



Hollow Pike

James Dawson , Juno Dawson

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Something wicked this way comes...

She thought she'd be safe in the country, but you can't escape your own nightmares, and Lis London dreams repeatedly that someone is trying to kill her. Lis thinks she's being paranoid - after all who would want to murder her? She doesn't believe in the local legends of witchcraft. She doesn't believe that anything bad will really happen to her. You never do, do you? Not until you're alone in the woods, after dark - and a twig snaps... Hollow Pike - where witchcraft never sleeps.

Hollow Pike Details

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From Reader Review Hollow Pike for online ebook

Mark Rice says

I'm not a 15-year-old girl. Some people may have noticed this. While reading *Hollow Pike* (which I agreed to review for Amazon Vine), I tried to get into the mindset of a female adolescent, as that was the only way I could give the book a fair review. This was more than a little scary, as I had witnessed Sonny Crockett going deep undercover in the original TV series of *Miami Vice*, then being unable to return to his true self. What if the same thing were to happen to me? How would a teen girl's personality trapped in the body of a big, hairy Scottish bastard manifest itself? Well, if *Hollow Pike* is accurate, I'd accompany every verb with an adverb, I'd describe possible things as impossible (impossible eyes, impossibly long legs, etc.), I'd consider people my best friends two days after meeting them, and I'd be forever doomed to exclaim, "OMG!" when encountering anything at all. I took the risk, though. Embracing my inner teenage girl, I dived headlong into the OMG-fest.

Aimed primarily at teenage girls, *Hollow Pike* is a coming-of-age story. The main character, fifteen-year-old Lis London, moves from Wales to northern England in order to escape a campaign of bullying at school. The proverbial fish out of water in her new surroundings, Lis becomes plagued by recurring nightmares in which her face is held beneath the surface of a forest stream. OMG! Nightmares! She meets three new friends - Kitty, Delilah and Jack - who are part of the so-uncool-they-must-be-cool crowd. OMG! BFF! Lis discovers that Delilah and Kitty are lesbian lovers. OMG! Teenage lesbos! The ultimate outsiders! And if you're thinking things couldn't get any more nonconformist, you'd be wrong...Jack's sexuality is ambiguous. OMG! A homosexual, bisexual or possibly asexual boy! What is this *Hollow Pike* place? A modern-day Sodom in rural England? Being more traditional in her sexual predilections, Lis falls for former-fat-kid-turned-rugby-player Danny. OMG! Romance! Lis's flirtations with Danny don't go unnoticed by the beautiful and popular Laura, who has her own designs on him. Laura's bitchiness towards Lis drives the new girl further into the comfortable solace of her new friends. For a joke one afternoon, they plot Laura's murder. OMFG! Pretend ritualistic killing! Lis hears rumours that witches were once killed in *Hollow Pike*'s woods. In a local charity shop, she finds an old book that confirms the town's dark past. OMG! Witchery and sacrifice! Right here in this quaint little town! Lis lures Laura into *Hollow Pike* copse, where Kitty, Delilah and Jack are hiding, dressed in hooded-monk robes. Their plan to scare the shit out of Laura works well. She flees screaming into the depths of the woods, where she is killed for real. OMFG! Actual murder! Wracked by guilt over leading Laura into the woods, Lis soon realises that she has more to worry about: she may be next on the killer's list. To give away too much more of the plot would spoil any surprises. The events that follow Laura's death involve schoolteachers with shadowy secrets, ancient sects driven by religious dogma, eccentric old budgie-keeping witches and...of course...teenage lesbians! OMG! PMPWE! (Pissing My Pants with Excitement.)

So let's ask the important questions to determine the book's literary worth. Do we first meet the heroine in her ordinary world, then travel with her on a journey into new places and experiences? Yes, and the author does a good job of this. Does the story communicate that there's more to life than having a boyfriend (or girlfriend, if you happen to be a teenage lesbian)? Yes, but not convincingly. Does the author describe the subject matter (witchcraft, secret sects, ritual killing) with an adeptness that shows knowledge of those topics? No, not even close. Does the main character learn the importance of facing her fears (rather than running away from them, as she did at the beginning of the book)? Yes, and this seems to be the central theme of the novel; an admirable theme it is too. Is there an overriding moral to the tale? From what I can gather, it's either 'lesbians have more fun' or 'trust your inner voice and have courage in the face of adversity'.

