

APPENDICES

SYNOPSIS OF WILD BOY

The novel Wild Boy is about a boy of about twelve years old who is found by people in the forest near Aveyron. He is naked; his body is full of scars, and he acts like an animal. He will bite people who try to approach him. He is considered to be an idiot because of his abnormal behaviour but Doctor Itard, one of the narrators in the novel, believes that the boy is not an idiot. He is in charge of educating Victor. He employs Madame Guérin, another narrator in the novel, to take care of Victor's daily needs. Victor behaves like a beast and he cannot speak. Doctor Itard tries to educate and civilize him. Doctor Itard teaches him to spell a word and eat politely while Madame Guérin and her husband take care of him like their own child. Julie, Madame Guérin's daughter often plays with Victor and Victor is very happy when he is together with her. He is obviously attracted by her.

Victor becomes the centre of attraction. People want to know about the boy who has lived in the forest for a long time. Victor is afraid when people approach him. Later he feels comfortable with the people who are close to him. He also wants to learn new things. They teach him how to be a 'human being'. Nevertheless, Victor is very bad-tempered and stubborn.

Time passes and now Victor has gained a little progress. He can speak a few words and is not afraid to interact with people any more. Doctor Itard is very excited to see Victor's development although he is a little disappointed because Victor cannot really be a normal child. However, at least he can prove that Victor can become a better person. After five years, Itard no longer takes care of Victor. Finally, Victor stays with Madame Guérin until he dies at the age of forty.

BIOGRAPHY JILL DAWSON

Jill Dawson is born in Durham and grows up in Staffordshire, Essex and Yorkshire. She reads American Studies at the University of Nottingham, and then takes a series of short-term jobs in London before studying for an MA in Writing at Sheffield Hallam University. In 1997, she is the British Council Writing Fellow at Amherst College, Massachusetts.

Her writing life begins as a poet, her poems being published in a variety of small press magazines, and in one pamphlet collection, White Fish with Painted Nails (1990). She wins an Eric Gregory Award for her poetry in 1992. She also writes other five novels: Trick of the Light (1996); Magpie (1998), for which she wins a London Arts Board New Writers Award; Fred and Edie (2000); Wild Boy (2003); and most recently, Watch Me Disappear (2006). Fred and Edie is based on the historic murder trial of Thompson and Bywaters, and is short-listed for the 2000 Whitbread Novel Award and the 2001 Orange Prize for Fiction.

She is married to an architect, Meredith Bowles and lives far from her former Hackney flat, in a village in the Fens near Ely, in a house that her husband designs for her. She has two sons, Felix and Lewis, who is diagnosed with Asperger syndrome – an incurable condition on the autistic spectrum. Dawson has read an enormous amount about Asperger's and autism since Lewis is diagnosed. One book in particular, Autism: Explaining the Enigma by Uta Frith, not only increases Dawson's understanding of the condition, but also prompts her to write Wild Boy. In her book, Frith claims that the "Wild Boy of Aveyron", a 12-year-old who is found in 1800 having lived alone in woods in the south of France for

five years, is history's first documented autistic child. Wild Boy is nominated for a British Academy Book Award.

Jill Dawson has taught Creative Writing for many years and holds many fellowships, including the Creative Writing Fellowship at UEA in Norwich, where she has also taught in the MA programme in writing. In 2006, she is honoured with a Doctorate degree from Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, for her 'significant contribution to writing, and her work in supporting emerging writers.'

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