

# The Magic Gems (Lily Halfmoon #1)



AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR  
**XAVIER BONET**

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid to Upper Primary

## SYNOPSIS

*'Witches and Wizards, Sorcerers and Enchanters, by the magic granted to you, you must solemnly promise to keep your powers a secret forever . . .'*

Lily Halfmoon has just moved to the town of Piedrville. New house, new school and . . . new powers? Surprise—Lily is a witch! She must learn magic, and find her animal guardian and gemstone, while keeping her new identity a secret.

Protecting the people of Piedrville from evil is no easy task. Especially when a dangerous creature is on the loose. Will Lily finally discover her gem's unique power with the help of her new friends, Gigi and Mai, all without attracting attention?

## ABOUT THE CREATOR

Xavier Bonet is a self-taught illustrator and comic book artist. He lives in Barcelona with his two children. He started in a little animation studio as a background artist, and eventually embarked on a career as a professional illustrator. He has illustrated many children's books including *Omnia* by Laura Gallego, the volumes of Michael Dahl's *Really Scary Stories*, The Keepers Trilogy by Lian Tanner and *Jabberwocky and Other Poems* by Lewis Carroll. He loves all things retro, video games and Japanese food, but above all, spending time with his family.

Find Xavier on Twitter and Instagram [@xbonetp](#) or [www.xavierbonet.net](http://www.xavierbonet.net).

## STUDY NOTES

### BEFORE READING

- Discuss the following questions before reading the book:
  - Can you tell what sort of story this will be just by looking at the cover?
  - Look closely at the book's title and see if there are any key words that jump out at you.
  - What about the cover illustration: is there anything in it that suggests 'Magic' to you?
  - Are there any elements that suggest 'Gems' to you?
  - Who do you think the story will be about? How did the title and illustration help you guess that?
  - Do Lily and her friends look like regular modern girls?
  - Do you think it will be a dark story about magic? Did the choice of colours in the title and illustration and the expressions on the faces of the girls help you come to this decision?

## AFTER READING

## Comprehension Questions

- What is the first clue in the story that Lily is not a typical girl? (p 2)
- What happens to her birthday cake when she blows out the candles? (p 4)
- Why does Lily have to tell her mother she is taking a shower? (p 6)
- How does Gigi realise that Lily has special powers? (p 10)
- Where do Gigi and Mai take Lily after school? (pp 14–15)
- What four things must Lily pledge to do before becoming a witch? (p 19)
- How does Lily pass the first Test to become a witch? (p 21)
- Why does Lily’s guardian awaken?
- What type of animal is Lily’s guardian?
- What must witches NOT do with magic gems? (p 27)
- What sort of gem does Lily activate? (p 29)
- Match the class with the teachers:

Professor Rosmarinus	Science
Professor Neit	Learning the Siren Song
Professor Kaul	Potions

- What mission does Professor Pehirol give to Lily, Gigi and Mai? (pp 46–48)
- Why is Professor Pehirol’s bed of snowdrops dying? (p 48)
- Why is a grox’s breath dangerous? (p 51)
- What is Professor Neit’s magical power? (p 55)
- Who is hiding in the flowers while the grox is on the warpath? (p 56)
- How does Lily activate the power of her gem? (p 58)
- What unique power does the moonstone have? (p 65)
- What carves Lily’s name in the stone? (pp 66–67)
- Onomatopoeia is ‘when a word describes a sound and actually mimics the sound of the object or action it refers to when it is spoken. Onomatopoeia appeals to the sense of hearing, and graphic novelists use it to bring a story to life in the reader’s head’. Examples of onomatopoeia in *The Magic Gems* include ‘Boom’ (p 4), ‘Brum’ (p 6) and ‘Yaaawn’ (p 7), to name just a few. Graphic novels feature lots of onomatopoeic words—and these are sometimes handwritten in special lettering, so that the word also looks like its meaning and the sound! Find five of your favourite examples of onomatopoeia in *The Magic Gems*.
- Motion Lines are the lines that appear in front, behind or parallel to an object or character to indicate movement. Compare and contrast the lines that the creator, Xavier Bonet, uses in the image of Lily going to bed on p 7 with those on p 21, where Lily teleports herself. Why do you think he shows two or more images of Lily in the same panel in both cases?
- Have you heard of the saying ‘an image is worth a thousand words’? Can you explain what you think it might mean? Now turn to the image spread across pp 14 and 15 and explain in your own words The Royal Library of Magic Studies.
- Tell the whole story from Zoë’s point of view. Make sure to explain her feelings for her sister, the reason why she follows Lily and her friends to Professor Pehirol’s house, and how she feels about Lily after finding out she is a witch?
- Who do you think the woman and strange creature on the pages that follow ‘THE END’ might be? Do you think they might be evil? How did the change in colour—from bright yellow on the preceding pages to a sickly green—make you feel? How did the last image of the woman’s eyes make you feel? Did it make you want to read the next instalment of the story?
- Write a short story about finding out you have a magical power. What is your power? How did you find out you had it? How might you use it at home and at school?

AUTHOR OF NOTES

**CAROLYN WALSH**