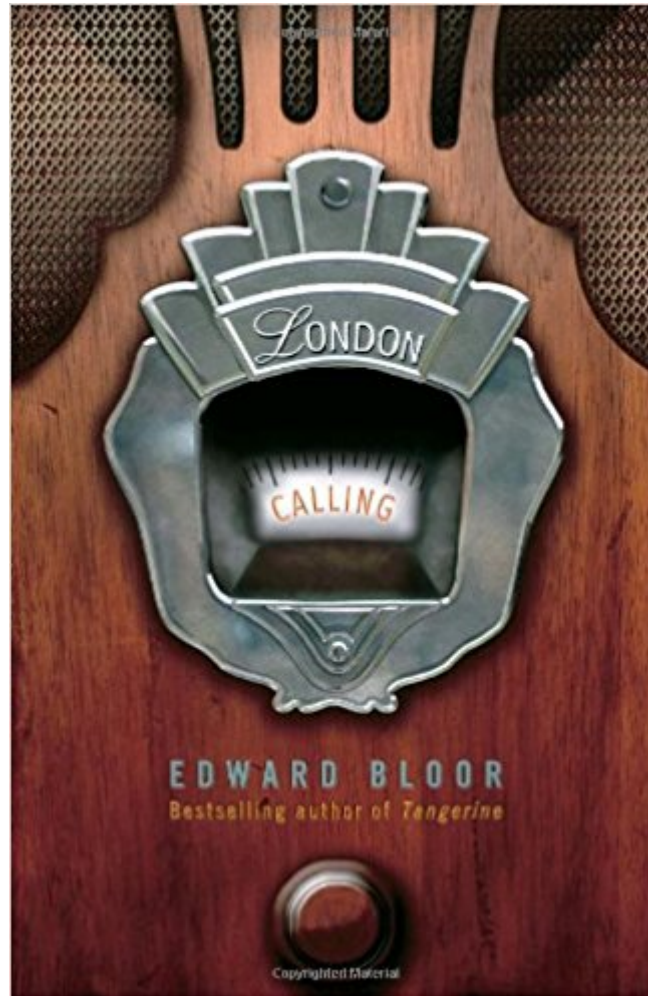




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London Calling



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Synopsis

Martin Conway comes from a family filled with heroes and disgraces. His grandfather was a statesman who worked at the US Embassy in London during WWII. His father is an alcoholic who left his family. His sister is an overachieving Ivy League graduate. And Martin? Martin is stuck in between--floundering. But during the summer after 7th grade, Martin meets a boy who will change his life forever. Jimmy Harker appears one night with a deceptively simple question: Will you help? Where did this boy come from, with his strange accent and urgent request? Is he a dream? It's the most vivid dream Martin's ever had. And he meets Jimmy again and again--but how can his dreams be set in London during the Blitz? How can he see his own grandfather, standing outside the Embassy? How can he wake up with a head full of people and facts and events that he certainly didn't know when he went to sleep--but which turn out to be verifiably real? The people and the scenes Martin witnesses have a profound effect on him. They become almost more real to him than his waking companions. And he begins to believe that maybe he can help Jimmy. Or maybe that he must help Jimmy, precisely because all logic and reason argue against it. This is a truly remarkable and deeply affecting novel about fathers and sons, heroes and scapegoats. About finding a way to live with faith and honor and integrity. And about having an answer to the question: What did you do to help? From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 6-9—Using the literary technique of magical realism, Bloor brings readers a serious tale of justice and redemption, of fathers and sons, of the privileged and the common. John Martin Conway feels out of place at his exclusive prep school, where he is constantly reminded that he is a scholarship kid. After a confrontation with Hank Lowery, the great-grandson of the school's founder, he requests to work at home on an independent study project. The World War II-era radio that his grandmother left him brings him into contact with Jimmy, a boy who lived during the war and who needs his help. He takes Martin back to the time of the London Blitz. In his own time, he focuses his research on the things Jimmy shows him and the people he encounters. Along the way he uncovers some new information about his grandfathers and General Hank Lowery's dealings during the war and discovers how he can help put Jimmy's soul to rest. He also comes to terms with his alcoholic father and with his own depression. Readers will identify with the modern elements of the story and be drawn into the tension of the historical events. Evocative descriptions and elegant phrasings make the writing most enjoyable, and because the author uses a first-person voice, the story seems very personal, and readers will feel Martin's turmoil and angst. Bloor's fans and those who like a little light fantasy with their history will find something intriguing here.—Cheri Dobbs, Detroit Country Day Middle School, Beverly Hills, MI Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 6-9. When an old radio transports Martin back in time to London during the Blitz, the seventh-grader makes startling discoveries that fuel twin quests: one to expose the unflattering truth behind two World War II heroes casting long shadows in his life, and the other to answer a young Londoner's eerie pleas for help. Every bit as provocative and open-ended as Bloor's *Crusader* (1999), this genre-defying novel incorporates mysticism steeped in Martin's Catholic faith and a present-day trip to London that connects two troubled father-son relationships across the decades. Bloor demands much of his readers, especially concerning the diplomatic issues leading to U.S. involvement in World War II, and many will have questions about where the facts end and invention begins. Ambitious yet unwieldy, this may work best as a fictional supplement in history classrooms, where it will open discussions of both the slippery qualities of historical truth ("Who decides what the real history of a time is?") and the nature of genuine heroism. Jennifer Mattson Copyright ©

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Our grandson loved this book and it made a long driving tripl much more pleasant.

Wonderful story!! I was really entertained and couldn't be torn away from it for several days! I really like the Christian element to it, and would recommend it to anyone.

Such a great book. The ending made me cry. This was a book for my language arts teachers book club.

It has an interest level of 6-8graders and the grade equivalent of 8.2 This book is a sensational page-turner. I an eighth grader would recommend this book.

My son likes this.

Good book for teenagers

London Calling is part historical fiction and part realistic fiction. I think it would have been a much stronger book if Edward Bloor had focused more on the historical fiction story. Martin is a sullen, withdrawn young teen trying to survive being bullied at his elite prep school and recover from the loss of his much loved grandmother. When Martin starts listening to the 1930's radio left to him by his grandmother, he travels back to WWII Blitzkrieg era London. Every time he travels back in time, a young boy named Jimmy appears and pleads with Martin to help save his Dad. Way too many pages are wasted with Martin saying "What do you want me to do?" and Jimmy saying, "I don't know." When not in London, Martin is dealing with being kicked out of school, trying to convince his family he is not depressed, and being embarrassed by his alcoholic father. The WWII story is much more interesting than the family drama.

This is fabulous historical fiction, a little fantasy, and coming of age story all in one. My son wanted me to read it after he did and I loved it!

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