

Ratha's Creature Reviews

Review from Language Arts, Vol. 60 No.7 Oct 1983

Bell, Clare. Ratha's Creature. Atheneum, 1983 259 pp. \$11.95 Ages 12+
"To be different is dangerous! A prehistoric cat-like creature, trained to survive and herd domesticated beasts, experienced rejection from her clan when she tried to share her fire-creature with its hot red tongue. Contact with the Un-Named Ones, the less intelligent predatory cats, not only aided her survival, but also prepared her for an eventual return to the clan.

Powerfully written, the reader is immediately enveloped in a vividly recreated past world that could have easily be happening now or in the future. Through the vehicle of rival cat-clans an outstanding glimpse is given of the impact of opposing forces in creating change and ensuring survival. The intensity of feelings and emotions unwittingly invites the observer into a personal introspection of changing codes of conduct, the impact of leadership styles and the domination of tradition.

Despite the turbulence of life around her, Ratha is portrayed with such sensitivity that her very fears, thoughts, frustrations and anxieties are humanly comprehensible. The development of her character is reflective of that process of maturing and gaining of wisdom experienced by any great leader."

Amazing Science Fiction
Nov 1983

By Robert Coulson

Ratha's Creature
By Clare Bell
Atheneum \$11.95 (hardcover)

The background of an intelligent race of cats on the Earth of twenty-five million years ago stretches my credulity past the breaking point. But the characters and plot woven into this background are excellent.

The "Named" are very much cats with a tribal social structure: they're not furry humans. Their herds are being raided by their "Un-Named" relatives, who are savages with a mixture of intelligence and normal cat instincts; the intelligent "Un-Named seem in the minority.ÿ

Ratha is an equivalent of a female teenager and the plot concerns her attempts to use her unorthodox ideas of defense. In the course of the book, she matures, saves the tribe (naturally), and learns that you can't always have all you want.

It's an excellent juvenile book and a must for cat-lovers