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StarPassage: Book One, The Relic



Synopsis

Teenagers Tim and Martie are desperate to end their parents' downward spiral. Between their father's PTSD and their mother's depression, their family has reached a breaking point. Then an ancient Christmas ornament reveals its secrets, sending the siblings across the centuries on a search for hope. But Tim and Martie aren't the only ones hunting through time. They're being watched by dark figures-Trackers doomed to haunt history. These Trackers believe the teens' ornament is their key to freedom, and they will do whatever it takes to steal it. What begins as an exciting adventure becomes a deadly race. Can Tim and Martie find the answers they seek before their enemy finds them?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Winner of a Gold Medal in the Mom's Choice Awards

Clark Burbidge was born and raised in the mountain valleys of the Rockies. He earned an MBA from the University of Southern California and a BS from the University of Utah. Clark and his wife, Leah, live near Salt Lake City, Utah, where they enjoy their blended family of ten children and five grandchildren. StarPassage is Clark's seventh book. His award-winning works include the Giants in the Land trilogy and A Piece of Silver: A Story of Christ.

Great Blend of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Historical Fiction. My daughters love sci-fi/fantasy novels. They have been hooked from the early days of The Magic Treehouse, Percy Jackson and The Hunger Games. This series opener made me happy, as a mom, on many levels! It added in doses of realistic, historical fiction settings and kept the fantasy/sci-fi realm of interest alive at the same time. Just as the kids learn mythology from Percy Jackson--they have a great opportunity to dig deeper into historical times with StarPassage. The Author Writes Well for the Intended Age Group--but, Parents Can Read Too! It is not always easy to create a series that both the kids and the parents can read without being bored or confused (on either end of the age spectrum.) The author has a great writing style for the middle school aged audience--but, makes the content complex and interesting enough that parents can read as well. Readers will Want to Follow the Series. The book's ending leaves enough to pull readers into the 2nd book of the series (which I began to read last weekend and will be reviewing in a couple of days!) There is enough resolution to satisfyingly end the first book--yet leave some threads dangling for book two! Would I recommend Star Passage Book One: The Relic Book? I think this is a wonderful book to encourage the kids to visit or revisit some history-themed topics. However; readers should be aware that there is a spiritual/faith based element present as well. (I didn't find this overdone--but, it may be perceived a bit stronger by some.) I felt that there were times when some of the characters seemed to behave a bit "out of character" or act a bit too abruptly--or the scene seemed a bit stretched or forced--but, I think those things would be far more noticeable to some of the parent/adult readers than to upper elementary/middle school readers. I would recommend the book to sci-fi fantasy fans--and to parents seeking to prime a child's interest in history via some tried and true, often enjoyed, fantasy themed content.--and I will add my 11 year old's thoughts once she finishes the book!! I received a complimentary copy of this book for use in a blog review. All opinions are my own.

2.5 stars: It was okay. I enjoyed this story about siblings Tim and Martie who find an ancient Star relic that transports them through time. The teens are on a mission to find spiritual help for their father, who is suffering from PTSD after being wounded in the army, and for their mother, who is dealing with depression. With their family falling apart, they wander through history seeking answers, but mysterious Shadow men are trying to steal the Star from them, and Tim and Martie will need help if they are going to return safely to their own time. I liked all the history in this book! Some of the plot points and settings are drawn from true history, and some of it is, of course, imagined. I was disappointed that one of the first places the characters travel to is Valley Forge where they meet General George Washington. Extremely trite. But the rest of the historical settings, such as a

WWI medical ship and a wagon train traveling the Badlands of the American West, are more diverse and interesting. I love the adventure in this book! It starts out slow, but picks up in the middle and ending of the book with spies, bombs, sabotage, wilderness survival, and of course the evil Shadow men who will stop at nothing to gain the power of the Star. There are some really well-written action scenes that draw you into the story. The characters have some development as they learn their spiritual lessons, but it feels very stiff somehow. They have these abrupt attitude changes that feel unnatural. There is also very little foreshadowing of certain events that would have made the story better. A little backstory or preparation could have given some key scenes more tension. There are several appalling spelling errors that made me cringe. One example: "Here, here!" said the gathered officers in response. "Instead of "Hear, hear". That is just sad. Another example: "I'll make due," she said. "Someone please kill me now. That is terrible. Where was the copy editor? Don't even get me started on the grammar. Don't use the word "shined" when you actually mean "shone". The grammarian inside me is dying here. The author has a definite tendency to "tell" instead of "show" which makes the writing stiff and hinders the reader from attachment to the characters. And the writing is extremely preachy! The messages ARE inspiring and follow the structure of the story, but there is a lot of preachy dialogue that gets redundant since we are told the same spiritual lesson over and over in different scenes. I was personally inspired by the spiritual themes of the book, but I feel like I read a sermon instead of a novel. Disclaimer: I received a copy of this book from the publisher/ author in exchange for a free and honest review. All the opinions stated here are my own personal thoughts and are not influenced by anyone.

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