



The Graveyard Book

Neil Gaiman , Dave McKean (Illustrator)

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

The Graveyard Book

Neil Gaiman , Dave McKean (Illustrator)

The Graveyard Book Neil Gaiman , Dave McKean (Illustrator)
IT TAKES A GRAVEYARD TO RAISE A CHILD.

Nobody Owens, known to his friends as Bod, is a normal boy. He would be completely normal if he didn't live in a sprawling graveyard, being raised and educated by ghosts, with a solitary guardian who belongs to neither the world of the living nor of the dead. There are dangers and adventures in the graveyard for a boy - an ancient indigo man, a gateway to abandoned city of ghouls, the strange and terrible floor. But if Bod leaves the graveyard, then he will be in danger from the man Jack - who has already killed Bod's family . . .

The Graveyard Book Details

Date : Published September 28th 2010 by HarperCollins (first published September 30th 2008)

ISBN : 9780060530945

Author : Neil Gaiman , Dave McKean (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 327 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Fiction, Horror, Childrens, Paranormal

 [Download The Graveyard Book ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Graveyard Book ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Graveyard Book Neil Gaiman , Dave McKean (Illustrator)

From Reader Review The Graveyard Book for online ebook

Will Byrnes says

When a family is murdered by a mysterious killer, one of the intended victims is missing, a young, diapered boy, who had wandered off just before the crime took place. But the killer needed to complete the job. Fortunately for the boy, he was taken in by the late residents of a nearby graveyard. And when the spirit of his newly deceased mother asks for their help, the residents agree to raise her son. He is given to the care of the Owens couple and named “Nobody,” Bod for short, as he looks like “nobody but himself.”

Neil Gaiman - from The Verge

In this Newbery Medal, Carnegie Medal and Hugo Award winning novel, it takes a graveyard to raise an actual corporate being, and there are many who chip in. Perhaps most important is Silas, resident of the worlds of the dead *and* the living. As Bod grows there are many interesting sorts who cross his path, a young witch lacking a gravestone, an unscrupulous dealer in antiques, a snake-like protector of a long-dead master, and an array of teachers. And there must, of course, be a girl, Scarlett by name, a living girl. Bod does venture out into the unprotected world beyond the graveyard gates, not always with permission. He wants to go to school like other kids, and does, with mixed results. He wants to buy a headstone for a friend who lacks one. He wants to spend time with Scarlett. As he enters his teen years, he determines to find the person who had killed his family.

This is not your usual coming-of-age story. Bod is indeed a likeable kid, good-hearted, innocent, easy to care about. One of Gaiman’s inspirations for this story was Kipling’s *The Jungle Book*, with Bod as Mowgli and the graveyard residents substituting, sometimes generically, for their animal counterparts in the earlier work. There is a section equivalent to Mowgli having been kidnapped by monkeys, a werewolf might be Akela. Bod’s nemesis is the killer Jack, the Shere-Khan of this tale. Each chapter jumps in time, and we see Bod take on new challenges as he ages. Of course, his home being a graveyard, the challenges he faces are not pedestrian. And finally, he faces an adult, mortal test that will define whether he actually gets to come of age or not.

There is so much in *The Graveyard Book* that is just flat-out charming that you will find, as I did, that your lips keep curling up at the corners. From Bod trying to find properly fitting clothing, to struggling to learn some of the unusual skills the locals have mastered, to coping with some of the lesser baddies who make life difficult for those around them, Bod will gain your allegiance and your affection.

The baddie, Jack, is a purely dark sort. No gray areas there. And that makes the central conflict one of pretty much pure good, against completely pure evil. There are plenty of moments of real danger for Bod and that keeps tension high. But there are nuances to other characters that add color and texture to what might otherwise have become a flat gray panel. These additions add heft to the story, and make one wonder larger thoughts about the limits of change, of redemption. This one is easy to recommend, to kids of all ages, but don’t wait too long. You never know when it might be...you know...*too* late.

