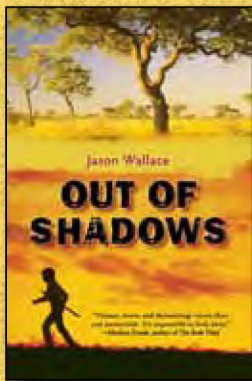


## OUT OF SHADOWS BY Jason Wallace



Ages 15 up HC: 978-0-8234-2342-2

**WINNER OF THE UK'S COSTA CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD**

★ “[A] taut drama . . . [with a] heart-pounding conclusion.”

—*School Library Journal* (starred review)

*At an elite boys' boarding school in Zimbabwe, privileged Robert finds himself torn between his black roommate and the white bullies still bitter over losing power because of the recent civil war.*

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

“Surely wars are about putting an end to a wrong, not making a new one?” (p. 9) Nelson asks Robert on the first day of school. And yet Mugabe claimed to be “putting an end to a wrong” by taking land from white farmers and returning it to black farmers. In what way is this right? In what way is it wrong? Is there a fair way to right this wrong?

Both Nelson and Robert are treated as outsiders at Haven School. How does their treatment differ? How do they each cope with the way they are treated?

Mr. van Hout asks his class if they would kill Hitler if they could go back in time. Robert doesn't realize that he will be given a similar chance. Is it possible to justify such an act of violence? Are there other ways to fight back against leaders such as Mugabe and Hitler?

Robert feels disillusioned by both his father and mother in different ways. Why does he feel betrayed by them? How does this betrayal contribute to his coming-of-age?

In chapter twenty-seven, Robert meets Greet for the first time since Greet graduated and sees what he's become. “Where had the monster gone? Or had I just stopped believing in monsters?” (p. 189) he asks himself. What does this mean? How does meeting Greet again, and what follows, change Robert's idea of monsters? Has Robert turned into a monster? Is Ivan a monster? What about Mr. van Hout? How does the idea of monsters, and their existence, relate to the concept of good vs. evil?

“There is a lot more to an education than what happens inside the classroom” (p. 271), Weekend says to Robert in chapter forty. As Robert's understanding of what's going on around him grows, he changes. How does Robert change with relation to his family? His peers? Zimbabwe? How does learning lead to growth?

*Out of Shadows* is full of dichotomies: rich and poor, black and white, good and evil, right and wrong. How does Robert experience both sides of each? What does he learn about each pair? What makes his experience of these ideas different from that of his classmates because he is not from Zimbabwe?

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Wallace lived in England until, at age twelve, his family emigrated to Zimbabwe. It was this experience in a tough boarding school during the aftermath of the war for independence that forms the foundation of his award-winning novel. This is Jason Wallace's first book. Learn more about him at [www.jwallace.co.uk](http://www.jwallace.co.uk).