



The Story of Tracy Beaker

By Jacqueline Wilson

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TRACY BEAKER'S NOT exactly sure what her mother does, because Tracy has been in foster care for as long as she can remember. Maybe one day Tracy's mother will show up and reclaim her long-lost daughter, but in the meantime, Tracy's doing everything she can to take care of herself—even though she has to share her birthday cake. Then a journalist shows up to write a story about their orphanage, and she and Tracy strike up a special friendship.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Wilson (*Double Act*; *Bad Girls*) presents an insightful portrait of 10-year-old Tracy in the girl's own words. Readers initially make her acquaintance through entries in a fill-in book entitled "My Book About Me." Her revelations are by turn caustic, funny and heartbreaking. Living in a group home for children after two unsuccessful stints in foster homes, Tracy repeatedly expresses her fervent hope and pitiable conviction that her roaming, much-idolized mother will appear to take her away. "There's not much point making friends because I expect to be moving on soon," resolves the heroine, whose tough-kid veneer is wrenchingly transparent. An aspiring author, Tracy takes solace in her autobiographical writing and her new friendship with Cam, a writer who visits the home while researching an article. Despite Tracy's passionate attempts to persuade Cam to take her in as a foster child, her fate is uncertain at the close of the novel. Yet her indomitable spirit and grit leaves little doubt that she will end up on top. Sharratt's drawings help to keep the mood light, as Wilson again shapes a convincing and memorable heroine with a snappy, fresh voice. Ages 8-12.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 4-6-A first-person narrative about a bright and feisty girl. Tracy has spent most of her life in the British foster-care system, always fantasizing that her mother will come back for her. When Cam, a writer, comes to the home to do research for an article, she and Tracy connect. Not intimidated by the angry 10-year-old's tantrums and fibs, Cam exerts a positive influence on Tracy, who finally makes overtures of friendship to some of the other kids. Tracy is at times a tough character to like-she is rude, sarcastic, and unfriendly. However, perceptive readers will quickly see beneath the outrageous tales and bravado a vulnerable youngster desperate to be loved. The book ends rather abruptly, with Tracy asking Cam to be her foster parent, but readers will be glad to know a sequel is imminent. Sharratt's witty cartoonlike drawings enliven this universal tale of a child struggling to belong. Readers will root for Tracy, who never admits to tears, only to attacks of hay fever. A well-paced and involving novel in which a memorable character learns to cope better with her very real problems.

B. Allison Gray, South Country Library, Bellport, NY

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 3-6. British author Wilson has stepped into the spotlight as one of the sharpest authors writing for middle-graders. This book, already published in the U.K., actually precedes some of the titles published here, and it marks Wilson's first collaboration with illustrator Nick Sharratt whose jaunty ink drawings are so much a part of books such as *Double Act* (1998) and *Bad Girls* [BKL Ja 1 & 15 01]. The young heroine here is 10-year-old Tracy Beaker, who has been in foster care since she was a baby. Tracy is sure that her mother, whom Tracy imagines is famous and quite busy, will come for her someday, but in the meantime, Tracy's trying to rope almost anyone into being her foster parent. Kids who have read Louise Rennison's *Angus, Thongs, and Full-Frontal Snogging* (2000) will recognize Tracy's voice as that of a younger Georgia, bitingly funny, amusingly bitter, and at odds with the world. Tracy's heartache and the bravado she musters to cover it will be readily identifiable by readers, who will appreciate both her honesty and her wit. *Ilene Cooper*

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Users Review

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