



## The Night Rainbow

*Claire King*

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Under the sweltering heat of the summer sun, five-year-old Pea - and her vivid imagination - run wild in the meadows behind her home on the edge of a small village in Southern France.

Pea's father died in an accident, and now she only has her little sister, Margot, for company. Their mother is too sad to take care of them; she left her happiness in the hospital last year, along with the first baby.

Overwhelmed by grief, isolated from the other villagers, and pregnant again, Maman has withdrawn to a place where Pea cannot reach her, no matter how hard she tries.

When Pea meets Claude, a neighbour who seems to love the meadow as she does, she wonders if he could be their new papa. But the villagers view their friendship with suspicion. What secret is Claude keeping in his strange, empty house?

"Pea is a heroine you won't forget." (Maggie O'Farrell)

Emotional and beautifully written, you'll be on tenterhooks throughout (Stylist )

An original, beguiling debut about the consequences of an imaginatively lived life (Marie Claire )

"Perfect for reading groups."

## **The Night Rainbow Details**

Date : Published April 2nd 2013 by Bloomsbury USA (first published February 14th 2013)

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Author : Claire King

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## From Reader Review *The Night Rainbow* for online ebook

### Kathleen says

Een ontroerend en tegelijk grappig boek dat je helemaal in het zuiden van Frankrijk doet wanen. Ik hou sowieso van boeken die geschreven zijn vanuit het perspectief van een kind zonder dat het kinderachtig is. De meeste auteurs kunnen dat best goed, maar de vertelstijl in dit boek was zo overtuigend en zo écht dat ik er nu van uit ga dat er ergens in een klein dorpje in Zuid Frankrijk meisje rondloopt dat Pea heet.

Een aanrader.

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### Angela M says

A touching story of sadness , loss , death and grief see through the eyes of five year old Pea will at times break your heart . This is A beautifully written story of how Pea copes with her life and ultimately how kindness eases the pain .

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### Magdalen says

Claire King's debut novel, *The Night Rainbow*, is a beautiful book. Set in the French countryside, it is a poignant and gripping story written from the point of view of five-year-old girl whose mother is too grief-stricken to properly care for her. **Read full review at Wordhorse.** <http://www.wordhorse.co.uk/review-the...>

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### Deborah Pickstone says

A rather charming debut novel that deals with death and childhood sensitively and believably. I will look for more from this author.

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### Kirsty says

*The Night Rainbow*, Claire King's debut novel, has been highly praised by such firmly established novelists as Joanne Harris and Maggie O'Farrell. It has been promised that the book is 'an unforgettable novel about innocence and experience, grief and compassion and the dangers of an overactive imagination'.

*The Night Rainbow* is told from the first person perspective of five-year-old Peony, called by the affectionate nickname of Pea. Pea lives on the edge of a small village in the South of France, along with her heavily pregnant English mother and four-year-old Margot. Their mother, Joanna, is overwhelmed by grief. Pea tells us in her honest voice how, when her mother came back from hospital the preceding year, 'She had changed from fat to thin, but she didn't bring back a baby like she promised. She left it at the hospital, along with her happiness'. Despite being pregnant again, Joanna has the added sadness of having to contend with the

bottomless well of grief left after her French husband Amaury's death: 'One day in spring, he was driving his tractor on a hill and he fell off it and was squashed... Without Papa here there is never a very good time to be in the house, so every day we have to decide where to go'.

Pea's voice is captured immediately, and many childish proclamations are woven throughout: 'half of me is sunny and hot because I'm sitting in a ribbon of outside', Pea tells us. When introducing herself and Margot, she says, 'Margot is like me and she is not like me. I am five and a half, Margot is only four, but she's tall for her age. We both like cuddles and insects and cuddling insects and we both have freckles and green eyes, like Maman... In the sunlight Maman's eyes are kaleidoscopes'. The girls are endearing from the outset. Pea describes the way in which 'Margot dreams about tiny people that live in the cupboards and have parties on Thursdays, and about jigsaws that make themselves'.

Such childish magic has been included that it is difficult not to love the very bones of the girls from the first chapter. Margot quickly assumes the role of mother on their daily rambles: 'Pea, look at you, you haven't even got a hat on', and 'Today I am the maman, she says, so you will do as you're told'. The girls have taken it upon themselves to try and find Maman's lost happiness. 'There are more than a thousand things in the world,' Margot reasons, 'and one of them must make Maman happy'. The girls are self-sufficient and often fix their own meals. They even take it upon themselves, in one particularly sad passage, to wash their clothes as Maman has forgotten to. Their love for Maman, and for each other, is touching.

