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The League Of Seven



Synopsis

The League of Seven is the first book in an action-packed, steampunk series by the acclaimed author of Samurai Shortstop, Alan Gratz. In an alternate 1875 America electricity is forbidden, Native Americans and Yankees are united, and eldritch evil lurks in the shadows. Young Archie Dent knows there really are monsters in the world. His parents are members of the Septemberist Society, whose job it is to protect humanity from hideous giants called the Mangleborn. Trapped in underground prisons for a thousand years, the giant monsters have been all but forgotten—but now they are rising again as the steam-driven America of 1875 rediscovers electricity, the lifeblood of the Mangleborn. When his parents and the rest of the Septemberists are brainwashed by one of the evil creatures, Archie must assemble a team of seven young heroes to save the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The League of Seven is an imaginative mid school read featuring a wild steampunk world full of menacing monsters and soaring steamships. But oddly passive main characters rarely rise to meet the challenge of the worldbuilding and the horror is fairly disturbing. In an alternate universe 1875 America, Archie Dent is the son of heroic parents: members of the Septemberist Society who have historically protected the Earth from the monstrous creatures known as Mangleborn. Although they have been suppressed for centuries, the mangleborn have found a new conduit back into the human world: electricity. The time has come for a New League of Seven: the heroes with unique abilities to appear when the world needs them most. Archie Dent always dreamed of being the

leader of the League of Seven: fate may have arranged that he will assume that role and find the remaining six. About half way through this novel, I realized I just wasn't enjoying the story. Despite the very creative reimagining of the 1875 world, I didn't get into Archie or the other characters. Gratz is a good enough author that he would take a very passive child and transform him through adversity into a hero. But that transformation was taking far too long and I had a hard time rooting for or understanding the character. Odd plot choices abounded - each one making Archie more of an unappealing, timid, crybaby than heroic. He falls asleep in great danger, doesn't run or fight but goes along with the flow, cries and shuts down with adversity, and seems more like a seven year old than pre-tween. Perhaps that was more realistic when a child is confronted with horror situations - but then again, I don't want realism in a fantastical steampunk world.

Alan Gratz's love for creating complex worlds and populating them with characters who readers can relate to and learn from, shines through every page of this engaging book. Without a word of backstory, Alan immerses the reader into this fantasy world, giving you just enough information that will make you want to keep reading. The secret entrance to the headquarters of the Septemberist Society could only be reached by submarine. Twelve-year-old Archie Dent had been there a dozen times before and still he had no idea where it was. Manhatta? State Island? Breucklen? Queens County? For all he knew, the submarine they took to the group's secret headquarters didn't go to any of New Rome's boroughs at all. It might turn right around from the Hudson River Submarine Landing in Jersey and head back to Hackensack territory. And asking didn't help either. His mother and father didn't know where it was, or they wouldn't tell him. I bet the Septemberist Society is under the big statue of Hiawatha in New Rome Harbor, he told his parents as they wove their way through the crowd down to the submarine docks. That would be so brass! (p. 1) Introduction of protagonist with a voice. Check. Introduction of a believable steampunk world based loosely on cities and states the reader is familiar with? Check. Next comes the conflict: Enter the Mangleborn and their descendants, the Manglespawn. Monsters so horrific they can only be defeated by the superhuman powers of the League of Seven. In the opening chapter Archie meets his first monster: It was something else. Something black and shiny and big, bigger than Archie, with too many legs and too many eyes and a curled, segmented tail with a thick stinger at the end |.

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