



# The Squickerwonkers

*Evangeline Lilly , Johnny Fraser-Allen (Illustrations)*

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**The Squickerwonkers** Evangeline Lilly , Johnny Fraser-Allen (Illustrations)

Meet Selma of the Rin-Run Royals, a clever little girl who is spoiled to the core. One day Selma stumbles upon a band of colorful marionettes, and gets more than she bargained for. The remarkable Squickerwonkers of the fabulous Squickershow are about to teach Selma that she'll not always get her way.

Evangeline Lilly is best known for her work as an actress, but her foremost passion has always been writing. This book is her first published work. Beautifully illustrated by Johnny Fraser-Allen, this eccentric and visually stunning cautionary tale will appeal to adults and children alike.

## The Squickerwonkers Details

Date : Published November 18th 2014 by Titan Books

ISBN : 9781783295456

Author : Evangeline Lilly , Johnny Fraser-Allen (Illustrations)

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Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Fantasy, Horror, Fiction, Middle Grade, Sequential Art, Comics, Audiobook

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## From Reader Review The Squickerwonkers for online ebook

### June says

I only looked at the first couple of pages before I bought this book. The art is very pretty (and a little creepy), and since my kids love books about monsters I thought this would be a fun addition to our home library. It turned out to be much darker than I expected and my daughter (5yrs) didn't like it. I'm not sure I would go as far as saying she was scared, but she did ask me to bring it back to the store.

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### Maira Moura says

Review da edição brasileira.

O livro infantil assustador com final traumatizante já é um gênero, não? E quando existe um circo/espetáculo/lona, ou marionete, ou personagens com botões (no caso, moedas) ao invés de olhos, já podemos ter quase certeza do que esperar.

As ilustrações à la Molly Crabapple, em tons de pergaminho e cortiça, são ótimas e esquisitas. O texto é esquisitíssimo. Não posso falar sobre as palavras escritas por Evangeline - li a tradução. Não sei portanto quem é o responsável por versos livres tentando rimar entre si na última palavra (sem sucesso). Gostaria de ter o livro (que li emprestado) agora para ter um exemplo, mas apenas me lembro da leitura desengonçada. Desconfortável. A história também foi algo sem pé nem cabeça: uma extensa introdução a personagens pela graça da introdução a personagens - porque depois disso não foi reaproveitado na trama.

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### Allie says

#### A victim of bad marketing?\*

I'm not going to bother reading this to my kids because well, it's pretty pointless. It starts with a girl wandering into a wagon near a fair. Her name isn't known until about halfway into the book. But who do we learn about before the main character? *Nine* other characters... characters that you never learn anything about other than their short writeup dumps. After a few more pages it ends. **It just ends.**

Let me give a quick rundown:

- Short recommendation by Richard Taylor, head of Weta workshop (think Lord of the Rings) {e.g. **name dropping**}\*\*
- Dedication
- Foreword by Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh & Philippa Boyens (think Lord of the Rings) {e.g. **name dropping**}\*\*
- A spread that, alone, would have had me buying the book. Creates an atmosphere similar to Coraline.
- Title page
- 2 spreads of girl, alone in the wagon
- 5 spreads introducing the other characters

- 7 more spreads where something happens that is still worthy of being compared to Coraline
- Illustrated spread\*\*
- A spread that is advertising the continuing story\*\*
- Illustrated spread\*\*
- A spread that is advertising the continuing story\*\*
- About the author and illustrator
- 3 illustrated pages
- Short recommendation by Martin Baynton {e.g. name dropping}\*\*

\*\*Thank you, copy and paste!

After all that, I'm still torn how to rate this. I **love** the illustrations, that's what drew me to the book; I didn't even realize it was written by Evangeline Lilly until after I had borrowed it from the library! I love the immediate atmosphere that was created. I love the possibilities of where this book *could* go. But as a standalone, this book is shite. It introduces characters yet goes nowhere. *Fast*.

**\*What I wish is that this was a graphic novel, as opposed to a children's picture book. If that were the case, I'd probably wait until all of the volumes were printed in one book and I would just buy it. I think it definitely has potential.**

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### **Dewi says**

Yang membuat buku ini menarik adalah ilustrasi dan suara pembaca narasi. Alur cerita lemah, terlalu bertele-tele mengenalkan para Squicker. Penggambaran karakter Selma di tengah-tengah cerita malah menimbulkan pertanyaan. Spoiled Selma? Dia protes karena balon merahnya diletuskan, dan dia mendapat cap "spoiled". Kesannya ada hal-hal yang hanya berada dalam pemikiran penulis namun tidak tersampaikan ke pembaca. Setelah terjadi peristiwa klimaks tiba-tiba cerita selesai tanpa kejelasan lebih lanjut.

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### **Sara Bauer says**

The illustrations are FANTASTIC, and I love that Lilly has trusted children with something creepy. Neil Gaiman would be proud :)

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### **Carol says**

Pictures are an interesting style, but a little off too. The writing was awkward to read and really not an interesting story.

