

## The Mystery of the Cupboard

By Lynne Reid Banks


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## **The Mystery of the Cupboard** By Lynne Reid Banks Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

In this latest installment in the award-winning Indian in the Cupboard series, Omri's fascination with the little people of the cupboard has matured into an obsession with discovering the origin of their life-giving magic. With the help of his great-aunt's hidden diary and a meeting with an elderly roof-thatcher, Omri is able to piece together his own family's history--one that gave rise to the wondrous events of the last few years. In the process he takes a big risk in allowing the secret to be disclosed to an adult. Relying much less on the sheer derring-do typical of earlier episodes, Banks takes an introspective turn here, weaving a more adult story of disappointment and heartbreak into Omri's ever-widening understanding of the cupboard's mystery. Banks's series has grown up, and though some readers may miss the magical Peter Pan-like world of earlier installments, these rich, well-rounded characters speak eloquently and entertainingly within a polished mystery structure. While observing the parameters of a series, Banks demonstrates an impressive versatility, never swerving from her trademark disarming candor and unaffected yet elegant style.

Illustrations not seen by PW . Ages 10-up.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 3-6--Indian in the Cupboard (Doubleday, 1985) fans, rejoice! Here's another in the series, and it will appeal most to those familiar with the characters and events in the earlier books. When a distant relative dies, leaving Omri's mother an old farmhouse, the whole family moves to the country. As old thatch is removed in preparation for reroofing, Omri finds a notebook written by "wicked" great-great-Aunt Jessica as she lay dying, which reveals the secret of the cupboard, and how and why it, and its magic, came into being. New little people are introduced, and once again, Omri learns the folly--and danger--of playing with people's lives. Little Bear and Bright Stars, main characters from the previous books, make their appearance only on the last page, when the boy's father is let in on the secret. "From now on, thought Omri, whatever happens--and plenty will--Dad's in on it. Which is bound to make things . . . very, very complicated." One has to wonder if he will allow the adventures to continue. --Li Stark, North Castle Public Library, Armonk, NY  
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From Kirkus Reviews

When Omri's family moves to the country house his mother has inherited, he learns the earlier history of the magical cupboard first featured in *The Indian in the Cupboard* (1980). The house belonged to distant cousin Frederick; in its thatched roof, Omri discovers a manuscript dictated by Frederick's mother, Jessica Charlotte, on her deathbed. A tragedy is revealed: jealous of her sister Maria (Omri's great-great-grandmother), Jessica Charlotte--music-hall singer, unwed mother, and family outcast--stole a pair of her earrings, unwittingly setting off events that left Maria widowed and impoverished. The cupboard was Jessica Charlotte's; now, when Omri finds her toy figures, he uses it to bring them to life, hoping to avert the tragedy by sending them back to her time--belatedly realizing that this may cancel his own existence. Though the story begins slowly, Banks plots expertly, introducing new figures, bringing in old ones for cameo appearances, and even furthering Omri's nice relationship with his dad. There's not much chance to stereotype Native Americans here, as Banks was charged with earlier, but Jessica Charlotte is certainly a caricature of a music-hall singer; one wonders whether it's reasonable, or merely foolish, to deplore such shorthand in popular fiction. Not the best "Cupboard" book, but fans won't want to miss it; with a first printing of 75,000, they won't have to. (Fiction. 10-13) -- Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Julia Hayes:**

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#### **Barbera Champ:**

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