



The Golden Cuckoo

Elizabeth Jasper

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When thirteen-year-old Jake Malkin buys an old cuckoo clock at a car-boot sale, he has no idea a small boy is trapped inside. With the boy's big sister, Ella, Jake sets out to find and rescue Eddie, but he has to contend with evil in the form of Grabbe, a greedy, slave-driving villain and his assistants, the cruel old couple who were the weather man and woman from the cuckoo clock. Lost in the dark in the middle of a mysterious mountain, Jake and Ella meet up with a group of kidnapped boys who have been forced by Grabbe to work as slaves in his gold mine. Can they escape from Grabbe and find their way to safety?

The Golden Cuckoo Details

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Author : Elizabeth Jasper

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From Reader Review The Golden Cuckoo for online ebook

Susan Francis says

This children's adventure begins when Eddie is repairing a broken cuckoo clock in the presence of his older sister, Ella. One minute he is gluing the feet of the cuckoo (so he can stick it back on the ledge of the clock) and the next he finds himself in darkness... on a ledge... inside the clock! Ella is stunned by the sudden disappearance of her brother. Eddie understands that he is in the clock when the old woman and man appear in front of him, demanding to know where the cuckoo is. They are mean to him and make him undress to prove it is not in his possession - which it isn't. He realises he must have dropped it when whatever happened, happened. Eddie is trapped in the clock being held prisoner by the old woman and man.

The story moves to Jake, a boy of about 13, who helps his mum buy and sell stuff at a car boot sale. He wanders around the sale looking for anything of value that he can buy to sell on for a healthy profit. Jake notices that his favourite vendour, a man he calls Fancy, is selling what looks like a doll's house in its original box. On closer inspection he realises it is not a doll's house but a cuckoo clock and he loses interest. Fancy is keen to sell it to him and, reluctantly after some bartering, he agrees to take it.

Later, back home while in his room with the clock, a girl about his age barges in asking for the clock back. The girl is Ella and she is trying to get it back so she can find Eddie. Unfortunately, her dad sold it to Fancy and she has been tracking it down ever since. She explains everything to Jake and they search for the cuckoo, which had fallen inside. Jake suggests that they repeat Eddie's actions before he disappeared - although he is not entirely convinced that Eddie is really inside the clock. But, just in case, he says, "Don't touch the...". Too late. Ella and Jake both plummet into darkness and find themselves on a ledge inside the clock.....

My review:

The Golden Cuckoo is a novella for children of pre-to-early teenage. It is a page-turner of a read and I finished it in a matter of hours. Jake and Ella find themselves in another world searching for Eddie and discover some shocking things going on, all orchestrated by a dark and dodgy character. Jake and Ella's plan to rescue Eddie becomes a plan to right the wrong that is occurring. They have the cuckoo and the more time they spend in the world, the more it seems to be changing before them. Jake is quite the hero, facing danger and leading the way... hopefully to safety.

This novella read like a pilot to a potentially great series of fantasy novels. It focuses more on character development, back story and the scenario than it does on drama and plot. As a result, there are a lot of things that remain a mystery - which could potentially be solved later down the line (e.g. what is the cuckoo and why are the old woman and man so desperate to get their hands on it?). I enjoyed it so much it left me wanting more.

<http://soozbookreviews.blogspot.co.uk...>

Lisa Deckert says

A boy purchases an old cuckoo clock, little knowing that it will lead him on a magical adventure. Jake is forced into the role of hero, and everyone is counting on him. A fun story.

Billy Buttons says

This book was recently entered in The Wishing Shelf Book Awards. This is what our young readers thought:

FEEDBACK

Author: Elizabeth Jasper
Title: The Golden Cuckoo

COVER: 6/10

Our young readers thought your cover was excellent although, perhaps a little 'old' for them. They liked the central image and they thought the blurb was 'quite' enticing. One reader put (boy, aged 11), 'The cover is cool but I thought at first it was a book for my mum and dad. But it was still cool. The blurb was ok too but it did not pull me in.'

CONTENT 8/10

The readers very much enjoyed this book. They liked the strong opening paragraph which quickly pulled them into the story. They liked all the magic and the concept of a boy being dragged into a cuckoo clock. They loved the cuckoo and the way he helps the hero in the story. They also loved the evil weather man and woman. One reader (girl, aged 9) put in his feedback, 'This book is really good. Lots happen and I was never bored. The cuckoo was fun and the weather man and woman were scary.'

The readers (teachers) also thought the book would go down well with older readers too and would be an excellent first book in a set. One reader (teacher) put, 'This book is well written and full of interesting stuff for young readers. The idea of a boy being trapped in a cuckoo clock and two kids trying to rescue him is fantastic. But I wonder, if the book was a little longer, if the characters were a little better developed, would it not be better as a book for much older readers.'

EDITING 8/10

The readers thought this book was well-edited. They spotted no spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors. However, they did feel the book lost a little pace in the middle but that it picked up well towards the end.

STYLE 8/10

The children liked the style of the writing. They thought the story was exciting and at the same time, easy to follow. They felt there was lots of excellent imagery and that the author worked well with speech. One reader (girl, aged 12) put, 'I got really excited reading this book in class and it's fun to sit and write about it. I thought it was exciting, I liked the cuckoo very much and also Jake and Ella. But the best bit is the way it's written. The character descriptions are not very long and that's really good. I get bored when I have to read paragraphs of description. I did think that the setting descriptions needed to be a bit longer. I often thought it was difficult to see where Jake and Ella were.'

TO SUM UP 30/40

STATS

Of the 17 readers:
16 would read another book by this author.

10 felt the best part of the book was the plot.
7 felt the best part was the writing style.
5 felt the cover was too 'old' for them.
2 felt the blurb needed a little more work.

'A thrilling adventure packed full of magic and memorable characters. Highly recommended.' The Wishing Shelf Awards

Wanda says

13 year old Jake is helping his mother at a car boot sale (flea market) and buys an old cuckoo clock from another seller who is a friend of his. Later at home a young girl shows up at his house demanding the clock because she claims her brother has magically been transported into the clock. Strange as it may seem it is true and then she and Jake are drawn into the clock. Jake had been wishing for an adventure and one then begins--so be careful with your wishes! The world inside the clock holds many dangers but two talismans that help--the wooden cuckoo who becomes gilded and a cat that looks all too familiar. A dark story with moral undertones but entertaining!

Aleshia (Mad Scibrarian) says

I received a free copy of this book through Goodreads first reads program.

A boy named Jake purchases an old cuckoo clock. He brings it home to his mother, who is unhappy with his purchase, and a girl, Ella, comes to his house claiming she needs the clock back to find her young brother trapped inside. Both Jake and his mom are confused over the story, but they let her stay for tea. While the mom goes to call Ella's dad, Jake and Ella toy with the clock, and end up in another world. They set to look for a way out, and to look for Ella's younger brother.

It was a pretty good story. Everything happens quick, but it is a story set for younger-middle grade children. It has a slight Chronicles of Narnia feel to it. My one complaint is there was no further information on the salesman of the cuckoo clock, or really how the clock came to be or exactly where the clock led to, but maybe that is the mystery for a child to solve for themselves. :)

Marie (UK) says

what a glorious little story suitable for children age 8 or 9 and up as well as adults
