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Andrew Fusek Peters

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A poor plumber's boy, Ark spends his days unblocking the toilets of Arborium. But, while at work, Ark overhears a plot to rob the island of its greatest natural resource - wood. Soon Ark's life is plunged into danger as he vows to save his home and his people.

Ravenwood Details

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From Reader Review Ravenwood for online ebook

Rick Stuckwisch says

Interesting book. Odd would probably be the better way to describe it, although it wasn't bad. Quite clever and creative, actually, but it took me awhile to get into the groove of it. Not sure if there was an underlying "morale" to the story; I suspect that there was, and that I wouldn't necessarily agree with it, but can't honestly put my finger on what it might be exactly. Anyway, a bit of a diversion. Won't be going out of my way to look for other books by the author, but I'm not sorry to have read it.

Kori Elliott says

I finished this book about a month ago and it took me awhile because I read other books while reading it so I'm a little rusty.

Still, I actually liked this book. My favorite part was honestly just the puns. OH THE PUNS! They made the story so much more amazing and fun. But the story was great and had a wonderful ending to it. I'm glad I read this book, to be honest. It was such a good fantasy book to read and had a nice light-hearted feel to it. I kind of regret reading it how I did but the stuff I remember from it was pretty good.

However,

How big was the tree? Was it a HUGE tree or just a normal tree with tiny people living in it? (I struggled with this idea throughout the book. It seems weird but I honestly just couldn't figure it out.)

Besides that, I did actually enjoy this book. :) It was such a delight and the characters were very relate-able in my opinion.

Ryn Lewis says

The premise was okay; I wanted this to be good, but it was definitely a slog to get through it. The basic storyline was fine, and I finally got to enjoy some of the characters, but I'd recommend T.A. Barron's Great Tree of Avalon set if you want to read tree-dweller fantasy. The writing was wieldy and burdensome, yet many parts happened almost too quickly and were accepted far too readily by characters who did not actually seem to have the motives to back their actions up. I enjoyed the final scenes, but did not feel the story earned them, so to speak. If you're a die-hard high fantasy lover, you may like this, but for the more casual reader, you'll probably want to look elsewhere.

Heather says

Pros: Good characters - I particularly liked Mucum, Shiv, Joe, & Flo.

Cons: Too long. Sometimes a bit boring. The tree puns get annoying. The battle scene is awfully gruesome

for something that seemed (until that point) like an upper-elementary school title. (*I really don't want to see people snapping other's necks by stepping on them. Yuck.*)

Major beefs: I was conflicted on how the characters and settings might look, because:

1. The book is full of descriptions and explanations of the sewer system - we get to know it inside and out. **However**, the book is seriously lacking in details on the rest of the setting. About all we know (eventually) is that the trees are about one mile tall. Oh yes, and some of the paths in the city are 20 feet wide. Okay, how about some more details? Describe it for me, please!

2. I don't know what size the characters are. The ravens and the mealworms are huge (larger than people, if three people can sit on a raven's back and a mealworm threatens to eat people). But how big are the people? Are they human size? (Are they human?) If so, why haven't they grown like the other creatures? Or perhaps they are suddenly smaller? I never got a clear picture on what any of the people looked like except their coloring. Give us a clue, please, whether these people can be measured in feet or whether we should be using inches!

This might be a good read for those who want to live in trees or save the earth. Some readers will love the amount of time we spend traversing sewers, discussing sewers, or getting covered in effluent. Others will probably like the book for the friendships that occur between Ark & Mucum as well as between the two boys and Flo. Some, though, will probably not make it to the end of the book.

Heidi says

The cover is gorgeous. The characters are unique and interesting, and their growth seems real with the exception of a couple of places where characters do things that are very out of character and it doesn't seem quite believable. But the world is to dream about (as long as you are not afraid of heights, like me). I did struggle with the writing somewhat. I'm not sure if the author just has a unique style or if the phrasing was too British, but the writing didn't flow the way it could have.

I thought it was interesting that the author presents the reader with the experiences of not only the hero, Ark, but his archnemesis, Petronio. By the end of the book, I felt like I understood what made each boy tick, both the good and the bad. The plot was slower at the beginning, which makes sense, since the author has to present the reader with a picture of the world and the conditions under which it exists. The last third of the book definitely picks up the pace, I almost felt like someone had knocked the wind out of me. The last part of the book is also much darker, as Ark is faced with having to fight a battle he would rather not fight. The fact is war is ugly however you look at it and Peters depiction of it feels very real. The scenes at the end were almost too much for me, but would undoubtedly be just right for someone who doesn't mind that sort of thing.

Michele says

Thankfully, I am *finally* finished with this book! It took FOREVER!

