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# Return of Death Eric, The

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Death Eric, the world's foremost feedback metal band, are led by ex-plumber's-mate-from-Glossop Eric Thrashmettle on his legendary guitar, Rabid Dingo with Fingers Trubshaw on bass and Kenyatta McClatter battering away at the drums. They're in trouble ? cursed, thinks Eric, by a raven who perched on the mike just as they closed Part One at the Chickenstock Festival with their triple platinum smash-hit, ?Pig Train?.

Lifting the curse falls to Eric's two children, Lulubelle (Lou) and Living Buddha (Buddy), with some help from Enid the Roadie (Wave, their mother, is absent again, heavily into self-discovery, organic sheep's yoghurt and biodynamic honey). Eric's right out of it since the raven, Fingers is obsessive about his lawn-mowing business and Kenyatta just loves frying and serving fish and chips from his roadside van. In affectionate rebellion against their Dad's lifestyle, or lack of it, Lou and Buddy are committed and conventional school pupils, with special interests in English Literature, Reptile Studies and Maths, and a taste for classical music. Their skills are regularly needed to cope during the steeplechase of a plot.

Llewellyn (?sad but true that he was nearly a rock star?) clearly knows his Planetsmasher switch from his Gibson Flying V; and, for that matter, his dummity dum a reebop from his dippity dappity doo dah. He's very funny. The zany situations and language (?his sneaker moved along the floor like a questing skunk?) will be much enjoyed by young readers with a taste for the way it's told as much as for plot; and there's an edge of satire there too. They might also enjoy some devices such as storytelling repetitions, the occasional ?Dear Reader? aside, and some caricatured minor characters like Sid the Soothsayer, who can be absolutely relied upon to get it wrong every time. Then there's Per Spire, the crooked manager, and people with daft names like Grungus Fist, Alphonse Quing and Zelda Startlepuss, but maybe you've picked that up already.

It's asking a lot to sustain all this as a reader ? it's exhausting stuff ? for 260 odd pages and maybe an editor might have restrained Mr Llewellyn by about 60 pages. Though that, I'd guess, might have been difficult. It's quite a headbanger.

GF

Running Order:

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