



[Home](#) > Just Because

Just Because

Books Reviewed:

[Just Because](#) [1]

Issue:

[185](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Elizabeth Schlenther](#) [3]

Not a Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Since Scope's 'In the Picture' campaign, there has been more emphasis on showing children with disabilities in picture books, but still nowhere near enough. This book by a mother who knows all about disability is a remarkable creation. Using her own two children, Clemmie, who is severely disabled, and Toby, her younger brother, Elliott shows us just how close siblings can be and how little disability matters to a younger member of the family. Toby accepts that Clemmie will never walk or talk, 'cook macaroni, pilot a plane, juggle, or do algebra', but he knows she is special, beautiful, like a Princess, accepting of his noise, and sometimes making him laugh. She doesn't like some things, like his drawings of pigeons and having her hair brushed, but she enjoys their pet ladybird because 'he tickles her hands'. Toby likes her wheelchair; last week they 'went to the moon on it', and Clemmie accepts Toby just as he is too, even when he chases the cat and eats the crayons. And when there is a big storm, it is Clemmie who is brave and likes the noise and who helps Toby feel better. Particularly moving because these are real people in a real family, even though the bright and cheerful illustrations are of doll-like children, this story adds greatly to our understanding of how 'normal' living with a disabled child can be. With praise from both Jacqueline Wilson and Michael Rosen, this is a book to be enjoyed both in the classroom and in the home.

Running Order:

18

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