Honestly, I did not like this book. I gave it two stars instead of one because I only give one star to books that are just not functional. This book "makes sense," if only in the most basic way: there are no obvious flaws in the logic of the plot, and sadly I have read books that do lack such basic components.

I was excited when I saw this book at my school's bookfair (I'm a school librarian). I liked the cover and it just sounded interesting. What does it have going for it? It has an unusual and intriguing setting. The "people" (I really have no idea if they are people or some kind of bug--they are called Dendrants) live in huge trees. Or at least they are huge in comparison to the species that live there. These trees have been modified into cities, and they never ever go to the bottom of the tree because it is supposedly poisonous. There was some kind of environmental disaster in the distant past or something and their race packed off to an island to live in the trees. The modifications mostly are in the form of metal chutes, walkways, and plumbing. It is a different setting, at least for most children's fantasy.

However. There are many things I didn't like about the book despite its possibilities:

First, I was just bored. The plot sounds like it would be good. A boy overhears something he shouldn't and immediately his life is in danger. He nearly misses death on several occasions, consults with his religious leaders, and then is carried off to meet a mystical bird goddess. He needs what he will learn there to fight the dangers awaiting his community. But somehow this story just drags with silliness that seems serious. Ark (the main character) crashes through the roof of his "church" on top of the "Goodwoody" (really?!). This convenient religious experience spurs him to trust a black feather, which is usually the symbol of death. ! Of course Ark is a special boy with a special purpose who meets a goddess and must pass several tests and you know this story, right?

Second, and really the most annoying part of the book, there is just waaaayyyy too much talk about poo. Ark is a "plumber's boy," a sewage worker. He literally works inside the sewer pipes with "squit." This is how is overhears a plot to kill the king. Fine. Except that the sewage is a constant topic in this book! It gets old and overused. I only can think that it was an attempt at humor, but it doesn't work. Consider this sentence as Ark and his friend Mucum (!) are making preparations to stop the assassination of the king: "How he missed the pong of honest poo!" Then a page later, Little Squirt agrees to help by answering "Do boar squit in the woods?" There is much modified swearing as well: "Son of a beech!" (as in trees, but really no one is fooled). Who is the intended audience of this book?

Third, the story spends *a lot* of time with the enemy. Well, he is the son of he enemy. Ark is clearly the main character, but we get to know his arch rival pretty well. Too well. We see all his greedy machinations, as well as his sympathetic traits. While this might make him a more developed character, it is not enough to be a story of two people, just an uneven enemy. It made the book longer than it needs to be, especially for a book for children.

There are more things I didn't like about it, but I think that is all I need to write.

Amanda says

Rating this book and writing a review have been really challenging. I loved this story, read it engrossed to the end. The world building is unique (in my reading experience, although that's probably not saying much) and very cleverly done, with the wood-related swear words and sayings. The characters are likeable and you want them to do well. The main character has a great journey and stands tall at the end. However, there is something I can't quite put my finger on about the writing style that I found tricky. It seems a long book for an MG novel and in places there is a lot of telling rather than showing. It feels a bit preachy and maybe a bit rushed. I also sense a sequel (I haven't looked it up) and it feels like a really long-winded scene set for a second novel or even a series. It would make a great movie (again, have no idea if there is one. I should probably have done my research before writing this!) as the world is built with imaginative detail. I can't say much more without giving stuff away. I will say I was a bit let down by the ending: I expected

more from Ark and it all felt a bit rushed and contrived.

So, for story, world, characters, gripping plot (if a bit slow in places) I'd give 4 stars. But for opaque sections, too much telling in places, repetition in the story, and a weak ending I might downgrade it to 3 stars. But I feel 3 stars suggests I didn't enjoy it, which I definitely did. 4 it is then!

Sassbot5000 says

I didn't actually finish this book. It got about halfway through it and realized it wasn't working for me. I've been trying to read it for a month and I'd read 30 pages and then put it down and it was a struggle every time to pick back up. The flow of the writing wasn't working and the action happened it spurts.

Daniella says

100% guarantee the only reason this book was written was to make as many tree based puns and reference to sewage as possible such as treenager, be-leaf and Barkingham Palace. Also appreciated greatly that the head raven flew into a helicopter's blades in order to save the other ravens and stop the assassination of the King.

Amanda C says

RAVENSWOOD by Andrew Peters.

The story is set on an island filled with huge trees that the people in the story live on that have a lot of villages and cities in them. The main characters are Ark Malikum, the protagonist, and Petronio the antagonist of the story, and Mucum the best friend of Ark who helps him make it through the story. I took the book from my cousin who got it from idabel library, i took it because it looked interesting.