PS – Disney has acquired the film rights for this and it is likely that it will emerge, someday, with a look similar to that of *Coraline* and *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.

=====EXTRA STUFF

Links to the author’s personal, Twitter, FB and Tumblr

The official website for the book

Neil Gaiman reads the entire book

This Literary Wiki page seems rather slight

I also reviewed Gaiman's

-----Stardust, briefly, a few back

-----The Ocean at the End of the Lane in August 2013

-----Trigger Warning in March 2015

-----The View From the Cheap Seats in June 2016

Valerie says

This is how it usually goes with me and Neil Gaiman books:

Scene: at the library.

Picks up Stardust and reads back flap... thinks, "hey, this looks like a great book. What an interesting idea for a story..." When actually reading Stardust: bored.

A couple months later. At the library.

Picks up Neverwhere... thinks, "hmmm. This looks really interesting, but that's what I thought about Stardust. Well, maybe I'll give him one last chance." When actually reading Neverwhere: stupid last chances!!!

So I was a little hesitant to pick up The Graveyard Book. Again, the idea is interesting - a toddler's family is killed, and he's raised in a graveyard by ghosts - but Gaiman's books have seemed interesting to me before. So it's with gratitude that I say:

Finally. FINALLY! To me, this book (at long last) connected. I loved the characters and the concept, and the actual text seemed to flow and be more engaging than the previous books I'd read. I'm glad I gave Gaiman's books one more last chance after the last last chance. I may even try one more.

Jayson says

(A-) 83% | Very Good

Notes: A bit too short, and the illustrations don't really work. Still, it's a fun, light and whimsical take on its macabre milieu.

emma says

Ho-ly shit. You guys!

<https://emmareadstoomuch.wordpress.co...>

I just managed to get through a book - a whole freaking book - with no blatant sexism, racism, homophobia,

girl-on-girl hate, instances of the beloved not like other girls trope, love triangles, flat characters, overused archetypes, that plotline where you discover your power and it's consuming you, gag-worthy romance, weird writing quirks, overwrought emotion, social issues used to make it seem ~profound~, apocalyptically bad characters, or plot slowness. In the year of our Lord two thousand and seventeen.

I'm in shock. I have gotten so freaking used to hating books - and it's not even that I choose to! It's just...what are the chances of a book not containing one of those things? If you take my 2017 reading challenge so far as your not-so-random sample (I'm in a stat class, can you tell?), the chance is 2/36. Because out of the 36 books I've read this year, this is only the second I've given five stars. So I guess I'm really covering my bases on the negatives. No one can call me problematic, baby!

But anyway, there's good news in that paragraph of sad - besides just how woke I am. The good news is that **this book is essentially perfect**. According to my tried-and-true method - the one that skyrocketed me to fame, you guys - *The Graveyard Book* just full on *rocks* in every category. So let's go through those categories!

First, the setting. (If you somehow have managed to see this review without seeing my *Caraval* review, 1) congrats and 2) I've declared settings to be my favorite thing.) This book takes places in a *motherf*cking graveyard, baby*. (Let me know when I've said baby too many times. Oh, it already happened? Yeah, fair.) Anyway, graveyards are cool as hell. Setting a book there? Specifically in one with thousands of years of history and a historic monument on the grounds? Even cooler.

And you know what graveyards mean, guys. *Ghosts*. YES, I AM INTERESTED IN A BOOK THAT CENTERS ON GHOSTS. ANY BOOK. GIVE ME ANY GHOST BOOK. But especially one that starts off with a ghastly death. (That's not a spoiler. It's literally the beginning of the book.) Anyway, this is everything I love combined.

So, as I mentioned with an excess of enthusiasm a second ago, almost every character in this book is a ghost. Or at the very least, the type of creepy little thing that spends most of its time in a graveyard. (A handful of human characters who are probably Tim Burton fans included. It seems like Tim Burton fans would force themselves to hang out in graveyards just for the aesthetic. You feel me?) Anyway, it should go without saying that the characters are great. They're graveyard inhabitants.

