



The Last Siege

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A chance encounter on the snowy slopes of a castle moat throws together three lonely teenagers: Emily, Simon, and the highly enigmatic Marcus, who is the catalyst for all that follows. At first the castle's ruins are merely the backdrop to a day in the snow. But when the three break into the forbidden interior of the keep, they find the castle taking on a different and deeper meaning. Despite the freezing conditions, they spend the night there, to experience the power of occupation. But when the re-enactment gets out of control and a very real siege ensues, their playful dare soon turns into a frenzy of nightmarish action.

The Last Siege Details

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B-zee says

Ending macam apa ini?! Yah, tapi cerita di balik masing-masing karakternya cukup menarik. Dan kisah petualangannya cukup seru kalau bukan karena faktor luar (di luar buku ini) yang mengganggu hari-hari ini. 3.5 bintang deh.

Nina says

After Bartimaeus, I expected something as grand as it, in terms of stories, characters, plots. I was greatly mistaken. I don't know what's the point of the story. Did Marcus tell his friends the real story about his injury and abuse? If he lied, why? I really didn't get it.

Melissa says

WHAT is the point of this book? Mr. Stroud, I read this because I'm a fan of the Bartimaeus Trilogy. I adore Barty, and I love Nathaniel and you broke my heart by killing him in the end... HOW COULD YOU!!!! See, I love the story and I'm so affected by the characters. But this- The Last Seige--huh?

Why write it even? You didn't write anything about the characters that would make me care for them and what they will do. The characters are underdeveloped and did not earn anything from me as a reader. I can't feel for them, much less care how they will end up. There's a lot of historical info in your story here, but sadly you have weak characters and a feeble plot. The story's end only made me question why did you have to write this pointless story? But I forgive you. What's one unimpressive story? Please do keep on writing more 5stars worth of books!

Daria says

I had been expecting something along the lines of time-travel and an actual siege of the old castle ruins in medieval times. This sort of adolescent story does not appeal to me (they never do, I confess), but there's no denying that Jonathan Stroud's writing is nothing short of brilliant, as always.

Jenn says

I attempted to read this but it was so tirelessly boring I couldn't finish it. I enjoyed the Bartimaeus Trilogy and although those books had their moments of flagging enthusiasm, they had rousing plots, the resolutions of which I looked forward to discovering. Halfway through The Last Siege I never had a clear understanding of what was at stake for the characters-- what was the plot? what was the conflict? why should I care? I really wanted to enjoy this book, but it just seemed to go on and on describing things that were happening without ever even accidentally creating a sense of narrative. Is that even possible? Stroud manages it here.

Grundanlage sind auch die Charaktere der Protagonisten in Ordnung, Emily emotional, aber vernünftig, Simon begeisterungsfähig und tatkräftig, wobei Marcus manipulativ und fantasievoll zugleich ist. Dennoch bleiben die drei seltsam flach und entwickeln sich nicht in vollem Potenzial. Allein Emily, aus deren Sicht wir die Geschichte miterleben, zeigt Züge von Reflexion und Weiterentwicklung in ihrem Charakter. Was ich am meisten vermisst habe in Die Eisfestung ist der Humor und Sarkasmus, der Jonathan Strouds andere Bücher durchdringt, sei es die Bartimäus-Reihe oder die Geisterserie um Lockhart & Co. Es ist, als hätte der Autor hier bewusst ernsthaft mit seinem Thema umgehen wollen. Aber untertitelt als Thriller bleibt die Geschichte dann doch ziemlich bodenständig und vorhersehbar, die Spannung gerade im Showdown springt nicht so recht über.

Stephanie says

A bit boring until the big climactic finish. I didn't like Marcus pretty much from the beginning. Also, from the back of the book I thought there would be a supernatural element to it, so I was a bit disappointed on that front.

Ashley says

I can't help worrying that Stroud spent all his humor and creativity on the Bartimeaus books. I want so bad to really enjoy his other work but it tends to leave me a little disappointed. This book had many fun and redeeming plot developments, but ultimately it crash landed in a pile of doo doo at the end. The story was about three early teens who end up sneaking into a castle and staying the night. It had some nice camping and ghost story qualities which I loved, but the characters were a little under developed and not exactly endearing. Don't you hate when fictional characters do stupid stuff and make the wrong choices? Not to mention the moral of the story might have been that sometimes kids aren't really abused, they are just calling wolf, so be weary of alleged child abuse...um, I don't think that is the best message. Oh well. I refuse to give up on you Stroud, but please, do better next time.

Camille says

Meh, really disappointed with this story. Had an interesting premise that fizzled out. I have enjoyed Stroud's other books.

Robin says

Three present-day teens are thrown together in the last defense of a medieval castle—each one lonely for a different reason. Emily is an only child whose schoolmates either pick on her or ignore her. Simon is the youngest child of a big, blue-collar, trouble-making family, who often gets picked on at home. And as for Marcus... well, he's not even from the West Norfolk village where the children sneak onto the grounds of a ruined castle for a bit of sledding and snowball-fighting. No one really knows much about him, except that his imagination is sparked by the romance and mystery of a castle that entertained kings, withstood sieges, and even hosted its very own ghost story.

