



Splendors and Glooms

Laura Amy Schlitz

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Newbery Medalist Laura Amy Schlitz brings her sorcery to a Victorian gothic thriller — an enthralling, darkly comic tale that would do Dickens proud. The master puppeteer, Gaspare Grisini, is so expert at manipulating his stringed puppets that they appear alive. Clara Wintermute, the only child of a wealthy doctor, is spellbound by Grisini's act and invites him to entertain at her birthday party. Seeing his chance to make a fortune, Grisini accepts and makes a splendidly gaudy entrance with caravan, puppets, and his two orphaned assistants. Lizzie Rose and Parsefall are dazzled by the Wintermute home. Clara seems to have everything they lack — adoring parents, warmth, and plenty to eat. In fact, Clara's life is shadowed by grief, guilt, and secrets. When Clara vanishes that night, suspicion of kidnapping falls upon the puppeteer and, by association, Lizzie Rose and Parsefall. As they seek to puzzle out Clara's whereabouts, Lizzie and Parse uncover Grisini's criminal past and wake up to his evil intentions. Fleeing London, they find themselves caught in a trap set by Grisini's ancient rival, a witch with a deadly inheritance to shed before it's too late. Newbery Medal winner Laura Amy Schlitz's Victorian gothic is a rich banquet of dark comedy, scorching magic, and the brilliant and bewitching storytelling that is her trademark.

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