



## The Ifs Return (The Ifs series, #2)

*J.D. Pooker*

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### **The Ifs Return (The Ifs series, #2) J.D. Pooker**

J.D. Pooker is back with THE IFS RETURN.

From MIDWEST BOOK REVIEW: Exceptionally imaginative and extraordinarily well written, THE IFS RETURN by J. D. Pooker is especially recommended ... for young readers ages 8 and older..."

Released May 2015, for ages 8 and Up, enjoy this fantasy adventure with brothers Landon and Broden (we met them in THE IFS), along with Slade, Gage, and a host of wild forest animals!

THE IFS RETURN takes us deep into the Ifs' underground village as Landon and Broden are called upon again to find the menacing If, Gage - who now has MAGIC!

Meet more Ifs, more fun beasts (including one hungry attack squirrel in the Ifs' underground chambers) and more excitement as the brothers shriiinnnkkk and freeze in time (!) at the mercy of Gage's fierce magic.

Can the brothers save themselves, their family AND save Slade and his village from evil Gage? Read THE IFS RETURN to find out!

Also available in a paperback edition (9780991153428, \$9.95) and in a Kindle format (\$2.99), B&N.com, Apple iBooks.

### **The Ifs Return (The Ifs series, #2) Details**

Date : Published May 20th 2015 by Little Devil Books (first published May 18th 2015)

ISBN :

Author : J.D. Pooker

Format : Paperback 158 pages

Genre :

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## **From Reader Review The Ifs Return (The Ifs series, #2) for online ebook**

### **Cindy Barton says**

Broden and Landon have just finished helping the Ifs defeat and capture Slade and are trying to get some sleep before school the next day. Now if only they can stay awake and make it through the day. Before the day is out they learn that Gage has escaped and Slade needs their help once again to help them. Boy are they mad! Why should they help the Ifs again, it isn't their fault that Gage got away? Besides, now there is something else to be worried about, the Ifs have magic. Should the boys be worried about Gage? This is the second book by J.D. Pooker in the story of the Ifs and is for middle school children. As the mother of a child that doesn't like to read, I know it is hard to find a book that interests them. This one did. I had talked him into reading the first book and he was excited to read this one. Not only did he enjoy it, but so did I. There is just enough action to draw the young reader in and keep their attention. The author knows what kids like and gives it to them.

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### **Christy says**

This review first appeared on my blog, Christy's Cozy Corners.

I don't know about you, but when I was a little girl I used to love the books in The Littles series! I had (still have) a vivid imagination, and thinking about little people living in my house or town was just so cool!

J.D. Pooker must have been a fan too. Perhaps this is why she wrote The Ifs, which I reviewed earlier. In this book, The Ifs Return, only a day has passed and already trouble is again brewing! Broden and Landon find out that Gage has escaped in spite of the fact that he was just captured! They think that he won't leave them alone, and soon they find out they were correct. And now he is using magic against them to even the playing field. He shrinks them, so they are closer to his size!

The Ifs Return is an adventure that your children will enjoy! Just be sure they read The Ifs first since this is the sequel. There is a lot of quick paced action which children enjoy. The characters are great and ones your kids can relate to as well. I recommend that you check out The Ifs books if your kids enjoy a good adventure.

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### **Kim Propp says**

I did not get a chance to read the first book in The Ifs series so I had to figure a few things out while reading this book. That said, it is not necessary to read the first book first because JD Pooker goes into full detail to catch up newcomers to the story. Landon and Broden are brothers and the main characters in the story. There are several characters including wild animals that are transportation (dogs, wolves, crows), the Ifs (a small person who rides on dogs, crows, and wolves for transport), and other characters who are not paramount to the story.

In the first story Landon and Broden defeat an evil If who escapes, and the second book is about his revenge and the war that ensues. Some parts of the story were a bit redundant. I found it tedious that because there

were so many characters the author had to mention them by name when it was their turn in the story. However, there was a lot of creativity such as the glowing mushrooms (that really do exist) were the lights in the Ifs city. It appealed to the teacher side of me that there is a science lesson at the back of the book discussing the glowing mushrooms.