This book also has a little bit of *magic* in it. MAGIC, I SAY! A very cool kind of magic. It gives you a hint of the creeps when it happens. I'm not going to say any more than that! Read to find out, as my elementary school librarian would say.

Other than that...this book is *bananas* well written. An absolute pleasure to pick up. The title is great. (More

books should just be named The Subject Thing. Like The LEGO Movie. That was a successful film. Take a hint.) Also fast-paced. Made me feel emotions. (A truly rare occurrence.) Cute ending. What more can I say?

Bottom line: READ THIS BOOK. READ IT READ IT READ IT. I never like anything and I loved this.

Ariel says

I just don't think Neil Gaiman can write something I won't enjoy. His worlds are so rich and visceral, his characters so unique and loveable. I loved this story, loved Bod with all my heart, and was proud of him as he grew up. I listened to this audiobook, narrated by Neil Gaiman, and it was top notch. Can't wait for my next

Meredith says

****SPOILER ALERT****

This book was entirely mediocre. The plot was disjointed and very loosely woven throughout the story, and much of it didn't make any sense. Details (what few details there were) seemed to be added at the last minute to make later events in the story make sense. It's almost as if Gaiman wrote the middle first, then the beginning, and then the end. I think he had a million ideas floating around in his head and had no idea how to connect them all, so he made up some stuff on the fly.

Also, I'm willing to accept a large amount of non-sensical information in a fantasy novel, but there has to be some sort of explanation behind it. For example--if a boy lives in a graveyard his entire life, what happens if he needs to go to the dentist or take a shower or get vaccinated? Somehow, everyone reacts completely normally to the protagonist, even though he must be a filthy, smelly toothless wreck. Also, at the end of the book, the ghosts just kind of release the main character into the world--the boy who is only 15 and has had almost no formal schooling in his entire life. What is this kid supposed to do with himself? He's been getting his education from people who've been deceased for at least 150 years and has nothing on him but a little money and a passport. Yeah, I'm sure he'll do REALLY well on his own.

Anyway, I didn't think it was a bad book, but it certainly wasn't a good one, and it was WAY below Neil Gaiman's usual standards.

Patrick says

Recently, on a car trip with my little boy, I decided to try listening to an audiobook.

In the past this hasn't been a success. He loves to be read to in person, both picture books and chapter books. But he not a fan of listening to books in the car. At best he's indifferent, but usually he just asks me to turn them off.

Generally speaking, he'd prefer to listen to Macklemore's Thrift Shop, which he calls "The Sway Music."

But he's four now, with a vocabulary that's diverse to the point of being a little creepy. (I taught him "cruft" yesterday.)

So I plugged in the Audio of Gaiman's Graveyard book. For those of you who don't know, Gaiman reads his own audiobooks more often than not. Lovely accent aside, he's fucking amazing at it. Really irritatingly good.

We listened to it for about 10 minutes or so, then I heard him saying, "Dad? Dad!" from the back seat.

I sighed and turned it off, I expected him to tell me that this was boring and we should stop. Or that he wanted to listen to the Sway Music or one of his, as he puts it "Kid CD's."

But it wasn't anything of the sort, instead he said. "Dad! I'm listening to the story and I can see the pictures in my head!"

"Really?" I asked.

"Yeah," he says. "It's like a movie!"

I couldn't be happier. Neil Gaiman as his first audio. My boy has good taste. "What does it look like in your head?" I ask.

"There's a hill, and on the top of it there is a fence and a graveyard!"

We talk about the story for a little bit. He's slightly confused on some points: he thinks the boy's name is Jack, and he thought that the man who was coming to hurt the boy was invisible except for his hand. (Which is understandable, given the way Gaiman describes things, focusing on the hand and the knife.)

