



[Home](#) > The Dolls? House Fairy

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# The Dolls? House Fairy

Books Reviewed:

[The Dolls' House Fairy](#) [1]

Issue:

[180](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Valerie Coghlan](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

The current vogue for the 'f' word in children's books does nothing for me - fairy books that is, especially those with a pink hue - so it was only Jane Ray's name on the cover of **The Dolls? House Fairy** that encouraged any sort of positive feeling as I opened it. But Thistle, no wimpish fairy, dispelled all fears. Reminiscent of Raymond Briggs's **The Man**, she is messy and insistent on getting what she wants, and also like Briggs's Man she arrives unbidden and expects a human child to obey her commands.

Thistle's arrival in her dolls' house is an agreeable distraction when Rosy's Dad, who helps her to make things for the dolls' house on Saturdays, is unexpectedly taken to hospital. Rosy is understandably upset, but mending Thistle's injured wing helps the days without Dad pass. And is it coincidence that Thistle vanishes on the day Dad comes home from hospital? The two closing spreads where Rosy and Dad restore order in the dolls' house and where, in one, Mum and granny sit on one side of the opening and Rosy and Dad on the other in a separate frame indicate much of Rosy's relationship with her father.

Ray's verbal narrative is calm and measured leaving the elaborate illustrations to hold the reader's attention. Ray's delight in pattern is richly evidenced, but doesn't overpower her subjects. The interior of the dolls' house is finely detailed, and is done justice by the large format pages on which the story unfolds in this delightful picture book.

Running Order:

10

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[1] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-dolls-house-fairy>

[2] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/180>

[3] <http://typo3.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/valerie-coghlan>