



Slathbog's Gold

M.L. Forman

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Do you have the courage, the wits, and the skill to claim a dragon's hoard? If so, apply within ...

The sign is small, tucked into the corner of Mr. Clutter's bookshop window: "Adventurers Wanted. Apply Within." No one but fifteen-year-old Alex Taylor even seems to notice it is there. And for Alex, who has wished for a change in his life, it is an irresistible invitation.

Upon entering Mr. Clutter's shop, Alex is swept away on an incredible adventure to a faraway land filled with heroic warriors, mysterious elves, and hard-working dwarves.

Alex becomes the eighth man in a band of adventurers seeking the lair of Slathbog the Red - and evil dragon with a legendary treasure. Along the way, Alex and his new friends must battle dangerous trolls and bandits, face undead wraiths, and seek the wisdom of the Oracle in her White Tower.

Alex's adventure takes him to distant and exotic lands where he learns about courage, integrity, honor, and, most importantly, friendship.

Slathbog's Gold is the first book in an exciting new YA epic fantasy series and heralds the arrival of a major new talent in the genre.

Slathbog's Gold Details

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From Reader Review Slathbog's Gold for online ebook

Jill Williamson says

Review by Jill Williamson

Fifteen-year-old Alex Taylor walks by a bookshop one day and spots a small sign that says, "Adventurers Wanted. Apply Within." Inside he meets the talkative Mr. Clutter, who treats him as though he is on an interview for a great adventure. Alex was merely curious, but the next thing he knows, an elf and a dwarf are brought into the interview to ask him some more serious questions. The adventure? A quest through a portal to another world to faraway Varlo to kill the evil dragon Slathbog and seize his treasure. Alex isn't sure what he's gotten himself into, but he has always wanted a little adventure in his life...

If you liked *The Hobbit*, you'll like *Slathbog's Gold*. It's practically the same premise, though for a younger audience. There are trolls, bandits, elves, and dwarves, as well as an Oracle and some creepy wraiths. I enjoyed that Forman created a unique set of rules all adventures must follow. My favorite magical item in the story was the adventurer's magic bag. Each owner chooses his or her own password. Inside, the bag is like a small apartment, though extra rooms can be added later if need arises. This is a fun book for anyone who loves adventures. I expect a long and enjoyable series from the new author. Recommended.

Ryelor says

SPOILER WARNING

This book caught my eye the first time I saw it on the bookstore shelf. The cover had a dragon. I love dragons. My better sense prevailed and I didn't buy it. Almost a year later, my wife found it in clearance and got it for me. I'm glad she bought it on clearance.

Before I turn into Mr. Negativity about "*Slathbog's Gold*," I want to say that I respect M.L. Forman for getting published. No doubt he will continue to refine his talent until he releases some real gems. This first installment of the *Adventurers* series was (unfortunately) not enough to entice me to read more of his books. However, I've seen a lot of positive reviews. To each his/her own.

There were quite a few things that bugged me about *Slathbog's Gold*. I know it's easy for people to sit back and destroy someone else's work. I think I try to approach each new book and author with an open mind, but inevitably every reader finds a book or author they don't "gel" with. However, how anyone could give this book 5 stars is beyond me.

Here, in no particular order, are the things that bothered me about *Slathbog's Gold*:

1. Character development was virtually non-existent in this book. People are introduced left and right but the reader is never given a reason to really care about them. The reader is expected to just understand that these people are great without receiving any type of reason as to why. For example, we are given the idea that Alex has it rough--he's an orphan, he just fought with his stepfather--but it ends there, and before you know it, he's a mega-uber-super hero slaying trolls, bandits, wraiths and a dragon with no experience whatsoever. He never struggles or messes up. Alex is perfect. Not only is he perfect, but he is the most powerful wizard

and warrior to ever exist in the history of adventurers. Sorry, but I don't enjoy perfect protagonists. They are boring. The other characters are all very one dimensional (one who laughs all the time, one is always grumpy, etc.).

2. Forman terribly overused people's names in the text. It seemed like every sentence began with the name "Alex" and, just in case we forgot, he would mention Alex's name a bunch more times in the same paragraph . . . and sometimes even in the same sentence! "Alex enjoyed Thrang's cooking, but not as much as Alex enjoyed the banquet at the White Tower." Almost every paragraph my mind was screaming, "USE A PERSONAL PRONOUN, MAN! I KNOW WHO YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT! I'M NOT AN IDIOT!" I'm surprised his proofreaders didn't catch such novice mistakes.

