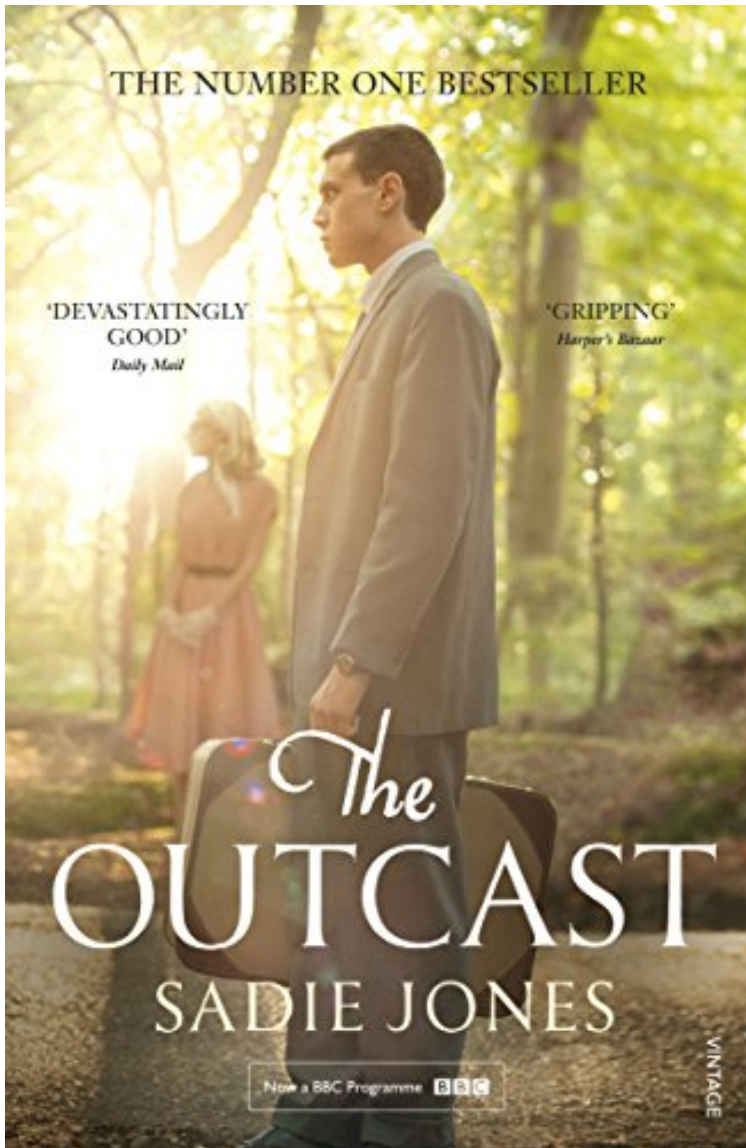


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The Outcast



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Description :

Présentation de l'auteurThe bestselling novel behind the major new BBC drama starring George Mackay (Pride), Jessica Brown Findlay (Downton Abbey), Greg Wise (Cranford) and Hattie Morahan (Sense and Sensibility)Sussex, 1957. Lewis is nineteen, straight out of jail, and stands alone at a railway station. He has returned to the village where he grew up: the village where, a decade earlier, tragedy tore his family apart, leaving him to a troubled adolescence with a father he barely knew. Now, the only person who understands him is Kit Carmichael, daughter of a bullying local businessman. Through the pain and isolation of their shared childhood comes love and loyalty and soon they realise that to forge their own futures, they must first confront the darkest secrets of their past.**THE NUMBER ONE BESTSELLERWINNER OF THE COSTA**

