



# The Door to the Lost

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## **The Door to the Lost** Jaleigh Johnson

There was no warning the day magic died in Talhaven. It happened with a giant explosion and the arrival of a skyship full of children, all with magic running through their veins and no memory of home.

Rook and Drift are two of those children, and ever since that day, they've been on the run, magical refugees in a world that doesn't trust magic. Because magic doesn't die right away--it decays, twists, and poisons all that it touches. And now it's beginning to poison people.

Try as they might, Rook and Drift can't remember anything about their lives before Talhaven. But it's beginning to look like they're the only ones who can save their adopted world . . . if that world doesn't destroy them first.

## **The Door to the Lost Details**

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Author : Jaleigh Johnson

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# **From Reader Review The Door to the Lost for online ebook**

## **Alexa Hamilton says**

I am grateful to start my year of middle grade reading with some fantasy, as there wasn't enough out last year. The premise of this book is fantastic--abandoned magical exiled children in a hostile world, hustling for money, going to the magical black market. There are some lovely themes in there. And Rook and Drift, our main characters, quickly wind up with a third member of their trio a fox--or at least, they think it's a fox. I loved all the cozy magic here, and the growth that Drift and Rook see. I did not connect as well to the action/adventure sequences where Rook and Drift are out in the magical Wasteland and the third person omniscient narration chooses to be much less omniscient, I think to create suspense, but I found it confusing. I wanted to know Rook's plans so I could see if they were going to make it. I think the emotional portions of this book are a lot stronger than the action in it, which is unfortunate.

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## **Stacie says**

The Door to the Lost, by Jaleigh Johnson, is a magical fantasy that is packed with action and filled with heart. Written for middle-grade readers, it will delight young readers with its mixture of magic, adventure, strong young characters and well-built fantasy world. A page turner filled with excitement, this story wraps you in tightly with each turn of its doors.

In the world of Talhaven, magic is a tricky thing. It exists in pieces, hidden and often tainted - traded in black markets where, if caught with it, you could face serious consequences. No one knows this better than young orphans Rook & Drift, who live as exiles among the people of Talhaven, having lost their own home years before during a mysterious explosion. Rook & Drift take care of each other, trading their magical skills as a means to survive. Their names reflect their looks & powers - Drift can conjure and control wind, and Rook, who has the black & white hair of a Rook-bird, can draw doors that lead to other worlds.

Rook has been drawing doors for years as means to escape the constables and live on the run. But her ultimate goal is to draw the door that will lead her home, to the place where magic exists freely - and where the family she cannot remember may be waiting for her.

A book that kept me rapt in every heart-pounding chapter, this door turning story was a page-turner for me. A middle-grade fantasy that swept me up into magic and adventure, it is also a story of friendship and perseverance. Easily a 5 star read; I recommend this to readers young and old - and will be looking for more from this author.

\*Received ARC from NetGalley & Random House Children's Books in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Rosie Rizk says**

Fantastic book. Great characters with awesome magic. I loved the MC, who grew a lot throughout the book.

And I'm a sucker for orphans and magic, which this book definitely has.

The non stop action and character building and magic make this book hard to put down. The girls' friendship was very well done. I fell easily into the story, fearing for the orphans' everyday struggle to get by, and hoping the adults don't discover or betray them. Or that their magic could save them in time.

I highly recommend this book for middle grade and older readers.

Disclaimer: I received an advance copy through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Laurie says**

Interest Level: 5-8

Imagine that you live in a place where you have to hide all of the time because you are being hunted? How would it feel to have to sneak around and hide all of the time? This is exactly Rook and Drift's life. They live in a place called Talhaven where magic used to abound. Then one day without any warning there was a great explosion in the doorway between Vora and Talhaven that causes the magic to die, or what magic is left is dangerous. Everyone who is left in Talhaven that has magic is now being sought after to be put in prison, or even worse, some just disappear. Drift and Rook are best friends. Drift can cause great winds with her magic and Rook can create magical doors to travel anywhere. Rook is always trying to create a door back home to Vora so that they can live in peace. One day when Rook has created a door a red fox jumps through and threatens everything they have ever known. Is the red fox an enemy come to harm them, or is the red fox the answer they have been looking for? Will Rook ever make the door to get them back home, or will Rook find out that home may be something different all together? Read this fast-paced, action packed, edge of your seat adventure to find out.

