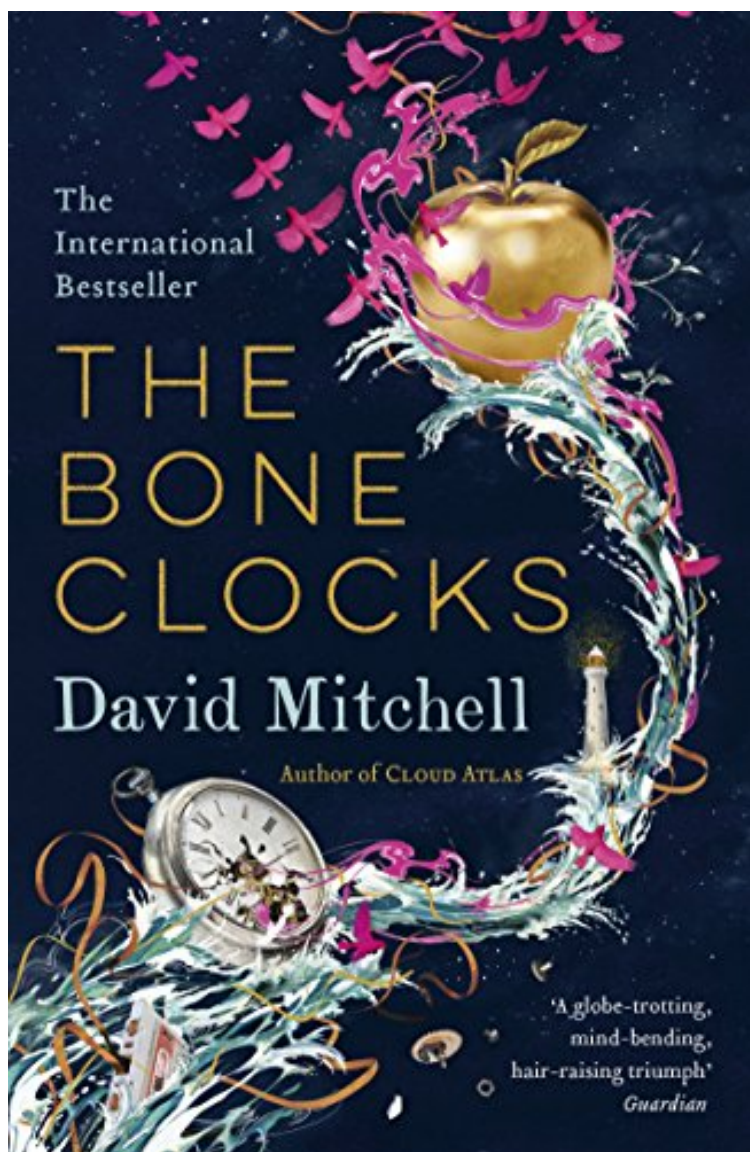


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# The Bone Clocks (English Edition)



Par David Mitchell  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurLONGLISTED FOR THE MAN BOOKER PRIZE 2014 One drowsy summer's day in 1984, teenage runaway Holly Sykes encounters a strange woman who offers a small kindness in exchange for 'asylum'. Decades will pass before Holly understands exactly what sort of asylum the woman was seeking . . . The Bone Clocks follows the twists and turns of Holly's life from a scarred adolescence in Gravesend to old age on Ireland's Atlantic coast as Europe's oil supply dries up - a life not so far out of the ordinary, yet punctuated by flashes of precognition, visits from people who emerge from thin air and brief lapses in the laws of reality. For Holly Sykes - daughter, sister, mother, guardian - is also an unwitting player in a murderous feud played out in the shadows and margins of our world, and may prove to be its decisive

weapon. Metaphysical thriller, meditation on mortality and chronicle of our self-devouring times, this kaleidoscopic novel crackles with the invention and wit that have made David Mitchell one of the most celebrated writers of his generation. Here is fiction at its most spellbinding and memorable best.

