

How to Twist a Dragon's Tale

Cressida Cowell

Reviewed by: Kartikeya Krishna, 16

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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This story is the story of Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III, the greatest Viking that ever lived. His memoir looks back at the time when he was still a very ordinary, un-special young boy. Set in the small island of Berk in the middle of the Viking Archipelago, the Viking children are on a herding exercise for their Pirate Training Program when a huge fire begins to rage across the mountainside. The Exterminators, a type of big, evil, fiery dragons caused the fire. The Exterminators herd the boys into a circle and, though most kids escape on their teacher Gobber's riding dragon, Goliath, Hiccup and Gobber are stuck in the fire because Goliath is killed once he begins to take them out of the fire. They are saved by a man in a fireproof suit riding a white dragon whom they believe to be a Lava-Lout, one of the most hated Viking tribes in the Archipelago. The man soon reveals himself to be Humungously Hotshot, one of the greatest heroes on the planet and Hiccup's father, Stoick, appoints Humungous as Hiccup's bodyguard.

Hotshot saves Hiccup from several deadly situations (which he happens to have actually put him in). One day Hiccup wakes up to Hotshot leaning over him, arguing whether or not to kill Hiccup. Humungous begins to tell Hiccup his life story, beginning with when he fell in love with a Viking woman whose father sent him out on an impossible task for her hand in marriage. Humungous is supposed to bring the Firestone straight from the Lava Lout Island but when he goes, he is captured quickly and fails in his quest. He befriends a jail keeper named Terrific Al whom he asks to deliver a half ruby heart to the woman he loved so that she may come and rescue him. Terrific Al comes back after some time (around 15 years) and tells Humungous that his love has married someone else who brought her the Firestone and had thrown Humungous' half-ruby heart into the ocean. He then asks Humungous for a favor: to kill Hiccup. Hiccup soon realizes that the woman is actually his mother Valhallarama and that Terrific Al is really Alvin the Treacherous, Hiccup's archenemy.

Humungous warns Hiccup that there are hundreds of thousands of Exterminator eggs lying down on Lava Lout island and they will all hatch once the volcano on the island explodes, and that the only hope they have of surviving is by returning the Firestone back to the Volcano. Hiccup, Fishlegs, Hotshot, Camicazi (from the Bog Burgalar tribe), the White Dragon and the Windwalker take the Firestone from the annual meeting of The Thing to Lava-lout Island to stop the volcano from erupting but are stopped by Alvin and the Exterminators. The Volcano explodes and Hiccup manages to put the stone into the volcano and, on contact with the lava, the fire stone hatches into a fire dragon. The fire dragon kills all the Exterminators while Hiccup and his riding dragon Windwalker, run down the island away from lava (dragons are fireproof) and fall into the sea. Hiccup's father and others rescue him and everything works out well.

The stories that Cressida Cowell writes about Hiccup and his adventures are always extremely entertaining. There is a lot of humor involved in the book and it progresses really quickly. The best aspect of this book though is that, even though it seems to be a children's book, it's actually quite a satisfying read for any reader of any age and any gender. Hiccup is quite a relatable character, an average boy who finds out that he is actually capable of doing wonders. Personally I suggest this book for anyone and everyone who just wants a quick, fun read.

Recommended Titles

How to Train Your Dragon by Cressida Cowell
How to be a Pirate by Cressida Cowell
How to Speak Dragonese by Cressida Cowell