



Wraithwood

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A girl who's always been sheltered from magic discovers the truth about her origins in *Wraithwood*.

Brinnie is less than delighted when her parents send her to spend the summer with her Uncle Merlin, whose existence she was never before made aware of. But on first take, she likes his sprawling mansion, Wraithwood. It's a breathtaking estate—a Victorian wonder with a four-story library and enchanting grounds, if in desperate need of modern accoutrements, like electricity and plumbing.

Brinnie folds herself into two months of prospective reading. While the adults around her conceal dark goings on, they also give her wide berth. She practices cooking, gathers eggs, and befriends Marcie, who works as Wraithwood's maid. Still, she's aware of activity just beyond her scope: people with magical powers appear; she seems to exacerbate the supernatural abilities of others; and there are rumblings of a showdown in a place called Riverdell.

Memories suggest that Brinnie is more than just an ordinary girl—a suspicion that's confirmed when dangerous men wielding magic disrupt a Wraithwooder trip to town for church. Though the adults have promised to keep the truth from Brinnie, she learns that she's on the right side of a wizards' battle, and humanity's continued existence hangs in the balance.

The irresistible first book in a planned trio, *Wraithwood's* world is both magical and familiar. Supernatural revelations enter the story in an unobtrusive way: chairs float in the air; a bedroom emerges from a blanket in a wizard's hovel; an impenetrable maze proves to be the best estate security. But it's Brinnie's empathetic search for answers, and for her own identity among the wizards, that will carry affectionate interest in her story forward into the trilogy's next volumes.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (July / August 2021)

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