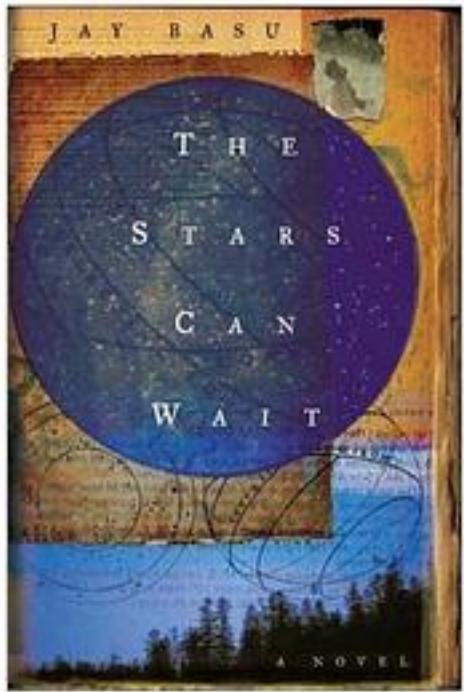


The Stars Can Wait: A Novel



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著者:Jay Basu

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From Publishers Weekly

A young Polish boy with a passion for stargazing and astronomy tries to cope with the ramifications of his older brother's erratic behavior in Basu's poignant debut novel, which takes place during WWII in a small village in historically riven Silesia, at the beginning of the Nazi occupation of Poland. Gracian Sfka is the 15-year-old protagonist, a dreamer who manages to endure his days laboring in a coal mine by wandering out into the woods at night to watch the stars, despite the constant presence of Nazi guards who could kill him. His older brother, Pawel, finds more direct

ways to deal with the enemy, starting with his stint in the Polish army, during which he loses a couple of fingers fighting against the Germans. Pawel is equally belligerent with his own family, beating up his brother-in-law after eluding a prison sentence for smuggling. The turning point in the relationship between the brothers comes when Pawel gives Gracian a telescope to pursue his hobby. The boy also uses the instrument to spy on Pawel's courtship with the most beautiful girl in the village as well as his brother's maneuverings with the local underground. Basu is a lyrical writer, painting an eloquent picture of two brothers who are polar opposites as he traces Pawel's inevitable descent against the inexorable rise of the Nazis. There are many familiar elements to this WWII parable, but what is relatively rare is the power and craft of Basu's portrayal as he examines the impact of war on a family as seen through the eyes of a sensitive and precocious adolescent. Author tour.

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Book Description

In this powerful debut set in 1940s German-occupied Poland, a young Catholic boy unearths the secrets of his brother's mysterious life.

Fifteen-year-old Gracian Sofka is a stargazer. Every night for the past year he has broken curfew to view the constellations from a clearing in the forest—that is, until his older brother, Pawel, discovers his secret pastime. And now that the German troops have stepped up patrols of the area, the gruff, mysterious Pawel forbids his brother to continue his risky activity.

Life in the previously quiet village of Malenkowice grows increasingly precarious. Men are accosted on the street by German soldiers, Gracian's widowed mother risks imprisonment to smuggle food, and Gracian's co-workers at the coal mines grow restless. As tension builds in the town, it also grows within Gracian's own household. After a run-in with his sister's husband, Pawel is forced to leave the house, becoming even more distant and elusive in Gracian's eyes.

Then one day Pawel presents Gracian with a telescope, allowing the boy to slowly discover the truth about his brother's shadowy past. But while he succeeds in unlocking Pawel's secrets, Gracian is blind to the inevitable tragedy hurtling toward them all—and to his unwitting role as its catalyst.

Haunting and lyrical, *The Stars Can Wait* possesses the intense, concentrated power of a fable and introduces a stunning new voice to American readers.

作者介绍:

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