

TO READ OR NOT TO READ, THAT IS MY QUESTION

不愛讀書不是你的錯

- * 2019 Golden Tripod Award
- * 2019 Taipei Book Fair Award
- * 2019 Eslite Bookseller Award Author of the Year
- * 2018 Taipei Public Library Pick

"It's not your fault if you don't like to read!" Children's book star Jimmy Liao transforms a collection of famous quotes about books, bookstores, and reading into a story full of both inspiration and sharp, witty criticism.

When a local bookstore faces bankruptcy, the saddened owner asks his son to bring around all his friends who used to hang out there so he can ask why no one buys books anymore. The owner collects dozens of famous quotes about books and reading to remind the children why books are so important, but the children's responses are much more realistic and less predictable than he expected.

Jimmy Liao's latest work is "color commentary" in the literal sense; every famous quote from Kafka, Borges, Woody Allen, and others is accompanied by a brilliant full-page illustration and met with snarky but accurate criticism from the mouths of children. It's a work of tough love for books and bookstores, offered by a devotee of reading; it's also a celebration of the role books can play in our life.

Jimmy Liao 幾米

Jimmy Liao (1958) is an illustrator and picture book writer. After graduating in art from Taiwan's Chinese Culture University, he worked in an advertising company for twelve years, until a battle with leukemia inspired him to start a career as an illustrator. He published work with various newspapers and magazines before producing his first picture books, *Secrets in the Forest* and *A Fish that Smiled at Me*, in 1998. He



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Age: 8+

Rights sold: Italian (Abele Onlu), Thai (a book), Spanish (Barbara Fiore), Simplified Chinese (Tianjin Huawen Tianxia)

went on to achieve fame throughout the Chinese-speaking world, with films, television adaptations, and merchandise. He has won numerous influential awards and has been published in several languages, including a series of collaborations with English-speaking writers, including Amazon Best Book of the Year for Kids winner, *The Champion of Staying Awake* with Sean Taylor. Bold colors and child narrators are signature characteristics of his work, which often hints at a world sometimes sinister, sometimes lonely, but always filled with the deepest of emotions.

Dear classmates, because fewer and fewer people are buying books, our family bookshop may have to close.

In fact, I'm happy that I won't have to move books and help in the shop in the holidays. But my father's upset, he frowns all day, he's not ready to give it up.

He misses everyone, and often asks me:

"How's so-and-so, he hasn't been for ages."

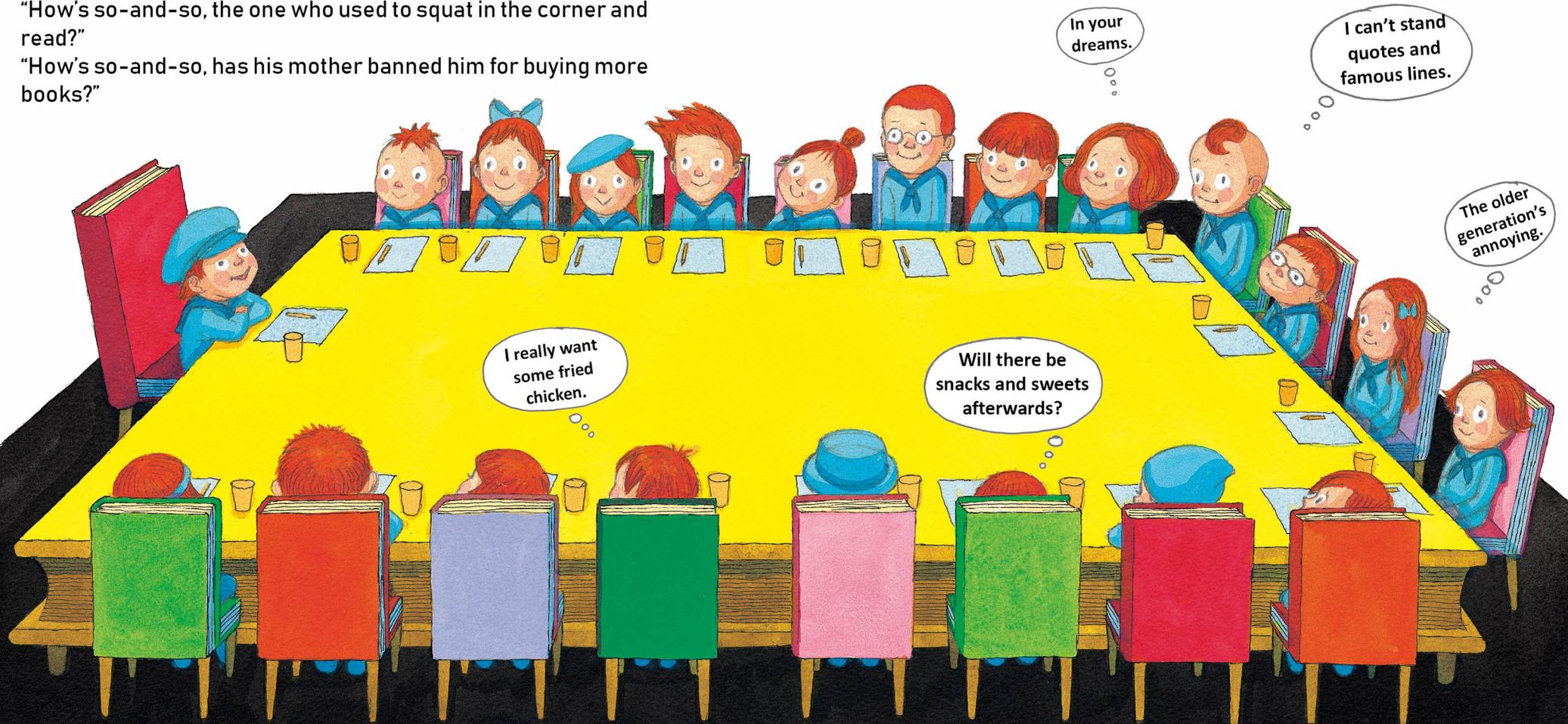
"How's so-and-so, the one who used to squat in the corner and read?"

