



2009

# The Midnight Charter

Tessa McMillan

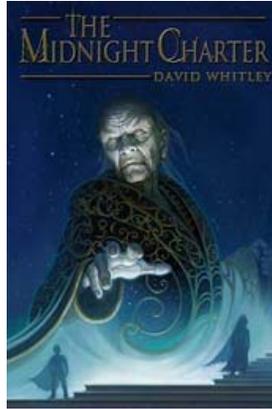
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Whitley, David. *The Midnight Charter*. Roaring Brook Press, 2009. ISBN 9781596433816. \$16.99. 319 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Fiction; Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Prophecy--Juvenile fiction; Imaginary places--Juvenile fiction; Conduct of life--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

During the gray plague outbreak in Agora, Mark is sold to Dr. Theophilus to pay for his father's debts. Mark becomes the doctor's apprentice, but Mark's new friend Lily decides to switch jobs with him. Lily was working for Count Stelli, the great Agorian astrologer. After the switch is made, their lives change completely. Mark is taken on to be an apprentice astrologer to Count Stelli, and Lily creates an almshouse to help the poor with Dr. Theophilus. While Mark rises in power and prestige, Lily is constantly fighting to defend her almshouse. When a mutual friend is murdered, Lily discovers that a secret society—known as the Midnight Charter—has been watching her and Mark to see if they are the prophesied ones who will change the future of Agora. When Lily tries to find the truth behind the Midnight Charter, she must decide whether to take her new knowledge back to Agora or to leave the city forever with Mark.

Whitley creates an intriguing and thought-provoking story with *The Midnight Charter*. The society Whitley creates is based on contracts between people for any job or promise and is void of any charity or selfless service. But when Lily creates her almshouse, she is fighting Agora's founding principles. It is a well-written book that young adult readers will enjoy. *The Midnight Charter* can be an excellent resource to use in the classroom for analyzing the make-up of different societies or imagining our world without charity.

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