

Alcock, Vivien

Vivien Alcock: 1924-2003

Vivien Alcock was the much-loved author of compelling mysteries and supernatural fantasies for children. Her flair for creating sinister and creepy moods was established with the publication of her first book, *The Haunting of Cassie Palmer* (1980), and her writing is characterised by its strong plots and determined heroines.

Initially a commercial artist, she was married to the author Leon Garfield and was first published at the age of 56. She went on to produce almost a book a year, including *The Stonewalkers* (1981), *The Cuckoo Sister* (1985), *The Monster Garden* (1988), *A Kind of Thief* (1991), and her final book, *The Boy Who Swallowed a Ghost* (2001). Famously shy and retiring, Vivien had a particular understanding of the inner feeling of teenagers, especially those who observe quietly from the sidelines. As she saw it, "childhood is an exciting and dangerous time, and it fascinates me," and her books reflect that excitement, danger, and fascination. Her books have been translated into many languages.

Recent books:

The Boy Who Swallowed a Ghost (Mammoth: 2001)