This type of fantasy book is not usually my type of book but I received it from a publisher to review, so I did. Boy was I wrong! This book grabbed me from the beginning and wouldn't let go until I finished it. It was absolutely fantastic and Jaleigh Johnson now has a new fan! Do not miss this book!!

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## **Arianna says**

Before, the worlds of Vora and Talhaven traded. Vora supplied Talhaven with magic. Magic of all kinds. For airships and lights and tools. In exchange, Talhaven gave Vora the natural resources they needed. Talhaven became dependent on magic. And then the Great Catastrophe happened. The magical doorway connecting Vora and Talhaven exploded. Hundreds of people were killed and many more were injured. Just before the

door exploded, a final ship came through. A ship with three hundred twenty-seven children. After the explosion, none of the children could even remember their names, much less why they'd come or what their lives were like before. No wizard has come through the doorway into Tralhaven since, and as the magic fades, it warps. Now all of Talhaven fears magic, and no place more than the city of Regara, where the explosion happened. The children who came through the doorway are feared, and those that were not rounded up hide as best they can. Rook and Drift stick together. Drift can conjure winds to lift herself and others into the air. Rook can make doors to almost anywhere, although what she wants most of all is to make a door back to Vora and go home. No matter how hard she tries, it never works. Then one day, Rook and Drift are caught by Regaran constables, and with them is an adult wizard, Dozana, the first adult wizard Rook and Drift ever remember seeing. The Rook's powers are needed to travel into the Wasteland where the door to Vora once was. Power is building up where the door once stood, and if something isn't done there will be another explosion, worse than before. Rook and Drift don't know who to trust. The constables that are always cruel to them? The wizard who claims to be Drift's mother? And could this be the final chance for Rook to go back to the home she's always dreamed of?

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### **Kailey (BooksforMKs) says**

Rook and Drift are exiles, forced to live in hiding because they possess magic from another world. Rook has the ability to open doors that will transport her to any place she can imagine, but when she opens a doorway to a mysterious snowy forest, a creature comes bounding into her life that will change her forever. Unable to trust anyone, hunted down by a government that hates their other-worldly magic, Rook and Drift try desperately to control the unreliable magic buzzing around their city. The magic of the world is poisoned and twisted, and only Rook and her friends have a chance at controlling the magic before it destroys their city.

I devoured this book, and was utterly fascinated with every scene! The characters, the world-building, the beautiful magic, the masterful writing, the adventure, the mysteries... I loved it all!

The world-building is incredibly imaginative! I loved the way the magic works, the deep history of the wizards from another world, and the poor exiled children stranded with no memory of their home. The whole scene unfolded before me in this wide tapestry of people and events and magical history.

The main characters are adorable and pitiful and strong, and my heart was wrenched for them in so many ways. Their miserable search for answers about their past lives made me very emotional, because aren't we all searching for the answer to that same question: "Who am I?"

The way the exiles desperately cling to one another and form a little family all their own was so touching and sweet. I was cheering for them, and crying for them, and laughing with them!

Rook is so dependent on Drift, two little girls trying to find a way to keep food in their mouths and shelter over their heads. Drift is smart and savvy, while Rook is the heart of the group. I just adore their friendship!

The adventure was glorious! Running, hiding, and barely escaping from the bad guys, then comes a big twist and everything is changed. The characters can hardly keep up with each new dangerous situation, and the reader is kept on their toes through every chapter. Even the quieter scenes were full of mystery and unanswered questions that kept me reading and reading into the wee hours.

I want to pick up more books by this author!

Disclaimer: I received an ecopy of this book from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for a free and honest review. All the opinions stated here are my own true thoughts, and are not influenced by anyone.

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## **Rajiv says**

A BIG Thank You to NetGalley, Delacorte Books for Young Readers and Random House Children's for providing me a copy of "The Door to the Lost" by Jaleigh Johnson in exchange for my review. Before I begin, I would like to say that I'm not a fantasy reader in any way. It's not that I don't enjoy it, but it takes quite some time for me to finish a fantasy novel. I prefer to read realistic fiction for the most part. Having said that, I selected this book in NetGalley because I LOVED the cover design! I am glad I selected it because Wow, this was a roller coaster of a read!

