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### Swordbird

Angel Pearce

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Fan, Nancy Yi. *Swordbird*. Illustrated by Mark Zug. HarperCollins, 2007. ISBN 9780061130991. \$15.99. 219 p.

Reviewer: Angel Pearce

Reading Level: Intermediate

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Fantasy;

Subject: Children's writings, American; Birds--Juvenile fiction; Fantasy; Books--Reviews;

This book is impressive considering a 12-year-old girl wrote it. It is pretty amazing in fact considering how difficult it is for some children to write a story without rushing to finish it, when it reaches the right length, with something like "and they lived happily ever after."

*Swordbird* is a fantasy about two warring tribes of birds, the blue jays and cardinals. Like many stories of its type, the hero must follow through with his quest or all is lost. The jacket cover states that Fan wrote this story after a vivid dream about birds as she was wrestling with her feeling about September 11th. Her descriptive narrative is less wordy than many youthful authors and she does not make up unpronounceable words. Students in the fourth to sixth grade and their teachers could use this book as an example of what they could write. Although not classic material, it should find a good following among fans of *Redwall* and *The Guardians of Ga'Hoole*.