But generally he was getting it. More importantly, he was enjoying it.

I know this because for the next couple days, whenever we got into the car, he asked if we could listen to "the story of the boy that lived in the graveyard."

Yes, yes we can.

Val...Shameless.Skanky.B*tchy. says

4 Stars

Me reading has been all over the place lately. I have been reading a lot of adult fantasy, YA fantasy, and just straight up middle grade books...and very little romance. For whatever reason, this is just what I have felt like reading.

This was a cute, if creepy, little book. It was for me what I expected *The Little Prince* to be, but alas, wasn't. I really liked Bod and all the characters of the graveyard, especially Silas. I also enjoyed Gaiman's writing style - which is a good thing, since I bought this as part of a four book box set. I look forward to reading the others.

denial, says sober I. But I've certainly seen a distinct rise in the Gothic and otherworldly over the last few years, and one wonders if it's because kids want more of that kind of stuff or publishers are merely getting less squeamish. All that aside, generally I'll read a May Bird book or an Everlost title and they'll be fun examinations of the hereafter, but not the kind of things that touch my heart. Great writing doesn't have to transcend its genre. It just has to be emotionally honest with the reader. And *The Graveyard Book* is one of the most emotionally honest books I've yet to have read this year. Smart and focused, touching and wry, it takes the story of a boy raised by ghosts and extends it beyond the restrictive borders of the setting. Great stuff.

It starts with three murders. There were supposed to be four. The man Jack was one of the best, maybe THE best, and how hard is it to kill a toddler anyway? But on that particular night the little boy went for a midnight toddle out the front door while the murderer was busy and straight into the nearby graveyard. Saved and protected by the denizens of that particular abode (the ghosts and the far more corporeal if mysterious Silas), the little boy is called Bod, short for Nobody because no one knows his name. As he grows older, Bod learns the secrets of the graveyard, though he has to be careful. The man (or is it "men"?) who killed his family could come back for him. Best to stay quiet and out of sight. Yet as Bod grows older it becomes clear that hiding may not be the best way to confront his enemies. And what's more, Bod must come to grips with what it means to grow up.

Can I level with you? You know *Coraline*? Mr. Gaiman's previous foray into middle grade children's literature. Come close now, I don't want to speak too loudly. Uh... I didn't much care for it. WAIT! Come back, come back, I didn't mean it! Well, maybe I did a tad. It was a nice book. A sufficient story. But it was very much (new category alert) an adult-author-to-children's-author-first-timer-title. Gaiman appeared to be finding his sealegs with *Coraline*. He took the old Alice in Wonderland trope which adult authors naturally gravitate to on their first tries (see: *Un Lun Dun*, *Summerland*, *The King in the Window*, etc.). Throw in some rats, bees, and buttons, and voila! Instant success. But *Coraline* for all its readability and charm didn't get me here [thumps chest:]. I didn't feel emotionally close to the material. Now why it should be that I'd feel closer emotionally to a book filled with a plethora of ghosts, ghouls, night-gaunts, and Hounds of God, I can only chalk up to *The Graveyard Book's* strong vision.

My husband likes to say that the whole reason *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* worked as a television show was that it was a natural metaphor for the high school (and eventually college) experience. Likewise, *The Graveyard Book* has this strong, strange, wonderful metaphor about kids growing up, learning about the wider world, and exploring beyond the safe boundaries of their homes. There's so much you can read into this book. I mean, aren't all adults just ghosts to kids anyway? Those funny talking people whose time has passed but that may provide some shelter and wisdom against the wider, crueller world. Plus Mr. Gaiman also includes characters in Bod's world that kids will wish they had in their own. Silas, a man who may be a vampire (though the word is never said) is every child's fantasy; A mysterious/magical guardian/friend who will tell you the truth when your parents will not.