Hollow Pike is a decent story with a wee bit of originality. If the author had edited out 95% of the book's adverbs, I might have awarded it four stars. Being bombarded by adverb after adverb is not only irritating,

but also a sure sign of lazy writing. Constructive criticism from a stickler: choosing a strong verb removes the need for an adverb. Peppering a story with adverbs reduces its readability. I'm going to give this book to my 15-year-old niece without saying anything to create preconceptions in her. It'll be interesting to hear her experience of it.

As for me, I'm off to join a coven of teenage lesbo witches. I know, OMG, right?

Lykaia says

A veces prefiero un libro de mierda sobre el que poder despotricar a gusto. Un libro malo lo recuerdas aunque sea para arrugar la nariz cada vez que alguien lo menciona o lo ves en una tienda. Prefiero que un libro me provoque ganas de quemar todos los ejemplares que existan a que no me transmita absolutamente nada. Apatía total, indiferencia absoluta. Como dice ese famoso refrán da igual que hablen mal o bien de ti, pero lo importante es que hablen.

De Hollow Pike no puedo decir que sea una catástrofe absoluta, pero tampoco puedo rescatar nada especialmente bueno. No entiendo que su autor dé clases a chicos jóvenes porque su instituto, sus personajes, no pueden ser más estereotipados. Que sí, los clichés existen por algo, pero podría haberse esforzado por hacer personajes un poco más personas.

Hollow Pike es un batiburrillo entre la peli de Mean Girls (Chicas Malas en España) y cualquier película de terror para adolescentes. Sigue todos los tópicos, todos los esquemas, al pie de la letra. Como si tuviera miedo de salirse del guión de "historia de misterio con asesino de por medio". No tiene nada que no hayáis leído, nada que no hayáis visto. Y es una pena porque su planteamiento base resultaba interesante.

En definitiva, un libro incapaz de provocarme cualquier tipo de sentimiento. Un libro que nunca te molestarías en recomendar, pero tampoco harías el esfuerzo de intentar alejar a nadie de él como si sus palabras contuvieran la peste negra. Escribimos para decir algo, para generar emociones ya sean buenas o malas, ¿qué hay, en realidad, peor que un libro completamente olvidable por lo insulso que resulta?

Jean Menzies says

Review originally posted on my blog: <https://morejeansthoughts.wordpress.c...>

Rarely does an author's debut novel accomplish everything it sets out to do. Hollow Pike sets up a premise, introduces us to its characters and takes us on a journey that ticks every box the reader is looking for it to fulfill. The novel itself first came out in 2012 and is not my first foray into Juno Dawson's writing. I had previously read Say Her Name when it was released in 2014, a novel which also falls into the Young Adult Thriller/Horror genre, and shortly before picking up Hollow Pike I had finished listening to the audiobook of Dawson's first adult nonfiction work The Gender Games. In fact, it was listening to The Gender Games that had me itching to finally pick Hollow Pike up from my shelf having acquired it shortly after finishing Say Her Name. This is not a review of The Gender Games but I think it is safe to say that the book had to be pretty good to have me jumping straight into another work by that same author.

Hollow Pike, as I have mentioned, is a Young Adult book that could be described as a thriller or even horror novel. Due perhaps to the flexibility of Young Adult writing, where Dawson herself feels authors are freed from the confines of a single genre, Hollow Pike offers a little more than goosebumps. The book follows Lis

who has recently moved from her high school in Wales to one in Hollow Pike, Yorkshire, after a bad bout of bullying at her last school. Bullying, moving, new environments, making friends and first romances are all prevalent themes throughout the novel; all accompanied by a good, creepy mystery.

I feel as though I have seen this comparison made elsewhere but if you have seen the 90s cult classic film *The Craft* I think that is the immediate comparison anyone will make when reading this novel, I certainly did. Thankfully *Hollow Pike* followed its own story but I do think if you enjoyed the former you will enjoy the latter (and vice versa). If you know *The Craft* though, then you will know it is all about witchcraft, and witchcraft lingers too over *Hollow Pike*.

It resembles *The Craft* in another way. Similarly to the way I felt when reading *Say Her Name*, *Hollow Pike* to a certain extent reminded me of a self-aware teen horror film such as *Scream*. Even more like the genre of TV show in this vein that seems to have garnered more popularity over the past couple of years; shows like *Scream Queens* and the serialized version of *Scream*. Although I would say this book is less gore and more mystery, which is a good thing in my books. There does, however, seem to be a film-like quality to Dawson's novels.

