



Martin Marten: A Novel

By Brian Doyle

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WINNER OF THE LESLIE BRADSHAW AWARD FOR YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

WINNER OF THE BANFF MOUNTAIN BOOK AWARD FOR FICTION

Dave is fourteen years old, eager and headlong. He is about to start high school, which is scary and alluring. Martin is a pine marten, a small, muscled hunter of the deep woods. He is about to leave home for the first time, which is scary and thrilling. Both of these wild animals are setting off on adventures on their native Mount Hood in Oregon, and their lives, paths, and trails will cross, weave, and blend. Why not come with them as they set forth into the forest and crags of the mountain and into the bruising wilderness of love, life, family, friends, enemies, wonder, mystery, and good things to eat?

Martin Marten is a braided coming-of-age tale like no other, told in Brian Doyle's joyous, rollicking style. Two energetic, sinewy, muddled, brilliant, creative animals, one human and one mustelid...come sprint with them through the deep, wet, green glory of Oregon's soaring mountain wilderness.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

On the slopes of Mt. Hood, OR, a young marten goes from birth to adolescence quickly, while Dave at 14 slowly becomes a young man. Sections of the novel alternate between the marten's and the human's lives. The wild animal is not anthropomorphized, although he is called Martin by the author. He is a fascinating creature of the woods whose survival becomes important as readers learn about him and his family. Dave and his younger sister, Maria, are treasured by their hardworking parents, who live a quiet, simple life in the isolated area. When Dave's father loses his job, Dave seeks employment at the local general store. There, he works for the unusual young owner, a woman who does not accept the idea of marriage. Her story and that of her suitor are cleverly introduced into the plot, and teens will learn to care about them. Gradually, more beautifully portrayed and eccentric characters enter the narrative. At the same time, the marten is becoming fully grown and looking for a mate and Dave is shyly running with a special, athletic girl in his new high school. Maria, Dave's sister, deserves a novel of her own. As a first grader, she wants to apply for fourth grade and sees no reason why students should stay in their designated class. There is adventure, near tragedy, and romance in this luminous novel. The descriptions of the woods will inspire any city dweller to go on a hike. VERDICT Teens will want to read about the lives of Dave and his friends and be introduced to the fast, clever Martin.—Karlán Sick, Library Consultant, New York City

Review

“*Martin Marten* is a joyous celebration of the complexities of life told by a master storyteller. You will want to share it with your family and friends.” ?Neil Abramson, author of *Unsaid*

“*Martin Marten* is a daring and delightful creation. As well as any novelist working today, Brian Doyle blends animal and human kingdoms into a seamless hopeful narrative overflowing with the wonderment of life. So artfully does he weave the feelings and impulses of his imagined people and wildlife that Doyle himself must be half-man, half-critter. *Martin Marten* should be required reading for all humans.” ?Jim Lynch, author of the novels *Truth Like the Sun*, *Border Songs*, and *The Highest Tide*

“Brian Doyle's gorgeous new novel is a hypnotic, luxurious journey through our natural world--a mind-bending celebration of how sweet each day can be. *Martin Marten* is composed with musical prose and sparkling, quirky characters who remind us that humanity is still capable of great good, and bliss might well lie just beyond our own back doors. A modern day Siddhartha set in the lush Pacific Northwest, *Martin Marten* awakens readers to the interconnected worlds that define the landscape of one glorious mountain, and the common boundaries of its infinite souls” ?Carol Cassella, author of *Gemini*

“Behold a tale both wonderful and wise about the mysteries of adolescence, the interconnectedness of the natural world, and the nature of existence itself. Insightful, heartwarming, and beautifully written, Brian Doyle's *Martin Marten* will have you cheering for characters across the species divide.” ?Brian Payton, author of *The Wind Is Not a River*

“Doyle is a born storyteller. ... Life in the Northwest woods may be fanciful in *Martin Marten*, but the characters emerge true as rain.” ?*Seattle Times*

“A rich, wise tale of two creatures from different species whose lives run parallel to each other.” ?*Shelf Awareness*

“Flows along absorbingly, avoiding sentiment while imparting a quiet acceptance of the rhythms of the natural and human worlds. Highly recommended; even city slickers can love.” ?*Library Journal* (starred)

“Utterly winning.” ?*The Wall Street Journal*

“Brian Doyle seeks that magical connection with the reader and, in *Martin Marten*, is wonderfully successful in his effort.” ?*Portland Book Review*

“[Brian Doyle’s] a guy with a penchant for piquant detail, and possibly a cosmic agenda. When you finish reading a novel by Doyle, you’re bound to feel more attuned to the universe.” ?*Kitsap Sun*

"Reading it feels a bit like wandering through the woods all day just for the pleasure of it, with no particular plans. Indeed, at times his prose feels like the very embodiment of a marten moving through the forest--by turns playful, reverent, breathless, and fierce." ?*Orion*

About the Author

Brian Doyle is the editor of *Portland Magazine* at the University of Portland and the author of seventeen books of essays, fiction, poems, and nonfiction, among them the novels *Mink River* and *The Plover*. Honors for his work include the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Literature. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Willie Grajeda:

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Anne Shibata:

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