One thing I particularly liked about the book was the fact that Bod makes quite a few careless or thoughtless mistakes and yet you don't feel particularly inclined to throttle him because of them. Too often in a work of fiction a person isn't properly put into the head of their protagonist. So when that character walks off and does something stupid there's the sense (sometimes faint, sometimes not) that they deserved it and you're not going to stick around and read about somebody that dumb, are you? But even when Bod is at his most intolerable, his most childishly selfish and single-minded, you can understand and sympathize with him. Bod is no brat, a fact that implies right there that he is someone worth rooting for. We see our own young selves in Bod, and we root for him as a result. And as Bod reaches each stage in his growth, he encounters experiences and personalities that help him to reach maturity. That's a lot to put on the plate of a l'il ole fantasy novel, particularly one that's appropriate for younger kids.

And it is appropriate too. Don't let the fact that the first sentence in the book ("There was a hand in the

darkness, and it held a knife”) put you off. The murder of Bod’s family is swift, immediate, and off-screen. What remains is just a great fantasy novel that has the potential to appeal to both boy and girl readers. Kid wants a ghost story? Check. Kid wants a fantasy novel set in another world appropriate for Harry Potter fans? Check. Kid wants a “good book”. That’s my favorite request. When the eleven-year-old comes up to my desk and begs for “a good book” I can just show them the cover and the title of this puppy and feel zero guilt when their little eyes light up. A good book it is.

I guess that if I have any objections at all to the title it has something to do with the villains. They’re a bit sketchy, which I suppose is the point, but we live in an era where children’s fantasy novels spend oodles of time defining their antagonists’ motivations and histories. Gaiman’s more interested in his hero, which is natural, but the villains’ *raison d’être* is just a bit too vague for the average reader. Honestly, if it weren’t for the fact that Bod’s family is slaughtered at the start of this tale you wouldn’t necessarily know whether or not to believe that these people are as nasty as we’ve been told.

That said the book’s a peach. I once heard someone postulate that maybe Neil Gaiman wrote it just so that he could play with the sentence “It takes a graveyard to raise a child.” Unlikely. Fun, but unlikely. I mean, he does make a casual allusion that isn’t far off from that phrase, but he never goes whole hog. This book doesn’t feel like it was written to back up a joke. It feels like a book written by a parent with children growing up and moving out. It’s a title that tips its hat to kids making their way in the world, their pasts behind them, their futures unknown. This is not yet another silly little fantasy novel, but something with weight and depth. The fact that it just happens to be loads of fun to boot is simply a nice bonus. Highly recommended.

Ages 10 and up.

mark monday says

Once there was a little girl who lived in a big house in a strange and wonderful city in the North. Her name: Dove Black*. An unusual name for an unusual girl. Her equally unusual mother took her away for the summer, across the sea. I came to that strange and wonderful city and stayed in that big house. In the house was a book. The Graveyard Book! I fell prey to an odd illness during my visit; while my companions made merry in the streets and taverns of that city, I recovered on the wide and sunny porch of that house, the clucks of chickens from the chicken coop and the laughter of the children playing on the street making me feel rather less lonely. I took The Graveyard Book down from the shelf and read it. It was perfect company. Indeed, it is a perfect book!

I’ll dispense with much of a synopsis because you can read that anywhere. An infant is taken in by a graveyard full of ghosts (and more); they raise him as their ward and son. As he grows up, young Nobody Owens learns a lot about death and a little bit about life as well. Gaiman notes *The Jungle Book* as an inspiration; I’m not sure I would have thought of Kipling’s classic myself but after reading that comment, it makes perfect sense, title and all. There, done with synopsis.

Many times I felt as if the book was tailor-made for a young mark monday, what with the eerie atmosphere, the ambiguity, the graveyard, adventure mixed with sadness, life and death existing side by side, and at the core of it all, an unusual and genuinely loving family – but a created family, not necessarily a family by blood. All those things appealed to me at a pretty deep level as a kid, which is probably why I really loved Bellair’s *The House With a Clock in Its Walls* as well. I wish this book had been around when I was younger; I can easily picture connecting to it in so many different ways.

