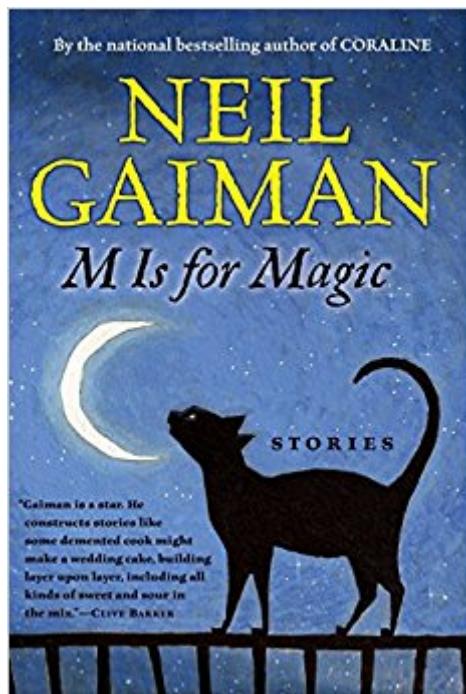


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# M Is For Magic



## Synopsis

Master storyteller Neil Gaiman presents a breathtaking collection of tales for younger readers that may chill or amuse, but that always embrace the unexpected: Humpty Dumpty's sister hires a private detective to investigate her brother's death. A teenage boy who has trouble talking to girls finds himself at a rather unusual party. A boy raised in a graveyard makes a discovery, and confronts the much more troubling world of the living.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Taking both inspiration and naming convention from Ray Bradbury's *R Is for Rocket* and *S Is for Space*, Gaiman's first YA anthology is a fine collection of previously published short stories. Although Gaiman's prose skill has improved markedly since the earliest stories included here, one constant is his stellar imagination, not to mention his knack for finding unexpected room for exploration in conventional story motifs. Jill Dumpty, sister of the late Humpty, hires a hard-boiled detective to look into her brother's tragic fall; the 12 months of the year sit around in a circle, telling each other stories about the things they've seen; an elderly woman finds the Holy Grail in a flea market and takes it home because of how nice it will look on her mantelpiece. Collectors will be pleased to note the inclusion of several stories that were previously published in the now-hard-to-find collection *Angels & Visitations*. Also of note is fan favorite *How to Talk to Girls at Parties*, which has been nominated for a Hugo Award for 2007. Though Gaiman is still best known for his groundbreaking *Sandman* comic book epic, this volume is an excellent reminder of his considerable talent for short-form prose. Ages 10-up. (July) Copyright © Reed Business

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A modern master of fantasy has selected nine of his short stories and a poem and added a segment from an upcoming children's title for this volume, appropriately titled in homage to a past master, Ray Bradbury. Leading off with a classic detective story involving nursery rhyme characters, Gaiman continues down familiar but twisted paths. There's a scary jack-in-the-box and a troll under a bridge. A rogue describes a perfect scam. A black cat fends off the devil; the eaters of a phoenix discover that it burns. There are stories about talking with girls, with ghosts, with knights in armor, and with aliens. Finally, Gaiman concludes with instructions for proper behavior in fairy-tale land. Although all but "The Witch's Headstone" have appeared elsewhere, this well-chosen collection is sure to create a new generation of Gaiman fans who will not need to understand all the allusions to enjoy the stories. Danish comic-book artist Kristiansen, no stranger to Gaiman material, will be providing the illustrations. Kathleen IsaacsCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I like Neil Gaiman's work. I have read most of what is available. I have sought out his work, I have seen him read live. I like this particular book, but it is all familiar. Not familiar in the way that when you read a lot of an author's work you know their patterns and intonations and common themes. This book is familiar in the way that pretty much everything in it is available in some other publication. I don't know if this collection is better audience-directed than his more complete story collections, but I think Gaiman's audience is anyone that has ever been young at heart, searching for a sense of wonder in their encounters with the world. Gaiman brings this wonder; he is a master story-teller. However, you should perhaps seek out *Smoke and Mirrors: Short Fictions and Illusions* (P.S.), *Fragile Things: Short Fictions and Wonders*, or *The Graveyard Book*. All these represent a fuller realization of Gaiman's mastery than this title.