"How's so-and-so, has his mother banned him for buying more books?"

I say: "How should I know!"

So he asked me to come and ask you all, if you still like going to bookshops to browse and buy books?

You all know my father's mad about books, obsessed with quotes. He reads for the quotes and loves nothing better than to share them with you.



**I don't believe in the magic in my books,
but I believe that when you read a truly
good book, something magical happen.**

– J. K. Rowling

J.K. Rowling (1965-)

Joanne Rowling, pen-names J.K. Rowling and Robert Galbraith, British novel writer, scriptwriter, and film producer. Known for the Harry Potter series. One of the bestselling authors in history; the movie adaptations are also among the highest earning in history!



Most of what makes a book "good" is that we're reading it at the right time for us.

– Alain de Botton

Alain de Botton (1969-)

British author and philosopher. Publishers across the world fight to publish his work. His essays are intelligent and interesting. His unknown works include *Essays in Love*, *How Proust Can Change Your Life: Not a Novel*, and *The Consolations of Philosophy*.

When do you think is
the best time to read?

Hah Hah,
I'm embarrassed to say.

Sh... sniff, sniff.



I read for pleasure and that is the moment I learn the most.

– Margaret Attwood

Margaret Attwood (1939-)

Canadian novelist and poet. She also writes criticism, plays and children's literature. She has published over 40 works, including *The Blind Assassin* which won the 2000 Man Books Prize for Fiction.

Mum and Dad told me not to read books that aren't for my exams.

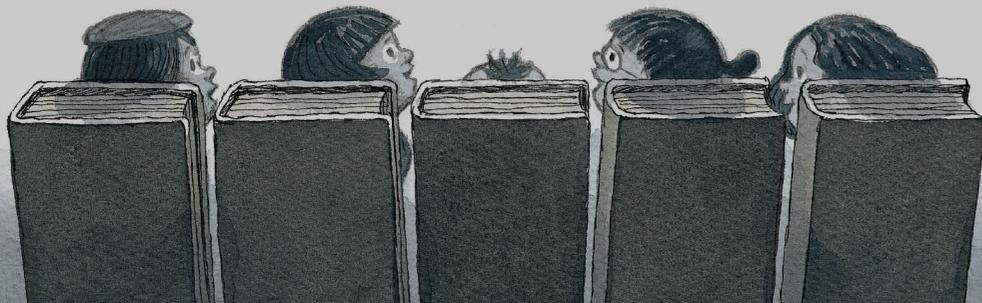
That's all we read for

Exams!

Exams!

Exams!

That's when I learn the least.



A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say.

– Italo Calvino

Italo Calvino (1923-1985)