Ark hears the evil plot about the Maw trying to take over Arborium because the wood is now very valuable. Ark and his friend Mucum try to save Arborium, and tell the king while fighting off Petronio, his enemy. He is just a plumber boy but he is also very powerful. Now Ark must save Arborium from being destroyed by the Maw.

I think the book had an okay ending but i think it could have been better and more thought out. My favorite quote from the book would be. "Come. If you have mastered your fear, then there is no reason to be afraid."

I personally didn't really like the book. i liked the idea of it, of what they were saying about people living in giant trees and big scary creatures, but it wasn't that great a story. I don't know a book that would be similar to this, but another fantasy type book could be The Mark Of The Dragonfly, its a really good book. People who are into fantasy and action type books would most likely like to read this story.

Emma says

There was no growth in the characters. Take Ark, for example. One day he was a plumber, who knew nothing about fighting, nothing about being a leader. By the end of the book he was both a fighter and a leader. But inbetween that.... There was nothing. But becoming a leader isn't something that just happens like

that. It takes time for people to trust you, and for you to trust yourself. Bit with Ark, all he had was a day's training from Corwenna, and all of a sudden he took out the best fighters from both Maw and Arborium. There was nothing I liked about it. Ugh. It was the same with all the other characters, as well... No growth, just sudden leaps without proof that they deserved whatever knowledge or power they had gained. And there was practically no character development at all... :/

Cindy says

I thought this was a great concept for a book, until I read the first 20 pages. I'm sadly disappointed by the overall result of this book. Here's why.

1. I can't figure out if these are little one inch people living in a tree, or a HUGE giant tree grew and humans lived there. I'm assuming the first, but there are references that confuse me so I am not really sure.
2. This book would have been better if the author had spent some time on character and plot development instead of trying to force witty jokes about poop, going to the bathroom and sewer systems. This I'm afraid is why the book failed.
3. The ending. After 300 pages of the book with no real end in sight, a mysterious solution appears. A quick battle ensues (now mind you this was supposed to be WORLD ENDING), and the book ends.

Overall, this book was boring, dull, and I really wish it had turned out better because it was agony reading the book.

Becky says

Ravenwood is an imaginative feast of a story. It is both a coming of age story and an epic fantasy-esque adventure set within the forested island of Arborium.

It is the story of Ark Malikum, a Dendran who lives in Arborium. The son of a plumber, Ark has now taken on his father's job as a sewage worker keeping the pipes free from blockages. Ark's tale begins when he overhears a traitorous plot against King Quercus. He flees in fear of his life and so begins his great hero's story.

The world-building in this novel was extraordinary. There is a whole world of people living in the trees of Arborium because of an evolutionary need. The world we know of humans has long been polluted by our greed and ignorance of taking care of the planet. While I was reading Ravenwood, I was marvelling at the ingenious concept of merging our human expressions and customs and transforming them to work for the world in which the novel is set. The author transforms forms colloquial sayings of our culture into the living language of Arborium. This sentence really tickled me: "Then he turned and ran, hoping to catch Ark before he did something totally conkers" (pg. 205). There are many many of these quirks and as an adult reader I delighted in getting all the puns the author intended.

The themes of this novel are in fitting with the setting. Through Ark's journey we learn about the ecology of

Arborem and how each part of the world is dependent on the other. Then there is the issue of progress versus the status quo. Should humanity always be moving towards advancement and new technologies? If we do, then what are we leaving behind? Ravenwood also explores the consequence of what happens when man turns against nature. For all these reasons, I can see this book being a great resource in the classroom as well as a great adventure story.

There are some things that distracted from my enjoyment of this book. The first was that the beginning is heavily weighted in description rather than dialogue so it felt slow to get moving. The second was that the Rootshooters who live in the darkest places of Arborem are written with a dialect. Some of that dialect was difficult to read and because I was deciphering it rather than reading it, I felt that it removed me from the story in those times which was a shame.

My favourite character in the story was Ark's best friend Mucum. He is lovable quick-witted fool who lightens some of the darkest scenes. The characterisation in this novel was eccentric and I loved that about it. Even the villains are well-layered which is often something that I think gets overlooked in children's fiction.

Ravenwood has the feel of returning to traditional fantasy adventures. Maybe it is the coming of age story? Maybe it is the lean towards literary fiction rather than commercialism? But then, what better way to write a book that considers the themes of man versus nature? I think the target audience will love this book. It reminded me of Tunnels and Toby Alone. And yet it can more than stand on its own two feet as the tale of one boy learning the truth about who he really is.

Ana Florez says

final grandioso, inicio desastroso
