



The Shadows: The Books of Elsewhere: Volume 1

By Jacqueline West

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The Shadows: The Books of Elsewhere: Volume 1 By Jacqueline West

For fans of Pseudonymous Bosch, *Coraline*, and *Septimus Heap* comes the first book in the award-winning, *New York Times* bestselling Books of Elsewhere series.

This house is keeping secrets . . .

When eleven-year-old Olive and her parents move into the crumbling mansion on Linden Street and find it filled with mysterious paintings, Olive knows the place is creepy—but it isn’t until she encounters its three talking cats that she realizes there’s something darkly magical afoot. Then Olive finds a pair of antique spectacles in a dusty drawer and discovers the most peculiar thing yet: She can travel *inside* the house’s spooky paintings to a world that’s strangely quiet . . . and eerily sinister. But in entering Elsewhere, Olive has been ensnared in a mystery darker and more dangerous than she could have imagined, confronting a power that wants to be rid of her by any means necessary. With only the cats and an unusual boy she meets in Elsewhere on her side, it’s up to Olive to save the house from the shadows, before the lights go out for good.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best Books of the Month, June 2010: Hair-raising adventures can be found close to home this summer. Soon after 11-year-old Olive Dunwoody moves into a rundown Victorian mansion with her nerdy mathematician parents, she realizes something isn't quite right. It's full of oddities like strange paintings hanging on the walls and a trio of talking cats lurking in the shadows. While Olive's parents busy themselves solving math problems, she decides to work out the mysteries of the dusty old pictures by plunging headlong into the world on the other side of the frames. But, will she be able to escape the hidden dangers of Elsewhere? From the first few pages of *The Shadows: The Books of Elsewhere*, middle grade readers will be hooked on this spooky new series. --Lauren Nemroff

From School Library Journal

Grade 4–6—Olive Dunwoody and her mathematically minded parents move into an old Victorian home complete with the deceased owner's furnishings. Olive first notices that something is wrong when she can't take the paintings off the wall. She sees things moving in them. Then, while rummaging through the drawers, she finds a pair of glasses and tries them on. Olive can now enter the paintings and talk to the people in them. She is warned by a talking cat named Horatio not to spend too much time in there or to lose the glasses. She meets Morton in a painting and learns that he was forced into it because of a conversation he overheard. Olive is determined to find out more about the house and its history. But who can she trust? Her neighbors, the talking cats, or the people in the paintings? The expressive black-and-white illustrations contribute to the overall spooky mood of the story. The plot moves quickly as Olive pieces together clues. Recommend this book to reluctant readers and fans of Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* (HarperCollins, 2002).—Samantha Larsen Hastings, West Jordan Public Library, UT

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From Booklist

First-novelist West begins the Books of Elsewhere series with an old house and a curious girl. Eleven-year-old Olive had been living with her nerdy mathematician parents in a series of nondescript apartments, and the whole family is happy to move into a Victorian house, complete with furniture, that's for sale at a comfortable price. Once ensconced, Mr. and Mrs. Dunwoody become as obsessed with their math as ever, leaving Olive to her own devices. The devices, as it turns out, are odd paintings and a pair of glasses that allow her to venture inside the art to Elsewhere. And though they may not qualify as devices, there are several talking cats wandering about as well. The plot, as well as the character of Olive, will seem familiar to readers of light fantasy, but West does put her own nice spin on things. Most fun are the talking cats—Horatio, Leopold, and Harvey—whose commentary keeps things fresh. By book's end, Olive has made some inroads into the mysteries of her new home, but it's a very large house. Grades 4–6. --Ilene Cooper

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eva Burton:

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