



The Music of Razors

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In nineteenth-century Boston, a young doctor on the run from the law falls in with a British confidence artist. Together—and with dire consequences—they bring back to the light something meant to be forgotten.

A world away in London, an absent father, haunted by the voice of a banished angel, presents his daughter with an impossible friend—a clockwork ballerina.

For two centuries, a bullet-removal specialist has wielded instruments of angel bone in service to a forgotten power . . . and now he vows to find someone else to shoulder the burden, someone with a conscience of their own, a strong mind, and a broken will. For a hundred years he has searched for the perfect contender, and now he has found two: a brother and a sister. Walter and Hope. Either will do.

Last night something stepped from little Walter's closet and he never woke up. Now he travels the dark road between worlds, no longer entirely boy nor wholly beast, but with one goal in mind: to prevent his sister from suffering the same fate as he. Only the creature he has become can save Hope. But is it too late to save himself?

The Music of Razors Details

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From Reader Review The Music of Razors for online ebook

neko cam says

It was just so very, very all over the place. The CONSTANTLY changing perspective was flat-out annoying; it meant that I'd spend a sentence or two of each and every new section with absolutely no idea what was going on. Hell, the perspective jumped between first, second, and third all within the same paragraph sometimes.

While some of the description was wonderfully illustrative, the majority of it was so convoluted and/or vague as to force me to re-read whole passages to try and garner even a semblance of the goings on. By the end of the novel I was so tired of doing this that I'd just push forward when this occurred.

I lost count of how many times various characters behaved in unrealistically stupid ways, though I won't explicitly discuss them for fear of spoilers.

At the start of the novel I thought 'Oh, okay, so the narrative is jumping around a bit? Starting several threads? That's cool, I'll roll with it', and around the half-way mark I thought things were *starting* to come together and make retrospective sense, but HOT DAMN was that wrong. The end was so messy that I just threw my hands up, exclaimed "FUCK IT!" and powered through it for the sake of completion.

Jessica says

Okay, so I enjoyed reading this book. Kind of. The words and phrases and visuals are amazing, the story is interesting and extremely creative and I applaud the writer on his bravery in writing this novel as his first publication. All right, so here is the reason I gave it only three stars. Although I can appreciate writing in a overtly personal voice, as though the author were building a journal of thoughts that can only be traced together by himself, but to do this to an audience is a little like telling your reader that you are far more creative than they are and that they will never truly be on your level. The character profiles were hidden in fantasy, and kept having vague conversations that were trapped in the idea that the reader could assume what was going on inside the author's mind at all times (which I found NOT to be true). But I did enjoy the monsters and fairy-tale like qualities of the book, as well as the Fallen Angel imagery, so I did enjoy it overall.

Shane says

Been reading this with Kelmy (my 13-year-old). It's pretty dark so far and so he loves it. About halfway in I could take it or leave it.

Well those are hours of my life I'll never get back. A little too surreal for me. I thought it might end up being something like Vellum: The Book of All Hours but in the end it just really didn't go anywhere. It seemed to be about a very big struggle between angels and god and humans, but then it focused on a really small scale where nothing was resolved at the end. As we got about 30 pages from the end I expected some really "big" events to happen and they did but they happened to really "small" people (even though they were the main

characters) so it really didn't seem finished.

Susan says

I found this on list of recommended steam-punk, a genre I'm exploring. The beginning was quite intriguing but by the time we got to the (shudder) evil creatures who stole dirty socks, I was ready for the book to end. I'm not sure if it really degenerated into incoherence, or if I was just turning pages too fast to catch the plot.

And what's with angel bones as a plot device, anyway? Recently read Danielle Trussoni's "Angelology" (as it has a Bulgaria hook) and there it was angel bones again as a key element. I think for the future I'm boycotting any book in which the quest for angel bones is featured.

Still, there's some good writing, and clearly a vivid imagination at work. I suspect Rogers will write better books in the future.

Juushika says

A student of medicine meets a group of "exceptional" youths, intent on contacting a certain spirit through their seances; a doctor, running from the law, meets a mutilated man and a friend from his youth; a young boy, consumed by his own childhood monster, becomes his sister's monster to save her from a shadowed man that wants her to take his place, living an eternal life and wielding magical tools made from the bones of an angel. In this debut novel, Rogers unites these three stories into one narrative that traces tools of extraordinary power down to a young boy and girl from our own era as they discover and create their identities. Delicately plotted, heavily atmospheric is a way that is both magical and haunting, this is a readable, richly conceived story. *Music of Razors* is not without its faults—the mythos is arbitrary, and the ending is rushed and lacks the art of the rest of the book—but on the whole this is a promising debut novel and I recommend it, if with some caveats.

