

The Witch in the Woods: Grimmworld: Volume I

Michaelbrent Collings

Shadow Mountain Publishing (Mar 5, 2024)

Hardcover \$18.99 (320pp)

978-1-63993-232-0

In Michaelbrent Collings's inventive fantasy novel *The Witch in the Woods*, twins who are descendants of the Grimm brothers navigate a new reality when theirs collides with a fairy-tale world.

Jake and Willow move to a new town, where their new teacher bears an uncanny resemblance to a witch. After Jake and Willow are chased by creatures at school—and are saved by a wizard, Old Eli—their situation becomes stranger. Old Eli explains that they are descendants of the brothers Grimm and that their universe is overlapping with fairy-tale Grimmworld. The overlap is a result of the new job the twins' father has; he is at the center of the problem without realizing it.

The twins are thrust into the middle of the woods of Grimmworld. The place holds elements of familiar fairy tales, here twisted and made darker. There, the twins endeavor to find Hansel and Gretel, who are being held captive by the teacher, who is in fact a witch.

Willow and Jake are effective heroes because they see the best in each other, navigating the woods and rescuing their friends through the powers of cunning and love. Every challenge they face has a real-world corollary. But they also change the course of a fairy tale in Grimmworld—an unprecedented occurrence. In time, they are granted passage back to their world; the overlap between the worlds has been solved—for the moment, at least, though the premise for the next book in the series is also set up.

In the fantasy novel *The Witch in the Woods*, two children enter a magical world and rise to the challenges they're presented with.

RACHEL TELLJOHN (March / April 2024)

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