

Jed and the Junkyard War

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Jed is a regular kid with a normal, loving family . . . that is, if it's normal for a loving family to drop their child off in the middle of nowhere and expect him home in time for Sunday dinner. Luckily, Jed excels at being a regular kid who-armed with wit and determination-can make his way out of *any* situation.

At least until the morning of his twelfth birthday, when Jed wakes to discover his parents missing. Something is wrong. Really wrong. Jed just doesn't realize it's floating-city, violent-junk-storm, battling-metals, Frankensteined-scavengers kind of wrong. *Yet*.

A cryptic list of instructions leads Jed into a mysterious world at war over . . . *junk*. Here, batteries and bottled water are currency, tremendously large things fall from the sky, and nothing is exactly what it seems.

Resilient Jed, ready to escape this upside-down place, bargains his way onto a flying tugboat with a crew of misfit junkers. They set course to find Jed's family, but a soul-crushing revelation sends Jed spiraling out of control . . . perhaps for good.

Jed and the Junkyard War Details


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Author : Steven Bohls

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From Reader Review Jed and the Junkyard War for online ebook

Siba says

This story was a great adventure in a cluttered world; to explain it in one sentence. The junkyard world feels like one of those worlds that you wish you could live in, but at the same time you're glad you don't because Dread are freaking creepy. This book made me want to pick fresh lemons and eat food straight out of the can. Also, this book will make me very skeptical of old guys with big noses and bushy mustaches for a few months.

I've been waiting for this book for who knows how long...totally worth the wait. Great job Steve.

Ms. Yingling says

Thought I had gotten this from either Netgalley or Edelweiss Above the Treeline, and can't find it on either site now.

Had some very clever, laugh-out-loud moments at the beginning, but ended up being hard core Steampunk. Other than Gratz's The League of Seven, I just can't get my students to read this genre. Will pass for now.

Lola says

3.5 stars.

I'm not surprised JED AND THE JUNKYARD WAR was published by Disney Book Group. It's so Disney-ish.

In the junkyard, life is different, obliging Jed to alter his perception of reality. For starters, everything is happening above the ground, as it's filled with, well, *junk*. And it's a fantasy world, steampunk at its core.

Jed is sent to the junkyard after his parents disappear under mysterious circumstances. Come on, it was supposed to be an epic birthday, not an epic *bye-day*!

He may not have known it right then, but Jed was prepared for all this danger, making him worthy of the challenges that come with dwelling in the junkyard. What happened to his parents? And who really was his grandfather?

It's seriously fun. Really fast-paced, humorous and action-packed. I'm going to read the sequel for sure. The junkyard is a very interesting place.

BUT, and this is why my rating isn't higher, I didn't exactly enjoy reading about the secondary characters as much as I did about Jed. In STARFLIGHT, a Disney book with a crew of pirates in "space," the captain and subordinates are as compelling as the heroine. Not in this book.

And maybe that's because the background of the characters is not something the author focuses very much

on. It goes fast – mishap after mishap – no time to pause!

I quite liked it though. It's original, that's for sure, and we all need these types of fantasy reads that propel us into a world different from ours. Recommended!

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Greg says

To describe this book in one word: fun.

This is the first book in a series (a trilogy, I think), and it's awesome! The characters are interesting and unique, the story is fun, and the adventure is non-stop.

The world building--a world that's covered in mountains of junk--is refreshingly unique, and kind of makes you wonder why no one else has thought of it before.

Obviously, because this is just the first book in the series, there are a few questions that go unanswered at the end. But luckily it's not done in that obnoxious way where I felt like the author should have just answered it in this book. Instead, it makes me excited for the sequel.

I would definitely recommend this for 9-12 y/o who like adventure.

Cara says

My oldest son read this first and said I HAD to read it. It is good, really good. This is one we will buy and add to our family library. Loved it.

