



Rent a Bridesmaid

Jacqueline Wilson , Nick Sharratt (Illustrations)

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Tilly can't believe it when her best friend Matty is asked to be a bridesmaid. In Tilly's favourite daydream, she's wearing the most beautiful bridesmaid dress and walking down the aisle behind a bride. The one wedding she'd really love to attend is her own mum and dad's - but it seems like that's never going to happen. So Tilly decides to make her own dream come true, and puts a notice in the local shop, advertising her services as a bridesmaid. And to her amazement, she gets a reply . . .

A fabulous, funny and moving story about finding family and friendship in all sorts of places, from the mega-bestselling author of *Tracy Beaker*, *Hetty Feather* and *Katy*.

Rent a Bridesmaid Details

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Author : Jacqueline Wilson , Nick Sharratt (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review *Rent a Bridesmaid* for online ebook

Artemis says

I've read five of the "newer" Jacqueline Wilson books this week (they are quick reads for kids), with another one planned soon, and 'Rent a Bridesmaid' is a story I especially like and adore. It's cute, pink, girly, frothy and sweet - just what I hoped for.

With a great, plausible premise for modern England - a little girl working as a "bridesmaid-for-hire" for various weddings (well, three at the moment) - and lovely, believable, and relatable and flawed characters and scenarios, 'Rent a Bridesmaid' is delicious fun.

Nine-year-old Matilda "Tilly" Andrews is given her new best friend's bridesmaid's dress as a present, a raspberry-coloured, cakey delight of a dress, that the friend, Matty, hated wearing. But Tilly loves it so much that she wants a chance to wear it for a wedding immediately. But no one she knows is getting married yet, least of all her dad and her estranged mum, and she'll soon outgrow the dress, and then it will be too late. So she and Matty come up with an ad for a shop window that says she'll rent herself as a bridesmaid to anyone's wedding, free of charge even.

Little Tilly meets some lovely people this way, and forms new connections with others, including a closer bond with her wonderful but nervous and standoffish dad.

'Rent a Bridesmaid', like nearly all of Wilson's books, is like a soap opera for children, and I mean that as a positive. It is a positive and charming girls' book that deals with serious issues that any child, including myself as one, can instantly relate to. Such as separated parents, dealing with disappointment, anxiety and expressing anger, letting children draw and imagine whatever they want without so much fuss from well-meaning but misguided adults, rocky and changing friendships, supportive school teachers (as they need to be), and love overcoming any prejudices.

The first wedding Tilly attends is that of an elderly couple, the sweetest, kindest people you could meet, and the second wedding is for a gay couple, also fantastic people. Such sincere and important messages for children are presented, and it is probably the best depiction of queer people that Wilson has ever written (she's made some serious muckups in her past books so that isn't saying much, but still, credit where it's due: at least the gay men here are not one-note tokens with gay as their only characteristic, and they are happy. Still waiting for at least one canon LBGQT female now, Wilson).

I could relate to Tilly on a lot of accounts from when I was a child; I like her not just because of her name. Let her draw dinosaurs and monsters! Let her play "Warrior Princesses" with her friend Matty. Let her express herself. I think that her dad's and her teacher's concerns over her "violent" imagination has less to do with them thinking that this is how she copes with her mum leaving her, than it is about plain old sexism. Tilly was even sent to a clinic at one point in the past, where she met an anorexic girl. She likes "girly" things as well.

She's just herself. Suppressing her creativity is unhealthy. It will only make her worse. Let this child be.

Despite this drawback on his part, I love Tilly's dad, who tries hard despite working so much. He worries about her, but he'd do anything for her, and he even saves her from drowning in a pool (Wilson's protagonists, as well as a tendency to draw, also seem to be very timid swimmers for some reason). Tilly also

starts off having a nanny figure, before being practically adopted by Matty's family, and it is in this instance where perhaps the funniest line I've ever read in a Jacqueline Wilson book comes:

“Dad said Aunty Sue was a godsend. If that was so, I wasn't surprised. God was probably happy to have got rid of her.”

