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# The Naming of Tishkin Silk

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[Andrea Reece](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

It's not just his name that makes Griffin Silk unusual. Griffin is uncommon in lots of ways: he's quiet, prone to cogitation, the only boy in a family of girls. The Silk way of life is unusual too, and none of this makes it easy for him when, after years of being taught at home, Griffin has to go to school. The majority of his classmates regard him with hostility and suspicion, only a girl called Layla has the ability to understand and appreciate the special magic of the Silks.

Despite the warmth and love in Griffin's home, we quickly realise that something is very wrong. Griffin's mother is in hospital and he is waiting for her to come home and wondering about his new baby sister. With Layla there to help him, Griffin finds the courage he needs to do something very brave, for him and for his family.

This is the first book in a series that has won awards and much acclaim in Australia, and it is every bit as tender and touching as the commendations say. As an author, Millard is as brave as Griffin. The story of the Silks, and their bohemian lifestyle could easily veer into the sentimental yet Millard's light touch, the certainty of her vision, means that it never once feels anything less than completely true. She has a gift for creating families, real, complex and with a proper history, that compares to [Hilary McKay's](#) [4], or [Berlie Doherty's](#) [5].

Millard's descriptions of the Australian countryside are vivid too and will add a touch of exoticism for young readers: Griffin's five big sisters clamour round their grandma in the kitchen with after school stories 'like a flock of galahs'; at dusk the sky is 'watermelon pink, furrowed with apricot'. An uncommonly good book.

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