



Darkmouth

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~~Not a Choice~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Author Shane Hegarty was living a (presumably) quiet life as the Arts Editor of the *Irish Times* until a bidding war broke out at the Bologna Book Fair in 2013 for this, his debut novel. This fantasy rushes from drama to crisis, and is laced with humour and more than a passing nod to Greek mythology, Ghostbusters, Star Trek and Tolkien.

Darkmouth, in which the adventure is located, is the last Blighted Village to be plagued by Legends ? human-eating monsters that pass through gateways from the Infested Side to wreak havoc. It appears that Hugo is the last remaining Legend Hunter and his son, 12-year-old Finn, is his only child. Finn is in training, and with less than a year to go before his father leaves Darkmouth to join the Legend Hunters? Council of Twelve (long on paperwork, short on action), it seems that Finn alone can save his village. Problem is, he?s rubbish.

All the ingredients of a really good yarn are here: humour, portals, good-versus-evil, well-drawn characters, Bondesque gadgets aplenty, and the probability of annihilation. What more could you ask for? The pace is furious as the novel tears headlong towards its denouement, in which Finn is transformed from anti-hero to reluctant hero, and we are shown that not everyone is as they seem.

The book should have a wider appeal than just the 10-12 category at which it is aimed. It will also be enjoyed by any younger readership possessed of reading stamina (the book extends to over 400 pages) and a wide vocabulary.

With HarperCollins planning the biggest series launch of the year, Darkmouth looks set to become one of the books of 2015. You?re likely to see it on blogs, in schools, in libraries and in video trailers. Given the visual quality of the writing, a film version sometime in the future wouldn?t be at all surprising, too. The sequel is planned for release in August. I hope you can wait that long to find out what happens to ... I won?t spoil it. Read the book, then wait patiently for the sequel.

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