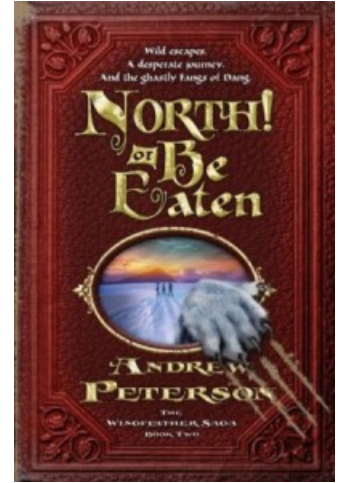
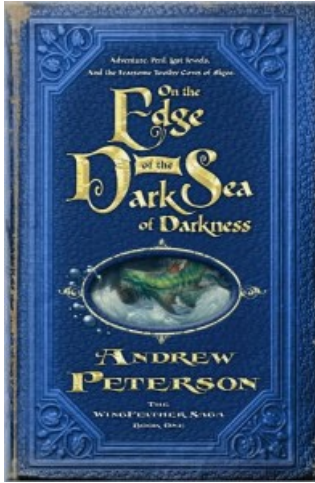


Review: The Wingfeather Saga – Books 1 and 2



I've started reading the *Wingfeather Saga* series of books by Andrew Peterson. They are excellent. The first two books are *On the Edge of the Dark Sea of Darkness* and *North! Or Be Eaten* and the third *The Monster in the Hollows* is due out in May. I can't wait.

I've mentioned Andrew Peterson a couple of times here and there with reference to his music. He is a lyricist extraordinaire, a true bard, constructing words in warp and weft so that truths are revealed, discovered and savoured by the reader, the listener.

He brings the same skill to the *Wingfeather Saga* – a story centred on three siblings Janner, Tink and Leeli Igiby in the world of Aerwiar. It is fantasy but not flippancy – a mix of *Narnia* and *The Hobbit* perhaps. He mixes depth of character and meaningful events in the narrative so that you are left reflecting on your own real life. And he does this purely, without recourse to ugly allegory or meddling metaphor.

There is humour, even in nomenclature ("The Toothy Cows of Skree"), suspense and adventure. It is about quests and identity, the discovery of purpose and the exercise of bravery, humility, maturity and joy. There is betrayal to

face, and evil both faceless and embodied in the poisonous Fangs of Dang. How to express it more without giving away the story? I dare not – read it for yourself!

The books suit themselves to be read aloud. I will be reading them to my children. Consider the rhythm and metre in this description of the Igiby family found early in the first book:

Well, except for the way they always sat late into the night beside the hearth telling stories, and when they sang in the garden while they gathered the harvest, and when the grandfather, Podo Helmer, sat on the porch blowing smoke rings, and except for all the good, warm things that filled their days there like cider in a mug on a winter night, they were quite miserable. Quite miserable indeed, in that land where walked the Fangs of Dang.

If you want a story that will move you, seize you and not let itself be put down, this saga is that.