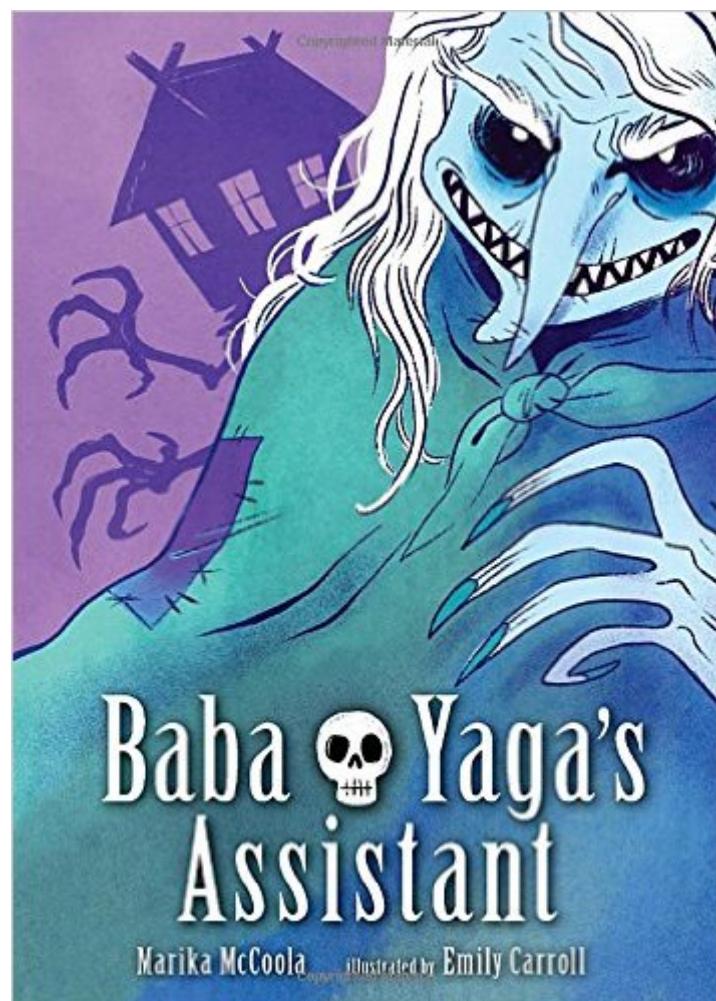


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# Baba Yaga's Assistant



## **Synopsis**

Russian folklore icon Baba Yaga mentors a lonely teen in a wry graphic novel that balances gleefully between the modern and the timeless. Most children think twice before braving a haunted wood filled with terrifying beasties to match wits with a witch, but not Masha. Her beloved grandma taught her many things: that stories are useful, that magic is fickle, that nothing is too difficult or too dirty to clean. The fearsome witch of folklore needs an assistant, and Masha needs an adventure. She may be clever enough to enter Baba Yaga's house-on-chicken-legs, but within its walls, deceit is the rule. To earn her place, Masha must pass a series of tests, outfox a territorial bear, and make dinner for her host. No easy task, with children on the menu! Spooky and poignant, Marika McCoola's stunning debut "with richly layered art by acclaimed graphic artist Emily Carroll" is a storytelling feat and a visual feast.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: GN340L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 136 pages

Publisher: Candlewick (August 4, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 076366961X

ISBN-13: 978-0763669614

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.6 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #227,692 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #577 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Multigenerational #1558 in Books > Children's Books > Comics & Graphic Novels #2865 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

I almost gave up at the start of this book because of the heroine's unrelenting angsty moping. But be patient, after the setup and then the appearance of Baba Yaga the book really takes off. We start with our heroine Masha. Her beloved mother died when she was a child, leaving her to be raised by a distant father and a loving, wise, romantic and possibly magical grandmother. Then grandmother

dies, although we get to know her well through numerous flashbacks. Distant Dad suddenly decides to remarry. We get an actually very nice step-mother and a horrible, bratty little step-sister. At this point Masha decides to run away and seek out Baba Yaga, who needs a new assistant. Also at this point I would have been fine if Baba had just eaten Masha and called it a day. But wait. In the woods, confronted by Baba Yaga's chicken leg house, Masha transforms into a resourceful, funny, clever and spirited heroine. Baba Yaga turns out to be full of sarcastic wisecracks. We end up with a very entertaining battle of wills between these two. The fun angle is that as Baba Yaga sets tests for Masha, Masha has to flash back to old Baba Yaga stories and to tales told to Masha by her grandmother in order to figure out how to pass the various tests. That's how we end up getting a mix of old-fashioned Baba Yaga and modern Baba Yaga. It reads like an anthology of Baba Yaga stories, but all tied together into the story of Masha's trials. The inspired illustrations really help carry the day. Masha is the least well realized character, sometimes being drawn in a bland and flat style and sometimes drawn with a little oomph.

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