



Osbert the Avenger

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News/Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Christopher William Hill was one of 12 authors featured in the **Books for Keeps** feature on [rising talents](#) [4] (BfK 187). His novel **Osbert the Avenger** has now been published, and a more deliciously gruesome tale of injury, revenge and murder it would be hard to find.

The story is set in Schwartzgarten, a city with a particularly bloody history, ruled by barbarous tyrants. The town's top school, The Institute, is run on the same brutal lines: not since Roald Dahl have teachers been so ingeniously sadistic, or depicted with such grotesque glee.

Little Osbert would seem to stand no chance there, but the cruel treatment meted out to his friend, Isabella spurs him to take revenge on his teachers. He has been inspired too by his nanny, motto, 'Do unto others before they can do unto you?! After accidentally causing the death of the music teacher, Osbert the Avenger is born. The hunting suit and shiny cleaver he was given for his 12th birthday prove very useful as he sets out to despatch the others, in ways guaranteed to produce shudders in adults and howls of laughter in children (warning: you may never enjoy strudel in the same way again).

Osbert does not quite get away with his terrible crimes, but there's certainly no moral message here: he's very aware, as are we, that killing his teachers made him more happy than he'd ever been. Rules are broken in a carnival manner that is deliciously and genuinely thrilling. Young readers will be delighted to know that there are more **Tales from Schwartzgarten** to come.

[Read our Q A with Christopher William Hill](#) [5]

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