The author left the ending open for another sequel. I look forward to reading it. Kids from 5th - 8th grade will appreciate this book. I received this book in exchange for an honest review. This post was first seen on Heart of a Philanthropist blog.

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## **Cat Michaels says**

*The Ifs Return* is the second in the series of J.D. Pooker's inventive tale of two brothers who stumble upon a pint-sized civilization and intervene to rescue it. I read an e-pub version on my tablet.

### **CHARACTERS**

It took awhile to get into the characters because I had not read the first book; however, I soon caught up. Main characters, siblings Landon and Broden, are excellent role models for middle-grade children by demonstrating strong values of commitment and honesty. The boys' parents are loving, and their 'cool' mother is especially supportive. The bad guys are evil without being scary or bloody.

Secondary characters among the Ifs are interesting and follow conventions for fantasy yarns, with good and evil lining up against each other for a climactic finish.

### **NARRATIVE**

While well-plotted, the story would benefit from fewer lengthy passages. Narrative is often burdened with details that could be eliminated by shifting from a 'telling' mode to a 'showing' one.

More instances of crisp descriptions and dialogue would move the story forward. Stilted phrases also stand in the way of the book's full potential:

"Rage filled his eyes, red crept up his neck."

"Confusion covered his face."

"Landon and Broden felt a joyful heat rise into their faces."

*The Ifs Return* incorporates important values of integrity and courage as the brothers work together to save the Ifs. Pooker presents an imaginative world of little people and creatively fleshes out the inherent joys and challenges of living small. The author brings to life the particular conventions of such a world. I especially enjoyed the delightful way squirrels and tree roots threaten the tiny Ifs' village life.

The book's ending (no spoiler!) was engaging and creative; conflict with the baddies was resolved with little violence.

### **FORMAT**

As with most digital books, text, font and spacing can be adjusted to suit the reader. Since there are no illustrations beyond the cover to aid with context and significant chunks of text blocks to take in, this book is geared to confident upper-elementary readers. I appreciated the addendum the author inserted that offered children more resources to learn about a scientific subject encountered in the book.

## RECOMMENDATION

Confident readers in grades 3-5 will enjoy this fantasy. Even though its male protagonists naturally appeal to boys, girls will also enjoy the adventure.

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### *Disclosure*

*I was provided with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.*

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## **Darleen Wohlfel says**

The Ifs Return, by J. D. Pooker, is the second book in the tale of two brothers who are suddenly awakened to the mystery of another world coexisting in their local park. Landon and Broden, discover sibling rivalry is common even in a world of six inch people, and find themselves caught up in a battle beyond their imagination. If they are to help their newly found friends and survive, they must learn to work together. I enjoyed the creativity of this story. The easy style of the author makes the unbelievable real enough to pull you into the very heart of the battle. Not just once, but twice. Book 2 picks up with ease where one leaves off, and you are again engaged in the perils of the 'If' community.

The story give us the opportunity to examine choice, face selfishness, and make sacrifices. I especially liked that the parents are strong allies, trustworthy to the cause, and a strength to the boys throughout the storyline. Personally, I love adventure and imagination. I enjoy seeing children fight for a cause and not a death count. To see them learn of ways outside their norm, and come to respect them. Pooker has given us much to experience in our time spent with the brothers of both worlds. It's definitely worth reading!

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## **Elizabeth Woodrum says**

I enjoyed The Ifs Return, though I did find it a little uneven in the pacing at the start. A second book in a series is always a harder task for an author. There needs to be enough exposition that readers can be reminded of previous events, but the action of the new story also needs to start relatively early in order to keep returning readers interested. I felt that some of the early scenes that were meant to reintroduce the characters were a little slow paced or didn't really progress the story along. However, once the action got going, it flowed very well. Overall, I did enjoy the style of the author, but I just felt that the beginning was a little off.

