

## The Tea Dragon Festival



A Graphic Novel; School Library Journal Review:

Gr 3--5--While foraging for ingredients in the forests near Silverleaf village, young Rinn stumbles upon the slumbering dragon Aedhan, who has been asleep and largely forgotten by the village for the past 80 years. Rinn and the other villagers don't know what caused Aedhan to sleep for so long, but Rinn's uncle Erik and his partner Hese (Hese) arrive just in time to help investigate. O'Neill returns to the world of tea dragons in this prequel to 2017's *The Tea Dragon Society*. Erik and Hese return, as well as a few tea dragons from the original, in their younger years, but both titles in the series can be read independently. Judiciously used dialogue is welcoming but upstaged by the peach- and seafoam-infused artwork. The limited use of lines gives the art a soft and dreamy feel. Lesa, the head village cook, is deaf and communicates via sign language, cleverly depicted via speech boxes rather than the speech bubbles used for audible communication. Rinn and Aedhan discuss gender-fluidity in dragons, and the main human characters appear to be people of color. Fun extras in the back matter include a short note about the relationship between dragons and tea dragons, as well as a one-page tea dragon handbook. VERDICT A serene and delectable feast for the eyes, with a gently shared message about recognizing one's strengths.--Alea Perez, Elmhurst Public Library, IL

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