But I'm an adult and I still feel a deep connection to the book. All those things above are still things that connect me to a novel, of course, but my feelings about many of those things have intensified.

The idea of a 'created' family, one that can come together for a variety of reasons but one that will look out for and support and love its members, one that embraces the difference of the individuals within that family... so meaningful to me! It's an idea that I didn't start experiencing until my early 20s, oh the life of a quasi-punk cynical jerk outsider who suddenly realizes that there are others out there like him, happy sigh, and it's an idea that I feel like I've tried to carry on with my adult circle of friends and within my work place. It's actually why I even chose my place of work. The Graveyard Book offers this found family as meaningful and valid and beautiful, much as The Jungle Book did. Gaiman doesn't bluntly pound the point home and he isn't mawkish or even all that sentimental about it all – but it is such a central part of what makes the novel work. And it is also what makes the ending such a sweet and sad one. Sometimes, perhaps always, you do need to move on. Some things are transitory. Sometimes those families that you spent so much time with melt away and stay on only as memories. But you can always make those families again! Yes.

Ambiguity: I love it and I yearn for it in books. The feeling that the author doesn't want to spell things out for you, that they realize the reader may gain pleasure from figuring things out on their own, filling in the blanks, imagining why something may have happened and what may come next. Not being spoon-fed every little detail and not tying it all up with a neat little bow. It seems like an easy thing to be able to do but I think many authors just don't want to do that. Perhaps they don't realize there is a sort of tyranny in excessive detail, in paths made painfully clear and obvious, fluorescent lighting rather than shadows and moonlight, endings that explain it all away instead of showing a newly opened door – an ending that leads to a beginning. That is one of the beautiful things about this book, that kind of an ending and the ambiguity of it all. Sure, it explained many things. But it left many doors open, for the reader to step through and explore on their own. Maybe this is also why I appreciate books written for children and young adults: because of the basic form of the genre, the actual length of such books, perhaps even because of the attention span of the audience... things often have to be left to the reader's imagination. I like simplicity that creates mystery, simplicity that is its own form of depth.

"Hello," he said, as he danced with her. "I don't know your name."

"Names aren't really important," she said.

"I love your horse. He's so big! I never knew horses could be that big."

"He is gentle enough to bear the mightiest of you away on his broad back, and strong enough for the smallest of you as well."

"Can I ride him?" asked Bod.

"One day," she told him, and her cobweb skirts shimmered. "One day. Everybody does."

"Promise?"

"I promise."

Death is not the end! I don't know if I believe in ghosts or heaven or a cosmic consciousness that we all float into. But I do believe in the somewhat corny We All Live On In Some Way, whether it be as memories or as influences or as just one more part of humanity that is connected to the rest of humanity because we are all humans. I dunno. The Graveyard Book literalizes that concept, of course. It does it in a way that can make sense to both children and adults – showing how things are forgotten, perhaps, and that's not so bad really, and it does it by showing how we live on in each other, by the things we do and the people we care for. Is

Gaiman a spiritual man? Surely he must be. There is a certain kind of spirituality to much of his fiction, an ease with and an interest in describing worlds that are larger than us – and yet he makes that greater world rather wonderfully prosaic, real, worlds we could actually live in, somehow. Some may think such things are depressing – or that a book that is set in a graveyard and that opens with death and where the dead live next to the living, all of that, that that is a depressing book. To me, it is the opposite of depressing. Death is a part of life; there would be no life without death. This book for children recognizes that and even, amazingly, celebrates it.

