

A Vanishing of Griffins: Songs of Magic

S. A. Patrick

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In S. A. Patrick's novel *A Vanishing of Griffins*, three friends travel through a whimsical, magical world on a continued quest to defeat an evil sorcerer.

In the last volume, Patch, Wren, and Barver managed to upset the plans of the ruthless Hamelyn Piper. But in the aftermath of the battle, one of their friends was captured and sold to an ambitious pirate king. Patch—a young piper with a talent for crafting the pipes used to channel songs into magical powers—betrayed his friend but refuses to let him remain in captivity. Alongside his shape-shifting friend Wren, and the dragon/griffin hybrid Barver, Patch enacts a rescue plan.

The trio are flawed: Patch struggles because of his past decision to betray his friend; Wren hungers for knowledge and to master her abilities; and Barver confronts myriad personal fears while working to do what's right. And their world is steeped in whimsy; even amid the violent horrors they face, there are touches of humor and lightheartedness. While Patch and his allies are trapped in a massive cave with a monstrous creature that they believe is moments away from eating them, for example, they discover the creature is not hungry at the moment; it wants to perform tricks rather than eat them.

The Hamelyn Piper's plans are world-ending, and so the stakes of the trio's quest are grand. Still, they face every situation with levity and hopefulness. As one task ends, another begins: Patch and his allies work to recruit more beings into their fight against the Hamelyn Piper, leading into the book's tantalizing cliffhanger ending.

Vanishing of Griffins is an inventive fantasy novel in which friendships and perseverance help teenagers to overcome the obstacles they face.

JOHN M. MURRAY (March / April 2023)

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