



Rise of the Shadow Stealers

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Fletcher and Scoop are Apprentice Adventurers from the ancient establishment of Blotting's Academy on Fullstop Island, the place where all story characters are trained. The trouble is, they can't remember how they got there.

It's the first day of term, but the two apprentices soon realise something is wrong. Things are going missing, including their own memories, and Scoop has the unsettling feeling that something is creeping in the shadows.

As the children search for answers, they become entangled with the life of the Storyteller, the island's creator and king. They journey to his wedding banquet and find themselves uncovering a hidden past. What is their connection to this mysterious man? And is there more to him than meets the eye?

Rise of the Shadow Stealers Details

Date : Published January 25th 2013 by Our Street Books (first published November 30th 2012)

ISBN : 9781780996943

Author : Daniel Ingram-Brown

Format : Paperback 216 pages

Genre : Fantasy



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From Reader Review Rise of the Shadow Stealers for online ebook

Sarah Swales says

I wasn't sure what to expect from a short story, as I'd never read one before. Mr Ingram-Brown is a fabulous author and his stories have completely captured me. Both books I've read have had me hooked and as an avid reader, I can honestly say that they are one of the best series I've had the pleasure of reading. I thoroughly look forward to reading more!

Sian P says

This book has everything...danger, magic, mystery, plot twists and stories. The latter is not much of a surprise in a story book but this one is set on Full Stop Island, the place where all story characters are trained, meaning there are stories around every corner. Stories within stories, stories about stories and stories that have long been forgotten.

The main characters, Fletcher and Scoop, wake up to find they are apprentice adventurers at Blotting's Academy where all is not as it should be. The shadows are growing and things are going missing but nobody seems to be taking it seriously. It's up to Scoop and Fletcher to investigate and find out what is going on. Where are the shadow's coming from? Who is the story teller? What is the golden feather? Through their adventurers, helped along by their mentor, the Yarnbard, the forever young Lady Wisdom and the dessert-resembling Quill sisters, amongst others, Scoop and Fletcher uncover stories back to the beginning of the island and beyond.

Will they complete their quests and make it to Alethea in time or will the dark and dangerous Grizelda put a stop to their adventures?

This was the first time in a long time that I haven't been able to put a book down. When I did have to, I spent the whole time I was away from it thinking about what might happen next. I am looking forward to the next one...get writing Dan!

Ian Fraser says

I really enjoyed this book, Ingram-Brown's writing style is more enjoyable than JK Rowling's. Clever plot, numerous characters to get to know, a layered and colourful story, with good use of imagery. Compares favourably with other authors such as Ursula Le Guin (A Wizard of Earthsea), and even CS Lewis's Narnia stories, both of whose books have spiritual messages, and CS Lewis's also having a Christian theme running through them, though they stand on their own without reading the Christian theme into them, as does Ingram-Brown's Rise of the Shadow Stealers. They are better for having them in, though, and understood.

Fe Murray says

I received a free copy of this book from the author for an honest review on my blog. No payment was exchanged, although some very good conversation was had.

Rise of the Shadow Stealers is one of those books that you would never normally find but somehow stumble across - or in my case, get sent a copy after a Twitter connection - and reading it makes your week. The premise is charming, fanciful and wonderfully meta: set on an island where fictional characters are trained to fit their roles in their respective novels, Fletcher and Scoop team up for a quest to restore their lost memories of their lives before they were at Blotting's Academy and to attend the wedding of the mysterious Storyteller.

I have to say I found Rise of the Shadow Stealers rather surprising, and not in a bad way. I came to it assuming from the cover and blurb that it would be children's fiction (not that that's a bad thing in the slightest. Critics sniffily dismissing something as children's fiction irritates me no end). It's actually quite sophisticated for that genre though, interweaving a delightfully whimsical fantasy plot with more mature themes, like maintaining morality in difficult times and finding your purpose, and drawing heavily on religious symbolism and metaphor throughout. This can get a little heavy-handed in places, particularly the religious parallels, but for the most part it's skilfully interwoven with the fantasy narrative that means you can read it on whatever level you'd like: whimsical fantasy, Christian literature, good old fashioned morality tale and so on. A lot of reviews made comparison to the Narnia series and I can definitely see their point. Rise of the Shadow Stealers stands on its merits as a charming fantasy novel, but it really comes into its own when you delve deeper and think about the messages behind it all.

While the plot is technically about Fletcher and Scoop's quest to reach the Storyteller's wedding, it's as much about their growth as characters as it is about getting from to B. This is a world inhabited by purposeful stereotypes (the infinitely wise but slightly batty old mentor, the outrageously evil witch, and even one character who proudly identifies herself as a Snob), who can at times feel a little 2-D by themselves, but this does help to emphasise the fact that the two protagonists develop naturally and realistically enough that I was really very fond of them by the end. Their flaws are what make them important as characters, and so they're nicely fleshed out and allowed to make mistakes. Fletcher in particular undergoes some notable development, and his transformation is well handled and enjoyable to witness, because the characters, like the rest of the book, are charming and you find yourself really rooting for them as they undergo their quest.

