

Book Review: Kensuke's Kingdom

Author: Michael Morpurgo

Kensuke's Kingdom is a thrilling adventure story from exceptional children's writer, Michael Morpurgo.

Michael, his parents and their faithful dog Stella set sail around the world in their yacht the Peggy Sue. Michael has never been so happy and then disaster strikes when he and his dog are swept overboard and find themselves stranded on an island where he discovers Kensuke, a former Japanese soldier and obstinate old man. Seemingly determined to thwart any attempt Michael makes to be rescued yet, unswerving in his generosity, sharing precious food and water and watching over him. Michael soon looks on Kensuke as both saviour and captor. It is not until both boy and man begin to understand one another and a bond of trust builds. Having lost his own family in the war Kensuke realises he must do all he can to help Michael find his own family even though he desperately wants to keep his island secret from the outside world he has turned his back on.

This poignant tale of trust and mutual respect is a thrilling and emotive story, written in the first person narrative giving the reader a sense of a true story being related to them. The final page of the book reinforcing this effect beautifully. The characters of Michael and Kensuke's characters are as far removed from each other as is possible but it is this contrast that engages the reader and adds such interest to the story.

Morpurgo's style of writing is distinctive and his execution of a flashback storyline masterful, leaving you able to relax and simply enjoy a cracking good read.

Reviewed by: Mr. Newell