



# The Witch's Boy

By Kelly Barnhill

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**“This spellbinding fantasy begs for a cozy chair and several hours of uninterrupted reading time.” —*The Washington Post***

When Ned and his identical twin brother tumble from their raft into a raging river, only Ned survives. Villagers are convinced the wrong boy lived. Across the forest that borders Ned’s village, Áine, the daughter of the Bandit King, is haunted by her mother’s last words: “The wrong boy will save your life, and you will save his.” When the Bandit King comes to steal the magic Ned’s mother, a witch, is meant to protect, Áine and Ned meet. Can they trust each other long enough to cross a dangerous enchanted forest and stop the war about to boil over between their two kingdoms?

**“Barnhill is a fantasist on the order of Neil Gaiman.” —*Minneapolis Star Tribune***

**“[*The Witch’s Boy*] should open young readers’ eyes to something that is all around them in the very world we live in: the magic of words.” —*The New York Times***

**“This is a book to treasure.” —*Nerdy Book Club***

**A *Washington Post* Best Book of 2014**

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**A *Kirkus Reviews* Best Children’s Book of 2014**

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## The Witch's Boy By Kelly Barnhill Bibliography

- Rank: #83621 in Books
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- 400 pages

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 4–6—When Ned was young, he and his twin brother built a raft and tried to sail to the sea. The raft sank, and one boy survived—the wrong boy, if you ask the villagers in Ned's tiny town. Alternately whispered about, teased, and outright ignored, Ned survives his brother's death with a stutter and an air of palpable sadness that seems to weigh down his weak frame. Meanwhile, in the middle of a formidable forest the villagers claim used to be home to nine stone giants, a young girl named Aine lives a fractured life with her father, who leads a horde of bloodthirsty bandits. When the raiders attempt to steal the magic Ned's mother guards so faithfully, Ned and Aine end up as unlikely allies on a journey to right an ancient wrong. Careful, confident Aine; whose skills, both domestic and wild, make her a formidable ally (and excellent heroine), is a studied contrast to the weaker, shy Ned. The boy's growing confidence and ability to wield and protect his mother's magic adds elements of a classic origin-quest tale to a story that's already brimming with a well-drawn, colorful supporting cast, a strong sense of place, and an enchanted forest with a personality to rival some of the best depictions of magical woods.—Elisabeth Gattullo Marrocolla, Darien Library, CT

## Review

“In a story of an unexpected hero, a thief’s daughter, and some very tricky magic, Barnhill weaves a powerful narrative . . . Barnhill elegantly joins the story’s diverse threads in a complex tale whose poignancy never turns sentimental.” —*Publishers Weekly*, **starred review**

“Careful, confident Aine; whose skills, both domestic and wild, make her a formidable ally (and excellent heroine), is a studied contrast to the weaker, shy Ned. The boy’s growing confidence and ability to wield and protect his mother’s magic adds elements of a classic origin-quest tale to a story that’s already brimming with a well-drawn, colorful supporting cast, a strong sense of place, and an enchanted forest with a personality to rival some of the best depictions of magical woods.” —*School Library Journal*, **starred review**

“Barnhill skillfully interweaves the stories of Ned, Aine, Sister Witch and the stones, along with an intriguing group of secondary characters. The third-person narration switches perspective smoothly, and it’s all related in a precise, flowing prose that easily places readers into the fantastic setting and catches them up in the story. The classic fantasy elements are all there, richly reimaged, with a vivid setting, a page-turning adventure of a plot, and compelling, timeless themes.” —*Kirkus Reviews*, **starred review**

“Warring nations, mysterious stone figures, and the running thread that magic is alive and dangerous all add to the gripping core narrative of two children who find wells of strength and ingenuity from being pushed out of their comfort zones. The setting is exceptional: lush descriptions are flawlessly integrated, conveying a deep understanding of the natural world and the people, flawed and complex, who populate it . . . Offer this to Gaiman and Wynne-Jones fans, and to realistic fiction buffs who are open to brilliant coming-of-age stories sharing space with touches of magic.” —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*, **starred review**

“Barnhill . . . is an eloquent writer who spins beautiful lines . . . This spellbinding fantasy begs for a cozy chair, a stash of Halloween candy and several hours of uninterrupted reading time.” —*The Washington Post*

“A story with many alluring elements . . . Barnhill creates an absorbing world of kingdoms and prophecies in

which transformation comes through language, and through courage and self-awareness as well . . . [*The Witch's Boy*] should open young readers' eyes to something that is all around them in the very world we live in: the magic of words." —**NewYorkTimes.com**

"Barnhill tells a complex story, one that sustains and subverts the usual fairy-tale tropes. Through the eyes of the brave and increasingly shrewd Ned and Áine, young readers consider the complications of magic, the corrupting desire for power, and the conflicting natures of good and evil in this atmospheric and elegantly told literary fairy tale." —***The Horn Book Magazine***

"The characters are vivid and well developed . . . The writing is beautiful and lyrical, but keeps pace with an action-packed story . . . Recommend this title to those who like retellings and strong, narrative fantasy." —**VOYA**

"Kelly Barnhill is deft at crafting strong characters, and this classic fairy tale is filled with otherworldly beasts and plenty of magic." —***San Antonio Express-News***

"In [this] gorgeously written and fast-paced adventure through forest and flood, bandits and courtiers, wolves and queens and witches, the boy and the girl must stop a war, restore magic to its rightful place, and find their own places in a world they've helped to make bigger. Barnhill is a fantasist on the order of Neil Gaiman, and this story feels fully inhabited." —***Minneapolis Star Tribune***

"Fiercely original and uncommonly lovely, *The Witch's Boy* is equal parts enchanting and haunting. Kelly Barnhill is master of truly potent and unruly magic; luckily for readers, she chooses to use her powers for good." —**Anne Ursu**

From the Back Cover

**"This spellbinding fantasy begs for a cozy chair and several hours of uninterrupted reading time."**  
—***The Washington Post***

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Jerry Thomas:**

Information is provisions for anyone to get better life, information these days can get by anyone from everywhere. The information can be a know-how or any news even a problem. What people must be consider if those information which is inside former life are difficult to be find than now is taking seriously which one is appropriate to believe or which one the actual resource are convinced. If you obtain the unstable resource then you have it as your main information it will have huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not happen inside you if you take The Witch's Boy as the daily resource information.

#### **Patricia Sax:**

Reading a book can be one of a lot of activity that everyone in the world really likes. Do you like reading book and so. There are a lot of reasons why people fantastic. First reading a publication will give you a lot of new facts. When you read a reserve you will get new information mainly because book is one of many ways to share the information or maybe their idea. Second, studying a book will make an individual more imaginative. When you looking at a book especially fictional book the author will bring one to imagine the story how the characters do it anything. Third, it is possible to share your knowledge to other people. When you read this The Witch's Boy, you could tells your family, friends and soon about yours reserve. Your knowledge can inspire average, make them reading a reserve.

#### **Jennifer Shipley:**

Spent a free time to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or their friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book can be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you will ask may be what kinds of guide that you should read. If you want to consider look for book, may be the e-book untitled The Witch's Boy can be good book to read. May be it may be best activity to you.

#### **Jose Hackler:**

Playing with family in the park, coming to see the sea world or hanging out with good friends is thing that usually you have done when you have spare time, after that why you don't try point that really opposite from that. One activity that make you not experience tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition of information. Even you love The Witch's Boy, you could enjoy both. It is excellent combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hang type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout fellas. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

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