

Morgan Le Fay: Small Things and Great by Jo-Anne Blanco

4 stars

An exciting first exploration of an intriguing world.

Morgan Le Fay is the story of a young girl, Morgan, who lives a sheltered life in a Arthurian castle by the sea. On the night of a tragic shipwreck, Morgan begins to experience strange and prophetic visions and, shortly after, she is recruited by a magical being to embark on a fantastical mission. The book tells the story of Morgan as she encounters visitors to the castle and begins to discover the extent of her powers, as well as carrying out her dangerous quest into secret faerie realms.

The book is very readable and easy to follow, although a lot of characters and names are introduced early on. The story is entirely presented through the eyes of Morgan so many of her sights and thoughts are dreamlike in nature and we often don't know exactly what is real and what is not, although I think this works well. There are many fantastical elements to the story but also many references to locations in the real medieval world and so one would assume the setting is a mythical version of our own history. Christianity and religion play large parts in the story; Morgan has many interesting discussions with priests and internal opinions about the Bible that provoke thought, although often do not influence the plot strongly.

One slightly strange aspect is the age of the children in the story. Morgan and most of her friends are 5 years old, yet their thoughts and conversations are far more mature and it comes across as a bit weird. There is obviously an element of magic about the children but nonetheless it seems strange. There are also many references to events and people outside of the main plot that never come to fruition and feel a bit superfluous.

The introduction of the faeries and magical creatures is probably the best part of the book. They are often described as beautiful and kindly, especially by the young narrator Morgan, yet there is a subtle, sinister side to many of their actions and there is a dark, creepy edge to them. It is hard to tell exactly who is influencing Morgan throughout the narrative and her quest and this works to keep the plot interesting and prevents the story from becoming too childish.

Overall, Morgan Le Fay is an entertaining book that is far less whimsical than it may initially appear. There are a lot of characters and concepts introduced but it remains captivating and the magical world created is an interesting one to develop further.

Boromir

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review.