



2015

# Unspoken: A Story From the Underground Railroad

Tessa McMillan

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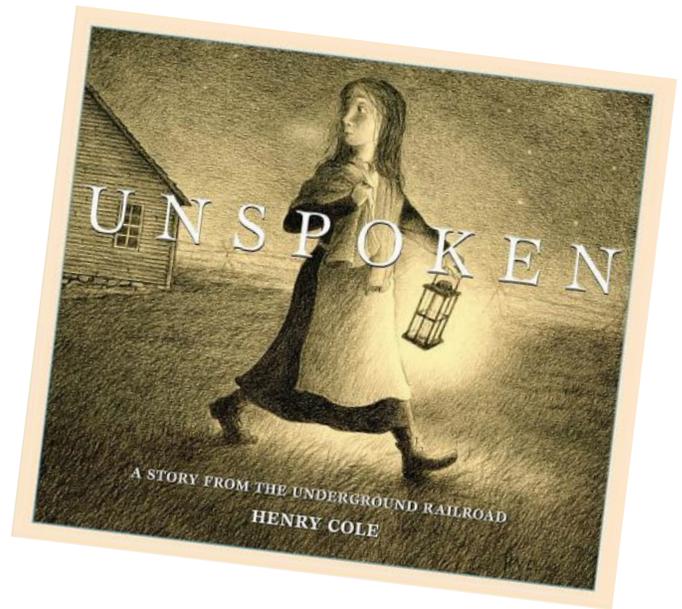
McMillan, Tessa (2015) "Unspoken: A Story From the Underground Railroad," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 36 : Iss. 5 , Article 60.

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# Book Review

**Title:** Unspoken: A Story From the Underground Railroad  
**Author:** Henry Cole  
**Reviewer:** Tessa McMillan  
**Publisher:** Scholastic Press  
**Publication Year:** 2012  
**ISBN:** 9780545399975  
**Number of Pages:** 40  
**Interest Level:** Toddler, Preschool, Primary, Intermediate, Young Adult  
**Rating:** Outstanding



## Review

Along the road home, a young girl watches several Confederate soldiers pass her by. Once back at her farmstead, the girl begins her chores, one of which is to fetch food from the larder. As she gathers food, the girl senses someone hiding behind the recently harvested corn. Frightened, the girl runs away. That night, however, the girl cannot stop thinking about the stranger's needs. Later she returns offering both food and friendship. As the days pass, the girl continues to safeguard her secret visitor. One day two men come to the farm looking for an escaped slave. The girl knows they are searching for her guest. When she goes to warn him, he is gone but has left behind a cornhusk doll.

*Unspoken* is a masterpiece in children's literature. This book without words speaks volumes thanks to Cole's mesmerizing graphite illustrations. From the first page, readers are instantly transported into the Civil War period, walking along the road with the young girl. Life seems monotonous to the girl until she meets the stranger. Then the girl begins her own silent rebellion against slavery. If the girl reveals what she is doing, a precious life may be lost. So calmly and patiently she takes care of the person that destiny put in her way. In Cole's author note, he talks of wanting to write a Civil War story. But unlike most Civil War books, *Unspoken* is a quiet tale showcasing the humble courage exhibited by many unacknowledged people.