



Sword Quest (Swordbird)

By Nancy Yi Fan

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One magical sword. Two rivals.

Wind-voice the half-dove, formerly enslaved, is now free, and Maldeor, the one-winged archaeopteryx, hungers for supreme power. The adversaries will both embark on their own epic quest to find the sword that will determine the future of birdkind. An exciting prequel to the *New York Times* bestseller *Swordbird*.

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Sword Quest (Swordbird) By Nancy Yi Fan Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 3–7—In this prequel (HarperCollins, 2008) to *Swordbird* (HarperCollins, 2007), Nancy Yi Fan reveals the origin of the legendary bird that serves as savior to the world of birds. Although the moral values imbedded in the story are sometimes handled in a heavy-handed and didactic style, Yi Fan manages to weave a fascinating story about four birds on a quest to locate a magical sword. On their journey, they gain insight into their own strengths and frailties. While the novel is fascinating, the audio version is a disappointment. Janellen Steininger, the narrator, does not have the vocal range to adequately portray the multitude of characters in the story. Except for Maldeor, the evil one-winged archaeopteryx, all the voices sound essentially the same. As a result, the text sounds stilted and juvenile. There is the additional problem of the lack of background music for the songs of the birds. For libraries where the first book is popular, purchase the print version only.—Connie M. Pierce, *Falling Water Elementary School, Chattanooga, TN*

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Review

In this good-versus-evil story, a prequel to *Swordbird* (HarperCollins, 2007), readers see a legend taking shape as evil forces attempt to conquer the inhabitants of a bird world. Prophecy says a hero will emerge on Hero's Day, but no one knows who it will be. Scattered in unknown regions of the world lay strategically placed Leasorn gems that hold clues to where the hero's sword waits. It is up to the hero to discover where and to retrieve it. The archaeopteryxes, an army of birds intent on cruelty and destruction, support the desires of the villainous leaders. Maldeor, a leader with a batlike wing forged from evil magic, has cast his eye toward claiming the sword. But unlikely birds lay down their lives to uncover the clues so they might save the sword for its true master. Fleydur, eagle prince of the Skythunder tribe, Stormac the mynah, and Ewingeral the woodpecker all play pivotal roles as companions to 013-Unidentified, a dovelike bird trapped as a slave. Readers will find the characters credible and well suited for their roles in this fabled adventure. The tightly crafted story line is nicely executed, but the most important element, and one that truly touches the heart, is the underlying theme of love.

--Robyn Gioia, *School Library Journal* --*School Library Journal*

Review

Birds form the unusual topic of this quest novel, which begins with a prophecy that foretells the coming of a great hero. The archaeopteryxes' dark empire is growing, and they have turned even the strongest species of birds, such as the crows, into slaves. 013-Unidentified, a strange white bird, is held in their captivity at the start of the book. As he struggles to free a fellow prisoner, he suddenly recalls the name his mother gave him, Wind-Voice. He escapes and grows strong again, reclaiming his true identity as Wind-Voice. Throughout the novel, he journeys across the land to stop the evil Maldeor from reaching the Hero's Sword. This is a novel about recognizing the hero within and understanding what is truly important in life--such as family, friends, and peace, rather than power or treasure. Yi Fan's writing is outstanding given her young age. I also loved Rioux's exceptional pencil-drawn illustrations, which bring charming life to the characters. Together, they make this book an entertaining flight of the imagination.

--Laura Ruttig, *Children's Literature*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gregory Proctor:

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