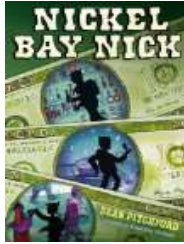


Booklist Review

Books For Youth - Fiction - Action/Adventure



Nickel Bay Nick.
Pitchford, Dean (author).

Oct. 2013. 272p. Putnam, hardcover, \$16.99 ([9780399254659](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9780399254659)). Grades 4-7. [REVIEW](#). First published November 13, 2013 (Booklist Online).



“This has got to be the Worst. Christmas. *EVER!*” declares 11-year-old Sam Brattle. He has a swelling police record and no respect for anyone or anything. His mother left before his heart transplant at age 3 1/2. His friends are older delinquents. His father’s business is failing. On top of that, Nickel Bay Nick—the secret benefactor who leaves 45 \$100 bills around his deteriorating town before Christmas—has disappeared. When Sam damages part of Herbert Wells’ house, he is blackmailed into service to help cover the repairs. The job isn’t what Sam expects because Herbert, whose leg is broken, reveals he is Nickel Bay Nick. To become Herbert’s “operative” before it’s too late, Sam has no choice but to listen, obey orders, and accept responsibility. The often-thankless execution of the distributions changes his perspective about friends, family, and community. With a genuine feel for adolescent pain and emotion, Pitchford offers a comical but forthright coming-of-age story that will make readers cheer for Sam. Hand to fans of Louis Sachar’s *Holes* (1998) or Gary D. Schmidt’s *Okay for Now* (2011).—*Jeanne E. Fredriksen*

Booklist Editors Recommend

Titles similar to *Nickel Bay Nick*

- [The True Gift](#)
- [The Angel Tree](#)
- [Okay for Now](#)
- [Holes](#)