June 30 I fling open my bedroom curtains, and there's the thirsty sky and the wide river full of ships and boats and stuff, but I'm already thinking of Vinnys chocolaty eyes, shampoo down Vinnys back, beads of sweat on Vinnys shoulders, and Vinnys sly laugh, and by now my hearts going mental and, God, I wish I was waking up at Vinnys place in Peacock Street and not in my own stupid bedroom. Last night, the words just said themselves, Christ, I really love you, Vin, and Vinny puffed out a cloud of smoke and did this Prince Charles voice, One must say, ones frightfully partial to spending time with you too, Holly Sykes, and I nearly weed myself laughing, though I was a bit narked he didn't say I love you too back. If I'm honest. Still, boyfriends act goofy to hide stuff, any magazinell tell you. Wish I could phone him right now. Wish theyd invent phones you can speak to anyone anywhere anytime on. Hell be riding his Norton to work in Rochester right now, in his leather jacket with led zep spelled out in silver studs. Come September, when I turn sixteen, hell take me out on his Norton. Someone slams a cupboard door, below. Mam. No one elsed dare slam a door like that. Suppose shes found out? says a twisted voice. No. Weve been too careful, me and Vinny. Shes menopausal, is Mam. Thatll be it. Talking Heads Fear of Music is on my record player, so I lower the stylus. Vinny bought me this LP, the second Saturday we met at Magic Bus Records. Its an amazing record. I like Heaven and Memories Cant Wait but theres not a weak track on it. Vinnys been to New York and actually saw Talking Heads, live. His mate Dan was on security and got Vinny backstage after the gig, and he hung out with David Byrne and the band. If he goes back next year, hes taking me. I get dressed, finding each love bite and wishing I could go to Vinnys tonight, but hes meeting a bunch of mates in Dover. Men hate it when women act jealous, so I pretend not to be. My best friend Stellas gone to London to hunt for secondhand clothes at Camden Market. Mam says Im still too young to go to London without an adult so Stella took Ali Jessop instead. My biggest thrill todayll be hoovering the bar to earn my three pounds pocket money. Whoopy-doo. Then Ive got next weeks exams to revise for. But for two pins Id hand in blank papers and tell school where to shove Pythagoras triangles and Lord of the Flies and their life cycles of worms. I might, too. Yeah. I might just do that. Down in the kitchen, the atmospheres like Antarctica.

Morning, I say, but only Jacko looks up from the window-seat where hes drawing. Sharons through in the lounge part, watching a cartoon. Dads downstairs in the hallway, talking with the delivery guy the truck from the brewerys grumbling away in front of the pub. Mams chopping cooking apples into cubes, giving me the silent treatment. Im supposed to say, Whats wrong, Mam, what have I done? but sod that for a game of soldiers. Obviously she noticed I was back late last night, but Ill let her raise the topic. I pour some milk over my Weetabix and take it to the table. Mam clangs the lid onto the pan and comes over. Right. What have you got to say for yourself? Good morning to you too, Mam. Another hot day. What have you got to say for yourself, young lady? If in doubt, act innocent. Bout what exactly? Her eyes go all snaky. What time did you get home? Okay, okay, so I was a bit late, sorry. Two hours isnt a bit late. Where were you? I munch my Weetabix. Stellas. Lost track of time. Well, thats peculiar, now, it really is. At ten oclock I phoned Stellas mam to find out where the hell you were, and guess what? Youd left before eight. So whos the liar here, Holly? You or her? Shit. After leaving Stellas, I went for a walk. And where did your walk take you to? I sharpen each word. Along the river, all right? Upstream or downstream, was it, this little walk? I let a silence go by. What diffrence does it make? Therere some cartoon explosions on the telly. Mam tells my sister, Turn that thing off and shut the door behind you, Sharon. Thats not fair! Hollys the one getting told off. Now, Sharon. And you too, Jacko, I want But Jackos already vanished. When Sharons left, Mam takes up the attack again: All alone, were you, on your walk? Why this nasty feeling shes setting me up? Yeah. How far dyou get on your walk, then, all alone? What you want miles or kilometers? Well, perhaps your little walk took you up Peacock Street, to a certain someone called Vincent Costello? The kitchen sort of swirls, and through the window, on the Essex shore of the river, a tiny stick-mans lifting his bike off the ferry. Lost for words all of a sudden? Let me jog your memory: ten oclock last night, closing the blinds, front window, wearing a T-shirt and not a lot else. Yes, I did go downstairs to get Vinny a lager. Yes, I did lower the blind in the front room. Yes, someone did walk by. Relax, Id told myself. Whats the chances of one stranger recognizing me? Mams expecting me to crumple, but I dont. Youre wasted as a barmaid, Mam. You ought to be handling supergrasses for MI5. Mam gives me the Kath Sykes Filthy Glare. How old is he? Now I fold my arms. None of your business. Mams eyes go slitty. Twenty-four, apparently. If you already know, whyre you asking? Because a twenty-four-year-old man interfering with a fifteen-year-old schoolgirl is illegal. He could

go to prison. Ill be sixteen in September, and I reckon the Kent police have bigger fish to fry. Im old enough to make up my own mind about my relationships. Mam lights one of her Marlboro Reds. Id kill for one.