Whilst on a trip to a nearby meadow to get out of the oppressive house, the girls meet a middle-aged man named Claude, who is inseparable from his dog Merlin. They see him as 'a strange kind of grownup', who does as the girls tell him to. He tells them that he knew their Papa, and a relationship of shared memories is built up accordingly. Claude becomes a steady part of their lives, a constant in uncertain times. He has his own sadness to contend with, and tells the girls that he is 'a bit broken', but their friendship is all the more strong because of it.

King's descriptions of the landscapes in *The Night Rainbow* are a definite strength and, like Pea's narrative voice, she has captured them perfectly. Many of these observations contain distinctly childish aspects: 'I try to think about the rain. It is like people clapping, as though the clouds have done something clever... or maybe the swallows have put shoes on and are dancing on our roof'.

Pea and Margot are two of the most realistic childish protagonists I have come across in fiction, and they are distinctly memorable in consequence. The differences in their personalities – Pea is the worrier and Margot the one who reassures, for example: 'Even though I am biggest she is the bravest', Pea tells us – have been balanced wonderfully. King has successfully married together the idylls of a childhood lives in the rural South of France with the realities of loss, grief and loneliness. A marvellous debut.

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### **Patrice Hoffman says**

I can't say I've read any books written from the perspective of a child as young as Five and a half. *The Night Rainbow* by Claire King provides us with the voice of Pea who lives in the south of France with her younger sister Margot, and her mother. Pea is tasked with helping her mother feel happier after having lost her husband and child in the same year and with helping her sister Margot create new games for them to play in their expansive fields.

Pea and Margot are definitely independant, fun loving children who do a great job at carrying this novel with

their adventures. Pea's voice of innocence works well not to bring the tone of the story down although there is much to be sad about. The mother is pregnant and highly depressed after being dealt such a hard blow of losing her husband. Pea can't seem to make her happy and she gets the brilliant idea of asking their new found friend Claude to be their new Papa. Did I fail to mention Claude? Well Claude and his dog Merlin befriends the girls by giving them gifts and spending time with them. I know, I know.

Claire King writes spectacularly from a child's point of view using vivid imagery with fantastical qualities only imagination can provide. I actually felt sorry for Pea most of the novel because I felt she was neglected and left to deal with life on her own but she still seemed happy. She's only aware of the danger that a child would encounter such as going to use the bathroom in the middle of the night or having a nightmare. The reader is aware that the mother pretty much checked out which is maddening as well as heartbreaking. Pea doesn't see what we the readers are able to see through experience and that's why her friendship with Claude kept me glued to the pages with angst.

Overall, I really enjoyed this atmospheric novel written by Claire King. There are many reasons this novel could be sad for readers but the light-hearted air of Pea's voice, recounting her summer adventures enables this novel to be pretty enjoyable. I long for the days when I didn't have a care in the world and could see things through a child's eye. I recommend this novel for all who long for those days as well.

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## **Emma says**

First of all let me just say ... this book made me feel all the feels!

The Night Rainbow is a beautifully written book about 5 year old Pea and her Maman (Mother). After the death of her new born baby and her husband Joanna is in a serious depression, neglecting her daughter and spending all of her time in bed. Pea and Margot look after themselves, spending their days out in the meadow and in the beautiful French countryside. Maman does not feed them properly or bathe them and they are basically left to fend for themselves.

They meet Claude and his dog Merlin and an unlikely friendship is formed, while I was suspicious of Claude's intentions at first we learn that he really is just a kind hearted man who is trying to help. He gives the girls food and attention and nurtures them.

The writing in this book and the descriptions were fantastic, I really felt like I was right there in the French countryside with Pea, I could taste the peaches, olives, baguettes and biscuits as she ate them. I could feel the hot summer breeze and her loneliness, I was COMPLETELY lost in this book.

I adored Pea as a character, Claire King does an amazing job of capturing the innocence of a five year old and it made me nostalgic. I think we'd all like to be children again to go back and see things as magical and wonderful in the way Pea does.

