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The Christmas Tree that Ate My Mother by Dean Marney

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Author: Marney, Dean

Title: *The Christmas Tree That Ate My Mother*

Year of Publication: 1992

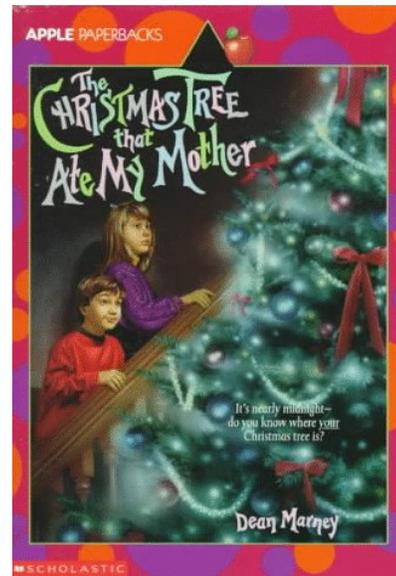
Publisher: Scholastic Inc.

ISBN: 9780590448819

Number of Pages: 86

Rating: Cannot Recommend

Reading/Interest Level: Intermediate



Keywords: Holiday; Adventure; Fantasy; Mothers; Family; Humor

Review:

Elizabeth freely expresses her opinions, including the fact that she thinks the family Christmas tree is weird. Strange things happen from the beginning: first, the tree salesman knows Elizabeth's name even though she does not introduce herself. Next, the tree moves itself around the living room, and the ornaments don't stay put. Then Elizabeth watches as her mom walks right into the tree. Elizabeth has to face her own fears of the dark and of loneliness as she seeks to rescue her mother from inside the Christmas tree and bring her back in time for Christmas morning.

Written for young readers in grades four to six, *The Christmas Tree That Ate My Mother* is part of a series of similar books by Dean Marney. The story line and vocabulary are simple, which make this a book that young readers can easily read on their own. However, the story does not challenge the reader's imagination much beyond the concept of traveling to an unknown location through the trunk of a tree and fighting a large black blob. The main character is whiny and disrespectful to her parents and brother, and she often uses sarcasm when communicating with her family. While beginning readers may find success with the book's easier reading level, the story and characters come up short.

Reviewer: Lorianne Ouderkirk

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