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Handles

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Editorial Choice:

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Book

BfK Rating:

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This Carnegie winner returns us to Polthorpe (remember **Thunder and Lightnings?**) near which city girl, motorbike mad Erica is forced to stay with Auntie Joan and her MCP menfolk. The chance discovery of 'Mercury Motor Cycles', tucked behind the High Street opens up a comic and absorbing world for Erica, in sharp contrast to the boredom and stifling restraint of Hall Farm Cottage with its malignant rows of marrows and the odious Cousin Robert. This is a sharply funny book with a potently serious side which questions prescribed attitudes to male/female roles and the way in which we attach 'handles' to people. Jan Mark is nudging cultural assumptions and exploring and showing a whole range of pre-adolescent feelings with a most assured lightness of touch. One award winner which many children will enjoy and from which they could take away a great deal.

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