



## Ned's Circus of Marvels

*Justin Fisher*

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## **Ned's Circus of Marvels** Justin Fisher

From exciting debut author, Justin Fisher, comes this rip-roaring, page-turning new magical adventure. Perfect for fans of House of Secrets.

Ned Waddlesworth has always considered his world to be exceptionally ordinary. Until the day he discovers it ISN'T. AT ALL. Because on Ned's thirteenth birthday he discovers that everything magical he's ever read about or imagined is REAL.

And without him, the world will soon be engulfed in monstrous beasts and beings.

So with the help of a robot mouse, a girl witch and a flying circus unlike any other, it's up to Ned to swoop in and save the day!

Roll up, roll up, and prepare to be AMAZED by Ned and the marvellous, magical, monstrous flying circus!

## **Ned's Circus of Marvels Details**

Date : Published June 30th 2016 by HarperCollinsChildren'sBooks (first published February 25th 2016)

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Author : Justin Fisher

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## From Reader Review Ned's Circus of Marvels for online ebook

### Cassandra says

If you want non-stop action and a well paced story, then this is the book to read. I was honestly amazed how much happened in just a small book. I believe this will be part of a series as it had a sneak peak for the next book.

You follow a young boy, Ned, who just turned 13 enter into a world of magical, crazy creatures that live in secrecy to the 'normal' human world. However, as soon as Ned turned 13, his boring old Dad wanted to bring him to the circus as a present but their path is blocked by evil clowns, yes there are actually evil clowns in this story, which turns into a wild chase. This is just the beginning for Ned though as he is forced to hide within a circus troupe.

Throughout his adventure he meets a gorilla who ends up being his roommate, an old fortune teller who LOVES Hello Kitty and the ringmaster who is one a kind. The people he meets isn't the only thing he can wrap his head around, the circus can fly and there is a war to be won, with the evil clowns involved which makes it a tiny bit more scarier for young Ned.

If you're looking for something to read during a long trip, I absolutely recommend this.

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### J. Taylor says

I enjoyed it and I loved George. It was just a nice, cute middle grade paranormal story.

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### Alexa Ayana says

DNF in 45%

Bagi Ned, hidupnya setara dengan penampilan dan prestasinya, biasa-biasa saja. Tapi saat ulang tahunnya yang ke-13 dia terpaksa berpikir ulang tentang hal itu, hidupnya kini jauh dari kata biasa-biasa saja. Dia terdampar di sebuah tempat yang aman, sebuah sirkus misterius yang menampung mahkluk-mahkluk mitologi dan urband legend. Lepas dari covernya yang sangat memikat, sinopnya yang bikin kepo aku terpaksa merelakan buku ini masuk list DNF setelah gagal bonding dengan isi buku ini walaupun sudah bertahan sampai 45% selama 2 bulan. Beberapa hal yang menjadi penyebabnya sbb :

- World building yang rumit tapi tidak fokus. Untuk ukuran fantasy YA middle grade, buku ini betul-betul kompleks. Semua detail world building dan banyaknya karakter/mahkluk-mahkluk/nama/mixed budaya tambahan yang coba di gambarkan penulisnya ini akan membebani pembaca awam yang tidak punya imajinasi HIPERAKTIF.
- Terlalu banyak detail/informasi tak penting. Beliau adalah seorang ilustrator ternama dan dia cenderung untuk mendeskripsikan segala sesuatu dalam narasi super mendetail. Masalahnya dia memaksakan semua hal masuk ke dalam bukunya, padahal belum tentu semua itu akan berperan dalam plot bukunya. Bayangkan semua nama karakter, aneka jenis monster, mahkluk fantasi aneka rupa dari aneka negara, detail steampunk

yang sliweran eksis di buku ini.

- Tertele-tele. Dalam 45 persen yang kubaca, si hero Ned masih dalam posisi grey dan tidak tahu apa yang dia hadapi, apa misinya dan bagaimana meningkatkan kemampuan. Dia masih selalu di tolong untuk lolos dari semua situasi. Kadang dalam 1-2 hal aku hanya menemukan 1 alinea yang benar-benar penting. Pangkas 10 chapter dari buku ini kurasa tidak akan mempengaruhi penggambaran karakter dan world buildingnya.

- Alurnya super cepat, penuh aksi sejak awal tapi tidak fokus dan menggelinding liar. Aku serasa tiba-tiba di lemparkan ke medan perang penuh peluru bersliweran tanpa informasi apapun. Seru? Yea. Panik? Banget. Dari serangan badut-badut seram, werewolf, monster-monster darkling dengan nama-nama yang susah dihafalkan (saking banyaknya) sampai Jin Ifrit ikut memeriahkan suasana.