The book certainly knows how to illustrate Growing Up. Each chapter is a step forward, a snapshot of Nobody Owens as he grows up. At the end, it captures that wistfulness, that sweet sadness at the knowledge that growing up means you may never look at things the same way again, you can never go home again and if you do, that home will be a different place. That home may be a physical place, it may be a group of people or even just one person, it may be a feeling of being protected or a place where you learned and grew and loved and lived in a particular way. Good things to cry over. The tears may be melancholy ones, wistful tears – but yet not depressing ones, not to me at least. If anything, they affirm life. And growing up, or moving on, or going down new paths... it is also an adventure. I love how the ending makes that perfectly clear. Sure, shed some tears over what has passed and can never be again, but know that the future is still a path that can lead you to all sorts of places. It doesn't matter how old you are – old Silas is about to go on his own adventure too. And so Nobody is sad and moves on and is happy and moves on and he jumps onto that path and moves on.

Trudi said in her review “*Gaiman reminds me of why I love to read and I love him for that.*” Yes, Trudi, yes! Very well said.

After I finished the book, I looked through Dove Black's bookshelves and found many things that I loved. A lot of Philip Pullman, Susan Cooper's Dark Is Rising series, Narnia, books by Edward Eager and Louise Fitzhugh and Colin Maloy and Garth Nix, and of course Harry Potter and The Hunger Games. I admire your taste, Dove Black. I hope all of these books have informed your world view. But how could they not? They must. Your mother put your paintings and your awards on the wall and she should be proud: you are a talented young lady. I think you will grow up to be an equally impressive adult. I wish you the best of luck! But I really don't think you'll need it.

* A real little girl but of course not her real name. I tried to think up an approximate of her unusual name but I fear I have failed. Her real name is so cool!

Fabian says

The riproaring adventures of Huck Finn's wiser half-brother; Harry Potter's long lost second cousin. A Mowgli doppelganger, admittedly so.

When Tim Burton died*, the void was taken up, wholly, by Mr. Gaiman. When will "The Graveyard Book" become a film? Cannot wait to watch singin'/dancin' ghosts, not the usual recycled shit from some Disney classic. Hey, it worked like a charm with "Coraline"!

*career- & art-wise

Jason Koivu says

I've got a doctor's appointment scheduled for Monday. Maybe I'll ask what's wrong with me, I mean, why don't I love Neil Gaiman as much as everyone else?

After all the hype surrounding him, I finally gave in and started reading his books. Aside from his collection of short stories, *Fragile Things*, I haven't been as impressed as I expected to be.

The Graveyard Book in particular I found to be slow moving and depressing. Maybe that's inevitable being that most of the characters in it are dead. It's not that the writing isn't good.

Gaiman's stories generally aren't to blame, either, in fact there are some flashes of real ingenuity in some of them. *Coraline* and *Stardust* have been standouts for me personally in this respect. I have noticed that sometimes the scene description is lacking. There have been moments in the middle of a page where I've stopped and said "wait, where is this happening?" and when I "look around" all I see are a couple characters in a room about as decorative as the inside of this text block I'm writing in right now. But those aren't common occurrences and they're certainly not enough to sour the whole book.

I don't know, if the doctor can't help me maybe I'll seek a second opinion from the librarian.

Mark Lawrence says

I read this to Celyn but the 5* are from both of us. I think I probably enjoyed it more than she did in fact.

It's a fine book. I can see why it's done so well. The story is well structured, the brutal opening providing an orphan, a mystery, and an ongoing threat. Thereafter the book slowly cycles back around to its beginning and in the mean time raises our young Bod, equipping him with the skills to deal with his problem.

Bod's life in the graveyard is very interesting, with him learning various bits of magic and magical lore from the dead. With hundreds of ghosts spanning several thousand years there's all manner of opportunity for interest and I enjoyed Bod's interactions with them.

We watch Bod grow up, be educated, and make ventures into the living world. The whole thing crept up on me. I was gently entertained throughout but by the end I found myself really caring about the story.

The end was really quite emotional in that Toy Story III sort of 'leaving the nest' way that punches parents in the gut. I think Celyn got a bit irritated as I kept pausing to gather myself to read the next line.

