



Peter and the Starcatchers

Dave Barry, Ridley Pearson, Greg Call (Illustrations)

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Orphan Peter and his mates are dispatched to an island ruled by the evil King Zarboff. They set sail aboard the *Never Land*, a ship carrying a precious and mysterious cargo the "greatest treasure on earth" - but is it gold, jewels, or something far more mysterious and dangerous? Adds to classic *Peter Pan*.

Peter and the Starcatchers Details

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From Reader Review Peter and the Starcatchers for online ebook

Travis says

If you are going to write a prequel and explain everything about a book considered a 'classic' than at least come up up with something better than this.

Somehow two fairly talented writers got together and managed to suck most of the fun and magic out of Peter Pan.

That takes effort.

The explaination of how NeverLand came to be is on a level of feeble right up there with George Lucas deciding the Force is caused by alien germs.

The only character I liked was the pirate that eventually becomes Captain Hook, and by the end of the book I was actively rooting for him to kill Peter, so I wouldn't have to worry they'd do a sequel.

So much of the actual Neverland stuff comes in the last quarter of the book and felt like the writers suddenly realized they needed to stick that stuff into the story. It felt very forced.

Skip this book and go read Peter Pan. It tells you all you need to know about Neverland, Peter and fairies and does it in a fun way that makes more sense than this book.

Madeline says

Reviewer's Note: obviously, there isn't a movie version of this book (yet, anyway - they're supposedly working on one, which will probably be terrible but I'll save that rant for later) so once again I have to put a book on my The Movie Is Better shelf because I can't be bothered to create a shelf titled The Stage Adaptation Is Better. Just keep in mind that if that shelf existed, this book would be there

First, Some Background: (for review of actual book, please skip ahead to paragraph four) So this past spring, I spent four days in New York with three of my friends. As we are all giant theater dorks, our sole objective was to see as many shows as we could for as cheaply as possible (a feat we accomplished quite spectacularly, thank you verra much). One of my friends, the the giantest theater dork of us all, had heard fantastic things about this off-Broadway show called *Peter and the Starcatcher*, and convinced us that we *had* to venture away from Times Square in order to see it. The short version of the story is, after a subway adventure and being afraid we wouldn't get to see the show because we bought stand-by tickets because the show was technically sold out, we got in.

And oh my sweet baby Jesus, it was the best thing I have ever seen on stage, ever. EVER. It was funny and touching and exciting and sad and *fucking hilarious*. Almost all the props, scenery, and special effects were created by the actors, which made the whole show look like something being performed in someone's attic by a bunch of neighborhood kids (which, really, is the only way a Peter Pan story can be performed) who just happened to be extremely talented. (see the show's website here for an idea of what it looked like) The cast was amazing, the script was perfect, and it was alternately funny and heartbreakng. My point is, the show is the sole reason I read this book, and I knew going into it that the book had no chance of being as good as the play, so I wasn't even that disappointed when I turned out to be right.

JM Barrie's *Peter Pan*, while amazing, left a lot of unanswered questions. How did Peter get to the island? Who taught him to fly? Where did the pirates come from? How did Peter and Tinkerbell meet? Why, if fairy dust allows people to fly, is Peter the only one who can fly without it?

Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson took these questions and used them to write a Peter Pan origin story, and it's much, much cooler than it sounds. Peter starts out as an orphan, along with several of his friends from the orphanage, being put on a ship and sent across the ocean to work as servants for an evil king. Also on the ship is Molly, a girl who knows more than she's telling about a mysterious trunk being kept below decks with mysteriously magical properties. In pursuit of the ship, and the magic, is the pirate Black Stache. Did I mention that the ship Peter is placed on is called the *Never Land*? Oh yes, I see what you did there.

It all makes for a fast-paced, fun pirate adventure with lots of action and humor (not as funny as the play, I have to admit). As I read, I kept thinking that this is the book *The Dagger Quick* wished it could be. The characters are all great, especially Molly, who despite fulfilling the usual Girl Character in an Adventure Story jobs like being held hostage and getting rescued, is still perfectly capable and intelligent, and gets to do her fair share of the rescuing. Also she speaks Porpoise, which was never not funny.

