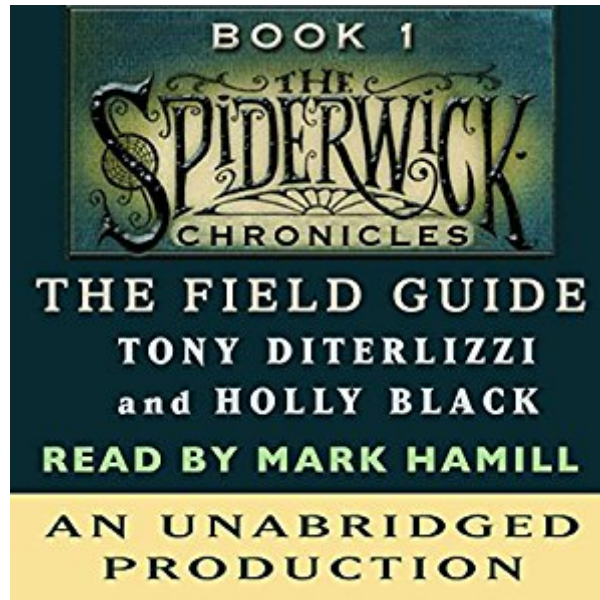


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The Field Guide: The Spiderwick Chronicles, Book 1



Synopsis

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Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 1 hour and 6 minutes

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Customer Reviews

The Field Guide, in my mind, is superior in the realm of children's lit. Even in the present-day "Renaissance of Children's Literature" it is not often that one stumbles across a book with some many positive characteristics. For one, I do not understand the hullabaloo surrounding the similarity in packaging to the Lemony Snicket books. This book was not dark or full of satire like the Series of Unfortunate Events books. Truly, the packaging of these series is where the similarities begin and end. These series is probably more appropriate for a younger audience as well, except for one expletive ("crap") that adults may find objectionable. The family dynamics are believable. The siblings love each other and help each other out, but that doesn't stop rivalry or ridicule. The story begins as the family moves into a new house, sans the father. After some exploring with the dumbwaiter, the children find mystifying secrets. The author's secrets are tough to figure out, but is good for mind-stretching purposes. I would especially recommend this book for children who may be too young for Harry Potter.

What better place to begin a children's fantasy series than a mysterious, run-down old Victorian?

Anyone that knows anything about Victorians knows that they have enormous storytelling potential,

as many of the larger, older ones have attics and crawl spaces galore. A perfect place for faeries, good or bad, to be hiding out, and for children to go exploring. For a twin, poor Jared Grace seems oddly the quintessential loner - the typical setup character who sees and believes in the elements of fantasy first, but whom nobody believes. Nevertheless, it's impossible, through both the writing and the deft illustrations throughout, not to have empathy for him. I "fell in love with" Jared in the first two pages, and maintained that throughout the story, which, while short, was still lively and well paced. Jared, who characterizes himself through the narrator as aimless and not the smart one (the smart one is Simon, his twin), is the character who is determined to solve the clues he is faced with, and upon realization that their families disruption of a faerie creatures habitat is the cause of all of their weird troubles, sets the situation right all by himself. While comparisons to Lemony Snicket are inevitable, I found more similarities to L. Frank Baum, particularly in chapter titles, such as "In Which Two Walls are Explored by Vastly Different Methods". I particularly enjoyed the drawing of the boggart in the final scene, as it was reminiscent of Jon O'Neil's wonderful and still (in my opinion) unparalleled artistry in children's books from the Wizard of Oz series. And kids - if you haven't read all of Baum's Oz books, rush to the library or beg your parents to buy them for you here on (*grin*) for they are amazing and wonderful, and in this most delightful renaissance of children's fantasy, should not be forgotten. More than one hundred years ago, L. Frank Baum started it all.

Do you hear something knocking on the walls of your house at night? Do you keep losing bobby pins, pencils, or spools of thread? Have you woken up to find that all the laces of your shoes are tied together and that your dog has a large bald spot on its head? If you answered "yes" to any or all of these questions, then there can be no doubt that you have a member of the faerie world living in your home. Is it a boggart, a brownie, or a knocker? What do these mysterious creatures look like? Within the pages of this remarkable guide you will find the answers to these and many other questions. Without a doubt this is one of the most comprehensive and fascinating books of its kind. Co-authors Holly Black and Tony DiTerlizzi have taken pages from Arthur Spiderwick's famous Guide and used them to create a book that is beautiful to look at and full of valuable and useful information. Where else will you learn how to stay on the right side of a brownie, and how else will you know that the gargoyles you see on buildings may in fact be alive? Packed with luscious color illustrations and numerous pencil sketches, this book is a must for fans of The Spiderwick Chronicles. Readers of all ages will get lost in the pages (some of which fold out to reveal beautiful illustrations) and in no time will be convinced that they indeed are looking at the life's work of Arthur Spiderwick, which thankfully has been reproduced here by the talented duo of Holly Black and Tony

DiTerlizzi. --- Reviewed by Marya Jansen-Gruber, editor of Through The Looking Glass Children's Book Review ([...]) [...]

All the things a kid could ever want in a book--Faeries, Goblins, secret rooms, and a quick read to boot. I frequent the library, but felt these books were so fantastic I had to buy copies of my own. The illustrations by Tony DiTerlizzi are wonderful, and I found myself eager to turn each page to see the next picture, as well as to read what would happen in the story. The style of the books are eerily similar to that of Lemony Snicket-- there are three siblings who find themselves in some sort of trouble or danger in each book, a letter from the author, and a snippet on the back of each book with reasons why you shouldn't read the story. Still, the events in the books were very original and kept me entertained. I can't wait for the rest of the series to be released (there are five books total). A must read!!

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