



The Other Side of Silence

Books Reviewed:

[The Other Side of Silence](#) [1]

Issue:

[109](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Robert Dunbar](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

With a young heroine called Hero and numerous references to myth and fairy tale - not to mention chapters alternately entitled 'True Life' and 'Real Life' - this entrancing story could serve as a primary text for a course on intertextuality: as a second, or subsequent, reading will confirm, the number of levels on which it can be appreciated is staggering. For Hero, a decision not to talk is a way of attaining individuality in a family and background where, as she expresses it, 'words flow away like wasting water' and where self-imposed silence thus becomes 'an alternative authority'. In establishing this authority she becomes a regular visitor to the eerie Credence House and in time learns the frightening truth about the mother and daughter who are its inhabitants. But there is also the other house, called home, where Hero and her own mother have a relationship to explore and develop. This is a clever, subtle and witty novel, with a wonderful cast of offbeat characters; there is hardly a page which does not afford a penetrating insight into the strange territory we refer to as 'family life'. Highly recommended.

Running Order:

12

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[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-other-side-of-silence>

[2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/109>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/robert-dunbar>