

# BOOK NOOK

## ■ Book Reviews: 'The Collectors' and 'The Lion of Mars'

By Lisa Britton

For the EO Media Group

Fiction is my favorite type of book, and I'm continuously drawn to middle-grade fiction, which is written for ages 8 to 12.

I am far beyond that age group, of course, but at nearly 10 my son is squarely in the middle so I often find myself pursuing those shelves at the Baker County Public Library.

We recently picked up two new releases: "The Collectors" by Jacqueline West and "The Lion of Mars" by Jennifer L. Holm.

Max, my son, was still engrossed in his latest "Wings of Fire" book, so I snuck these out of the pile and read them first.

I loved them both.

"The Collectors" is about a boy named Van who wears hearing aids and has super-sharp eyesight that helps him collect all sorts of treasures.

One day he notices a girl stealing pennies from a fountain. Curious, he follows her and soon finds himself torn between two worlds — one where wishes are captured, and one where all wishes come true.

This is a grand adventure and encourages the reader to think about wishes they make — on birthday candles, on falling stars — and consider the consequences if every single one came true.

It also keeps you guessing until the end to figure out who is bad and who is good — and you may even question that when you finish the last page.

We now have the sequel, "The Collectors: A Storm of Wishes."

"The Lion of Mars" is set on Mars, where Bell has spent the 11 years of his life living in a colony built below the surface.

When a virus sickens the adults — but the children are immune — it's up to the kids to seek help by



facing their fears and venturing to the other colonies located on this inhospitable planet.

"The Lion of Mars" is a story of bravery and hope and how sometimes we have to examine whether what we've always held as the truth may not be the entire story.

While science fiction isn't my first choice, this was such an enjoyable read with relatable characters who, although they live on Mars, experience the same challenges and triumphs as children on Earth.

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