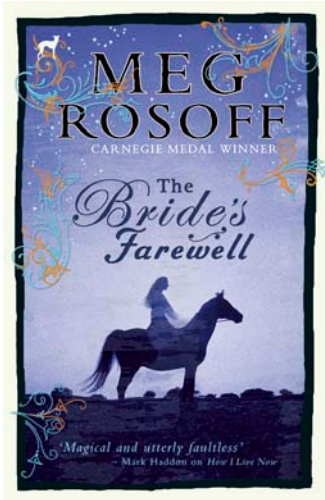


TALKING POINTS

CILIP Carnegie Medal Shortlist 2011



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards



THE BRIDE'S FAREWELL

by Meg Rosoff

1

'The dress in which she was to be married she left untouched, spread over a dusty chair.'

Why does Pell leave her wedding dress behind, and why is it 'untouched'? Is it an emotional parting?

Why has she chosen to leave at this particular moment? What does this tell us about Pell's state of mind?

2

What is Pell escaping from? Does she plan on leaving on her own, or does she intend to take her brother Bean with her?

Why does she allow him to join her?

3

'She felt carefully inside the best teapot for the coins put away for her dowry...'

What is a dowry? What kind of historical context does this give the story?

Although the author isn't specific about the date, what other clues are there as to when the novel is set?

4

When Pell discovers the blanket in her bag, what do we learn about her sister Lou?

Did Lou know Pell's secret plan? How do you think she knew?
What does Pell assume will happen to Lou now she has gone?

5

What kind of relationships does Pell have with people generally?
Why is her relationship with Bean different to her relationship to other members of her family?

When Pell meets Esther and her children, how does their life as a family compare with that of the Ridleys?



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6
What do we learn of Pell through her relationships with animals?
Why are these animals such a major part of her life?
Would you describe Jack and Dicken as pets? If not, why not?
When Pell is finally reunited with Jack, how do they both react? Why does she walk away and leave him 'to his new life'?

7
How hard is life for the characters in this book, the Ridley family and the gypsies? How does poverty affect their lives on a daily basis?
Throughout the book, there are references to food and the struggle to find enough to eat. Why does the author constantly draw our attention to this?
In what way does acquiring food to survive on a daily basis influence the path that Pell takes in life?

8
What does the novel tell us about women and attitudes towards women at this time?
Would you describe Pell as a conventional women? In what way does she differ from her sisters, for example?
'To the neighbours it looked like carelessness to lose four boys and keep the girls, who weren't worth half so much alive?'
Why would the neighbours think that of the girls?

9
What hints does the author give about Bean's true parentage?
What does Esther mean when she says she was 'wronged' by a preacher? To what lengths did she go to get her revenge?
When Pell hands over 'what money she had left to Bean's mother', how is she 'repaying a lapsed family debt'? Do you think she was right to do what she did?

10
Despite her aversion for 'human society' Pell feels most settled with Dogman. Why does this relationship work? Is he better suited to her than Birdie would have been?
In what ways did Dogman let Pell down, and vice versa? Why does Pell return to him finally?

