



The Grumpface

B.C.R. Fegan

D. Frongia, Illustrator

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The Grumpface is light and fun, and the grumpiness and daftness of its leads are sure to set children giggling.

B. C. R. Fegan's *The Grumpface* is a familiar and appealing story about a cursed forest troll, who serves as a not-too-scary villain, and a hero who stays positive and keeps trying even though he never seems to succeed.

Grumpface is a troll, cursed to unhappiness. Anyone who encounters him is given three chances to perform tasks of his choosing. If they cannot pass at least one task, they must remain his captives in the land of Ho.

Dafty Dan is a young, slightly inept inventor in the land of Hay. He is in love with a flower merchant, Bella, who regularly laments the fact that she has no roses to sell. Dan decides that he will find her a rose, and his search leads him directly into the path of Grumpface. Dan is as determined to pass the troll's challenges as Grumpface is determined to stay grumpy.

The story is told in rhymed couplets with clever wording:

*Nightshade, lavender, tulips and rue
I'd sell you a rose but alas, not one grew.*

While it has a familiar premise, the book still feels fresh. Dan's search for a rose is innocent and keeps the story light, as does the limited requirement of needing to meet only one out of three of Grumpface's challenges. This book will be most appropriate for young children, who will appreciate its simple story and the flow of its language.

The illustrations by D. Frongia appear to be computer generated; they are appealing, with lush colors and interesting backgrounds. Most of the characters are shown in fairly modern clothing, while the town of Hay and Grumpface himself have a more historical or fantastical feel.

The Grumpface is light and fun. Grumpface's grumpiness and Dan's daftness are amusing and sure to have young children giggling.

CATHERINE THURESON (April 17, 2017)

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