

[PDF] Wise Child

Monica Furlong - pdf download free book



Books Details:

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Author: Monica Furlong
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly In this exciting, well-written fantasy, the setting (Britain in the Dark Ages) is as much a character as Wise Child and her guardian Juniper. Orphaned by the death of her grandmother and her sailor-father's disappearance, Wise Child chooses to become the ward of Juniper, the village wisewoman who is healer, midwife and witch. Under Juniper's kind but stern tutelage, Wise Child thrives, learning herb lore, reading and basic survival in those difficult times. Wise Child manages to live between the Churchrepresented by the grim village priestand the witchcraft that Juniper would have her learn. This delicate balance is destroyed by the coming of Maeve, Wise Child's mother, who had abandoned her. Her evil awakens the real power of Wise Child

as well as the superstitions of the village, rendering the trial of Juniper for witchcraft inevitable. Self-realization enables Wise Child to save both herself and Juniper in an exciting climax. Though the ending may strike some as too easy, this is an intriguing portrayal of an ancient way of life, and Wise Child is an engaging heroine. Ages 12-up.

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From School Library Journal Grade 6-8 Wise Child's life takes a new direction when her grandmother dies; her parents are both gone and in all the poverty-stricken village there is no one willing to take her inexcept Juniper, a mysterious healer from Cornwall who lives alone and has decidedly heterodox ideas about the place and purpose of women. Wise Child is self-centered and headstrong, but under Juniper's cheerful tutelage she begins to see herself as part of a world large enough for a liberated view and for magic too; Juniper's an expert witch, a hybrid combination of natural scientist and traditional broom-rider. Wise Child is quickly initiated into the secret arts. Juniper is both too modern and too perfect for the story. She has little difficulty coping with a Good Witch's usual enemies (an evil sorceress and a mob of fearful peasants egged on by the local priest), always arrives in the nick of time to rescue Wise Child, and shows never a trace of fear, impatience, or superstition. When, her many good deeds forgotten, she is about to be burned at the stake, she escapes with Wise Child, and the two find their way to the Isles of the Blessed. Readers may be intrigued both by the characters and by this revisionist view of witchcraft, although they will find a more realistic and involving exploration of it in Margaret Mahy's *The Changeover* (Macmillan, 1984).
John Peters, New York Public Library

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