



BOY VERSUS WIZARD

The Serpent of Eridor by Alison Gardiner explores one boy's magical adventure to save his friends

"The desire to add the bizarre and keep stirring when writing a story took root on the school run. Every writing day is an adventure; it's like living with a slowly evolving motion picture inside my head. It's fascinating writing fantasy, as I can toss in anything, from stange to spectacular," says Alison Gardiner, of the inspiration behind her fantasy fiction book *The Serpent of Eridor*.

The Serpent of Eridor tells the story of 14-year-old Alex Weston who, after being attacked by an assassin, finds himself shipwrecked on the tropical island of Eridor with his hamster Skoodle, thus unwittingly crossing the barrier into a world of enchantment. He soon discovers that Skoodle is a funny, opinionated, reluctant hero who regularly takes advice from his dead uncle. While on the island, they befriend a brilliant, ebullient monkey, a warrior bear and a sarcastic snake. Possessing no magic abilities himself, Alex is armed only with bravery, loyalty, sheer cussedness and wit as he fights to save his life and his friends. He must also wrestle with the suspicion that a few ounces of added rodent doesn't make him the strongest fighting unit on the island. On his journey, Alex is pursued by murderous crocodiles, engulfed by a man-eating mud swamp and attacked by vengeful wizards. But all that feels like a warm-up in comparison to his final challenge...

Let the battle commence!

"Fantasy is frustrating, caffeine-overload inducing, but fun to write and undoubtedly keeps the brain in gear," explains Alison. Threaded with humour, this graphic, vivid story explores the weird and the wonderful to create a fast paced story, ideal for any child aged eight-twelve. Alison is fascinated by the genre of fantasy and enjoys weaving wild and bizarre aspects into her adventure series, including the sequel *Alchemy*.

ALISON GARDINER is a doctor, broadcaster and author with four children, so feels she's a full time juggler. She enjoys writing fantasy fiction for children and young adults, and enjoys every second of alone time to pursue her creative interests.



PUBLICATION DATE 28TH JANUARY 2015

ISBN: 9781784620783 PRICE: £9.99

EISBN: 9781784627362 PRICE: £2.99



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