The mystery itself was a fun rollercoaster of switching between suspects, certain you must be right this time. The characters were endearing and the cheese factor was just right. The book set itself up to be something and delivered exactly that to the reader; I was not disappointed. So all in all this was the perfect Young Adult thriller read for me and exactly what I needed when I read it.

Laura V. says

Pues va a hacer que no.

Yo *esperaba* leer un libro con magia, pero me encontré una trama que no me atrapó en ningún momento. NINGÚN personaje me enganchó. Lis es tan plana como personaje que no me llamó la atención y me importó bien poco qué pudiera pasarle. Laura pudo haber sido.. interesante, pero era muy típica. El grupo de *frikis* resultó para nada misterioso, ni Delilah, ni Kitty ni Jack me transmitieron esa sensación de camaradería que se da en amigos de tanto tiempo. O yo no tengo el mismo humor que ellos, o ellos son muy forzados *entre ellos*.

El interés romántico de Lis es malísimo. Pero no en personalidad, en personaje. Que pelele. Ni una pisca de gracia tiene.

La trama parece que va más sobre el *acoso* escolar, que sobre la magia que me prometieron.

Con una intriga que no suena tan intrigante a medida que pasan las páginas.

Mientras lo leía, parecía más una película de esas de Halloween que son malas, *malas*, con un grupo de adolescentes que sin ton ni son terminan en medio de un gran problemón.

Con la portada que tiene, y lo tenebroso que resultaba la floresta esperaba LA historia, pero apenas pasan dos minutos dentro de ella.

No es un libro malo que pueda destripar a gusto, pero tampoco es un libro bueno del que pueda rescatar cosas bonitas. Eso es triste.

Pero bue. No resultó, lástima.

Mizuki says

It's a very decently written YA thriller, although I don't like how the Main Character, Lis turns out to be a

fool when her life and her friends' are in danger, and how the teenagers in the book never tell the adults anything even when disturbing events are taking place and a girl had already been murdered.

Still the author created a dark, frightening atmosphere with his writing and the story constantly keeps you at the edge of your seat and the ending is satisfying.

Emma says

Utterly un-put-down-able

I make no bones about this one, this is going to be a gushy 5 glorious angel loves, so you really really NEED to read this book. James's writing literally swept me away. I started reading the first chapter one evening too tired to concentrate I decided to wait until the following day. This also happened to be the last day of the Christmas holidays. I could not put it down, seriously it is that FREAKIN'AWESOME. So what if the first day back in school was rapidly approaching as I read through the small hours of the night. I could not have asked for a better back-drop either as the rain was lashing against the windows and the wind was howling around the chimney.

The third person narrative keeps tight reign over the plot, a necessary device when the plot is a twisty turny twisty thing. I was hooked. The central character, Lis, is WELSH *cheers* now that for a start gave it a big fat bonus from me. Plus James has the welsh tone depicted perfectly in Sarah, Lis's sister, believe me I know being welsh and all [; D] Lis has left her home in Bangor to live with her older sister due to atrocious bullying. The emotions and behavior depicted as a victim of bullying was poignantly portrayed within the narrative and it was only after reading the book that I found out James specialized in Bullying and Behavior during his time as a teacher. His experience really shines through within the story.

I am not going into too much detail about the plot as YOU HAVE TO READ IT. I will say that right from the very beginning it is apparent that Lis is very intuitive. This is re-enforced by the mention of past events by her sister.

The atmospheric tension envelopes the senses. Fantastic use of metaphor within the narrative adds to the drama oozing from the pages. James's humour shows through with the Twilight reference and Macbeth has certainly never been used with such fun, easing the white knuckle ride for a moment. Throw a sprinkling of Glee over the top and you have pink glitter coated chills.

All the characters are quite quirky yet portrayed so realistically. I have to say that the quirky touches to the characterisation enriched the overall impact of the plot. I especially adored Danny, through him we are able to see how shallow cliques really are and the dilemma that a lot of teens face - is it easier to join the 'in' crowd with people that you may not necessarily like or be true to yourself and risk being an outsider.

The description of Hollow Pike itself was unnervingly similar to the town I live in; with its bargain shops and disproportionate number of pubs even down to the Italian restaurant. This may just be a very sad reflection of the times that many towns now look like this.

The research that has gone into the witchcraft aspects of this book is unbelievable and very, very impressive adding to the tension and the realism especially with the history of the witch trails woven into the plot.

This book blends important teen issues, teen angst, witchcraft and murder mystery creating a delectable cocktail of a book. Best sipped slowly so you don't miss a single drop.

