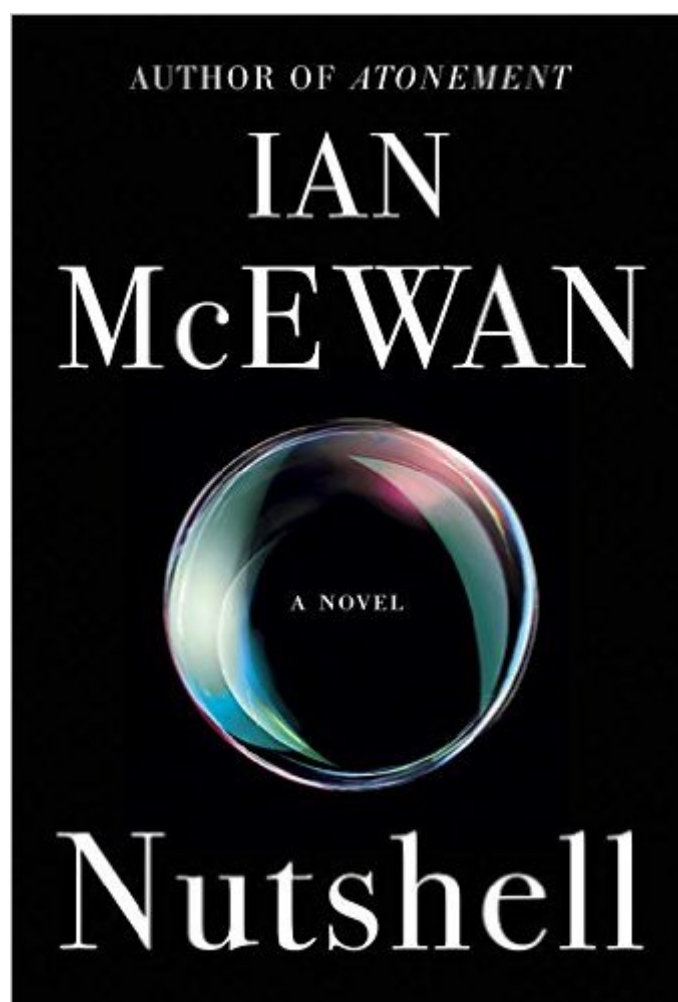


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Nutshell: A Novel



Synopsis

New from the bestselling author of *Atonement* and *The Children Act* Trudy has betrayed her husband, John. She's still in the marital home—a dilapidated, priceless London townhouse—but John's not there. Instead, she's with his brother, the profoundly banal Claude, and the two of them have a plan. But there is a witness to their plot: the inquisitive, nine-month-old resident of Trudy's womb. Told from a perspective unlike any other, *Nutshell* is a classic tale of murder and deceit from one of the world's master storytellers.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (4 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The narrator in Ian McEwan's "Nutshell" is a fetus in his mother, Trudy's, womb. Twenty-eight year old Trudy is nine months pregnant with her husband, John's, child. She has betrayed John by taking his brother, Claude, into her bed. Readers will be startled by the off-beat premise of a brilliant fetus who emotes like a college professor. Having listened to podcasts, radio shows, and other forms of entertainment during his sojourn in Trudy's uterus, he is probably more prepared for college than most high school students. He waxes philosophical about the state of the world, the perils of climate change, and his mother's volatile emotions. Most heartbreaking of all, he worries about his own fate, since Trudy seems to care nothing about his welfare. She and Claude behave like lovesick teenagers and imbibe large quantities of alcohol. Matters deteriorate when the fetus overhears Claude and Trudy plotting to commit an unspeakable crime. Although he is powerless to do anything but kick, the fetus hopes that the pair will quickly come to their senses. This is an original and darkly humorous novel by a wordsmith whose generally well-crafted but occasionally

pretentious writing effectively portrays moods, attitudes, and settings. McEwan enables us, along with the growing fetus, to visualize what is happening. He toys with us, keeping us in suspense, along with the poor baby-to-be, wondering how this daft soap opera will play out. There is a Shakespearean flavor to this melodrama; the Bard would relate to the characters' hubris, pettiness, and impulsiveness. McEwan implies that our collective foibles have led to the global catastrophe that is now unfolding. We have, it seems, learned nothing from having weathered conflict after bloody conflict.

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