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# The Magnificent Mummies; Mouse Flute; Owl in the House; Delilah Digs for Treasure; Runaway Fred; Keeping Secrets

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News & Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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If I see another book with the words 'National Curriculum Key Stage 1' on the back I shall scream (Blue Bananas have them prominently printed on the back cover). Presumably this labelling is meant to entice parents to buy but it can only serve to limit the potential readership of the books. The Egyptian desert setting of **The Magnificent Mummies** (Mummy Mummy, Daddy Mummy, Tut, Sis and the cat), for example, gives plenty of scope for the type of humour that would amuse readers in the junior school. It has used camel salesmen, an eccentric archaeologist and a lost whale masquerading as the Aswan Dam all fleshed out with hilarious illustrations.

**Mouse Flute** is much more reflective in mood and chronicles the seasons in the life of Mouse and his friends Weasel and Bear. With his flute, Mouse seems to be able to bring to life the world around him so that in Spring, 'trees put out leaves and whispered their Winter dreams to the wind.' The watercolour pictures are beguiling with many touching details to linger over, but it is the carefully chosen words which paint pictures in the mind that will, I suggest, linger longer.

In **Owl in the House**, Owl falls down the chimney and is tempted to stay and become a pet until he smells the outside again and realises he must be free.

The other three titles are less strong although they have some lively female characters. In **Delilah Digs for Treasure** would-be pirate Delilah unwittingly disturbing dogs' bones, a squirrel's store of acorns and tree roots, not to mention mum's precious bulbs and Spencer the cat's toilet spot in her search. Then finally she does discover something worthwhile. I like the idea of Delilah's treasure being the fruits of the earth (Grandma's potatoes) rather than jewels.

**Runaway Fred** is a black and white dog who besides getting up to the sort of mischief one would expect, manages to acquire an impressive collection of cuddly toys. It has a small boy narrator who recounts the escapades of his sister's light-pawed puppy. In **Keeping Secrets** Rosie finds that her cousins Josh and Harry have plenty in store for her. All these titles have full colour illustrations throughout and a liberal sprinkling of speech bubbles.

Running Order:

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