The Music of Razors has two primary strengths: a delicate plot, and exceptional visuals. At first, the plot seems complex—too complex, certainly, for the book's length. But as it grows, it combines three stories, three timelines, into one coherent narrative. Rogers does this with skill, such as the independent introduction of each plotline naturally introduces all of the characters, making them both human and complete, and the combination of the plot lines is logical, uniting the storylines and simplifying the storytelling to manageable complexity without ever over-simplifying it. The plot shows careful planning and real artistry, and Rogers excels at both. The second strength are the images, and these are exceptional: exceptionally haunting, exceptionally pervasive, exceptionally conceived. The dim magical atmosphere and the unsettling, haunting images illustrate each aspect of the story but, to say it better, they do more: they draw the reader in and create the dense, mysterious landscape that he explores. Sometimes, these images are overdrawn or excessive, but on the whole they are the delight of the book. Fans of retold fairy tales, of authors such as Neil Gaiman, of dark fantasy will be drawn to and enjoy this text on the images, the atmosphere alone.

For these strengths, the novel has failing as well: an arbitrary mythos, and an increasingly rushed and incoherent conclusion. The mythos that the story is based on—the bones of an angel, murdered by another angel, which were turned into tools of semi-divine power—does not reference back to any real mythology, and only obliquely connects to Christianity. It is seems arbitrary because it indeed *is*, and this fact weakens

the supposed instinctual connection between the "extraordinary" students that draw together and removes the story from the religious and mythological plain that it claims to inhabit. However, even if the angel bones mythos is accepted at face value, its role in the book plays out in strange ways—at the beginning, it gradually leads the characters together and directs the key points of the plot; at the end, it directs every moment of the plot in actions that are little more than plot twists, and so are unjustified and unexplored and even strip away all intent and free will. This, combined with the increasingly fragmented narration of the book's last chapters, makes for an ending that feels both arbitrary and rushed. The book suffers for it: The plotting falters, as does the pacing and the storytelling itself; the skill of the book dissolves into a conclusion that feels hasty, unexplored, unsatisfying.

(I should also note that the text could use some editing—both to remove the fragmentary passages at the conclusion, or at least to unify them with the rest of the text, and to correct a few accidental shifts from past into present tense.)

I enjoyed this book, on the whole. I picked it up because of the Neil Gaiman blurb/recommendation, and was pleased to find an equivalent atmosphere—not a copy, not by a long shot, but rather an atmosphere and rich scheme of images that is equally enticing, dark, and atmospheric, and also magical but within our own mundane realm. Between this well-conceived atmosphere and the careful plot, *The Music of Razors* is an enjoyable read and a very strong first novel. I wish that the mythos had some sort of historical connection, and more than that I wish that the end of the book had shown the same care in plotting and in storytelling as is present in the rest. As a result, I do consider this a faulted book, and so I recommend with caveats: this is an atmospheric and enjoyable read, but it is far from perfect and feels a bit unfinished. I look forward to more from Cameron Rogers—I believe he does show great promise as an author

Heather says

Picked up on a whim. See, it's the angel's wings on the book cover that did it. Then I realized - oh. Fallen angels. And then - oh, another Melbourne author, with a K.J. Bishop quote on the back.

There are certain aspects of the story I *loved*, namely centered around Henry, and I think there are some lovely aspects to the novel overall - but I can't help feeling as if incoherency replaced surrealism here and there. This leaves the same taste at the back of my mouth that the overrated *Donnie Darko* did - the imagery and mood is sharp and clear when it needs to be, but the plot is a cloudy, confused mess, and maybe not as clever as it would like to think it is.

That said, I still found most of it quite beautiful. I was reminded of a less abrasive Clive Barker (ugh) at times, and a less indulgent Neil Gaiman. It makes perfect sense to me why a K.J. Bishop quote is featured on the jacket.

I'd recommend it. It's a quick read.

Benjamin says

This book was heartbreakingly beautiful. So much pain and sadness mixed with wonder, awe, jaw-dropping loyalty and stark, blinding true love. A novel written like it was entirely composed of prose and poetry, this

is one of my favorite novels.

Read it.

Jim Kratzok says

Interesting!

I liked the story quite a bit, but the ending left me a bit cold. Maybe I should re-read the last chapter but until then I was thoroughly enjoying the book.

Cindy Grant says

Brilliant. Imaginative. Original.