Kim says

Great book! Such amazing fun in this weird world of junk. So enjoyed the crew of Bessie. They are gruff and crazy and fearless (except when it comes to salt). Shay "mouse" (the ship's stow away) was such an intriguing character. Wasn't sure to feel bad for her or to fear her.

My favorite interaction was between Jed and Captain Bog. It started with Jed thinking Captain Bog's face looked like the bottom of a shoe and continued to develop from there. Loved it !!!!! Read it in 4 hours!

Chris McGrath says

This was a fun surprise! I read this book with my second grader on Brandon Sanderson's recommendation, and we both enjoyed it even more than Sanderson's Alcatraz vs. the Evil Librarians. In fact, there were times I considered continuing to read it on my own after he went to bed! Highly recommended.

Rubén says

A book that's just as messy as the flying junk-ships it's about, and I mean that in the best way possible. I was never bored, certainly. But as the story kept twisting and turning, I could only shake my head at how deep a hole it was digging for itself. *This can't possibly be resolved in the small number of pages left*, I told myself.

And guess what?

I was right.

The setting is awesome. Junkstorms? Floating, steampunk-esque cities? Mechanical monsters that drink people's insides and wear their skin (shudders)? Yes, please.

The characters, on the other hand, are kind of generic. An almost-five-man-band, with no twist or meaningful development for any of them, aside from possibly Jed. (view spoiler)

The first half of the book does little aside from justifying the second half. Still, I'd have to say I prefer the rhythm and mystery of the first half to the nearly-exhausting-EVERYTHING-IS-HAPPENING hodgepodge of the second half. It's as if the moment that (view spoiler), *that's* when the story actually started. But it felt so disconnected from everything that came before (not to mention a bit too convenient). Then it rushes from one exciting event to the next, opening door after door with little apparent interest in closing any.

Eventually . . .

(view spoiler)

Thankfully, a childhood of reading the Last Dragon Chronicles has desensitized me to horrible cliff-hanger endings. Compared to those books, *Jed's* ending was satisfying. Barely.

Those expecting a stand-alone book are in for a nasty shock indeed.

So: overall, a fun jaunt through an interesting, different world.

That beginning was weird, though. I thought we were over the whole "start in the middle and go back" way of opening books.

Patrick says

This was fun and creative with 4 and 5-star elements mixed with some confusing/forced plotting in the mid-to-end of the story, which is quite forgivable for a first book.

I loved the weird world with the junk storms and canned food/battery based economy--think Terminator meets wacky alternate Earth rather than dystopian future. Jed was quite likable and so was the girl (forget her name), but she was a little convenient as well. The freaky Dread head on the mast was a great touch and payoff, as were the touches on Iron and Copper culture and the watch. The push red buttons thing was totally fun, but made no sense. I am OK with some random fun details, though it could be explained in a future book in the series.

Minor spoilerish here--the ending has some Keys to the Kingdom/League of Seven vibe going. I liked it mostly, and it was foreshadowed in hindsight, but I don't quite love it.

I put this on hold after seeing posters for the author's talk at Provo Library, and I'm glad I did. I think my students will enjoy this too. I'll probably end up buying a copy for school.

Rachelle says

This book was incredible! I read it along with my son and he was so into this story that he kept begging me to read more. When I was busy canning grape juice, he read an entire chapter out loud because he couldn't wait.

Bohls does a great job of creating a fantastical world that readers can dive into. Mystery, humor, ingenious tricks, hints, and suspense make this book unputdownable! We can't wait to read the next book in the series to find out what will happen to Jed.

Brandon Sanderson says

Jed and the Junkyard War

(Note: For an explanation of my Goodreads policy, please see [here](#).)

People tend to be interested in the books my students write, as many of them share some of my storytelling philosophy with me. That's certainly the case here, with Steven Bohls' *Jed and the Junkyard War*, a middle grade fantasy with some excellent worldbuilding and some of the same whimsical narrative feel as the *Alcatraz Books*.

