



2018

The Ruinous Sweep

Becca Wilhite

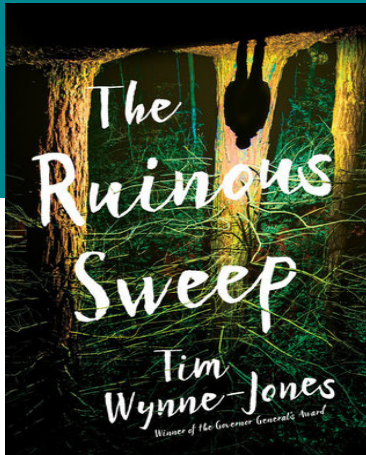
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Book Review

The Ruinous Sweep

Author

Tim Wynne-Jones

Illustrator

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Reviewer

Becca Wilhite

Rating

Dependable

Level

Young Adult

.....

Pages

385

Year

2018

Publisher

Candlewick Press

ISBN

9780763697457

In a modern reflection on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Donovan and Beatrice explore life's challenges and aftermath. Dono, thrown from a moving car in the first chapter, struggles in a shadowy space between life and death to get home to his girlfriend Beatrice, who sits by his bedside recording each word and sound he utters to make sense of the mysterious accident and resultant deaths. Dono's exploration of forgiveness and Bee's fight against what appears to be Dono's guilt lead to both uncovering secrets, some of which create new conflicts, dangers, and opportunities for redemption.

Wynn-Jones's exploration of the afterlife pushes up against many uncomfortable topics, including lust, gluttony, wrath, sullenness, avarice, and betrayal. Subtle dialog, explicit danger, and shocking reappearances of characters who appeared dead and gone combine to soak the story in the kind of vice that "The Inferno" warns mortals to expect in the afterlife. A startling shift of main characters in the middle of the book creates an on-edge feeling that leaves readers in an awkward imbalance: it's hard to settle in knowing that more shifts and changes must be ahead. There is a gentle sense of redemption in the end, smoothing over the book's general tone of anxiety-inducing danger, both physical and immortal.

*Contains moderate language and moderate violence.