



The Drowning

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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This motif radiates from the central incident in the story ? her brother Benjie?s death by drowning close to their local Cornish beach, when he was supposedly in Jenna?s charge. Jenna?s grief-stricken mother abandons the café which is the family business and flees to London, unable to reconcile herself to the loss. Jenna?s father, a well-meaning but emotionally enfeebled foil to his overbearing ? and rather one-dimensional ? wife, buckles under the stress of running the business alone and Jenna gives up her hard-won and much-prized place at a London ballet school to support him and assuage her relentless guilt.

The blow of thwarted ambition is somewhat softened by a powerful first love affair with Meryn, a local lifeboat man, who persuades her to dance again and all seems more optimistic until Jenna finds Benjie?s diary with its sorry tale of remorseless bullying by twins whom she discovers by chance, are Meryn?s beloved younger sisters. These fresh cracks in the glass are resolved rather more convincingly than the emotional difficulties in Jenna?s parents? marriage, where Jenna?s mother?s return precipitates her attempted suicide in a bleak but over-theatrical section of the book.

Jenna gets her happy ending and is able to take up her ballet school place but the sweetness is tempered by the inevitable and mutually agreed ending of her relationship with Meryn and her father?s stubborn hope that his wife will one day return. This gives an otherwise conveniently neat ending the ring of credibility.

Running Order:

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