Jed is a kid with a mysterious past and parents who push him to be a survivor. He ends up falling through the proverbial rabbit hole, and is sucked into a land coated in a deep layer of junk. Airships soar about, searching the junk for usable refuse, including the cans of food (apparently from our world) that can be found there.

The whimsical worldbuilding is imaginative and flavorful, and is mixed with a steampunk setting with most

everything being built from the junk in one way or another. (Including mechanical monsters that prowl the junkyard.) This place is somehow connected to Jed's parents and their past, though Jed is going to wade deep through the broken world to find it.

For Writers

Two things stand out to me in the book. The first is the worldbuilding, which I mentioned above. I find that many books just aren't audacious enough in their worldbuilding, and a middle grade fantasy is the perfect place for a story like this--which has some pretty evocative worldbuilding imagery. I tend to like fantasy the best when it's exploiting some insane premise that could never fly in another genre.

The other thing to look at here is the balance of danger and whimsy. This is something you don't ordinarily find anywhere other than middle grade. Series like Harry Potter and the Series of Unfortunate Events are perfect examples--they contain these wonderful, even silly, worlds and somehow mix them with a real and present sense of danger and action.

Jed and the Junkyard war is an extreme example on both counts. The junkyard is an outrageous premise, and is full of flying airship pirates. The prose itself is at times very still, poking at the borders of mocking just how ridiculous the story can get. At the same time, the dangers to Jed are real, even chilling at times. In an adult book, you rarely see this kind of a combination outside of something intended to be humorous.

The Short Version

A fun middle grade fantasy with an evocative setting and genuinely thrilling moments.

Rating Notes

Well below the PG-13 threshold.

Bias Notes

Steven was a student in my BYU university class a few years back, and as such, I'd say I'm quite biased toward his writing. He tends to beat me at Magic: the Gathering, though, so some day he deserves his comeuppance.

(Note, for other former Sanderson students, check out Janci Lynn Patterson, Brian McClellan, Peggy Eddleman, Charlie N. Holmberg, and others I'm sure I'm forgetting and will have to edit in later.)

SheReadsandWrites says

The world building in this book rocked! The author did a great job taking me to a believable world of floating ships in a junkyard. I really liked the distinct flavors of voice in each of Bohls' characters. He also does a good job with the "feeling" each type of being in the book gives. From the icky scary dreadnaughts, to Jed's heroic saving father, to the fair yet ruthless Captain Bog.

I read it to my 8 and 6 year old, but I would NOT suggest having anyone younger than 10 read it. The main character, Jed, is thrust into a world where man eating robots wear the skin and body parts of their victims. I

had to do some damage control with the nightmare inducing content for my kiddos as I read the book to them. Depending on the child, you might want to wait even longer.

As for the story itself? It left my kids and I asking a ton of questions. I usually prefer more resolution than it gave at the ending. I'm hoping the second book will answer our questions.

Alex says

This was a fun and easy to read book. The characters were good, especially Jed and Shay. The book really was just fun and intriguing the entire time. I highly recommend Jed and the Junkyard War to anyone.

Broadenyourminds says

I was given this book by NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

I LOVED this book.

The summary really called out to me; it's an adventure, it's a bit weird and almost magical. It sounded right up my alley. And I was right, it was.

The characters are incredibly funny and well written. I wish I could meet each and everyone of them.

The story is absolutely brilliant. I just wanted to know what was going to happen, I want to discover more secrets. I needed to, that's how much I loved it. I needed to know how it would end. The story keeps you on the edge of your seat the whole time, it makes you laugh, it annoys you, it scares you and above, it surprises you.

It really is an adventure that I would gladly take on again.

Susan says

Reading Jed and the junkyard war was pure pleasure. This book is delightful, quirky and fast paced . The characters came alive and drew me deeply into the story. I loved the opening-from the weird parenting style of Jed's mom and dad, to the tunnel behind the dishwasher. It was so much fun following Jed on his adventures while he was searching for his parents. The ending was a great twist and left me anxious for the hopeful sequel
