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The Apple Tart of Hope

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Who could resist such a title? Nor does the story disappoint. It takes the familiar ingredients of two young teenagers who are close friends until circumstances and misunderstandings cause a rift. Will there be a happy ending?

Meg and Oscar are outsiders within their school environment, but as neighbours they become the closest of friends, sharing thoughts across their windowsills. Though Meg's family is whole, if eccentric, Oscar's is less happy; his mother is dead and there are secrets filling the space. When Meg leaves with her family, beautiful, manipulative Paloma arrives. Jealousy, insecurity and innocence combine to result in tragedy. But there is a twist which the author handles very well - a real surprise for the reader.

Meg and Oscar are engaging, believable characters the reader is happy to meet. Fitzgerald tells her story briskly allowing each protagonist to present their own version of events - their voices are visually distinguished by different fonts, a neat device. The plot, though conventional, is handled with an engaging freshness that is a pleasure to read. This is one to recommend to readers who may be familiar with Hilary MacKay or Eve Ibbotson - a happy book. And it has apple pie - though sadly no recipe.

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