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Knighthood for Beginners

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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This children's comedy is set in the land of fairy tales and features all the classic tropes one would expect: fire breathing dragons, knights in shining armour, kings in castles etc etc. However, in Elys Dolan's fairy tale world, nothing is exactly what you would imagine and everything is very, very silly.

The tale's hero is a young dragon who fails utterly to meet any of the essential criteria for acceptable dragon behaviour. He won't eat villages, he can't solve riddles and he's useless at knitting. He does love reading, though, and, when he finds a book about being a knight, he decides that chivalry is the life for him. A quest to become a famous knight begins.

Readers will love the fact that this hero is a dragon hooked on books. They will love his dedication to his quest. Most of all, they will love that he is called Dave.

Like all classic heroes, Dave has a trusty steed - a talking German goat called Albrecht. Albrecht has an impressive CV, which includes acting, dancing, wrestling and even professional match-making. But heroes also need adversaries and Dave's is a ghastly, bearded brute, who not only stands in Dave's way of becoming a knight, but also has plans to kidnap the king and take control of the kingdom.

The story's narrative is predictable but it is delivered with so much silliness and so many jokes that it still feels original. All of Dolan's characters are stereotypes with quirky twists. The princess loves pies, the wicked witch craves romance, and the knight-in-shining-armour prefers to strut his stuff in the nude! Bold and chaotic cartoon illustrations also add to the comedy.

This is by no means the first fairy tale farce to make its way onto children's bookshelves, but it is crammed with funny bits and is a welcome addition to a much-loved genre.

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