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The Jumbies



Synopsis

Corinne La Mer claims she isn't afraid of anything. Not scorpions, not the boys who tease her, and certainly not jumbies. They're just tricksters made up by parents to frighten their children. Then one night Corinne chases an agouti all the way into the forbidden forest, and shining yellow eyes follow her to the edge of the trees. They couldn't belong to a jumbie. Or could they? When Corinne spots a beautiful stranger at the market the very next day, she knows something extraordinary is about to happen. When this same beauty, called Severine, turns up at Corinne's house, danger is in the air. Severine plans to claim the entire island for the jumbies. Corinne must call on her courage and her friends and learn to use ancient magic she didn't know she possessed to stop Severine and to save her island home.

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Algonquin Young Readers; Reprint edition (April 26, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 161620592X

ISBN-13: 978-1616205928

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 26 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #53,711 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #20 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Central & South America](#) #860 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths](#) #1187 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship](#)

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 3-5 • A middle grade twist on a traditional Haitian folktale. Corinne and her father don't believe in jumbies, malevolent creatures that come out of the island's dark woods to prey on people. Then one day a strangely beautiful lady named Severine walks into Corinne's house and takes over, her Papa begins acting weird, and evil creatures attack the village. Corinne and her friends approach the white witch for help but she can't assist because it would affect the ancient balance between creatures and humans. However, the white witch does tell Corinne that

she has a special power that can help. Readers will find Corinne engaging and her determination authentic. Corinne's friends, Dru, Bouki, and Malik are also fully formed and believable characters whose loyalty and bravery help save the day. Even the evil Severine is drawn well enough to evoke empathy in readers. The story builds nicely to the inevitable confrontation between Corinne and Severine. Though the denouement seems a little too good to be true, the themes of fairness, justice, and retribution meld into a better than average evil witch story. VERDICT This is a well written tale full of action with enough scary elements to satisfy fans of Adam Gidwitz's *A Tale Dark and Grimm* (Penguin, 2010) or Laura Amy Schlitz's *Splendors and Glooms* (Candlewick, 2012).
—Gretchen Crowley, Alexandria City Public Libraries, VA --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

“Tracey Baptiste scares up new audiences to learn about jumbies . . . She builds a fairy tale about a brave girl and her adventures among Caribbean creatures.”
—Washington Post
“A scary but cheerful tale that draws on Caribbean folk traditions. A great update on the ‘town under supernatural attack’ story, with a marvelous setting.”
—Baltimore Sun
“Endlessly addictive and hypnotic”
—Essence Magazine
“Far more than just your average spooky supernatural story, Baptiste uses the underpinnings of a classic folktale to take a closer look at colonization, rebellion, and what it truly takes to share the burden of tolerating the ‘other.’ Plus there are monsters. Gotta love the monsters.”
—Elizabeth Bird, Fuse 8
“The themes of fairness, justice, and retribution meld into a better than average evil witch story . . . This is a well written tale full of action with enough scary elements to satisfy fans of Adam Gidwitz’s *A Tale Dark and Grimm* or Laura Amy Schlitz’s *Splendors and Glooms*.
—School Library Journal
“It’s refreshing to see a fantasy with its roots outside Europe . . . this is a book worth reading simply for its originality.”
—Kirkus Reviews
“A spine-tingling tale rooted in Caribbean folklore that will have readers holding their breath as they fly through its pages. Be forewarned! This tale isn’t some cozy, tropical vacation and it’s not for the weak at heart, oh, no! If you like spooky tales, this is the book for you.”
Corinne’s story is truly a welcome and refreshing edition to the world of fairytales.
—Valerie R. Lawson
“This girl’s got guts. Even as she wanders the mystery-shrouded forest full of creepy-crawlies from Haitian folklore and faces up to the frightening newcomer to her village, Corinne La Mer brings badassery and wisdom beyond her years. Launching brave kids into the world of the horror novel, and leading them through it with lyrical

prose, author Tracey Baptiste knows just how to seize kids' attention.

•Foreword Reviews •

This book has been a HUGE hit in my fourth grade classroom! I bought six and as soon as one student finishes and turns it in, it is snatched up by the next. We have a "no spoilers" policy. This book is real deal literature for children!

I am also from Trinidad so it was refreshing to see our folklore being used material for a full length. Tracey's writing is clean, focused and engaging. When the book becomes available, I will get the rest of the chapters.

Felt like the end could have been a bit more dramatic but this is an excellent book nonetheless ... I don't normally read books in one shot but did for this one... Would make a good movie... Animated or otherwise!

My 11 yo daughter loved this book and completed it in two days because she was so into it! This Haitian tale was captivating and I would recommend for any child that is an avid reader and loves adventure.

Lots of fun, great for kids who want to be scared, but not TOO scared. Also a great alternative for the kid who likes mythology but has burnt through all her books on the Egyptian and Greek pantheons.

The creativity, detail, and touches of darkness and edginess were great. I bet kids will appreciate it.

We just started reading this as a family last night, we are already hooked!!!

My 11-year old loves it.

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