That is hilarious.

'Rent a Bridesmaid' also includes cameos from another Jacqueline Wilson book, 'The Worst Thing About my Sister', which I haven't read.

There are references to 'Inside Out' and 'Frozen'. 2016 publication!

One more side note: Wilson's books contain A LOT of descriptions about food and what the child characters are eating, so it's usually sweet things. And this book is about weddings. And baking. I tend to read these books before and after I've eaten, so I'm already full up by the time these huge food portions show up in the story. It is thanks to this that, ironically, I may have lost my appetite as of this moment. Or at least my sweet tooth.

Do I hear wedding bells? What about friendship bells? Daddy bells? 'Rent a Bridesmaid' is a touching, heartfelt, big strawberry-cake-with-icing treat. It's a cute and updated version of Wilson's stories for young girls, containing realistic events and characters, and modern social morals.

Final Score: 4/5

Den says

Tilly has always wanted to be a bridesmaid and is envious when her best friend is one. She is overjoyed when her friend gives her the dress after the event and decides to rent herself out as a bridesmaid.

Kirsten McKenzie says

[Tilly realises that her dad has a thing with Miss Hope, her teacher, and is totally cool with it even though she yelled at her to 'stay away from her dad!' (hide spoiler)]

Laura Samuel says

As always, Jacqueline Wilson never fails to empower the imagination and joy within a book for young readers (and 22 year olds!). Jacqueline Wilson was my fave author growing up, and still to this day I can appreciate her writing and the positive messages she portrays through her stories. This story may appear to be about one, beautiful, bridesmaids dress, but it brings across so much more than that. Divorce, and its impacts on children, family structure, love/weddings (LOVE how she included a range of couples, old, traditional and gay!).

Illustrations as always are fabulous. I wonder if similarly to her last series of Books (Hetty Feather), the development at the ends leads its way to further Tilly stories? Lets wait and see! Cant wait for the October release!

Maddie says

A cute plot clocking an underlying, extremely heart-breaking relationship between mother and daughter. Loved it!

Eve beinguniquebooks says

Tilly or Matilda is a young girl of nine living with her dad but dreaming always of her mum coming home and being a bridesmaid at their wedding.

Matty is her best friend she meets at school and sets off her bridesmaid dreams even more when Matty has to wear a special raspberry pink girly dress and be a bridesmaid which she doesn't want to do. Matty is more rough and tumble!

We learn throughout the book, the hope that Tilly has held since her mum left as she started drawing angry and blacked out pictures which meant she ended up in a clinic with an anorexic girl who gave her a tip to getting out, faking happy.

Through her daydreams, becoming bridesmaid by advertising herself as a rent a bridesmaid! She does get happier but soon her mum arrives back with a shock and her dad is acting strange around Miss Hope, her teacher's phone calls after they met at a wedding. As well as dealing with Marty becoming friends with Matty too and them hanging out a lot now as well.

Tilly is a great character that shows the epitome of typical issues and how they face young children growing up. Many people could be oblivious that children pick up on things and how they effect them differently not just on the surface. Anything can be faked but this book isn't faking anything true to the title embodies a great story dealing with relevant issues.

Sofia Fitzpatrick says

A very fun exciting book. I was sad to have finished it. I recommend it to everyone, children and adults alike.

Jonathan Peto says

I've never self-identified as a fangirl, but after reading quite a few of Wilson's novels to my daughter, I suppose I may as well admit to being a Jacqueline Wilson fangirl. Especially after this book.

Unlike the books starring Hetty Feather, this one has a contemporary setting. The main character, Tilly, lives with her dad because her artist mother has flown the coop. She doesn't see her mother much, her parents had never been married in the first place, and she gets obsessed about being a bridesmaid and weddings. My mother gagged when I told her about Tilly and I could not convince her that Tilly and her story were good. When my daughter picked it out and I saw the pink cover and read the blurb, I groaned, but Tilly's friends are tomboys and put up with her and so might you. She rents herself out as a bridesmaid and there are a few slow moments but if you're a fangirl like me, you'll probably love it. Otherwise, you may want to pick up the first Hetty Feather book.

