



Power of Kids: Sunshine and Soul of Kids

Thierry Kouam

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The book's portrayal of children as strong, dedicated leaders who are willing to risk everything for freedom is compelling.

Thierry Kouam's empowering juvenile fantasy *Power of Kids* features strong-willed children, a malevolent monarchy, and magic.

In a town where a tyrannical king rules with an iron fist and has declared education for children illegal, a group of rebellious kids attempts to restore the rights of the people. Led by Sunshine, a girl with leadership skills and magic powers, the children endure trials and tribulations during their quest to defeat the evil king and his wicked god, who steal and enslave children's souls.

The story has many elements, but they are not all well explained, and not all plot points are followed through. The king's mysterious project involving the children's souls is never fully revealed. Sunshine's fight reaches resolution, but many questions remain open, and several subplots are unresolved.

The book moves at a slow pace that drags further because of its long blocks of dialogue, which overextend scenes. More action-packed scenes, like fighting sequences, aren't described in full, and there's often uncertainty about what's actually happening.

The children face serious troubles because of the king, but their story lines repeat, coming to seem formulaic. Scenes frequently feel incomplete. Though it is generally chronological, the story takes a few huge leaps into the future, and it is hard to tell how much time the novel covers, and even how old the children are throughout the book.

The text reads like an awkward translation and is hard to understand. It is without paragraph breaks; each page is a block of text. Sentences are haphazardly structured, and errors in grammar and punctuation are common. Dialogue is repetitive and confusing. Quotation marks are inconsistently used; it is often difficult to distinguish dialogue from prose.

Characters are plentiful but aren't adequately described or developed. Sunshine and the Princess Luna are the main characters; they both use magic, but their powers are inconsistent and unclear.

Characters are added randomly throughout the story, and the cast becomes difficult to keep track of. Many of the children enter into unconvincing romantic relationships. Still, the portrayal of children as strong, dedicated leaders who are willing to risk everything for their town's freedom is compelling.

The novel is set in a town that is barely described and hard to imagine. When specific places like the lord's castle or the children's homes are presented, they incorporate a strange blend of modern and Renaissance features, muddling the book's time period. Jumps from a recognizable world into a more mystical realm are hard to track.

Power of Kids is a juvenile fantasy wherein tough children work to defeat an evil king.

DELIA STANLEY (February 15, 2018)

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