



The Monkey Puzzle Tree

Sonia Tilson

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"Early encounters with malign adult power mark Gillian Davies as a brand marks flesh. In Sonia Tilson's beautifully designed novel, we see how in all her relationships—family, friends, work, love—Gillian is both vital and damaged, eager yet constrained. Tilson's engaging story features a host of memorable minor characters on both sides of the Atlantic, and it culminates in a most satisfying confront-the-abuser scene. A fine first novel."—**Cynthia Flood**

Gillian Davies was six years old when she was sent to a remote Welsh village to escape the Blitz. She was told she was lucky: all the other evacuees were billeted in humble cottages while she was to live in Maenordy, the isolated manor house up on the hill. Yet it was here, in this place of supposed comfort and safety, that she suffered sexual abuse, the shame of which would alienate her from her mother and haunt her for the rest of her life.

Decades later, Gillian is living in Canada and with a son and a granddaughter of her own when she receives word that her mother is dying. Though she hasn't returned to Wales since she left it as a young woman, she now rushes back impulsively, determined to reveal at long last to her mother what befell her as a child. But can she?

Alternating between past and present, World War II Wales and Canada, *The Monkey Puzzle Tree* is the passionate and disturbing account of Gillian's struggle to accept her childhood trauma, forgive her mother, and confront her abuser—who seems, she discovers, to be as dangerous as ever.

"*The Monkey Puzzle Tree* is an emotional thriller. It is disturbing, intelligent and compulsively readable."—**Mary Borsky**

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