3. Laughter: Why is everybody laughing in this book? There were at least two or three references to laughter on every page! It got so bad that, instead of finding other ways to describe the adventurer's merriment, Forman began tacking on adverbs: he laughed grimly; he laughed menacingly; he laughed heartily. I became so annoyed with the word "laugh" in the text that I would grit my teeth every time I read it. I understand that one of the characters was known for his gaiety, but the relentless overuse of laughter was annoying. (Not to mention bowing. There was so much bowing in this book I wondered if the setting were actually the far East.)

4. There were some really weak plot points as well. Slathbog was apparently a bad-A dragon who had killed countless adventurers and ravaged an entire land and was downed by a 15-year-old kid's sword slash. In fact, Alex's slashing sword seemed to solve all of the adventurer's problems. I guess my biggest complaint is that things were too darn easy. Alex was the answer to everybody's problems. I found myself wishing Alex would be eaten by the dragon. No such luck.

5. Too many tired clichés: elves, dwarfs, mystical swords, etc.

6. Alex's magic came too easily. There were no consequences except for him feeling a little tired after using it.

7. Dialogue: "Hi Andy," said Alex. "Hi Alex," said Andy. "How are you, Andy?" laughed Alex. "I am fine, Alex," laughed Andy. "How are you, Andy?" Alex smiled. "I am fine, Andy," smiled Alex. Ad nauseam. The dialogue was so forced and contrived (and there was tons of laughing and smiling after most of the dialogue). Andy, supposedly a youth from modern day, talks like a lord from medieval times, saying things like "I know not" and never using contractions. Most of the time the dialogue felt clunky and fake to me.

8. There is more, but this is too long.

There will surely be more installments in this series. I, fortunately, will not read them. If anybody wants this book, I'd be happy to sell it to you. It's in my house on clearance.

Mike (the Paladin) says

[The Hobbit was probably mentioned specifically because Trolls in this world turn to stone in the sun. (hide spoiler)]

Rachel says

This was an extremely average book. It was completely inoffensive, so you can let your kids (of any age) read it without fear, but it was also completely bland.

There were battles with bandits, a troll, a spiritual battle with wraiths, and a great and ending battle with a dragon; and these battles probably comprised a combined total of 50 pages out of 376. The rest of the book was travelling, learning, everyone laughing heartily (except for the one guy who brooded gloomily until the shade of his dead wife gave him permission to live life with joy). No one seemed to face any significant danger (which sounds preposterous, considering the list of dangers above), and everywhere they went, they were greeted with cheer and openness.

There was no substantive conflict: not against evil, not against nature, not against man. I'd be fine with my kid having this kind of adventure, because he would suffer no apparent damage, meet with friends everywhere he went, and come home with mountains of gold.

Or, to put it all more succinctly: meh.

Micah Scelsi says

I read this book because it seemed highly recommended, but I don't understand the hype. The author has some good concepts in the book, but that is intertwined in a standard format fantasy adventure. The characters are not very well developed and motivations are questionable. I read the entire book and it was entertaining, but there wasn't that much there. Part of my gripe may be it is meant for a younger audience, but there are still very good books - the Ranger's Apprentice series is a great one that both talks of a young boy growing up and takes on a series of adult problems. If you want a new author, the Green Rider series is also good. The Fantasy genre seems to have a difficult time differentiating between various books made for different ages. I have read plenty of "YA" books, but this one doesn't do it for me. If you want old school fantasy look into the Dragonlance books by Weiss and Hickman. This author has good concepts, but there is so much else out there that has a more developed story.

Dani - Perspective of a Writer says

"The sign is small, tucked into the corner of Mr. Clutter's bookshop window: "Adventurers Wanted. Apply Within." No one but fifteen-year-old Alex Taylor even seems to notice it is there. And for Alex, who has wished for a change in his life, it is an irresistible invitation." And away we go on an exciting adventure with Alex when he joins as the 8th with a group seeking the legendary dragon treasure of Slathbog the Red. Along the way he learns about courage, integrity, honor, and, most importantly, friendship. He returns home a changed young man...

I have been reading so many middle grade books recently and they have been really good! This is one that I highly suggest... my younger brother LOVES this series and has read it multiple times now. He's not a speedy reader but he's drawn back into this world again and again. He's a gamer so that is really saying something!! If you enjoy mean girls and tons of internal conflict then this book is NOT for you. If you are an intellectual who has no problem reading classics then this book is NOT for you. If you are looking for a book that is simple but engaging where you are dropped into a world where you wish you could join Alex, then

this book IS FOR YOU!

