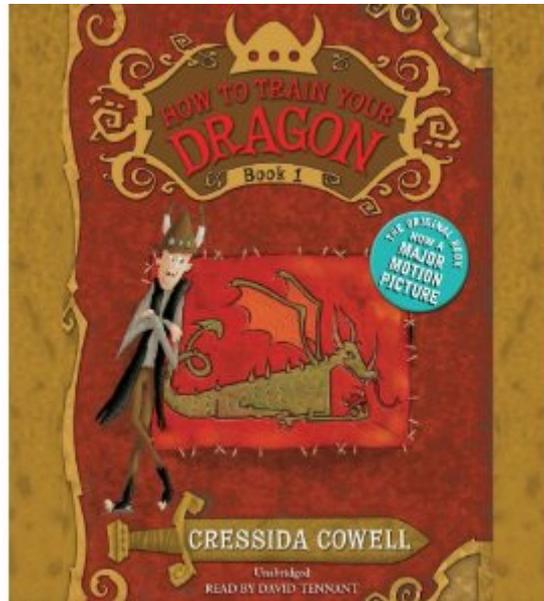


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How To Train Your Dragon



Synopsis

Chronicles the adventures and misadventures of Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III as he tries to pass the important initiation test of his Viking clan, the Tribe of the Hairy Hooligans, by catching and training a dragon.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Version: Unabridged

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Customer Reviews

I am one of the lucky generation that got to experience this book as a child, right in the prime 7-12 demographic it is intended for. I can tell you with all honesty, I have kept it within reach of my bed for about six years now, even as I have grown to love Shakespeare, Huxley, and quite a few other old masters during my literature-loving days of high school. (And I see you giving me that funny look- a scribbly little book about a crazed pack of Vikings and an ineffectively housebroken dragon? I am dead serious, and not ashamed to admit it.) This book is a gem, and a keeper. I have only grown to love it more, now that I, thanks to some great Lit classes, have the tools to REALLY appreciate it. The recent Dreamworks movie, alike in the basics down to its snarky little hero, yet differing completely in conception, has only strengthened this love. It's a very simple story, with a very simple hero. Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third is small, skinny, and rather unremarkable. He isn't particularly good at sports, prefers a civil conversation to a fistfight, and can almost spell "motivation" correctly. In other words, he's a terrible Viking. Being son of the Chief and The Hope and Heir of the Tribe of the Hairy Hooligans doesn't help matters much. Following the ancient traditions of his clan, he and his fellow novices are ordered to capture, raise and train their own dragons in preparation for an all-important initiation ceremony. However, the dragon that Hiccup

gets saddled with (and I do not mean that literally, ya movie buffs), though pint-sized and completely toothless, proves to be more than his little trainer can handle using the traditional Viking method (YELL AT IT).

Hiccup Horrendous Haddock is supposed to one day lead the Viking tribe that is currently ruled by his father, Stoick the Vast. Unfortunately, he doesn't have any of the traits that Vikings look for in a leader. Before he can inherit leadership of the tribe, he must first pass an initiation (along with 19 other Viking boys) in which he captures a young dragon and trains it to hunt fish for him, as dragons have done for generations. This book has all of the trademarks of a traditional contemporary teen novel; the social outcast, the single unpopular friend, the strong bullies, and the out-of-touch, demanding father are all familiar figures to us. But in *How to Train your Dragon*, these conflicts are set against a goofy, over-the-top surreal Viking background, in which the foremost authority on dragon-training has published his advice in a book (which reads, in its entirety: "Yell at it!"). The humor is broad and plentiful, and the book is broken up by graphic insets that range from amusing childish drawings of the characters to reproductions of pages from ancient tomes on dragons. Even though I thought that the book didn't work on some levels, I enjoyed the originality. The action scenes involving dragons are interesting, and readers will enjoy many of the jokes. The appearance of an enormous sea dragon provides for some truly chilling moments, and the more serious interactions between the sea dragon and Hiccup are probably the best in the book. Another strength of the book is the ability to evoke the flavor of a fairy tale, by presenting us with initiation rituals and dragons in a way that sometimes seems magical. The success of this series will depend on whether the writing can be tightened up in future volumes.

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