



[Home](#) > Drawing With Light

Drawing With Light

Books Reviewed:

[Drawing With Light](#) [1]

Issue:

[182](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Caroline Sanderson](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Emily and her elder sister Kat have grown up without their mother who left without explanation when they were small. Since then there has been no contact and the sisters have learnt to live without her. They have their Dad and his new wife Cassy with whom they get on fine. But then things start to shift for Emily. Kat goes away to university and Emily, her Dad and Cassy move into a tiny caravan whilst they are restoring their new house. Emily falls for the gorgeous but unfocused Seb, and for a while life is sweet. But when Cassy announces that she is expecting a baby, Emily finds herself thinking more and more about her own mother. What was she like? Why did she leave? The urge to find answers to questions she has never dared ask before starts to unpick Emily's settled life: 'It's like someone has lifted off the top of my head and let all this air in. I'm dizzy with it.'

This is a sensitive and assured novel about the time in young people's lives when they start to crave a sense of identity, and need straight answers to big questions about who they are, and the real reasons adults behave as they do. Emily is an attractive and convincing character, and her growing passion for nature photography forms a poignant and believable link with the artistic mother she has never known. The passages in which Emily delves into her mind for any tiny maternal recollection, however fleeting, are very touching, and I love the way Green extends the nature metaphor by likening our overlapping and compacting memories to old leaves crumbling and turning to rich peaty soil, ready to nourish the new things that are to grow. If I have any criticisms, they are slight: Seb is almost too good to be true, and the real identity of Emily's mother - a noted artist living in the south of France - also feels rather romanticised. Tracy Beaker this is not. But these are quibbles. There is still much to admire in this realistic and affecting story.

Running Order:

42

Source URL (retrieved on Nov '19): <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/182/childrens-books/reviews/drawing-with-light>

Links:

[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/drawing-with-light>

[2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/182>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/caroline-sanderson>