



Into the Land of the Unicorns

Bruce Coville

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One unicorn dwells on Earth.

Hundreds fight in Luster.

Their legends are recorded in

THE UNICORN CHRONICLES

Into the Land of the Unicorns

As each chime sounds, Cara climbs faster up the steep bell tower. Eleven! She must be on the roof when the next bell tolls. Twelve! With a deep breath, and only half believing she will survive, Cara jumps off the church roof and into Luster, land of the unicorns.

In Luster, Cara meets many wonderful creatures, but the most magnificent of all is Lightfoot, a rebellious young unicorn. Cara's band of friends comes to include a hairy creature named the Dimblethum and the monekey-like Squijim. Together, they set out to reach the Unicorn Queen before the mysterious man who is following them does - to prevent the destruction of all unicorns forever.

"Coville weaves traditional unicorn myths into his accessible fantasy...[with] an ending that hints at the next adventure." *Booklist*

Into the Land of the Unicorns Details

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Author : Bruce Coville

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From Reader Review Into the Land of the Unicorns for online ebook

Laura Hill says

I first read this book when I was about 10 years old. I am now 26 and I have never forgotten it. This book really was what started me on fantasy and fairy tales.....I had read all of The Narnia series before hand but for some reason this book resonates within me the most. Maybe its something that I connect with my childhood and how when your ten anything still seems possible and to you and Unicorns really are real. This book really captured that for me. That is something I miss the most about childhood is the ability to dream and really believe what you dream can become a reality. I also credit this book for my lifelong love of lockets. I cannot wait till My daughters are old enough and can enjoy this book for themselves.....

Brigid ☆ Cool Ninja Sharpshooter ☆ says

This was the book of my childhood! I was absolutely obsessed with it in third grade. Looking back at it, I realize that it was probably a pretty corny book, but I can't let go of my fondness for it. Preteen kids who enjoy fantasy should definitely read this one.

Allie says

What a great book! From the beginning to the end. I wish I could go back in time and read this when I was younger. *Sigh*

Very much looking forward to the rest of these books!

Katrina Patton says

This was the book that got me into reading. It was so good and I loved it so much. I still remember what it felt like to get so involved with the characters, and to feel as if I could go along on the journey with them. It's fantastic for young readers (and adult readers too, although it's more directed to a younger audience). It will always be special to me :)

Ilana Waters says

Oh. My. God.

Sorry for the fan-girl squealing you hear in the background. That's just me trying to explain, in actual words, how much I love this book and why. I'll try my best . . . here goes:

First of all, this story reminded me of *Narnia*, *The Never-Ending Story*, the movie *Labyrinth* (the main character, Cara, brings to mind *Labyrinth's* "Sara," and not just because the name rhymes), and for some reason, *The World of David the Gnome* (television cartoon). Did I mention the book pairs perfectly with *The Last Unicorn*?

It's an incredibly well-rounded tale. The pacing is fast. The dialogue is witty. It alternates between moments of aching tenderness, death-defying action, and laugh-out-loudness. The secondary characters are so lively and inventive, I'm surprised they didn't pop out from between the pages.

But I think what I loved most about *Into the Land of the Unicorns* was the sense of enchantment, awe, and just plain *wonderment* so often missing from children's literature today. I only wish I'd read this book years ago when it was first published, and I was a wee thing.

But if you'll excuse me, I can't be dilly-dallying all day writing this review. I have to run out and get the next book in the series! I suggest you save yourself the hassle and just procure all four at once. :-)

Nikki says

I'm not sure I could say anything bad about this book even if I wanted to. It's certainly not perfect, but saying anything negative about this book seems wrong to me. I can remember being eight years old and desperately waiting through class to get to the silent reading part of the day, where I would eagerly grab *Into the Land of the Unicorns* and disappear from my classroom entirely. I devoured it and loved it immensely. I reread it multiple times that year and loved it more each time. I can say that without a doubt this is the book that sparked my passion for fantasy. After reading this I took my mom's copy of *The Hobbit* into my room and barely left until I had finished it.

So, what can I say? If it weren't for this book I don't know if I would have become such a hardcore fan of the fantasy genre. I think it's cute, clever, and a great first time fantasy novel. I will definitely read it again as an adult.

Ann says

I really enjoyed this book! I think I enjoyed it more the further into it I got because I began to realize the scope of the book. Also, because it's a series, I wasn't sure how much of the book would be self-contained vs. continuous.

I adored the way the "fantasy world" and how Coville described the various landscapes. Ditto for the creatures of the fantasy world! From both known fantastical creatures (like unicorns) to some new (at least, I've never heard of them before), delightful creatures! I felt as though each character had a distinct personality – even if it took me a little bit to figure them out. And I felt invested in them all, which is a good feat for the book being only 150 pages.

That's really my only reason for the 4 stars instead of 5. There's really nothing wrong with the book that I can find to warrant only 4 stars – but for me, I'm used to more in-depth books with great detail to the plots. This was the only thing I wanted more of; I felt there was enough plot and character back-story that the book could have been expanded and delved into further. Though, perhaps that wasn't the author's intent – or it wasn't the intent of this book since it's a series.