Alex is one of the MAJOR reasons I LOVED this book! Alex goes with the flow. He's not very remarkable, he doesn't enjoy washing dishes in his uncle's restaurant but he knows that he's blessed to live with his uncle and cousin with his parents gone. He doesn't beat his chest in a bid for sympathy or put on an act to protect himself. He felt like a 15 year old boy (and not a precocious one at that) who isn't yet able to choose how he becomes who he wants to be. This sign gives him that opportunity!!

The premise is AMAZE!! LOVE IT! I was sucked right in, because Alex wasn't all gun-ho for an adventure. He was curious and wanted that satisfied but wasn't expecting much. It's Alex's mindset going into the shop that sets the tone of the entire story! I felt like I would have reacted much like Alex did bowled over by the adults certainty. Isn't that how life is sometimes for kids?! I really appreciated his perspective. To some readers, who are popular or accomplished already they probably won't get or appreciate the specialness that is Alex... he is regular but he is special too. And the best thing about him is he goes for it! Not like.. I'll do it I'll rule the world, mwaaaaa! But more like okay this happened and this is what I can do... He doesn't know if it will work or not but he goes for it!

I LOVED how Alex treasured friendship! He didn't bond right off with all 8 adventurers. They were comrades but not necessarily close. And his relationships were different with the different adventurers. That is true to life. Andy is his contemporary, just a little more experienced than he is, but he is really close to the two who signed him on, Thrang the dwarf and Arconn the elf. Then there is the group leader Bregnest. I won't give away any details about Alex's relationship with these guys but it really works because each one is a little different! You really aren't friends in a group as large as eight you tend to congregate with people your own age, the ones you first met or those you have regular contact with and these friends are the same way!

Travel stories are the best way to explore the world for the first time. We needed to get a grasp of how things work and what's out there and this trip provided a means to give us a glimpse of that. Of course, the plot goes a long way to giving us fun these to experience with Alex and to test him as we do that traveling.

I actually really enjoyed the slice of life nature to the story. Due to this day to day look at adventuring the pace of the story was a tad slow at times as camping and their movements have to be at least mentioned but it doesn't mean that something wasn't always happening or setting up to happen. So you were always intrigued by what was coming next and how Alex would react. This aspect of the story was balanced well. He was learning what he could about being a wizard, about what it meant to be an adventurer as well as how to make decisions for himself when faced with a situation where he needed to make a decision.

The magic system was very fluid. We are so used to Harry Potter with wands and spells and advanced learning that it was refreshing for the magic to be single words and rather instinctual about how to USE the magic. His own conscience came to play in his decisions and how he would use his magic.

The end was a little pat... there was little difficulty in beating the dragon. It was a rather forgone conclusion at this point. But there were difficulties surrounding the defeat of the dragon. The message is that many times the big bad dragon we are to face can be defeated we simply have to make the journey, be on the lookout for ways to solve problems then we must face our fear and it is as easy as that. Its everything leading up to the final challenge that is the trouble! I enjoyed that message for a middle grade audience! Things are tied up really well at the end, maybe a little too tied up for an adult.

The three negative I talked about were not enough for me to drop my rating. I simply enjoyed the book too much for that!! I will MOST DEFINITELY be reading the next book and I anticipate the entire series!!

If this is NOT ENOUGH to convince you to read this book I have two other reasons...

Shahree - the horse he obtains for his adventure. Alex didn't even realize he liked horses until he bought her! He goes on a mini adventure due to this horse and it is super adorable his relationship with her! The GEEB!! - A bird in the shape of a bowling pin with 1 bird like leg, yellow with a red zigzag. It delivers messages (I won't tell you from whom!) He answers in honks and dings his head changing to a horn and bell for each! You pay in gems and he'll give you honest change! So cute! He just popped away, lol!

There... NOW GO READ IT!!

BOTTOM LINE: The best choice for young readers whose favorite pastime is NOT reading... they will be hooked!

You can find this review and many others on my book blog @ Perspective of a Writer. See my special perspective at the bottom of my reviews under the typewriter...

Zemkat says

This book started out charming enough. A teenage boy stumbles into a magical shop, and finds it difficult to resist signing up to go on an adventure, especially when the man behind the desk insists on filling out the application form for him.

"We should put 'no' to affiliated with dark creatures. And 'no' to evil intent."

