



Tarquin the Wonder Horse; The Impossible Parents Go Green

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

1

These are well-produced books set in a large, clear type, with a high proportion of pictures interspersed with text. Walker have included many well-established writers in this series for newly-fluent readers not yet ready for a fuller text, and continue the tradition here.

'Once, a horse, weary of travelling in far-off countries, decided to return home.' So begins June Crebbin's story of Tarquin, a magical horse seeking a worthwhile existence avoiding the use of his special powers, which 'only bring trouble'. This pseudo-folk-tale, with its theme of greed leading to downfall, is well-handled, with many instances of language appropriate to the genre; the story's tautness is lost when it slides away into a more contemporary style. An enjoyable read, nonetheless, for children of 7 or 8, with illustrations from the unmistakable pen of Tony Ross.

Less successful is Patten's second story about the Impossible Parents, Mr and Mrs Norm, whose litterdropping, gas-guzzling lifestyle is challenged by their environmentconscious children. Converted to 'green-ness' with a vengeance, the children have to retrieve the position. Patten pokes fun at the parents at both extremes, while ultimately condoning their least 'green' behaviour, and displays a degree of prejudice and stereotyping quite out of place in a book for young readers. The construct is an adult one and class-bound at that; the humour, derived from derision, unattractive. The illustrations complement the text well, and the language, if clumsy in places, is clear and readable, with a sensible amount of repetition.

Running Order:

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