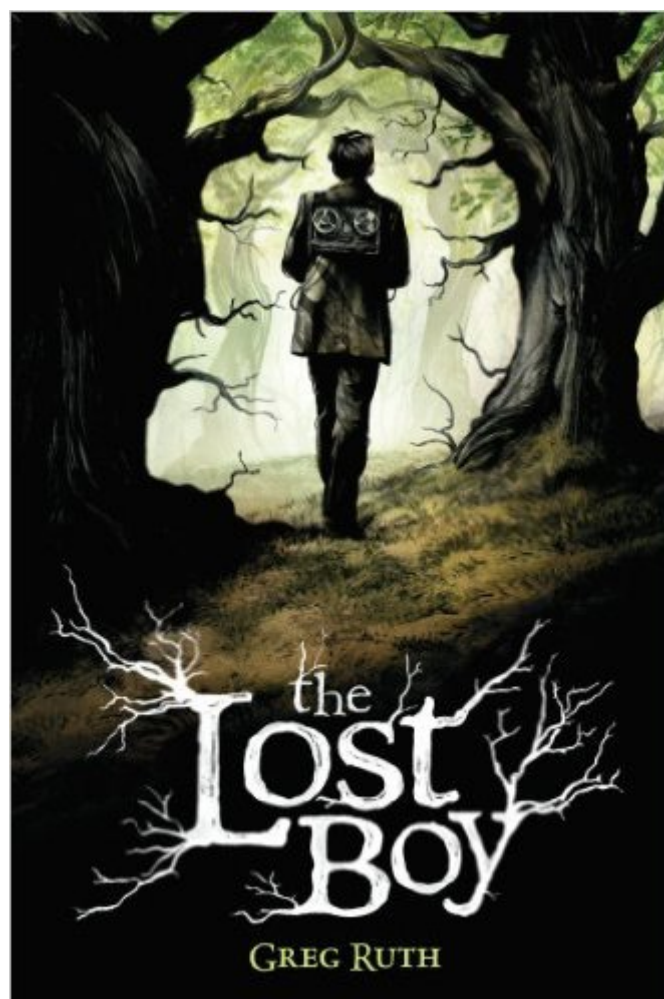


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The Lost Boy



Synopsis

Some mysteries are too dangerous to leave alone . . . Nate's not happy about his family moving to a new house in a new town. After all, nobody asked him if he wanted to move in the first place. But when he discovers a tape recorder and note addressed to him under the floorboards of his bedroom, Nate is thrust into a dark mystery about a boy who went missing many, many years ago. Now, as strange happenings and weird creatures begin to track Nate, he must partner with Tabitha, a local girl, to find out what they want with him. But time is running out, for a powerful force is gathering strength in the woods at the edge of town, and before long Nate and Tabitha will be forced to confront a terrifying foe, and uncover the truth about the Lost Boy.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 370L (What's this?)

Paperback: 192 pages

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Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 6.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.9 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (22 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #83,860 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #64 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Moving #789 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Comics & Graphic Novels #903 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Mysteries & Detectives

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

This is a very ambitious graphic novel that pushes the limits of both what you can draw and what you can convincingly build and describe in that format. Nate has just arrived in town, moving in to the home from which a boy had mysteriously disappeared forty years earlier. He's not happy about the move, but this isn't a family drama or teen angst kind of book, and the early hints that that is where we're headed fade away early on. What does happen is that Nate finds the journal and some dictated audio tapes from Walt, the boy who disappeared. What Nate reads and hears is presented in the form of flashbacks featuring Walt, so the story basically runs as two parallel narratives,

separated by forty years. The author nicely handles switches from one track to the other so that we follow the Walt backstory and Nate's current investigation of that backstory with reasonable ease. Nate is assisted by Tabitha, who starts out as a pretty snarky character, but who then calms down and becomes a sharp, funny strong character in her own right. There is no mooning romance, but the two have good chemistry and feed each other's courage and energy. Things get very strange very quickly. Basically, the old forest that borders town is sort of a glamour that hides "The Kingdom", an alternate universe that holds all manner of creatures - good, evil and indifferent. Walt could see The Kingdom and was obsessed with it. Nate and Tabitha can see The Kingdom's denizens and it seems that both Nate and Tabitha are important to the players who are competing for control within the Kingdom. From here we meet sentient bugs, a button boy, lots of birds, tree people, giant enforcers and any manner of other weird creatures.

I saw this at the library and was immediately drawn to the haunting artwork on the cover. This was an excellent dark fantasy graphic novel full of mystery, adventure, and a bit of creepiness. This looks like it will be the first book in a series. Nate has been forced to move into a new house in a new town with his parents. He's not happy. But then he finds an old tape recorder under the floorboards of his room. As he listens to the tape a mystery of a lost boy who discovered dark fey in our midst is unraveled. Nate, along with a local girl named Tabitha, starts to dig into the mystery in hopes of finding out what happened to this Lost Boy. However, with their dabbling Nate and Tabitha awaken dark forces in the woods near the town. What starts out as a creepy mystery turns into an action packed adventure through a dark forest infested with wondrous creatures. When I started reading this book I wasn't sure what to expect, but as the story unfolded I found myself really drawn into it. Ruth has built an excellent world here and a fascinating mystery that is both intriguing and a bit creepy. The whole story is definitely more dark fantasy, than fluffy fantasy. I would say it's appropriate for middle grade and older, I think it would be too scary and intense for younger kids. Nate starts out as your typical kid who's all whiny and mad about moving to a new town. However the difference between him and other kids is that he is willing to believe the strange things he hears about on the tape recorder. At the beginning of this book the pages alternate between having a white and a black background. The white background panels are ones dealing with Nate, the black panels are showing what happened in the past...

The Lost Boy is a gorgeously illustrated thriller that starts atmospherically but doesn't maintain momentum by the somewhat flat and obvious ending. It's a great book for tweens and teens,

though, who will enjoy the mood and fantastical elements and likely not be put off by the obviousness of the plot. Story: Nate, a young boy, moves to a new town and isn't happy about the relocation. Then he finds an old tape recorder in the floorboards of his room and hears an incredible story of another boy from 50 years ago unfold. The appearance of a neighbor with a daughter his age, who reacts strongly when she sees Nate's tape recorder, sets a great adventure in motion. For behind Nate's house is the entrance to a secret, fantastical world - a gate whose key an evil, otherworldly presence is desperate to obtain. A key that Nate is accused of hiding. The clean, well drawn, black and white illustrations are the heart of this graphic novel. Each looks to have been lovingly done. Every page is intricately detailed and hold reader attention. That arts brings the magical otherworld of talking bugs riding dogs, evil tree-like creature, walking doll, and even an anthropomorphic squirrel to life. Since this is a mystery, the first part flies very quickly as the story of Walt, a boy from the 1950s, is told through the voice recorder to Nate. Along with Tabitha, the next door neighbor who is Nate's age, the two work together to solve the half century old mystery of Walt's disappearance. About half way through the story, a lot of the plot becomes quite obvious - perhaps more than was necessary to ensure that a younger audience could follow.

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