



[Home](#) > Doctor Quack

Doctor Quack

Books Reviewed:

[Doctor Quack](#) [1]

Issue:

[139](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Clive Barnes](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

This book has the feel and the landscape of a traditional tale, and is advertised as an 'accessible novel for more confident readers'. As readers of McCaughrean's other work might expect, there is a lot going on. The plot is a vaguely circular one in which Benedick, a young man cruelly defrauded by a quack doctor, sets up himself as a travelling salesman of dubious potions and, with a quick wit and some luck, not only gains his revenge on his deceiver but the hand of the princess into the bargain. McCaughrean makes the most of the opportunity for word play and humour afforded by Benedick's sales patter and the way he talks himself out of the king's dungeon. This may need a more confident reader to appreciate to the full, and one or two of the plot devices are more contrived than convincing. Would the king really believe that his subjects had been changed into ducks just because they shouted 'Quack' at Benedick? The illustrations go for simple folk comedy, while the writing offers a more sophisticated wit. None of this will detract from a fast-moving, inventive story where the author's enjoyment in what she is doing is palpable.

Running Order:

41

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[1] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/doctor-quack>

[2] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/139>

[3] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/clive-barnes>