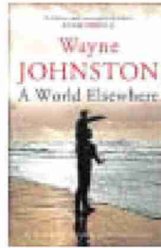


Client: Vintage
Source: The Guardian (Review)
Date: 17 August 2013
Page: 13
Reach: 191182
Size: 87cm2
Value: 1244.1

VINTAGE BOOKS

Fiction



A World Elsewhere
by Wayne Johnston
(Vintage, £8.99)

Princeton chums Landish Druken and Padgett Vanderluyden are the oddest of odd couples - one the stolid offspring of a Newfoundland seal-hunter who “needs a chair for each half of his arse”; the other the waspish heir to one of the biggest fortunes in America. Having caused Druken’s expulsion from college for cheating, Vanderluyden makes amends by offering him residence at Vanderland, the vast French folly he has been building in the North Carolina wilderness (and clearly modelled on Biltmore, the largest privately owned house in America). There’s an unsettling air about Vanderluyden’s Gatsby-esque tendencies; a sybaritic dedication to the “bare excessities” of life and a morbid compulsion to count the buttons of his immense wardrobe since a loose thread caused his baby sister to choke to death. But Druken is the greater enigma, a would-be novelist who burns every sentence he writes. The wordplay can feel overwrought: “I’m more of a startist than an artist.” But there’s a powerful sense of the emotional blackmail and deceit that keeps Druken tied to the premises of his nemesis. **Alfred Hickling**