



Withering-by-Sea: A Stella Montgomery Intrigue by Judith Rossell

Reviewed by Jo

Eleven-year-old Stella Montgomery resides at the Hotel Majestic in Withering-by-Sea with her three terrible Aunts. Set in Victorian times, the Aunts are 'taking the waters' and partaking of other water treatments designed to increase health and vitality, and attempting to teach Stella correct deportment, manners and other accomplishments suitable for young ladies in between these treatments.

One night, as Stella is sneaking out of her room to recover her Atlas (of which the Aunts definitely would not approve!), she witnesses something terrible, and is plunged headfirst into an adventure (which includes [singing cats](#), magicians and dancing girls, among other things).

[Judith Rossell](#)'s fascination with the Victorian era is evident in this extremely well-researched novel. Lots of lovely references to candles, oil lamps, new indoor plumbing...

Aimed at children aged 9+, fans of [Lemony Snicket](#), the [Wildwood Chronicles](#) by Colin Meloy and Carson Ellis, and [Tensy Farlow](#) by [Jen Storer](#) will really enjoy this.

First in the series, followed by *Wormwood Mire* and *Wakestone Hall*.

Available from Newcastle Libraries as [book and an ebook](#)

Winner of the [2015 Indie Book of the Year Children's & YA](#)

Winner of the [2015 ABIA Book of the Year for Older Children](#)

Winner of the [2015 Davitt \(Best Children's Crime Novel\) Award](#)

Honour Book in the [2015 CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers](#)

Shortlisted for the [2014 Aurealis Award](#)