



Double Act

By Jacqueline Wilson

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Ruby and Garnet are 10-year-old identical twins. They do everything together, especially since their mom died three years ago. Can being a double act work forever? Especially when their father starts dating again?

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Double Act By Jacqueline Wilson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

An unexceptional mix of familiar plot devices, this British import is almost gratingly obvious. Ten-year-old twins Ruby and Garnet take turns narrating, and although their voices aren't especially different, they are meant to be opposites. Ruby is outgoing, Garnet shy; Ruby leads, Garnet follows. Their mother has died long ago, and now their father has a girlfriend, whom they immediately reject. The four move from the city to the country, where the twins are desperately unhappy. Serious issues, like the burdens of twinhood and the difficulties of forging independent identities, become lost amid a surfeit of frothy subplots, including an audition for a TV show and a plan to enter a ritzy boarding school. The narration is frequently cloying, as in Ruby's comments about her father's taste for classic literature: "If we have a look at Dad's book we wonder what the Dickens they're about and they seem very Hardy, but Dad likes them." The brittle nature of Wilson's (Elsa, *Star of the Shelter*) writing finds its extension in her glib resolution of the conflicts, and the illustrations, rendered as if by Ruby and Garnet, are as flat and unrevealing as the story. Ages 9-12.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 4-6?A story written in the form of a journal with identical twin sisters writing in turns. The 10-year-old girls have always relished their twinship: making it impossible for people to tell them apart, working out signals so they can pretend to sneeze simultaneously, toss their braids in perfect synchronization, etc. At least, Ruby has always loved it?but then she's the dominant, extroverted one. Garnet seems to have been going along for the ride, safe in Ruby's shadow. When the twins' lives begin to change?a new girlfriend for their father, and then a new job in a new town with the corresponding new school for his daughters?their relationship is suddenly ripe for examination. When Ruby persuades her to audition for a TV series, Garnet rises to the occasion but is paralyzed with fear and subsequently guilt-ridden to have spoiled Ruby's chance at stardom. Next, Ruby plots their escape from home by applying to boarding school, but only Garnet passes the entrance exam. In the throes of making the decision to attend, she finds inner strength, and in finally acknowledging her twin's separate identity, Ruby affirms her love. Though the twins' voices are not always clearly differentiated as to vocabulary and style, their characters and interests are consistently distinct.

Black-and-white cartoons add to the generally lighthearted tone. This is a solid but not a stunning

read.?Miriam Lang Budin, Mt. Kisco Public Library, NY

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 3⁺-6. Ruby and Garnet are identical on the outside but quite different on the inside, as their entries in their combined journal show. Ruby is the bossy, confident one; Garnet the meeker, always ready to follow Ruby's lead. But neither of the British 10-year-olds is happy when their father decides to move the family to a country village to open a bookshop with his girlfriend, Rose--Rosey Ratbag to the twins. This is a book that gets it all right. Ruby and Garnet are characters with whom readers will identify, for everyone has been either the leader or the follower in a relationship. Kids will also recognize the anger that rises in the girls when they are forced to leave all that's familiar to them to move somewhere they don't want to go with someone they don't want to be with. On the other hand, youngsters will also comprehend Rose's frustrations as she tries every way she knows to get through to the unfriendly, unhappy girls. But this is not just a story of familial angst. It is also very, very funny. The clever design interposes the often laugh-aloud journal entries with sharp ink drawings that capture emotions with economy of line. (The obviously redone-for-an-American-audience dust jacket is the only misstep--too sweet.) Recommend the tale to kids who like Cleary-Wilson, too, knows how to mix messages with plenty of fun. *Ilene Cooper*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robert Mundo:

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Patrick Pierce:

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