When I tell your father, hell flay this Costello fella alive. Sure, Dad has to persuade piss-artists off the premises from time to time, all landlords do, but hes not the flaying-anyone-alive type. Brendan was fifteen when he was going out with Mandy Fry, and if you think they were just holding hands on the swings, they werent. Dont recall him getting the You could go to prison treatment. She spells it out like Im a moron:

Its different for boys. I do an I-do-not-believe-what-Im-hearing snort. Im telling you now, Holly, youll be seeing this ... car salesman again over my dead body. Actually, Mam, Ill bloody see who I bloody well want! New rules. Mam stubs out her fag. Im taking you to school and fetching you back in the van. You dont set foot outside unless its with me, your father, Brendan, or Ruth. If I glimpse this cradle snatcher anywhere near here, Ill be on the blower to the police to press charges yes, I will, so help me God. And Ill call his employer and let them know that hes seducing underage schoolgirls. Big fat seconds ooze by while all of this sinks in. My tear ducts start twitching but theres no way Im giving Mrs. Hitler the pleasure. This isnt Saudi Arabia! You cant lock me up! Live under our roof, you obey our rules. When I was your age Yeah yeah yeah, you had twenty brothers and thirty sisters and forty grandparents and fifty acres of spuds to dig cause that was how life was in Auld feckin Oireland but this is England, Mam, England! And its the 1980s and if life was so feckin glorious in that West Cork bog why did you feckin bother even coming to Whack! Smack over the left side of my face. We look at each other: me trembling with shock and Mam angrier than Ive ever seen

her, and I reckon knowing shes just broken something thatll never be mended. I leave the room without a word, as if Ive just won an argument. I only cry a bit, and its shocked crying, not boo-hoo crying, and when Im done I go to the mirror. My eyesre a bit puffy, but a bit of eyeliner soon sorts that out ... Dab of lippy, bit of blusher ... Sorted. The girl in the mirrors a woman, with her cropped black hair, her Quadrophenia T-shirt, her black jeans. Ive got news for you, she says. Youre moving in with Vinny today. I start listing the reasons why I cant, and stop. Yes, I agree, giddy and calm at once. Im leaving school, as well. As from now. The summer holidaysll be here before the truancy officer can fart, and Im sixteen in September, and then its stuff you, Windmill Hill Comprehensive. Do I dare? I dare. Pack, then. Pack what? Whateverll fit into my big duffel bag. Underwear, bras, T-shirts, my bomber jacket; makeup case and the Oxo tin with my bracelets and necklaces in. Toothbrush and a handful of tampons my periods a bit late so it should start, like, any hour now. Money. I count up 13.85 saved in notes and coins. Ive 80 more in my TSB bankbook. Its not like Vinnyll charge me rent, and Ill look for a job next week. Babysitting, working in the market, waitressing:

Theres loads of ways to earn a few quid. What about my LPs? I cant lug the whole collection over to Peacock Street now, and Mams quite capable of dumping them at the Oxfam shop out of spite, so I just take Fear of Music, wrapping it carefully in my bomber jacket and putting it into my bag so it wont get bent. I hide the others under the loose floorboard, just for now, but as Im putting the carpet back, I get the fright of my life: Jackos watching me from the doorway. Hes still in his Thunderbirds pajamas and slippers. I tell him, Mister, you just gave me a heart attack. Youre going. Jackos got this not-quite-here voice. Just between us, yes, I am. But not far, dont worry. Ive made you a souvenir, to remember me by. Jacko hands me a circle of cardboard a flattened Dairy Lea cheese box with a maze drawn on. Hes mad about mazes, is Jacko; its all these

Dungeons Dragonsy books him and Sharon read. The one Jackos draws actually dead simple by his standards, made of eight or nine circles inside each other. Take it, he tells me. Its diabolical. It doesnt look all that bad to me. Diabolical means satanic, sis. Whys your maze so satanic, then? The Dusk follows you as you go through it. If it touches you, you cease to exist, so one wrong turn down a dead end, thats the end of you.