Gaiman's typical wonder captured on page. Quite honestly I listened to the audiobook first, fell utterly in love, and then HAD to have the hard copy - as often proves the case when it comes to Gaiman's work. I wind up buying nearly everything of his twice, especially if he's reading it - he's probably my favorite narrator of all, and yet the way his words make page-fall drive me to wanting to own the text, as well. Plus it's Gaiman, I know I will read this time and again, and likely wind up buying it again in the future. Many have shared the greater details of this work, so I won't be

redundant. Just know it is as magically, wonderfully Gaiman as ever, and definitely worth the buy...

I loved these stories, especially the one about bod. The idea of a live boy being raised in a graveyard by ghosts, is too much to ponder.

This collection of short stories from Neil Gaiman, primarily aimed at a young adult audience, is as delightful as any of his works. This collection also contains the story "The Witch's Headstone" which later was developed to become "The Graveyard Book."

In this collection, we have a variety of short stories that go from funny, to creepy, to fascinatingly clever. Although *M is for Magic* is aimed at the YA audience I guarantee these stories are great for any adult to enjoy. Here's an overview of the stories:

- The Case of the Four and Twenty Blackbirds* Little Jack Horner is hired to solve the mystery behind the death of Humpty Dumpty. - I personally loved this one. Detective stories always [...] in.
- The Troll Bridge* Hands down this is my favorite of the bunch. Upon a stroll through the forest, a young boy encounters a troll under a bridge who wants to eat his life.
- Don't Ask Jack* A very short and creepy tale of an old Jack-in-the-Box.
- How to Sell the Ponti Bridge* Not one of my favorites but still a great crime story.
- October in the Chair* Also one of my favorites. The months of the year hold a gathering to tell their stories.
- Chivalry* Fine... this one is also a favorite. When an old lady finds the Holy Grail at her local thrift store a dashing stranger on a magnificent horse comes a knockin'.
- The Price* Quite creepy really... this is the tale of a stray black cat that fights the devil every night to protect the family that took him in.
- How to Talk to Girls at Parties* ehhh... Didn't do much for me. But nonetheless, it was still worthy. Two boys walk into a party where they realize the kids aren't everyday average teens.
- Sunbird* A gathering of Epicureans who have become bored having tasted everything there is to taste. They are enticed into seeking the legendary Sunbird of Suntown... for a taste that is to be richer than peacock and lusher than duck.
- The Witch's Headstone* This is an excerpt from *The Graveyard Book*. It tells a story of Bod getting into trouble outside the graveyard while trying to help the ghost of a witch.

There's always something great about short stories; the satisfaction of being able to read something as a "whole" in a few hours. Yet, as always with short stories, I always want more. Mr. Gaiman does not disappoint with this collection. This was quite an enjoyable read no matter what the age.

Excellent stories, but not quite Gaiman's best work.

love Neil!

Any story collection of the incomparable Neil Gaiman that contains the short story "Chivalry" ought to be given 5 stars! Every time I read words that Gaiman has written I am in awe and overcome with jealousy that I never thought of this or that incredible idea! As a child, my favorite stories were the legends of King Arthur, and the story "Chivalry" was not yet around for my enjoyment! How I would have loved to have this collection - as well as his recent Newbery winner, "The Graveyard Book" as a young, avid reader, who obsessively read Ray Bradbury and Edgar Allan Poe over and over again and couldn't find anything on the same level of quality and bone-chilling enjoyment. Even though many of these are being republished here, it is a great introduction for young adults to the crazy, chilling, creative, vivid world of Neil Gaiman. I find these stories to be perfectly acceptable - and amazing - stories for the young, precocious reader. Neil is perfection.

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