



# Marvelous

*Travis Thrasher*

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## Marvelous Travis Thrasher

Brandon Jeffery's summer started out with a bang—as in, a friend crashed his car and now he has to work two jobs to pay it off. It's at Fascination Street Records that he's introduced to a beautiful but quiet girl named Marvel. She's new to Hidden Cove and looking for a summer job, so Brandon secretly strikes a deal with their boss to work for free so she can be hired.

When a classmate is found murdered, however, their summer takes a turn for the mysterious. Brandon's friend Devon is sure he knows just who's to blame: the creepy recluse of the town quarry. But the police have few leads, and Brandon has the sneaking suspicion he's being watched.

That's not what's in the forefront of on his mind, though. More than trying to pay off his car to his unemployed, alcoholic father and protecting Seth Belcher from the school bullies, he's determined to date Marvel. He doesn't understand why they seem so close and she refuses to date him, but as the mystery behind her tragic past begins to unravel, Marvel finally confesses her reason: God has revealed she's destined to die saving others—and it's going to be soon.

## Marvelous Details

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Author : Travis Thrasher

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# From Reader Review Marvelous for online ebook

## Jaime says

Started slow, better toward the end. Overall, a bit quirky.

### Full Review:

The story itself is intriguing, if a bit cliché (the whole small town, average kid falls in love with quirky new girl, and lots of ups and downs follow). The whole element of Marvel being extraordinarily different because of God gives the book a different feel than most other contemporary stories of the same vein. The first handful of chapters started off slow, mainly because of Brandon's first person POV narration. He really gets sidetracked sometimes telling parts of his story and life. Some of the random scenes of dialogue as his friends play video games or Brandon rushing around on his bike felt out of place and unnecessary and a lot of the plot isn't resolved at all in the first book. There's a lot of small plot strings that probably will come together in the end but aren't given any indication how in this book. Overall the story flowed well and kept me interested in the plot of the murders and this girl named Marvel.

For me, the characters were a bit tricky. I personally don't relate a whole lot to a seventeen year old boy that just likes to play violent video games and try not to make his alcoholic father mad. Brandon is definitely a punk kid. He doesn't know what he believes, he acts strong but sometimes isn't, he's just kind of living life (or getting through life), and he spends too much time ogling over a girl. His narration though is definitely a strong point of the novel to really get into a kid's head. I don't think it'd be the same story without him telling his story himself.

Marvel, on the other side of things, is hard to nail down. She's quirky and she's had a twisted life, but a lot of her character felt to be the author's way to preach the gospel. It didn't feel complete or making sense. She's still mysterious and I don't know a lot about her or what she's doing.

The rest of the characters are a mass of names without faces. I can see his father, even the record store owner and the kid being bullied, but Brandon's group of friends are all one mass. I don't have much to go on with them and I got them mixed up frequently.

Overall, it was an interesting story with good moments, cheesy moments, fear-gripping moments, and the glimpse of marvelous moments. I think it'd be a good fit for high school teens who are interested in contemporary stories with a twist of supernatural elements. The book does deal with darker content like violence, abuse, and murder, but for the most part it's clean and an easy read. I definitely was prompted to read book two: Wonder.

In addition, my favorite part is at the end of the book Thrasher included playlists of songs for characters and elements of the story since a main portion of the story is set in a records store. Very cool.

--Tyndale House Publishers has provided me with a complimentary copy of this book in exchange for an unbiased review.--

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## **Stoney Setzer says**

### **Good start to a series**

"Marvelous" is the first entry in Travis Thrasher's new "Books of Marvella" series, and it is quite an attention-grabber. A teenage boy living in the suburbs of Chicago meets a mysterious girl who fascinates him...all while the town is shaken to its core by the murder of one of his high school classmates. In time, he begins to realize that Marvel isn't just another girl, that one murder is only the tip of the iceberg, and that his life will never be the same. I'm looking forward to Book 2.

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## **Theresa says**

When, oh when is book 2 coming out?! I need to know what happens next!

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## **Lou says**

### **Reseña en español completa**

AHHHHHH!!! Love this book!!!!!!

