



Took: A Ghost Story

By Mary Downing Hahn

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“Folks say Old Auntie takes a girl and keeps her fifty years—then lets her go and takes another one.”

Thirteen-year-old Daniel Anderson doesn't believe Brody Mason's crazy stories about the ghost witch who lives up on Brewster's Hill with Bloody Bones, her man-eating razorback hog. He figures Brody's probably just trying to scare him since he's the new kid . . . a “stuck-up snot” from Connecticut. But Daniel's seven-year-old sister Erica has become more and more withdrawn, talking to her lookalike doll. When she disappears into the woods one day, he knows something is terribly wrong. Did the witch strike? Has Erica been “taken”?

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 4–7—When Daniel's father loses his job as an executive, his family is forced to move from their comfortable Connecticut home to a run-down house in Brewster's Hill, MA. As if moving to a dilapidated house and leaving behind all his friends is not enough, no one in Brewster's Hill will speak to Daniel or his little sister Erica, except to tell them scary stories about a girl who disappeared from their house and an old witch who haunts the woods with her monster Bloody Bones. Thankfully, Daniel and Erica have each other, and they do their best to ignore the cruel taunting. However Erica begins to withdraw, acting strange and constantly talking to her doll, before she disappears leaving Daniel to rescue her and keep his family from falling apart. Hahn is a master of horror stories, and this is no exception. The story is told mostly from Daniel's point of view but Hahn offers occasional glimpses into the ghost witch Old Auntie's viewpoint, and this helps to build tension. The tone is eerie and ominous, and enhances the pervading spookiness. Bloody Bones' description is haunting and readers will be scared stiff. VERDICT Horror fans and readers looking for a good scare will enjoy this creepy tale.—Ellen Norton, Naperville Public Library, Naperville, IL

Review

"Horror fans and readers looking for a good scare will enjoy this creepy tale."

—*School Library Journal*

"Satisfyingly frightening."

—*Publishers Weekly*

"Hahn successfully reworks the recipe for those who still enjoy a good scare...a compelling addition to the Hahn collection of ghost stories."

—*VOYA*

"This creepy tale skillfully weaves in—and honors—the oral tradition of folklore, legends, and ghost stories."

—*Horn Book Magazine*

"Stalwart young readers who brave Daniel's telling are rewarded with a resolution that blends the mystical with the hopeful and creates community where once only fear and sorrow thrived."

—*Booklist*

About the Author

MARY DOWNING HAHN, a former children's librarian, is the award-winning author of many popular ghost stories, including *Wait Till Helen Comes*, which is being adapted for film. An avid reader, traveler, and all-around arts lover, Ms. Hahn lives in Columbia, Maryland, with her cat, Oscar. Visit her online at www.marydowninghahnbooks.com.

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