Daniel says

Picked up at the library on a whim, this was one of the most fascinating novels I've recently come across. It is wonderfully bizarre, full of potential, yet fails to manage to keep up with its aspirations. The spirit of the novel reminds me strongly of Neil Gaiman, very near his brand of story and his style, perhaps an emulation. Regardless, it ends up feeling like an emulation that can't reach the same magic. The plot is terribly complex and relayed in an often confusing narrative of shifting points of views, with many details kept from the reader to maintain a feeling of on-edge uncertainty that never becomes absolutely clear and coherent. I'd be eager to see what Rogers' talent is able to produce in the future, this showed a lot of exciting potential despite not completely working.

Scatterbug says

this is a book that requires multiple readings. going to start my fourth soon. it is initially confusing and rambling, and maybe it's my own fault it didn't all make sense in the first read (or even the second), but... the prose is amazing. the imagery is amazing. the story, once i got it, is amazing. this is a beautiful, powerful book. it left me in tears in the first 10 pages, and had me sobbing in the last ten.

Wendy says

Not my usual reading fare, but I'll give it a try. Getting tired of young adult fare, expand my horizons a little.

Update

Hmmmm....let's see....well.

Some reviews about this were about nice prose, beautiful descriptions. Well, look at me. I can string 7 beautiful words together: Lily pasture clouds descend fluffy pillow evergreen. Wow! I can write like Cameron Rogers!! Beautiful prose which makes NO SENSE WHATSOEVER!

Ah, the first 3/4 was a head scratcher. I can't say that I totally dislike sci-fi, or fantasy, but it has to be slightly understandable to be readable. Seriously, you have NO IDEA what this guy is talking about through most of the book.

I can't tell if this is just some long metaphor for a useless, futile life or what. On the one hand, I hate it when authors feel the need to spell out everything because they don't trust you as the reader to get it. But I equally hate it when authors are so random and artsy that they don't give you ANY CLUE as to what anything means or why.

It's supposed to be about a fallen angel. That is why I was interested in reading this. In a very roundabout way, I suppose it is. But then again, 95% of what happens in no way lets you know what is really going on. Or why. Or why you should care.

Rachel says

From the prologue:

"While riding his bike that afternoon, Walter had turned a corner very fast, and almost slid beneath the wheels of a passing milk truck. That was the moment Walter first realized that he could die. And this was the night the closet door first opened.

That's not to say the closet door had never been opened before, but it is to say that it was the first time it had opened by itself." (page 6)

There is in fact a very real monster inside Walter's closet. But the man in the long black coat assures Walter that one can make monsters go away. Tell it to go away... and it will. But the man in the long black coat is not to be trusted. Taking his advice sets Walter on course to grow up faster than any child should have to, and to face the evil in this world and beyond head on to right a snowball of wrongs that began with only two words: "Go. Away."

I initially checked out the Kindle sample of this book to see what it was all about. I read the first few paragraphs and the writing just hooked me. It's an unbelievably imaginative, yet dark and cautionary tale about the war between good and evil waged over the course of millennia. We are like pieces in a chess game who cannot see the big picture beyond the square we occupy.

This book was a whole new take on the monster under the bed and what the unseen world around us could be like. I can't emphasize enough how much imagination is behind this book. At times, it can get a little confusing, but then again, I think it lends itself to interpretation in that way, and adds to the surrealism of the story. Readers of gothic fiction and dark fantasy, do not miss this book.

Sonia says

The Music of Razors reminded me of *Donnie Darko*, *The Gates*, and *The Book of Lost Things*. If you liked any of those, I'd wager you're going to love this book.

It has a very disjointed, rambly feel. There is the quality of dreamy unreality and vagueness which sometimes irks my last nerve, but I think it works here.

There's something a little off about the work though that makes it not quite all-the-way "there" for me. Unfortunately I'm having trouble determining why I have that feeling. The writing was pretty. The fantasy elements were exciting. The characters were interesting and believable.

I enjoyed reading it.

Miramira Endevall says

I got this book from BookBub solely because of a blurb by Neil Gaiman. The thing is, I don't really share reading interests with most of my favorite authors, but for some reason Gaiman's recommendations have always been golden for me. So there you go - author blurbs really do work!

Which is good, because the jacket description is terrible. Advice for everyone to whom I send a copy of this book: Do. Not. Read. The. Jacket. Before. Reading. This. Book.

That said - read this freaking book. While dark and sometimes slightly confusing (I agree with some of the commenters that sometimes the shifting perspectives don't segue well), the story is fascinating and the resolution just lovely.

In some ways, I can't believe I'm giving four and five stars to so many books lately, but DAMN I've read some amazing stuff in the past couple of months. :-)