"Does anybody say 'yes' to evil intent?"

"It's better to be safe than sorry. We have to ask. It's on the form."

Unfortunately, it only went downhill from there. I'll be returning it to the library unfinished.

For the first few chapters, I was sure that we'd be getting to the exciting adventure part any time now. I guess we have to introduce the party. And establish that magic exists. And go shopping. And talk about the equipment. Come on, adventure, any time now.

Even after the adventure started in earnest, there was far too much time spent on boring events and conversation (not made more fun by the near-constant laughter of the characters) with potentially interesting things quickly glazed over.

Sample dialogue:

"Um, Thrang? What's this?"

"What's what?"

"This."

"Oh, that."

Sample narrative:

Thrang told of how he'd joined an adventure to capture a dangerous sea monster. With great excitement and vigorous demonstrations, Thrang explained how the monster had almost gotten away, but was captured in the end. His descriptions of how the monster acted amused them all, and when he finished the story, Alex and the rest of the company cheered.

(Cool story, bro. Thanks for not telling it.)

The final straw was the total wimp of a protagonist. For half the book, he embraced neither of the awesome destinies offered to him, whining, "There must be some mistake," over and over. That is, until he abruptly sighed, fully accepted his destiny, and said, "What now?"

Maybe his character development was not as sudden as it appeared and he'll be back to whining on the next page. I don't care to find out. Disappointing, given the characters' understanding of how writing can work:

"Words can do more than explain what things are. Words can give us knowledge and understanding. They can tell us of things as they once were, as they should be, or even as they might be."

They can, but in this book, they don't.

Wendy says

First of all - thanks to Goodreads for sending me a free copy of this book!

So I have some mixed feelings about this book. I had one major problem with the book: the main character. Very little information or background was given about the main character, Alex. You know his hair color and age. You don't even know what time period he lived in. This became frustrating when Alex entered a new adventurous world and was surprised at everything in it. His surprise was unbelievable because there was no context of an old world to compare it to. I couldn't figure out if he was from a modern world or old-timey. His manner of speaking was a little bit unbelievable as well, for a 15 year old. Always thanking others for their wisdom and such. He wasn't cocky, selfish, sleepy, and had a thirst for knowledge. What kind of teenager is that? He also NEVER made a mistake. For a new adventurer in a new world, he should have been making mistakes right and left. No one wants a perfect hero in a story.

For the story itself, it was engaging and fun to read. The ending was fantastic as it opens up for future books while still giving a solid ending to this story. I will definitely read the next book in the series, and hopefully the main character in it is more believable.

Tina Bartholoma says

The BEST fantasy surprise I've had in several years. After years of awaiting sequels, here's a bright new voice. Alex is a 15 year old dishwasher who sees a cardboard sign in a store window with words that change everytime he glances away. He wanders in and inadvertently answers the Adventurers Wanted Sign. This is a fast-paced dragon-slaying adventure with many classical elements of a quest but always a surprising quirk around the corner. I especially loved the fact that the "wardrobe" was out-of-order and they had to use the back door. When I got to the end of this one I turned back to the first page and started over again. I'm so glad this is the first book in a series.

Julie says

Alex Taylor is not having a good day. He didn't mean to drop all the glasses and break them. Besides it was his cousin's fault. Thinking that a brisk walk would clear his head, Alex wanders down a street and happens

to see a sign in the window of a bookshop: Adventurers Wanted, apply within.

Curious, Alex enters the store and before he knows it he is signing a contract to go on an adventure with an Elf and a Dwarf. With the rest of his company Alex goes on the adventure of a lifetime searching for the evil dragon Slathbog and pursuing his legendary treasure.

But there is something different about Alex from his other companions. Right from the beginning Alex is tagged as a magic user. Alex must come to terms with this and find his inner magic in order to help his team and reach his final goal.

I was glued to "Slathbog's Gold" right from the first page. I guess I would describe it as a mix of Lord of the Rings and World of Warcraft genre with a little Harry Potter thrown in for good measure. Fans of HP will definitely flock to "Slathbog's Gold". The thing to keep in mind is that "Slathbog" was definitely written for a younger audience. The writing is more similar to "Charlie Bone" than full-out "Harry Potter." Adults may find the writing tedious and un-descriptive, but kids (who the book was written for) will love it, and it's a story they can read themselves which always gets points in my YA books.

