



Magrit by Lee Battersby, illustrated by Amy Daoud

Publisher: Walker Books

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This book for young adults is a carefully crafted fantasy; the reader will experience a range of emotions while trying to piece the puzzle together.

Magrit is a young girl whose world is an abandoned cemetery where she has created Master Puppet from items she found in the graveyard such as a skull, bones and twigs. He sits on the chapel roof staring aloofly from his high vantage point.

Magrit frequently seeks Master Puppet's advice, but his skeletal love is cold and unresponsive. The dynamics between the two inhabitants of the cemetery changes when baby Bugrat is dropped off by a passing stork. Magrit feels responsible for the baby's welfare and upbringing.

Master Puppet will have nothing to do with Bugrat, constantly sniping at Magrit who is confused, exhausted, and fearful of the future. What is the connection between Magrit, Master Puppet and the newly discovered skeleton child? The tension is skilfully managed by Battersby as there can be 'no hiding from the truth.'

Amy Daoud's black-and-white illustrations appear at random throughout the text, sometimes shown as block letters to emphasise a piece of conversation, effectively adding to the mood of the story.

This is Battersby's first novel for young readers. He has a quirky sense of humour with a wry joke to end the acknowledgments. Magrit is published in hardback with a stylish, textured cover and purple-tinted page edges.

Author's website:

<http://battersblog.blogspot.co.nz/>

Reviewed by retired teacher/librarian, Pat Osman

