



I Wish I'd Written? Aquila

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I Wish I'd Written

Byline:

Jenny Nimmo chooses Andrew Norriss's **Aquila**.

My son, Ianto, is dyslexic. When he was ten he read very slowly, but given a book that engaged his interest he would persevere and win through. He begged me to write a story about a space-ship. All my attempts failed. I wish I'd written **Aquila**. I know he would have powered through it. Imagine! A boy/hero who is clever enough to learn how to pilot a two-thousand year-old flying machine, and is, incidentally, dyslexic.

For me **Aquila** is a rare and wonderful book because it allows the reader to laugh at the slight inconvenience of sometimes reading words backwards. It illustrates the fact that a passionate interest in something can lead even the most reluctant scholar to acquire knowledge. It has a cliff-hanger on every other page. Even the adults are funny yet sympathetic, in fact Mrs Murphy's problems gain such momentum we're left breathlessly anticipating the incident to top them all. We're not disappointed. As for **Aquila**? Boy, what a machine!

I wish I could give Andrew Norriss's **Aquila** to my son now, but he's twenty-two. Perhaps it's not too late. After all I loved it and I'll never see forty again.

Aquila by Andrew Norriss is published by Puffin, 0 14 038365 4, £3.99 pbk.

Jenny Nimmo's latest book is **The Dragon's Child** (Hodder Children's Books, 0 340 67303 6, £9.99 hbk and 0 340 67304 4, £3.50 pbk).

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