I truly enjoyed "Slathbog's Gold." I thought it was a fun adventure with likable characters and a fantastic goal at the end. It really was a fun book, and I can't wait to read the next installment.

On the flipside, I did read another pretty scathing review that accused Forman of all but plagiarizing "The Hobbit." Now, I have not read "The Hobbit," so I cannot say how similar or dissimilar the plots are, but "Slathbog" does have certain "Lord of the Rings" characteristics to it, but I really don't find this distracting from the overall story. Forman obviously had his own ideas to tell an adventure story for kids. If he was inspired by the works of other authors, big deal! A good writer is someone who reads right? No matter how similar or not to another work, I believe Forman accomplished his goal: to write an exciting and magical YA book, and that is just what "Slathbog's Gold" turned out to be.

Von Sowards says

This book felt like a video game or some gamers Friday night DnD sessions mixed with J. R. R. Tolckien's The Hobbit . A kid gets to go into an adventure world with.. wait for it... Elves! and Dwarfs!! and don't forget the most cliché of them all.... DRAGONS!!!! What is even better is that when you go on an adventure you can spend years and then come back with not time passed at all!

In a video game you begin by picking your character and weapon type, like a thug with a mace or a thief with a knife or an archer with a bow or a warrior with a sword... or maybe even a wizard! With a STAFF!! Then through out the game your character collects items from people or random treasure chests and money from cutting down greenery and people's pottery. In a video game the items are just stored in you digital files so when Link pulls out his Megaton Hammer you don't ask yourself "now... where was that before I pulled it out?"

So in a book... can you just put it back in your computer files? No, it is a book not a computer.

So in this story the hero picks his career path and finds that he is a wizard! He then gets a magic bag that can magically store anything imaginable in it!

With the hero suited up they can now go find the dragon and murder him to steal his gold! What a fun book!

Q Turner says

I don't know who the author paid to get over 1,500 positive reviews, but as far as I am concerned, this book is terrible. Zero character development, zero tension, saccharine, predictable and derivative of about 1,000 other similar stories, this adventure wouldn't even have been interesting if I had played it as a PC in the actual game. To be clear, I love this genre, so this I not genre baiting. Some of my most favorite books are about adventure and fantasy, dragons, etc. This story was low on detail, and had absolutely no showing, it was all telling. Author uses the word "questioned" instead of "asked." Drove me crazy. About the only redeeming feature of this tale was its brevity.

****SPOILER ALERT****

If I had to point out a single glaring failure of this book, it would be its complete lack of balance. There are no consistent female characters. The Oracle doesn't count as consistent because she's not part of the party. The entire group is like a gay cruise, with some emo mixed in for fun. There's nothing even remotely tense or interesting; no romance, no real mystery for the reader (Alex's wondering about whether he's really a wizard or not does not count since the reader knows that, quite clearly, he IS a wizard), everything gets wrapped up in a neat little bow at the end. And I'm all for resolution, but to have resolution, you must have had, I dunno, CONFLICT?

And why are all of the band of guys so lawful good? Real characters aren't like that, not even real D&D characters! There wasn't a neutral or chaotic bone in the bunch, let alone any slip of character into anything even remotely less than 1000% altruistic. And again, this isn't to say that constructing a world in which the main characters are generally good is unbelievable. I'm a huge fan of Star Trek, for example, and a more egalitarian, noble society there never was. But not everyone toes the line, not everyone shares the same vision of altruism, and not everyone is absolutely charitable, hopeful, friendly, honest, and compassionate at all times with no exceptions. There were no betrayals; there wasn't even any subtext!

Don't waste your money. Read Anne McCaffrey instead.

Jacob says

Pretty good, but derivative, repetitive, and not as great as similar options, but the ending was a good twist. You can't miss the homage to The Hobbit, since this is about a company of adventurers getting together and traveling over a long period of time to slay a dragon and seize its hoard. One of the earliest encounters is even a troll, and apparently trolls still die if exposed to direct sunlight. There are dwarfs, elves, and wraiths, magic swords and specially forged minerals without any direct Earth analogue. No, not "mithril", silly. It's called "truesilver". It's a bit of a shame there weren't giant spiders or a werebear.

Also, it didn't help that the main character, a young boy, is super special. Apparently he's got tons of latent talent and ability and keeps getting picked out of his adventuring group for being so amazing, potential-wise. And he keeps doing tons of amazing things and outshining his supposedly more experienced group members. Not only is it implausible, it's repetitive and gets boring after a while. Especially since the other group members are so gracious. No one gets insanely jealous and there's no group conflict over this issue. Basically it's wish fulfillment, and it doesn't make for great reading.