Lucy says

Hollow Pike is James Dawson's debut novel and is a welcome addition to the British young adult movement. It tells the story of Lis, who has moved in with her sister and her husband in Yorkshire after being hounded out of her school by bullies.

When she is bullied again by the class tormentor, Laura, Lis bonds with the school outcasts; Kitty, Delilah and Jack and they scheme to teach her a lesson. After a practical joke however, Laura is killed.

Now, Lis and her friends need to solve the murder because they were also in the woods that night and may be in danger themselves.

The novel is set in a small town filled with lore and legends of witchcraft and Dawson brilliantly sets up the suspense here. For me, I never doubted Hollow Pike and its superstitious residents and minor characters like Mrs Gillespie create this atmosphere.

James Dawson has been a teacher and worked within diversity and bullying and this shows in his writing. His depiction of bullying in schools is brutally honest, as are the teachers' reactions - I am pretty sure in middle school I had the exact same conversation as Lis with Mr Grey when he learns of her bullying - and this makes the novel more authentic and creates a plot and characters that feel so real and honest, I think teenagers will find something to relate to within this novel and love it.

Dawson's use of sexuality and the relationship between Kitty and Delilah is another testament to his writing. While some depictions of anything other than heterosexuality seem to ignore the concept or existence of bisexuality - yes, Glee, I'm looking at you, Kurt - Dawson's characters are cautious and working out who they are, whether they like boys, girls or both and it is written very well.

I loved the romantic development between Lis and Danny and thought it was a great portrayal of a teenage romance and that all encompassing first love and the doubts you're good enough.

This is not a particularly supernatural book, it is more a novel about the fear of an act than the act itself - the Crucible by Arthur Miller is offered as comparison frequently throughout the novel. For me, Dawson's strengths were his depictions of bullying, family, friendship and romance. I really look forward to more of his writing in the future.

I received my copy for free through Orion/ Indigo and am grateful for this. I was even more excited when I realised it was a signed copy and would like to thank Orion for sending me this. The tone of my review or content has not been influenced by any of the above.

Serendipity Reviews says

Since I first spoke to James Dawson on Twitter last summer, I have been desperate to get my hands on his debut novel, Hollow Pike. I was beginning to think that it would never arrive. For me, this is definitely one of my most anticipated books for the year and it did not disappoint me.

The opening lines saw me hold my breath and I didn't breathe again until the end of the first chapter. I

honestly thought I might need medical assistance. What an amazing opening to a book. The intensity of the situation hits you like a fist and knocks you over. Luckily after that it slows to a steady pace, or I may have had to sue for causing damage to my health.

The book is full to the brim with a chilling atmosphere, that begins to leave you with the impression that someone might just be watching you. I found it to be completely believable and I am now a little wary of forests, especially as I live right near one that is well known for its connection to witch craft.

The book is told from the point of view of Lis, who has moved to Hollow Pike for a new start. Desperate to get away from the uncomfortable situations she found herself in at her previous school, only to dive head first into similar dangerous waters at Hollow Pike. I really felt for Lis, as I was convinced that everyone was out to get her. I couldn't work out who she should actually trust - they all seemed full of devious intentions. I love the touches of sarcasm from Liz; being a really sarcastic person myself, I completely warmed to her straight away. I am impressed by the author's ability to write from a female perspective, something I have always believed to be a hard task for a male author. Danny made a fabulous drool worthy hottie in the book, his hidden geekiness made him even more adorable.

I fell in love with Sarah's house. It sounded just like a German Huf Haus, which you buy in kit form. I just wanted to live there. Who doesn't dream of a balcony in their bedroom?

The steady pace of the book begins to pick up as the book draws to a close, creating a dangerous situation for Lis at the end. I would never have guessed it would end the way it did and I was left longing for more. I have so many unanswered questions, so I really do hope there is a sequel. James promised a book with a Twin Peaks feel and that is actually what he has given us.

I was definitely impressed by this book. Not only was it extremely well plotted, but I also found the writing to be excellent. You can tell the author understood his characters and got into their heads to tell the story. There wasn't a lot of background information concerning all the secondary characters, which I felt added to the tension and suspense of the book, because you had no idea what secrets they had hidden away and whether they were trust worthy or not.

This was a brilliant debut for an author I think we will be hearing a lot more about in the future. James Dawson is definitely a debut to watch out for.

Juli says

3,5/5

Es entretenida, pero al principio se me hizo algo lento. Recien las últimas 70 páginas no podía dejar de leer.

