



2018

Giant Pumpkin Suite

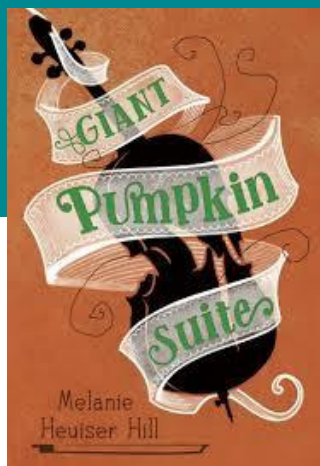
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Burr, Sydnee (2018) "Giant Pumpkin Suite," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 39 : Iss. 9 , Article 32.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol39/iss9/32>

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Book Review

Giant Pumpkin Suite

Author

Melanie Heuiser Hill

Illustrator

Reviewer

Sydnee Burr

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

434

Year

2017

Publisher

Candlewick Press

ISBN

9780763691554

At age twelve, Rose performs far above her academic level and is an accomplished cellist. In order to reach this height in performance and maintain it, she strictly organizes her days into homework and practice, leaving little to no room for anything else. Her twin brother couldn't be any more different. Not interested in school, and with grades far below his sister Rose, Thomas agrees to help his aging neighbor grow a giant pumpkin. When life takes an unexpected turn, Rose is forced to take a step back, relearn what it means to have fun, and make meaningful discoveries in her own neighborhood during the process.

Hill does an excellent job of transforming Rose from a straight-laced, single-minded, focused young woman to a kid who knows how to have a good time. In the beginning, Rose's obsession with music is borderline irritating. However, throughout the course of the book, Rose learns to pull her nose out of her compositions and awaken to the world around her. The neighbors are interesting and have so much to offer through their life experiences and warm friendship. A balance between work ethic and taking time to enjoy life is struck, and Rose teaches readers to choose similarly. Although Rose and Thomas's neighbors appear so different, both in stations of life and choice of hobbies, Rose and Thomas are able to begin lasting and beautiful friendships with everyone on their block and create a sort of pseudo-family unit forged with connections of support and encouragement.