My only gripe about the book, really, is that the authors seem oddly intent on making connections between the book and the animated Disney version of Peter Pan, instead of Barrie's original. Characters from the movie are described in the book as looking just like their animated counterparts: Peter has bright red hair, Black Stache (who becomes Hook) has curly black hair and a long mustache, and Smee is described wearing the same outfit he wears in the movie. The last straw was Tinkerbell, who in this version was originally a bird (it makes sense, I promise) that had a green body and a bright yellow head. However, this annoying aspect might not have actually been the authors fault: given that the publishing information at the beginning of the book loudly proclaims that this is a DISNEY EDITIONS book, I imagine the publishers prodded the authors to include some stuff that would tie the book into the animated movie.

This was a fun book, although vastly different from the (superior) stage version. I could go into all the differences, but frankly this review is long enough and I'm not sure anyone actually cares that much. The point is, the book is a fun adventure story that is actually a really well-done prequel to *Peter Pan*, but if you get a chance to see the play, you absolutely should.

Okay, one more thing about the play: here are two lines that I remember and wanted to share.

First, from Captain Stache to Smee: "Oh Smee. How flat and unprofitable the world must look from the deck of your *HMS Cynic*."

And here's what Molly said to Peter when they said goodbye, in a scene that made the whole damn theater cry like babies: "It's supposed to hurt. That's how you know it meant something."

Cindy says

This was chosen as a book club read for me, and my initial reaction to the selection was "Oh, no. Not another Peter Pan story." I was pleasantly surprised at this "prequel" series. It is definitely recommended for kids, but I enjoyed it myself. I thought the ideas of how Peter Pan and his friends came to be was quite creative. For any audio book fans, this is read by Jim Dale of Harry Potter fame. Just like in Rowling's books, Dale is fabulous at reading these stories. The book (and its sequels) are pretty lengthy, but they read pretty quickly.

Aoife says

3.5 stars

Jenny says

This was a fun adventure! So this is sort of a Peter Pan retelling/prequel of the original story. Basically this story tells us how Peter Pan was created. Fun adventure, and felt very true to the original Peter Pan. I really liked it!

Peter says

This book by Dave Barry is very similar to the original Peter Pan. But has more action and includes more info. It tells the adventure of Peter and his friends (all of whom are orphaned) on their journey across the sea while being chased by the most dreaded pirate in history: Black Stache. I would recommend this book to fans of Peter Pan and other books like that.

Lissa says

I picked this book up in the airport on my way to South Africa because I thought it looked a bit Harry Potter-esque. I knew it was a book for children, but it had a heft similar to the Harry Potter books, and I was looking for something light and fast to read. Sometimes, for plane reading, I don't want something heavy and ponderous - just something that will keep my attention and interest for long enough to get from here to there. Unfortunately, the heft of the book and the magical subject matter are about where the similarities between Peter and the Starcatchers and Harry Potter end.

Peter and the Starcatchers is a sort of prequel to Peter Pan. It tells the story of how Peter went from being an orphan in London to becoming Peter Pan. In fact, one of the most interesting aspects of the story is seeing how each of the players in the Peter Pan story that most people know comes into the scene. At the beginning of the book, Peter and four other orphans from St. Norbert's in London (the future Lost Boys, of course) are loaded onto the ship, the "Never Land" sailing for the country of Rundoon. They are to be sold into service for the evil King of Rundoon, King Zarboff the Third. On the boat, Peter sees a mysterious magical trunk loaded, and makes the acquaintance of a young girl named Molly who is perhaps not all that she seems. Meanwhile, the evil pirate Black Stache (the future Captain Hook, of course) plans to steal the magical trunk for his own use. Much of the rest of the book is a comedy of errors as each of the factions tries to get a hold of the trunk. There are, of course, other side adventures including some savages (the Indians?), a lagoon full of mermaids, and a gigantic crocodile.

The book is a great children's book, but unlike Harry Potter, it does not transcend the genre. As an adult, I found the action to be pretty thin, the plot and the writing very simplistic and not particularly thought provoking. As a children's book, I think it has a lot of things going for it, including a good length. As seven

or eight year old, I think I would have enjoyed this book immensely. In thinking about the books I loved as a child (*A Wrinkle in Time*, *The Dark is Rising* series, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle* -- all of which I read around grade 3 or 4), this is definitely less intricate and thought provoking. But for a younger child - even one where it's still necessary to read books aloud, this would be good. I think it would be especially good for young boys who don't have the young adult series like *The Babysitter's Club* enticing them to read.

