



Goblins vs Dwarves

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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They are back; Skarper, Henwyn, Princess Ned and all their friends living in Clovenstone Castle. After their adventures which were recounted in **Goblins**, everyone has settled down and life is pleasant - if a bit boring for some. Not for long. The arrival of the Dwarves intent on taking the precious slowsilver presents a threat to the survival of all who live in the castle; it is war.

Here is a sequel that proves to be as lively as its predecessor. Skarper and Henwyn are attractive anti-heroes, and Reeve clearly enjoys confounding the expectations of readers well used to the conventions of fantasy; Princess Ned is no beautiful, young girl rather a comfortable elderly lady, Garvon Hael a very unheroic hero. However, other characters are more recognisable; the dwarves are very much the traditional hard working dour race familiar from Tolkien. The juxtaposition allows plenty of scope for humour, both the slapstick that young readers will enjoy, but also more subtle - it is the slowsilver, the fuel for the Head, that is also its destruction. However, the humour never overwhelms the reader. It enlivens an exciting tale, adding a little irreverence to the fantasy. For there is a serious side. Within a traditional narrative, Reeve introduces themes of tolerance, ecology, friendship, loyalty, loss and truth. However, these are so skilfully handled that there is no sense that the author is preaching. Rather they enrich a fast paced, lively adventure adding depth to a familiar landscape. The result is a thoroughly satisfying read for any young reader with a lively imagination and a sense of humour.

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