- Konfliknya belum jelas sampai di 45 persen ini. Dan makin membingungkan. Aku sampai mengintip web penulis untuk bisa memahami visinya yang merupakan gabungan fantasy, horror, petualangan dan steampunk ini. <http://www.circusofmarvels.com/>

Aku betul-betul ingin menyelesaikan dan menyukai buku ini. Tapi untuk saat ini, sorry buku ini bukan untukku. Untuk teman-teman penggemar berat fantasy mungkin kalian bisa mencoba buku ini, siapa tahu kalian bisa menikmatinya lebih dariku.

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### **Leo B says**

I'm eleven and I was worried this would be too young for me but it wasnt. i liked it because it was different and clever and scary. it made me want to go behind the vail like ned does and see all of the legends that live there. I loved the airship and it was a good description as it made like you feel you were there flying in it. i laughed a lot when ned was hit in the face by kitty, i thought she was so funny. its an adventure book and one of my favourites i've read since house of secrets - clash of the worlds. i think i like this more, because i like all the people in it and i think it's more exiting. i read it in a week and i miss it now. my favourite people in the book are george, kitty and alice the elephant who has wings. everything is very different and you feel like you are in a different planet. i want to read the next book now and hope it will come soon. i have given my friend the book to read too so that i can talk to someone about it.

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### **Rachel says**

I read this book with my 10 year old son and he loved it so much he said to give it 5 stars. For me it was more like 3.5 so we met in the middle and rated it 4 stars.

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### **Lucy Banks says**

\*DNF - stopped at page 354 (so close, but not quite there!)\*

### **A gutsy, imaginative concept - but too frenetic and 'surface' for me.**

Normally with a DNF I'd not leave a review or rating - however, I was fairly close to the end on this one, so

thought I would. In short - I liked it, it was a fairly interesting read, but I don't think it was the book for me.

Ned is an average boy (startlingly, overwhelmingly average in fact), until he suddenly finds himself plunged into the Circus of Marvels, complete with stroppy ringmaster, fabulous talking gorilla (easily my favourite character, he was lovely!) and a farseer called Kitty. There's all sorts of darkness in this strange new world, and sadly, lots of it is coming right for Ned!

It's a great concept - I was so keen to read this, as I'm a sucker for anything circus-related. However, I got the sense that the author packed so much into the story, that it didn't read 'deep' enough. I wanted to get more familiar with the characters, to understand their lives and their motivations, and instead, I felt it was all quite 'surface'. Also, the pace was so astoundingly quick, I found it tricky to keep tabs on what was going on all the time.

Don't get me wrong, it had bits that were pure gold - I liked the creepy clowns, I loved the author's sheer breadth of imagination, and I respect his ambitions. I'd just like to see the next one slowed down, explored more deeply, and focused more on the characters, rather than the action.

I've now passed it on to my 8 year old son - if he loves it, I'll be sure to come back and update this review accordingly, as he's probably more the target audience than I am!

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### **Klinta says**

I would like to thank Netgally, HarperCollins UK and the author for a free digital copy of this book in exchange for my honest opinion.

Full review.

I didn't like this book. Not because it was badly written, but just because it wasn't my cup of tea. I don't really know, if steampunk is the right word for it, but that is the one word that comes into my mind when I think of it.

Obviously I had misunderstood the summary of the book (or it just didn't hit the right mark), because what I thought to be a magical adventure for me, turned out to be a really hard journey. The first part of the book seemed chaotic because nothing really was explained and although some might find it charming to be in the protagonist's place, trying to figure out all that's happening... I wasn't. There seemed to be a lack of descriptions as well, which left me being able to imagine some things very clearly and some - not so much.

The tide changed around the middle, when things were explained and clicked in places, so at last I could connect the things I still hadn't and it got interesting for a bit. But unfortunately I didn't enjoy the ending much - again, because plenty of characters, magical creatures and other things were thrown together.

I wouldn't find the world that was built in this book very successful, it seemed to me like a lot of magical worlds that already exist were thrown together, some magical creatures given new names, new looks (really why?) and yet none of them explained or properly described. Also I found that the building process done by Engineer lacked explanation. I felt that by the end I got a hang of it, yet it is something that the Engineer would learn in the first page of the Engineering book... but I had to second guess it?