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### **Brian says**

My twins loved the drawings, but didn't care for the story. I thought about this and decided that I agree with them. The artwork is what I liked best. The story doesn't really have much of a message compared to other

books of this genre, and the writing could be stronger. I read it a third time and decided that the writing sounds hurried. I suspect this is going to be a series, and the writer cut off part of the original end to make it suspense for the second book. If that is the case, it didn't feel inspired. Beautiful art illustrations though. I wish Goodreads had an option to rate the writer and artist separately when they are different persons.

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### **Tria says**

Not the best children's book I've ever read, but certainly not the worst. I only have it in audio (the version read by Sylvester McCoy), but I like what illustrations I've seen to date. The narration is excellent, and very entertaining, even though this first instalment of the series is a little light on plot.

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### **Erin Brockway says**

This book is about a little girl, Selma, the heir to the Rin-Run Royals, and how she comes upon a group of marionettes. She learns all about each one of the marionettes and then they ask her to join them on stage. Once on the stage they pop her balloon and she thinks that her grandpa will teach them a lesson for making her cry. When she tells her grandpa what happened, things change and something different happens than what Selma thinks will happen. Selma is a spoiled little girl who always gets her way until now. In the end her grandpa gives her to the marionettes to help teach her lesson and she is turned into one of them. The illustrations in the book are really well done, every time I look at it I notice something new in them. I'm not sure I would actually use this book in my classroom because it seems kind of dark. The moral of the story is good about teaching children that they may not always get their way, but I feel like something is missing in the end to help relay that message to children.

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### **Stephanie says**

Since people wanted an actual review as opposed to my educated rant below, I am obliging:

That the text starts with a slant rhyme is telling. A "rhyming" book that relies on slant rhyme is a book that shouldn't be written in verse. To say the 10 action-less pages that introduce the Squickerwonkers throws off the pace is an understatement--it is the majority of the book and means the story itself is primarily action-less. In addition to the slant rhymes, there are awkward word choices and phrases throughout which would make for a difficult read aloud. All of this makes it evident that rhyme is more important than plot and character development in this story.

What little plot there is is confusing in that Selma (a protagonist brave enough to join the Squickerwonkers onstage) is labeled a brat for being angry that they popped her balloon--for no reason. What the heck?! Anyone would be angry about that! Maybe she was a brat but please give some believable evidence, sheesh.

What is this book? A cautionary tale that doesn't know what caution it's advising? A failed rhyming exercise? I'm not sure but I certainly wouldn't spend money to find out.

The only good things I can say about it is the illustrations do a good job of creating an uncanny atmosphere and that the book doesn't shy away from fear is admirable. However, the negatives GREATLY outweigh the positives. Now, back to my rant:

(from 9/14/14)

I wish someone would give celebrities who decide to write a children's book the memo that not all picture books need to rhyme. Actually, I wish someone would convince celebrities that they probably don't need to write a picture book. That writing a good picture book is difficult--very difficult. That they may not be able to do it without researching what makes a good picture book. That just like acting takes training and skill, so does writing. That just because something is for children doesn't mean it's easier to accomplish than something for adults. Picture books should be respected as a form of literature as important as--if not more so--books for adults and no one should be able to write and publish a children's book, regardless of the quality of that book, just because they're famous.

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### **M Pereira says**

I think my imagination is too limited for this story

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### **Leslie says**

I was attracted to the name and the heavy pages and rich ink. The promised darkling tale appealed to me, and the characterization of the disturbing puppet show carries through on the book's threat. However, what is offered in the book is an introduction. You will have to buy the next book, if you are purchasing the first--not because there is a cliff-hanger of an ending, but rather that sensation of the story being left unfinished. The book leaves off with pages to spare; pages dedicated to sketches and what-not. I was left unsatisfied, and not in the kind of way where I am positively hungry for more.

It is perhaps my own failure to capture the right rhythm of speech, but some of the rhyming text was clunky and awkward.

Do read this one through first before if thinking of purchasing.

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### **Amelia says**

There are lots of works of horror out there that are better written and more developed than this one. Laundry list of limericks introduce characters to a non-existent plot. See my blog for my full review:  
<https://challengingthebookworm.wordpress.com>

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### **Terry Pretz says**

This was disappointing because the message seems unfinished. I understand that the child is spoiled and there's some lesson to be learned, but what are we supposed to be figuring out? My little girl asked me what it was saying, and I didn't really know what to answer other than the little girl was spoiled and there's dangers in the world. It doesn't have a strong message like most children's books, and appears to be using good art as a means of trying to catch the buyer's attention. The art is very good. Also, the rhyming is

strained and hard to read, not flowing as a children's book should be. There just isn't enough here to make this a good read, plus it should be stressed that for the reading age suggested, this is not a great bedtime story.

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### **Dan says**

No plot, no resolution and the rhymes have perhaps the worst cadence I've ever seen in a children's book.

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