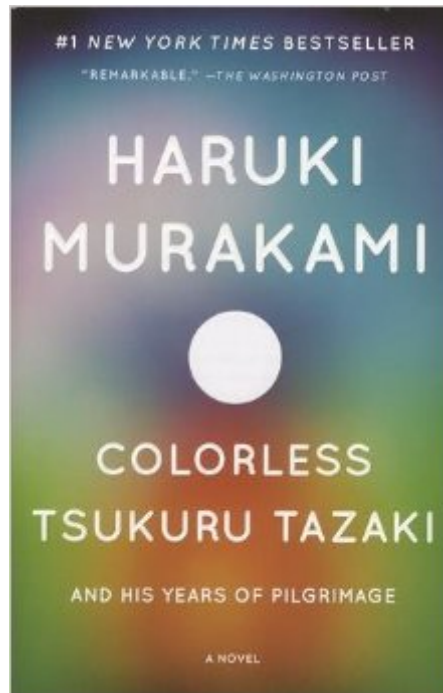


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Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki And His Years Of Pilgrimage



Synopsis

A New York Times and Washington Post notable book, and one of the *Financial Times*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Slate*, *Mother Jones*, *The Daily Beast*, and *BookPage*'s best books of the year An instant #1 New York Times Bestseller, *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage* is the remarkable story of a young man haunted by a great loss; of dreams and nightmares that have unintended consequences for the world around us; and of a journey into the past that is necessary to mend the present. Here Haruki Murakami "one of the most revered voices in literature today" gives us a story of love, friendship, and heartbreak for the ages.

Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Vintage Books (May 5, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0804170126

ISBN-13: 978-0804170123

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (955 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #13,893 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #59 in [Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Magical Realism](#) #359 in [Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Coming of Age](#) #486 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Coming of Age](#)

Customer Reviews

As a longtime Murakami reader, I fell in love with his novels and short stories from the '80s and '90s, but became increasingly disillusioned as Murakami began experimenting with his style in *Kafka on the Shore* (which I still found mostly enjoyable), then on to *After Dark* (which I found completely underwhelming), and *1Q84* (which I honestly struggled to finish). To me, in these newer works, Murakami seemed tentative, off key, and honestly a bit "lost" ... failing to capture the intangible *mojo* that makes an outstanding Murakami novel better than the sum of its parts. As a result, I approached *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage* with a bit of trepidation ... and honestly a bit of resignation--I was willing to give Murakami another shot, but if this book fell short, that might've been the last Murakami book I was willing to read. *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki* has a compelling mix of the "old" and the "new" Murakami. For the first time since Murakami started to alter his style, the story is told entirely from the perspective of the familiar "Boku" character ...

mid-30s, lonely, detached, insecure (in this case, about whether he is "colorless"--this will make sense when you read the book), on an unusual quest to reconcile a past trauma and lost relationships. The book is strikingly free of the "magical realism" present in some of his iconic works such as *Wind-Up Bird* and *Hard-Boiled Wonderland*, and tells a much more "realistic" tale more similar in concept to *Norwegian Wood*, *South of the Border*, or even his debut novel, *Hear the Wind Sing* ... but with considerably more maturity and psychological depth, I'd argue. Unlike the "old" Murakami protagonist, however, Tsukuru is not passive ... cool, but not dispassionate.

Sara's ultimatum sets Tsukuru on his pilgrimage. The plot is a quest, that time-honoured structure familiar from Homer's *Odyssey*. He must travel far and wide and overcome many obstacles in his search for the truth. It's a form that Murakami used masterfully in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* in which the protagonist's emotional trajectory "from sweetly inadequate to semi-mythic" resembles Frodo's transformation in Tolkien's epic *Lord of The Rings*. Tsukuru visits each of his former friends and talks to them face-to-face. He finds the boys still in Nagoya, and goes as far as Finland for one of the girls. When he finally learns the truth, it is disturbing. The fate of one of the five is as eerie, violent and sad as anything Murakami has ever written, although at a remove. We hear about it rather than witness it, a technique that keeps the attention squarely on Tsukuru. *Colorless* continues the author's fascination with the permeable barrier between reality and imagination, in which temporality and states of consciousness merge and overlap. Tsukuru has erotic dreams involving Shiro (white) and Kuro (black): we wonder if they are unbidden aspects of his unconscious or whether they have more sinister portent. Murakami is extraordinarily attentive to the feelings of love and hate, injustice, jealousy and guilt that engulf Tsukuru. When a new friend, the handsome boy Haida (the name means "oegrey field") appears in one of these sex dreams we know we are in a different reality. Haida's story-within-a-story further confuses Tsukuru. Haida's father is offered a "death token" that, among other things, heightens the ability to see colours. Is the story about Haida or his father? Is Haida even real? Murakami often pushes the outer limits of language, using music where words fail.

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