I am really sad that I didn't like it, I had such high hopes and was really ready to love it and have a new

favourite, but I would encourage others to read it, because as I said - it wasn't my cup, I didn't like it and I don't have arguments or reasons for it, just didn't bond with the book and story and had different feelings than expected.

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### **Bev says**

Ned thinks his life is exceedingly boring and mundane thanks to his very overprotective father but on his 13th birthday everything changes - in the most magical way. He finds himself part of the troupe of the most gorgeous, intriguing circus, charged with finding a girl whom together with himself, will save the magical and mortal world. I loved this book! Ned's amazing engineer powers are just wonderful and I'm looking forward to meeting many of the other characters in later books - especially Ringmaster Benissimo and Ned's best friend, the huge but cultured ape, George. A fun read that should keep Harry Potter lovers spellbound.

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### **H B says**

I think it was the quote where Ned says "Great....I love the circus," he managed, with all the enthusiasm of a boy that still loves his father just a little bit more than the truth" which was the beginning of where I moved from liking this book, into LOVING this book.

It's the characters that make this into such an enchanting and enthralling world to escape into, and they do feel somehow...REAL. The imagination that some authors show just amazes me. Some of his descriptions are really very powerful (and intoxicating). You know you're reading something special, when you find your mind wandering towards it, during the day, and you find yourself looking forward to the moment when you're going to get to dive back into it again, and lose yourself to the story, to the adventure and to the excitement.

Some people may be tempted to draw parallels to Harry Potter, but I'm not. It's different. I LOVED Harry Potter and I'm a die hard fan. There is a boy who is more than he thinks he is, but that is where I think the comparison stops and I, for one, am glad about that. I needed it to be different and I willed it to be different, and it was.

I don't want to spoil the story on here, but one thing I can say is that it is a little scary and I was surprised how scary some of the characters are, when I know it's for children - such as the clowns. They are haunting and reminded me of the joker in Batman.

Benissimo is a legendary character and I found myself wanting to know more about him and hoping that there would be more, because he is so magnetic and strong. I'd have liked more about him to be honest. The eccentric characters of Kitty and George are funny and whimsical and downright bonkers, but it was Lucy I was continuously fascinated by, even more so than Ned somehow, but I don't want to say too much about her on this apart from the fact that she could/should have a story all of her own.

One of the clever things about this book, is that you can't guess at all what's going to happen next or at the end. I was a little worried that some of the best characters wouldn't make it, and some don't.....

I loved the places it took me and I think if I was to pick a favourite part of the book it would have to be when they visit Shalazaar. The descriptions are just brilliant. The whole of the world 'behind the veil" is so clever and very well explained and thought out.

My 9 year old son started reading at the same time as me and is about a hundred pages in - but he's a slow reader, I will update when he's made it all the way through. He's loving it so far and it's fun to discuss it with him and find out his favourite bits. He's obsessed by George.

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## **Sarah says**

Ned believes himself to be an ordinary, boring boy leading an ordinary, boring life. This is all about to change. In his 13th birthday Ned discovers that his life is not all that it has seemed and is about to be plunged into the most amazing dangerous, exhilarating adventure of his life.

When I read children's literature I usually quickly forget the fact, becoming involved with story and characters just as much as with adult fiction. Sadly, it was not the case with Ned's Circus of Marvels. It is with this in mind that I continue this review. For me the story lacked depth and the characters were never really developed well enough to engage my sympathies. Yes, there was action and tension, and there were moments of real gold, but on the whole it became a bit monotonous and I found myself looking forward to the end.

However, I would never assume to speak for children who may read and love this book. Being old and world worn, I felt that the themes and storylines had been done before. This obviously wouldn't be the case for a young reader and my opinion certainly wouldn't stop me from giving this to a child to read.

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## **?Anni? (Book Princess) says**

This was nothing at all like I expected it to be, which makes rating it kinda hard. I liked it, but I'm not sure if I had picked it up if I'd known some things before. But let's start at the beginning^^

I found this book in the children's section in the library and on the back it says 'ages 9+'. Therefore I thought it was some magical children's fantasy book. Instead it turned out to be pretty action packed with a very evil and seemingly unstoppable villain. I liked the fast pace and the action, only sometimes it was almost too much and I didn't find it appropriate anymore. Probably it's not a children's book after all.

The characters were interesting, although some were a little flat and I didn't really connect with any of them. George was pretty funny and likeable though!

The world and magic system were interesting as well, but I felt like at times it could've been a bit better developed. The author could've gone into more depth. There were some steampunkish elements to the story, with gears and flying machines and whatever, and that wasn't exactly my kind of thing, but then, I usually don't read steampunk novels so it's just a personal preference.

