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Leviathan (The Leviathan Trilogy)



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Synopsis

It is the cusp of World War I. The Austro-Hungarians and Germans have their Clankers, steam-driven iron machines loaded with guns and ammunition. The British Darwinists employ genetically fabricated animals as their weaponry. Their Leviathan is a whale airship, and the most masterful beast in the British fleet. Aleksandar Ferdinand, a Clanker, and Deryn Sharp, a Darwinist, are on opposite sides of the war. But their paths cross in the most unexpected way, taking them both aboard the Leviathan on a fantastical, around-the-world adventureÃ¢â ¬Â¦.One that will change both their lives forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 7 UpÃ¢â ¬â •This is World War I as never seen before. The story begins the same: on June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife are assassinated, triggering a sequence of alliances that plunges the world into war. But that is where the similarity ends. This global conflict is between the Clankers, who put their faith in machines, and the Darwinists, whose technology is based on the development of new species. After the assassination of his parents, Prince Aleksandar's people turn on him. Accompanied by a small group of loyal servants, the young Clanker flees Austria in a Cyklop Stormwalker, a war machine that walks on two legs. Meanwhile, as Deryn Sharp trains to be an airman with the British Air Service, she prays that no one will discover that she is a girl. She serves on the Leviathan, a massive biological airship that resembles an enormous flying whale and functions as a self-contained ecosystem. When it crashes in

Switzerland, the two teens cross paths, and suddenly the line between enemy and ally is no longer clearly defined. The ending leaves plenty of room for a sequel, and that's a good thing because readers will be begging for more. Enhanced by Thompson's intricate black-and-white illustrations, Westerfeld's brilliantly constructed imaginary world will capture readers from the first page. Full of nonstop action, this steampunk adventure is sure to become a classic.Ã¢â ¬â •Heather M. Campbell, formerly at Philip S. Miller Library, Castle Rock, CO END --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"Full of nonstop action, this steampunk adventure is sure to become a classic." -- starred, School Library Journal --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This book is an alterverse (-partially fictionalized) adventure set in 1914 that follows two protagonists in alternating third-person. Alek is the son of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, a Clanker, and is forced to flee Austria after his parents' assassination. Deryn is a young woman who hides her real identity in order to join the Darwinist air corp. Alek and his people, the Clankers, set out in "Walker" a bi-pedal war machine. Deryn takes to the air in a biological airship called the _Leviathan_. When the two parties' paths collide, they are forced to work together to get out of their respective predicament, despite their opposing political and technological views.For the most part, I listened to the audio book, even though I happen to have picked up both the audio and Kindle editions during two different promotions. I really enjoyed this book a lot. Despite the war-time and technological advancement politics, the book kept a nice pace. I did get really tired of Deryn's favorite insult, "bumrag," very quickly. Most of the other "cursing" consists of phrases like, "barking spiders!" which I found whimsical and refreshing. I liked this book well enough that I will probably listen to or read book two (once I pick it some time after I've cleared up more of my Audible-Kindle slush pile).The book contains illustrations that were very nice. I flipped through the Kindle edition at some point and looked at all of them. Early on in listening to this book on the Echo, the Echo activated itself when Cumming would read the phrase, "Alek said." I found it amusing,,but others may not. I didn't notice do so a lot as the book progressed, though. Alan Cumming was a really fine narrator for this story and really enjoyed his performance very much. There were a couple of times I had to adjust the audio level because he would drop his voice a bit, but that's my only quibble.Overall, I recommend this book--and audio book--quite highly. This could open up some great familial or classroom discussions about history and the opposing technology (machines or engineered creatures). The authors' afterword (which is in both the the Audible edition and Kindle

edition) is really interesting and covers the historical events vs. his fictional ones a bit and could lead to further exploration.

I bought this book because I'm a big fan of Mr. Westerfeld's Uglies series, and because I'm hoping to have more of his books read before I catch a glimpse of him at an upcoming book fair. I'm so so glad I picked this one up. I read the whole thing in two days because I simply couldn't put it down.The duel story of Deryn and Alek really captures the mind. I loved the references to real world events and the quick comparison between his book and the real story of The Great War makes me want to research more about WWI so I'm more prepared for the references while reading the next book in the series.There's a bunch of great tension in both storylines and I was so excited when the two finally crossed paths, despite the difficulties they faced while crossing paths.If I had to nitpick a problem, I'd say it's the disjointed way the time jumps in the individual storylines as they move forward before they meet up. There would be parts where some grand future adventure would be hinted at only to have it ripped away from the reader to jump to some several weeks in the future. I'm sure the plan was to get the characters in the single storyline as soon as possible, but it was a bit jarring.Overall though, I fell in love with this world and the characters and I'm eagerly looking forward to getting to the next book in the series.

Prince Aleksander's world has been turned upside down in a single night. His parents were killed and now he's on the run from his own people and his enemies. As the sole heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Alek is to stay deep in the cold hell that is the Swiss Alps until the threat of war is over. But fifteen years of planning his safety retreat could never account for a Darwinist ship to fall from the sky right in front of them. Alek is too good for his own good, and decides to help the crew of the Leviathan.Deryn Sharp enlisted in the British Air Service disguised as a boy. Deryn is not afraid to fly; she's witty, smart, and very creative in her ways of getting around the ship. It's her quick thinking that saves two of her crew mates, and herself when the Leviathan goes down after being severely damaged. She's woken up by a strange boy who seems to have appeared out of nowhere, bringing medicine and supplies for the stranded crew. As he refuses to say where he came from, she has no choice but to take him hostage!Much talking and promise keeping will be made before these two see eye to eye. Deryn suddenly feels like this strange, well mannered boy, should know she's really a girl. But there's no time for that! The German airships will be closing in on them soon, and they have to fix the Leviathan. Full of beasties, action, and machines, Scott Westerfeld's Leviathan is steampunk at its most creative!The world building blew me away, with the

Clankers on one side and the Darwinists on the other I never new what to expect! What new beastie or machine would make it's appearance at the turn of a page. It was especially delightful to have Keith Thompson's illustrations along the way. I swear, I read faster and faster just to get to all the drawings! Charming characters abound, starting with our heroes Deryn and Alek. They're both young, brave, and a little bit reckless. The story is told in alternating chapters between these two, and I liked that I could always distinguish whose chapter it was by the language used. Deryn curses a lot, Alek--being a prince and all--is more formal. I love how by the end of this book they've both achieved considerable growth and learned from their ordeals. Dr. Barlow and Tazza were also favorite characters, and I hope to see more of them in the other books, because I'm sure she is hiding some very classified info. Other characters that stayed with me were the messenger lizards, the flÃƒÂ©chette bats, Huxleys, and the Leviathan itself!Fast paced and full of action, Leviathan is book one of the series and I'm already buzzing with energy for the other two books...which better arrive home soon! I can't wait to be immersed once more in this steampunk world Mr. Westerfeld has created. Because it truly is a thing of wonder!

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