



The Pond

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

How to deal with death and grief? This is the theme of Nicola Davies' latest book. There is nothing mawkish or sentimental. The young narrator does not hide the anger that grief can bring, both in young and old. The death of the father leaves a terrible hole in the family, symbolised by the muddy messy hole in the garden where the pond should have been. Then a duck arrives ? the turning of the world and the seasons, the life to be found as the pond is resurrected allows the family to move on with their good memories; the pond had been their father's idea.

While the link between life, death and the natural world is a common theme, there is freshness brought to it by Davies' prose. It is a simple story, told clearly and elegantly. Enriching and adding both visual and emotional depth to a familiar story are Cathy Fisher's illustrations. Filling each double page spread with rich, saturated colours she captures both the uncompromising desolation of the uncared for hole in the garden, the teeming life of the pond, the excitement of the discoveries to be made ? and the perfection of the water lily flower. It too will die ? but by then a new pond will have been created. This is a beautiful book in more senses than one and deserves to have a prominent place on any bookshelf.

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