FIRST NOVEL PRIZE.co.uk About the Author ~ Sadie Jones Sadie Jones was born in London. She grew up in a creative environment: her father is the Jamaican poet and screenwriter Evan Jones, and her mother was an actress. As her friends took up their various university places, Sadie worked in a variety of jobs. After travelling, she settled in London and spent several years as a screenwriter, before writing her first novel, *The Outcast*. Sadie is married and has two children. Exclusive .co.uk Interview with Sadie Jones What is *The Outcast* about? *The Outcast* is about a boy called Lewis - his childhood and adolescence as he grows up in the stultifying world of the home counties in the late forties and fifties. It is an everyday tale of drunkenness, violence and a fair amount of sex, set amongst the well-brought-up professional classes. It is also a love story. What inspired you to write it? The idea of a boy coming out of prison and trying to fit into a community that is itself corrupt was the first thing that came to me. I wanted to write an Oedipal story, with iconic characters, about what the nature of what it is to belong, and injustice. I set it in the fifties because I have always been very attracted to the books and films of that time. Who are your literary influences? Its difficult to think in terms of being influenced, because when you write you try to find your own voice and forget those of other writers, but I must in some way be a product of books Ive loved. My favourite writers are Hemingway, Capote, Salinger, McEwan and Dostoyevsky. If you could recommend just one "must-read book" to anyone, what would it be and why? It would be *The Brothers Karamazov*, by Dostoyevsky, because it is a book that tells a riveting story and is profoundly insightful about human nature. Dostoyevsky has an undeserved reputation of being sort of turgid, but nothing could be further from the truth of this book. He relishes the events he discloses and has no prissiness he gets in the mud with his characters. What top tips do you have for anyone looking to write their first book? Its very hard; I only know what works for me, which is planning, structure and hard work. I have found that whenever I write thinking Ill sort some lingering doubt out later, I generally run into trouble. If you cant answer every single question about your story, then people will be able to tell. Also, try not to get too tied up in whether or not its any good, or what will happen to it when its finished all of that can be paralysing. s for *The Outcast* An assured voice, a riveting story, and an odd, wrenchingly sympathetic protagonist. I would never have imagined this was a first novel. Lionel Shriver In the tradition of *ATONEMENT* and *REMAINS OF THE DAY* but in her own singularly arresting voice, Sadie Jones conjures up the straight-laced, church-going, secretly abusive middle class of 1950s England. *The Outcast* is a passionate and deeply suspenseful novel about what happens to those who break the rules, and what happens to those who keep them. I loved reading this wonderful debut. Margot Livesey I much admired *The Outcast*. Sadie Jones tells her story using minute details to convey the apparent ordinariness of her characters' lives. But from the choreography of these walking, smiling, drinking people, from their emotional repression and their children's deprivation, she conjures an atmosphere of menace and suspense that erupts into violence and tragedy. It is an impressive debut for this talented new novelist. Michael Holroyd Sadie Jones is an important new voice. She writes in beautiful prose of terrible events, demonstrating how love denied brings brutal consequences. She conjures the repressive social climate of the 1950s with awful accuracy, and explores the hearts and minds of young people with forensic skill. A great stylist and fine storyteller. Joan Bakewell One of Radio 4s *Book at Bedtime* reads for February, Jones story is imbued with brooding atmosphere and drama. Understated and elegantly narrated with attention to period detail, this is a gripping love story with a twist. If you liked *Atonement* by Ian McEwan, youll love this. Harpers Bazaar (Feb issue) A wonderfully assured first novel. Guardian The prose is elegant and spare, but the story it reveals is raw and explosive Devastatingly good. Daily Mail *The Outcast* grips from page one Jones has captured the stultifying morals and mores of Fifties English middle-class life with satisfying accuracy. Publishing News Set in post WWII suburban London, this superb debut novel charts the downward spiral and tortured redemption of a young man shattered by loss. The war is over, and Lewis Aldridge is getting used to having his father, Gilbert, back in the house. Things hum along splendidly until Lewiss mother drowns, casting the 10-year-old into deep isolation Jones prose is fluid, and Lewiss suffering comes across as achingly real. Publishers Weekly A confident, suspenseful and affecting first novel, delivered in cool, precise, distinctive prose. KirkusExtraitChapter One1945 Gilbert was demobbed in November and Elizabeth took Lewis up to London to meet him at the Charing Cross Hotel. Lewis was seven. Elizabeth and he got onto the train at Waterford and she held his hand firmly so that he wouldnt fall when he climbed up the high step. Lewis sat next to the window and opposite her, to watch the station get small as they pulled away, and Elizabeth took off her hat so that she could rest her head against the seat without it getting in the way. The seat was itchy against Lewiss bare legs between his shorts and his socks and he liked the way it was uncomfortable and the way the train moved from side to side. There was a feeling

