



Time after Time

Books Reviewed:

[Time after Time](#) [1]

Issue:

[220](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Lucy Staines](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

[Judi Curtin](#) [4] writes sensitive, hugely engaging novels about contemporary girls and the things that matter most to them: friends, family relationships, learning to be happy with who you are. Most of her books have modern settings, though she's written a couple of time-slip novels sending characters back into the past. In this story, her characters again travel back through time but to a decade many **Books for Keeps** readers will remember well: the 1980s.

Molly and Beth have been best friends for ages, though when Molly's Mum and Beth's dad announce they're moving in together, their relationship is bound to change. Sneaking out together to attend a concert without their parents' knowledge, they stumble into a strange sweet shop they've never noticed before, and emerge again into 1984. As readers will understand, visiting the 1980s will have its plusses and minuses for 21st century kids: you can buy packets of biscuits for 20p but have to survive without mobile phones. There are lots of details older readers will relish: the shop that sells the biscuits has comics **Mandy** and **Bunty** on its shelves too; the girls are baffled ? and amused ? by the hairstyles and fashions.

While Curtin observes the rules of time travel, she's not really interested in the how of all this; it's the why that is her real concern. Beth's mum died when she was a tiny baby, and her longing for some knowledge of her mum is intensified now that she can observe daily Molly's relationship with her mother. Propelled by these emotions into the past, she immediately decides to track down her 14 year old mum. Molly, there too, has misgivings, but accompanies her new step-sister.

Emotions reach a very high point as the two reach Beth's mum's home, and Curtin describes the tension beautifully. The eventual meeting too is handled with real sensitivity. Beth manoeuvres it so that her mum brushes her hair, an extremely touching moment. Molly too gets to meet her own mum, and comes home understanding her better. This is time travel that puts female relationships ? mother/daughter, best friends ? into the spotlight, in a book that is funny, sad and uplifting. It reminds us all too that the teenagers our mums were are only ever a splash of (**Smitty**) perfume away.

Links:

[1] <http://w2w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/time-after-time>

[2] <http://w2w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/220>

[3] <http://w2w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/lucy-staines>

[4] <http://w2w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/208/childrens-books/articles/featured-author/an-interview-with-judi-curtin>