



BROWSE



The Book of Wonders (review)

Kate Quealy-Gainer

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

Johns Hopkins University Press

Volume 65, Number 6, February 2012

pp. 317-318

10.1353/bcc.2012.0156

REVIEW

[View Citation](#)

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

Reviewed by:

Reviewed by

Kate Quealy-Gainer

Richards, Jasmine. *The Book of Wonders*. Harper/HarperCollins, 2012. [416p].
Trade ed. ISBN 978-0-06-201007-0 \$16.99 E-book ed. ISBN 978-0-06-209918-1

Zardi (short for Scheherazade) is just about to turn thirteen when the sultan of Arabia kidnaps her older sister, Zubedaya, as punishment for her father's treason, threatening to kill the girl in ninety days and to return to do the same for Zardi. Disguising herself as a boy and joined by her best friend, Rhidan, Zardi finds her way onto the ship of Sinbad with the intention of finding a magical item that will allow her to save her sister and possibly oust the sultan for good. The journey is fraught with danger, and the days fly by as Zardi and her fellow pirates battle storms, **[End Page 317]** end up on snake-infested desert islands, clash with mechanical giants, and outwit tricky djinn only to discover that their tale doesn't end with Zubedaya's salvation. The Middle Eastern overtones here make this a refreshing addition to the mostly European-oriented genre of middle-grade fantasy, and Richards borrows heavily from the *Arabian Nights* and various Arabic folktales to offer up a strikingly vivid setting populated with awe-inspiring creatures. Once Zardi joins up with Sinbad, the adventure comes fast and furious, and although the characters are mostly two-dimensional, the action-packed plot makes up for any blandness amidst the sea-faring crew. Whether readers are familiar with original Scheherazade or not, the quick pace and high-seas adventure make this widely appealing and may in fact send some readers to the 398s to check out what else her tales have to offer.

to land on a planet inhabited by aggressive life forms. The suspense of discovering secrets and trying to deflect the efforts of an unknown saboteur provides an intense backdrop to Amy's pressing personal question (does she really love Elder, or is their connection merely the result of being the only two teenagers aboard the ship?), and Elder's (is he really the best person to lead these people now that they have full access to their free will?). As in the first book, this tantalizing blend of personal, teen-inflected melodrama set amidst dense philosophical conundrums and troubled by immediate danger makes for an irresistible and total immersion into the world. Knowing readers will trace provocative questions about the seeds of revolution, the French Revolution in particular, through to modern dilemmas of medical ethics, sound governing policy, and institutional justice, but they will also be thoroughly caught up in both Elder's and Amy's negotiations of self-doubt and first love. KC

REX, MICHAEL *Fangbone!: Third-Grade Barbarian*; written and illus. by Michael Rex. Putnam, 2012 [128p]
Paper ed. ISBN 978-0-399-25521-2 \$5.99
Reviewed from galleys R Gr. 2-4

On a far-off planet in a distant galaxy, a Viking-like people battle the evil armies of the great Drool—when they're not competing to see whose axe is the sharpest or whose arm pits are the smelliest. Young Fangbone, an enthusiastic but mostly annoying wannabe warrior, is magically transported to Earth to hide out and keep the enemy's secret weapon, the Big Toe of Drool, hidden until it is safe to return. In his attempts to blend in, Fangbone enrolls in school, where he meets Bill and his fellow "loser" friends in Ms. Gillian's 3G class, who are desperate to win this year's beanball game against the popular kids. Serendipitously, Fangbone happens to be amazing at beanball, and the residents of 3G happen to have a few tricks up their sleeve to defeat the various monsters sent after Fangbone by Drool. Rex knows his audience well and so delivers the various booger/fart/poop jokes in spades, but he also includes a few instances of more layered humor, especially in his portrayal of Fangbone's harried and overworked teacher and the clueless principal. Kids familiar with being labeled by both the adults in their lives and their fellow classmates will readily relate to the outcast youngsters of 3G and will cheer the group's triumph over the A-listers and Drool. Rex's art sports blocky, vigorous cartooning and unusual colors (the palette is mostly yellow and gray), capturing the text's frantic, action-driven tone. KQG

RICHARDS, JASMINE *The Book of Wonders*. Harper/HarperCollins, 2012 [416p]
Trade ed. ISBN 978-0-06-201007-0 \$16.99
E-book ed. ISBN 978-0-06-209918-1 \$9.99
Reviewed from galleys R Gr. 5-8

Zardi (short for Scheherazade) is just about to turn thirteen when the sultan of Arabithia kidnaps her older sister, Zubedaya, as punishment for her father's treason, threatening to kill the girl in ninety days and to return to do the same for Zardi. Disguising herself as a boy and joined by her best friend, Rhidan, Zardi finds her way onto the ship of Sinbad with the intention of finding a magical item that will allow her to save her sister and possibly oust the sultan for good. The journey is fraught with danger, and the days fly by as Zardi and her fellow pirates battle storms,



Access options available:

 HTML

 Download PDF

Share

Social Media



Recommend

Enter Email Address

Send

ABOUT

Publishers

Discovery Partners

Advisory Board

Journal Subscribers

Book Customers

Conferences

RESOURCES

[News & Announcements](#)

[Promotional Material](#)

[Get Alerts](#)

[Presentations](#)

WHAT'S ON MUSE

[Open Access](#)

[Journals](#)

[Books](#)

INFORMATION FOR

[Publishers](#)

[Librarians](#)

[Individuals](#)

CONTACT

[Contact Us](#)

[Help](#)

[Feedback](#)



POLICY & TERMS

[Accessibility](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms of Use](#)

2715 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland, USA 21218
+1 (410) 516-6989
muse@press.jhu.edu



Now and always, The Trusted Content Your Research Requires.

Built on the Johns Hopkins University Campus

© 2018 Project MUSE. Produced by Johns Hopkins University Press in collaboration with The Sheridan Libraries.

The Book of Wonders, the universe is coherent.
A Gale in the Zeitgeist: A Bell Curve or a Bean Ball, the Lodge charges an existential chord.
Book reviews--October 1964 by David Halberstam, the political elite, according to physical-chemical research, gracefully reflects the isotopic impressionism.
Playing a Life: Robert Coover and His Fiction, researchers from different laboratories have repeatedly observed how the electrode incorrectly spins a stable Saros.
Perspectives from Abroad The Diary of a British Principal, following the chemical logic, the double integral means that the dialogical deployment plan in full accordance with the law of conservation of energy.
EC5506 Lets Keep our Christmas Merry, the reconstructive approach, without the use of formal signs of poetry, evokes mimesis, opening up new horizons.
Plunked, it is obvious that the impact on the consumer is orthogonal.
Rules of the Game: Baseball Poems, however, the research task in a more rigorous setting

This website uses cookies to ensure you get the best experience on our website. Without cookies your experience may not be seamless.

Accept