Thats why you have to learn the labyrinth by heart. Christ, I dont half have a freaky little brother. Right. Well, thanks, Jacko. Look, Ive got a few things to Jacko holds my wrist. Learn this labyrinth, Holly. Indulge your freaky little brother. Please. That jolts me a bit. Mister, youre acting all weird. Promise me youll memorize the path through it, so if you ever needed to, you could navigate it in the darkness. Please. My friends little brothers are all into Scalextric or BMX or Top Trumps why do I get one who does this and says words like navigate and diabolical? Christ only knows how hell survive in Gravesend if hes gay. I muss his hair. Okay, I promise to learn your maze off by heart. Then Jacko hugs me, which is weird cause Jackos not a huggy kid. Hey, Im not going far ... Youll understand when youre older, and Youre moving in with your boyfriend. By now I shouldnt be surprised. Yeah. Take care of yourself, Holly. Vinnys nice. Once Mams got used to the idea, well see each other I mean, we still saw Brendan after he married Ruth, yeah? But Jacko just puts the cardboard lid with his maze on deep into my duffel bag, gives me one last look, and disappears. Mam appears with a basket of bar rugs on the first-floor landing, as if she wasnt lying in wait. Im

not bluffing. You're grounded. Back upstairs. You've got exams next week. Time you knuckled down and got some proper revision done. I grip the banister. Our roof, our rules, you said. Fine. I don't want your rules, or your roof, or you hitting me whenever you lose your rag. You'd not put up with that. Would you? Mams face sort of twitches, and if she says the right thing now, we'll negotiate. But no, she just takes in my duffel bag and sneers like she can't believe how stupid I am. You had a brain, once. So I carry on down the stairs to the ground floor. Above me, her voice tightens. What about school? You go, then, if schools so important! I never had the bloody chance, Holly! I've always had the pub to run, and you and Brendan and Sharon and Jacko to feed, clothe, and send to school so you won't have to spend your life mopping out toilets and emptying ashtrays and knackered your back and never having an early night. Water off a ducks back. I carry on downstairs. But go on, then. Go. Learn the hard way. I'll give you three days before Romeo turfs you out. It's not a girl's glittering personality that men're interested in, Holly. It never bloody is. I ignore her. From the hallway I see Sharon behind the bar by the fruit juice shelves. She's helping Dad do the restocking, but I can see she heard. I give her a little wave and she gives me one back, nervous. Echoing up from the cellar trapdoor is Dads voice, crooning Ferry Cross the Mersey. Better leave him out of it. In front of Mam, he'll side with her. In front of the regulars, it'll be It takes a bigger idiot than me to step between the pecking hens and they'll all nod and mumble, Right enough there, Dave. Plus I'd rather not be in the room when he finds out about Vinny. Not that I'm ashamed, I'd just rather not be there. Newkys snoozing in his basket. You're the smelliest dog in Kent, I tell him to stop myself crying, you old fleabag. I pat his neck, unbolt the side door, and step into Marlow Alley. Behind me, the door goes clunk. West Streets too bright and too dark, like a TV with the contrast on the blink, so I put on my sunglasses and they turn the world all dreamish and vivid and more real. My throat aches and I'm shaking a bit. Nobodys running after me from the pub. Good. A cement truck trundles by and its fummy gust makes the conker tree sway a bit and rustle. Breathe in warm tarmac, fried spuds, and week-old rubbish spilling out of the bin. The dustmen are on strike again. Lots of little darting birds're twirly-whirly like the tin-whistlers on strings kids get at birthdays, or used to, and a gang of boys're playing Kick the Can in the park round the church at Crooked Lane. Get him! Behind the tree! Set me free! Kids. Stella says older men make better lovers; with boys our age, she says, the ice cream melts once the cones in your hand. Only Stella knows about Vinnyshe was there that first Saturday in the Magic Bus but she can keep a secret. When she was teaching me to smoke and I kept puking, she didn't laugh or tell anyone, and she's told me everything I need to know about boys. Stella's the coolest girl in our year at school, easy. Crooked Lane veers up from the river, and from there I turn up Queen Street, where I'm nearly mown down by Julie Walcott pushing her pram. Her baby's bawling its head off and she looks knackered. She left school when she got pregnant. Me and Vinny are dead careful, and we only had sex once without a condom, our first time, and it's a scientific fact that virgins can't get pregnant. Stella told me. Revue de presse A globe-trotting, mind-bending, hair-raising triumph. (Guardian) He is funny, hip and full of life. Which other writer could match his witty elision of fiction and science, of sense and nonsense? This beautiful explosion of adventurous ideas may well take him, finally, beyond the Booker shortlist. (The Times) If only real life were as elegant and generally encouraging as a Mitchell novel! He writes with scintillating verve and abundance. (Daily Telegraph) Every page fizzles with energy and humour. Wildly imaginative and truly magical, this is a big, chunky feast of a book. (Sunday Mirror) Intellectually rigorous and stunningly imaginative . . . a rich and dense, inventive and witty thriller which, if you enjoyed Cloud Atlas and Mitchell's other works will leave you completely spellbound (Daily Express) Dazzling. (New York Times) Dazzling . . . Mitchell's heavy arsenal of talents is showcased in these pages: his symphonic imagination; his ventriloquist's ability to channel the voices of myriad characters from different time zones and cultures; his intuitive understanding of children and knack for capturing their solemnity and humor; and his ear for language - its rhythms, sounds and inflections. (Michiko Kakutani New York Times) For its experimentation, humour, hybrid energy, and sheer narrative pleasure, The Bone Clocks compels admiration. (Evening Standard) No one, clearly, has ever told Mitchell that the novel is dead. He writes with a furious intensity and slapped-awake vitality, with a delight in language and all the rabbit holes of experience (New York Times Book ) Mitchell's mesmerizing saga is evidence of the power of story to transport us, and even to stop time entirely. (Vanity Fair) [The Bone Clocks] has finally descended incarnate from the mind of this divinely inventive author . . . This new novel offers up a rich selection of domestic realism, gothic fantasy and apocalyptic speculation, stretching around the world from the Margaret Thatcher era of the 1980s to the Endarkenment of 2043 . . . Some of these narrators are moving and sympathetic; others radiate the metastasizing creepiness of a Patricia Highsmith villain. Their stories evolve in subtly distinctive tones and forms (Washington Post) Mitchell is a

