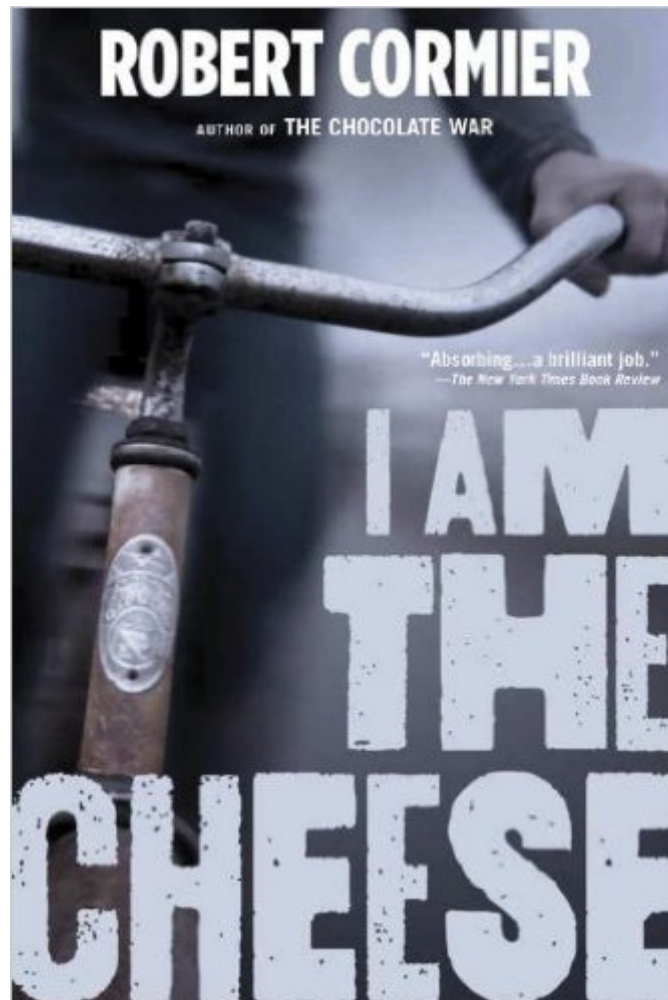


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I Am The Cheese



Synopsis

Before there was Lois Lowry's *The Giver* or M. T. Anderson's *Feed*, there was Robert Cormier's *I Am the Cheese*, a subversive classic that broke new ground for YA literature. A boy's search for his father becomes a desperate journey to unlock a secret past. But the past must not be remembered if the boy is to survive. As he searches for the truth that hovers at the edge of his mind, the boy and readers arrive at a shattering conclusion. An absorbing, even brilliant job. The book is assembled in mosaic fashion: a tiny chip here, a chip there. . . . Everything is related to something else; everything builds and builds to a fearsome climax. . . . [Cormier] has the knack of making horror out of the ordinary, as the masters of suspense know how to do. • "The New York Times Book Review" A horrifying tale of government corruption, espionage, and counter espionage told by an innocent young victim. . . . The buildup of suspense is terrific. • "School Library Journal, starred review" An ALA Notable Children's Book A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year A Horn Book Fanfare A Library of Congress Children's Book of the Year A Colorado Blue Spruce Young Adult Book Award Nominee

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 810L (What's this?)

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Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars See all reviews (356 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

As a young child, I considered Robert Cormier one of my heroes. He wrote engaging, enigmatic

stories that did not pander to his young adult audience, yet his novels were not too tough-and-stringy for such readers to digest. I read his entire catalog of books, from "The Chocolate War," to "Fade," and everything else in between, and each enthralling book helped me to examine (what were) complex social and moral issues. His books were refreshing and thought provoking, and I greatly appreciated Cormier's assumption that young children were capable of understanding three dimensional characters, hard truths, and pain more substantial the pain of a friend moving away or of losing a beloved pet. Cormier's novels had a deep and beneficial impact on my developing personality, and I thank him. Over the years, although I did not forget his name, I did not think about Cormier very much. He served his purpose, I felt, and had nothing new to offer. Many of us know already that Robert Cormier recently passed away. I read it in the Boston Globe, and I was deeply saddened. I decided to, out of respect, re-read my favorite of his novels, "I am the Cheese." I was a little nervous, expecting to be disappointed. This was not the case. "I am the Cheese," is a novel that is in many ways formatted for children. However, it is also a novel that can bring back (and make real), for those adults who want them, the feelings of loneliness, despair, suffocation, and unreasonable fear that we felt when we were thirteen or so. This is no summer Disney flick with a few hidden tongues-in-cheek for Mom n' Dad. "I am the Cheese" is a (yes) simple, but POWERFUL tour-de-force of brittle yet sepulchral sentiment.

Chilling. Sometimes authors can be separated into "Authors That End Their Depressing Book Hopefully" and "Authors That End Their Books In Deep Dark Dank Despair". Robert Cormier is of the latter category. In his remarkable, "I Am the Cheese", Cormier tells the technically adept tale of Adam Farmer. Cutting between scenes in which Adam tries to remember the events of his past and scenes of him riding his bike on a small quest to find his father, the book is a deft portrayal of what is real and what is imagined. More than anything else, this is one of the rare psychological thrillers written specifically for youth. As Adam realizes what has happened to him, so too does the reader. And as Adam starts to mistrust his interrogator, ditto the reader. Clues to Adam's past come to him slowly, their subtlety impressive. For example, Adam discovers that he has two birth certificates. One says his correct birthday. The other, a birth date in a completely different month. This is a small discovery on his part, but a perfectly chilling one. He doesn't understand the significance of this discovery, nor does the reader, but we're compelled to discover what it all means. If you've a kid who'd be interested in a book with an unreliable narrator, you couldn't do much better than this. Adam is sympathetic, but ultimately not in control of any of the forces that guide his travels. He is the world's victim, a fact explored fully at the novel's shocking close. DO NOT read the last page of

this book if you want to be surprised. I, myself, caught an accidental glance and knew more than I ever wanted to as a result. This is not a book for anyone who likes their protagonist to overcome his/her personal struggles and triumph in some small way in the end.

Very much I like the title, "I am the cheese" (a book by Robert Comier) is rich in mystery, suspense and lip-biting climaxes. The "Farmers"; the main family in this story, undergo changes due to a past event... Changes made include scenery jobs, house... and even identity. All changes for the better? The story centres around "Adam Farmer", the only child of Mr and Mrs "Farmer". He has a normal life, until he finds "his" birth certificates. More clues come up and he becomes a spy; watching and listening around the house. There are secrets, there's evidence. What aren't his parents telling him? That was in the past, his on a journey now, cycling round the memories, around the asylum. He's now traumatized by the past. The past he "can't remember". But what happened? What forced him to "forget"? He's in an Asylum, but why is there? He says he's cycling to his father in Ruttenburg, but why are they apart and where is his mother? This book's a psychological thriller. A good read yet a little stingy with the clues as to solving the mystery. The book constructs blocks of suspense with levels of clues. Climaxes come through out and right at the end is an unbelievably twisted surprise. The story's set in Ruttenburg, Vermont and in Monument Massachusetts. The setting's effectiveness lies in the thought of such a big thing happening in a well developed place, yet it wasn't noticed or stopped... It makes me kind of think that something like this could be happening here in South Africa, JHB and I wouldn't even know about it. The author gives a heavy message lightly. A warning to us to open our eyes, take notice and do something about things. He brings it through in a confusing, mind working yet entertaining way.

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