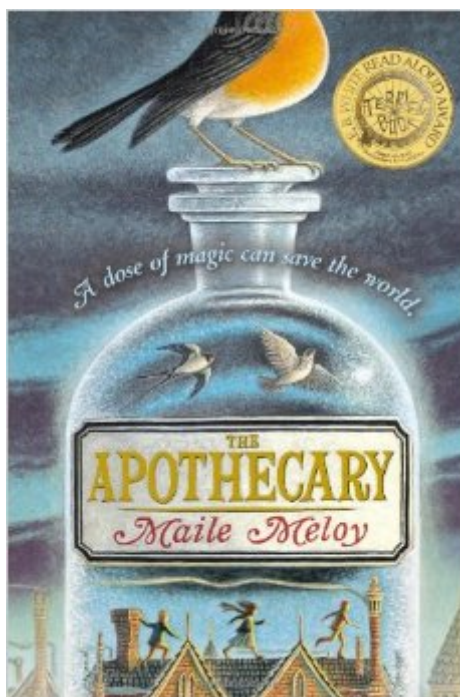


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# The Apothecary (The Apothecary Series)



## Synopsis

It's 1952 and the Scott family has just moved from Los Angeles to London. Here, fourteen-year-old Janie meets a mysterious apothecary and his son, Benjamin Burrows - a fascinating boy who's not afraid to stand up to authority and dreams of becoming a spy. When Benjamin's father is kidnapped, Janie and Benjamin must uncover the secrets of the apothecary's sacred book, the Pharmacopoeia, in order to find him, all while keeping it out of the hands of their enemies - Russian spies in possession of nuclear weapons. Discovering and testing potions they never believed could exist, Janie and Benjamin embark on a dangerous race to save the apothecary and prevent impending disaster. Together with Ian Schoenherr's breathtaking illustrations, this is a truly stunning package from cover to cover. Contains a teaser chapter of the sequel, *The Apprentices*.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0740 (What's this?)

Series: The Apothecary Series (Book 1)

Paperback: 368 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books; Reprint edition (February 12, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0142422061

ISBN-13: 978-0142422069

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (130 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #17,996 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

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[Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy & Magic](#) #1154 in [Books > Children's Books > Action & Adventure](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

I got an advanced reading copy of this book from the publisher. This was an excellent book. It is based during the cold-war and touches on issues that were important then (Communism and the atomic bomb, Nationalism) as well as entwining magic throughout the story. Very well written and a pleasure to read, with beautiful black and white illustrations. I finished it in one sitting and enjoyed every minute of it. In the early 1950's Janie's parents are suspected of being sympathetic to

Communism; as a result Janie and her family are forced to flee from America to London. In London Janie is miserable until she stumbles into Benjamin Burrows. Benjamin is the son of an apothecary and wants to be a spy; he ropes Janie into helping him spy in the park one day. Little do they know that there are very dangerous events afoot and Benjamin's father is part of them. Their innocent spying turns into a flight for their lives as they are drawn into a conflict that spans nations and involves a magical book called the Phramacopia. I loved this book because it just covered so many different things and made them into a wonderful cohesive and magical story. There is a lot in here about cold war politics, the atom bomb, international spies, and war in general; but there are also other issues covered like fitting in at a new school, the morality of war, idealism in science, and the responsibilities of those who wield great (magical and scientific) power. Janie is a wonderful character; she is realistic, resourceful, and very easy to relate to. I loved her parents; they treat her like the smart kid she is and are witty and funny.

Loved every moment of this novel. The plot was inventive and the reader was magnificent. Fourteen-year-old Janie and her parents move from L.A. to London in 1952 to escape questions of communism. In London her parents will write for a new Robin Hood series, and Janie will continue being fourteen - just with a new school and new friends. Instead, Janie becomes friends with Benjamin Burrows whose only dream in life is to become a spy. He has already picked out his first suspected Russian "spy" to watch, and soon Janie and Benjamin are caught up in more than either ever bargained for. Benjamin's father is an apothecary and expects his son to follow in his footsteps, but Benjamin wants more out of life than selling hot water bottles. Little does he know who his father really is nor why following in his footsteps could lead him to his real future as a spy. The heart of this story lies with the friendship formed between Janie and Benjamin. At first it seems that readers will follow Janie, but soon it becomes apparent that Benjamin is an equally important piece of this plot's puzzle. The strength lies with the fast-moving plot. The author does not hold back, thrusting readers into an international tale of friendship, family, and espionage. The character development is spot on with interesting twists and turns throughout. Even the novel's conclusion is tightly woven together and will leave readers satisfied. That was my one true fear: how would this end and leave me satisfied? Meloy accomplished just that, and The Apothecary is going to have a strong hold on children's literature for years to come. I did this as an audio, and the reader was fantastic.

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