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Amber Ambrosia *Second in the Serpent's Chain* *Series*

by Rae Bridgman
Illustrated by Rae Bridgman

Wil Wychwood and his ten year old cousin, Sophie Isidor, both students at Gruffud's Academy for the Magical Arts, are heroes in their hometown of Middlegate. They have recently saved the snakes of Narcisse and captured the villainous Rufus Crookshank. But even heroes can become bored when school is out for the summer.

Summer has barely begun when Rufus Crookshank escapes custody. His escape quickly ends Wil's and Sophie's incipient boredom. Now there is a new danger in Middlegate. Rumor is that Crookshank is linked to a secret magical society called the Serpent's Chain. Also, Crookshank apparently has a female accomplice, a mysterious "dark-haired lady," who Wil and Sophie frequently spot in their neighborhood.

As Crookshank continues to elude the Firecatchers, something - possibly a strain of tainted honey - has been fouling Middlegate's beehives. Worried about the fate of the bees, Wil and Sophie - encouraged by the appearance of a bee on Wil's magic black medallion - volunteer to work with Gruffud's beekeeper. They hope being near the hives will provide them with clues to the cause of the disturbing illness.

Wil and Sophie turn to friends and family for help. Wil's magical, egg-eating snake, Esme, who has helped them before, is again an ally. Portia and Portius, the two stone heads atop Gruffud's entranceway column, are of invaluable assistance despite their insistence that theirs is "the knowledge of human frailty," and not of things dastardly and evil. Aunt Rue and Aunt Violet are always on the side of their niece and nephew.

To save the bees, Wil and Sophie find it is necessary to

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NOTE:

The Reviewer

Harold N. Walters

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think like bees, to be like bees. If only they had some magical honey - ambrosia - that might transform them into bees, perhaps they could enter the hives and discover the source of the sickness. If only they had!

Young readers will be especially tickled by Sophie's eyeglasses. Why? They are "mood" glasses. When Sophie's emotions change, so does the color of her glasses. The frames change from darkest black to "lollipop yellow." For this and a slew of other reasons, the adventures of Wil and Sophie in their efforts to save the bees of Middlegate, is a delightful fantasy.