Swati Daftuar says

May Wilson Never Stop Writing.

Layla says

Really loved this book!!

Bee (Heart Full of Books) says

I feel like Jacqueline Wilson has a lot to answer to with this whole 'you can only have one best friend' stuff. This philosophy definitely reared it's ugly head a lot when I was in primary school more than ten years ago! You'd think the message would've changed by now so it's not as toxic and creates less drama. That's literally my only complaint about Jacqueline Wilson's stories, otherwise they're really great reads.

Cassandra says

meh. Nice that JW is finally moving on from all her books being *exactly* the same (i.e based on her own childhood), although this one was still very predictable.

The problem is that she so obviously tries to include political correctness and diversity - three weddings, so lets do an old couple, a gay couple, and then make the conventional wedding in the story be less fun anyway (but there is only one non-white person) - just irks me. I don't know how to explain this! She just *has* to reference Frozen, YouTubers, OMG, and Inside Out, to name a few. You can show what time a book is set by much more subtle methods than this - it's like she still writes exactly the same stuff, but inserts different relevant pop culture to show it's set in 2016.

Oh well I liked how Tilly had a bit of depth, with her drawings and whatnot.

Aoife says

Nine-year-old Tilly's dream is to be a bridesmaid at her Mum and Dad's wedding. Living alone with her Dad trying to make the best of their fresh start after Tilly's Mum left, this doesn't seem possible. After Tilly's new best friend Matty gives Tilly her raspberry pink bridesmaid dress, Tilly decides to take matters of being a bridesmaid into her own hands. Advertising in her local newsagents a rent a bridesmaid service without her Dad's knowledge, Tilly soon gets replies. Being elderly Mr and Mrs Flowers bridesmaid, and teacher Simon and book shop owner Matthew's bridesmaid enables Tilly and her Dad to properly settle into their new start and begin to enjoy their new life. All this is put at stake when an old face turns up from their past.

This is a heartwarming story of a young girl fulfilling her dream of being a bridesmaid. 'Rent a Bridesmaid' is a story about growing up, adapting to life as it changes, and about the separation of parents and the breaking up of families. But mostly it is about the power of friendship between people of all ages. I thoroughly enjoyed this book even though I'm twenty one and this book is aimed at children aged eight and upwards. I've been a fan of Jacqueline Wilson since I was a child. I've been wanting to read this book ever since I heard her read an excerpt of it when I saw her in Dublin at the Dublin International Literature Festival. I'd recommend this book to Jacqueline Wilson fans of all ages who adore stories about friendship.

Louise says

My favourite part of 'Rent a Bridesmaid' would have to be the Flowers wedding as they are such a sweet couple. I love it when her Father lets her do it and is so nice. What I have written is a bit complicated as I don't want to spoil it for anyone but if you see a book you think will be good then read it! And by the way, this is one of those books!

Beebie May Hutley says

Rent a Bridesmaid is certainly not up there with her best books but it's sweet nonetheless. As all Jacqueline Wilson books do, this one covers the current 'hot' social topics; mainly gay marriage and dads as single parents.

I loved the use of Tilly's drawings throughout the book which subtly mocked psycho-babble about children's drawings showing suppressed feelings; all at the same time as her drawings being a completely accurate representation of her feelings. I think (I hope) the point was that while her drawings might have just been a monster, or yes, were sometimes showing something more sinister, children's emotions run deeper than anything that we can analyse from a piece of paper. Tilly's conflicted feelings at the end of the book when her mum came back is a case in point here.

I will be donating Rent a Bridesmaid to the library at the school I work at and I am looking forward to hearing what the pupils think of it!
