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# Odd and the Frost Giants

Meriam Bates

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Gaiman, Neil. *Odd and the Frost Giants*. Illustrated by Brett Helquist. HarperCollins, 2009. ISBN 9780061671738. \$14.99. 128 p.

Reviewer: Meriam Bates

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Adventure stories; Fantasy fiction; Fairy tales;

Subject: Mythology, Norse-- Juvenile fiction; Heroes--Juvenile fiction; Giants--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Ever since he was ten, Odd has been unlucky. His father was killed in a sea battle, Odd's leg was crushed by a falling tree, and his mother remarried into a stepfamily where Odd feels he does not belong. Two years after his father's death, Odd, who is sick of being trapped inside with his stepfamily for an unusually long winter, takes off over the ice and snow to his father's old woodcutting cabin. It is there that he meets a fox, eagle, and bear who turn out to be Norse Gods. Odd goes with them to Asgard and helps them defeat the Frost Giants using his wits and his irritating smile.

Told in Gaiman's straightforward fast-paced manner, the story follows traditional fairy-tales by keeping the action key and the character development and emotional involvement at a minimum. While the plot is loosely based around traditional Norse mythology, one does not need to be familiar with such tales to appreciate the story. There are however, some references that add humor and foreshadowing if one is familiar with the background mythology. Readers of Gaiman's body of work, including last year's Newbery winner, *The Graveyard Book*, will enjoy this fanciful story about family and adventure.

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