The relationships were both heart warming and heart wrenching at the same time. They were always believable and I cried a few times while reading this book. I loved how all of the characters developed and matured throughout the book. There were times when I wanted to jump into the pages and comfort Pea and give Maman a piece of my mind but everything worked out for the best I feel.

I completely adored this book it is a summer read in my opinion and I will be fishing it out again to reread

next year for sure.

5 out of 5 stars!!

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### **Phil says**

This book made me laugh and cry, something which rarely happens for me..... the writing is lyrical and beautiful, the story is all embracing; impossible to put down, and the twists are subtle and satisfying. Pea, the central character is someone i won't forget in a long, long time.

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### **Brooke says**

“You should be careful with opening doors to secrets, says Claude. Sometimes secrets are secrets because that's the best way.”

"The Night Rainbow", follows Pea and her little sister, Margot as they spend their days running free, inventing games in the meadow behind their house. But Pea starts to worry, because recently her father has died in an accident, and her mother has just lost a baby. Pea's mother is English so she is already isolated in this small French village and begins to retreat even further. Pea and Margot stay out of her way and try to make things better. When Pea and Margot met Claude on one of their outdoor adventures they find that he loves the meadow just as much as them...but Claude is hiding a secret...

King decided to tell this story from Pea's (five and a half year old) perspective. I think it was an overall good choice, but there were times I was a little sick of reading from her perspective. Because of her young age the writing is very choppy, but I did think it was necessary for the story to be told in this way. It all comes down to tastes I suppose. Pea has this wonderful imagination and outlook of the world. She is smart and loves the outdoors. I appreciated how King chose to write her with simple yet profound words. Claude and Margot are also great characters. I was very much invested and wondering how things were going to play out in the end, even though I guessed the "twist" halfway in, it still made for a beautiful story.

Metaphors are something I love in books. This story is certainly full of them aka: the night rainbow. I really think this is a perfect book for a book club to read, because there are so many thought provoking and unanswered questions at the end. Personally, I think this did not hinder the story but made it better. Not all books need to wrap up nicely in the end, but need to make us think about these characters and the authors intent on writing them. How else will they stay with us long after we read about them?

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### **Hedi [ The Dutch Reader ] says**

*“Maman!*

*The word seems to come out of me all on its own. I think it's strange my mouth would do that. The rest of my head knows she's never there.”*

This was something i never read before. I came across this book at a Bookconvention and thought that it would be fun to read from a little girls perspective. Well Pea, short for Peony, is the most smart and beautiful

little five year old i have ever read about. We meet Pea in a very troubling time in her life. Her mother is depressed, because of the loss of her baby and her husband, Peony's father died in an accident and now she is all alone with her little sister Margot and her imagination.

Pea is quite grown-up for her age, but i think that that comes from the circumstances in her life. She is trying to make her mother happy and is trying to run the household. When Pea and Margot run around the countryside they meet a man, Claude. There is a kind of sadness about him, but he had taken an interest in the little girls, he is kind to them, plays with them but keeps his distance. There is sadness and loss threaded through the lives of Pea, Margot, Maman and Claude. It never quite goes away, but nor does the sense of how wonderful the world is, and what a grand thing it is to be alive.

There is little to say about this story without giving too much away. What i can say about this book is that it is beautifully constructed, with twists and turns that are never obvious. The voice in which Pea is portrayed is so true to character, you really see the world through a little girl's eyes. She made me want to be five and a half, to take such delight in the world, to notice so many important things, to be caught in flights of fancy and amusement, to watch the strange ways adults behave from the sidelines, and most of all to have the faith in the world that comes from living in the moment.

Although there was a lot of magic in Pea's life i saw a lot of danger too. The loneliness, the neglect.. every alarm sign went off. It made me want to shake her mother to realization, look at your little girl, she is still here.. she needs you! All i can say about this book is that i felt true and it was a story that pulled on your heartstrings.

The reason that i didn't rate this 5 or 4 stars is the fact that some times i couldn't deal with the 5 year old perspective, i would have liked to see some other perspectives. It is a beautiful story but the ending also felt a little bit rushed, it was there in a second out of nowhere. To leave this at a positive note, read this book, it tells you so much about the world and teaches you so much! Loved it!