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## **Nora St Laurent says**

I am a Travis Thrasher fan. I was first introduced to Travis through his earlier novels titled The Water Mark, The Second Thief, The Promise Remains, Three Roads Home, Blinded, Letters of War, Home Run and Then I read Isolation. This book wasn't like his others. I'm a chicken at heart so reading scary stories is not something I seek out. This author has added an element to this novel that wasn't in his other stories.

Travis Thrasher is a talented author that has written many types of genre's well. He's written love stories, mysteries, horror, movie novelizations and coming of age novels. I was thankful for the review copy of Travis Thrasher's new YA novel so I thought I'd give it a try. I'm glad I did. Marvelous is the first book in a new YA series called Marvella. I was hoping since this was a YA series Travis wouldn't be too graphic and dark like he was in the book Isolation. I was right. I was hooked from the start, check this out.

"The worst feeling in the world is being stuck. Stuck in a place you know you can't leave, stuck in a position with no power. Stuck being a person you'd never trade places with."

"Summer's barely begun, and I already feel like some kind of prisoner."

The author has set the tone of the book. It's written in Brandon's pov and in first person. This is the summer before Brandon's senior year. A friend totals his car, he's now working two jobs to pay his parents back for the car. He had not planned on the string of unfortunate events. Brandon feels strapped until Marvel walks into the Fascination street Record store he works at.

Marvel is beautiful and fascinating. She wants to work at the music store. He goes to his boss Harry and pleads for him to hire her. Braydon gets his wish. Soon he discovers there's more to this beauty. She's fun, mysterious, complex and tight lipped. He tries hard to earn her trust! He wants to date her.

Braydon is a guy I instantly liked. He's a hard worker and takes time to watch out for people, like Seth Blecher; who's being beaten by school bullies. Braydon had to help. He does his best to be there for Seth.

Braydon is willing to endure his Father's drunken abuse. He hopes it will protect his younger brothers. He keeps this abuse a secret, which makes him loathe his father. He dreams of the day this violence will stop.

Then a school mate's body shows up by the river. No clues as to who did this horrible thing to Art. He was Braydon's age; a nice guy. This turns the small town of Hidden Cove upside down. Nothing like this has ever happened. Braydon talks to Marvel about this and then Marvel feels she compelled to share a secret with him. One she hasn't share with anyone. Braydon handles the news with grace and compassion.

Then another teen's body shows up dead in a similar fashion by the same river. This is a game changer for Marvel. She tells Braydon about the call on her life. In order to do what God's called her to do it she'll be required lose her life to save someone. Braydon doesn't know what to think.

I enjoyed this novel it reminded me of the love stories this author has written in the past. It was fun, tender and complex. The author gives a glimpse of big events looming over head that will most definitely appear in the next books in the series. Wonder is the next book to be released January 2015.

This Ya novel is filled with mystery, and adventure. It's a coming of age novel with a hint of romance, a sense of humor; a serious side too as they deal with the two dead teens, and a supernatural thread. This author talks about relevant topics for teens today – abuse, sex, drugs, alcohol, bullying and has them think about where will they spend eternity? I felt that the novel; Marvelous is the “set-up” book for the series. The author took his time in sharing what he did so readers will get to know this fun diversified cast. You can't help but get attached to Braydon and Marvel their love story and how they deal with life and their friends.

I found myself rooting for Braydon and Marvel as they try to navigate life separately but are being drawn together. I was anxious about what will happen next for them and the people of Hidden Cove. I was afraid of what the author will surprise readers with next. At the same time the author did give hints about the dark yet hopeful story to come. He ends this book on a cliff hanger and a few questions to think about. On the last page there are two audio playlists. One a Fascination Street Play list and the other is for Marvel. Let the fun begin. Travis Thrasher is a versatile author I enjoy reading. I'm so glad he's connected with a young audience and speaks their language. Mark you calendars' to read the next installment of this mysterious series.

Disclosure of Material Connection: #AD Sponsored by publisher.

I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 “Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising”

Nora St Laurent

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## Joana Felício says

4.5

READ THE ORIGINAL REVIEW ON MY BLOG: <http://thebookaddictsblog.blogspot.pt...>

I got this ebook from Netgalley in return of an honest review.

At the very end of last year I posted a review of *Wonder* by Travis Thrasher and I genuinely enjoyed it, but I felt like something was missing. It made sense, given that I later discovered that it was actually the second book in The Books of Marvella series. After I came upon this information, I immediately requested the first book, *Marvelous* from Netgalley and I couldn't be happier to review it right now.

