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Donoghue, Emma. Room

Jack is five years old. He?s spent his entire life living in Room, an 11?x11? space he shares with his mother, Ma. Jack is happy with his life. Ma teaches him reading and tells him stories and lets him watch just a little bit of TV and breastfeeds him when he wants it and at night, he sleeps in Wardrobe just in case Old Nick comes in the night. Old Nick is the keeper of Room, and he brings their food and occasional treats, and at night he sometimes visits Ma and makes the bed squeak. Though Jack doesn?t know it, the whole world he sees on TV is actually real and his Ma came from there originally. Old Nick took her seven years ago and put her into Room and now, with Jack getting so big and old, Ma knows they can?t live in such a small space together much longer. Ma tells Jack the truth and Jack doesn?t want to believe it at first. But then, he has to be very brave and help save his Ma from Old Nick. The outside world is very scary and other people are very strange, but Jack is smart and strong and he thinks he can handle it. But can Ma, after seven years locked away from her own Ma and father and brother?

Donoghue?s latest novel is intense, frightening, and, at times, surprisingly funny. Told entirely from the perspective of Jack, whose voice is simultaneously naïve and amazingly mature, the reader is distanced slightly from the misery of his mother. In some ways, this makes the story easier to bear. And in others, it is far more creepy. Jack?s complete acceptance of his strange world is at times chilling. An important book in many ways.

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