

Boloney's Kingdom: Book 1--Boloney the Warrior

Anthony Burns

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The first book in the Boloney's Kingdom trilogy, *Boloney the Warrior*, introduces readers to an ordinary boy who will go on a journey in an unknown realm. Tony Boloney, a young schoolboy, has always wondered about his place in the universe. One evening, a mysterious spirit named Zefnia whisks him off to a parallel world called Mazgavon, where a power-hungry leader named Morchy has taken over the land. Boloney, with the help of seven symbolic tokens, is the only one who can restore the Land of Mazgavon to its people.

Anthony Burns brings some intriguing elements to this fantasy novel. The tokens and the critical ways they help Boloney on his journey are unique. The astrology, philosophical ideas, and allegorical figures for time and space are also creative and lay the groundwork for a rich fantasy world.

Unfortunately, the author doesn't really incorporate these elements into the overall narrative arc. A character may spend quite some time explaining a fairly esoteric idea (especially given the book's age range), only for the reader to find out that the concept has little impact or significance on the characters or story as a whole.

Other aspects are also similarly touched upon for seemingly little reason. For example, Boloney learns early on that the Mogglers, lionlike creatures that live in the forest, are almost extinct. Later on, he has to kill almost all of the Mogglers to protect someone. While he briefly expresses that he feels badly about this, he is praised by others for killing them, and the issue is completely dropped without having further impact on Boloney. With so many other elements to be explored, this information feels superfluous.

The lack of plot and character development hinders the reader's connection to and investment in Boloney and his quest. The book does become slightly more engaging toward the end, and ultimately reaches a complete and satisfying resolution.

While the book is easy to read, some of the odd plot turns may be confusing to readers. Overall, the book is best suited for readers ten to thirteen years of age. Children who enjoy fantasy or adventure novels will be most interested.

Though the overall lack of cohesion leads to a disjointed read, the book does have a very interesting concept with some intriguing backstory.

ALICIA SONDHI (September 26, 2012)

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