Esperaba algo mucho más tenebroso

Bee (Heart Full of Books) says

I have to admit that I was expecting a lot more from Hollow Pike. I wanted it to be focused more on the witch element rather than the horror/mystery because that's what pulled me to it! I also found the characters to be more like caricatures rather than real people (not to mention practically identical to the characters,

dynamics included, in Mean Girls. There's even a Mean Girls reference, I mean, come on!)

But it's Juno Dawson's first book, and I know it only goes up from here!

Ailsa says

My thoughts: From the moment I read the description of this book back in November/December, I wanted to read it. I can totally relate to the paranoia here - I come from the middle of nowhere, and when I'm walking the dogs on my own, I always get jumpy. You don't really think someone is there, but if you here a sudden noise, it puts you really on edge. I love how, in the few sentences on the back cover it captures that jumpiness, which is something that runs throughout the book.

Hollow Pike was... not quite what I was expecting, at first. It starts with Lis moving to the village of Hollow Pike to live with her grown-up sister Sarah, to start over at a new school because she was being bullied. Yes, someone starting at a new school is something we've seen before in YA novels (a lot), but I like it. It's a good way for the main character and the reader to learn things at the same time, gradually, without having an info dump to get the reader up to speed.

In many ways, Hollow Pike is a story about bullying. Having come for her fresh start, Lis falls in with the 'popular' crowd, and watches as they bully other people. I hated seeing Lis just standing watching what her new 'friends' were doing. Even though I could sort of see why she didn't want to end up being picked on again, I think if she'd done something when she first saw what kind of people the girls were, and left to find other friends, she would have been fine. However, after an incident where Lis is seen talking to Queen Bee Laura's crush, the posse turn on her, and she finds herself a victim once more. The only good thing about this is that it leads are to some new friends, who actually seem genuine.

Of course the other big part of Hollow Pike is the witchcraft. In the first chapter, before she arrives, Lis dreams about crawling along a stream in the woods, and someone drowning her. It's a nightmare she's had a lot, and when her mum drives through a 'shortcut' in the woods to get to Sarah's house, Lis is shocked to realise that it's the wood from her dream. Witches are tied in to the history of the village - everyone knows it, but no one really believes it. Then a girl is murdered in the woods, and Lis's dreams get worse. Although she keeps telling herself she doesn't believe it, creepy things keep happening. She feels like she's being watched. Birds go quiet when she walks past. A creepy shop owner tells her that her dreams are a warning.

I spent the whole book trying to work out who the bad guy was. I was fairly convinced that there was something witchy going on, but still found myself questioning if that was just because of the stories about witches in Hollow Pike. I kept changing who I thought was behind everything, every time Lis found something new that seemed to point in a different direction. I really didn't guess who it was until it was far too late, just like Lis.

Bullying, in various forms, remains a theme of the book all the way through. I think it's a very good look at how it affects people, why people get caught up in it, and different kinds of bullying and prejudice. Woven through that is the paranoia of the witches, and trying to work out what is going on, if Lis is just imagining things, and if not then who is targeting her and why. It really is an excellent read, one of the best young adult novels I've read in a long time. I can't wait to see what James Dawson comes up with next. Writing this review, I realise just how well certain things were slipped in to the novel to emphasise the themes - I wish I'd had this book when I was trying to write english essays in high school, because there would have been so much to write about!

I could go on, but before you all get bored of reading, I give this book 10 out of 10. A brilliant, gripping

story that fans of slightly more realistic young adult books will love.

~Ailsa

(This review was originally posted by me at The Book Bundle - if you liked the review, please consider following the blog! :))

Luisa says

Me han fallado algunas cosas y otras no eran lo que esperaba. Pero en general me ha entretenido bastante.

Siento un poco de indiferencia con este libro pero si lo pienso, tira más al "me ha gustado" que al "no me ha gustado".

Kirsty says

Hollow Pike is a fantastic read from an awesome debut author which I thoroughly recommend. In this review (fan girl rave) I will tell you exactly why it is so entirely awesome and why you need this book in your life and probably do this without telling you too much about the storyline or plot so I don't spoil it for anyone

The first reason why I loved this book was because it is uniquely different. It is an odd mix of a contemporary mixed with a horror/thriller than probably shouldn't work but it does so well. I loved how it switched between the very funny to the very dark

Another reason why this was fab this because James can really write girls well and I've never come across a male author who has managed to do this until now. He has this insight into the female mindset which comes across brilliantly in the comments made by the main character which I know for a fact I have thought of or said myself when in a similar situation.

