



[Home](#) > Inside

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# Inside

Books Reviewed:

[Inside](#) [1]

Issue:

[181](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Lois Keith](#) [3]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

In J K Rowling style, writer Julia Jarman has chosen to use her initials rather than her name for this book whose target group is likely to be teenage boys who like a bit of gritty realism. The story starts with 17-year-old Lee on his first day in a Young Offenders Institution for a crime he admits he *has* committed. He mugged and then burgled an old woman who is now afraid to leave her own home. His defence is that he needed money to pay back his mother's debts to the local loan shark. But his mother has had enough: her son's recent violence reminds her too much of her ex-husband and Lee's girlfriend seems unlikely to stick around. Only the community worker who 'dobbled him in', an ex-offender himself, seems likely to be of any support.

The YOI is no holiday camp. It is over-crowded with the constant threat of violence from the other offenders and an unhelpful and sometimes dangerous lack of attention from the officers. But this is a story of redemption and the reader waits to see if Lee is strong enough to make the choices that will change his life.

Although his interest in the education classes and his remorse at his crime might seem a bit obvious and glib, the story picks up momentum and the dilemmas Lee faces in this violent and uncertain environment make for a compelling read.

Running Order:

59

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[2] <http://w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/181>

[3] <http://w.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/lois-keith>