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Sweep: The Story of a Girl and Her Monster

Karen Abbott

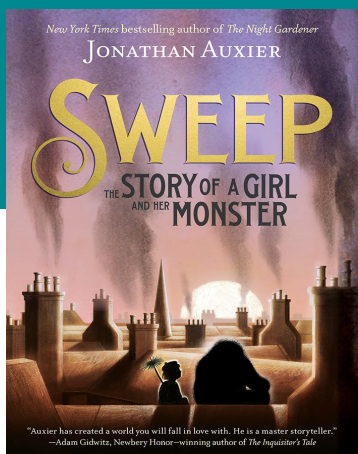
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Book Review

Sweep: The Story of a Girl and Her Monster

Author

Jonathan Auxier

Illustrator

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Reviewer

Karen Abbott

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Intermediate

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Pages

368

Year

2018

Publisher

Abrams

ISBN

9781419731402

When Nan, a chimney climber owned by a cruel master, gets stuck in a chimney, another climber lights a fire under her to scare her out. The piece of charcoal in her pocket hatches in the heat and knocks through the bricks to an attic to save them. Nan's monster is born! Charlie, as he names himself, gives Nan a reason to branch out on her own as she tries to protect him and teach him. They do pretty well, but other climbers are still at risk. Nan and Charlie put themselves on the line to end the barbaric practice of children in chimneys.

This is a magical story. Nan has courage but is hardened by the life that has trapped her in an endless and brutal struggle to survive. This forces her to shun friendship and close off her heart to keep from being destroyed by her helplessness to change her life. The magic piece of charcoal that becomes Charlie, a gift of love from her first sweep, saves her in every possible way. The primary theme of this book is monsters. Are monsters magical, hideous creatures, or are monsters men with brutal hearts, or people who choose not to see the plight of others? Who is the true monster? The story answers these questions with sincere and graceful love. It is a wonderful, wonderful book.

*Contains moderate violence.