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Smash!

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Not on the Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

As the millennium approaches, the town council of Shadderton decides to commemorate it with a development dedicated to racial harmony in the town. But as the project involves the relocation of Asian families to a white council estate, the local fascists mobilise to exploit the potential for confrontation. At the same time, members of the Muslim community, enraged by a racist attack on a child, begin to organise direct retaliation. Meanwhile, a group of local entrepreneurs, with motives transcending racial loyalty, start to feed fivers to the flames. The resultant plague of escalating violence is described from the viewpoints of Stephen and Ashraf and their families, former friends who end up in opposing battalions. The account of how Stephen is slowly sucked into the quagmire fantasies of the nazi group makes particularly disturbing reading. Swindells' customary procedure, packing action and dialogue into brief, concise chapters that nimbly bound from one perspective to another, carries the story along at a vertiginous pace, and he even finds room at the end for a characteristic knife edge chase. However, the dimly sinister essence of the conflict is never trivialised, and its relevance is highlighted by the lively descriptions of home and school life within which the violence uncoils.

Running Order:

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