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Clarion Review

Juvenile Fiction

Johnny Joins the Army: Flower Kingdom Series
Andrea Beyers
Beyers Andrea
Anthony LeTourneau, illustrator
Flower Kingdom Series RockTuff Publishing
978-0-9800754-1-0
Four Stars (out of Five)

Johnny is sent out to get some compost to help heal the roof of the "lily house" he lives in with his aunts. On his journey he meets old friends and makes some new ones. He also learns about God's army.

This is the second book in the Flower Kingdom series. Five books are planned for Season One and the author is already working on Season Two. The first book in the series was *Fiona Finds the Son*.

LeTourneau's illustrations of a living flower/vegetable garden add to the story's ambiance and will make young readers anxious to turn the page; Timothy a tiger lily fashioned into a tiger is especially outstanding. He listens well and is always loyal and kind. These are important attributes to instill in a child.

The story's biblical message is well taught and would make *Johnny Joins the Army* a good teaching tool for children's church activities Christian summer camps or families. It is a good introduction to Jesus and God's army.

The layout of the book is well planned and flows nicely. The illustrations are rich with color and imagination and add to the book's readability. Children eight to ten years old will find this easy to read and absorb. The book's backmatter includes useful references to plants featured in the story and how to grow them.

Overall the concept of the series is a good one the illustrations are special and the stories are a good way to introduce Christian ideas in a fun format for young readers. (Who could resist a “bus” that’s actually a passing bunny?) The entire series should be popular with parents and children alike.

Jo Ann Hakola