



The Marvellous Land of Snergs

Books Reviewed:

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Editor's Choice:

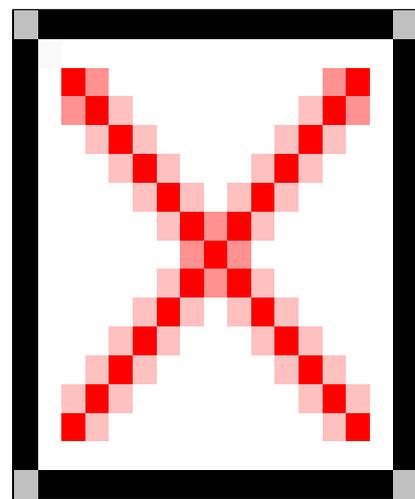
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4



Pip and Flora have one thing in common ? they are orphans and inmates of the Sunny Bay Home for Superfluous and Accidentally Parentless Children. They are also continually getting into trouble ? and now they are running away from the home, with an irrepressible puppy called Tiger and Gorbo ? a Snerg with a talent for always doing (or saying) the wrong thing. They are running not so much from Miss Watkins and the home as from a lady dressed in purple. Who is she? Why does she want to capture Flora? The answer to these questions lies at the end of an adventure that will include cinnamon bears, wobsers, squeeles, Snergs, Kelps and Golithos, an incompetent ogre, among other threats. Will they survive?

This is not the novel written by Wyke-Smith and published in 1927. However, Veronica Cossantelli has taken the central idea, the brimming imagination, an element of the moralising such a feature of books for the young at that time and created a lively homage that captures the flavour of the original for a contemporary audience. Pip and Flora are enjoyable characters ? Pip coming from a circus family, lively, outgoing; silent Flora with her privileged background ? both determined and loyal. Then there is Gorbo ? a character to enchant with his overblown language and ability to create mayhem. It is this delight in words such as ?pusillanimous?, ?proscipient?, even ?confuscated? that truly links Cossantelli's clever reimagining to its past. Much is made of its connection to Tolkien who apparently thoroughly

enjoyed reading the original with his children. I recommend parents and teachers copy his example and share this story with their children; it demands to be read aloud with its nonstop plot, humour, outrageous characters, jeopardy ? and final satisfying happy ending.

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