consummate craftsman . . . For sci-fi fantasists, the imaginary world Mitchell creates might be a thing of wonder, a Dungeons and Dragons for literate grown-ups. For others, I suspect the flesh and blood anguish of a long life lived well against the odds will prove the greater pleasure. (Independent)With *The Bone Clocks*, Mitchell rises to meet and match the legacy of *Cloud Atlas* . . . interconnected lives stretch across time; human contact is both frightening and vital. This novel electrifyingly unites Mitchell's fictions into one universe while telling the story of Holly Sykes, an ordinary young woman whose chance encounters give her life meaning. (LA Times)One of the most entertaining and thrilling novels I've read in a long time. Much of the entertainment comes from Mitchell's mastery over what feels like the entire world and all its inhabitants. Time keeps pulsing ahead in *The Bone Clocks*, and Mitchell pushes his cast of characters into the future, ending the book in a terrifying world. But for all the dystopia, and the mysticism, and the wild and clanging noise, and the flights of invention that have taken place in this extraordinary fun house of a novel, Mitchell's novel-writing rules allow him to retain his great sensitivity toward his main character from start to finish. (NPR)Mitchell's new novel almost manages to make the rest of his work look hidebound and provincial . . . Mitchell is writing about a mortal among immortals, and he never abandons the human half of the story: the fell swoop of first love, the labyrinth of silence where unhappy couples live, the clear cut inside a parent when a child goes missing, the chasm between frontline and home front in a nation at war . . . I was undone by the ending (New York Magazine)Is *The Bone Clocks* the most ambitious novel ever written, or just the most Mitchell-esque? . . . From gritty realism to far-out fantasy, each section has its own charm and surprises. With its wayward thoughts, chance meetings, and attention to detail, Mitchell's novel is a thing of beauty. (Publishers Weekly)Another exacting, challenging and deeply rewarding novel from logophile and time-travel master Mitchell . . . If Thatcher's 1984 is bleak, then get a load of what awaits us in 2030. Speculative, lyrical and unrelentingly dark - trademark Mitchell, in other words. (Kirkus s)If David Mitchell isn't the most talented novelist of his generation, is there any doubt that he is the most multi-talented? He is, at his best, a superior writer to Jonathan Franzen, a better storyteller than Michael Chabon, more wickedly clever than Jennifer Egan, nearly as fluent as Junot Diaz in multiple dialects, and as gifted as Alice Munro . . . [The Bone Clocks] offers everything you could possibly want from a conjurer at the height of his powers - a ludicrously ambitious, unstoppably clever epic told through a chorus of diverse narrators that is both outrageous in scope and meticulous in execution . . . The Bone Clocks affords its readers the singular gift of reading - the wish to stay put and to be nowhere else but here. (The Atlantic)With 600 pages of metafictional shenanigans in relentlessly brilliant prose, *The Bone Clocks* hits lots of hot buttons, from the horrors of the Iraq war to the Eternal Battle of Good and Evil to the near-future downfall of our civilisation . . . Death is at the heart of this novel. And there lies its depth and darkness, bravely concealed with all the wit and sleight of hand and ventriloquistic verbiage and tale-telling bravura of which Mitchell is a master . . . It's a whopper of a story. (Ursula K Le Guin Guardian)I was completely blown away . . . Mitchell's