



2018

Goldeline

Karen Abbott

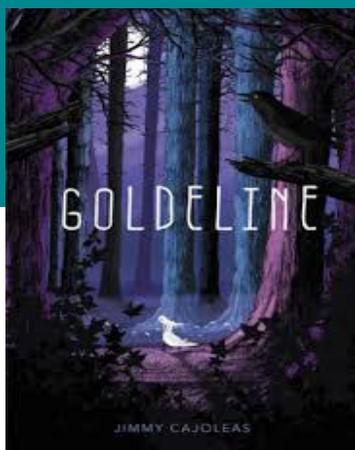
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Book Review

Goldeline

Author

Jimmy Cajoleas

Illustrator

Reviewer

Karen Abbott

Rating

Dependable

Level

Young Adult

Pages

256

Year

2017

Publisher

HarperCollins

ISBN

9781328714978

Goldeline is an orphan adopted by the leader of a gang of forest bandits. She is fairly happy in her bandit life, although she is uncomfortable with her role of stopping the travelers that the gang robs and is sympathetic to their plight. One day she discovers a boy about her own age hiding in a carriage and decides to save him. They become friends, but when they fight, she helps him find his way to the village. He reveals the band's location and this costs Goldeline her only home, sending them both fleeing into the least safe regions of the forest to evade the Preacher and reunite with their guardians.

This book feels like *The Scarlet Letter*, *Robin Hood*, and *The Hobbit* mashed together. This combination stirs a familiarity that is pleasant in some parts of the story, but the overall depth and message of the preceding classics is missing. Because it feels familiar, a comparison is inevitable and *Goldeline* comes up short. *Goldeline* speaks with a forest-roughened twist to her words, which is consistently jolting and makes it hard to really feel her loss and desperation. There are intermittent themes of family, loss, bonding, love, good vs. evil, same-sex relationships, rape, and survival. These themes are not for every reader or every interest level. Approach this book with caution. It is an interesting story, but not much in the way of meaning.

*Contains mild violence and mild sexual content.