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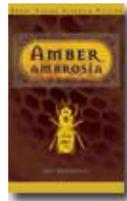
★★★★

Amber Ambrosia: The Serpent's Chain Book 2

by Rae Bridgman

Ages 9-12 171 pages Great Plains Publications April 2007 Paperback

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Also by Rae Bridgman:

The Serpent's Spell

Fish and Sphinx

Science, suspense and some good old sleuthing make *Amber Ambrosia* a sweet mystery. This second book in the Middlegate series places main characters, Sophie and Wil, in a bit of a sticky situation. The honeybees are getting sick, and no one can figure out why. When Wil's black medallion suddenly sports a golden symbol, the cousins set off to unravel the riddle in a most unusual way.

A magical world, a couple of adventurous children and a perplexing problem fill these pages with excitement. The setting contains many captivating elements that will stir the imagination of younger readers. Sophie and Wil are extraordinary in a delightfully ordinary way. As their summer seems to drag, they quickly embrace the idea of solving this mystery. Heedless of the apparent danger involved, they are cast into the secret world of magical honeybees. Once there, they need to rely on their determination and courage to stop the Serpent's Chain from returning to power.

The author's description of the hive and the activity of the bees come alive as the main characters are magically transformed into these buzzing insects. Their system of communication as well as the daily tasks of the individual bees provides an interesting and scientific aspect to the storyline while moving forward with clues. Danger and deception attempt to thwart the curious cousins, but they resolutely fly forward into the swirling swarm of scheming plans with the sole purpose of uncovering the truth.

Amber Ambrosia is a well-crafted story that young readers will stick with.

Joyce Handzo/2007 for *curled up with a good kid's book*

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