

The Stars' Tennis Balls



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著者:Stephen Fry

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"We are merely the stars' tennis balls, struck and --bandied/Which way please them."
----The Duchess of Malfi --by John Webster

Everything about Stephen Fry's new novel, including the title, will be a surprise, perhaps even a shock. The only thing that can be guaranteed is that it will be his next earth-movingly funny bestseller. And we are still pretty confidently saying it will not be about earthworm migration patterns in East Devon.

This is the story of Ned Maddenstone, a nice young man who is about to find out just what hell it is to be one of the stars' tennis balls. For Ned, 1978 seems a blissful year: handsome, popular, responsible and a fine cricketer, life is progressing smoothly for him, if not effortlessly. When he meets Portia Fendeman his personal jigsaw appears complete. What if her left-wing parents despise his Tory MP father? Doesn't that just make them star-crossed lovers? And surely, in the end, won't the Fendemans be won over by their happiness? But, of course, one person's happiness is another's jealous spite. And spite is about to change Ned's life forever. A promise made to a dying teacher and a vile trick played by fellow pupils rocket Ned from cricket captain to solitary confinement, from head boy to political prisoner. Twenty years later, Ned

returns to London a very different man from the boy seized outside a Knightsbridge language college. A man implacably focused on revenge. Revenge is a dish he plans to savour and serve to those who conspired against him, and to those who forgot him.

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