

Dragonwatch: A Fablehaven Advenature

Brandon Mull

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Dragonwatch is the first follow-up volume to Brandon Mull's best-selling Fablehaven series. Siblings Kendra and Seth Sorenson live with their grandparents on a farm in Connecticut, but theirs is no ordinary pastoral life. Ever since they first drank milk from Viola the magic cow, Kendra and Seth have been able to see the fairy world. Their days are filled with enchanted swords, naiads, and unicorns; they see satyrs and ogres where their mortal cousins see only goats and bears. And that's not to mention the restless dragons being guarded at Wyrmoost, and the vengeful demons—roundly defeated at Zzyzk, the battle where Kendra killed the demon king.

"Turbulent times await us all," a witch warns Seth: this uneasy post-battle truce won't last long. A "storm of dragons" will be upon the world unless someone can keep Celebrant the Just, the king of the dragons, from breaking out of Wyrmoost. When Agad the wizard pays the Sorenson family a visit, he announces that he is reinstituting Dragonwatch and invites Kendra and Seth to be the next caretakers of Wyrmoost. The role comes with its fair share of danger, which paves the way for some intense action scenes. In searching for one of seven scepters that can create safe places, the siblings will face a gate troll, an assembly of the undead, and a death-defying ride on the back of a griffin.

Mull sets up an intriguing contrast between the humdrum real world and the exhilarating fairy world Kendra and Seth experience. That mixture of the familiar and the unknown will intrigue young readers with a fondness for Tolkien's Middle-earth. The dialogue and descriptive prose shine too: "The stars were fading. A light wind ruffled the sequoias." With dragons on the loose and key characters missing, there's plenty of scope for sequels.

REBECCA FOSTER (Children's 2017)

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