The Secret School

Vicky M. Turner

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Reviewer: Vicky M. Turner
Reading Level: Intermediate
Rating: Excellent
Genre: Historical fiction;
Subject: School—Juvenile fiction; Teachers—Juvenile fiction; Books—Reviews;

Ida Bidson is in eighth grade at the Elk Valley Schoolhouse. It is a one room school for eight children. Ida is fourteen and her seatmate, Tom, is the same age. Both are counting on a certificate of completion so that they can attend High School next year. With only six weeks left in the school year, their regular teacher, Miss Fletcher, is called home because of an ailing mother and the school is closed. Tom comes up with the only solution -- Ida will become the teacher in a secret school -- a school that no adult will know about -- least of all the school board.

Avi always spins a good tale and -- in my opinion -- this is one of his best. Well written, plausible situations, and great characters. Ida and Tom, of course, steal the show. Even Herbert Bixler (the only student to not attend regularly) finds a way to defy his father, who thinks that book learnin’ is not important.