



2018

Monsterland

Tessa McMillan

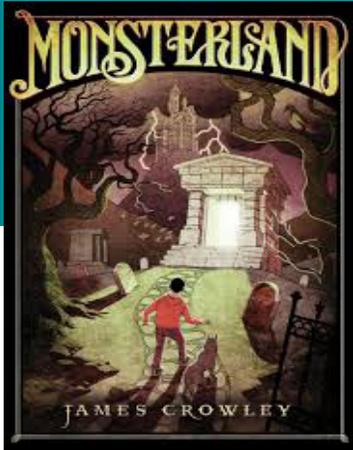
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Book Review

Monsterland

Author

James Crowley

Illustrator

NA

Reviewer

Tessa McMillan

Rating

Excellent

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

373

Year

2017

Publisher

G. P. Putnam's Sons

ISBN

9780399175893

Charlie Cooper is grieving for his beloved cousin Billy. On Halloween night, Charlie sees a figure that reminds him of Billy. Charlie follows the figure and is lead along an unfamiliar path deep into a neighboring mountain valley. But when Charlie catches up, he's shocked to see a hideous vampire. The vampire, known as the Prime Minister, governs a monster sanctuary called Vampyreishtat, or Monsterland. In Monsterland there is an island where lost souls reside and the living can see them again. The Prime Minister says that Charlie can go there to see Billy. Eventually they get to the island and Charlie is reunited with Billy. With his grief dispelled and their mission complete, Charlie returns to his family, leaving behind the strong friendships he made in Monsterland.

Monsterland is a fantastic coming-of-age story about finding the courage within oneself while overcoming grief. Charlie keenly misses Billy and feels somewhat responsible for his cousin's death. So when the Prime Minister gives Charlie a chance to see Billy again, Charlie is more than willing to encounter any hardship just so he can find peace with himself. The reason why Charlie prospers in Vampyreishtat is because of his grief. Charlie can look past any monsters' grotesque facades and see that many are grieving in their own ways. With this special perspective, Charlie is able to sympathize and connect with them. What makes Crowley's story so rich and helps Charlie's character to beautifully develop is the clever, solid world Crowley has created. Crowley takes the monsters of old horror stories and turns them into relatable, flawed characters who just want to live as normal of an existence as they can. Any fans of Brandon Mull or Jennifer Nielsen will thoroughly enjoy this adventure through Monsterland.