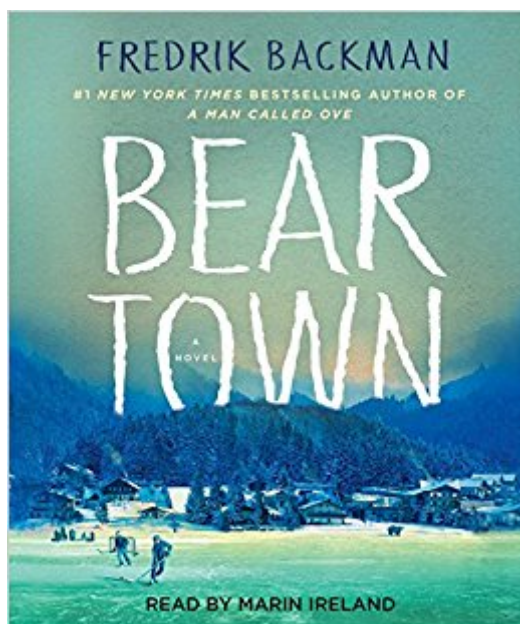


The book was found

Beartown



Synopsis

The #1 New York Times bestselling author of *A Man Called Ove* returns with a dazzling, profound novel about a small town with a big dream—and the price required to make it come true. People say Beartown is finished. A tiny community nestled deep in the forest, it is slowly losing ground to the ever encroaching trees. But down by the lake stands an old ice rink, built generations ago by the working men who founded this town. And in that ice rink is the reason people in Beartown believe tomorrow will be better than today. Their junior ice hockey team is about to compete in the national semi-finals, and they actually have a shot at winning. All the hopes and dreams of this place now rest on the shoulders of a handful of teenage boys. Being responsible for the hopes of an entire town is a heavy burden, and the semi-final match is the catalyst for a violent act that will leave a young girl traumatized and a town in turmoil. Accusations are made and, like ripples on a pond, they travel through all of Beartown, leaving no resident unaffected. *Beartown* explores the hopes that bring a small community together, the secrets that tear it apart, and the courage it takes for an individual to go against the grain. In this story of a small forest town, Fredrik Backman has found the entire world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An Best Book of April 2017: How do I love Beartown? Let me count the ways. It's a domestic drama in which a family is pulled apart by an act of violence. It's a coming-of-age story for a young woman who must choose to speak out or keep silent. (And a young man, too, actually.) It's a slow-build thriller, opening the story with the statement that one teenager is going to put a

shotgun to the head of another and pull the trigger. It's a cautionary tale of small-town thinking yet at the same time celebrates how a handful of people can change a tight-knit community. Beartown has so much going on within its enjoyably readable pages that putting it in a literary box is all but impossible—and indeed that is one of the many reasons readers will pass this book amongst one another with a confident “I think you’ll like this.”

• As the town's finances decline, small, scrappy Beartown hunkers deeper into itself, proud only of its white-hot junior hockey team led by a coach whose hard-driving mantra is, simply, “Win.” Seizing the upcoming hockey championship could lure a new hockey academy their way and jumpstart the local economy. But the exposure of a hidden crime sweeps the hockey club into its vortex and fractures the town and longtime friendships, even as it welds together new, unlikely alliances. Once the crime is revealed, Beartown could have strolled down an easy trail, but Backman refuses to tread it, sidestepping the predictable as he forges a new path of soul-searching and truth-telling. There are hard moments here, and readers might find difficult discoveries in their own hearts as the people of Beartown struggle with what they hope is real but fear is not. Masterful in its storytelling and honesty, this is another winner for Backman, surpassing even his much-lauded *A Man Called Ove*.

—Adrian Liang, *The Book Review* --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

PRAISE FOR BEARTOWN —Backman is a masterful writer, his characters familiar yet distinct, flawed yet heroic. . . There are scenes that bring tears, scenes of gut-wrenching despair, and moments of sly humor. . . Like *Friday Night Lights*, this is about more than youth sports; it's part coming-of-age novel, part study of moral failure, and finally a chronicle of groupthink in which an unlikely hero steps forward to save more than one person from self-destruction. A thoroughly empathetic examination of the fragile human spirit, Backman's latest will resonate a long time.

