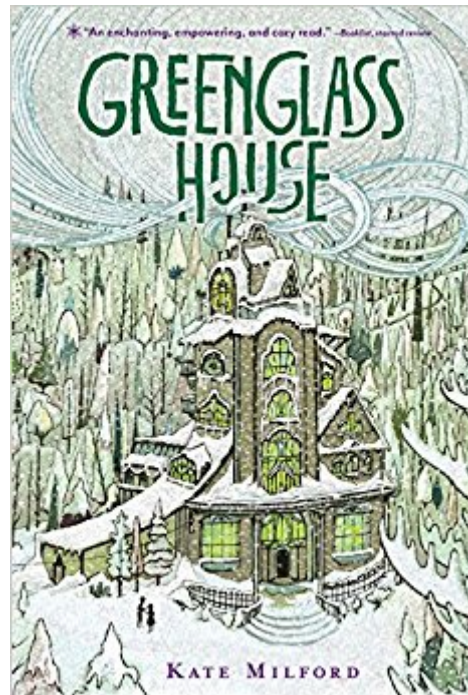




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# Greenglass House



## Synopsis

New York TimesÃÂ Bestseller National Book Award Nominee Winner of the Edgar Award for Best Juvenile Mystery ItÃÂs wintertime at Greenglass House. The creaky smugglerÃÂs inn is always quiet during this season, and twelve-year-old Milo, the innkeepersÃÂ adopted son, plans to spend his holidays relaxing. But on the first icy night of vacation, out of nowhere, the guest bell rings. Then rings again. And again. Soon MiloÃÂs home is bursting with odd, secretive guests, each one bearing a strange story that is somehow connected to the rambling old house. As objects go missing and tempers flare, Milo and Meddy, the cookÃÂs daughter, must decipher clues and untangle the web of deepening mysteries to discover the truth about Greenglass HouseÃÂ and themselves.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Gr 4ÃÂ6ÃÂ•The Greenglass House is the kind of ancient, creaky home in which a gothic horror story might be set, and the plot in Milford's latest seems to be headed that way, at least at first. Milo has just finished his homework and is looking forward to the quiet time over Christmas break, when the inn for smugglers his adopted parents run is usually deserted. But in the midst of a howling blizzard, an odd assortment of visitors with secretive purposes seemingly related

to the history of the building shows up at the inn. When the power goes out and items begin to go missing from the strange new guests' rooms, Milo decides to team up with the cook's daughter, Meddy, to figure out which, if any, of the guests arrived with nefarious purposes. Meddy's interest in Role Playing Games (RPGs) and her insistence that she and Milo adopt new names and personalities for their quest can make certain passages confusing, as Milo often refers to and thinks of himself as his game character, Negret. A twist near the end of the story helps fold the RPG plotline into the overarching narrative, while the icy, atmospheric setting and nuanced character development propel the story forward, in spite of lingering questions about the world the characters live in. Give this one to fans of Trenton Lee Stewart's "The Mysterious Benedict Society" (Little, Brown). --Elisabeth Gattullo Marrocolla, Darien Library, CT --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

**\*Starred Review\*** It's Christmas break and adopted Milo and his parents are looking forward to a vacation all to themselves at Greenglass House, the inn where they live and routinely host benevolent passing smugglers. When five unusual guests unexpectedly arrive, and their belongings—which all have something to do with the house—start disappearing, Milo finds himself at the heart of a real mystery. With the help of Meddy, the oddball girl who arrives with the cook, and a role-playing game that gives him the courage to poke around where he knows he is not supposed to, Milo uses his knowledge of the house and his skills of observation to find the missing objects, piece together the mystery of the house, and discover a secret about the legendary folk hero who used to live there. The puzzling mystery is perfectly matched by the offbeat world of Nagspeake, a fictional harbor town enhanced by folklore and history rich enough to sound convincingly real, and the dreamy Greenglass House, with its enviable attic, snug corners, and thrilling past. Milford (The Boneshaker, 2010) weaves together compelling clues, crackerjack detective work from Milo and Meddy, and well-rounded characters to reveal heartwarming truths about Greenglass House and its residents. An enchanting, empowering, and cozy read. Grades 5-8. --Sarah Hunter --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This book has definitely been one of my favourite reads of the year so far, and the funny thing is, I didn't think it would be. It is a middle grade book revolving around our main character Milo, who is the adopted son of the Pines'. He was looking forward to his Christmas break and some much needed downtime with his family, who happen to own and run an inn - The Greenglass House, that is known to welcome all kinds of visitors, including smugglers. However, just as Milo had finished all