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### **Annette S. says**

Telling a story, especially an adult story, from the point of view of a child is a very difficult thing to get right. Among authors who have been successful in achieving this are Emma Donoghue in *Room*, John Boyne in *The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas* and John Harding in *Florence & Giles*. With the publication of *The Night Rainbow*, Claire King joins their ranks.

Pea and her sister Margot live with their English mother in the south of France. Their French father died a few months previously and Maman, heavily pregnant and suffering in the blistering summer heat is physically and emotionally distant. Pea tells us that Maman 'left her happiness in the hospital with the baby,' a miscarriage from the previous year.

Pea and Margot spend their days playing in the meadow, searching for the one thing that will make their mother happy again and it is here they meet Claude, a mysterious man with a limp and a dog with whom the girls become fast friends.

King uses a mix of language in the book. Through Pea's eyes we see the meadows and streams as magical places filled with fairies and wonder. But it is the matter of fact way in which Pea deals with her mother's negligence where the author's talents really shine. The way Ms King shows us how a five year old child interprets her mother's depression is skillful and believable and my heart went out to Pea. I longed to cook her a good meal and give her a hug.

Pea and Margot are characters who stay with you, long after the last page is turned and it is testament to

Claire King's talent that I still think about Pea and hope that she, Maman -and Margot - are happy.

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### **TM Upchurch says**

At five and a half, Pea understands that sometimes babies don't come home from the hospital, fathers die, and mothers need a lot of rest if they are pregnant again -- so Pea makes her own food, tries to tidy the house to cheer up Maman, and takes four-year-old Margot to play and eat peaches in the meadow.

It's the kind of story that makes you want to adopt the main character; to jump through the pages, run in, and make it all right -- but we can only watch as Pea tries to mend her family.

This is the voice of a small girl, written by a mother of small girls. It's as charming as it sounds, with the clear, simple voice of the child interspersed with those flashes of intuition that five-year-olds produce occasionally, just to remind us that they understand more than we know.

Favourite character? Margot -- little sister, voice of reason, bearer of night rainbows.

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### **Blair says**

No rating causes me as much consternation and angst as the three-star rating. In my time on Goodreads, I've used it to mean everything from 'this was a great concept/something I was really looking forward to, but the execution was quite poor' to 'this was a really good book, but it just lacked something/wasn't essentially my kind of thing'. *The Night Rainbow* is another should-have-been-3-and-a-half (but I can't quite bring myself to give it 4). Claire King's debut is a thoroughly charming tale, full of atmosphere and laced with sadness.

Five-year-old Pea (short for Peony) and her younger sister Margot live in the South of France with their English mother. The story is set over the course of one very hot summer when Pea and Margot are left to roam the countryside surrounding their farm largely unchecked. Their mother is heavily pregnant and depressed, having lost both her previous baby and the girls' father within the year. Pea and Margot play together every day in the fields, inventing games and trying to work out what they can do to help their mother and make her happy again. Then they meet Claude, a loner who befriends them and dazzles them with gifts - sweets, a treehouse, even bicycles. However, the reader sees what the adults in the village see: that Claude's interest in the children is worrying, and that the family desperately needs outside help.

I received a copy of *The Night Rainbow* from Netgalley, and I have to admit that I probably wouldn't have read it otherwise. The reason for that sentiment is that Pea narrates the story herself, and I am emphatically not a fan of child narrators. It's testament to the author's ability that I really enjoyed this book despite that. Pea's voice is authentically childlike, but rarely irritating, and it's very effective at evoking the atmosphere of the French countryside, the magic and the boredom of village life, and the stifling heat of summer. I didn't find it difficult to get drawn into the story and enjoy Pea's innocent, imaginative descriptions of the world around her.

There's a significant twist in this book which I guessed fairly early on, and I'm not sure whether or not I was supposed to. I did feel the reader was definitely meant to figure it out on their own - as there's no proper reveal - but the fact that I spotted it quickly affected my reading of the book thereafter, as I was looking for further clues or suggestions in the narrative. How soon you see it will probably depend on how closely you examine the story: some readers will probably guess right at the beginning, others might manage to make it all the way through to the end without realising. I will say that the author did an excellent job of weaving this



secret into the narrative - there are many parts that must have been incredibly difficult to write without making it obvious.

