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Butterfly Brain

Books Reviewed:

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Reviewer:

[Andrea Reece](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

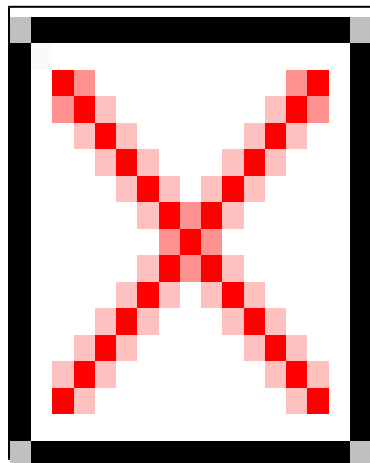
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5



[4]

Written in poppy, bouncy rhyme that asks to be read aloud, Laura Dockrill's book opens with a warning: this is a cautionary tale and 'rather strange and sort of gory'. Gus certainly seems to be setting himself up for a fall, arguing with everyone, kids and grown-ups alike, and constantly leaning back on his chair no matter how many times he's told not to. Sure enough, the inevitable happens, Gus topples backwards and cracks his head open. It's at this point that the story begins to open up into something much more interesting and profound than it originally seemed. Gus's dreams, imagination and memories leak out through the crack that's opened up in his head. It's a genuinely disconcerting image but the dark is lightened - literally in the illustrations - by the arrival of a golden butterfly, his very own 'brain butterfly' in fact. Together they will recover all of Gus's memories, even those that frighten him or make him sad, and that's where they find the cause of his anger, the anger that has made him so intractable. The story is one of grief, loss but ultimately recovery as Gus can finally talk to his dad and grandmother about the secret he's kept locked inside himself. Despite the weight of issues being discussed, the verse retains its spark, offering reassurance and pointing the way to a brighter future for Gus and anyone facing the loss he's experienced. Gwen Millward's illustrations are equally accessible and emotionally true and it's a book that will prompt young readers to examine their own feelings and fears, and to understand why anger can be a response to sadness or anxiety.

Laura Dockrill talks about her book in this [interview for Books for Keeps](#) [5].

Source URL (retrieved on Oct '20): <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/244/childrens-books/reviews/butterfly-brain>

Links:

[1] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/butterfly-brain>

[2] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/244>

[3] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/andrea-reece>

[4] [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Butterfly-Brain-Laura-Dockrill/dp/1848128681/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=laura dockrill&qid=1598730299&s=books&sr=1-3](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Butterfly-Brain-Laura-Dockrill/dp/1848128681/ref=sr_1_3?dchild=1&keywords=laura+dockrill&qid=1598730299&s=books&sr=1-3)

[5] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/243/childrens-books/articles/featured-author/an-interview-with-laura-dockrill>