I liked how the whole plot seemed to build up towards the ending. That itself was well done in my opinion, I liked the conclusion of the story and found myself smiling at the epilogue. I then found out there is a sequel to this, but this book could very well be a stand alone.

So you see, there were parts I enjoyed and parts I didn't like that much, so I rated this 3 stars - I didn't love it, but I didn't hate it either and it kept me entertained for a couple of days. I still wouldn't recommend it to children, early middle grade should be fine though.

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## **Christina Reid says**

Full review to come!

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## **Rob Smith says**

A great book. A mixture of adventure and fantasy.

Sometimes too slow to get to the action which for me is the reason it loses a star. It could lose some younger readers at these points.

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## **Lily says**

Three stars is generous, I think, but there were plenty of things I did actually enjoy about this book, so I'll be nice. If this book had anything, it was certainly imagination and potential, and it's the potential that's probably the most disappointing thing; this book could have been good if more care had been taken in editing.

The main issues were:

1. It was way too long. This book is over 400 pages, but it's repetitious and predictable at pretty much every twist and turn, and there's a lot that could have been cut out without hindering the plot or character development at all.
2. The writer didn't seem to want to stick to a style and it was very annoying. I think he meant to write from Ned's POV in third limited, but the action, description and thought processes were constantly jumping into this trying-to-be-funny omniscient narrator voice that would have worked if it was consistent and not jumbled up into Ned's POV at the same time. It was weird to be getting all Ned's thoughts then jump into an action sequence where we're clearly being shown more than Ned can see/know, to then jump back again with Ned going 'But I don't know what's happening' time and time again. I was never sure whose head I was in, or if I was supposed to be in Ned's head at all. The omniscient voice destroyed a lot of the fear/anticipation/horror of some of Ned's experiences too, so that it felt as though Ned was just sarky about everything, except he wasn't.
3. The utterly predictable and melodramatic plot. Nothing about this plot apart from a few cool bits of magic were new or surprising or interesting. I figured out who the traitor was a good 270 pages before he was revealed (and then had a little rant about all the times he struggled to get Ned to do what he wanted or failed because of them dang kids!-- wait, that's Scooby Doo.) It's full of cliched plot points, conveniently-timed rescues, and most disappointingly of all: the circus itself is barely seen at all. I took this book as a light fun read when I started but the longer it went on, it just dragged and was boring, despite all the melodrama and silliness that would otherwise have been fun.
4. The truck-tons of cliched writing fresh out of the worst children's blockbusters (it literally even has the

lines 'I don't know how much longer I can hold them off!' and 'Lucy . . . must save Lucy' (right before character speaking falls unconscious), and I could list a lot more.)

5. Virtually every background character was primarily described by their nationality and an abundance of stereotypes right out of the tropes bin. Even worse though, were the constant use of poorly-done and again stereotypical accent/dialect dialogue. Of course only the main characters speak English properly. Kudos for considering multicultural representation, but seriously poor way of doing it.

6. Renaming things (such as goblins) for no purpose other than to make them phonetic ('gor-balins')? I literally have no idea on this one, but it propped up a lot. Also every monster was described by their teeth, fur, and eyes. I couldn't imagine them any different really unless the name gave a clue as to what they were actually meant to be.

7. Lucy was pretty pathetic, always needed rescuing, and I still don't actually understand how her power differs from Ned's? If Ned can change the atomic makeup of things, surely he can heal a dying cell too? And surely if she can affect such changes, she's doing the same thing he is? I dunno, I think I'd need to ask a scientist, because the way both these powers were explained just sounded the same to me. But also the research was terrible in some places-- such as how fast Ned learns to tightrope walk. Fisher has clearly never spent an hour trying out a slackline, let alone seen kids on one.

8. I don't think I've seen so much ellipsis in one book ever. And it was always done poorly, and just became another annoying thing that made me wonder if this book had been edited.

So overall, there were a lot of problems with this book, but I don't think that they would have been so bad if they weren't all amplified by the length of the book. Had the book been shorter, some of these things wouldn't maybe matter so much because quick fun reads can be predictable and dodgily written sometimes, and still be good for kids who are a lot more forgiving about that sort of thing. I probably won't hang on to my paper copy of this one, but it's not a book I wouldn't give to my younger siblings. I think this can still be enjoyed a lot by kids, especially if it's read aloud by a parent who can do good voices. But I really don't think this one will win any prizes.

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### **Rebecca says**

my boyfriend nudged me and erased my entire review. 4/5. cba typing it all again. f u steven. f u.

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