

Enevah

Linda A Ponsonby

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At its heart, Enevah is a fantasy about love, family, and companionship.

Mother and son share an imaginative, out-of-this-world adventure in Linda A. Ponsonby's *Enevah*.

Barat, a bandicoot, is watching Marah and her son, Micca, play outside one day with their family pets when the young boy insults his mother. As he runs and she chases him, demanding an apology, Micca disappears into a tree along with two of the dogs and a cat. Giving chase, Marah, Barat, and the dog Missy get sucked into the tree and are taken to Enevah, a world that calls visitors to take on missions. Now Micca, Marah, and their newly human companions must train and prepare for a mission to save Earth and other worlds.

The narrative provides an immersive setting and deep description of Enevah. Barat, as a bandicoot-turned-human, often asks questions about Enevah, which leads other characters to explain the customs and culture of the planet.

As narrator, Barat is the protagonist and his view of the world drives the story. But Enevah features many other characters. Marah is a loving mother, but also a woman who doesn't take guff from anyone. Missy is sassy and rude, but always loyal. Micca is mischievous, but on the hero's path.

The conflict gets lost in too many details and characters. Marah, Micca, Barat, and the pets-turned-humans are each accompanied by Lagnarhs, small creatures who guide them and have distinct personalities. Barat's questioning leads to long expository answers. For instance, when he asks Legeth, a Miroobec soldier, about his medical background, the man launches into a monologue about his life back in Scotland. The story also suffers under too many objectives. The group of family adventurers must train and then find two daggers, eight Diamonuses, and two keys.

Nonetheless, at its heart, *Enevah* is a fantasy about love, family, and companionship. It's where a repressed wish about family comes true—that children never age, parents can share their child's most fantastic adventures, and family pets can have human capabilities. The fantasy also explores forgiveness. While Marah and Micca begin the story with an insensitive argument, the relationship between mother and son unfolds as loving and supportive. Even though Missy and Barat may bicker, numerous scenes show that the two care for each other.

Enevah is a sci-fi fantasy adventure that is sure to appeal to young adults. It shows that no matter where life leads, home remains where the heart is.

KATERIE PRIOR (September 20, 2016)

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