



2010

Walls Within Walls

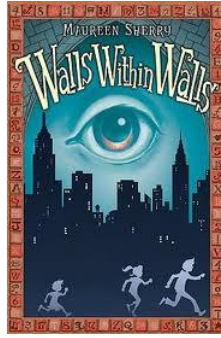
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Sherry, Maureen. *Walls within Walls*. Illustrated by Stower, Adam. Katherine Tegen Books, 2010. ISBN 9780061767005. \$16.99. 349 p.

Reviewer: Lauren Bangerter

Reading level: Primary, intermediate

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Fiction; Detective and mystery stories;

Subject: Brothers and sisters--Juvenile fiction; New York (N.Y.)-- Fiction; Books--Reviews;

After finding hidden messages behind the walls in their new Manhattan apartment, the Smithfork children embark on an adventure to find out what those messages mean. They are clues that lead to a treasure which was hidden by Mr. Post—who had lived in the apartment over eighty years ago. Although many had tried to find the treasure before them, the Smithforks were able to solve the mystery because they found a new clue. The first step in solving the mystery was to return an over-due library book and receive a package in return which put all the other clues in the correct order. Enlisting the help of their neighbor, Eloise Post, the Smithforks unravel the scavenger-hunt-like mystery that had generations of detectives before them. Along the way, they realize that the most important treasure is the relationship you develop with your own family. The treasure is found, along with Eloise’s long lost brother, and the stage is set for another hunt.

Walls within Walls is an intriguing read. The use of coded messages, patterns, and poetry makes it fun for the reader to unravel the mystery with the Smithforks, and Sherry displays an impressive knowledge of poetry and architecture. However, it does seem unbelievable that the Smithforks just happened to find out exactly how to decode the messages or that they happen to know random bits of information about New York architectural history. This would be a good choice for an elementary school aged child and would form an entertaining framework for learning about poetry and architecture.

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