I have stated this before, but I'll say it again: I don't usually read Christian fiction, and I'm not a religious person, but I truly appreciate different points of view on the matter and this series is one of the finest examples of what I'm trying to say. The truth is that I didn't know *Wonder* was Christian fiction, and if I had known, despite what I just said, I probably would have missed a wonderful story (see what I did there). That would have been a shame, as this is quickly becoming one of my favourite series and it makes me sad to see it be underappreciated and sometimes ignored due to its categorization.

First of all, my favourite thing about these books is its different considerations of religion, through the eyes of very different characters, with very distinctive opinions, so it's not necessarily a Christian book to its core. Anyone would be able to appreciate the shapes and perspectives this subject takes throughout this book and also the fact that it's not exactly the core purpose of the book. There are so many layers to Marvel and her story that is actually difficult to describe them to someone who hasn't read it, especially in this first book, where we get to meet her through Brandon's eyes.

Secondly, it's impossible to talk about this story without mentioning the incredible set of characters created by Thrasher and the subplots they create with their mere existence. They are all fantastically rich and the simple ways in which the author demonstrates their character development is a treat to read. His writing style is lovely to read and goes perfectly with the story he is telling, reason why I honestly consider Travis Thrasher to be a fantastic writer that not enough people have had the pleasure to meet.

The humour and the flawed teenage characters make them so very relatable and we find ourselves seeing our own problems and flaws in them, true representations of young doubt, love and growth, a reason to thank Thrasher for writing such a brilliant book.

If you have not yet read this book, especially if you didn't do it because of the Christian label, ignore all skepticism and dive right in. There is no doubt everyone who does is bound to come out changed and touched in the end.

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## Melissa says

Brandon Jeffery's life is not exactly enviable. His dad is abusive, his friend totaled his car, and the summer before his senior year is going to be spent working two jobs to pay his parents back for his wrecked car. Life is not exactly going as Brandon would like. However, what promises to be a rather bland summer takes an interesting turn when Marvel walks into Brandon's life. She's beautiful, mysterious, and like no one he's ever met. But behind her bright personality is a haunting past that she's reluctant to let anyone see. With a new friend in Marvel and the murder of two young adults lingering over their small town, Brandon's final

summer in high school turns out not to be so bland after all. In Travis Thrasher's latest young adult novel, *Marvelous* is wonderfully brooding with strong spiritual themes and very likable characters.

I can't believe *Marvelous* is 350 pages long. With very little effort, I easily read it in two days. This book is really well done. The opening provides a quick hook for the story and instant love for Brandon. The chapters are short, but leave the reader with a strong desire to continue. The writing is so smooth and natural—it honestly feels like Thrasher put no effort into writing it. This is really an intelligent book, streamlined in its layout, feel and execution.

*Marvelous* has one of the best opening chapters I've read in awhile. It sets up the story perfectly. In just a few pages, the reader sees Brandon's unfortunate home life, but also his noble personality. A brooding tone is set that's carried throughout the book and leaves the reader a little uneasy. The first chapter truly sets the stage for a great character and the turmoil that follows.

Brandon is such a complex, interesting character and really makes this book easy to read. He is willing to stand up for virtual strangers, but unwilling to stand up to his father. The reasons he will not stand up to his father add depth and make him even more likable. However, despite his personal life, there is this average teenage quality to him. He has a group of close friends, mostly respectful to adults, and can get easily infatuated with a hot girl. He's just a dynamic character that moves this brooding story in a positive direction.

Marvel's character is good as well, but more than anything she provides a natural conduit for the spiritual aspects of this book. Her backstory is fascinating and I love the way Thrasher gradually introduces it. The mysterious element that she brings to the story serves nicely as a means to unfold truths about God, His plan, and His purpose. The exchanges between Marvel and Brandon are excellent and impart a lot of truth.

*Marvelous* has some similarities to Thrasher's previous series, *The Solitary Tales*. They are both dark stories which feature a somewhat snarky teenage boy with a rough home life, infatuated with a gorgeous girl. But I personally like *Marvelous* a bit better. Brandon can be sarcastic, but he also has respect for authority. He is goo-goo for Marvel, but he's not as dramatic about his affection as Chris was. Overall, the balance in his character makes him a more enjoyable hero. Readers of *The Solitary Tales* series are definitely going to want to pick this one up.

