

**CLEMENTINE HAS ALWAYS FELT LIKE THE** villain of his story. At school, His teachers won't call him by the right name (even though Clementine is a boy's name, if a boy has it), his classmates tease him about his love for spiders (even though they're beautiful), and he's the only one who can see the monsters that haunt the surrounding woods.

But then he meets Beetle—a boy who teaches him to howl at the moon, who dreams of being a hero and says the whole sky is beautiful (while looking right at Clementine and not at the sky at all). Beetle and his friends introduce Clementine to the true magic of the woods, where their imagination becomes reality and they make their own rules.

Unlike Beetle, though, Clementine wants to make things better for real—not later, when he's grown up, but now. And when he discovers the truth behind the magic and monsters, Clementine has to decide: Does he become a hero with Beetle and protect a world where he doesn't fit? Or does he finally become the villain, ready to build a new world, whatever the cost?

This story is a celebration of imagination, inclusion, and all things monstrous—about a queer kid who is exactly and exquisitely himself. It's a love letter to villains and heroes, and all the ways they make us brave.

**NOAH COREY** lives in Washington State with his husband (Markus), his dog (Potatoes), and his three cats (Wirt, Greg, and Beatrice). He feels passionately about outer space, insects, and fictional vampires.

**READ BY DANI MARTINECK**



**Listening  
Library**

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