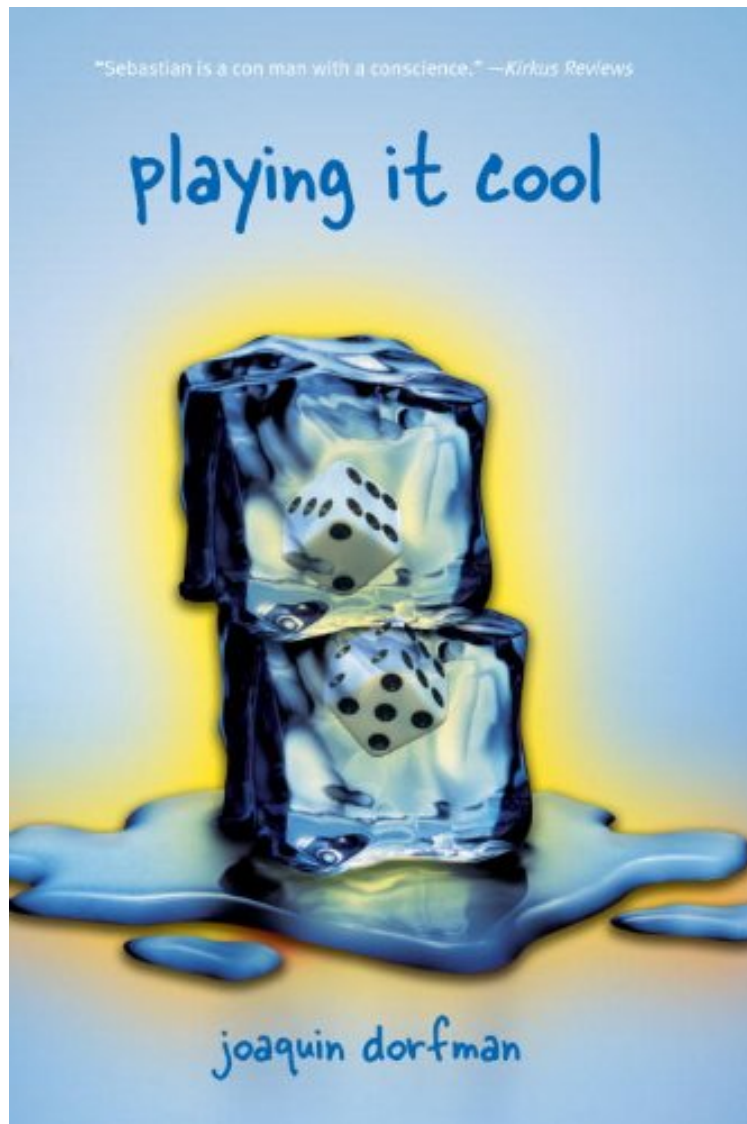


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## Playing it Cool

Von Joaquin Dorfman

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**Von Joaquin Dorfman : Playing it Cool** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Playing it Cool:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Courtesy of Teens Read TooVon TeensReadTooSebastian Montero has a reputation around town as a problem solver. Any problem you've got, Sebastian has a way to fix it. He doesn't do it just out of the goodness of his heart, though; it's all part of the complicated network of favors, debts, and problems that he's organized. He's calm and in control in the middle of his domain. He knows how it all works.Along comes another problem. This one directly involves

Sebastian's friend, Jeremy. Jeremy has just found out that the man he thought was his father, well, isn't. Sebastian has found Jeremy's real father, and the two of them set off for the coast of North Carolina to meet Dromio. Seems straightforward enough, right? Well, then throw this into the mix: Bastian and Jeremy are switching identities, so that Jeremy won't get hurt if Dromio turns out to be a shady character or just a jerk. When Dromio accepts him right into the family, Bastian keeps pushing the charade further and further--but to what end? *PLAYING IT COOL* is a very interesting novel. Most of the characters are realistic, and the plot is certainly well-thought out. The scenario itself is a little odd, but suspension of disbelief is common enough in fiction. The writing is pretty excellent, too, but it lacks a certain spark throughout a good chunk of the book. At the beginning, and then again at the end, it seems good, but lacks whatever it is that makes a book special. Still, though, this is a book worth reading! Reviewed by: Jocelyn Pearce

*Kurzbeschreibung* I always know what I'm doing. So says 18-year-old Sebastian Montero, who is famous around town as a problem solver of the subtlest kind. Want a date with the girl of your dreams? Bastian can make it happen. Have a friend threatening suicide? Baz can talk him off the ledge. But as popular as Sebastian is, no one really knows him. Thanks to his intricate network of favors and debts Sebastian controls the world, manipulates it and hides from it. It isn't until his best friend asks him to track down his long-missing father that Sebastian is forced to face the most challenging problem of all, the solution to which will change his life forever. From the Hardcover edition. From Booklist Gr. 10-12. Eighteen-year-old Sebastian can solve any problem without getting too involved, from arranging an abortion to stopping someone's brother from committing suicide. All he asks is that you do him a favor someday. Things change, however, when Sebastian swaps identities with his friend Jeremy before the boys go to stay with Jeremy's newly found biological father, Dromio. Caught up in charismatic Dromio's wake, the boys feel the strain of their switched identities, but Sebastian cannot seem to let go of the lie--until it's apparent that he's put too much of himself at stake. Sebastian is appealing as the untouchably cool savior-manipulator who helps, not because he cares, but because it stops him from facing his own vulnerability. His downfall is heart wrenching, and his response to it is entirely believable; he doesn't change overnight. Though Dorfman's overabundance of fragmentary sentences wears thin, he writes with a compassion and an energy that will propel readers along. Recommend this to teens who like poignant psychological drama. Krista Hutley Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved. From School Library Journal Starred . Grade 9 Up Hot on the heels of *Burning City* (Random, 2005), which Dorfman coauthored with his father, Ariel Dorfman, comes this first solo effort, a sophisticated, mystery/romance/coming-of-age story full of red herrings and elaborate schemes. Eighteen-year-old Sebastian is a solver of problems. Friends and friends of friends confide in him, adults as often as peers, and he finesses, bribes, deals, and conspires to help them through everything from abortion to attempted suicide. Like a superhero, he can be available at a moment's notice; like the main character in a noir novel, he drinks coffee and alcohol and smokes until he comes up with the information or resources needed to carry out his scheme. His latest case involves tracking down his friend Jeremy's birth father, who has a checkered past, and then planning a visit to meet him. The teens agree to switch identities, allowing Jeremy an emotional distance from which to better assess the man. The plan is elaborate and full of danger, and as Sebastian gets to know Jeremy's mysterious father, Dromio, he begins to find himself trapped by his own deceptions. Sebastian is a memorable character cocky, clever, and very mature at times. The story is filled with adult language and behavior, including blackmail and violence, but not all that much sex. Sebastian is still a needy boy, though this only becomes evident slowly, in his insecurity with girls, and as his desperate need for a father of his own begins to surface. The adult characters are complex and often fascinating, especially Dromio. While the tension abates toward the end, this fast-paced novel will grip mature young adults. Susan Oliver, Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library System, FL Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.