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# The House at the Edge of Magic

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Editor's Choice:

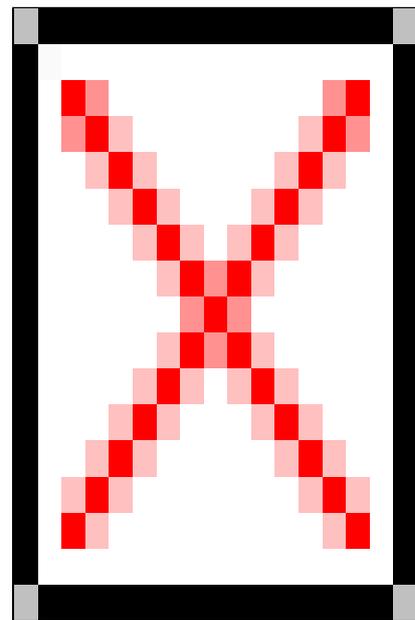
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4



In a world that feels something like Victorian London, Nine is an orphan who survives as part of a group of pickpockets, living under the control of an old man called Pockets. When she steals a small ornament in the shape of a house, she thinks that it will bring her luck and some money, but she is not prepared for what happens next. The house begins to grow, until it is a large and very tall building but when the door opens to reveal a troll and a wizard, not to mention a Scottish talking spoon, she really thinks she is having a nightmare. The wizard Flabberghast and his companions are stuck in the house, because of a curse cast by a witch and only Nine can break the spell. How she untangles the mess, saves the day and finds a way to free the house occupants makes for an exciting and sometimes wonderfully funny story.

This is a fantastic mix of Charles Dickens, think of a female Artful Dodger and Terry Pratchett with the **Tiffany Aching** series, but it also has a magic all of its own. We get a real sense of the terrible conditions that people, especially young children, could find themselves in and the way that they had to try and survive in a world without any social care. Nine is a strong and feisty character, who accepts that her life is difficult but has found ways to make life more bearable. The

one thing stopping her from running away is the fact that Pockets has her only possession, a small and beautiful music box, which she had when she was found at about three years old. This link to an unknown past is what keeps her staying with Pockets, but perhaps the mystery will be solved in a future story. This is a truly delightful story, with charming and often very funny characters and it is going to be a firm favourite with middle grade readers.

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