



Mister Max: The Book of Lost Things: Mister Max 1

By Cynthia Voigt

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Mister Max: The Book of Lost Things: Mister Max 1 By Cynthia Voigt

Max's parents are missing. They are actors, and thus unpredictable, but sailing away, leaving Max with only a cryptic note, is unusual even for them. Did they *intend* to leave him behind? Have they been kidnapped?

Until he can figure it out, Max feels it's safer to keep a low profile. Hiding out is no problem for a child of the theater. Max has played many roles, he can be whoever he needs to be to blend in. But finding a job is tricky, no matter what costume he dons.

Ironically, it turns out Max has a talent for finding things. He finds a runaway child, a stray dog, a missing heirloom, a lost love. . . . So is he a finder? A detective? No, it's more. Max finds a way to solve people's problems—he engineers better outcomes for them. He becomes Mister Max, *Solutioneer*. Now if only he could find a solution to his own problems . . .

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Best Books of the Month: Middle Grade, September 2013: *Mister Max: The Book of Lost Things* is an imaginative blend of mystery and adventure, the first of a proposed trilogy. We begin with twelve-year-old Maximilian Sterling's very theatrical parents mysteriously disappearing, leaving him in the care of his grandmother. What follows is not what I expected--a wonderful surprise. While waiting for news of his parents, Max stumbles into detective work that he calls the job of "solutioneer," because sometimes there is more to finding a solution than simply retrieving what has been lost. Max's theatrical upbringing serves him well, with disguises and personas that are often comical and always exactly what is needed to get the job done. If only he could figure out how to solve his own mystery: the whereabouts of his parents. *Mister Max* is a thoughtful and beautifully written novel that will reassure the most timid of readers that hidden within themselves is a wealth of courage and untapped possibility. --Seira Wilson

From School Library Journal

Gr 5-8-Admirers of Voigt's "Tillerman" series (S & S) will recognize several plot points in this first volume of a proposed trilogy: a child is seemingly deserted by his parents and survives with the support of his grandmother. But there the similarities end, for this is a mystery-cum-adventure story with a 19th-century feel and an accumulation of improbabilities that build to a satisfyingly melodramatic climax. As Maximilian Starling wends his way around his nameless city trying to find an honest day's work, he stumbles across a series of people with problems, unanswered questions, unsatisfied longings, or vague states of malaise. And then there are the sinister types who seem intent on breaking into Max's house. What are they looking for? Fortunately, Max's parents were theatricals, which gives him both an intimate knowledge of roles to assume while pretending to be old enough for employment and an ample supply of costumes in which to disguise himself. Whether it's finding a good home for a lost dog, facilitating the reunion of disappointed lovers, or recovering a long-lost heirloom, Max displays good sense, a sensitive nature, and winning ingenuity. He resists being labeled a detective and since he merely guides people toward the resolution of their troubles, it's fitting that he calls himself a "solutioneer." By book's end, however, he has not answered his own questions. Readers still don't know what has happened to his parents, for example. This will likely leave them strangely contented, knowing that Voigt has so much more to reveal in the sequels to this comedic page-turner.-Miriam Lang Budin, Chappaqua Library, NYα(c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From [Booklist](#)

In the early 1900s, 12-year-old Max arrives at the dock to join his parents for a voyage to India only to learn that they have already gone, leaving him a cryptic note. He confides in his grandmother, who encourages him to support himself until their return. After he finds a lost toddler and restores the boy to his mother, her friends hire Max to recover other things they have lost. Though baffled by the mystery of his parents' disappearance, Max discovers that he has a knack for solving other people's problems. The measured pace of the writing will not appeal to every reader, but the style suits the story's period. Voigt takes her time creating multifaceted characters and laying the groundwork for the next two volumes in the Mister Max trilogy, while the novel quietly builds a momentum of its own. The hint of lurking villainy is real, but even stronger is the sense that Max, his grandmother, and his friends will use their individual strengths to set things right. Stay tuned. Grades 4-6. --Carolyn Phelan

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Joy Hanson:

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