



The Imaginary

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~~Not a choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Many people have an imaginary friend at sometime in their childhood; then they will grow out of this. What might happen if the adult cannot give up this friend? This is the predicament that faces Amanda and her best (imaginary) friend, Rudger as they come up against the sinister Mr Bunting.

This is a book to remember. Like that classic, [The Midnight Folk](#) [4] by the poet John Masefield, it seamlessly blurs the boundary between the real world and that of the imagination. Perhaps this is because A. F. Harrold is also a poet and creator of the wonderfully named Fizzlebert Stump. Here we meet Amanda, a girl with an active imagination that can conjure adventures out of the everyday; adventures that need a companion. If, however, school friends are lacking, the answer is an imaginary friend. Hence Rudger. But imagination can be tricky. It can take over. Or it may disappear. What happens to your friend then? How should one value such a friendship? These ideas are woven through the action - and there is plenty of action as well as moments of real terror (imagination is not always cosy). It is this that prevents the whole becoming a whimsical indulgence. Amanda is a recognisable and robust girl who is more than a little bossy. Rudger has echoes of Pinnocchio and yet is a convincing boy. Above all there are Gravett's illustrations enhancing and extending the text, giving imagination a local habitation and a face. A beautiful book that repays rereading.

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