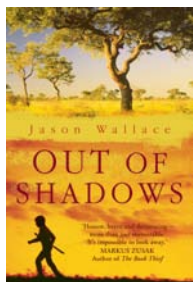


Reading Guide

Out of Shadows by Jason Wallace



Andersen Press
9781849390484
£6.99



The author:

Jason Wallace is related to JRR Tolkien and a descendent of one of the first international England cricketers. He was born in Cheltenham but, aged 12, his life was turned upside down when his mother remarried and the family emigrated to Zimbabwe. He did actually meet Robert Mugabe when he visited his school! Jason is currently a web designer, living in south-west London, and he writes in his spare time.

The book:

Zimbabwe, 1980s, the war is over, independence has been won and Robert Mugabe has come to power offering hope to black Africans. For Robert Jacklin, it's all new: new continent, new country, new school. And very quickly he learns that for some of his classmates, the battles rage on ...white boys who want their old country back, not this new black African government. Boys like Ivan for whom there is still one last battle to fight, and he's taking it right to the very top.

Talking points:

- 'What's your problem Jacko? You've stopped seeing us in the holidays and at school you haven't been out with us in bloody months.' Robert struggles with peer pressure throughout the story. Can you think of an occasion when he thinks for himself?
- 'Stupid Kaffirs – one day they're sticking together, the next they're stabbing each other in the back.' Ivan Hascott is a committed racist. How does he try to make black characters like Nelson Ndube feel inferior to white people?
- "'Perkiss", my old man answered, still looking into the hole. "He's my assistant. But keep your voice down."' It seems Robert's father has been lying about his seniority at the embassy. Why would a father with a wife and family feel the need to lie about his job?
- 'My mother walked past with another empty bottle.' Many characters abuse alcohol in an attempt to escape their troubles. What consequences does this have on them and those around them?
- 'I was suddenly being haunted by a whole new thought: I was Greet.' A lot of bullying takes place amongst the characters. To what extent does Robert end up repeating the wrongs of the older generation?

Read more:

Over A Thousand Hills I Walk With You by Hanna Jansen

The Boy Next Door by Irene Sabatini

More about Jason Wallace:

Jason Wallace's website: www.jwallace.co.uk

Jason Wallace at Andersen Press: www.andersenpress.co.uk

The Booktrust Teenage Prize celebrates the best contemporary writing for young people

This guide provides information about some exciting online resources as well as ideas to trigger in-depth discussion during class or with a reading group. There are six guides, one for each of the 2010 shortlisted titles.