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I Swapped My Brother on the Internet

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~~Not a Choice:~~

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Media type:

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In this humorous book, Jo Simmons explores a question that many children will have asked themselves at one time or another: what if I could swap my brother or sister for a better one?

Using an exciting new website ? Sibling Swap - Jonny is granted the power to do just that. His older brother, Ted, is, naturally, extremely annoying. He puts salt in Jonny?s drinks, burps in his ear and teases him incessantly about his inability to climb trees. It?s a blessed relief for Jonny to rid himself of his tormentor but he soon finds that the grass is not always greener on the other side of the Internet.

Jonny is sent a parade of replacement siblings. Each seems perfect to begin with, but invariably they have something about them that Jonny just can?t live with. Jonny fails to stipulate that he?d like a human, or even a living sibling, and, as a result, each replacement is more bizarre than the last. Readers are required to suspend their disbelief beyond the merely implausible, to the totally ridiculous, when mermen, ghosts of Tudor monarchs and even human meerkats knock on Jonny?s door. Though the resulting comedy is somewhat hit-and-miss, there is also drama and tension to be enjoyed, as Jonny begins to wonder what might have happened to his real brother, Ted.

Jonny?s misadventures with his new siblings lead him to question his choice to swap Ted and he begins remembering all of the things he enjoyed about spending time with his brother. As a result, an endearing feeling of love and positivity is grown, which is welcome accompaniment to an extremely silly tone overall.

Children will laugh at Jonny?s colourful language (?Oh sweet mangoes of heaven!?) and will find the Hanging Pants of Doom hilarious. Though readers will enjoy dreaming of similar sibling swaps for their own pesky brothers and sisters, the concept and the comedy are stretched a little thin by the end.

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