



2009

Clover Twig and the Magical Cottage

Tessa McMillan

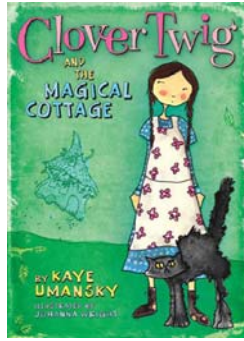
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Umansky, Kaye. *Clover Twig and the Magical Cottage*. Illustrated by Johanna Wright. Roaring Brook Press, 2009. ISBN 9781596435070. \$16.99. 297 p.

Reviewer: Tessa McMillan

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Witches--Juvenile fiction; Household employees--Juvenile fiction; Dwellings--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Clover Twig begins seeking employment to give financial help to her large, loud family. She finds a wanted ad on the village notice board from Mrs. Eckles. Mrs. Eckles, a well-known witch, needs a girl who can help clean up her old cottage. Clover answers the ad and Mrs. Eckles hires her. As she begins her job, Mrs. Eckles tells Clover about her evil sister, Mesmeranza, and how they have fought with each other for years. Meanwhile, Mesmeranza plots to take away Mrs. Eckles's cottage. She mainly wants the cottage because it can fly. While Mrs. Eckles is away, Mesmeranza fools her way into the cottage and flies away with Clover, Clover's friend Wilf, and Neville, the cat. Once they land, Mesmeranza imprisons the children. Neville finds a special potion that helps him to think clearly, and he helps the children escape with the flying cottage. Mesmeranza pursues the cottage back to its original location to find that Mrs. Eckles has returned home. Before the two begin to fight, their grandmother arrives to stop their bickering and restore the cottage and surrounding property to their original condition.

Umansky's story is witty, spunky, and well written. Her characters are endearing and humorous. This book can be a great read-aloud book for any age group. The illustrations, however, are too primitive to the point that they do not match up well with Umansky's intelligent narrative.

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