



The House of Madame M

Books Reviewed:

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Reviewer:

[Carey Fluker Hunt](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Are you lost? Then step this way! Madame M has some surprises waiting for you inside her rather unusual house. But do take care?

Clotilde Perrin's latest picturebook is a wonderfully gruesome lift-the-flap delight for readers who enjoy a ghoulish joke. Strikingly illustrated with intricately detailed and darkly humorous spreads, this large-scale hardback features five room-sets containing more than 25 interactive constructions with macabre themes. From the seasonal clock in the sitting room (youth to old age in a single rotation) via the graffiti in the toilet (don't lift the seat!) to the monster-extractor above the hob (where even the supper is aware of death), many of its features will please older audiences, including reluctant readers and those who find it hard to concentrate on longer texts.

Visitors to Madame M's house are met at the door by a plague-beaked monster ? one piece of advice: don't touch a thing? - and taken on a tour of a building with more than its fair share of gloomy corners. Accompanied by a laconic and very funny commentary, we're hustled from hall to sitting room (?devilishly charming?) and on into the kitchen and beyond. With skeletons in every closet, there's plenty for us to see and do ? as long as we don't mind sticking our fingers into some pretty nasty locations, that is. Do watch out for those knives in the sink, though? and it might be best to give the bathtub a wide berth. Simmering yourself over a low heat could make you sleepy, and that might not be a good idea?

Despite the brevity of the text there's a sense of energy throughout, drawing us towards the final page and our ultimate encounter. But it's the illustrations which really make this book, and which will be explored repeatedly.

If books were recipes, you might detect a **Fungus the Bogeyman** flavour about this one, together with a dash of Jan Pienkowski and maybe a pinch of Fritz Wegner, too. But in **The House of Madame M**, Clotilde Perrin's imagination, skill and joie de vivre have created an original and distinctly different dish, and it's a triumph. Enjoy!

Links:

[1] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/the-house-of-madame-m>

[2] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/240>

[3] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/carey-fluker-hunt>