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Where's Julius?

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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By coincidence, John Burningham's book explores the same ground, that of reality and fantasy, as Mike Dickinson has. But this time, I think with total success. Julius is never there at meal times and the reasons for his absence become wilder and wilder; starting with the credible (he has made a house in the living room from old curtains and wants to eat in it) to the highly unlikely (he is shooting the rapids or feeding wolves in Russia)> In each case his noble parents are shown obligingly carrying a tray of food to wherever Julius happens to be this time. The children's reactions were very interesting. How did we know if the stories were true or not (you couldn't carry food all that way, it'd get cold)? What was Julius really doing (I bet he's pretending the stairs are mountains in Tibet)? The reason for the enhanced quality of experience this book offered them is, I think, that it is written from the child's point of view, Mike Dickinson is nudging the adult reader and saying, 'Look how amusing children are when they misinterpret our words'; John Burningham is being the child, so involved in his fantasy that it all seems real and the very detailed menus root the story firmly in real life. All children could identify with Julius' intense play life and so, I felt, found this book much more satisfying than the more superficial and artificial **My Dad Doesn't Even Notice**. The Pictures in this one are, of course, a delight with some particularly beautiful sky effects. They are bolder than some of John Burningham's work and none the worse for that.

Running Order:

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