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Of Giants and Ice (The Ever Afters #1) by Shelby Bach

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Author: Bach, Shelby

Title: *Of Giants and Ice* (The Ever Afters #1)

Year of Publication: 2012

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers

ISBN: 9781442431461

Number of pages: 352

Rating: Excellent

Reading/Interest Level: Primary; Intermediate

Keywords: Fantasy; Middle School; Fairy Tale Characters; Magic; Dragons; Celebrity; Giants; After-school Programs; Parents; Friends; Adventure;

Review:

Ever After School is not like any other after-school program that Rory has ever attended. For one thing, students are taught by people with names like Rumpelstiltskin, Snow White, and Rapunzel who look and dress like fairy tale characters. Dragons, fairies, and giants are part of the 'tales' that attendees prepare for. Rory gets to help rescue a damsel in distress and slay a dragon on her very first day. When her good friend Lena asks her to help her with her 'tale' Rory embarks on the adventure of her life and learns about friendship, teamwork, and overcoming fears.

For children ages nine and up, Bach's first book is a well written and fun. Told through the eyes of sixth grader Rory Landon, the author paints a realistic picture of a girl whose life is complicated by the divorce of her parents. Loneliness, frequent moves, not wanting to have to make new friends, inadequacy in the shadow of family members, and feeling guilty about resentment and anger towards people they love are normal reactions that many children experience and will relate to. The book is slow to start since the first chapters have an exciting dragon fight but then it takes over 150 pages to lay down background and get back to some action. It is possible that some readers may impatiently set the book aside before the tempo of the book begins to accelerate but adventures are just around the corner and well worth the wait as magic enters the story and Rory is involved in 'tales' of her own.

Reviewer: Cynthia Frazier

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