The real triumph of the novel, however, is the world building. You can really tell that Ingram-Brown had great fun creating Fullstop Island (which is just the most adorable name ever) from the ground up to create a setting that lives beyond what we see in the story. It's my favourite kind of world building too, where tiny details and minor characters are fleshed out beyond just filling their role to advance the plot, even if they just appear in once scene. Particular favourites of mine were the batty and slightly weird ladies who run the tea shop and one very special character who appears at the end, who you will have to read the book to find out about. If nothing else convinces you to give Rise of the Shadow Stealers a go, the joy of its construction should be all the persuasion you need.

You've probably noticed the common theme in this review: 'charming'. You can't help but enjoy yourself while reading this book, and I would recommend it to anyone out there who needed a little cheer to brighten their week. I'm definitely looking forwards to the sequel and what Daniel Ingram-Brown has up his sleeve for his characters next.

Sarah Morris says

A very lovely readable book. It grabs you within the first page and keeps you on the edge of your seat the whole way through! The characters are fab and connect really well with the reader. There's adventure, mystery, comedy, theatrics, madness and more as the story develops and there's not a moment of boredom to be had by readers old and young alike.

As a child I would have loved this story and as an adult I appreciate it's beauty all the more. Would (and have) recommend this to everyone who enjoys stories!

Peter Lane says

I loved it - I must be a teenager (I'm not!)

I'm REALLY hoping that, unlike ROTSS, the second book, which is being written now, doesn't take 4 years to make it onto the bookshelves.

This book had it all - Magic, Mystery, Joy, Sorrow, goodies, baddies, heartbreak and romance.

WARNING the cover is made of glue - I couldn't put it down.

Emily says

I'm going to be completely honest and say that I had absolutely no idea what to expect from Rise of the Shadow Stealers. In a way, I think that was the perfect way to go in and start this sweeping adventure. It will appeal to kids and that kid inside of you who never really grew up and likes to remind you of the happy carefree days of your childhood (just me?). From the first page I was entranced by the story.

We start off with Fletcher and Scoop, a boy and girl (respectively), who wake up in their rooms at Blotting's Academy on the mysterious and imaginative Fullstop Island. They have no memory of how they got there but they (and us) are quickly swept up in the action as they learn they are now attending a school that will teach them all about stories: to tell them, be told them, and even become part of the stories. Fletcher and Scoop are appointed Apprentice Adventurers and are quickly on a quest to figure out why they can't remember anything, and also to help right the dark injustice that has settled on the island.

The less I say about the plot, the better. It's best just to learn along with Fletcher and Scoop about the island, and the role of stories and characters to the story line. The author writes with such ease and his descriptions are beautifully worded, whether they are describing a hilarious and colorful character or a heart-felt moment. I especially enjoyed his descriptions of Fletcher and Scoop: he is described as resembling an exclamation point and she of a question mark. It's creative and wonderful little bookish details like that that made me happy to know an author was honoring the world of literature. He has peppered in such little homages to the world of reading throughout the book. There was also such a clever twist near the end that brings a whole new (and yet very familiar) world into the mix.

Should you read it? Yes, you should! Everyone loves a good fantasy/adventure series. It will be a big hit with kids, and with adults who can appreciate the classic literary acknowledgements and will get a kick out of them (I certainly did). This series has my stamp of approval on it. If you've ever wished you could go on a quest and explore a land of stories, this book is for you! And while you're there, have a tankard of Noveltwist for me :)

Charlotte says

I should probably start off by saying that I never usually read books of this genre, so I was completely unsure what to expect when I started reading it. However I am always willing to give anything a go, so I was still looking forward to reading it.

To begin with, I was a little worried that I wasn't getting into the story; probably mainly because it is such a different genre, and because I've been reading books recently with a much higher age demographic. There were elements that I was intrigued by though; characters not remembering anything from their past, and waking up in a place they don't recognise. The two main characters, Scoop and Fletcher, are students of Blotting's Academy and discover that they are partners. They set off to find their mentor – the Yarnbard, which is a character that I really liked – and went on an adventure full of twists, turns and dark caves to find the mysterious Storyteller.

Although I felt like I wasn't going to get into the story at the beginning, I quickly became hooked. The amount of plot twists and events happening in every chapter made me not want to put the book down because I wanted to find out what was happening next. The characters and settings were described in a way that made the images perfectly clear in my mind, so that I had an image of everything I was reading. There was one part that I loved and I could really clearly picture because it reminded me of MMORPG games that I'd played a lot in the past:

“She saw a stream of strangely assorted characters heading passed her, away from the village. Some were Academy students dressed in their red tunics, and others were obviously islanders or villagers. There were tradesmen and women: a baker, her apron and cloth-cap covered with flour; a cobbler, half-finished shoes hanging around his neck, and a man carrying an axe.”

