

# Doll Bones

Karen Abbott

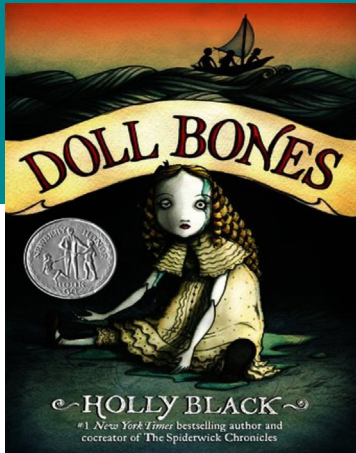
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## Book Review

# Doll Bones

### Author

Holly Black

### Illustrator

Eliza Wheeler

### Reviewer

Karen Abbott

### Rating

Excellent

### Level

Intermediate

### Pages

256

### Year

2013

### Publisher

Doubleday Children's

### ISBN

9781416963981

Zach, Alice, and Poppy create fantastic stories out of old dolls and other paraphernalia most days after school. Zach is William the Blade, a fearsome pirate. Alice is Lady Jaye, the rogue orphan thief. And Poppy plays the villains and sometimes the Queen. The Queen is an old porcelain doll locked in the Crystal Tower (a curio cabinet at Poppy's house). When Zach tells Alice and Poppy that he doesn't want to play the game anymore, Poppy does the unthinkable—she frees the Queen from the Crystal Tower. The Queen, or rather, a ghost named Eleanor, begins to haunt Poppy. Zach and Alice join Poppy on a quest to bury the Queen, a doll who was made from a little girl's bone and ash.

This is a good thriller to read aloud at Halloween. Reading it aloud with a group might make it a bit less scary for those who don't like things that are too creepy but still want something with a chill. It is a quick read with a compelling plot and spooky clues sprinkled throughout. These characters and the complexities of friendships that try to survive the transition to middle school are well developed and are managed with Holly Black's deft hand. Zach is the primary character and his point of view fits a twelve-year-old boy whose interest in sports and girls is just emerging. He is repeatedly stumped by what motivates the girls. Get used to it, Zach—this part of your life has only just begun to get confusing. He is a true little hero who steps up to the plate to resolve problems and do his best, as do his friends Alice and Poppy. All three characters exhibit moments of selfishness typical to their age group. This makes them human and keeps the fantastic story line in the realm of reality. This is a good scary read. Be careful that it doesn't give you nightmares!

\*Contains mild violence.