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Sabriel by Garth Nix

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Author: Nix, Garth

Title: *Sabriel*

Year of Publication: 1995

Publisher: HarperCollins

ISBN: 9780064471831

Number of Pages: 292

Rating: Dependable

Reading/Interest Level: Young Adult

Keywords: High Fantasy; Magic; Wizards; Quests; Death

Review:

When Sabriel's father disappears, she embarks on a dangerous journey back to the Old Kingdom, the land of her birth and a place where magic crosses the boundary between life and death. On her journey, Sabriel embraces her destiny as a gatekeeper of death, using her powers to banish the evil dead and protect the living. But something more evil than she has ever encountered lurks at the heart of the Old Kingdom, and Sabriel must summon all her strength to meet the challenge ahead. She is bolstered by two companions—the mysterious Mogget, a magical creature trapped in feline form, and the noble Touchstone, a prince haunted by his painful past. Together, they accept their pasts, confront the future, and save the Old Kingdom from the greatest evil it has ever known.

Sabriel is a high-fantasy novel set in a rich and detailed world. Nix creates an intricate web of magic, mystery, and creatures that are both beautiful and terrible. But while the page-turning action keeps readers enthralled, the details and history of Sabriel's world are cumbersome and confusing. Sabriel's character is brave and thoughtful, but unexpectedly transforms from an iron-willed stoic to an emotional teenager. Nix creates a compelling hero's journey that explores questions of destiny, family, and forgiveness, but falls short in the development of the characters and their relationships, which are too often glossed over in favor of detailed descriptions of adrenaline-inducing action.

Reviewer: Lauren E. Johnson

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