of specialness; his mother was quiet with it and it changed the way everything looked. They had a secret between them and they didn't need to talk about it. He looked out of the window and wondered again if his father would be wearing his uniform and, if he were, if he would have a gun. He wondered, if he did have a gun, if he would let Lewis hold it. Lewis thought probably not. His father probably wouldn't have one, and if he did it would be too dangerous and Lewis wouldn't be allowed to play with it. The clouds were very low over the fields, so that everything looked close up and flat. Lewis thought it was possible that the train might be standing still and the fields and houses and sky might be rushing past. That would mean his father would be rushing towards him standing in the Charing Cross Hotel, but then all the people would fall over. He thought he might feel sick, so he looked over at his mother. She was looking straight ahead, as if she was watching something lovely. She was smiling so he pushed her leg with his foot so that she would smile at him, and she did, and he looked back out of the window. He couldn't remember if he'd had lunch or what time of day it was. He tried to remember breakfast. He remembered going to bed the night before and his mother kissing him and saying, 'Well see Daddy tomorrow, and the way his stomach had felt suddenly. It felt that way now. His mother called it butterflies, but it wasn't like that, it was more just suddenly knowing you had a stomach, when normally you forgot. He decided if he sat and thought about his father and his stomach any more he'd definitely feel sick. Can I go for a walk?' he asked. 'Yes, you can go for a walk. Don't touch the doors and don't lean out. How will you know where to find me again?' He looked around, G. Carriage G. He couldn't open the door; it was heavy and they both fought with it. She held it open for him and he went down the corridor, one hand on the window side, the other on the compartment side, steadying himself and saying under his breath, 'along-along-along.' After Elizabeth had spoken to Gilbert on the telephone the day before, she had sat on the chair in the hall and cried. She cried so much that she had to go upstairs so that Jane wouldn't see her, or Lewis, if he came in from the garden. She had cried much more than any time they had parted since he had first gone away and more than she had in May when they heard the war in Europe had ended. Now she felt very calm and as if it was normal to be going to see your husband whom you had been frightened might die almost every day for four years. She looked down at the clasp on her new bag and thought about all the other women seeing their husbands again and buying handbags that wouldn't be noticed. Lewis appeared through the glass, struggling with the door, and she let him in and he smiled at her and stood balancing with his arms out. Look He had his mouth open with the effort of not falling over and his tongue to one side. One of his socks was down. His fingers were each stretching out. Elizabeth loved him and missed a breath with loving him. She grabbed him around the middle. 'Don't! I wasn't falling! I know you weren't, I just wanted to give you a hug. Mummy! Sorry, darling, you balance. She let go, and Lewis went back to balancing. They took a taxi from Victoria to Charing Cross and they looked out at the buildings, and the big holes where buildings had been. There was much more sky than there had been and the gaps looked more real than the buildings, which were like afterthoughts. There were lots of people on the pavements and the road was crowded with cars and buses. The weather made it look as if the broken buildings and people's coats and hats and the grey sky were all joined together in greyness except for the blowing autumn leaves, which were quite bright. Here we are, said Elizabeth, and the taxi pulled over. Lewis scraped his calf climbing out of the taxi and didn't feel it because he was looking up at the hotel and seeing all the men going in and out and thinking that one of them might be his father. 'I'm meeting my husband in the bar. Yes, madam. Follow me. Lewis held Elizabeth's hand and they followed the man. The hotel was vast and dim and shabby. There were men in uniform everywhere and people greeting each other and the air was full of smoke. Gilbert was sitting in a corner by a tall, dirty window. He was in his uniform, and greatcoat, and he was smoking a cigarette and scanning the crowds outside on the pavement. Elizabeth saw him before he saw her and she stopped. 'Do you see your party, madam?' 'Yes, thank you. Lewis pulled her hand, 'Where? Where?' Elizabeth watched Gilbert and she thought, 'I should hold this moment. I should remember this. I will remember this all my life. Then he looked up and saw her. There was a moment of blankness and then a smile and from then she wasn't on her own in her head any more, she was with him. He crushed his cigarette into the ashtray and got up and went over to her. She let go of Lewis's hand. They kissed, embraced clumsily, and then allowed each other to be very close, quickly. 'God, we can get you out of this bloody uniform Lizzie, you're here Well burn it, ritually. Don't be treasonous. Lewis looked up at his mother and father holding each other. His hand felt strange where she had let go of it. He waited. They stood apart and Gilbert looked down at Lewis. 'Hello, little chap!' Lewis looked up at his father and he had so many thoughts in his mind that his face went blank. 'Aren't you going to say hello?' 'Hello. What? Can't hear you!' 'Hello. Shake hands then!' Lewis held out his hand. They shook hands. 'He's been so excited, Gilbert. He's been full of things to ask. He's talked

of nothing else. We cant stand here all day. Shall we get out of this ghastly place? What do you want? What shall we do? I dont know. Are you going to cry? Lewis looked up at Elizabeth in alarm. Why would she cry? No. Im not going to. We could have some lunch. Well, not here. Come on, Ill get my things. Wait. He went over to the table where hed been sitting and picked up his kit bag and another bag. Lewis held tightly to his mother. She squeezed his hand. They still had their secret, she was still with him. They went for lunch and a huge fuss was made about the chops, which were small and brown, in the middle of a large silver plate. Lewis thought he wasnt hungry and ate enormously. He watched his parents talking. They talked about the housekeeper, Jane, and whether or not her cooking was tolerable. They talked about the roses Elizabeth had just planted and that there was going to be a big Christmas party at the Carmichaels. Lewis thought he would explode with boredom and his insides would splash all over the walls and onto the waiters white jacket. He tapped his fathers arm. Excuse me, sir. His father didnt look at him. Ill get the train, I should think . . . Lewis thought he hadnt heard. Excuse me, sir . . . Excuse me. Do answer him, Gilbert. Lewis? Was it very hot in the desert? Very. Were there snakes? A few. Did you shoot them? No. Were there camels? Yes. Lots. Did you ride on any? No. Did you shoot lots of people or blow them up? Lewis, let Daddy eat his lunch. Shoot them to death, or blow them up? Lewis, nobody wants to talk about things like that. He could see that they didnt. He thought hed stick to safe subjects. Do you like chops? Chops are jolly nice. Dont you think so? Not bad. Did they give you chops in the desert? Not usually. Jelly? Talkative, isnt he? Not always. Hes excited. I can see that. Eat your lunch, Lewis, and be quiet, theres a good chap. Lewis had already finished his lunch, but he obeyed the second part, and was quiet. His room was dark. The curtains were drawn, but a little light came in from the

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