Clarion Review

General

Three Sister Dragons
Matt Johnstone
BookSurge
978-0-578-04196-4
Three Stars (out of Five)

In a story that has many of the familiar hallmarks we have come to expect from fantasy novels —a brave teenage boy unaware of his destiny, an evil witch, orphans who have yet to realize their potential, a helpful wizard, and an enchanted object —three sister dragons are orphaned when their parents die fighting the evil witch, Twistcurse.

Although the three dragons know a lot of things instinctively, they will still need a guardian. For this task, the sisters choose Cadve, the son of a farmer who had heard tales of dragons and magic, but has had little experience with either. When Cadve's parents learn of his new occupation as a keeper of dragons, they are a bit skeptical, but surprisingly calm about it all. Stories of this type often omit parents, but in this case, Cadve's parents offer no interference; in fact, they offer their support. Cadve is free to begin his mission to protect the dragon sisters and to battle Twistcurse and her minions.

Despite the book's title, this really is Cadve's story. His role as the chosen keeper of the sister dragons is what sets the story in motion. He is an old-fashioned sort of hero, and no matter what obstacles he faces, readers will feel assured of his success.

The author, Sierra Madre native Matt Johnstone, comes from a family of writers and poets, and this book is one in a series. Ken Bloomhorst, whose spot illustrations complement the text, is an award-winning art director and graphic designer.

As readers begin the story, there may be some confusion because the “List of Characters” is not clearly labeled to indicate how the characters relate to one another. And while it is understandable that dragons might name children after themselves, such passages must be written very carefully to keep readers from mixing up the two characters who share a name. *Three Sister Dragons* gives readers the chance to look up unfamiliar words like “rune” or “copse” if they choose, although their meaning can be gleaned from context.

Three Sister Dragons is an imaginative tale that is accessible to young readers. Chapters are divided into manageable sections that successfully propel the reader forward. The novel will be of interest to fantasy readers who are looking for a new story.