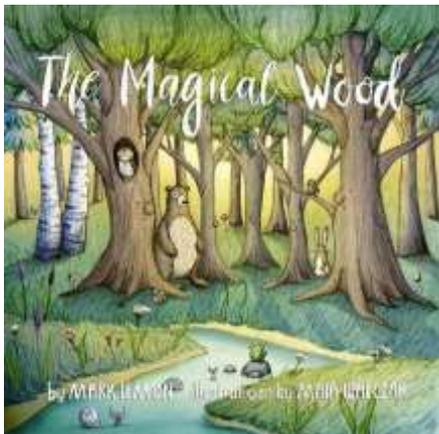


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BOOK REVIEWS

Read what people affected by cancer think about...



The magical wood (2018)

Lemon M, Walczak M (illustrator)
Bristol: Lemon Drop Books, 2018.
28pp.
ISBN 9780993503146.

Average star rating 4.0 (out of 5)

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This is such a lovely story; it makes you have hope and courage and realise that the person you lost will always be around you. It is easy to read, a bit emotional, and the illustrations complement the story perfectly.

I like that the characters come together for support, showing love, care, kindness and compassion. We all want to believe in magic and hope for good things, especially for children; when reality is different from their expectations it's very important to have support in a kind, loving, magical way so they can feel even more loved.

Family member of young person who has been bereaved (26-35) (October 2019)

Strongest Tree is blown over in a storm and dies. The creatures of the wood come together in their grief to talk about Strongest Tree, to remember, and learn that it's ok to feel sad. It will be useful after bereavement for a child, parents, other family members and health professionals, indeed for everyone to know about and share.

The language is suitable for children, and the text is in a large font. It is beautifully illustrated, with space for children to express their feelings about their loss, and links to the Childhood Bereavement Network.

Breast cancer survivor (56-65) (June 2019)



This is an excellent, gentle opening to the subject of bereavement at any stage. It would be good for bereaved children and those supporting them, such as a parent or carer, or other family members. It is also invaluable for health professionals, other professionals, such as counsellors and teachers, or those who care for children.

It is an excellent and heart-warming story of love and loss. The language is perfect for children, the cover is beautiful, and the illustrations throughout are wonderful and gentle. It is interactive in places, perfect for going through the process of healing with a child dealing with bereavement. The font size is great although a different typeface would make the book more reader friendly.

This book is beautiful. Told through the voice of the wood and its creatures. It helps us to understand grief and to explore our feelings in a very simple and nature-orientated way. Nature is healing in so very many ways. I would have appreciated someone giving me or reading me a book such as this when I was a young girl experiencing loss. I would have read this to my younger siblings also.

My mother had throat cancer, my sister had breast cancer (26-35) (April 2019)



This book was devised with the support of Winston's Wish. There are some useful support contacts at the back for parents and carers. It could be useful before and after bereavement. It is a simple story about a big tree that suddenly dies and how the woodland creatures cope with their loss. The cover is very attractive and the simple, colourful pictures are good for young children. A couple of parts appear to make the book personal and might make a child open up and discuss how they feel.

It is easy for children to understand but the story does not flow as well as it could in places; parts of the rhyming text are not smooth reading and the vocabulary in a couple of the sentences is also not easy on the tongue. I suggest that an adult reading the book does so aloud to themselves a couple of times to get the flow of the sentences before reading it to the child.

I like the fact that the book seems, in parts, to be personal for the child reading it and that it is ok for them to feel sad. It will encourage discussion. Very young children will be able to cope with the simplicity of the book. It certainly has a place on the shelf but having reviewed many on the same subject, I have seen others that I prefer.

Breast cancer survivor with seven grandchildren (46-55) (September 2018)

The cover of this book about coping with the loss of a loved one is magical and inviting as the title suggests. The layout of the book is text on one page and picture on the opposite page. The pictures are quite gentle, although large, with only one image rather than a scene. The language is very well matched to young children. I did not like the typeface or font size.

The message is useful and comforting, but I don't know if it is delivered in an understandable way. Part of me thinks that it is too abstract for young children to understand, another part thinks that this is a message that children could well relate to through parts of nature that they may know. I am not sure if the blank pages for children to draw or write on are a good idea; it will depend on the child.

I think that there are better books about grief on the market, but this is written with advice from Winston's Wish, so in many ways, who am I to argue?

Living with cancer (myelodysplastic syndrome) and former teacher of 3-16-year-olds with SEN (46-55) (July 2018)

Further information

Why does Macmillan Cancer Support review books?

We use reviews to help us compile a list of suggested cancer books, the [Macmillan Core Book List](#). Cancer information centres and public libraries can use this list to select appropriate and relevant books for people affected by cancer.

We add reviews to the [Directory of information materials for people affected by cancer](#) so that people affected by cancer can see what others in a similar situation think about a book. You can also see details of all the books reviewed in the [Book reviews listing](#), which also has links to all the reviews.

We recruit most of our reviewers through the [Volunteering Village](#) and the [Cancer Voices Network](#), people affected by cancer who have signed up to help Macmillan Cancer Support in a number of ways. Volunteers are a vital part of our book review process; since 2007, over 1,500 Macmillan volunteers have written more than 6,000 reviews of over 500 different books.

If you are a health professional who would like to review books for us, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

Information and support for people affected by cancer

If you are looking for support to help you live life with cancer, you may wish to contact one of [Macmillan's cancer information and support services](#). Or you can call the Macmillan Support Line free on **0808 808 00 00** (Mon-Fri 9am–8pm). We have an interpreting service in over 200 languages. Just state, in English, the language you wish to use. If you are deaf or hard of hearing you can use textphone no 0808 808 0121 or Text Relay.

You can also email us using the [website enquiry form](#). Alternatively, [visit our website](#).

Feedback

If you have any comments, please [email Sue Hawkins](#), Information Materials Researcher, Macmillan Cancer Support.

We're here to help everyone with cancer live life as fully as they can, providing physical, financial and emotional support. So whatever cancer throws your way, we're right there with you.

For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit macmillan.org.uk

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