However, I would think this a great book to start out for younger readers. And it's a delightful treat for those of us who adore fantasy books to read between tomes!

Daniel says

Bruce Coville is one of the best fantasy writers out there. Because he tends to write toward the younger market, many adults aren't familiar with him, which is a shame.

I first read this many years ago, when I was reading children's books at a tremendous rate. It's possible that this was one of the first Coville books I read. I immediately became enchanted by the book and by Coville's work, which I have sought out on a regular basis.

This book came off the shelf again the other day as I was looking for something to read aloud to my boys (ages 10 & 12) at bedtime. Although both will read on their own, they enjoy having me read to them. I chose this book because I knew they weren't likely to read it on their own (unicorns and a female protagonist made this seem a little too 'girly' for them). They absolutely loved it!

It was hard to stop at night, because both boys would want 'just one more chapter'.

Coville does a good job here by making the unicorns male, to balance the fact that the main human character is female. Throw in a creature that resembles a half man, half bear; a Disney-ish squirrel-like creature called a Squijum; a dwarf, a dragon, and a whole glory of unicorns, and you have one of the most unique fantasy stories around.

The book is a quick and easy read, and we're already well in to book #2.

Wesley Pena says

I just want to clarify that I only read this because I read a book about unicorns in Brazil that ended in a cliffhanger but we moved before I could get the second book from the library (or we didn't have it because this was a missionary school library in Brazil, I can't remember) and ever since then I have been trying to find the book again but couldn't remember the name. This is that book, but it's pretty terrible and poorly written and I don't even LIKE unicorns. I bought it for 50 cents at the goodwill bookstore and the author signed it.

Kristina says

Allow me to reminisce on the topic of Skydancers for a moment. On a beautiful spring day, anywhere from 10 to 15 years ago, my sister and I were playing outside on the terrace. We were delighted because we had recently been given a Sky Dancer each as a present (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETCLxx...>). After playing with them inside, where they could only fly so high before crashing into the ceiling or a wall, we took them outside. My sister and I couldn't get them to work quite right but we were having fun trying to figure it out. My dad, mightily confident in his own Sky Dancer flying abilities, stepped onto the terrace,

took my Sky Dancer from me and declared "This is how you do it right." He balanced the Sky Dancer on her pedestal, grasped the pull ring, and launched the Sky Dancer several feet in the air. The Dancer hovered... and on her way gracefully to the ground, landed unceremoniously into the leaf- and muck-filled gutter on the roof. My sister and I were stunned into an angry silence, which was broken by my dad's laughter and effusive apologies. To this day, any mention of Sky Dancers sends everyone in the family into peals of hysterical laughter.

Playing with Sky Dancers and reading this book (not at the same time) are two of my stronger childhood memories. I remember reading this book and wishing that there was a sequel (which there would be several years later). I must have read this book half a dozen times. And then I forgot about it completely, until a few months ago when my sister and I changed our topic of conversation from African warlords to unicorns and I vaguely remembered an amazing book with marvelous unicorn characters. After a bit of research, we found it. The book is just as wonderful as I remember it, but I did have to tell myself to slow down in reading it because I was so anxious to reconnect with the story. This time, I plan on reading the entire series!

Beth says

Two stars for grown-ups, but four stars if you're 12 or younger.

I got this book from the library to read with my six-year-old because I was a huge unicorn fan when I was a kid. I would have adored this book at her age; at the ripe old age of 30-something, though, it was a tough slog.

Shy, misunderstood Cara has lived most of her life with her mysterious, somewhat distant grandmother, Ivy Morris. When she senses that they are in danger, Ivy whiskers them away to a church for safety and gives Cara a magic amulet. When Cara uses it, she is transported to Luster, the land of the unicorns.

Coville's writing, as well as his mythology, are mediocre at best and eye-rolling at worst. It was difficult for me to say names like Arabella Skydancer with a straight face, and don't get me started on the hugely annoying "comic relief" character, the Squijum, Coville's version of Jar-Jar Binks. (My daughter loved him, though.)

Cara is an okay heroine, but she spends a lot of the story in fear, wonder, or tears (and sometimes all three).

There are plenty of wonderful children's novels out there. For the amount of time it takes to read a book of this length aloud, I wish we had chosen something different.

Lilly says

I first read it when I was in elementary school. In 6th grade, I found it in the school library's recycling bin and promptly stole it (it was going to be thrown out anyway, and was still in good condition). I've read it at least 10 times. Loved it from the very first. I re-read it last year, expecting it to be boring and too young for my tastes (it followed a novel five times its size), but it still had me laughing 'til I cried. The characters are wonderful. I have to make my friend read it because he behaves very much like Lightfoot. I could almost hear him say the lines. I've always loved Coville. His collection The Unicorn Treasury is interesting as well.

