



[Home](#) > Wilderness

Wilderness

Books Reviewed:

[Wilderness](#) [1]

Issue:

[168](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Lois Keith](#) [3]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Sometimes you know that you are in the hands of a skilled writer from the first page and **Wilderness** is one of those books. Roddy Doyle is entering into more serious territory than in his previous, larky books for young readers but there are still plenty of references to dog poo for those who liked that kind of thing in his 'Giggler' story for younger readers.

This is essentially a book of two parts, told in alternating chapters. In the first story, two young brothers find themselves on an unexpected adventure holiday in Finland with their mother. There is a real sense of a frightening, icy wilderness and the half tame, half wild huskies become like extra characters in the story. When their mother is lost in the snow, the real adventure starts as the boys take great risks to save her life. In the second story, their stropky half sister is at their home waiting for the arrival of her birth mother who is about to make an unexplained reappearance after many years of absence. If she expects her daughter to pick up where they left off in mother/daughter bonding, she is going to be disappointed: things are not so easy for an abandoned child.

Both parts of this book are interesting and the things that make Roddy Doyle a great writer for adults work here too: a well paced story with good dialogue and plenty of humour. Usually these scenes would be in different books aimed at quite different readers and it is likely that for some readers the adventure story will be favoured over the one of teenage angst and vice versa. This isn't to say this novel wouldn't appeal to a wide range, more a comment on niche marketing which 'guides' the reader with pink or blue covers: this one is mostly blue!

Running Order:

4

Source URL (retrieved on Oct '21): <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/168/childrens-books/reviews/wilderness>

Links:

[1] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/wilderness>

[2] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/168>

[3] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/lois-keith>