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The Rambling

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Book Review

The Rambling

Author

Jimmy Cajoleas

Reviewer

Jessica Mellor

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Rating

Dependable

Level

Primary, Intermediate

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Pages

291

Year

2019

ISBN

9780064298786

Publisher

HarperCollins

Buddy has always had the worst luck. When he almost burns down his mother's bakery, he decides it's time to leave town and live with his father by the swamp. But it's only after one day that his father is kidnapped and Buddy goes on an adventure to try and save him. Along the way, Buddy almost gets eaten, befriends a spider-folk, and learns about the magical game of Parsnit. Parsnit is a magical game that uses cards as a way to tell the most compelling story. Whoever tells the best story wins, but if you lose, it could mean your death. Buddy must learn how to play the game and have one final Parsnit duel if he wants to save everyone he cares about.

The cover art is beautiful and mysterious, yet the title really doesn't mean anything to the story. The book does start off a bit slow, but it picks up after the first couple of chapters. After he gets started, Jimmy Cajoleas does a great job creating a fast-paced plot where event after event happens, drawing the reader in. The main character is eleven years old, but the book is still appealing to a variety of ages. The writing style is mildly distracting, with some sentences covering half of the page due to the many commas used. There is an attempt to have an almost southern accent at times, but it is random enough that it sometimes became irritating to have things repeated such as "I was headed right out of Collardsville, I was" or "I tripped, I did." The accent only has a few variations and isn't tied to one character. Overall, the book has a nice fast-paced plot that is enjoyable, and the twist on tarot cards is well done.