Let's start off with the characters. For a fantasy adventure, the characters are down to Earth that we can relate to. All the three main characters, Rook, Drift and Fox have endearing qualities that make them naive and charming. I loved that we directly jump into the adventure and learn about the characters, instead of getting a proper introduction. My favorite character was Fox. He's so adorable the moment he bumps into Rook and Drift! Even though he doesn't have much of a dialogue, his ardent support throughout their journey makes him very memorable. I also loved the other exiles that the team meets in the ship, and wished they also had a backstory. The author has also written Dozana very well and you cannot help despise her for the crooked villain she is.

Now let's talk about the story-line. From the get go, we travel with Rook as she tries to survive in the land of Talhaven. The whole book is action packed and there is never a dull moment in the story. There are some great suspenseful moment like when Rook and Drift hide in Mr. Baroman's attic, or when Rook hears knocking on the other side of the door or when she gets trapped in the giant spider web. I really couldn't predict what was going to happen next, and was completely engrossed in the book till the climax.

This is the first book I have read by Jaleigh Johnson, and I really like her style of writing. She beautifully blends the progression of the characters while keeping the fast pace of the story. My only question is, is this a standalone book or part of a series? The only part that could have been better was if the author provided more details of the characters and the history of the land. As much as I loved the story, I felt that the author cut down a lot to keep it in pace with a middle grade novel. Perhaps that is why I would love to read about more of these characters and hope there is a continuation. I want to pick out her "World of Solace" Series to see if that is equally good.

Overall, I completely enjoyed this book and give it 4.5 out of 5 stars.

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## **Teresa says**

4.5/5 Stars

First of all, a huge thank you to NetGalley, Random House Children's, and Jaleigh Johnson for the opportunity to read this book for free in exchange for an honest review.

Jaleigh Johnson's new novel for younger readers, The Door to the Lost, is an amazing gem among fantasy

novels for younger readers. From what I can tell, it is a stand-alone, but there are potential opportunities for future adventures with the characters...maybe?

This book contains multiple worlds/dimensions, and in Talhaven, magic suddenly disappeared. In Vora, a magical war leads to the adult wizards sending their children to Talhaven. Hundreds of children find themselves in a world they don't know with no memories of their names or families, but they all have different magical abilities. As these exiles learn to control and use their abilities, the people of Talhaven want to use them for their own needs, since the society that so heavily relies on magic can no longer replenish their own magical resources.

Since the children cannot remember their birth names, they each give themselves their own names, often based on their abilities. The main character of this story, Rook, is able to open gateways to any place in the world...just not to other worlds, like her homeland of Vora. But her doorways keep opening up to the same place against her best efforts, and she can't seem to find out why. Her best friend, Drift, can use magic to fly, manipulating wind currents and air in various ways. The two aim to live a simple life in seclusion until two things happen: a giant magical Fox appears, and an adult wizard claiming to need their help to save the town the children temporarily occupy.

I vastly enjoyed this book, and for 304 pages, it goes by in a flash! The story is told from Rook's third person limited perspective, and her age resonates with a young adult. Readers both middle grade and high school will find enjoyment in the magic and adventure found in this book. It also deals with the thematic ideas of finding one's own identity and what family means. A book that I would like to have in my classroom, this is a great read for a young adult audience.

Following Rook on her adventure was exhilarating, and despite the fact that this is definitely a conclusive volume, I wouldn't mind seeing further adventures with these characters. Even if you are beyond the years of middle or high school, if you like a quick read and are a lover of fantasy, put this one on your list! This is a must-read book for all ages!

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## **Aelvana says**

Two years ago, the magical gate that led to the world of Vora blew up, scattering magic everywhere. And now magic itself is broken, unreliable, distrusted. Rook and Drift have been scrounging for a living since then, bartering Rook's ability to open magical doors to anywhere for cash. But when she opens a door she never intended, and a gigantic fox slips through, her life will change drastically . . .

