



The Rag and Bone Shop

By Robert Cormier

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Twelve-year old Jason is accused of the brutal murder of a young girl. Is he innocent or guilty? The shocked town calls on an interrogator with a stellar reputation: he always gets a confession. The confrontation between Jason and his interrogator forms the chilling climax of this terrifying look at what can happen when the pursuit of justice becomes a personal crusade for victory at any cost.

From the Hardcover edition.

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The Rag and Bone Shop By Robert Cormier Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

This final novel from the grand master of young-adult fiction is one last jewel in the literary crown of Robert Cormier, who died in November 2000. In it he continues to explore the themes that are so characteristic of his work: guilt and forgiveness, misuse of authority, and the corruption of innocence. But a new book from Cormier is always a surprise, and here he gives us a brilliant evocation of the detective story, in a narrative that centers on the interrogation of a murder suspect.

A 7-year-old girl has been battered to death, and there are no suspects, no leads. The police, under political pressure to make an arrest, bring in Trent, a cold, ambitious professional interrogator who prides himself on his ability to extract confessions. His victim is 12-year-old Jason--the last person to see the girl. We know that Jason is innocent, and halfway through the interrogation Trent realizes it, too, in "a blazing moment." But like a medieval torturer, his goal is confession, not truth, and so he stifles his impulses for good and proceeds with the job, with deeply ironic consequences.

The interrogation itself, which forms the centerpiece of the novel, is dazzling in its elegant thrust-and-parry, its subtle twists and turns, as Jason frantically tries to escape, like a mouse caged with a python. The point of view snaps back and forth so that we are intensely aware of the shifting emotions of both participants in the deadly game. And once again, Cormier has given us an ending that seems provocative and uncomfortable--until we remember that the center of his moral universe was always summed up by the words "if only."
(Ages 12 and older) --*Patty Campbell*

From Publishers Weekly

Cormier's (*The Chocolate War*) final novel, published posthumously, is characteristically dark and thought-provoking as he delves into "the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart," (from the Yeats poem). The author offers an in-depth study of two complicated characters: Trent, an ambitious and renowned interrogator who holds a perfect record wrenching confessionals out of criminals, and 12-year-old Jason Dorrant, suspected of murdering his neighbor, seven-year-old Alicia Bartlett. The killing attracts much publicity plus the attention of a senator. The local police, anxious to solve the case quickly, call on the expertise of Trent to get Jason, the last person seen with the victim, to confess to the crime. The interview between Trent and Jason evolves into a taut, sinister mind game as the interrogation expert twists the boy's thoughts and manipulates his words. Jason parries the insinuations and accusations against him to the best of his ability, but finds himself questioning his own sense of reality. The tension mounts as it becomes increasingly evident that Trent is more concerned with getting Jason to say the words he wants to hear than discovering what really happened on the day Alicia died. The chilling results of the questioning will leave an indelible mark on readers and prompt heated discussions regarding the definition of guilt and the fine line between truth and deception. Ages 12-up.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 7-Up This posthumously published novel by Robert Cormier (Delacorte, 2001) proves as psychologically tight as his earlier classics (*The Chocolate War*, *We All Fall Down*). Here, a middle-aged police interrogator works his craft on a 12-year-old boy whom local authorities have chosen to take the role of discovered perpetrator in a crime they want to declare solved. Jason is a socially awkward and quiet boy.

His neighbor and friend, a seven-year-old girl, is the murder victim. As one of the last people to see her alive, Jason has been willing to cooperate with police inquiries about events of the afternoon of her death. However, under Trent's manipulative questioning, Jason begins to wonder what it is that the police want with him. As the questioning continues, along with Trent's insidious suggestions that Jason is hiding his role in the girl's death, Jason crumbles psychologically, admitting to a crime he did not commit. Trent's need to pin the murder on the boy is teased out in excruciating detail. The tidy existential refrain, "You are what you do," echoes in Trent's head and in the listeners' ears. In pitch perfect Cormier style, the story's denouement finds Jason planning to turn the phrase inside out by doing what he has been told that he is. Scott Shina's reading of this taut and emotionally true story is riveting, with Jason's naive confusion and Trent's cynicism each given appropriate pace and voice. This is an excellent starting place for those who have yet to meet Cormier, as well as a welcome addition to his corpus for those who have read his previous novels. -Francisca Goldsmith, Berkeley Public Library, CA
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

George Harvey:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important action, like looking for your favorite publication and reading a guide. Beside you can solve your trouble; you can add your knowledge by the e-book entitled *The Rag and Bone Shop*. Try to the actual book *The Rag and Bone Shop* as your pal. It means that it can for being your friend when you sense alone and beside that course make you smarter than before. Yeah, it is very fortunated for you personally. The book makes you a lot more confidence because you can know anything by the book. So , let me make new experience along with knowledge with this book.

Reginald McDade:

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Jerome Chisolm:

Many people spending their time by playing outside using friends, fun activity using family or just watching TV 24 hours a day. You can have new activity to shell out your whole day by examining a book. Ugh, you think reading a book will surely hard because you have to accept the book everywhere? It okay you can have the e-book, bringing everywhere you want in your Smart phone. Like *The Rag and Bone Shop* which is obtaining the e-book version. So , why not try out this book? Let's see.

Isaiah Owens:

Within this era which is the greater person or who has ability to do something more are more important than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time not very much but quite enough to get a look at some books. One of several books in the top checklist in your reading list will be The Rag and Bone Shop. This book and that is qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in becoming precious person. By looking way up and review this book you can get many advantages.

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