



Bread and Sugar; Daisy Chain Dream

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Bread and Sugar and **Daisy Chain Dream** are the second and third parts in Joan O'Neill's family saga which began with **Daisy Chain War**. The trilogy has already received critical acclaim in Ireland, where it was first published between 1987 and 1994.

Principally set in Dun Lagohaire during the immediate post-war years, **Bread and Sugar** follows the fortunes and misfortunes of the Doyle and Quinn families. Karen's husband, Paul, is missing, presumed dead and she is planning to remarry Hank who wants to send her son, John, to boarding school. Lizzie seizes an opportunity for greater freedom by moving to England to complete her nursing training, while Vicky trains to be a doctor in Toronto. Meanwhile, in Dun Laoghaire young Patsy Quinn is sent to a sanatorium for the unpleasant treatment of, and slow recovery from, TB.

In **Daisy Chain Dream**, Lizzie rekindles her romance with childhood sweetheart, Pete Scanlon, and Karen is reunited with her long-lost husband, Paul. The older generations of the Doyle family benevolently preside over their family and extend their protection to others in need. As the children leave home, Gertie finds a new interest in converting the large family home into a guest house aided by her home help, Mrs Keogh.

The evocation of time and place and engaging characterisation make the 'Daisy Chain' trilogy an ideal candidate for televised drama. The narrative is infused with warmth and light and presents an affirming portrait of a family overcoming adversity and celebrating 'the wonders of life'. Even in the bleaker episodes, such as pregnant Biddy's incarceration in the Magdalen Convent and enforced labour in the convent's laundry, her strong self-determination and optimism carry the story forward. The 'Daisy Chain' trilogy will be enjoyed as much by adults as teenage readers and will linger in the memory like other well-loved family stories such as **Little Women**.

Running Order:

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Links:

- [1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/bread-and-sugar>
- [2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/daisy-chain-dream>
- [3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/140>
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