



The Light on Hogback Hill

By Cynthia De felice



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The Light on Hogback Hill By Cynthia De felice Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Despite a tie-in to Halloween, an eerie setting and a creepy character or two, there's little suspense or mystery in this flimsy novel. Hadley and Josh, the new sixth grader at Possum Hollow School, goad each other into exploring Hogback Hill, purportedly the home of a hunchbacked old woman who turns trespassers into black cats. The so-called hag turns out to be sweet and timid, the victim first of a tragic accident and then of her ill-tempered brother, who has spent decades stoking her fears of the outside world. The plot seems especially contrived given DeFelice's (*Devil's Bridge* ; *Weasel*) skill in capturing the everyday--her portraits of Hadley and her single mother and of Josh and his cheerful family demonstrate perceptiveness and a talent for creating recognizable milieus. Ages 8-12.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 4-6--Hadley and her friend Josh are consumed with curiosity over a mysterious light on the hill nearby. Their imaginations are fanned by gruff old Angus Tull, who tells stories about a hag on Hogback Hill who turns people into cat monsters. In spite of his horrifying tales, the children decide to see for themselves who or what lives in the house. There they meet Netta, Angus's reclusive humpbacked sister, who has lived there alone for 57 years. The children befriend her, and with their support she is able to return to the village to make a life for herself. This plot has some weaknesses. The most serious is that a woman who has not seen a human other than her brother for over half a century simply climbs down from her hill and takes up where she left off. Angus Tull is cast as a major villain. As the person who caused Netta's crippling accident, he feels guilt and shame, but the lengths to which he has gone to keep her hidden strain credibility. Further, Hadley, who has been having nightmares about Hogback Hill, decides to pay her initial visit there on Halloween. The children do exhibit genuine caring for Netta, but their personalities never come fully to life. The quiet, gentle woman seems almost too good to be true. Hadley all too perceptively realizes that her mother, like Netta, has been isolating herself from a world she fears will hurt her. In spite of its flaws, this book will find an appreciative audience. The initial mystery and developing themes of friendship and caring will appeal to readers looking for an easy-to-read story with some substance.

Bruce Anne Shook, Mendenhall Middle School, Greensboro, NC

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 4-8. Eleven-year-old Hadley Patterson has been steeped in stories about the Witch Woman of Hogback Hill, who performs unspeakable horrors on those who dare to behold her. Josh Carter, a new student in Hadley's class, is fascinated by the tales and persuades reluctant Hadley that climbing the hill would be a wonderful adventure. What they eventually find is Netta Tull, a shy but charming woman who has hidden from the world because she fears that her deformity would make her an object of revulsion and ridicule. Josh and Hadley help her realize that she can be accepted, and she risks returning to town after her brother's death. Hadley and Josh are a little too wise and good to be true, but DeFelice portrays a genuine friendship between young people of the opposite sex in which there is parity without a hint of prepubescent libido intruding. Hadley is often left alone by her overworked, single-parent mother, but there is a strong bond of love between the two. DeFelice deals with opposite-sex friendship, single-parent families, and prejudice against the disabled--and still manages to weave a good mystery yarn. *Sheilamae O'Hara*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Cindy Gross:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or even read a book eligible The Light on Hogback Hill? Maybe it is to be best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time together with your favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have various other opinion?

Michael Thompson:

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