



Magic's Child

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In the third installment in the Magic or Madness trilogy, the people Reason Cansino loves most are all in danger. Reason's mother, Sarafina, has disappeared from the mental hospital in Sydney with Reason's evil grandfather, Jason Blake. Jay-Tee, the closest thing Reason has to a best friend, has used all of her magic and faces death at any moment. Only Reason can find the answers within her family's magic to save everyone who matters most to her.

Magic's Child is a satisfying and thrilling conclusion to a breakout trilogy that launched to multiple starred reviews and earned spots on the 2006 BBYA final list, as well as the Locus 2005 Recommended Reading List.

Magic's Child Details

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Author : Justine Larbalestier

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From Reader Review Magic's Child for online ebook

Neelz says

Not a bad conclusion to the trilogy. A complex ending. All the narrators in Magic or Madness are unreliable; was there a happy ending? It's hard to say. Did Reason make the right decision? Also hard to say. An interesting departure from the usual young adult fantasy.

RebekahD says

I love the way the author put this book together. I liked how Reason explained that she was magic's child, and magic was the greedy one.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Jocelyn Pearce for TeensReadToo.com

At the start of this wonderful conclusion to a great fantasy trilogy, Reason Cansino is a lot of things most fifteen year olds aren't. She's magic. She's pregnant. And she may or may not be entirely human.

In this continuation of Reason's story, she is falling more and more deeply into the strange, ancient, and inhuman power given to her by Raul Cansino. She is becoming more and more scarily powerful--but she's giving up her humanity (and maybe that of her unborn child) for that power. She won't die young like so many magic-wielders who use their powers unwisely, and neither will she go crazy and end up in the loony-bin with her mother.

But is giving up her humanity worth it?

MAGIC'S CHILD is strictly a continuation of an already begun story. It is not a story within itself, really, and, as such, should only be picked up by those who have read the first two parts of the trilogy (MAGIC OR MADNESS and MAGIC LESSONS). If you haven't read those, well, they're highly recommended, as well!

Justine Larbalestier's third installment in the MAGIC OR MADNESS trilogy is a good conclusion to the story, one that will have readers racing through it as fast as possible. It was a little bit open-ended for my taste, but not in a terrible cliffhanger way. It was either a less than fabulous last chapter or a fabulous way to leave the door open for another book set in this universe; who knows? Either way, the characters, dialogue, and style of MAGIC'S CHILD are all great, it's well worth reading, and I'm looking forward to reading more from Justine Larbalestier.

Michelle says

While I zipped through this last novel in the Magic or Madness series in about a day and a half, for some reason I didn't think it had the oomph of the previous two. Maybe it's because the stupid DC Public Library system forced me to wait for this book for more than a year after it was published, and I'd therefore forgotten

a whole lot of what had transpired, but for whatever reason, I didn't love this one as much. It's still awfully good, mind you, and it wraps everything up very tidily, with just the teeniest bit of room for more books in the series, which is nice.

Lauren says

After having read all three in this series, I really think it would have served the story better if this had just been one longer book. I don't think the plot lines were strong enough on their own. And because the author has to do some recap material, some chapters felt very repetitive. Overall, the series was enjoyable; I had a really hard time putting them down. A few things bugged me though: Where had this Cansino guy been during the first story? How did Jason Blake know about Cansino? I wanted some more back story on the old man to help clarify his role. The story went from "oh magic is real, how do I use it" to "Cansino magic v. regular magic v. no magic" but how was this Cansino magic even created?

Kim says

This was a very fun and interesting series! My math-y brain really appreciated the Fibonacci stuff, and it was fun to read a series set primarily in Australia (because that doesn't come up that often!).

I don't know that I was ever, like, *blown away* during this series, but it fully kept my attention and was a thoroughly enjoyable read. Which sounds like damning with false praise, but honestly I promise it's not!! It was very enjoyable and really a great series for younger readers but it just didn't completely grab me and refuse to let me go. It was like floating down a lazy river versus going white water rafting: incredibly enjoyable, but not, like, exhilarating.