My other (semi-)complaint is that there just isn't very much to the plot. The description in the blurb is, I think, a bit misleading: it didn't seem there was *that* much suspicion or secrecy surrounding Claude, and the situation wasn't played for drama like it might have been in a different kind of book. I'm not saying this is a bad thing, but I was expecting more tension in the build-up to the book's climax. And the night rainbow itself doesn't really have much significance - apart from being a reminder of the power of imagination, which is the key element of the story.

*The Night Rainbow* is a slow-paced, sedate book, highly redolent of the haze of summer and the enchantment of childhood. In this, it reminded me of *The Book of Summers* by Emylia Hall, and I would probably have enjoyed it more if I'd read it on a suitably hot and sunny day rather than finishing it while quite literally snowed in to my house! If you enjoy stories with child narrators, you're going to love this. If, like me, you're not usually keen, this book may very well convert you. While I feel it lacks the impact needed to be truly memorable, it's sweet and engaging - but save it for the summer.

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### **A.J. Waines says**

It's hard to put into words just how good this book is. I normally read crime and psychological thrillers, so it was refreshing to look at another genre for a change. In a nutshell it is about how a little girl copes with her mother heavily pregnant (and barely capable of scraping a meal together) and an absent (deceased) father. It takes place during a hot summer in rural France and follows Pea as she explores her world, tries to make sense of what is happening and struggles to look after herself.

The writing is fresh, original, poignant, funny, evocative and atmospheric. The language is gorgeous - the voice of five year old Pea spot on in pitch and content.

'I stare my eyes hard so the tears can't get out.'

'Her face is the most wrinkled face I know. It looks like a peach stone sucked clean.'

'It is hot, but in a nice way, as though the storm put the sticky summer in a washing machine...'

Truly aspirational for any writer, in the detail, observations and imagery through Pea's naive and innocent eyes. And for any reader - this is pure delight. Highly recommended!

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### **Rurae says**

This is an amazing, must read book. It's not my usual genre - which is romance, which I read like crack!

But it is sooooo beautiful. I read this for a real life book group I am part of and I'm so glad my friend picked this as it's very different to anything I've read in a long time.

It is told from five year old Pea's pov and her voice is very strong and real. If you've ever been lonely or unhappy as a child Pea will take you right back there to those feelings.

This book broke my heart but it also put it back together again. It made me feel so much for the various characters and there's quite a big twist that shocked me even more when I realised it and which made the book even sadder.

It is also very evocative and when you are reading the passages where Pea and her mother go to the food market you can almost be there. It brought back sun soaked memories of European holidays mooching around colorful markets full of gorgeous food and spices.

I can't rec this enough. It's a short read and very different to most things out there. I predict great things for Claire King.

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### **Eileen says**

This is a haunting story, narrated by a little girl whose pregnant, recently widowed mother is lost in grief. Unique and intense in a quiet way, *The Night Rainbow* transports the reader back to the thought processes and perceptions of a young child. You see the world through her eyes. I suspect it takes a talented writer to do this, and Claire King has succeeded beautifully! A few colorful characters lend warmth and some humor - a welcome relief to the underlying loneliness. Parts are funny, and parts made me weep. It is skillfully wrought; the well-developed plot leaves the reader both wanting more, and strangely uplifted! Maggie O'Farrell's endorsement on the back cover sums it up : 'At once moving and gripping, elegant and spare'!

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### **Teresa says**

Claire King's debut novel is an absolute delight with a narrator who will grab your heartstrings and never let go. Set in Southern France, during a blistering hot summer, this is the story of five year old Pea aka Peony aka Pivoine and her younger sister Margot. Their mother has retreated into herself following a miscarriage and the later death of their Papa. Maman is heavily pregnant again but Pea and Margot are left to their own devices, wandering the countryside where they meet up with Claude, a middle aged man with whom they strike up a friendship. Not everyone approves of their friendship but Maman's absence, both physical and emotional, means that the girls have to fend for themselves.

Narrated by Pea, this is a beautifully written story with equal amounts of joy and sadness. Pea and Margot's interactions will make you smile as they strive to make a plan to cheer up Maman but the smiles quickly vanish when their efforts fall flat. Yes, there is sadness here but the overall mood is one of optimism as Pea just bounces back and looks for another remedy for her mother's despair.

The author has captured Pea's five year old voice perfectly, that eternal optimism, the desire to live in the moment, the clarity of vision which can see when grown-ups are just overthinking and making things more complicated than what they really are. One could learn a lot from a child like Pea. This is a sparkling, quirky, captivating debut, highly recommended.

