

The Minotaur Riddle: The Discoveries of Arthur Grey Series

V. K. Finnish

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The author of this enjoyable adventure gives middle-grade readers exactly what they are looking for: action and relatable characters.

The Minotaur Riddle is the second book in The Discoveries of Arthur Grey series by V. K. Finnish. It's a highly enjoyable, well-written followup to *Society's Traitor*, the series' debut novel.

In *The Minotaur Riddle* readers rejoin Arthur Grey, now twelve, as he continues his adventures unraveling the truth behind legendary myths. The action in this story centers on the Olympic games in Historia—and the rumors and intrigue that ensue.

Again Finnish hooks young readers from the very first page, drawing them along by their curiosity. The line, "That is a bad omen" and mysterious voices singing in the forest are enough to keep readers' interested piqued for many pages. But, of course, Finnish doesn't stop there. It takes a bit for the mystery to develop, but the author keeps readers interested in Arthur, his friends, and the Olympics along the way. Once Arthur has a chilling encounter with a stranger, the story moves ahead at a galloping pace.

The author gives middle-grade readers exactly what they are looking for: action, adventure, and relatable characters that they can follow from book to book. Young readers will love the quirky, fantasy details, like Transportals and HistoriTaxis and Arthur's ability to hide things—his special power as a Guardian.

Kids will also relate to very typical human elements, like Arthur's relationship with his dog, Griffin, who's Arthur's Fetch—an animal to whom he has a special, mystical link. (Finnish does a particularly good job characterizing this companion who just so happens to be a dog that Arthur can talk to.) Young readers will be delighted to watch Arthur and his friends work together to tackle a mystery that threatens the whole town, unsolvable even by grownups.

The Arthur Grey series encourages kids to think creatively, collaborate, and be brave as they work to solve problems. Most parents won't have any objections to the action, lessons, or themes of this novel. And many adult readers may find the book a fun read themselves.

Finnish's storytelling is clean, beautiful, and adept. The language is spot-on for young readers—accurate and elegant and, above all, understandable. Dialogue is the greatest strength of Finnish's writing, managing to evoke fantasy characters and still feel realistic.

Readers who loved *The Society's Traitor*, will feel that this book carries on the promise of the first book. The ending of *The Minotaur Riddle* ties up loose ends, but leaves readers ready for another book in the saga.

MELISSA WUSKE (May 22, 2013)

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