

There but for the

author: Ali Smith

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Synopsis

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At a dinner party in the posh London suburb of Greenwich, Miles Garth suddenly leaves the table midway through the meal, locks himself in an upstairs room, and refuses to leave. An eclectic group of neighbors and friends slowly gathers around the house, and the story of Miles is one told from the points of view of four of them: a woman in her 40s called Anna, a man in his 60s called Mark, a woman in her 80s called May, and a 10-year-old child called Brooke. The thing is... none of these people knows Miles anything more than glancingly. So how much is it possible to know about a stranger? And what are the consequences of even the most casual, most fleeting meetings we have every day with other human beings?

Brilliantly audacious, disarmingly playful, full of Smith's trademark wit and puns, *There but for the* is a deft exploration of the human need for separation - from our pasts and from one another - and the redemptive possibilities for connections.

Reader's comments

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