



Dragons And Witches Edited By Madeline Smoot Reviewed by Jack Coffey

Name: Jack Coffey

Grade: 8th

Book Title: Dragons And Witches

Editor: Madeline Smoot

Number of Pages: 220

Rating (on a scale of 1-5): 4/5

Character List / Stories:

- **Burning:** *Burning* features an unidentified creature that crashes into a planet
- **A Very Baba Yaga Halloween:** *A Very Baba Yaga Halloween* features Baba Yaga, an unnamed teenage girl, an unnamed young girl, and Brad, a former boyfriend of Baba Yaga's
- **Some Like It Hot:** *Some Like It Hot* features Ashlee Fire-breath, a dragon, Sarah, Trevor, a genie, and Julian, a demon
- **The Witch and the Hunter:** *The Witch And The Hunter* features Hunt, the hunter, Kyle, Hunt's younger brother, Mother, and Witch, who has imprisoned Mother
- **Technological Magic:** *Technological Magic* features two children named Amalthea and Deimos

Review:

Dragons And Witches is a collection of ten different short stories. In my opinion they were all pretty good but there were some faults. I will be reviewing five stories so I can give an overall view of what the book will be like.

Burning is a short story about a creature that crashes into a planet using an escape pod. The story is told in first person, so it reads like a journal of the creature's discoveries. What is really good about this one is the author gives you context clues to what the creature might be. Some context clues are claws, and middle left leg for examples. The creature has to overcome challenges on this bright green planet like predators and crossing a flowing river. Finally, at the end, the author reveals what IT is, and it shows if IT escaped. It is an interesting approach with a lot of detail like the ships name and the back story of its species.

A Very Baba Yaga Halloween is a short story about the famous fairy tale witch, Baba Yaga and her tricks to feed on more people with the disguise of a Holiday. There are two parts to the story: one describes her Halloween trick, and the other reveals how she became a witch. It starts with Baba Yaga feeding on a person when she asks the horsemen (her henchmen) for a way to eat more people. The henchmen bring up Halloween, a fun time to get treats, and Baba Yaga gets the idea to disguise herself as a child getting candy. The Halloween story then takes a backseat to show the origin of Baba Yaga becoming a witch. After she was dumped by her boyfriend, she ran into the woods and met a dark spirit. The

spirit offered her power, and Baba Yaga agreed and became a witch. She then found her once-boyfriend, Brad and ate him! The story then continues with what happens next at Halloween. It is really interesting, so this story was good.

Some Like It Hot is a short story with a lot to offer! It starts with a dragon disguised as a human named Ashlee Fire-breath. Ashlee is a teenage girl looking for a kiss, but it is hard because whenever she is about to kiss she spits fire. So she meets up with her friend Sarah at the library. Sarah rubbed a lamp at an antique store and now owns a genie named Trevor. In case you couldn't tell already, this world they live in has different monsters and fantasy characters, which is a cool premise. Trevor sets up Ashlee with a demon named Julian that can handle a little fire. They have a date and they both connect really well. Read this story for an ending with a huge twist that you won't expect!

The Witch and the Hunter is a short story with more of a depressing tale. Two brothers named Hunt and Kyle are hunters. Kyle is the youngest and Hunt is the middle child, but their oldest brother was killed by a witch. Their Mother has been imprisoned by an unnamed witch, and the brothers are in the forest searching for her. What is clever about this story though is that the story is told from two perspectives, the witch and Hunt. The witch is making a concoction using Hunt's mother as ingredients. So far the witch has cut off her pinkie which is detailed heavily! The story then switches to Hunt, who has now been captured by the witch with Kyle next to him. Both brothers are tied up. The witch used her potion and turned into an evil looking human. The witch is mad at humans for destroying her forest, which makes sense considering that they are hunters. This story has another twist ending that is really intriguing! I strongly suggest reading this.

Technological Magic tells the story of humans in the year 2137 that colonized on the moon. This one was shorter than the stories in the book. The kids in the community were getting worried because there were no adults around, and so they decided to search for them. The main characters are two kids, Amalthea and Deimos. They both take a high powered bike and search in the station. They stumble upon a section where there was a bunch of space uniforms lying around. Outside, the adults were fighting off what looked like demons outside the barrier. The adults were surrounded by a big gas cloud which was odd. Amalthea finds her parents and they explain that these are not really demons trying to enter. They are witches and the only way to stop them is to use your inner self, which is what the kids thought was gas. The kids come out and help the adults fight off the witches with their "special powers". The battle was kind of lack-luster, but there was a good pay off at the end.

Dragons and Witches offers a wide variety in stories. It has fantasy and creativity in a lot of parts. In some areas it felt kind of rushed and didn't take the time to progress the story. In other sections though it was really interesting and I couldn't put the book down. I like this format a lot because if you don't like one section, you can move on and read the next story. It can be hard to fit all these different stories into one book because of all the different authors but I feel like people should give it a shot. Overall, it does have its ups and downs between stories but most of them are well done so that is why I gave this a four out of five.