A lot of attention is paid to the relationships between the group members, with others they encounter, and even between the main character and his horse. I like that attention was paid in this area, and that the group members go back to revisit friends they made, but I think this side of the story was handled better in the

Ranger's Apprentice series (starting with *The Ruins of Gorlan*). However, I appreciate that the main character spent a lot of effort making sure his other group members got enough of the rewards. It's just too bad the story wasn't consistent this way. For example, when the main character leaves the group to save his horse, he submits to punishment for breaking the group's rules, even though it was the right thing to do. But then everyone but him accidentally sleeps through their watch and they aren't punished for breaking the group's rules? It feels like the author may have written a little conveniently and the editor didn't catch it.

So what was distinct about this book? The magic bags to hold all your stuff were interesting (they're an enhanced version of *Dungeons & Dragons*' famous bags of holding), and the Oracle was decent. I also liked that the main character is a regular boy whose talent gets detected because he notices a magic sign, even if it's kind of a cross between the *Neverending Story* and *The Last Starfighter* when the shopkeeper shuffles him off on the adventure before he knows what's going on.

Emma says

I just finished the first three novels of a fairly new series called *Adventurers Wanted*. I would have promptly set out on a quest to find the fourth book, but unfortunately, it won't be out until next year. This is the most refreshing fantasy series I've read in a long time. Somehow it manages to rip off both Tolkien and G.A. Henty at the same time in a completely endearing and honest fashion and simultaneously turns many a fantasy trope on its head. I started cringing on the first page when Alex reflects on his stepfather scolding him for something Alex's stepbrother had done. I cringed even more when I realized that Alex's mother had died after remarrying. "It's going to be one of those books," I thought. I was stunned when a few paragraphs later, Alex shrugged it off due to the stress his stepfather was going through and chalked it up to things like that happening in all families. That was only the beginning. Alex is the sort of main character it seems has been missing from YA books for a while. He makes mistakes and needs his friends and family to advise, encourage, and confront him at times, but he earnestly wants to be a good man and takes on his faults with determination. And for the most part, he is trustworthy, self-sacrificing, and generous.

Throughout the stories Alex adventures with different groups of elves, dwarves, and men, and one of the primary storylines of the books is him learning from the example and teaching of older "men." In fact, I'd have to guess one common criticism of the series is the lack of women. However, I found the lack of stress on romantic relationships and the emphasis on mentorships very positive. Mr. Foreman has promised that someday Alex will find someone, but I am confident that given how the series is unfolding, it will be a much more natural and mature relationship than many teen books promote. Several characters have left adventuring to marry while others take reoccurring roles as companions and teachers until Alex's skills surpass theirs. This leads me to the main flaw in this story.

After skillfully navigating past many of the genre's worst tropes, Mr. Foreman included one that has steadily been growing more common and annoying: too much power, too quickly. Alex found upon entering the world of adventuring he had an aptitude for magic. Now, three books later, he is one of the most powerful wizards in centuries not to mention one of the youngest. I understand the desire and sometimes even need to allow for a young person of prodigious talent to bypass some of the standard training. It can make the story more exciting and relatable for a younger audience. It can also just make sense. As contrived as the prequel *Star Wars* trilogy can be at times, the question of advancing Anakin Skywalker to the council even though no one his age had ever been deemed qualified made sense. He was the best the Order had ever seen. He could blaze his way through any possible tests. However, the reservation and consequent exclusion came down to his literal age. Talent and even wisdom are not solely the result of living a certain number of years, but

experience is, and experience is what Alex severely lacks. It is possible that the books are building to a rather spectacular fall when Alex misuses his powers. I can even see him believing he is doing the right thing at the time, only to learn how badly he misjudged the situation. Either way, I would have been a lot happier if he had reached his current status a few books down the road.

That is my one reservation with this series. These books haven't found a home on my shelves yet as they are constantly loaned out, and I am so pleased to have found a series I can look forward to reading to my children before they're eighteen.

There is no language, no innuendo, and for a fantasy series a distinct lack of violence. I'd probably raise the rating to PG on account of occasional goblin slaying. There is magic, and the main character does learn to become a wizard although, ala Harry Potter, wizards are born with magic and need to be taught. Both Dwarves and Elves work small magics natural to their races.

Reblogged from my site: myrdan.com

Rebecca says

[an orphaned teenage b