I really enjoyed *Marvelous*. It's a quick, easy to read novel with great characters and good themes. The mood is nice and melancholy and the suspense keeps the pages turning. I'm definitely looking forward to the next book in this series.

Review copy provided courtesy of Nav Press

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### **Bethanie O'Dell says**

*Marvelous*, Book One of the Book of Marvella Series. Travis Thrasher. NavPress: 2014.

Brandon might be your typical soccer playing teenager on the outside but on the inside he's falling for a beautiful Christian girl with an insane mission while trying to balance his home life with an alcoholic father and his two summer jobs. To add to the drama, a body, classmate Artie Duncan's body, was discovered down in the river and Brandon's best friend Devon is playing Sherlock Holmes instead of keeping his nose out of

the investigation.

Marvelous takes place over the summer and is written in first person with Brandon as the narrator. One of the things I appreciated about the narration was the honesty. Many of the details that the reader discovers are through Brandon's dialogue and encounters with the other characters in the book. I thought this was a wise decision to have one character be the readers main source for information because there were so many side stories (the dead body, Marvel's family life, and Brandon's alcoholic father) that would have been distracting if told from several points of view.

I was a little frustrated that the series is named after Marvel, and although she has the most interesting storyline and most well developed character, the story follows Brandon. I didn't care so much for Brandon as the character and was disappointed that he was the main character. I liked him as a main character but compared to Marvel, he was a bit bland.

I was extremely disappointed in the end of the book, I felt like I invested a lot of time into the plot and characters but one of the biggest plot lines is left open. Possibly for the sake of the book being a part of the series but as a mystery the book doesn't stand on its own. I would recommend this to any young adult reader interested in a general Christian fiction story that involves a family story, teenage romance, a growing faith, and mild suspense.

Readers Note: I received this book from Tyndale Publisher in exchange for this honest review.

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### **Brooke (i blog 4 books) says**

I've been on a YA kick this summer, so I was excited to read Marvelous by Travis Thrasher. And since this is the first in a series, I was really hoping to love it so I would have a few more books to look forward to. While Marvelous started with an interesting plot and unique characters, I quickly became bored with the story. Personally, I felt that the story just moved along too slowly. By the end of the book, which ended without resolving ANY of the plot lines, I was pretty frustrated. Honestly, I felt like this was just a really long prologue or prequel to the series. Yes, things are set up quite nicely for the series, but I don't think I'll be going back to read the rest. I just needed something ... more ... from THIS book, not just preparation for the next one. [2 stars]

*I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher through Net Galley in exchange for my fair and honest review, which I have given.*

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### **Yo Leo Ficción Cristiana says**

RESEÑA EN ESPAÑOL

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## Anneliese says

This book is more of an introduction to the series than a stand-alone novel. *Nothing* is resolved by the end. There are so many filler chapters that are nearly identical in content - either Brandon with his friends, or Brandon with Marvel/thinking about her/dreaming about her/talking about her, etc. There is nothing to move the story along. If I had known this would be a sort of prequel, I'd be more willing to continue with the next one in the series. Unfortunately, finishing the book and realizing I'd have to get the next one for a conclusion was a discouragement. I won't be reading the second book.

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## Melek says

Daha kurguya dayanan, Türkçe inceleme için buradan.

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I didn't like the book. Like, did NOT like it, a few steps before seriously disliking. I found nothing I expected and I was bored as hell.

Problems?

### First, the plot.

It didn't work for me at all. I did read the synopsis before requesting it on NetGalley, but I expected more of a suspense kind, like, ordinary townie-quiet town-murder trio and bam! Everyone suspects everyone. Meanwhile, our guy finds a girl he can trust and *scene*.

We have nothing like this.

Instead, we have a guy drooling over the girl who says she doesn't want to get *involved* with him, but acts like she wants it every way. Murders? Nah, forget about them, we have Marvel.

The book is not just about Marvel, of course, we have a stupid Barton, curious Devon and another guy I keep forgetting as friends of Brandon, his abusive father, always-working mother, siblings we don't know much about, and Harry the boss, Seth the weirdo who gets bullied all the time and... You get the point. We have plenty of characters, but since he is all over her and nothing or no one else, we don't really get to know any of them apart from the father. And yes, that was the **characters** part.