Totoro says

well, there are some mixed feelings towards this book, at first, if you'd noticed, "i really wanted" it, paper back or electronic, didn't matter. after i got it, i was still really excited being a peter pan fan and also i really love sea adventures , pirates, fairies and all that, so i started the book head over hills.

everything about the book, though except for the term "starstuff" instead of "fairy powder", was fine. i honestly don't know what went wrong between me and this book, maybe i don't like adaptations, it was my first time anyway.

peter was great, explanations about the characters were obvious and to the point, the characters were a little too many, sometimes i lost track of the many names and how i've had pictured them the first time. the background for the Lockness monster bit was funny XD

and to my most favorite part which would take 2 stars out of the 4 :the audio book with Jim Dale's voice, once again i felt like i was traveling through harry potter with him, it was magical and wonderful, thank you Mr. Dale ^ ^

JP Seabury says

I have vague childhood memories of the tale of Peter Pan and Wendy, which probably come more from the Disney movie than any books that might have been read to me as a child. But from what I remember, it was one of those stories that starts in the middle of some other story.

You don't know, for instance, how Peter Pan came to be a boy who could fly, or never grow-up. You don't know how it is that he lives on an island with the Lost Boys, a tribe of "Indians", and his arch-nemesis, Captain Hook.

In the book, Peter and the Starcatchers, you discover the answer to all those questions. It's a wonderful book (which I managed to get for \$2.00), and I enjoyed every minute of it. I tell others that I screen these "big kid"

books, by reading them before giving them to my three sons -- but the truth is, I love them!

Peter & the Starcatchers is the first of three books written by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson, all apparently not authorized by the character's copyright holder. Nonetheless, they are original, masterful pieces of writing, and I highly recommend them to young (and old) readers.

Michael Fierce says

Sometimes I think I am Peter Pan because if growing up means you have to put down or put away the things you've loved since you were a kid then I can tell you I don't want to grow up. Not now. Not ever. **Never. Ever.**

I planned to read the original classic one day, having always been a fan of the Disney animated cartoon version growing up, that forever connected me to Peter Pan, Captain Hook, Wendy and all the wonderful characters and places associated with Kensington Gardens and Neverland. I couldn't find a version that had a cover I really wanted so I thought I'd hold out until I found just the right one.

Then, one day, I saw the 2003 film version directed by P.J. Hogan, and though I'll probably get eaten by a crocodile for saying this, I think it's far superior to any version before it and any that will follow. The minute the movie ended, a craving to read more Peter Pan gnawed at me until I finally picked up Peter and the Starcatchers.

Peter and the Starcatchers was a little different than what I was expecting. A bit of the background and history of the original Peter Pan had been reworked but it didn't matter because this book was still a lot of fun, clever, action-packed, spiritually rewarding, and even answered a few questions along the way.

It continued my interest and appreciation for everything I loved about Peter Pan in the first place.

I plan to read the entire series and am so glad writers of this calibre are continuing the myth and magic that is Peter Pan, who made his first appearance in **1902!**

Joe Hunt says

This book is horrible.

(Full disclosure: once upon a time, I thought Dave Barry was funny -- in the 80's -- so not a total hater.)

But I'm a huge J.M. Barrie fan (or Johnny Depp-as-J.M. Barrie).

p.s. I read it -- b/c I heard on comingsoon: they're going to make it into a movie.

Read the real Peter Pan alongside it -- I was doing that -- and you'll feel totally insulted.

The original...We've all seen the Disney cartoon (and the legend is so big), so we think we know it. But no.

It's so well-written. Every single line is funny, practically.

And he sticks in some side-commentary, for example...Fantastic.

(The 2003 live action Pan is pretty great -- also b/c it's close to the book. So, I mean: better than Disney.)

Anyhow: the book is horrible. And a terrible affront to the memory and real thing.

Peter & the Starcatchers not funny at all. I would say: "Like they're not even trying...but they are a tiny bit, and it doesn't work."

The plot is really small and frail. Could sum it up in one paragraph: a treasure chest full of fairy dust. The bad guys try to steal it. (The good guys try to stop them. It's a race.) Peter gets some, and it makes him fly.

