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The Inquisitor's Apprentice by Chris Moriarty

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Author: Moriarty, Chris

Title: *The Inquisitor's Apprentice* (*Inquisitor's Apprentice* #1)

Illustrator: Geyer, Mark Edward

Year of Publication: 2011

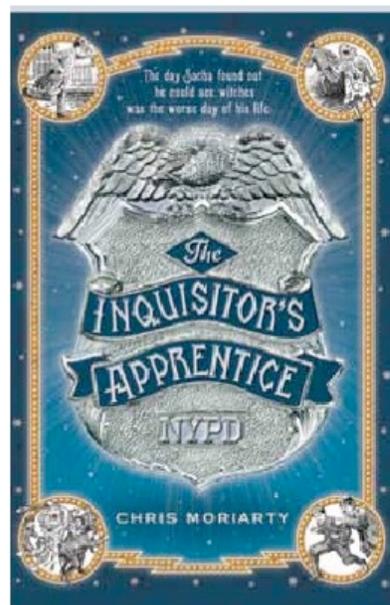
Publisher: Harcourt Children's Books

ISBN: 9780547581354

Number of Pages: 352

Rating: Excellent

Reading/Interest Level: Young Adult



Keywords: Historical Fiction; Fantasy; New York; Jewish Culture; Magic; Police; Thomas Edison; Apprentices

Review:

Magic is an everyday occurrence in New York during the early 1900s. However, it is illegal to use magic, and the Inquisitors, New York police officers trained to investigate crimes involving magic, are always watching for its unauthorized use. Maximillian Wolf, New York's best Inquisitor, has been assigned to investigate the attempted murder of Thomas Edison. Sacha Kessler, a thirteen-year-old Jewish boy and Wolf's apprentice, assists with the investigation. Sacha has the gift to see magic, and this becomes an important skill as Sacha learns that a dybbuk is taking over his life. If the creature succeeds, then a powerful man who plans to take control of New York's magic will ensure that Sacha is accused of murder and Wolf is disgraced, an eventuality that they must do everything to prevent.

The culture and history of early twentieth-century New York is cleverly woven with magic to create an interesting mystery. The book's strength lies in its fascinating characters, including Sacha and his Jewish family, Wolf and his mysterious background, and characters from the unique cultures found in New York. However, the first half of the book maintains a fairly slow pace, and there are quite a few unfamiliar references to Jewish culture. For example, readers who do not understand about kosher food may not understand why Sacha cannot eat pizza. However, readers who make the effort to immerse themselves in the book will be rewarded with an intriguing mystery. Social science teachers may find this book useful in discussing New York history and culture.

Reviewer: Suzanne Julian

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