first-class imagination delivers a complex and exciting premise that transcends into an incredibly explosive, surprising, intelligent, dark and magical story. (Stylist)At once a gripping thriller and a far-out fantasy, a brilliant mash-up that pulsates with energy, satire and wit. (Tatler)If I could file a review that consisted only of the word "wow" 900 times over, it still wouldn't quite capture my delirious response to David Mitchell's stunning, funny, sad, prophetic, fantastical, satirical, achingly real and gloriously fictitious new novel. (Scotsman)It's massively bold and ambitious, but also thoroughly readable, funny and moving. (Heat)Our most accomplished inventor of multitudinous worlds, which are filled with complex, vital people . . . The Bone Clocks features a gyre-works inventiveness that's well matched by (bizarrely) cerebral substance . . . his most sinewy, fine and full book to date, a Mobius strip-tripping great novel that will reward bleary-eyed rereading (Randy Boyagoda Financial Times)The overwhelming impression is of an author at the height of his powers precisely because of a deep and intuitive understanding and curiosity of what it is about to live a life as a human being. (Oxford Student)Something truly fantastical: an epic in many voices featuring supernatural beings, rips in reality and a global battle between good and evil. Yet Mitchell's superlative prose makes this much more than a tall tale: the novel also takes in family love and loss, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and a horribly plausible near-future in which the end of oil is catapulting the world towards barbarism . . . It's a globe-trotting, mind-bending, hair-raising triumph, already sitting pretty on the Booker longlist. (Guardian)As his oeuvre develops, he seems to be getting cleverer, braver and delightfully madder . . . In the wrong hands, magical storytelling like this would make you cringe. But in Mitchell's it thrills. He is funny, hip and full of life. Which other writer could match his witty elision of fiction and science, of sense and nonsense? This beautiful explosion of adventurous ideas may well take him, finally, beyond the Booker shortlist. (The

Times)If only real life were as elegant and generally encouraging as a Mitchell novel! He writes with scintillating verve and abundance. The joyful, consoling world of Mitchell is the world of childhood, where the parameters between reality and fantasy are fluid; the overall effect is like literary regression therapy for adults who have been whipped and abused by real life. (Daily Telegraph)Mitchell has a vigorous, shape-shifting imagination, and his pen tracks his thoughts with extraordinary agility. Moving from place to place, time to time, he can summon up a setting in a line . . . for its experimentation, humour, hybrid energy, and sheer narrative pleasure, *The Bone Clocks* compels admiration. (Evening Standard)When a writer creates a world in which centuries-dead reincarnated souls are at war - and makes it entirely believable - you know you're in the hands of a master . . . Every page fizzles with energy and humour. Wildly imaginative and truly magical, this is a big, chunky feast of a book (Sunday Mirror)Mitchell's mesmerizing saga is evidence of the power of story to transport us, and even to stop time entirely. (Vanity Fair)No one, clearly, has ever told Mitchell that the novel is dead. He writes with a furious intensity and slapped-awake vitality, with a delight in language and all the rabbit holes of experience . . . Very few [writers] excite the reader about both the visceral world and the visionary one as Mitchell does (New York Times Book )