Maybe that made sense, maybe it didn't??? IDK man, I'm not a WORD MAGICIAN or anything.

Courtney says

A nice conclusion for the Magic or Madness Trilogy. I don't know if I just read Justine Larbalestier's books too fast, but this one felt rushed at times just like *How to Ditch Your Fairy*. I think perhaps I'm getting too excited. Maybe that's a good thing! I was pleased with the wrapup that it provided for the trilogy. I was still a bit frustrated with Reason jumping to conclusions without thinking things through or even asking questions. She made a lot of assumptions. I did like the way magic was explained, and the last couple of pages was great. While Tom and Jay-Tee were likeable in the first two books, in *Magic's Child* they were finally endearing. I feel like I got to understand their voices a lot more. Overall, I was glad to finally read it! I looked forever to find it. I think I would have liked it even more if I had been able to read it closer to the time when I read the first two back to back. It was a nice visit back to Justine's world of magic.

Shelley says

I have taken my time with series. I started it in college as a required reading (the first book) and found myself intrigued by the idea of you can either use your magic and die young, or you can not use it and go mad. I felt I just had to find out what happened to Reason, her family and friends.

I was delighted with the second book and I absolutely loved this last book in the series. I think the author did a wonderful job wrapping up all the loose ends of the storyline and I walked away with a sense of finality. This is what I want with a trilogy and I can honestly say that I would be more than happy to re-read this series again in the future.

Adam says

Young Adult novels are so much better now than I remember them being when I was an actual young adult. I recall reading some S.E. Hinton, but not much else.

The "Magic or Madness" series by Justine Larbalestier is one of the best fantasy trilogies I've read; YA or not. All of the books are well-paced, exciting, and feature well-drawn, believable characters.

The story focuses on 15-year-old Reason Cansino who discovers very suddenly that magic is real. More than that, she is a magic user. In the word of the books, however, magic is a double-edged sword. Use it and it will shorten your life; but if you don't use it, you'll quickly go mad. For the most part, we watch as reason figures out how to use her magic, and how she avoids other magic users who would steal her magic so they could lengthen their own lives.

Besides Reason, there's a whole host of supporting characters, some who wield magic, some who don't, but all who lend their support in making this an exciting story.

I would pay heed to the Young Adult label and would share this with kids who are at least in their teens, as there are some plot elements that might raise uncomfortable questions from a younger reader. But once your kids (or you) have finished the Harry Potter series, this is a great series to pick up next.

Kate Gordon says

While I enjoyed this series overall, ultimately I found it problematic. *SPOILER* The sudden and sweeping decision that magic is "evil" felt like a cop-out; Larbalestier missed a great opportunity to explore a moral grey area - something that would made both the story and the characters more complex. I also wish there had been some discussion of the issue teen pregnancy; it's understandable, in context, that the women in her family have tended to have children early. However, the whole thing was a bit creepy and another missed opportunity. There was never any discussion or even a thought as to how Reason would take care of a child, go to school, live her life, etc. Again - an interesting premise in the series overall, but some serious missed opportunities to make this a more interesting story.

Jaemi says

The Magic or Madness trilogy was a really fun one to follow, as the stories are told from multiple points of view and all the characters are so different and full of life.

Reason Cansino had an unusual childhood. Always on the run from her grandmother, Esmeralda, she and Sarafina (her mother) never stayed in one place too long. They also never settled anywhere "normal." So while Reason has an innate talent for Math, that about covers her schooling. The other main rule of her life has been that magic doesn't exist. Except that it does, and her mother's refusal to use hers has driven her mad. Which leads to the series' beginning: Reason is sent to live with Esmeralda, as Sarafina had been committed to Kalder Park.

Over the span of two weeks, Reason's life changes in more ways than most could hope to handle.

Not only does she lose her mother, move in with someone she's been bred to hate and fear, and learn that magic is real and she has it, she makes two new friends, barely escapes destruction, inherits a creepy ancestor's magic, and, oh yeah, gets pregnant to boot.

Which is where we pick up in *Magic's Child*.