The characters and the action of the plot are very relatable for the young, intended audience. I believe that young readers will enjoy the brothers' story and will want to keep turning the pages to know how it ends. I did also enjoy the way the author presented the inner thoughts of the brothers and used this technique to share a few life lessons, such as the importance of not telling lies. I'm glad the author included these little life lessons for the reader in a way that is relatable and not overly preachy. It did make the characters seem more realistic to know they had made mistakes in their young lives, but learned from them.

Overall, I give The Ifs Return 4 stars. My pickiness with the early scenes is likely the result of my adult brain, and the issues I had are probably not things that the majority of the intended audience would notice. If you have a young reader, especially a reluctant one, I'd suggest giving him this series to try. It has enough adventure and heart to keep kids wanting more. I'd recommend it for those in grades three through five

especially, but kids as high as 6th or 7th grade may enjoy it as well. Though the reading level is likely below that of the average middle schooler.

\*I was given copy in exchange for an honest review.\*

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### **Darlene Cruz says**

I was cheering, laughing and rooting for the brothers, Landon and Broden. I found myself so immerse in the tale of another adventure of those tiny people. Tiny people who keeps entering the lives of Landon and Broden, friend or foe? They were sucked into another wild escapade of the If's, this time magic, huh! No wait a spell? Ooh, a talismans and their magic, no wait an amulet! Now you see them and now, "Hey where did they go?" Well not quite like that but when you read the story you will know what I mean. "This is all Slade's fault. All of it. If he hadn't let Gage get away, we wouldn't be in this mess." The brothers already helped Slade fight his war, now another is imminent. What excitedly made my adrenaline move up a notch, the If's. Brave wondrous tiny people who returns to seek the help of the brothers once again. All the creatures were revisited and those pesky birds, don't forget the squirrels too. Fear found them yet courage overtook their fears especially for one particular brother, Broden. He never got over the last encountered with Gage and rightfully so. Landon was so supportive and always had an encouraging word to help Broden overcome his fears. Brothers like no other, leaning on each other and working through so many challenges but always together. You will soar through the air, feel the weightlessness, whirl and twirl all the while captivating your imagination. Wonderful read indeed. I received a free digital download in exchange for a review through Mother Daughter Book Review.

Thank you, Darlene Cruz

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### **Erika Messer says**

Landon and Broden thought after the battle with Gage and the Ifs that it was over. But when their old ally Slade shows up and tells them that Gage has escaped and is after them, they start to worry and decide they need to up their game. Unfortunately for them, upping their game means shrinking them down to the size of the Ifs, about 6 inches tall! So now they are in a whole new world even though it's their own they are the size of bugs and they have to learn how to fight a whole new way ... something Gage is already well-prepared to do. They also have found out that Gage has magic, something they knew nothing about and their only hope is to find someone who can help them in battle.

I love the way the brothers are so bonded over the whole Ifs experience, they really seem to have a good relationship now and they have each others backs. There is never a second when one of them says they won't fight - it's a given. And they are pretty normal kids; they go to school, they live at home and they do average kid stuff. With the exception of fighting a group of little people called The Ifs. The underlying lesson a kid can get from these books is the concept of teamwork and that being an uncaring and unfeeling person can harm you and those you love in the end. Landon and Broden seem to have learned these lessons from the first book and they want to be better. This book also touches on the subject of lying to get what you want and that it is not a good idea. So definitely has some great moral lessons for kids and I think the Ifs are great characters to show the difference between good and evil. The brothers are complex characters in this book, I have not read the first book to know if they started out this way. We see their exhaustion, their pain, their

fear of getting in trouble with their mother, we see it all! And they become sympathetic characters that kids can really relate to. I would highly recommend this book for your middle age children if you are looking for something that has more substance to it than your normal read :) I received a complimentary ebook in exchange for my honest review.

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### **Lu Ann says**

The brothers - Landon & Broden - thought they were free of "Gage" and his minions but he escaped! *The Ifs Return* brings more adventure to the brothers' comfortable life. They must be on constant guard! However, Slade and the 'friendly' Ifs are there to help. The brothers experience a new "horror" in this sequel. Will their life end here...will life ever be "normal" again? Gage works his "magic" on Landon and Broden!

