

BOOKRAPT



THE BAY OF PLENTY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

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***The readers of Broken Wheel recommend* by Katarina Bivald translated from the Swedish edition by Alice Menzies**

Publisher: Catto & Windus

RRP \$35.00

It's an entertaining construct to weave a passion for reading into letters exchanged with a book lover in another country. Their shared interest leads an elderly woman in a small, run-down town in Iowa to invite her younger correspondent for a holiday.

Sara, recently made redundant from a Swedish bookshop, accepts her penfriend Amy's invitation and arrives in Broken Wheel with a suitcase of books. It doesn't take long for a problem to surface - Amy has died. Alone in Amy's house, 28-year-old Sara faces the fact that she's only lived her life through characters in books. Now it's time for her to meet real people, learn about small town America, and, most important in her eyes - introduce the locals to the pleasure of reading books.

The comical interactions and misunderstandings Sara experiences lead to many amusing situations. She attempts to understand the disheartened population of Broken Wheel through her only guidelines - the characters and plots of books. Unfortunately her reading doesn't help Sara cope with her feelings for Tom, Amy's nephew.

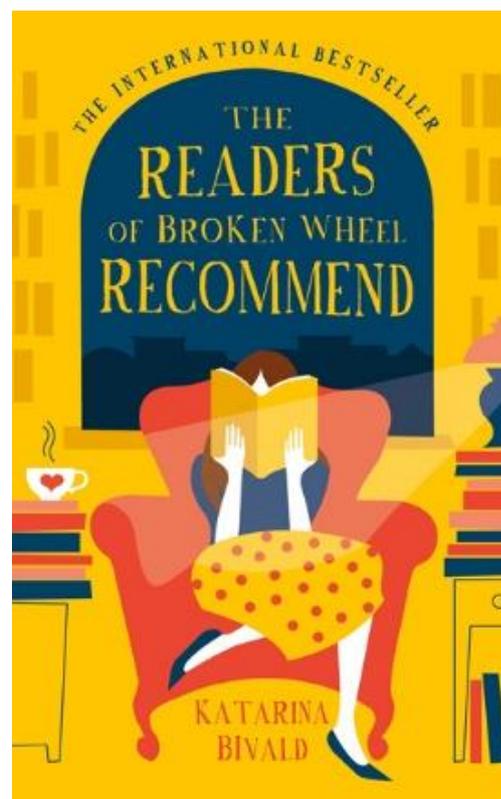
Sara's effort to convert the townsfolk into readers has surprising results. The individual characters are transformed by what they read, often with unexpected and hilarious outcomes. The readers of Broken Wheel blossom as they encounter humour, drama, redemption, and, of course, romance.

Sara is delighted to be accepted into their midst - although her visa will soon expire. How can she leave when she has found a place where she belongs?

There are many references throughout the storyline to well-known books and classics. Most connections and parallels work well, others strain a little to fit the plot. Nevertheless, new authors will be discovered and old favourites recalled. Keep a notepad handy.

Author's website:

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Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett

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