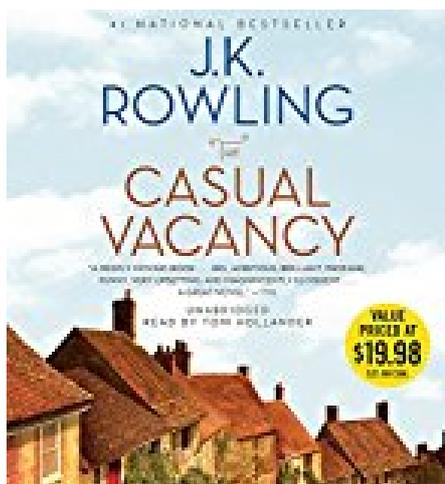


[PDF] The Casual Vacancy

J. K. Rowling, Tom Hollander - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: The Casual Vacancy
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly On the face of it, Rowling's first adult book is very different from the Harry Potter books that made her rich and famous. It's resolutely unmagical: the closest thing to wizardry is the ability to hack into the amateurish Pagford Parish Council Web site. Instead of a battle for worldwide domination, there's a fight over a suddenly empty seat on that Council, the vacancy of the title. Yet despite the lack of invisibility cloaks and pensieves, Pagford isn't so different from Harry's world. There's a massive divide between the haves and those pesky have-nots—the residents of the Fields, the council flat that some want to push off onto Yarvil, the county council nearby. In tiny Pagford, and at its school, which caters to have and have-nots alike, everyone is connected: teenager Krystal Weedon, the sole functioning member of her working-class family, hooks up with the middle-class son of her guidance counselor;

the social worker watching over Krystal's troubled mother dates the law partner of the son of the dead Councilor's fiercest Council rival, who also happens to be the best friend of Councilor Barry Fairbrother; Krystal's great-grandmother's doctor was Fairbrother's closest ally; the daughters of the doctor and the social worker work together, along with the best friend of Krystal's hookup; and so on. When Fairbrother—born in Fields but now a middle-class Pagford and one of the few people who can deal with the obstreperous Krystal—dies suddenly, the fight gets uglier. Rowling is relentlessly competent: all these people and their hatreds and hopes are established and mixed together. Secrets are revealed, relationships twist and break, and the book rolls toward its awful, logical climax with aplomb. As in the Harry Potter books, children make mistakes and join together with a common cause, accompanied here by adults, some malicious, some trying yet failing. Minus the magic, though, good and evil are depressingly human, and while the characters are all well drawn and believable, they aren't much fun. Agent: The Blair Partnership. (Sept. 27) --This text refers to the edition.

From J. K. Rowling has said that she considered writing *The Casual Vacancy* under a pseudonym. Had she done so, Rowling probably would have learned what it's like to be a midlist author—unpublicized, unnoticed, and unhappy. Like many midlist titles, this one is perfectly fine, but in no way outstanding. Set in Pagford, a picturesque West Country village, this very British book has a clever, if arcane, centerpiece: a casual vacancy, an opening on the village council. When Barry Fairbrother drops dead of an aneurysm, his death sets off a chain reaction. A strong supporter of keeping a poor council estate as part of Pagford (he grew up there), Fairbrother is opposed by a smug, controlling businessman (Vernon Dursley, writ small) who wants to rid the village of the “undesirables.” Fairbrother's demise causes a crisis at the council and in the personal lives of many, including a teenager to whom he gave a helping hand. As everyone knows, Rowling is very good at creating worlds, and here she effectively shows the stifling (for some) and satisfying (for others) constraints of village life. Somewhat less successful are her characters, who wouldn't seem out of place in a British soap opera: not surprisingly, it's her several teen characters, the tortured and the torturers, who jump most from the page. As for her prose, well, that was never Rowling's strong suit, and it lumbers more than it soars. To give credit where it's due, one of the world's richest women wrote her book and is willing to take the critical lumps when she didn't have to do anything more than stay home and count her money. She must like to write. --Ilene Cooper --This text refers to the edition.

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