



The Girl In Between

Books Reviewed:

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[Sue Roe](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

A girl and her ma seek shelter in an old, abandoned mill to escape a life of homelessness and danger on the streets of Dublin, constantly pursued by the yellow-jacketed ?Authorities? feared by ma. To the girl, the dilapidated mill is both castle and sanctuary and the memories and ghosts it contains do not frighten her. All that matters to the girl is that her ma always comes back from begging on the streets. But as ma's drinking and drug-taking spiral out of control and the Authorities draw nearer, the girl has to retrieve deep memories and, with the help of the mysterious Caretaker, work out who the ghosts really are.

This powerful story of homelessness, grief, abuse and isolation is told in the colloquial voice of a naive young girl. The narrative jumps backwards and forwards, with times and locations marked by her ma's frequent lapses into addiction. An atmosphere of fear and tension builds throughout, together with a feeling that something is very wrong, that is only explained by the supernatural twist at the end of the story. Whilst there are elements of confusion and repetition, this is, on the whole, a skilful and moving first novel with an effectively unsettling feel and a deliberately ambiguous ending. The author succeeds in combining the harsh realities of life on the streets within a story that reads like a bleak, modern fairy tale with archetypal characters, girl, ma, Caretaker, Authorities, and its own perilous castle. This intriguing, emotional YA title with its important themes should appeal to those older readers who appreciate social realism, mystery and a hint of the supernatural.

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