The Book Cover and Title could not be better! It is as eye-catching and exciting as this new escapade! The characters feel real and the scenes are depicted well. I just felt at one point the chapter was too repetitive in offering the two boys separate views. Otherwise, it was a great story for older elementary aged children and young teens.

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### **Lisavbr says**

*The Ifs Return* by J.D. Pooker is the second book in the series that revolves around the battle between two If brothers, Slade and Gage. It is set the day after the human boys, Landon (10 years old) and Broden (8 years old) helped Slade defeat his younger, jealous brother in a battle the decided which brother will rule over the Ifs. Gage has managed to escape custody and once again place into question which brother ultimately will rule Ifs.

In Book One, we learned how the human brothers' playtime battles in the forested portion of a local park had been observed by the Ifs who secretly lived there. Landon and Broden love action/adventure movies, TV shows, and books, and they often went into a secret clearing in the forest, and with the help of sticks they pick up on the forest floor, they recreate the battles they've watched and read. So when Gage, the younger of the two If brothers, decides to undertake a coup to remove his elder brother Slade, the rightful leader, the Ifs ask the human brothers to help. Landon and Broden agree, and, using sticks for swords, they save the Ifs from Gage. Proud of helping the Ifs, they looked forward to the banquet the Ifs were going to throw for them on Saturday.

Or did they defeat Gage? Landon and Broden wake up on Monday morning stiff and sore from their battle wounds, wishing they didn't have to go to school. Of course their mom insists they go to school. It is during the school day that they find out Gage not only escaped, but he also stole the talismans the Ifs use to perform magic. At first, they are reluctant about fighting again; they had just finished fighting Gage and his followers, and Slade couldn't even keep him in custody for 24 hours! They reluctantly agree to help once more. In the process, they get to ride on some of the animals the Ifs use as transportation, see the If villages, wear If armor, and use If weapons!

I found Book 2 just as interesting to read as Book 1; Pooker's characters are so believable that I had no problem suspending disbelief. The storyline is well-paced, so I was able to both read it quickly AND keep details in mind as I went along. I was really impressed by how Pooker kept the story exciting, as well as avoided any use of bloody gore that would frighten the 3rd grade through middle school readers who are her target audience. There is some violence, and some hold-your-breath action, yet it is so well written that excessive gore and death are not required in order to hold her readers' attention. In addition, Pooker shows her readers that children CAN tell their parents what is going on in their lives. When they tell their mother about the Ifs, she not only believes them but she also has some tips for them.

I also am impressed at how Pooker deals with real world ethical issues. As the human brothers fight the physical battles, they also fight internal, ethical battles. In Book 1, Landon and Broden's sibling rivalry had gotten to the point where they are physically fighting each other, but through their interactions with the adult If brothers, they see to what extent such behavior can go wrong as they grow up. In Book 2, that lesson is reinforced. As well, Pooker tackles the issue of lying to others is not only wrong, but also can go very wrong, not only for the person telling the lie, but also how lying can hurt everyone in their lives.

Bottom line... *The Ifs Return* is a great read, not only for the target audience (3rd grade through middle school), but also for their parents. It is interesting enough to hold an adult's attention; I am looking forward to reading Book 3! So, this is a good book for parents to read and discuss with their children.

( I received a free digital copy of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review through Mother Daughter Book Review.)

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### **Kathryn Jacoby says**

The Ifs have returned for more fun for their readers, but more worry and danger for our heroes, Broden and Landon. Gage, evil If, has managed to escape from his brother, Slade's jail and Slade again appeals to the boys for their help. Little (no pun intended) did they know that they would be fighting the bad Ifs on their terms, and not much more than their six-inch heights. Gage has acquired the magical talismans from Slade's village and has put the world into suspended animation while shrinking the boys. How are they possibly going to defeat Gage now?

