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CLARION REVIEW ★★★★★ FANTASY

Beyond Imagination

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Fairy stories can be fun for anyone who wants to believe in magic, and the potential for that excitement is present in Beyond Imagination.

Beyond Imagination is a simple story about five siblings who discover a fairy world in the forest behind their house. They join the fairies in trying to defeat the evil queen bee and discover their own magical potential in the process.

When a young family of seven moves to the small town of Amethyst, the children are overjoyed. Their father moves frequently for work, but has taken a new position that will allow his family to stay in one place. The children go exploring in their backyard and discover a book that teaches them to see the fairy world. They are invited to enter this world where the fairy queen, Kristin, asks for their help. The queen of the bees, Kayla, is trying to take over the fairy world, and only a fairy named Katherine, who lives among the humans and does not remember that she is a fairy, can defeat Kayla. The children must find Katherine and bring her back in order to save the fairies.

There are several story elements in *Beyond Imagination* that should be expanded or explained. The children's mother, Katherine, had lived in Amethyst before, and yet none of the children seem to know anything about it. The father is mostly absent and it is unclear what his role is in the story. There are five children that are the central characters, but the book never provides any details on who they are as people. The book is focused on the action of the plot, but without knowing more about the members of this family—their hopes and dreams and the relationships that they have with one another—it is difficult to become invested in the story.

Additionally, though the author is successful in sharing the story in a way that is easily understood, the abundant grammatical errors are distracting. For instance: "The sky went all dark and around our mom was a white and gold light surrounding her mom walked across the gate and she turned into a fairy she looked so beautiful. Her dress was blue like crystal and she had a crown on her head she looked like a fairy princess out of a movie."

The tone of *Beyond Imagination* is generally light. The siblings seem very happy and get along beautifully with each other and their parents. They are excited and happy to be introduced into the fairy world and their interactions are largely pleasant. There are, however, a few moments of extreme violence. These instances are shocking because they do not fit the tone of the rest of the story and make the book inappropriate for the young audiences.

Beyond Imagination reads like a mother making up a bedtime story for her children. There is an interesting bare-bones plot, but it needs a great deal more development to be appealing. Additionally, the writing needs to be heavily edited. Fairy stories can be fun and exciting for anyone who wants to believe in magic, and the potential for that excitement is present here for those who are willing to use their own imaginations.

CATHERINE THURESON (February 3, 2014)

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