



Another Twist in the Tale

Books Reviewed:

[Another Twist in the Tale](#) [1]

Issue:

[246](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Sue Roe](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

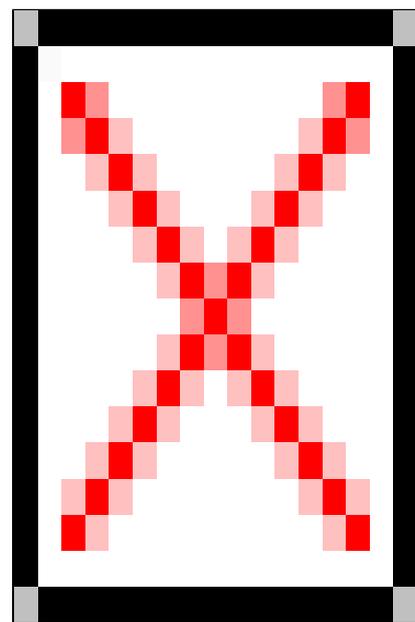
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5



The author's admiration for the writing of Charles Dickens shines through this witty and accomplished feminist take on **Oliver Twist**. In this version the Other Twist is Oliver's twin sister, not taken to the workhouse like her brother but abandoned on a rubbish heap to die, as an economically worthless girl. The baby is rescued by a kindly kitchen girl, given the name of Twill Jones, and raised in the kitchen of a gambling den. Twill eventually finds herself on the streets of London in a dazzling and gripping story that sees her encounter the Artful Dodger and outwit a devilish plot by Fagin to enslave street children into forced labour.

The clever title and cover of this novel set the tone for a skilfully written and engaging historical adventure which captures the atmosphere of Dickensian London perfectly. Dangers, threats, and mysteries lurk everywhere, particularly for women and children, and there is no welfare safety net for the poor. Twill is a courageous protagonist with a strong sense of justice, a feisty attitude and plenty of good ideas. The storytelling is masterly, introducing new and familiar characters and following gripping and intertwining plot threads through short, fast-paced chapters with dramatic scenes and witty, authentic dialogue.

Catherine Bruton has managed to capture the essence of Dickens and distil it into an accessible and intriguing story full of memorable characters and reflecting contemporary takes on such issues as the status of women and the slave trade. This book is highly recommended as a brilliant, funny, pacy, and immersive read and an excellent way into a classic author for young readers.

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[1] <http://w2w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/another-twist-in-the-tale>

[2] <http://w2w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/246>

[3] <http://w2w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/sue-roe>