



Bed: A Novel

David Whitehouse

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Reminiscent of such novels as *A Confederacy of Dunces* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Bed* is a darkly funny and surprisingly tender debut novel about two brothers, one of whom refuses to leave his bed on his twenty-fifth birthday.

Mal Ede, a child of untamed manners and unbounded curiosity, is the eccentric eldest son of an otherwise typical middle-class family. But as the wonders of childhood fade into the responsibilities of adulthood, Mal's spirits fade too. On his twenty-fifth birthday, disillusioned, Mal goes to bed—back to his childhood bed—and never emerges again.

Narrated by Mal's shy, diligent younger brother, *Bed* details Mal's subsequent extreme and increasingly grotesque transformation: immobility and a gargantuan appetite combine, over the course of two decades, to make him the fattest man in the world. Despite his seclusion and his refusal to explain his motivations, Mal's condition earns him worldwide notoriety and a cult of followers convinced he is making an important statement about modern life. But Mal's actions will also change the lives of his haunted parents, his brother and the woman they both love, Lou.

In *Bed*, David Whitehouse has put a magnifying glass on contemporary society. Hailed as a “momentous” (The Bookseller) debut in the UK, *Bed* is a mordantly funny and ultimately redemptive parable about mortality, obesity, celebrity, depression and the broken promises of adulthood. It is one of the most audacious debut novels in years.

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