Though Simon is the natural trouble-maker and Marcus is captivated by the castle, it is Emily who instigates the break-in. It's only a matter of a bit of rope and a climb up to a first-floor window. (That's one floor up from ground level, for those of us reading on the left side of the Pond.) The first time they get in, they explore the layout, discovering such points of interest as the murder holes, through which the castle's defenders could shoot arrows straight down or pour oil on the heads of their attackers. Another time they remember to bring enough supplies to stay overnight, building a fire and munching sandwiches in a room that hasn't seen overnight guests in over three hundred years.

With each visit, they run greater risks of being caught by their parents or turfed out by the caretaker. But on their third visit to the old castle, things go right out of control. Marcus turns up bruised and frightened, claiming that his father had beaten him for lying about where he was on the night of the sleepover. He says he has run away from home and claims the castle as his refuge. Then Marcus's father shows up looking for him, and brings policemen and others to aid in the search. What else can Em and Simon do than stand by their friend?

And so the castle faces its last siege, defended by three desperate children armed with little more than sticks, stones, snowballs, jugs of water (perfect for making ice-slicks in the frozen corridors), and an intimate knowledge of the ruins. Thanks to one boy's overactive imagination and his two friends' trusting nature, what might have been only a short prank pulled by ill-behaved youngsters becomes an all-out emergency—a one-day war—and, in a surprisingly powerful climax, a taut-strung, life-or-death drama.

The author of such supernaturally souped-up tales as *Buried Fire*, *The Leap*, and the Bartimaeus trilogy, here proves that literal magic does not a magical story make. The power of storytelling, demonstrated through the stories Marcus tells within this story, is a magic to be reckoned with. There is a line between romanticized history and outright fiction, between lie and delusion, between courage and madness, no less wonderful and dangerous than the boundaries of the land of Faerie. And when it comes to pulling someone back from the brink, there is nothing like the voice of a friend.

Ashlyn Ahrendsen says

Three kids--Emily, Simon and Marcus, find themselves wanting to discover an old abandoned castle. They live in a town with not much to do, and so one day they decide to cross over the walls and explore. Marcus knows much about this castle and tells them of a siege that happened 300 years earlier. After a fun night in the castle, they leave and go back to their normal lives. Soon however, Emily and Simon notice smoke coming from the castle's chimney and discover Marcus has once again crossed over. They go searching for him and find Marcus all beat up. Marcus tells of how mad his father was at him for coming home so late after the night in the castle (which of course he didn't know about). Marcus swears he'll never go home, so after police and his father show up at the castle, Marcus, Simon, and Emily find themselves in their own war--
- The Last Siege.

This book had absolutely no character development. We learn a little about Marcus, but nothing about Emily and Simon. I liked the idea of the story, but felt it dragged on and wasn't necessarily engaging. I would have much rather liked a shorter book with much less details, or a larger book with more plot, and character development. Wouldn't recommend this book.

Annika says

Ich weiß gar nicht wo ich genau anfangen soll ... Vielleicht erst mal mit dem positiven. Die Idee der Geschichte war nicht schlecht und hätte durchaus Potenzial gehabt es zu einem (Jugend-)Thriller zu machen. Der Schreibstil war ganz gut, wie man es von Jonathan Stroud gewohnt ist und sorgt dadurch schon für kurze Spannungsmomente. Dadurch auch 1 Stern.

Nun leider zu dem großen negativen Aspekt dieses Buches. Erstens fand ich die Charaktere Emily, Simon und von allem Markus ganz schrecklich. Es soll sich um Teenager handeln, die sie meiner Meinung nach eher wie bockige Kinder aufführen und total irrational handeln. Für keinen der Protagonisten konnte ich Sympathie entwickeln. Es war einfach nur schrecklich. Zweitens kommt dann die schwache Geschichte, die sich von schlimm langweilig zu noch viel schlimmer entwickelt. Teils hat mich der ganze Plot sehr gelangweilt und teils, vor allem gegen Ende der Geschichte, einfach nur stark frustriert, weil ich es einfach nur so blöd fand. Ich hätte in manchen Augenblicken das Buch am liebsten an die Wand geworfen. Zu guter Letzt kann ich nur sagen, dass das Buch überhaupt nicht hält, was es verspricht. Unter einem Thriller stelle ich mir etwas anderes vor. Auch wenn es einen Jugendthriller darstellen soll, kann ich mir nicht vorstellen, dass irgendjemand diesem Buch auch nur im entferntesten etwas abgewinnen kann.

Ich lese selten Bücher, die mir so absolut nicht gefallen, daher auch die "harten" Worte. Ich kann es nicht empfehlen und muss ganz klar sagen, da ist die Zeit und das Geld besser in ein anders Buch investiert. Für mich also ein absoluter Flop.
