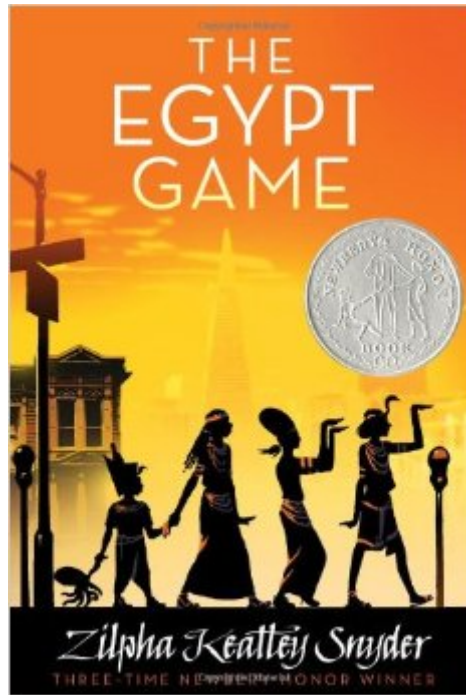


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The Egypt Game



Synopsis

The first time Melanie Ross meets April Hall, sheâ™s not sure they have anything in common. But she soon discovers that they both love anything to do with ancient Egypt. When they stumble upon a deserted storage yard, Melanie and April decide itâ™s the perfect spot for the Egypt Game. Before long there are six Egyptians, and they all meet to wear costumes, hold ceremonies, and work on their secret code. Everyone thinks itâ™s just a game until strange things start happening. Has the Egypt Game gone too far?

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (July 7, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1416990518

ISBN-13: 978-1416990512

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.6 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (326 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

I wouldn't be surprised if readers finish this book and don't turn back to the TV, but instead put together make-believe worlds of their own--not necessarily Egyptian ones. This book may not have transported me back to the real Ancient Egypt, but it did take me into the kind of world only a child's imagination can create. It contains makeshift altars and special names, made-up rituals and homemade costumes, "modified" hieroglyphics and even a new way to walk. Anyone who has ever invented his or her own special world, out of fascination or out of boredom, will understand the appeal of "The Egypt Game". While reading, I often thought that Zilpha Keatley Snyder had more fun writing about the made-up rituals than the characters had performing them. Not only are they fun, they are more or less well-researched, which is only right, as two of her characters are enthusiastic

readers who pay attention to details. Throughout the story, Snyder's sense of humor shines through, whether she is making one character sprinkle ashes into his hair or making two other characters refrain from doing so, "because to a girl even the death of a pharaoh isn't worth a dirty head." Except for April Hall and Melanie Ross--and the Professor, of course--the characters are not very complex. They become part of Egypt not because they have something vital to add to the plot, but because they make the game more fun. Only a few of them go through a change that is apparent at the end of the story. However, their personalities are varied enough to contribute to the small conflicts in each chapter (this is a semi-episodic novel), and to let readers have different favorite characters. The book has its darker parts, however.

When I first came across this book in 1975, I was nine years-old and was totally into everything ancient Egypt. I'd seen the King Tut exhibit twice, read everything both fact and fiction about the civilization and was so geeky that I taught myself to write in hieroglyphics (which was fun when it came to passing secret messages). Imagine my delight when the wonderful librarian at my elementary school (I wish I could remember her name because she helped feed my Egypt fix) gave me this book. I literally devoured it overnight and re-read it as many times as I could before it was due. It was the first time I ever considered stealing a library book because I was so in love with it and didn't want to give it back! Luckily I didn't have to since she gave it to me. It's a rather simple premise really: a bunch of very imaginative kids, most of whom are misfits, get together and create their own ancient Egyptian-styled world, complete with homemade costumes and props scrounged from the junk found in the abandoned back area where they created their "Egypt". There's a creepy old man who runs a thrift-antique store and a murder mystery, and even a dark and stormy night. Melanie and her brother Marshall (with his stuffed toy octopus), April, Elizabeth, Ken and Toby were the childhood friends I longed for. Melanie was me. Even now, forty-something years later this book feels timeless, even with the anachronistic use of the word "negroes" (which only appears twice in the narrative) to describe Melanie and Marshall who are black. Hey, this was the late 60's and yes, we were called "negro" back then, though "black" and "afro-American" were slowly coming into wider use. This book was written in 1967 during the turbulent 60's. The struggle for equal rights was in full swing.

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