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The Witch's Vacuum Cleaner and Other Stories

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Book Review

Title: The Witch's Vacuum Cleaner and Other Stories

Author: Terry Pratchett

Illustrator: Dave McKean

Reviewer: Olivia Noli

Publisher: Harper

Year: 2016

ISBN: 9780062653116

Pages: 243

Interest Level: Primary, Intermediate

Rating: Outstanding

Review



The Witch's Vacuum Cleaner and Other Stories is a collection of short stories written by Terry Pratchett when he was seventeen. The stories were published weekly in his local newspaper when he was working as a junior reporter. Pratchett promises a series of adventure in his newly edited and compiled anthology. The first story is "The Witch's Vacuum Cleaner," in which a party magician is cursed by a witch for disturbing her vacuum cleaner. Throughout the story, Ron Swimble, the party magician, becomes enamored with the witch and proposes marriage (and asks her to lift her troublesome spell). The book contains fourteen stories total with four stories about the town of Llandanffwnfafagettupago, a town in the real Wild West: Wales.

Pratchett is true to his promise of adventure as readers jump in to a world with air ships, magic, and a time-traveling television. Characterized by Pratchett's unique voice and humor, these stories are a great introduction for children to his other works. For fans of Terry Pratchett, it is very obvious that many of these stories were precursors to his Discworld novels. Pratchett's distinct use of footnotes, usually for humor, are evident in this anthology. His stories are geared towards younger children and he plays with words like whisper, making the font small and even faint, while loud noises are written in bold text that takes up half the page. Pratchett's distinctly educated voice is evolving and his imagination is amazing. He even claims in the introduction to have added a few details to some of the stories because his imagination was bigger in his old age than it was as a teenager. These stories are a wonderful introduction to Pratchett's work and can be enjoyed by readers of all ages.