J. D. Pooker has once again given us a fun, action-packed adventure that will keep the young reader turning the pages. This second book in the series is a bit shorter than the first, but I am finding that I've enjoyed it more. The two boys continue their brotherly bonding and we get to see more of the lives of the Ifs.

I would highly recommend this book to young readers. It is a quick read, which would also be good for reluctant readers.

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### **Katie Logonauts says**

The Ifs Return kicks off the day after the excitement and epic battle of the first book. Brothers Broden and Landon must face the doldrums of normal life and school and waking up early, in sharp contrast to their heroic deeds. But when each boy notices an animal keeping an eye on them at school, they begin to suspect the adventure's not over.

The Ifs Return is a quick read, but the pacing is slow and a bit awkward in places. Chapters alternate between the points of view of the two brothers, but they are written so similarly that I had difficulty telling them apart from each other. The story also spends much of the beginning of the book rehashing the entire first book. Once the new action begins, the adventures follow quickly and without much suspense or elaboration. The concept is quite interesting, but I think this book will leave even younger middle grade readers wishing there was something more.

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### **Tonja Drecker says**

I didn't read the first book, but still had little trouble diving into this adventure. Although it took a couple pages to get a handle on the two main characters and what was going on, there's enough information to let a reader dive into the world without reading book one (however, I highly recommend grabbing the other book first because I'm pretty sure it's worth it.)

The author does a fantastic job introducing a tiny species, the Ifs. This little, honorable folk seeks out the help of two human brothers (again) to help against their greatest foe. I loved the descriptions and scenes--so easy to get lost in! The squirrels were an extra treat and added a nice touch of reality to the entire adventure.

The dialogue is right for the intended audience and the characters are true blue, even in the face of sibling squabbles. It's easy to get lost in their story and root for them the entire way through. At times, the descriptions could have been a bit tighter, but in general, the story moves along nicely. I can easily see this book as a great read-aloud for kids before they go to bed, or for older ones on their own.

Summed up, this is a fun adventure for kids ages 8+ which will send their fantasy on a wild ride and have them searching for an adventure of their own.

I received a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Stacie says**

The Ifs Return is the second book in the series by J.D. Pooker and this latest adventure brothers Landon and Broden find themselves on is just as exciting as the first.

With the startling news that Gage has already escaped from Slade, Landon and Broden are angry and afraid for their own safety, but when they learn Gage has magic on his side they fear the worst. Still spent from the previous battle, Landon and Broden aren't eager to take Gage on again, but when Gage uses his magic for evil the boys don't have a choice. Can they stop Gage once again?

This is another fantastic, action packed story about the amazing Ifs and the brothers who willingly protect them. The Ifs Return will certainly appeal to middle grade readers with the creative characters, thrilling battle, and a magical underground kingdom. I enjoyed the brothers strong bond that began in the first book and continued to grow even stronger in book 2. Landon's vow to protect Broden is enduring.

The Ifs Return is a well contrived, imaginative tale, with wonderful characters that will captivate from beginning to end.

I highly recommend picking up a copy.

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### **Emmy says**

I had listened to the first book and enjoyed it. The book description for the sequel was promising, so I quickly downloaded it.

I didn't like that the first two chapters were too similar. My first thought was the author had written it from two different POV (Broden & Landon) and submitted them both by mistake.

I really didn't like this at all. I didn't like the magic aspect. I'm not sure I ever felt satisfied with the explanations.

I didn't like the sloppy revelation of the size alterations. It just didn't quite make sense in my head - how the brothers realized what had happened.

I think the most disappointing piece (because of the behavior and mannerisms from the first book), the reason(s) why the boys were not fully truthful to mom. Had I not read the book, the omission or white lies may not have rubbed me the wrong way.

I also enjoyed the first book more because the narrator brought more to the delivery. This narrator (Nathan Bakkner) read in a very slow and stilted tone, pausing more frequently during sentences than necessary. I also had to increase the speed to 1.25.

I think you'll enjoy it more if you haven't read the first book. For those reading or listening to this as a sequel, it doesn't hold up.

I've definitely spent my welcome out in the IFS world and wouldn't return, even with a free stay.

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