



# Winter Damage

Books Reviewed:

[Winter Damage](#) [1]

Issue:

[202](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Andrea Reece](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

~~New Talent~~

BfK Rating:

5

*Ennor thought the idea of doing things for the sake of it was strange and wasteful in time and purpose, but she was fourteen and could count fun times on the fingers of just one hand.*

Fourteen year old Ennor lives in a trailer with her father and younger brother in an isolated spot on Bodmin moor. The country is in the grip of a terrible winter, one so deep and hard that fear and mistrust have taken hold and society is crumbling. With her father gravely ill, Ennor decides to go and find her mother, who left them years ago. Her mother could be just the other side of the moor, but might as well be a thousand miles away. Nonetheless, promising to be back for Christmas, Ennor packs a bag and heads out into the snow.

The icy landscape, so brilliantly described that reading it on the hottest day of the year I felt a chill, defines the adventure, but what drives the story is the character of Ennor, and her relationship with Sonny, short for Sunshine, the girl she meets on her journey. Sonny is a traveller, strong, optimistic, full of the joy of living, no matter the circumstances. Despite their differences, or even because of them, the girls become friends. Their friendship is completely convincing, and gives the book a warmth and humour that overcomes the bleakness of the setting. With Sonny at her side, full of daring and compassion, appreciative of the live-giving qualities of sachet hot chocolate and custard creams, Ennor will do more than just survive her journey.

The book's editor also published Meg Rosoff's [How I Live Now](#) [4] and comparisons will be made between the two, and deservedly so. Not since [Lesley Howarth](#) [5] however has anyone written about Cornwall so vividly or in such an original and beautiful way: moor, sky, rock are a living presence in the book. Like Howarth too, Carthew writes with an originality of expression that is exhilarating. A poet, this is only her debut novel: it will establish her as one of the most exciting new voices writing for young people.

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