Anyway. A curious and highly entertaining book thick with inventiveness and written with deceptive skill.

Join my 3-emails-a-year newsletter #prizes

....

Nataliya says

It takes a graveyard to raise a child. This is a summary of this magical, sweet and imaginative story for children, which (in a good tradition of the Brothers Grimm) started with a **triple homicide**.

“There was a hand in the darkness, and it held a knife.”

Neil Gaiman does not waste time with unicorns and princesses and butterflies which are often considered acceptable for children. He kicks off his book with the **brutal murders** of a child's entire family, written in a **chilling tone** that made me quickly turn all the lights on in my bedroom.

Nobody Owens (named so because *"he looks like nobody but himself"*), or simply Bod, is the sole survivor of the aforementioned triple homicide, who is, in *The Jungle Book* style, **promptly adopted by a sweet ghost couple in the graveyard inhabited by an afterlife community**. He even gets a vampire as his guardian and mentor - *“There were people you could hug, and then there was Silas.”*

Given the Privilege of the Graveyard and taught how to Fade into the background, Bod spends his entire childhood playing among graves, learning his letters from the gravestones, running into trouble with some ghouls, being tutored by a werewolf with a taste for Eastern European food, dancing with Death, and making friends with the ghost of a young witch burned at stake. He does crave human company though, and in addition to becoming an "imaginary friend" of a little girl also does a brief stint as a non-so-ordinary student at a school. **All this while the evil that tried to murder him in the first place is still searching for him.**

Neil Gaiman has a real knack for the imaginative combination of sweet and creepy elements together with the bittersweet ending, creating a **unique and unforgettable story which appeals both to children and adults**. Told via a succession of interludes from Bod's unusual life, the story could have been overly sugary or overly morbid, but Gaiman easily avoids either extreme. This story has just the right mix of sweetness, whimsy, sadness, suspense, and adventures to keep the reader captivated throughout.

Bod said, 'I want to see life. I want to hold it in my hands. I want to leave a footprint on the sand of a desert island. I want to play football with people. I want,' he said, and then he paused and he thought. 'I want everything.'

Seeing the world depicted through the eyes of a quiet graveyard-raised but very human boy **colors the story with almost Bradbury-esque feeling of nostalgia for the fleeting magic of childhood**. We see the inevitable process of growing up, finding one's self, and letting go of the comforts of childhood home written poignantly and sweetly, and yet without overkill.

“You're alive, Bod. That means you have infinite potential. You can do anything, make anything, dream anything. If you can change the world, the world will change. Potential. Once you're dead, it's gone. Over. You've made what you've made, dreamed your dream, written your name. You may be buried here, you may even walk. But that potential is finished.”

Bod is a great character for a children's story. He is smart and resourceful, quiet and observant, loyal and brave, somewhat mischievous, and ultimately very life-like. His demeanor reminds me of my awesome younger brother, actually. Watching him grow up from a sweet child into what seems to be an actual good

adult is a pleasure.

"You're brave. You are the bravest person I know, and you are my friend. I don't care if you are imaginary."

This story, even though wonderfully complete, still reads almost like a tease at times. **Gaiman gives us a delightful and lyrical glimpse into the world which I would love to get to know better.** He creates such rich captivating characters that even after the book is over I am left longing for more. I would love to read a whole another book dedicated to Silas or Miss Lupescu or Lizzy the witch. (*Mr. Gaiman, if you ever run out of other book ideas... just sayin'!*)

5 stars and a well-earned spot on my "for my future (hypothetical) daughter" reading shelf.

"There was a smile dancing on his lips, although it was a wary smile, for the world is a bigger place than a little graveyard on a hill; and there would be dangers in it and mysteries, new friends to make, old friends to rediscover, mistakes to be made and many paths to be walked before he would, finally, return to the graveyard or ride with the Lady on the broad back of her great grey stallion. But between now and then, there was Life; and Bod walked into it with his eyes and his heart wide open."