



2009

### The Hidden Boy

Ruth-Anne Brown

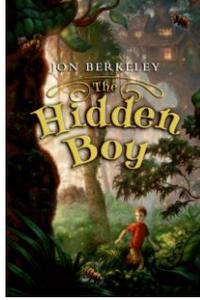
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Brown, Ruth-Anne (2009) "The Hidden Boy," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 30 : Iss. 6 , Article 14.  
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Berkeley, Jon. *The Hidden Boy*. Jon Berkeley. HarperCollins, 2010. ISBN 9780061687587. \$16.99. 262 p. p.

Reviewer: Ruth-Anne Brown

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Fantasy fiction; Adventure stories;

Subject: Adventure and adventurers--Juvenile fiction; Missing children--Juvenile fiction; Brothers and sisters--Juvenile Fiction; Books--Reviews;

The Flint family has won a “Blue Moon Once-in-a-Lifetime-Adventure Holiday” to Bell Hoot. The three week vacation spot, however, turns out to be the residence of the magical Mumbo Jumbo people. On the journey over, seven-year-old Theo disappears off the bus before they arrive. Bea Flint is the only one that can hear her brother. The people of Bell Hoot are divided into clans due to past disagreements. Maize Ledbetter is the leader of the outside clan. She demands the return of the Hidden Boy who is prophesied to take charge once she passes away. Bea discovers while she searches for her brother in the jungle that she has a keen sensitivity to the bees of Bell Hoot. She can hear them from miles away and hum to command them. With her gift she is able to find Theo and defeat Maize Ledbetter. Theo takes over the clan and governs with the help of his people.

Berkeley weaves a fantastical mystery that readers will love to solve. When Bea loses her little brother she realizes her family is what matters most. She orchestrates her destiny by utilizing her talents and courage. Short chapters throughout make the story seem like a breeze to read. Unique plot, characters, and setting are vividly described driving the imagination. Some mysteries are vaguely explained, though. *The Hidden Boy* is, overall, a well written and entertaining book for grades second through fourth.

Volume 30, no.6 (July/August 2010)