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Fablehaven, Book 1



Synopsis

For centuries, mystical creatures of all description were gathered to a hidden refuge called Fablehaven to prevent their extinction. The sanctuary survives today as one of the last strongholds of true magic in a cynical world. Enchanting? Absolutely. Exciting? You bet. Safe? Well, actually, quite the opposite... Kendra and her brother Seth have no idea their grandfather is the current caretaker of Fablehaven. Inside the gated woods, ancient laws give relative order among greedy trolls, mischievous satyrs, plotting witches, spiteful imps, and jealous fairies. However, when the rules get broken, an arcane evil is unleashed, forcing Kendra and Seth to face the greatest challenge of their lives. To save her family, Fablehaven, and perhaps the world, Kendra must find the courage to do what she fears most.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ever since my imagination was first captivated by timeless classics like The Chronicles of Narnia and The Hobbit, then more recently, the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling and the Bartimaeus books by Jonathan Stroud, I've been desperate to find other books that are just as wonderful, whimsical, magical, and most importantly, well-written. Fablehaven by Brandon Mull was everything I've been searching for in a fantasy classic appropriate for all ages. I fell in love with this story from the first paragraph to the very last page and my imagination delighted in every word. The tale opens with two children, Kendra and Seth, riding in the family car on their way to stay with their elusive grandparents for seventeen days while their parents go on a cruise. The children don't know their father's parents that well because the older folks seem to keep to themselves most of the time, so

the prospect of being left with these "strangers" is a little frightening for the children. And their grandfather had seemed quite reluctant to have the children left in his care as well, which only added to the mystery. Once the family finally reaches their destination, everyone is immediately taken in by the wondrous beauty of the old house and estate. After the goodbyes are said, Grandpa kindly ushers the children up to the attic and into the room they will be sharing - a room that seems especially designed to delight children, and then he instructs the kids about the rules of the household they are expected to follow. I won't spoil the story for anyone, but the excited children quickly adapt to their amazing surroundings, playing with really cool old toys, painting, swimming in the pool, watching all the many varieties of birds and butterflies in the lush gardens, and curiously exploring the estate. Soon, childhood curiosity leads to breaking some of Grandpa's house rules while he is away tending chores. That is when the really wild adventures begin. Soon Kendra and Seth discover a whole new magical world that they never dreamed could exist and quickly find themselves on the greatest challenge of their lives - to save themselves, their family, and the magical sanctuary called Fablehaven. This whimsical tale is extremely well-written and brilliantly executed, with interesting, believable characters and very funny dialogue (I found myself laughing many times at the playful banter between the children). Fablehaven is a fantastic treat for anyone's imagination and is sure to delight readers of ALL ages. This is a book I wish I'd had when I was a child. What a fantastic read! Very highly recommend. UPDATE 2/5/15 - Just finished reading all 5 books in the Fablehaven series (I couldn't stop myself!) and every single book is as thrilling or even more fantastic than the previous one! Such a wonderful adventure this has been! I am so happy to find an author whose family-friendly books I enjoy just as much as Jonathan Stroud's books and I anticipate reading everything I can get my hands on by Brandon Mull. Each book in the Fablehaven series gets a big, shiny 5 stars from me because I know other readers of all ages will love and treasure these books just as much as I do!

A young friend of mine was reading this a few years ago and I decided to give it a try. My only complaint is that it starts rather slowly. Otherwise it is a great, engaging story. The tone is totally different from Harry Potter, but invokes the same sense of magic and heroism.

Fablehaven is just what its name implies -- a haven for magical creatures in a high-tech world. Seth and Kendra have no idea what they're in for when they are forced to spend two weeks with their grandparents while their parents are away, but it soon becomes apparent that there are strange things afoot. Seth's insatiable curiosity and his willingness to ignore the rules lands the sibs in a pile

of trouble -- and an adventure they will never forget. In this debut we hear that the kids' grandparents are looking for possible successors to their responsibilities at the haven, and it's clear they're considering Kendra and Seth for the job. The characters are interesting and well-written, and there are some great fantastical ideas. We all enjoyed this book though it was not transcendent, and there is one surreal scene in which the kids need to milk a giant cow -- never read anything like it!!

My husband and daughters (elementary school age) all love books that are along the lines of Fablehaven. Fantasy and mythology with some mysteries and children as the main characters, and of course more than one book. This series will forever be the foundation of comparison when we search out new books. Brandon Mull has made it wonderfully difficult to find anything that compares. We love the brother sister relationship, full of sarcasm. We are forever quoting Seth and his awesome responses to an older sister. It was never easy to figure out or guess where he was going next in the story line. By the end he covered every question that had come up along the way. Just an amazing, and very entertaining book we all looked forward to and had a hard time putting down. Some of the subject matter might be a little scary for a child in the lower elementary grades if they are being read to.

I liked this book okay. I guess that is 1 between three and four stars. I will go with four because at the very end of the book I began to get excited and enjoy the story. I think the story has a great deal of potential, but some elements are underdeveloped and some are overworked. Seth was utterly ridiculous and his level of foolishness was entirely unbelievable. Kendra was a little flat for me until the very end of the story when she grew a pair and did something. I want to know more about the history of the preserve and how the grandparents became the caretakers. I think Grandpa ought to know an awful lot more about what he is dealing with and share it with the readers so we can be fascinated by it. I want to know more about Lena. There are so many possible parallel story lines here, I am disappointed that Seth's tomfoolery is the one we are subjected to. I am hoping that more links will be filled in the later books. I was not going to continue on, but other reviewers say the series improves, so I will give it a shot. The final thing that annoyed me was Kendra's odd inner thought sequences, like wondering if battling a demon would be as scary as a recital, and other parts where the author seems to repeat himself and just barely change the wording. "Wait, didn't he just say that?" Now, all the complaining aside, here is what I liked. I liked the idea of the preserve. I would like to visit there. I liked that the kids had to figure out for themselves what was going on. I liked the potential for epic creature interactions...although I think that could have been capitalized on

more. So, I liked it okay. I think that as a children's book it is decently engaging. I might try it out on my twelve year old and get his opinion.

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