This book is both sarcastic, witty and just down right funny in places. There were so many bits in the book where I was giggling out loud at the things the characters said or did especially when they were arguing.

The characterisation within this book was awesome. I loved the heroes of the piece and hated the nasty girls. I loved the secondary characters just as much as the main ones especially the quirky headteacher who I thought was just brilliant and again someone who made me giggle. James also knows how to write gorgeous boys. I completely got why Lis fell for Danny entirely because I did too.

I particularly loved that this book had gay characters that weren't just used as a gimmick to show how p.c/hip the author is. Another YA author who writes a certain overlong and drawn out vampire series makes me angry with her portrayal of gay characters by making them so over the top camp and by pointing them out all the time like they are a circus freak act. I loved that in Hollow Pike the gay characters were just there and they were quite rightly ordinary teenagers. I love that normalcy and think that in this book teenagers who are gay / might be gay have some kind of example to look to to see that actually being gay isn't an issue. Finally gay teenagers have got role models within British YA fiction.

One thing this book also does when is that it highlights the utterly devastating affect bullying in all its various forms can have on a young person's life. Again this is an issue that really can't get mentioned enough to raise awareness and to ultimately try to combat it within society.

All in all a fantastic debut which I thoroughly enjoyed and could not put down. I loved it entirely and would recommend it wholeheartedly to others. Go buy it in February because it is awesome!

Inés Izal says

Hollow Pike ha sido un libro plagado de suspense acertado, pero con una trama romántica mediocre.

Si el autor no se hubiera encabezonado en meter un romance innecesario que no entra ni calzador, le hubiera dado más estrellas.

Salvo por eso, tiene los ingredientes necesarios para una lectura adictiva y sorprendente.

La trama de suspense está bien planteada, en ningún momento había sospechado de la persona que resulta que es el asesino.

Otra cosa que me ha gustado mucho, es que toca el tema del bullying y de la homosexualidad. El autor no lo plantea de forma suave, ni lo expone con flores y corazoncitos con un final feliz.

Jack, Kitty y Delilah han sido unos personajes entrañables, que de no ser por ellos, la historia no habría sido igual de intensa.

Joanne Sheppard says

Even when I was a teenager, I found it hard to think from the perspective of a teenager, so I approached James Dawson's young adult horror novel *Hollow Pike* with some trepidation. I read plenty of children's and young adult fiction, but this, with a plot heavy on the school bullies and boyfriends, struck me as a book that might not have the same crossover appeal – for me, at least – as something like James Treadwell's recent *Advent*. However, while I definitely think an adult has to consciously try to put themselves into a teenage mindset to get into *Hollow Pike*, once I managed to do that I did thoroughly enjoy it.

It's a sharp, witty book with an oft-used basic premise – teenager Lis London moves to a new town, doesn't fit in with the cool kids and finds creepy goings-on afoot. The local drinking establishments are all named after pubs from horror films and Laura Riggs and her cronies, the roost-ruling queen bees at Lis's new school, are straight from *Heathers*. There's hints of *The Craft* in there, of *Buffy*, of *Scream* – but it's all slick, entertaining and well-executed with the pace and tension of a well-constructed thriller, and it's crammed with clever pop culture references, homages and in-jokes.

Lis is a strong and believable central character, attempting to find her niche in her new school's social hierarchy while plagued by strange dreams, haunted by the village's reputed history of witchcraft and watched by mysterious birds. While the 'horror' in *Hollow Pike* ostensibly comes from the supernatural elements and mysterious deaths in the woods, the ordinary teenage fears and pressures Lis faces seem just as scary at times: trying to reinvent herself after being bullied at her previous school, it's impossible not to sympathise when she realises that she'll have to choose between hanging around with people she actually likes and making herself a target for bullying yet again, or staying safe with the cool kids while simultaneously becoming everything she's ever hated. I was less sympathetic, and indeed less interested, when it came to her crush on geek-turned-hunk Danny, but to be fair, Lis herself isn't very sympathetic to herself about it either at times.

The tone is sometimes a wee bit too excitable for my liking - too many exclamation marks and moments where Lis and her friends absolutely have to do things right now - and there were times when this felt more

like reading the novelisation of a pre-existing film than an original story. I can imagine producers wanting to snap up the movie rights pronto, because in many ways I think this narrative feels as much like a teen horror movie as it does a novel.

However, I did still have a lot of fun reading Hollow Pike - it's a guilty pleasure of a rollercoaster ride that kept me turning the pages. Buy it for your teenage daughter and nick it when she's finished.
