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Galley Talk

Ellen Richmond, owner, Children's Book Cellar, Waterville, Maine

by Staff -- Publishers Weekly, 10/1/2007

Well received in the U.K., *The Black Book of Secrets* by F.E. Higgins [Feiwel & Friends, Oct.] will find an equally receptive audience here, I'm sure. Fun for everyone, it will especially appeal to the guys and will be a good choice to hook reluctant readers in upper elementary/middle school. Ludlow Fitch is an assistant to the mysterious Joe Zabbidou, a secret pawnbroker, who, in exchange for generous payment, collects his customers' guiltiest secrets and records their confessions in a big black book. Most of the secrets involve Jeremiah Ratchet, the richest man in town, whose cruelty and greed have caused most of the misery in the village. *The Black Book of Secrets* has it all: danger, adventure, theft, murder, body snatching, poisonings, a touch of humor and enough mystery to keep you guessing until the very end. Twist and turns through the book will keep readers on the edges of their seats. Seemingly unrelated threads within the story intersect nicely to create a satisfying climax. An enjoyable story that begs for a sequel.

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