And it's so formulaic -- like, they have a list. "Okay. What do we need in there, to make it look like a Peter Pan book ?

A boy named Peter: check.

Someone who ends up being Hook: check.

"Let's call him Black Stache. That's a stupid name." Check.

Smittee, some fairy dust, alligator, mermaids, flying...

Anyhow, I'm really angry. It's one of the saddest things I've ever read. A rip-off and a cheap knock-off, forgery / travesty... Really just an insult to one of the greatest stories ever.

And so now Disney is turning it into a movie.

Here's the thing, too: I, personally, would love to see the further adventures of Peter Pan -- if someone could write them well, make them interesting.

Be true to the original (even the side-commentary, I think)...Of course, have some of the old elements -- but have some new stuff, too, that's cool and interesting. Fun.

The new stuff here: talking porpoises. Horrible.

Really -- like "Worst.Book.Ever."

(I wanted to put zero stars. But I had to put one, so they knew I registered.)

p.s. Final thought: I think I'm going to write my own further adventures of Peter Pan, someday.

Just to prove it can be done: better. If something's worth doing, it's worth doing right. Already started brainstorming.

Wart Hill says

I'm not entirely sure what to say about this book. I enjoyed it, it was fun...but I felt oddly distanced from the characters and the story. I never felt fully invested. I don't know if that was just a me thing or if it was the book, but even so I did manage to get all the way through. And it was a nice, fun read.

Liz B says

What a slog this was to get through, in spite of Jim Dale's wonderful-as-always narration. My husband said that Dale's contribution primarily made it obvious how inferior this book was to the Harry Potter series. We finished it, though...months after starting.

Sara Bow says

Süße Story und tolles Abenteuerbuch - aber eher für jüngere Leser. Werde die Bücher meinem kleinen Bruder schenken, der damit sicherlich mehr Freude haben wird als ich. Breche die Reihe damit erstmal ab.

????? says

This book deserve 3 stars

Really fantastic

I decide to rate 5 stars but when press the golden stars i check 3 stars

My favorite character, Peter, was portrayed differently than his Disney, film and novel counterparts (He also isn't explicitly called "Peter Pan" either), but he was still the boastful yet playful and free-spirited character that audiences have come to love.

His developing relationship with Molly was truly a treasure to read as it unfolded, and despite being new characters, I grew fond of Molly and her father.

Writing-wise, and surprisingly, the book often had very beautiful imagery and metaphorical descriptions, making it easier for the reader to envision the world that Barry and Pearson re-created.

A lot of Barry's wit and humor was palpable throughout the novel, which fit really well with the adventurous tone that the story had. It helped relieved a lot of the more intense or mysterious moments.

I'm not going to provide any specific spoilers because I think everyone who's reading this right now should read this book and embark on its journey.

Overall, it's an amazing book. It's the first in a series — there's at least three more books following the first one. I can never put this book down, regardless of the amounts of times that I've reread it.

Janssen says

I love Dave Barry. My parents both adore Dave Barry, as does my grandmother, and they've been reading or handing off various columns and books of his to me for as long as I can remember. I've read practically

every column he's ever written and most of his books. For some reason, though, I've never read his novels, Big Trouble and Tricky Business. I love his non-fiction columns, so I was less interested in his fictional books. Then, when I went home for Christmas, my brother was reading the second of Dave Barry's juvenile books, called "Peter and the Shadow Thieves." I asked him how they were, and he raved about them. Even at eleven-years-old, I trust his advice, so a few weeks ago (I clearly don't trust his advice in a **TIMELY** manner), I picked up the first one at the library.

This is a fun book. I think I've mentioned before that I really adore re-tellings of classic or widely-known stories. I think *Beauty* (Robin McKinley) is excellent, and I love *Ella Enchanted* (Gail Carson Levine). There's just something so thrilling about watching the pieces fit together when you already know what the end result is. This book fits right into that category. It's the story of how Peter Pan became, well, Peter Pan.

