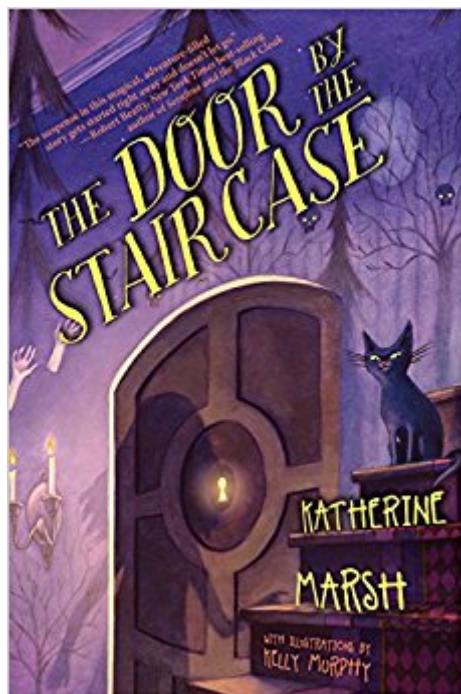


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# The Door By The Staircase



## Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Mary Hayes can't stand her orphanage for another night. But when an attempted escape through the stove pipe doesn't go quite as well as she'd hoped, Mary fears she'll be stuck in the Buffalo Asylum for Young Ladies forever. The very next day, a mysterious woman named Madame Z appears at the orphanage requesting to adopt Mary, and the matron's all too happy to get the girl off her hands. Soon, Mary is fed a hearty meal, dressed in a clean, new nightgown and shown to a soft bed with blankets piled high. She can hardly believe she isn't dreaming! But when Mary begins to explore the strange nearby town with the help of her new friend, Jacob, she learns a terrifying secret about Madame Z's true identity. If Mary's not careful, her new home might just turn into a nightmare. Award-winning author Katherine Marsh draws from Russian fairytales in this darkly funny middle-grade fantasy novel, now available in paperback. Praise for *The Door by the Staircase*\* "Well-drawn characters, an original setting, and a satisfying resolution are the ingredients that make this carefully crafted middle-grade adventure a highly rewarding read." -Kirkus Reviews, starred review \* "Marsh has crafted a sparkling tale full of adventure, magic, and folklore." -School Library Journal, starred review "[An] engaging, almost cinematic story . . ." -The Wall Street Journal Praise for *Jepp, Who Defied the Stars* New York Times Notable Children's Books of 2012 The Wall Street Journal Best Children's Books of 2012 "Narrating a young adult novel from a dwarf's perspective is nothing short of inspired. Marsh transcends genre to create an engaging narrative complex enough to keep not-so-young adults turning its pages." -The New York Times Book Review \* "This shining gem is a must-have." -School Library Journal, starred review\* " an epic search for love, family, respect, and a destiny of one's own making." -Publishers Weekly, starred review\* "Incorporating elements of adventure, romance, tragedy, intrigue, and science, the novel conjures a place and time not commonly explored in young adult fiction " -Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, starred review Praise for *The Twilight Prisoner*\* "Readers should be drawn in by the complex relationships between Marsh's protagonists and Jack's continuing existential struggles, caught between the worlds of the living and the dead." -Publishers Weekly, starred review Praise for *The Night Tourist* Winner of the Edgar Award for Best Juvenile Mystery, 2008 \* "This intelligent and self-assured debut will compel readers from its outset, and leave them satisfied as it explores universal themes of love, loss, and closure." -Publishers Weekly, starred review

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #23,712 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Adoption #23 in Children's Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Multicultural #60 in Children's Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Orphans & Foster Homes

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 9

## Customer Reviews

Gr 4-6 "Twelve-year-old Mary Hayes is orphaned when her mother and brother perish in a tragic fire, one that she escaped because she was outside reading her book of fairy tales. Life in the Buffalo Asylum for Young Ladies is so grim that she risks escape by chimney, only to be thwarted by an extraordinary whirlwind. The very next day eccentric Madame Zolotaya appears, adopts Mary, and takes her to a remote house near the strange town of Iris, which is populated by practitioners of the occult. Madame Z is kind to Mary, feeds her well, and gets her new clothes, yet she protests that she is "no one's mother." When it is revealed that her guardian is none other than Baby Yaga, the fearsome witch who eats children, Mary and her friend Jacob, a magician's assistant, work together to protect themselves from the witch's power. Laural Merlington brings much expression and varied voices to this exciting, magical tale, and only Madame Z's "Russian" accent seems a bit forced. Mary is a strong, kind, and clever character, and the common wish for a home, friends, and family unite the diverse and amazing characters. VERDICT Although there is some foreshadowing, the suspense stays strong throughout and draws to a satisfying conclusion; boys and girls, lovers of Harry Potter, and fans of dark fairy tales will appreciate this adventure. ["For those willing to tackle a rich and layered text, there's much here to enjoy": SLJ 12/15 starred review of the Hyperion book.] "MaryAnn Karre, Binghamton, NY --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

\* "Well-drawn characters, an original setting, and a satisfying resolution are the ingredients that

make this carefully crafted middle-grade adventure a highly rewarding read."•Kirkus Reviews, starred review"[An] engaging, almost cinematic story . . ."•The Wall Street Journal

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