I adored this. In a weird way, it's an anti-dystopia: the harsh, desperate, oppressive times we start out in gradually come to light as not actually as bad as Rook always assumed. That not everyone outside of the band of magical children is a horrible person just waiting to turn them in. The world's broken magic makes an interesting backdrop. All sorts of things went sideways thanks to that.

The characters are so much fun. Rook and Drift are two of the last people who had come through the gate before it exploded, along with a host of other children. Unfortunately, since the explosion wiped out their memories, they have no more idea than anyone else why everything went down. I love the tight friendship between the two of them. Both of them struggle with mistaken assumptions, both fear that their commitment isn't mutual, and both of them realize that their friendship means more to them than anything else.

Fox is amazing. He's a gigantic fox that Rook initially mistakes for a monster, and he certainly has several interesting abilities (shadow foxes!). Even though he doesn't say much, I love how he worms his way into Rook's heart.

Overall this is a complete story, but I do hope for more in this world because it was such a charming stay. I rate this book Highly Recommended.

See my reviews and more at <https://offtheshelfreviews.wordpress....>

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### **Skip says**

Magic is feared in Talhaven because a magical war in Vora causes adult wizards to send their children to Talhaven, and a cataclysm occurs. These children have no memories, but varying magical abilities, and are being hunted by vigilantes and the authorities. Protagonist Rook opens gateways to any place in the world using a piece of chalk, but not to the one place she desires ... her home in Vora. Mysteriously, a doorway keeps opening to a dark, wintry woodland, when suddenly a giant magical Fox comes through, to join Rook and her BFF, Drift, who can use magic to fly by manipulating wind currents and air. Their meager survival is threatened by Fox and the appearance of a wizard (and her captors) claiming to need their help to avert disaster to Talhaven. Rook, Drift and Fox embark on this adventure, finding some unexpected allies and enemies. Well-written and fun, with traditional middle age reader themes of friendship, family, and overcoming hardships.

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### **Nadia C. says**

I received this ARC from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

First off, this book was so wonderful and I'm hoping that a sequel is in the works. The world-building in the book was amazing; from the first few pages I was totally sucked in and couldn't stop reading. I love the main characters and how they have formed a family because they are unable to be with their 'real' family. I think that this is an important message to give to kids- that you can build your own family from friends. But onwards to the story, I thought it was a fantastic fantasy novel for kids that is based in the real world. I liked how the characters evolved as the book progressed. Looking forward to the next one!!!

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### **Miri ? Book Dragoness ? says**

From Jaleigh Johnson, author of *The Mark of the Dragonfly*, comes a new middle-grade fantasy, this time set in the different world of Talhaven. I loved *The Mark of the Dragonfly* and really liked its two companion novels, so I was eager to read anything new she wrote. I liked the book, but at the same time, it was a bit of a letdown compared to Ms. Johnson's other works.

**The premise hooked me from the prologue.** It tells us about the Great Catastrophe two years ago, the portal between Talhaven and Vora exploded and wrecked part of the city of Regara. Just minutes earlier, a ship full of magical Vora children emerged into Talhaven. Ever since, the magic lingering in Talhaven is corrupted, dangerous. The people now fear magic and are pointing fingers toward the children, calling them



exiles and blaming them for the explosion. I was so very interested to find out why this happened and how to fix this!

**The magic here is also fascinating.** We follow three "exiles", Rook, Drift, and Fox. Each of them have a special magical skill. Fox is a shapeshifter who can transform into a - you guessed it - fox. Drift can conjure winds so powerful they can carry you away. And Rook, well well. She has the most interesting power. She can draw doors that open into any place in the world (like the Anywhere Door). I've never encountered any characters with such power, and Doraemon's Anywhere Door (or Dokodemo Door, in Japanese) is a sci-fi invention.

I think I would have really liked it if only I were more attached to the characters. **I liked them and sympathized for them and hoped they could come out whole - and that was it.** I never rooted for them deeply as I rooted for Piper, Gee, and Anna in *The Mark of the Dragonfly*. It's not because there's no slight romance in *The Door to the Lost* like there were in Ms. Johnson's other books. Actually, the friendship between Rook, Fox, and Drift, how three children in a frightening world clung to each other, was one of my favorite parts of the novel. It's just unfortunate that I couldn't care for them more.