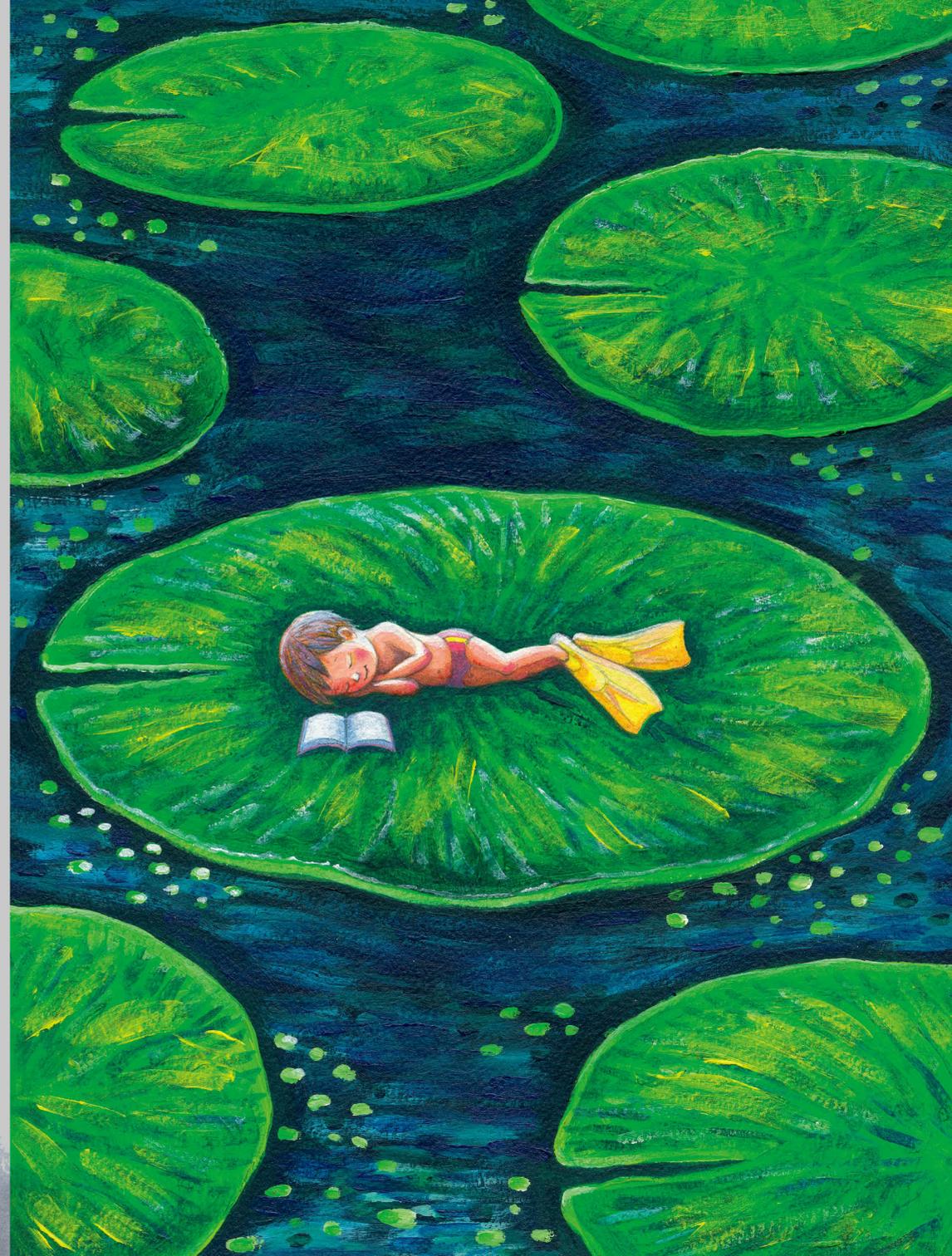
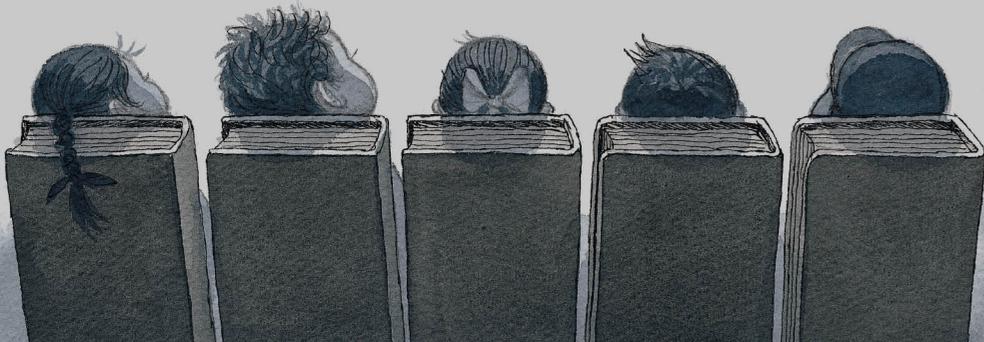
Italian writer. His unique fables packed with imagination make him one of the most important novelists of the 20th century. Famous works include: *The Argentine Ant*, *Invisible Cities*, and *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*.

Classics are books we have heard of but haven't read.

Then we all nodded off.

That have never finished what they have to say...

Just like my mum then.



“What does an editor do?”

“An editor helps an author bring out a book.”

“You mean, like the gynaecologist?
He helps bring out lots of babies,
But none of them are his.”

“But if there was ever a problem
Then people would blame him.”

