



Good Knight, Deano Dragon

Bonnie Sargent

Kathy Kerber, Illustrator

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Young readers will enjoy this entertaining story of a young boy who sets off to save his village from a food-hoarding dragon.

Good Knight, Deano Dragon is a fun, simple early-reader book that kids are sure to enjoy. When a young boy sets off alone to fight a dragon, he knows he is taking a dangerous risk and is not likely to succeed. He meets with an unexpected surprise that changes his life and the lives of everyone in his village. Full of knights, dragons, heroes, and humor, this book is entertaining and engaging.

Tristan wants to be a hero. A drought in his village has significantly decreased the annual crop yield, and the dragon that comes every year to claim a portion of their produce has left little more than beans to see everyone through the winter. The only ones who are not suffering are the royal family, and the king has no interest in doing anything to help the people or to rid them of the dragon menace. Tristan, who suffers from embarrassing gas and bloating from eating so many beans, decides that he is going to fight the dragon and get back the village's food.

Good Knight, Deano Dragon is generally well written and amusing. Children ages five to eight will appreciate the silliness caused by Tristan's overconsumption of beans: "Another pain in his gut and another embarrassing escape of gas made Tristan realize he had no more time to look for a proper place. He was forced to yank down his pants and empty his bowels here, squatting in the short grass, for the whole world to see." The story is simple and easy to follow. Though Tristan's actions are extremely dangerous, author Bonnie Sargent is careful to address the reasons that his actions may not be the right ones, even though Tristan ultimately faces no negative consequences.

There is very little dialogue. This keeps the characters at a distance, making them less vibrant and ultimately less interesting. Additionally, there are no chapters. The book is sixty-six pages long, and though there are a few full-page color illustrations, the majority of the pages are filled with text. Chapters would help to organize the flow of the story and the key points in the plot, and could also help build tension and interest. Possibly of more significance for young readers, chapters would provide logical stopping places for those who lack the time or ability to read the entire book in one sitting.

Ultimately, *Good Knight, Deano Dragon* is appealing. Children will enjoy the fantasy and appreciate the fact that it is a child who saves the day. Though the book is not as memorable as it might have been with better character development and organization, it is fun to read and will bring smiles to the faces of its young readers.

CATHERINE THURESON (April 16, 2015)

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