Towards the end of the book the story took some strange turns and it was great! Some things happened that I didn't expect at all – and when that happens in a book, I prefer it so much more than the ending being predictable.

Overall I really enjoyed reading this book! It's very easy to read so it's great if you don't want something that feels like a slog to get through; the story flows well and the twists and turns will keep you engaged until you turn the last page.

Visit my blog at <http://wonderfullybookish.wordpress.com> for more bookish things!

Lara Lillibridge says

A Potteresque fantasy with an ensemble cast, RISE OF THE SHADOW STEALERS is an imaginative novel with an interesting premise—the students at school are learning to be characters in stories (hero, adventurer, underdog, snob, etc.). There's a nod to homeschooled with the concept that the academy "can't be confined to bricks and mortar." (pg.70)

The story is focused on Scoop (female) and Fletcher (male) two apprentice Adventurers. While there are

teachers and adults, it is really up to the children to solve the puzzles to save the world.

This book conveys a strong positive message without coming off as heavy-handed or formulaic.

This book has some of the richest world-building I have read!

I'd recommend this book for upper middle grade/younger YA. There is some darker content that may not be appropriate for younger readers.

I look forward to reading the next book in the series.

Thanks, Net Galley, for providing a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

Nathan Dring says

If you haven't yet got around to reading 'Rise of the Shadow Stealers' then re-prioritise your time. A great, multi-layered, easily accessible, all age adventure. Brilliantly written with amazing imagination that you can't help but get wrapped up and carried away in. The next book can not come soon enough! This book is a fantastic showcase of a brilliant talent. Original, profound, exciting! More please Mr Brown!

Susan Angela Wallace says

Review to come

Marina Magdalena says

Every chapter of this book is filled with mystery, adventure and suspense! The journey across Full Stop Island captivates the reader with its quirky characters, dangerous exploits and philosophical reflections. Without doubt, every 11 year old needs a copy, and every parent should borrow it! I'm looking forward to a sequel :-)

Me says

This book was received through MissLiterati.com (from the publisher) for an honest review. No favours, money, or birds were given.

Rise of the Shadow Stealers definitely started off fresh.

This book is full of clichés. They are left, right, centre, underneath you, behind you, everywhere you look. The characters themselves are huge stereotypes, fitting in to the different kinds of characters in the books. Fletcher and Scoop are Adventures, so as an avid fantasy reader they were quite familiar. It was actually very funny to see characters who simply embrace the clichés, and their antics were interesting as I'd seen them done by other favourite characters of mine before and loved it then. It was an absolutely blast as first.

Everything in the world is literary-based as well, giving physical manifestations to many things that plague writers. A bad plot choice takes the form of a Plot-Jacker Spider, who whispers in your ear and adds embellishments. This were adorable as well to see such things given a physical manifestation.

This is how the entire world is built. Plus because our character's stories were just reactivated, info dumping can be done without it being a bore. Fletcher and Scoop were learning all of this information for the first time. It was quite enjoyable.

Fletcher and Scoop were half-heartily given things to make them individual. Fletcher in particular was more developed, but not by much. His development was again very cliché, and did not develop a depth within him.

Which is where my two problems with the book arose. I had to put this book down for reasons beyond the book's and mine's control, and when I could pick it back up the newness was quite lost. Fletcher and Scoop weren't quite as interesting anymore. I'd embraced the clichés, and the backstory wasn't enough to keep me attached. Since they were stereotypes, I already knew everything, which stinks. Sticking to this series will be hard for a lot of people.

Plus the execution of the climax was bad. There were so many sub-plots that got resolved one after another, so the tension was lost. The bigger plot line wasn't really helping since I kept on changing Dumbledore for one of the characters.

It was so interesting, it was delightful, it even made me go 'awwe'. It really was interesting until the characters weren't anything to hold onto.

This is the more up-beat and to fit specific guidelines review:
<http://www.missliterati.com/book-revi...>

Katharine says

I've just finished reading "Rise of the Shadow Stealers" and have thoroughly enjoyed it.

It is a wonderfully descriptive and atmospheric book which engages and delights the reader from the start. Scoop and Fletcher are great lead characters, clever, fearless and inquisitive. Their quest is fast paced, breathless and in the tradition of all the best children's literature, a right ripping yarn.

When I've been forced to put this book down, I've been itching to get back to it, to find out what happens next. It's clever, imaginative, thought provoking and has one or two unexpected plot twists which both surprised and delighted this reader.

Jodi Woody says

This was a wonderful allegory! Along the lines of C.S. Lewis and John Bunyan. It was a fantastic read and I am hoping there will be more from Daniel Ingram-Brown. The story is all about stories. The world that our two unlikely heroes reside in is filled with plots, twists, tales, both fun and scary. I would recommend as a

buddy read with a parent for ages under 10. I give it 4 stars. Good Job.
