Catalina y la isla del cíclope
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Catalina y la isla del cíclope (Catalina and the island of the cyclops)

This is an adventure story about an unlikely pair of best friends: a girl-rat and a boy-chicken. Their story begins when Catalina the girl-rat finds a giant eye, which she promptly loses. Naturally, she sets out in search of the giant eye, with René, the boy-chicken in tow. Via a dragon's nest they end up on an island inhabited by mythical creatures including a wayward Cerberus who neglects his duty of guarding the underworld – allowing the dead to escape and his somewhat annoyed master, Hades, with whom Catalina has a tête a tête about the problems of having such a busy life.

This is an eye-catching comic book with an engaging plot and endearing characters. Greek mythology is a rich vein of tales that can be reinvented anew for every generation and the author has done an excellent job here giving well-known characters a modern, humorous gloss. Undoubtedly, the legendary, Greek adventurer, Odysseus is the inspiration – since it was he who left the Cyclops blind. Like Odysseus, Catalina discovers herself shipwrecked and marooned on an island after events have gotten rapidly out of hand, faced with creatures of powerful magic and uncertain intentions. In contrast to Odysseus, however, Catalina's adventures have a somewhat happier outcome – especially for the Cyclops.

The pages are laid out in a two by three array so there are six pictures on each page, this arrangement makes the action and the story line easy to follow. The illustrations themselves are beautifully bold, full of movement and expression. The language is simple, using straight-forward vocabulary and sentence structure…

The banter between characters is hugely entertaining and well observed …

An element of teaching runs through the story – not only in terms of introducing kids to the wonders of Greek Mythology, but also in the life lessons that readers can pick up… There are several messages here, including that actions have consequences, but also that we have a right – even a duty – to explore the world, pursue our goals, and indeed, get things wrong now and again.

The ease of reading means that this book would appeal to quite young readers while the plot and some of the humour mean that older children will also enjoy it. This potentially widens the audience for this book and is a definite plus. There are plenty of laugh out loud moments and the reader is left with lots to think about – and quite possibly inspired to find out more about ancient mythology.

From the reader's report by .