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The Menagerie



Synopsis

From the New York Times bestselling author of the Wings of Fire series, Tui T. Sutherland, and her sister, Kari Sutherland, comes the Menagerie series, perfect for fans of Brandon Mull's Fablehaven series and The Spiderwick Chronicles. In the small town of Xanadu, Wyoming lies the Menagerie, a top secret facility filled with unicorns, dragons, phoenixes, and other fairy tale creatures. At least, it was a secret until six griffin cubs escaped. If Logan and Zoe don't get the cubs back fast, the entire Menagerie will be shut down. The race is on and the resulting adventure is only the beginning of a thrilling series that will leave readers wanting a magical menagerie of their very own.

Book Information

Series: Menagerie (Book 1)

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (144 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Sisters Tui and Kari Sutherland have collaborated on the start to a really fun book series, The Menagerie. Lead character, Logan, is an outsider in a small town, who is finding it very difficult to make new friends. That all changes when he discovers a griffin under his bed! Helping the young griffin return home also gives Logan a shot at becoming involved with an entire preserve of mythological creatures as well as getting to know Zoe, a classmate, and her family who are caretakers of the griffins and the entire menagerie. Logan feels a connection to the menagerie and

to Zoe's family which takes him from being an outcast to being very much engaged with some interesting people and animals. The book wraps up with a real note of suspense that will leave you eagerly in wait for book two. I believe this book will appeal to ages 8 and up as recommended, though it could appeal to readers of all ages who are interested in a fun adventure with fantasy creatures. Will certainly be of interest to those who love animals as the creatures are portrayed with full and individualized personalities. Clever enough to perhaps attract the attention of reluctant readers. As well as being very fun, the book is quite innocent as well. All too often these days we have to be on the lookout for content that may not be appropriate for younger readers even when the books are aimed at that audience. This book has no such controversial or inappropriate content for the younger audience.

This book is a fun read. Not exceptionally well written, but decent and the plot is creative and fun enough that it's worth a read... almost. My only complaint is that out of nowhere, the last page is suddenly, extremely gory (trying to set up an intense lead-in for book #2, giving details about an unexpected murder scene) and is a bit disturbing for more-sensitive kids. I let my 8-year-old start reading this book when I was partway through, and she finished it before I did, and is still independently bringing up "that book is really creepy" weeks later. I wish I had known so I could have prepared her beforehand, or maybe even told her to skip the book altogether. Usually books (and movies, and TV shows, etc.) that are going to "go gory" at some point give you some kind of a preview of the style of book you're getting into in the first 5 minutes, so if you're going to react poorly to such a thing you can bail early instead of suddenly dumping on you after you've invested a ton of time. I wish this book had done the same. The level of intensity is a huge, sudden shift from "Oooh a magical animal has escaped its cage!" to "an animal is dead, with blood and feathers everywhere." I don't think it's too much for all readers, but will be for some.

*****"I was hooked from the very first page! Talk of strange occurrences begins immediately. While the plot is a little bit hard to follow in the beginning, it becomes easier to understand as the story progresses. I felt like Logan, who was also confused by the occurrences."--Mira M., 9*The Menagerie draws you into an exciting fantasy that the novel creates, a mythical universe of amazing creatures and stunning secrets. Although I haven't read any of the Sutherland's other books, The Menagerie declares it has a magical power, creating imaginary worlds that magically materialize as you turn the pages of the myth. The characters are engaging, and the plot is mesmerizing. I'm sure that younger pals with more vivid interaction with the dramatic events will be moved by the plot and

encounters. The story of the Menagerie is about a family, of an ordinary town in Wyoming, whose secret zoo of mythical creatures is just hidden in their midst. The secret menagerie has been existing as far as Zoe could remember. Once some baby griffins went loose, Zoe Khan and her family, started a non stop hunt to find all six youngsters, as quickly as possible, seeking the help of Logan and Blue, two seventh grade boys. Some terrible happenings were to be avoided by all means. Secrets unfold to the reader, as Logan discovers them, in the intense search. Logan grabbed her elbow and pulled her back. "Zoe," he said, "We might not want to see this." Blood was dripping of the side of Pelly's nest, staining the pillows and silks. Feathers seemed to have exploded in every direction; some were even stuck up in the tree branches overhead. A bloody webbed footprint in the center of the nest was all that was left of Pelly. Someone had murdered the goose who laid the golden eggs. to be continued in . . . The Menagerie . . . [Book Two]

I actually enjoy YA quite a bit. This middle-schooler story was very entertaining with enough family drama to make it engrossing for even this adult. I found the observant hero, Logan, to be quite endearing as was the character of Zoe. If there were any issues with the story, they didn't hit me as I was racing through to the end. I needed to know if all six Gryphon chicks would make it back. I also wanted to know who let them out. The various mythological creatures at the zoo all have varying personalities as well as voices. The last page of the book is quite the cliffhanger. I have put them on my watch list so I can get the next one. I think this story would make for a fun movie as well.

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