There was also a random plot twist in the middle of the novel. The characters' responses to it, especially Drift, felt unrealistic and cheesy. The story takes over a very short amount of time, so I understand relationships and reactions have to be developed quickly. And there was some mild drama between Drift and Rook which felt, again, rather unrealistic, even a little forced.

Given that I'm rating this book three stars, I do want to end my review in a positive note, so I will say that the ending was lovely. **I admired the way the author steered the story toward an unconventional path, and explored the themes of what is home to the characters.**

*"Please let me say again, not everyone in Regara feels the way the Red Watchers do....But there **are** people in this world you can trust. If you give us a chance, we will help you in any way we can."*

**One other thing she did particularly well was how she balanced out both ill will and good will toward the exiles.** It's unrealistic for *everybody* in Talhaven to be prejudiced to the exiles, like the Red Watchers. There's always a few who could sympathize with them like the kind Mr. Baroman to the constable Jace, who did distrust them but also saw that they were just children.

I consider Ms. Johnson to be a great writer though, so I am looking forward to read more of her books. My favorite among them will still be, though, *The Mark of the Dragonfly*.

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**Ms. Yingling says**

Copy provided by the publisher

It's not that I don't like fantasy books. The Dragon with a Chocolate Heart? A Crooked Sixpence? Yes, please! But there are just certain elements that make me hang over the edge of the chair and obsess about my toenails in a very 12-year-old way. Is there a map of the world? Is the setting vaguely but not concretely medieval? Is magic illegal/endangered? Are the children the only ones who can save the world? Are there shape shifters or talking animals? It doesn't matter how good the book is: if it's not what I want to read, it can be a challenge to get through the book and remember details. (Fantasy Amnesia)

As a new school year gets underway, I think it's good to remember this. Teachers, if you're a huge fan of Wonder and don't understand why Joey doesn't like it, look at what he normally reads. Is it all football books? When was the last time YOU read a football book? Joey may feel the same way about Wonder as you feel about Tim Green. It's not Joey's fault, it's not the book's fault, it's just the wrong combination.

Did I read The Door to the Lost. I really did, because I want to put it in my library, and I read ALL the fiction books before doing that. Do I remember what Rook and Drift and Fox did when Rook was making doors to try to get to ... Vrona from... Threlkhaven? No. But my toenails look fabulous!

So here's a much better review from Charlotte, whose first love is fantasy books:

<http://charlotteslibrary.blogspot.com...>

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### **MC says**

This was amazing. There was so many plot twists happening that I could not figure out what was going on!! SUCH a good book!XD

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### **JustAButterfly says**

Most of this book rubbed me the wrong way for whatever reason.

It's compelling, but most of the plot just felt rushed. It sets up the "here are things as they are now" part and then just sprints off into the distance. Where is the world-building? Nowhere in sight. There's a few mentions of concepts, like a disease caused by the disappearance of magic and some of the children disappearing or serving the ruling family (or whoever runs the country this takes place in), but the disease shows up for two scenes, and other children only show up near the end, and they aren't serving anyone. This really needed some more characters, since Rook and Drift (and later Fox) can't carry the story by themselves at all.

The plot twists here also felt...boring and predictable. (view spoiler) Most of it just felt unsavory, and I didn't like where the plot was going after some of the more major events.

The characters are kind of boring here too. Fox was simple enough to be likable, but again, the two leads weren't very interesting. They were more like "the girl who flies and stuff" and "the girl who can create doors to anywhere semi-reliably but then doesn't use it for the late-middle of the book because she can't anymore" than real people.

The writing was okay, but there were a few sections where it seems off.

On the plus side, there's absolutely no romance in this book beside one scene with a husband and wife! Forced romances would have made this book much worse, so points for that.

All in all, I think I was just expecting too much of this book. It has a lot of potential, but not much of it goes

anywhere, so it just feels unsatisfying. If you haven't read hundreds of fantasy books you might like this a lot, but if you're a veteran the pretty common tropes here will annoy/bore you.

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