If I recall correctly, it includes an excerpt from this. Anyone know (specifically) what the other two books in the series are called? I've never quite been able to find them.

Lou Anders says

Written in 1994 and it still holds up beautifully. This is a delightful fantasy that I thoroughly enjoyed. I can't wait to dive into the remaining books in the series.

Mark says

This is a really lovely story, creating the imaginary world of Luster peopled or should that be beinged by recognizably imaginary creatures such as Unicorns, Dragons, Dwarves and then assorted creations from the imagination of Bruce Coville. These include sinister large eyed nightmares called Delvers, large gorilla/men called Dimblethum and then a monkey-like creature called a Squijim. This latter animal is a bit annoying. He strikes me as the 'amusing' character that the modern Walt Disney films have a tendency to insert into the action or children's cartoons are festooned with. They are unnecessary and serve no real purpose other than to be 'cutesy poo' (thanks MM) and simply get in the way of the story telling.

That having been said, the main thrust of the story is of Cara, a human girl, who is sent into the land to warn the Unicorns that they are in great danger from the return of the Beloved and her hunters. These are the sworn enemies of the Unicorns as a result of historical interactions. Coville introduces the character of the 'baddie', Beloved, and explains how she came to be so hateful and loathing of the Unicorns. It is a clever and itself logical progression through fear to hate showing how received positions, unsupported by evidence, can still become accepted and entrenched. Cara, possessing one of the five amulets of the Queen of the Unicorns, is given the role of returning this amulet to the Monarch which can act as a gateway into Luster and therefore is a dangerous tool for her enemies. This journey accounts for the story.

The descriptions of the places she visits and the creatures with whom she visits are imaginative and original. The incorporation of myth and legend are woven beautifully into the story to the extent that I am not totally certain where ancient myth and Coville's imagination begin and end. The Dragon, perfectly named as Lady Firethroat, protects herself by the enchantment of her heart kept safe in a golden casket. Three drops of her hot blood dropped in a jewelled chalice share her gift of 'the gift of tongues, of knowledge of the languages of all creatures', the unicorn's horn heals physical ills and wounds and involves the unicorn giving of him/herself in the act. He/She can heal physical wounds but not spiritual ones. These, Coville is saying, are deeper and involve more than just patching or tending, they need to be uncovered, faced and understood.

There is a wisdom in these stories because they speak of heroism and sacrifice, alliance and friendship, fear and prejudice. Once again I could see how an interested teacher or even parent could use these stories in reflection or discussion about what we are called to be ourselves.

He describes simply but emotively

'She was small and slender, as luminous as a rainbow, as fragile as a promise. You could see through her, as if you were seeing tomorrow'

'His huge paw rested against her cheek, it lay as delicately as a butterfly'

'That piece of horn was now lodged in her heart, which was doomed to be forever wounded, forever healing, both in the same instant'.

Lovely first volume of an enthralling series. Had I known about this when my first nephews and nieces were children I would definitely have given them this story. As it is the younger ones and my great nephews may well get them in a few years.

Janine Shipman says

Ok for unicorn lovers.

Hann Remraf says

I READ THIS LIKE A SUPER LONG TIME AGO WHEN I WAS 10 AND I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING EXCEPT I LOVED IT

Rachel says

At first I wasn't 100% into the audiobook style and found it a bit jarring to go from the narrator (Coville) to the dialogue voices. I think once Cara crossed over into the Luster though, the style smoothed out and it was pleasant to listen to. The story was a bit darker than I was expecting, but I think the message that family is not always your blood relatives is an important one. My favorite part might have been when we learned why unicorns had to escape to another world. Overall this had a charm to it and I'd like to read the next in the series.

Leah Rachel says

This is one of those books that helped form my concept of classic fantasy and of magical worlds. I now remember very little about it, but this book is why I loved unicorns so much, and why my first-ever novel (written and rewritten from 2nd to 8th grade and still in the back of my head, just waiting for something to restart and electrify it) starred unicorns.

Wolf (Alpha) says

I really like how Cara's grandmother sacrificed herself to save Cara and how she didn't play around. I am glad that Cara got out of there and that she was safe. I find it funny how the Dimblethum found her and how he immediately began protecting her. I am glad that they found her instead of someone else. I hate how the Dimblethum is captured and I really like how Cara insists that they stay behind to save him. I like how

Thomas finds them and how he and Cara become friends almost immediately. I really like how Cara gains the unicorns trust and how she is able to help the queen. I really like how she loves all of her friends and how she is so unwilling to leave any of them behind.

Sandy says

This is a story of a young girl's travel into a land where the unicorns live. After being hounded out of our world, the unicorns settled in another where only a few humans can go. This young girl and her grandmother were being chased by a hunter and grandmother gave her amulet to the girl to save her and sent her to the other land.

This story is highly recommended for the offhand advice the author gives to young reader on tolerance and patience and all the virtues most readers are not especially well versed in yet and does it in such a way that it is mixed into the story and relevant.

Kudo's to the author!