**The writing?** I must say I liked it. I have no idea why, but I did. He kept saying *yeah, sure*, but apart from that, I liked the sincerity of Brandon. He was like a close friend for me, I could sit and chat with him for a few hours. Unless he talks about Marvel, of course. Then I'll have to kill him (view spoiler).

To sum up, it had good characters and a nice writing, but lacked of interesting plot and interesting... well, interesting *everything*. Sorry, Travis Thrasher, but that's the truth. It was nothing more than a 3/5.

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## **Liz says**

The mystery in the book is amazing in my opinion but i do agree with some that it is a little boring with the story line. But once you read the second book it starts to not be boring anymore and it starts to make more sense.

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## **Lyndon says**

As others have pointed out, this is book one of a three novel series and is incomplete as it stands. It's well written (YA, first person guy POV), slow moving like the high school summer it describes, full of tension, mystery/thrills, family drama, friendship, and unrequited romance. Unfortunately, none of the threads are tied up at the end, so if you plan to start this book be prepared to continue on to parts 2 and 3 for the rest of the story. I have a feeling it will be worth the read, just FYI.

It's also a novel with spiritual themes - a Christian story but not "clean and squeaky." If you're looking for inspy, this is not that. It's real. The protag doesn't think of himself as a believer but is attracted to Marvella, a girl who talks freely and naturally about wanting to hear and follow God. Tough themes and topics are woven into the narrative, so should really appeal to today's modern reading teen.

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## **Kathleen (Kat) Smith says**

Ever since reading the Solitary Series from best-selling author Travis Thrasher, I knew I wanted more! Something that you find yourself going back to again and again in memory of a great series. He has done just that with the Books of Marvella Series and I couldn't be more excited. Not sure how I missed knowing these were coming out, but now, I know they will be just as good if not better than the Solitary Series was.

Marvelous is the first novel in the Books of Marvella series and begins with the life of Brandon Jeffrey, the oldest of three boys in the Jeffrey household. He is on summer break before heading into his senior year, one he is looking forward to completing in more ways than one. For Brandon it's not just about graduating, its about freedom from his abusive father who spends all his free time, drinking instead of looking for work. It is all Brandon can do to find ways to stay out of the reach of his father's drunken outbursts, which he hides from his two younger brothers and his busy hard working mother, a lawyer who can only see the best in him.

Brandon is struggling to find jobs to pay back the loan his parents provided him to buy a car, which was totaled when he loaned it to a friend. His father intends to ensure that Brandon pays all the money off this year and seeks to remind him of it whenever he gets the chance. Through a seemingly random coincidence, Brandon runs into Marvella Garcia, who goes by the name Marvel at Fantastic Street, a record store where he offers her a job even though it's not his decision. He decides she is so worth knowing he will find a way to get his boss Harry to hire her just to keep her around.

In between dealing with his father, the town of Appleton learns that a young boy Artie Duncan has been brutally murdered. While the police struggle to find suspects, they ask that all teens stay inside after dark and stay in groups. Brandon is your typical high school boy with an unbeatable crush on Marvel who insists that she only wants a friendship with Brandon. He only hopes in time he can convince her to possibly go on a date, while trying to keep the local football bullies from beating up a timid nerd named Seth. Brandon

wonders if these same bullies could be the ones responsible for the death of Artie seeing as they love intimidate anyone they can.

I received Marvelous by Travis Thrasher compliments of NavPress, a division of Tyndale House Publishers for my honest review. I did not receive any monetary compensation for a favorable review and the opinions contained here are my own. This is such a realistic novel as told from the eyes of Brandon Jeffrey. He has his own issues to deal with coming to terms with how to handle his father, and being able to be truthful when he needs to. Trust is a big issue here, and it takes confiding in Marvel to help him come to terms with his own deep dark secrets. But the town of Appleton is hiding its own secrets while the murder investigation continues. I love the emotions that come through in each character that comes to life in this series, from the bullying of Seth and how he struggles to handle it each time he runs into the football team, to Marvel sharing her insight into what has happened in her past that has lead her on a path for God. I can't wait for the next novel Wonder which is the second book in this amazing series. Solitary Tales fans? You will definitely want this one!! I rate this a 5 out of 5 stars!!!

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