



The 13th Horseman

Books Reviewed:

[The 13th Horseman](#) [1]

Issue:

[193](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Carole Redford](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Drake opens the door of a shed which has appeared in his back garden to find an outrageously motley trio, War, Pestilence and Famine, the three Horsemen of the Apocalypse, who interrupt their game of snakes and ladders to inform him that he is Death, the fourth Horseman. He is not an obvious choice, failing all his initiation tests, including the one which merely demands he whistles for his horse. Drake's lack of success can be partly attributed to the fact that a previous holder of the office is trying to kill him, and, it is supposed, works in the boy's new school. The beautifully executed dramatic set piece which ends the novel, however, sees Drake driven by anger and burgeoning love for the idiosyncratic outsider, Mel, both win his spurs as a ghost rider in the sky, and tip over from callow youth to assured young man.

This novel is a wonderful example of the absurdist and anarchic humour which has traditionally underpinned boys' comics, and which pre-adolescent males appear to relish. There is abundant evidence that Hutchinson is highly influenced by Northern comedy, especially such practitioners as Les Dawson, Morecambe and Wise and the author's fellow Scot, Billy Connolly. Hutchinson's work is not only hilarious; it contains a high degree of wit and intelligence. He delights not only in the apparent endless idiocy of humankind, but in the describing of it. This delight is infectious, his ability impressive.

Source URL (retrieved on Dec '19): <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/193/childrens-books/reviews/the-13th-horseman>

Links:

[1] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-13th-horseman>

[2] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/193>

[3] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/carole-redford>