



*Wave me Goodbye* by Jacqueline Wilson

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The bookstore is a place with a myriad of stories, nevertheless everyone has one book that they will forever gravitate towards, mine is 'Wave me goodbye' by Jacqueline Wilson. Published in April 2017, it's an historical fiction children's book which enthral you from the very first page and retains that same wonder right until the end. The story, set in 1939, follows 10-year-old Shirley as she is evacuated to Meadow Ridge -which is seemingly worlds away from her current life in London. This story is based upon one that 3.5 million children in our country lived; Shirley -just like all the real-life children- had to be evacuated since her hometown was made too unsafe by the threats of bombs. Once she has arrived in her new home, she and two other boys -Archie and Kevin- are taken in by Mrs Waverly. This sparks an enigmatic dynamic that is reminiscent of that seen in 'The Goonies' or 'Goosebumps.' Within what they like to call 'The Red House,' the kids learn to adapt to their new -not always welcoming- surroundings and discover the secrets that Mrs Waverly is keeping from them.

The themes of this book are ones that most people will feel at some point in their lives: estrangement, loneliness, and grief. For me, this book embodies these emotions in a way that enables you to understand that it's okay to feel them and how you can process them. I was left haunted by how this book beautifully blends non-fiction and fiction in a way that makes it both accessible and enjoyable. Wilson is known for her ability to be able to make authentic children, who do not have perfect lives -such as her well-known Tracy Beaker- but it stands out particularly in this book.

The writing within this book is something that is exceedingly rare. Yes, it may be a 'children's' book and you might be wondering: what makes this book stand out? Well, I first read this book when I was 7 years old, at that point in time I was not fascinated by what worlds could be created by just a few words, but this book changed that for me. I remember distinctively the feeling of contentment I felt when I was greeted by Shirley's benevolence or Alfie's tenacity. Even now, 7 years after I read this book, I still catch myself thinking about these characters. It's often hard to find people in literature who you feel mirror your emotions -with

so many popular books revolving around superheroes and villains- but I still feel a connection to the character of Shirley to this day.

For years I have been saying just how significant this book was to me and how it will change anyone's viewpoint of life -and I will not stop! The recommended age range for this book may be 7-10 years old but I urge you to read it whether you're 7 or 40, as we can all relate to the, sometimes peculiar, story of childhood.