• (Kirkus Reviews) —Lest readers think hockey is the star here, it's Backman's rich characters that steal the show, and his deft handling of tragedy and its effects on an insular town. —While the story is dark at times, love, sacrifice, and the bonds of friendship and family shine through ultimately offering hope and even redemption.

• (Publishers Weekly) —The sentimentally savvy Backman...takes a sobering and solemn look at the ways alienation and acceptance, ethics and emotions nearly destroy a small town and young people.

• (Booklist) --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Fredrik Backman is turning 36 a few days from now. It is amazing to me how a man so young can understand and write about people so well. Old people, kids, girls, men, women---it doesn't matter.

He seems to know and understand their thoughts and hearts. He is a master of relationships and how people get along and don't get along--what a good marriage looks like and what a real friend is. Astounding talent. I rolled my eyes at the hockey town theme for about 50 pages and then got lost in Beartown. This book is not really about hockey, but about a crumbling town far from anywhere that has nothing but hockey and the people who are in it. The residents of Beartown have known each other forever. The happenings and how the personalities bounce off each other in such human ways (hatefully and lovingly) makes this a fascinating and unforgettable book. This book is not at all like the Ove book except that it is written by a genius of human understanding.

It begins with a cliffhanger: "Late one evening...a teenager picked up a shotgun, walked into the forest, put the gun to someone else's forehead and pulled the trigger. This is the story of how we got there." I read it in one sitting, for it reads like a thriller, even though it's all flashback. Backman's previous books have been wise and funny and a little tragic, but this is a masterpiece. It centers on a small town seeking glory from its hockey club. I know these kids and these families and so will you. You'll recognize "how we got here", too. Backman brings to life their hopes and dreams, frustrations and difficulties--adults and teens alike. "Beartown" should be read and discussed in every high school; it's topical and yet these events have happened for centuries. It takes place in Sweden, but could be any small town in America, too. In sports and life what we hope our children learn is to make good choices in a very un-ideal world. Fiction is a way to enter into an age-old discussion framed so beautifully by one of the characters: "This town doesn't always know the difference between right and wrong...but we know the difference between good and evil." What is the right thing to do when things go very wrong? You'll be compelled to find your answer. Backman is the Dickens of our age, and though you'll cry, your heart is safe in his hands.

I thought the novel was good, a little "slow" at the start, with a "crescendo" of developments, feelings and tragedies at the end. The character development and the setting of "Beartown" next to a more prosperous town, "Ned", was excellent. Human nature plays a prime role in a story that revolves around a dying town in the middle of nowhere with its quest for fame and recognition. The author mates his characters artfully so that the "twists and turns" in their lives are, in the end, not so surprising given their dispositions and travails.

I have loved all of his books. This was a deviation in some ways from what I had been expecting, but another book that brings his characters to life. The essence of "team", especially in hockey, is his

subject, but also the way we glorify athletic prowess and forgive the athlete. His characters are always relatable as well as unique. And every book leaves me wanting the next.

Stayed up 'til 1AM to finish this book that breaks your heart and then puts it back together again. Slow to start but can't put down finish. If you know anyone who has been affected by rape, read this book. If you care about young women claiming their power when our culture supports young men robbing them of it, read this book. If you want to see how the outsiders in a community can be its saviors, read this book. Another Fredrik Backman masterpiece. Read it!

Bear Town is the latest book from one of my favorite authors. This story is quite different than his other books. The author has an amazing insight into people, places, and personalities. He captures it all beautifully. The author writes so well. It is a joy to read.

Have loved all of Fredrik Backman's books. He has become my favorite author! I was going to say A Man Called Ove was my favorite but Britt Marie Was Here and My Grandmother asked me...were just as beautifully written. Can't wait till he writes another novel!

I was mad at the author for the first part of the book. There was a lot of set up that had to be done but he added just a little too much foreshadowing for my taste. Once the I got to the 'guts' of the story I enjoyed the rest of the book.

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Beartown

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