

The Merry Witch Who Just So Happens to Have a Grocery Store

This book does not have a full translation.

歡喜巫婆之剛好有雜貨店

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In a town obsessed with buying expensive things, the Merry Witch opens a small, humble shop called Just So Happens to Have a Grocery Store. It always seems to carry exactly what people need—an umbrella in a sudden storm, or a way home after the last bus has left. A perfect antidote to the nearby megastore that fuels endless desire, the witch's shop offers not abundance, but just enough at the right moment.

Yet even the Merry Witch has her blind spots. One day, a clever girl in a light disguise arrives with a riddle and a set of requests the witch cannot fulfill. The girl is revealed to be Witchy, the Merry Witch's daughter. In keeping her shop open day and night to serve everyone else, the Merry Witch has overlooked the person who needs her most—the one who has been beside her all along.

Warm, whimsical, and wise, this lower middle-grade book reminds young readers that in a world overflowing with plenty, the most extraordinary gift is often the simple act of being with the ones we love.



Author Wen-Hua Wang

Wen-Hua Wang runs the website *Wen-Hua Wang's Fairy Tale Park* and warmly invites readers to look it up, stop by, and leave a message on the message board so he can get to know them. He enjoys writing at McDonald's, where the coffee comes with free refills and the staff are always friendly; whenever inspiration runs dry, simply sitting there for a while often helps ideas start flowing again. To date, he has published more than twenty books with Little Soldier Publishing Company Ltd., spanning a wide range of stories—from fun and heartwarming to laugh-out-loud hilarious. He hopes readers will enjoy his work and find joy and comfort in the worlds he creates.



Illustrator Chia-Chi Yu

Born in Taipei in 1977, Chia-Chi Yu graduated from the Department of Industrial Design at National Cheng Kung University in 1999, and received a Fine Arts diploma from France's École Nationale Supérieure d'Art de Nancy in 2005. She is currently a full-time illustrator, known for her fresh, vibrant use of color and her collage-like, graphic style.

What Magic Cannot Conjure: Valuing Those Who Are Already There

by Chih-Hsuan Tu

Do you know where the limits of magic lie? What is it that even a witch still cannot create? *The Merry Witch Who Just So Happens to Have a Grocery Store* unfolds in a world that drifts between reality and fantasy, exploring the distance between money, material possessions, and emotional needs. Through playful wordplay and engaging storytelling, the story conveys a simple truth that is all too often forgotten: cherish the people who love you and are already by your side.

In the Merry Witch's world, people buy excessive amounts of expensive things, driven by the fear that one day there will be nothing left to purchase. Buying becomes a way to prove one's existence. Their local store, We Definitely Have Everything Supermarket, feeds that anxiety perfectly. One day, however, the Merry Witch opens a shop of her own: Just So Happens to Have a Grocery Store. The shop is dark and narrow, selling mostly small, unremarkable items. Standing next to the market that appears to have everything, it seems distinctly unappealing. And yet, it is precisely this humble little grocery store that proves useful at the most critical moments.

A sudden downpour causes umbrellas at We Definitely Have Everything Supermarket to sell out completely. A couple who cannot find an umbrella wanders into the Merry Witch's store; happily, they find one just big enough for the two of them to share. Another customer, Mr. Wang, who misses the last bus home, also finds what he needs in her store: a ride back home. A bus emerges before his eyes, carrying him all the way into his own kitchen.

These episodes invite reflection on the subtle difference between "having everything" and "having just enough." The former mirrors people's relentless pursuit of material abundance in which desire eclipses genuine need. Yet when the rain is pouring or the last bus has already left, what truly matters isn't excess—it's the need met at exactly the right moment. Through scenes that are at once absurd and perfectly reasonable, the author gently asks readers to reconsider: are more expensive things really better? Does having more necessarily bring us closer to happiness?

One day, a little girl enters the shop in a light disguise and presents the Merry Witch with a riddle. She asks to buy "the very thing you just happen not to have." The witch racks her brain, but finds no answer. After the girl reveals the solution—it is she herself, the girl, whom the witch does not have—she asks the witch to procure more items: warmth, smiles, and care for her. The witch attempts to meet these requests by conjuring specific items—things that provide warmth, things that provoke laughter. None of them satisfy the girl.

In the end, the little girl reveals her identity: she is the Merry Witch's daughter, Witchy. The Merry Witch has failed to recognize her. After working twenty-four hours a day to meet everyone else's needs, postponing the act of going home again and again, she's left her daughter waiting. The Merry Witch believes she is constantly giving, yet fails to notice that the person who needs her most has been right beside her all along.

In *The Merry Witch Who Just So Happens to Have a Grocery Store*, the things Witchy longs to buy are precisely the things that cannot be obtained through money. What Witchy wants is not magic or merchandise, but her mother's presence. Warmth, smiles, and care cannot be bought; they come from companionship, from being truly held in another's heart. This clever, absorbing, and warm-hearted book suggests that when having everything is taken for granted, simply being together—and having just enough—becomes the rarest gift of all.

Chih-Hsuan Tu, formerly a market research analyst and online course programmer, now is a freelance writer. She reads to better understand the world, lives most days with enthusiasm, and occasionally retreats from the noise for solitude. A devoted cat person, she hopes to share a home with her better half and two cats, surrounded by bookshelves.