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Review of *Roar*
By Cora Carmack

Adult/Educator Reviewer: Meg McKeon
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Student Review: Via Nachman, 8th Grade



Carmack, C. (2018). *Roar*. New York, NY: Tor Teen.

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Adult Review: Meg McKeon

In this upper YA fantasy, our leading character is Stormling princess Aurora who is slated to wed a prince from another Stormling family. Stormling families are allegedly the only people gifted with particular magical affinities that will allow them to protect the cities over which they rule from storms. Aurora flees the palace to join a band of storm hunters she meets upon following her hubby-to-be into the black market – where stormhearts (enabling the owner to harness certain affinities) and other magics are sold – discovering that she could perhaps have the magic she’s always wanted. Aurora takes on the nickname Roar and begins to train alongside the storm hunters. And that’s where her adventure really begins.

This book’s appeal lies mostly in its world building and would lure in young readers eager to cut their teeth on a new fantastical realm with new magical rules. The concept of the storms develops in a way that turns these “supernatural” disasters from something devastating, to entities engendering a kind of painful empathy. Otherwise, the book spends quite a bit of time reemphasizing that Roar can train as good as Cassius, her storm hunter guide and love interest. At times, the romance and athletic competitiveness hits a little too heavily on “girl-identifying humans are just as

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good as boy-identifying humans” and in doing so almost upends the initial feminist gesture. Can we not have a heroine whose value isn’t dependent on her comparison to a male-identifying counterpart? As it is the first in a series, my hope is that Roar will choose herself just as much as the author will choose to develop her character outside of comparisons.

Student Review: Via Nachman

Roar is in a whole differently created world – set up to believe in a reality where storms are monsters that have souls. Creating a topiary of unrealistic logic and magic, this book gets a good 10 out of 10 in its weather forecast! The whole thing was made to have a sequel, leaving it on a cliffhanger and making us wonder *what the hell happens next!?*

The main character’s relationship with her two love interests is a bit rushed and sudden. And there’s a feeling of male dominance in it. It’s not the best role modeling love story. However, it can still be enjoyable. I just think there’s too much masculine authority. But, the magic in it makes up for it.

I think this book is for young teen readers looking for entertainment and for inspirations for plot ideas and world building. It’s not the best on the bookshelf, and it may not have a big theme or lesson in it. But, it still makes you feel like running into more pages again.

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