Read my complete review at [http://everydayreading.blogspot.com/2...](http://everydayreading.blogspot.com/2011/12/peter-pan-by-alex-mcclenahan.html)

Debbie says

Loved it. Great fantasy. prequel to peter pan. grades late 4th - 8. Grade 5-9—This prequel to Peter Pan refers as much to the 1953 animated Disney film as to J. M. Barrie's original play and novel. The early chapters introduce the archetypal antagonists: Peter, leader of a group of orphan boys being sent into slavery aboard the Never Land, and Black Stache, a fearsome pirate who commands a villainous crew. New characters include Molly Aster and her father. Molly, at 14, is an apprentice Starcatcher, a secret society formed to keep evildoers from obtaining "starstuff," magic material that falls to earth and conveys happiness, power, increased intelligence, and the ability to fly. Inevitably, the ships wreck off a tropical island and a trunk of starstuff is temporarily lost. Here, readers meet more familiar characters: the mermaids in their lagoon; the indigenous people who live in the jungle (modern versions of Barrie's redskins); and, of course, the crocodile. The authors plait multiple story lines together in short, fast-moving chapters, with the growing friendship between Molly and Peter at the narrative's emotional center. Capitalizing on familiar material, this adventure is carefully crafted to set the stage for Peter's later exploits. This smoothly written page-turner just might send readers back to the original

Morgan says

This was a really cute story. It's a prequel to Peter Pan that starts at the very beginning...before Wendy, before Never Land, and when Captain Hook had no hook.

I had tried reading this book a couple times, but could never get past chapter 5 or so. It was just a bit too slow...However, my mom-in-law lent me these books forever ago, and I felt I needed to read them and return them. :) So that's what I did!

It still took me awhile to get into this book. The main problem (and reason I gave it 3 stars instead of 4) is that the plot isn't described until page 160! That was far too long to get the actual plot going. But once you know what's actually happening, it's quite enjoyable.

Peter and four of his orphan friends (the Lost Boys) are on a boat heading for Rundoon to become slaves to

the wicked King. One night, Peter sneaks out for food and comes across a mysterious trunk that is causing quite the stir on the boat. Especially among a young girl the same age as Peter, Molly. She seems to know what's going on, and is even protecting the trunk. What you finally find out is that the trunk is full of Starstuff, a precious element that falls from the sky and produces wonderful results such as flying, healing, and the ability to never grow old...see where it's going?

The story then climaxes with a battle between Peter, Molly, and the Lost Boys, Natives (the Indians...) Mermaids, and Pirates on an island in the middle of nowhere. The result is a really fun story with wonderful twists.

It was a fun story, one I would definitely read to my kids one day....

Billy says

Pulitzer Prize winning humorist Dave Barry, best selling mystery writer Ridley Pearson, and illustrator Greg Call have combined their talents to create a series of prequels to the J.M. Barrie classic Peter Pan. This is the first of those stories.

Let me start my little review by saying that this book is so fun, exciting, and enjoyable that I have completely forgotten (almost) the creepy feeling I felt as a 42 year old man wandering around the children's section of the library looking for it.

Yes it's a children's book, make fun of me if you want, but it's not like I was breathlessly turning the pages to find out what would happen if Grover encountered a monster at the end of the book. At over 450 pages it follows the trend set by the Harry Potter books.... The story is equally satisfying for both kids and adults that grew up with these legendary characters, and thick enough that kids can do serious damage to the child predators that lurking around every corner (at least according to NBC's "Dateline"). The type is a little larger for the younger readers, but not so big that adults will be embarrassed.

Have you ever wondered...

How an orphan from England learned to fly, never grow old, make his home on a deserted island, and become everybody's favorite peanut butter pitchman?

How the most feared ambidextrous pirate on the high seas became the infamous embodiment of one handed evil (second only to the drummer for Def Leppard).

How that annoying little fairy wound up living on Neverland? I mean Tinkerbell, not Michael Jackson.

All these questions are answered, and more.

Seriously, this is an excellent book, and I will definitely be slinking my way back to that room in the library with the little tables and chairs so that I can continue following the adventures of Peter and his cohorts.

Angelic Zaizai says

Mau tau kenapa Peter [pan:] bisa terbang ??
Mau tau kenapa Peter tetep jadi anak2 selamanya ??
Mau tau kenapa ada nama Neverland ?
Mau tau kapan Peter kenalan sama Molly ?
Mau tau darimana asal Wendy ??

Mau ???
Pake Three.. eh baca aja novel ini.. seruuuu

serasa deja vu gini.. pas banget ya King of Neverland - Michael Jackson meninggal... RIP