his schoolwork early to really enjoy the rest of his break, several guests show up at the doorstep of the inn, each with a stranger reason for the visit than the next. Milo, a lover of mysteries, and mainly just bored, begins an adventure, in which he tries to find out the real reason behind their stay, and how they might be connected to one another. In doing so, he meets a young girl his age, Meddy, who encourages him to role play and use his imagination. Something that proves to be quite difficult for Milo at first, as he is grounded in reality, but he soon learns to enjoy the role playing as it gives him a chance to pretend to be someone he is not. This is important for Milo's character development, as he struggles with his identity and the many unanswered questions regarding his background and birth parents, and seems to deal with a lot of guilt for wanting to know, given that his parents are great and loving and have never done anything for him to wish otherwise. At first, I was a little put off by the "game", maybe because it's way above my age group and so I couldn't help but think how childish these kids are being. Meddy, especially, came off as very annoying and clingy and her insistence on sticking to character could become quite irritating - Milo sure did get frustrated with her a few times, however, as they get closer and closer to solving the mystery the game begins to make more sense until it reaches a climax, which honestly left me sitting with my jaw on the floor and gave me goosebumps all over. I really enjoyed getting to know each of the guests separately, and trying to figure out who was up to what. They all act quite suspicious, and they all have bizarre backgrounds that sometimes don't add up. Suddenly, things start disappearing - guests belongings are being stolen, and everyone is a suspect. Milo makes it his mission to find these missing belongings, but more importantly to find out who is behind all this thievery - and why. When Milo suggests that they all begin sharing stories after dinner, as a way to pass the time and get to know each other a little better, you start seeing glimpses of each one's true intentions and Milo uses that time to try and assess the details for any clues and piece things together, with the help of Meddy. It all reminded me a little bit of Agatha Christie's, *And Then There Were None*. Obviously, a more innocent, child-friendly version, just in the way that these strangers are all stuck in a house and telling stories and hiding things and so on. Then again, I probably made that connection because I had recently read it. A great mystery, with some great characters that are all well developed and rounded. Milo is a great protagonist to have and root for, and his sidekick Meddy is a wonderful companion to him. The twist in the story took me completely off-guard, and I honestly didn't see it coming. I don't know if it's just me, or if Kate Milford played it well, but I was blindsided and found it one of the most unpredictable twists that I had read in a while. Very well done. That twist and ending alone quickly made this book one of my favorites, otherwise, it would have been just another regular old mystery.

This is a sweet little story. It's filled with mystery, intrigue, and a little magic. Throw in some smugglers, thieves, and strangers and you get a fun little escapade. I thoroughly enjoyed it. I will say, as an adoptive mom, I wasn't prepared to encounter the dark adoption theme here. I felt really sorry for the character that struggled so with his identity - and it was never really clarified for him. I would warn adoptive parents to read this one with their kids and expect some painful conversations. It's worth it, but just be ready.

**Summary:** Greenglass House, an inn owned by The Pines, is usually very quiet during the winter. It is off season and Milo, The Pines' adopted son, is ready for a break. Unfortunately, the inn suddenly floods with guests and The Pines have to ask one of their employees to come back and help. Mrs. Caraway brings her daughters with her and they all set out to keep the inn running during the winter. One of the daughters, Meddy is the same age as Milo, so the two of them become friends. They begin playing this role playing game and taking on different characters to help solve mysteries and possibly find treasure. Each character accents things that the children would rather be. For instance, Milo's character is brave and bold, whereas Milo has some anxiety issues and is rather meek. These personas add an element to each character which allows more of the inn's history, the guests inside, and the treasure to be explored.

**My thoughts:** This is a multi-layered story that has fabulous main and side characters. Milford has managed to bring to life Milo and Meddy in two different ways. First, they are both children that are learning about themselves, their history, and their growing friendship. There is no romance, but the two definitely need one another. Their role-playing personas are also fully defined. Those give an extra layer to each child. We find their insecurities and ways they learn to deal with it. On top of that, it reminded me of times when I pretended to have an imaginary friend to get into mischief with. Finally, all of the guests within the inn have a very important part of play in unveiling the overall mystery. They also have their own kooky personalities which are interesting to read through. As well as Milford's wonderful characters, she also builds a world that makes you feel like you are there. The Greenglass House is revealed to the reader first as a view of the inn. We see the inside and outside and are able to picture the rooms and the fascinating glass, but as we move through the story, we also see more layers of the Greenglass House. It's almost as if the setting becomes a character. While the history is a mystery that the characters slowly figure out, it is also revealing more of the character of the House. It's definitely interesting and entertaining. I think I should look up some more Milford books.

My ten-year-old grandson and I read this book together and the final consensus was, we LOVED it! It's a little bit weird, with some quirky characters, which made it all the more fun!

I enjoyed this rather a lot. There was plenty of adventure packed into one location, and the location made me want to visit. On top of that, the relationships between the characters were just complex enough--there was enough realism in the relationships between the adult characters that adult readers could connect with this book while not making those adult relationships center stage. Milo and Meddy were also well-balanced--sometimes child characters are overly precocious, but I didn't feel they were. All in all, Greenglass House managed to have just the right amount of chill and warmth to make it a perfect January read.

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