



# Witch Dreams

By Vivian Vande Velde



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Sixteen-year-old Nyssa can enter into people's dreams. Although the authorities of the medieval town of Lindenwolde would put her to death if they realized she was a witch, she feels compelled to practice her unique brand of witchcraft to answer the biggest question of her life: who broke into her father's woodworking shop and killed her parents? Six years after the murder, Nyssa finally gets her chance to enter the dreams of the man she suspects is responsible. Suddenly she finds herself on a reckless, relentless journey that leads her through a maze of adventures—both in the real world and in the world of the unconscious. Nyssa risks death as she finally identifies the murderer in a shocking and unexpected climax.

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### Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-9-Nyssa, 16, is a witch who is able to dream other people's dreams. She is trying to resolve the lingering questions about who murdered her parents six years earlier. She uses her powers of bespelling and tries to get to true memory. For years, she believed that the wealthy young man who was seen at the scene was guilty and only exonerated for the crime through his parents' influence, yet through exposure to several people's dreams she learns of his innocence. Vande Velde once again grabs readers' attention on page one and holds it to the end. This quick-paced story is easy to understand and the writing is crisp and suspenseful, with the dream sequences in italics. The surprising plot twists should please mystery fans.—*Donna Marie Wagner, Harris County Public Library, Houston, TX*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 5-8. Ever since her parents were brutally murdered, 16-year-old Nyssa has searched for a way to confirm her suspicions about the killer, perhaps using her extrasensory ability to share in others' dreams--a dangerous gift that smacks of witchcraft. After one such "bespelling" reveals a flaw in her assumptions, Nyssa's investigations, combining supernatural elements and traditional gumshoe methods, end with a revelation about the facts as well as a thrilling psychological twist. It's never quite clear why it took six years for Nyssa to tap the dreams of eyewitnesses, but the greater flaw may be the unappealing jacket illustration; if readers can get past that, they'll soon be ensnared by the briskly paced plot and Vande Velde's simple yet visceral writing, especially effective in passages about Nyssa's dream-wanderings ("Wish dreams felt cool and rippled, and fear dreams tasted rancid but were exciting"). Offer this to middle-graders who enjoy the light fantasy of Nancy Springer's Rowan Hood series, older reluctant readers drawn to tales of witchcraft, and whodunit fans in both categories. *Jennifer Mattson*

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About the Author

Vivian Vande Velde's books have won many awards, including the Edgar Allan Poe Award for *Never Trust a Dead Man*. She is also the author of *Ghost of a Hanged Man*. She lives in Rochester, New York.

### Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Brian Nelson:**

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