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Utz



Par Bruce Chatwin
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Description : Description du produit Bruce Chatwin's bestselling novel traces the fortunes of Kaspar Utz, an enigmatic collector of Meissen porcelain living in Cold War Czechoslovakia. Although Utz is allowed to leave the country each year, and considers defecting each time, he always returns to his Czech home, a prisoner of the Communist state and of his precious collection. "A triumph." --The Washington Post "Exquisite. . . One thinks of a Vermeer painting, a luminous miniature disclosing worlds within worlds." --Newsday

Prsentation de l'diteur Bruce Chatwin's bestselling novel traces the fortunes of the enigmatic and unconventional hero, Kaspar Utz. Despite the restrictions of Cold War Czechoslovakia, Utz asserts his individuality through his devotion to his precious collection of Meissen porcelain. Although Utz is permitted

to leave the country each year, and considers defecting each time, he is not allowed to take his porcelain with him and so he always returns to his Czech home, a prisoner both of the Communist state and of his collection. From Publishers Weekly Chatwin is a protean writer (*On the Black Hill* , *The Songlines*) always capable of surprising and entertaining his readers. In this slim volume, he draws a satirical portrait of life in a Socialist state and concludes that human nature is the same no matter what political winds are blowing. The last descendent of an old Czech family, the eponymous art dealer Kaspar Utz lives in Prague, where the Russian occupiers allow him to keep his priceless Meissen porcelain collection on condition that he bequeath it to the national museum. To the narrator, Utz represents the quintessential adapter, able to tolerate a repressive government as long as his private life is undisturbed. Obsessed with a passion to preserve these remnants of the bygone days of imperial glory, Utz implies that the figurines are more real, enduring and invulnerable than the gray world of Eastern Europe existing behind the Iron Curtain. But on his death a droll mystery is revealed; the fate of the collection is as much a result of the belated awakening of Utz's romantic nature as it is a joke against the political regime he despised. Befitting his narrative, Chatwin's spare, precise prose takes on a surrealist quality appropriate to the theater of the absurd. 40,000 first printing; \$35,000 ad/promo; Literary Guild alternate. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Kaspar Utz has two passions in life: fine porcelain and sopranos. Between them he manages to keep the world at bay no mean feat for a resident of Prague living first under Nazi, then Soviet domination. Utz is not your conventional hero, and his heroism if it can be called that lies in his determination to maintain and expand his collection of antique porcelain figurines no matter what. It is his way of asserting his individuality, of thumbing his nose at the state. For Utz the figurines are almost living creatures, much like Rabbi Loew's legendary Golem. But as Utz himself points out, golems can be dangerous, by their very nature beseeching their own destruction. In spare but elegant prose, Chatwin slowly chips away at Utz's character to reveal its many facets. Intriguing and original; for most public and academic libraries. David W. Henderson, Eckerd Coll. Lib., St. Petersburg, Fla. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc.