

Weathering By Lucy Wood Now she has returned with Pepper her six-year-old daughter to this damp and derelict place but--as she's quick to point out to local folk--she's only here to settle her mother's affairs sell the house and move on as soon as possible. Luke her closest neighbour had kept an eye out for her accompanying her to the hospital when her wrists and fingers could no longer flex to perform the jewelry and watch repairs that had earned her a meager living. Furthermore while the author does provide some of Pearl's backstory--telling how and why she first came to the house and how she felt about the place at the beginning--I would've liked to know more about the time before the isolated valley. 320 Weathering is a meandering almost dream-like novel in which a mother and daughter Ada and Pepper return temporarily to the decaying and isolated home of Ada's recently deceased mother Pearl. The cottage resists all attempts at renovation as the damp of the adjacent river and the constant rain and snow intrude on a daily basis and the ghost of Pearl seems to haunt every last corner - literally and figuratively. The relationships between three generations of women are explored as they constantly repeat and reflect one another and attempt to come to some sort of peace with themselves each other and their surroundings. I absolutely loved Weathering but if you're looking for a novel with pace and plot you may want to give this one a miss: the characters' journeys are slow and difficult and the narrative is rich with descriptive detail to the point where the house and the river on which it stands are really characters in themselves. She's capable of developing a fierce fondness for people yet has little idea how to express this; at the start of the novel she repeatedly butts at Ada's hip rather than giving her a hug and her disappointment when a feral cat refuses to return her love is poignant. Ada herself back in the very place from which she spent her whole life planning her escape seems inept and irresponsible at times; nonetheless it's clear that she's simply trying to do her best under challenging circumstances. Cooking is one of the ways that she not only shows affection and helps herself to feel under control but also the means through which she begins to find some sort of niche in a village stricken by rural decline. Pearl herself whose death has brought Ada and Pepper back to the house in the first place begins Weathering as a ghost trapped in the treacherous river and yet her plight is extraordinarily physical as she struggles against the current and the weeds. Gradually she fights her way back to the house and makes her presence known in a way that Ada doesn't seem to find surprising; we're almost straying into magical realism here albeit in a remarkably unwhimsical manner. There's a suggestion that runs through Weathering that only through memory will Ada and Pearl manage to repair their relationship as each of them dwells on their years living in the cottage together and on Pearl's unorthodox approach to motherhood. They don't explicitly discuss this - their interactions are small and few - but in the environment of the cottage in which the memories of years past seem to be as deeply ingrained in the walls as the ever-present damp they seem to be reconciled. Pepper a child whose life so far has lacked continuity and belonging takes to photographing things as physical record of memory only to be utterly devastated when she discovers that her camera lacks a film. There is a strong sense that the battle against the climate and the isolation will never be won that the house will never be comfortable and dry and that its occupants can only accept rather than overcome this situation. Pepper is as drawn to the river and its bird life as Pearl was before her and is enchanted by observing them but never is the landscape romanticised - indeed the river's unpredictable currents and sudden rises in water level are a constant threat. Similarly every tiny thing at the cottage whether it's getting the radiators going making a journey in Pearl's old car or even just painting a wall presents an exhausting challenge. Ada's former school friends Judy and Robbie are struggling to keep their farm running the local pub is frequently empty and serves terrible frozen meals; the village shop is exploitatively expensive devoid of fresh produce and sells bottled water and bad firewood at inflated prices when the pipes freeze over the winter. This book feels darker in tone a family story set in an isolated and old fashioned house and a location that shapes the lives of the family that live there - a mother and daughter who return to live there after her mother's death and the grandmother whose ghostly presence is given equal weight. Everything and everyone is damp soaked drenched freezing cold from Pearl who fell into the river to Ada and Pepper in their attempts to do up the house and keep the water out. But I didn't make much

progress and all through a very wet February I was still reading it and I finally finished it on this rainy day which saw a few wintery showers. I quite liked the writing and the story though and since I don't think I did the book any favours by leaving it so long in-between readings I do intend to reread it at some point. 320 An alternative cover edition for this ISBN can be found here Pearl doesn't know how she's ended up in the river - the same messy cacophonous river in the same rain-soaked valley she'd been stuck in for years. Ada Pearl's daughter doesn't know how she's ended up back in the house she left thirteen years ago - with no heating apart from a fire she can't light no way of getting around apart from an old car she's scared to drive and no company apart from echoing footsteps on the damp floorboards. Pepper has grown used to following her restless mother from place to place but this house with its faded photographs its boxes of cameras and its stuffed jackdaw is something new. Fascinated by the scattering of people she meets by the river that unfurls through the valley and by the strange old woman who sits on the bank with her feet in the cold coppery water Pepper doesn't know why anyone would ever want to leave. As the first frosts of autumn herald the coming of a long winter and Pepper and Ada find themselves irresistibly entangled with the life of the valley each will discover the ways that places can take root inside us and bind us together. The three main characters are weathering their personal storms as well as the constant rain in this place somewhere in rural England It's a quiet story in a way except for the river. The story is told through three distinct points of view : Pearl yes even though she's dead is alive and well in spirit and is here to tell us her story and there's Ada and her six year old daughter Pepper who owned my heart . With beautifully descriptive language and I don't mean in a flowery way Lucy Wood makes you hear and see that river feel the rain and the dampness and believe that Pearl is right there . Just so impressive how Wood moves us back and forth through the minds of Pearl Ada and Pepper connecting past and present and linking them through love hardship birds and of course the river . I was drawn into the story right from the start as Ada sprinkles the ashes of Pearl her mother into the river near Pearl's former home as her daughter Pepper asks what she's doing. Some of the situations 6 yo Pepper was left in drove me crazy as a mom the old home actually requires wood to be fed into the furnace to provide heat and hot water etc. I was looking for a more peaceful tale in the British countryside and got a bit more tension than I bargained for but this is a good book and it was worth my time for sure. There is a lot of figurative language here which I really enjoy and you'll get a good bit of backstory on Pearl's life and see interesting characteristics repeating in the generations. I think if you're in the mood for a multi-generational story told beautifully with interesting quirky characters and you enjoy the British countryside you'll probably enjoy this one too. 320 I have been spellbound by this beguiling and bewitching book; a book that speaks of mothers and daughters of memories and ghosts of the way people and places can hold us and form us and of other thing - fundamental things - that I can't quite put into words. Pepper has never had a place to call home and she is captivated by the house full of relics of her grandmother's life by the power and the beauty of the river and by the small community that welcomes her. Pearl Ada's mother hasn't quite left the place that was her home for so long and her spirit rises up from the river that has claimed her to reclaim her place in the lives and the memories of her daughter and her granddaughter. And even Ada herself begins to wonder as she recalls and begins to understand the past and as she is drawn back into the life of the world that she thought she had left behind thirteen years earlier. And so that you can appreciate how profoundly this novel speaks of mothers and daughter how our relationships and the roles that we play evolve how our understanding of each other and the world around us change overtime.

Beautiful quiet book about the relationship between three generations of women living (or having lived) in a remote cottage. 320 She spent a long time finding the right spot -- the correct angle of light complicated colours something to frame the shots with in the background, Then she set up the tripod selected a lens attached it and set the aperture and focus. For the way time seemed to slow down and stretch measured in the river's ripples rather than by clocks and mealtimes. To make some sort of record -- but of what she wasn't sure exactly, To notice things she wouldn't otherwise have noticed: dragonflies hunting the patterns of light the specific way that water poured over a dipper's

back. (page 124) It has been thirteen years since Ada has seen the house on the river where she grew up alone with her mother Pearl: The first thing Ada and Pepper do is to scatter Pearl's ashes on the water: A watery elemental spirit she creeps from the river and makes her presence known to her daughter and granddaughter up at the house. She recognizes now how isolated and confused her life had been in those final months, Sinking into a form of dementia in part from lack of society she had refused to answer the phone or even respond to knocks at the door, Now she needs to be with the remaining two members of her family before taking final leave: Pearl's appearance does not startle or unsettle Ada or Pepper. She guides her granddaughter in the use of the camera left behind and encourages her interest in the birds that live on and near the river, Pearl's artistic passion for the creatures is evident in the framed photographs that line the lower hallway of the house: To Ada Pearl communicates her understanding that the life they lived beside the river was isolated unusual and difficult: Determined though Ada is to clear out Pearl's things and sort through all the paperwork expeditiously the house has other ideas raising endless impediments: Just keeping herself and her daughter warm fed and clean is a time-intensive business for Ada. The house has a primitive heating system that involves feeding wood into a boiler for heat and warm water, Due to disrepair and turbulent weather (rain hail and snow) the power and telephone service are frequently down, The nearest shop is some distance away and Pearl's rusty old car is hardly reliable, Coping with the place and weathering the ongoing fall and winter storms make Ada appreciate the hardships her mother faced, She also comes to terms with her guilt about not returning earlier to see Pearl before her death, News spreads quickly that Ada is back and she finds herself working at the local pub something she did as a younger woman, An excellent and creative cook she is soon in some demand at the establishment and the money is helpful: She is attracted to a sympathetic younger man who assists her with repairs to the house. Quite naturally it seems she is becoming embroiled in exactly the ways she vowed she wouldn't be. Wild storms wind rain flooding--the elements--are powerful players in Lucy Wood's poetic novel: Like her mother before her Ada is changed--weathered-- by her time in the rundown house near the chuntering river that muscled its way through the valley, Having said that I should add that it is not for everyone, Most of the book turns on how Ada and Pepper face the difficulties of living in a house so worn down by the elements: I wish the author had offered this instead of dwelling quite so much on Pearl's end: how she is (almost cosmically) absorbed back into the larger impersonal natural world, In the end Weathering is not so much a novel of incident as an extended prose poem albeit one with fully fleshed-out characters, I believe fans of Emily Bronte would like this book as well as readers of Jon McGregor who (I understand) has been a mentor to Wood. This is a book with an incredible sense of place and atmosphere and of the effect that one's environment can have on the psyche: Rarely have I read a book which has given me such a strong almost physical sense of its location. Six-year-old Pepper is difficult child excluded from multiple schools prone to fits of temper and full of blunt questions. She is also full of guilt at leaving her mother alone - a guilt that's encapsulated in the blood stains on the floor from her mother's fatal fall. The idea of someone coming to a particular place hating it and then gradually finding happiness by making it their own is not a new one. However Weathering presents the idea in a way I haven't seen before full of ambiguity and frequent unease, Watching the birds means being cold and wet entangled and scratched by vegetation: There is no moment when Ada and Pepper finally triumph in their struggle with the house; when a leak in the roof is fixed it simply reappears elsewhere, As a portrait of rural life Weathering is similarly uncompromising: And yet somehow this is where Ada and Pepper realise that they belong, Weathering is a beautifully written vivid and captivating novel bittersweet and occasionally surprisingly funny: There is a sense of melancholy about it but ultimately I found it strangely life-affirming, 320 This novel builds on the reputation Lucy Wood established with her short story collection Diving Belles: 320 Torrential rains wind snow and ice that is what the weather's like in this book which starts off in late autumn and moves through winter, I generally like "reading with the seasons" as I call it so I didn't start this until the weather finally turned cold in January after a very mild November and December: Or why for that matter she'd been stupid enough to fall down those rickety stairs. With her daughter Pepper she starts to sort through

Pearl's things clearing the house so she can leave and not look back. Weathering This atmospheric debut novel is set in a crumbling house by an English river and stars three generations of women – one of them a ghost, Ada has returned to her childhood home after 13 years to scatter her mother Pearl's ashes sort through her belongings and get the property ready to sell: Yet Wood introduces the traces of magical realism so subtly that they never feel jolting. Like the river the novel is fluid moving between the past and present with ease: The vivid picture of the English countryside and clear-eyed look at family dynamics remind me most of Tessa Hadley (*The Past*) and Polly Samson (*The Kindness*). 320 It's surreal and eerie a hard and gnawing read at times : There is an intensity in the thoughts and memories of the characters as well as the rain and the snow storms. The story begins with Pearl who is trying to get out of the river as her daughter Ada spreads her ashes , Ada hasn't seen her mother for thirteen years and returns to this isolated place where she grew up to scatter her mother's ashes and sell the old dilapidated house , It's about mother - daughter relationships love that is genuine even though it doesn't always seem so discovering one's self when it seems you are lost, 5 stars for me and I may make it 5 after I think about it more . 320 Three generations of women all wanting a home a place they feel they belong: Ada arrives with her young daughter Pepper back to the house she had left many years ago. Her mother Pearl has died and she intends to stay only long enough to put the house in order to sell. When I first started reading this the prose was so lovely almost haunting dreamlike it kept me reading still wasn't sure how I felt about the story, The descriptions of the river that plays a crucial role in this novel were amazing, The wildlife descriptions of the house that needs so much more work than even Ada realizes. Truthfully this is a slow burner of a book a quiet seducer that creeps up on the reader. Not much happens but what does is set against the surroundings the town and pub the few characters that live there. Pearl comes back kind of and tells her story a sad one, At the end of Chapter 24 there is such a tender moment it almost brought me to tears just a few lines but for me it encapsulated what this novel is relating: Love shown in different ways and where you least expect it whether for a person nature or a home, Almost without realizing it I came to love this tender exquisitely told story and all its characters: But I don't want to say she is dead either because her presence is real throughout this story. Ada just wants to get the house ready for sale and move on. But there's a lot to be done before that can happen and lots of roadblocks are thrown in the way thus the purpose for the novel. There is no audio available for this book and so I brought it with me on a trip so I would have time to sit and read it: I was very focused on getting to the end so I would know what happened but this isn't really that type of book. Some questions are answered and the ending is satisfactory but this novel is really more about the journey than the destination: It takes place near a river and moorland both of which almost become characters and all three women are quirky and interesting: But there were so many obstacles in Ada's way as she tries to close out her mother's property and move on that the book carried a little too much tension for me: Pepper seems more like a 10-12 yo than a six yo but it makes the story more interesting that she is the way she is. Ada has come home for the first time in thirteen years with her small daughter Pepper in tow: She didn't really want to come but her mother has did and it has fallen to her to go through her mother's things and to clear the house: She had nowhere in particular to go back to she has nowhere in particular to move on to but she doesn't plan to stay: The house lies deep in a valley that has been carved out by a great river; a river that is replenished by rain that never seems to stop: The house is dilapidated it is isolated and it has no home comforts. Ada just wants to do what she has to do and then go. All of this happens in one time and in one place but the story is timeless and it could play out anywhere in the world. The world that Lucy Wood creates lives and breathes; and it's a world where nature is very very close, The river and all of the life in and around it has much of a place as the people who move through the story. The story ebbs and flows it moves backwards and forwards in time and it works beautifully. One every page there's an image an idea or a memory and this is a book to read slowly so that you can pause and appreciate every one: The emotional intensity the clarity and the beauty of the writing is so wonderful, I loved Lucy Wood's voice when I read her short stories and it was so lovely to recognise it as soon as I opened this book and started to read, Her voice is distinctive and her prose is glorious

and utterly readable, This book explores themes that are close to my heart; I love it for that and I love it for its artistry: I've read comparisons to authors like Angela Carter and Margaret Atwood. I understand them I think they're fair but I also think that that Lucy Wood isn't quite like anybody else. I think - I hope - that one day she will be held as much as esteem as they are. I'll be very disappointed if I don't see Lucy Wood's name when literary prizes are awarded later in this year: I know I'm not wholly objective but I really do think that this book is in that class, 320



Lucy Wood has a Masters degree in Creative Writing from Exeter University. Lucy Wood has a Master's degree in Creative Writing from Exeter University. Wonderful language about the river and the weather. Not a strong narrative but that didn't matter (too much). And then waited. And waited. [. . .] Why did she do this? [. . .] But she knew why. She could remember exactly why even now. For the invisibility. For the hush. To forget. Pearl however is not ready to leave. There are things she too needs to settle. She knows why her daughter decided to leave. There is no bitterness. So is Pepper. Wood has written a highly atmospheric impressive first novel. First of all there is not much of a plot here. I look forward to seeing what she does next. It's also a brilliant character study of three women. Brooding and atmospheric full of startlingly vivid language. But I might just wait until there's a heatwave on. In a sense then this is a haunted house story. Non-subscribers can read an excerpt of my review at BookBrowse. It was 4. Thanks to Bloomsbury USA and NetGalley. Her love of photography which young Pepper will continue. ARC from Netgalley. 320 3.75 stars. This is a book about three generations of women. The youngest is six yo. The oldest is no longer alive. Happy reading. The story that the Lucy Wood spins is quite simple. But so many things say that she should stay. I could feel the rain; I could hear the river. She grew up in Cornwall. Diving Belles is her first work. She grew up in Cornwall. Diving Belles is her first work. {site_link}.