



The Castle in the Attic

By Elizabeth Winthrop

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Ten-year-old William receives a wooden model of a medieval castle as a gift. It has everything he could possibly want, right down to a miniature drawbridge, a portcullis and a silver knight. In this enthralling story that weaves the everyday problems of growing up with magic and fantasy, the castle introduces William to an adventure involving magic, a ferocious dragon, a wicked wizard, and his own personal quest, where courage will finally triumph over fear.

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The Castle in the Attic By Elizabeth Winthrop Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

When Mrs. Phillips, who has taken care of William for years, prepares to return to England, she gives the boy a medieval castle with one knight. The knight comes to life, and William is drawn into a battle to release the kingdom from a wizard's spell. PW admired Winthrop's "absorbing fantasy. Suspense and colorful details, as well as a gentle moral precept, make the story special."

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From School Library Journal

Grade 4-6 A satisfying quest fantasy with a strong element of modern realism which will appeal to a wide range of readers. Ten-year-old William is so distraught at the idea of his beloved housekeeper/nanny Mrs. Phillips returning to England that, with the aid of a magic token, he shrinks her into the size of the toy knight which inhabits a wooden castle that has been passed down in her family for generations. To undo his rash deed, William must be miniaturized himself and accompany the silver knight, Sir Simon, on a quest to overthrow Alastor, a wicked magician who long ago usurped the throne of what should have been Sir Simon's kingdom. William's pure and gentle heart enables him to triumph over both the magician and his own childish yearning to possess Mrs. Phillips. The plot is carefully constructed. William's real-life situation is a strong component of the story rather than a device whereby he can enter the fantasy world. His too-busy parents and his struggle to be mature enough to let Mrs. Phillips go are juxtaposed with his quest and struggle to defeat Alastor. Both William and Mrs. Phillips are sympathetic, well-developed characters. In contrast, William's pediatrician mother and architect father are sketchy, both in William's emotional life and in the author's realization of them. Adults may find the theme that a pure heart can triumph over evil is a bit overstated, and fantasy buffs may desire a more fully developed fantasy world, but for young readers new to fantasy this will be successful. Louise L. Sherman, Anna C. Scott School, Leonia, N.J.

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Review

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Users Review

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Peter Schmidt:

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