Thanks to her family's magical status, Esmeralda could tell pretty much immediately that Reason had conceived a child. And both can tell, thanks to her ancestor's intervention, that said child is changed by her new magic as much as she is. From essentially normal girl, to bald and glowing in a matter of days, being pregnant is almost the least of Reason's problems. But she still feels she should head to New York to explain to the father.

She catches Danny on his way out, set to catch a plane to Australia, as it so happens. But she can't bring herself to tell him why she's come. Instead, the conversation takes a rather dire turn, as Danny explains that what happened shouldn't have, that she's too young, and he's not really fit for commitment.

Add into this painful mix the visit from the social worker which didn't go so well, and the upcoming academic test no one had told her about, and you wouldn't be surprised that suddenly Reason seems to spend a lot of time chundering. Realizing it's actually caused by her magical changes doesn't make her feel any better--and does.

In the world of Raoul Cansino, everything is space and light. Pure magic. The human needs and feelings aren't there. Which is a blessing and a curse, for someone who has more stress than she can handle, but friends and family she deeply cares about.

And this is the ultimate struggle. To let go or hold on. Save her mother, her friends, or let them be, to fail or live as life would have it. To give in to this new world to the point she can't come back, or to shut out the magic and remain in a world that now feels heavy and dull.

This was a really great book; by far the best of the three. One of the best endings to a series I've read in awhile.

Nikki says

I don't know if I've been expecting more out of this series than I should've. But *Liar* had everything I wanted, and I was using that to judge Larbalestier's work as a whole... It was just my thing, I guess, and this trilogy wasn't, at least not to anything like the same degree. It was fun to read, and the moral ambiguity and the unreliability of nearly everyone does make it more complex than I'd really considered. We're told what people *think* magic is: we never get an objective answer. We never really know who has done right.

I still feel like this whole trilogy went by too fast, without getting its hooks into me. I didn't get engaged with Reason's transformation -- it didn't have the sense of drama, of desperation, of things coming unravelled, that I think it was meant to. And the end of this book just ravelled up everything so neatly, all in one, with so few jagged edges. Everything's okay. Of course Reason isn't upset that Danny doesn't really want her. Of course everyone gets healed. Of course there's one dad here at the end who isn't a total deadbeat...

Liar left me with a sense of unease, which I liked. There's a bit of that here, but I just didn't feel as jerked about and emotionally engaged, I guess. I'd definitely read this trilogy first, before Liar, if I wanted to get into Larbalestier's work.

Marian says

Disappointing ending to this fun series, a little too rushed feeling and add in a weird touch of religion?

Doris says

first read July 14, 2009

This book was very interesting at first, but just got weird towards the end. I was reminded somewhat of other books, but this left without a good closing. Not recommended for the age group for which it is intended.

Especially irritating is the use of Aussie slang which is not obvious and is never explained (although some of the very obvious is explained in a glossary at the end).

----- update 2014 reread-----

3rd in series

This YA book started off with a great story, using the current issue as a means to build the character image and history of their time together. Not having read the previous books, I saw that this 3rd book succeeded where others have failed: the author did a wonderful job bringing in the events from the previous 2 books in the series without making it sound boring or lame. There was obviously quite a bit that happened in the past, and that is understandable. No one works with a tabula rasa, so we need to accept that our characters did not just appear.

The characters themselves were well drawn, and for the most part were truly believable. I saw the denial of the younger magic users of the eventual result of too much magic use: like all teens, they believe they are indestructible.

I also saw the true life parallel in the desire to save their family, and restore the life they had, or wished they had.

The only real issue I had was with the character "Danny". Although he was a repeat character from previous books, we did not get enough of a feel for him for the eventual resolution (view spoiler).

Seplucid says

Konflik keseluruhan sih emang ga luas cuma mencakup keluarga dan teman-temannya yang dianugerahi /

dikutuk oleh sihir turun temurun. Penggambaran sihir leluhur Cansino dan dunianya oke, suka. Endingnya juga lumayan. Magic or Madness, what will you choose? or should the magic make a conclusion itself for you?? Not bad.