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### **Jane says**

I put down my copy of *The Night Rainbow* a few days ago and it is still tugging at my heartstrings. Tugging

because inside its pages I met a child whose voice, whose world, whose entire existence was so utterly perfectly realised.

We met in southern France in a blisteringly hot summer when Pea – short for Peony – was just five and a half years old. She spent that summer outside, running wild in the country and in her own imagination, with her little sister, Margot, in tow.

Maman stayed inside. She was heavily pregnant and she had withdrawn from the world, since she lost a child late in an earlier pregnancy, since Papa was killed in an accident.

Pea tried to help, tried to be good, tried to draw her mother back into the world, but nothing worked.

As they wandered in the countryside Pea and Margot met a man who had withdrawn from the world too. He was called Claude, and his dog was called Merlin. He took an interest in the girls, he was kind, but he kept a distance.

There is sadness and loss threaded through the lives of Pea, Margot, Maman and Claude. It never quite goes away, but nor does the sense of how wonderful the world is, and what a grand thing it is to be alive.

There's little that can be said about the story that doesn't say too much. But I can say that it is beautifully constructed, with gentle twists and turns that are never obvious but always right. And I can say that it is told in a voice that is captivating and so very, very real. A voice that always rang true.

Pea pulled me into her world, and she made me see and feel things as she did. I felt the sun beating down. I saw the parched grass and the meadows full of flowers. I tasted the baguettes that were delivered every morning, the peaches that were there to be pulled from the trees.

And she made me want to be five and a half, to take such delight in the world, to notice so many important things, to be caught in flights of fancy and amusement, to watch the strange ways adults behave from the sidelines, and most of all to have the faith in the world that comes from living in the moment.

But though I saw the magic in Pea's life I saw the danger too, the loneliness and that neglect. Light and shade.

That made me want to be a grown-up again, so that I could talk to people, so that I could do something to help. I don't know what, but I had been drawn in, and I cared. Because Pea's acute childish observation, the wealth of detail, the myriad observations, allowed me to see adult emotions and situations that she couldn't comprehend.

There were just one or two moments when I wondered if Pea was just a little wise, a little too capable for her age. But maybe that was the result of her life and situation.

I was caught up in Pea's world, and in her life, from the first page to the very last. And she still hasn't quite let go.

And, of course, for all of this to work so beautifully, there had to be an intelligent and sensitive writer working in the background: Claire King pulled the strings quietly, invisibly, and I am intrigued to see what she might do next.

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## Monika says

I picked *The Night Rainbow* up from the library on my way out of town without a clue about the subject or author, solely on the recommendation of a relative who wanted to discuss it when our vacations at the same cottage overlapped this summer.

I read this through in one day, beginning to end. It has short chapters, which made it easy to put down when I needed to see to dinner or tuck my daughter into bed. The short chapters also made it easy to sneak one in while tending a pot on the stove or waiting for my daughter to finish her bedtime routine. The writing style was different, and a welcome change of pace. (If you don't care for it after a couple of chapters, this may not be the book for you.)

Reading about the south of France makes almost any book a great beach read, but King's narrative style was what really drew me in. This story is told from the perspective of a very precocious girl nearly my daughter's age, and the characterization was **spot on**. Everything from this child's speech patterns to her heightened perception of reality was uncanny. It goes without saying that the story itself was beautiful in its own right.

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## Rebecca McNutt says

*The Night Rainbow* is an excellent novel written from the perspective of a five-year-old, an odd character for adult literature but still a girl with a lot to say. She and her younger sister try in their own simplistic ways to understand why life isn't everything it should be. Their pregnant mother retreats into her "sadness" and becomes reclusive, still grieving the sudden loss of her husband and also her miscarried infant from prior times. Their father was taken by an untimely accident, leaving them to deal with their broken family on their own. When they meet Claude, everything suddenly seems to be looking up. Claude is a kind but sad man, and often the girls see him and his dog and finally feel like there's someone else in the world who cares about them - but the rest of the town begs to differ, sensing something falsely suspicious about Claude's behavior. This book can take some getting used to if you've never read writing from a child's point-of-view before, and at times it's a very sad story of neglect and mental illness, but all the same it's a wonderful book of coming to terms with life and death and trying to start over.

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