

THE LAST BOGLER



CATHERINE JINKS

A satisfying conclusion to the Bogler series. Bogles are almost mythic creatures that gobble up children in Victorian London. They lurk in out of the way, dark and dank places and mostly prey on the children of the poor and unwanted orphans. Naturally, the well-to-do assume Bogles are just superstitious nonsense while those who serve as prey know better. They hire Boglers and this trilogy tells the story of the Last Bogler through the voice of three different apprentices. Book one featured a girl destined for the stage. Book two a lad who perhaps enjoyed thievery just a tad too much. Book three focuses on another boy. The series has fun atmosphere and with little fuss makes clear how bleak the worldview can be of orphans who don't expect anyone to watch out for them. And of course there are bogles, creepy and slimy creatures worthy of H.P. Lovecraft who are lured into traps by singing urchins. Jenkins creates a satisfying cast of characters, from the crusty last bogler to the three urchins to various adults like a crusading proto-feminist and a man of means who recognizes a lad with potential when he sees one. It's all tied up neatly here but with a nice creepy denouement that is enjoyable without feeling like a cheat. Good solid fun all around. -- Michael Giltz