



Castle in the Air

Diana Wynne Jones

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Young merchant Abdullah leads a humble life. Or he did until a stranger sold him a threadbare—and disagreeable—magic carpet. Now Abdullah is caught in the middle of his grand daydreams. Waking one night in a luxurious garden, he meets and falls instantly in love with the beautiful and clever Flower-in-the-Night. But a wicked djinn sweeps the princess away right before Abdullah's eyes, leaving the young man no choice but to follow. This is no ordinary quest, however, for Flower-in-the-Night isn't all the djinn has stolen. Abdullah will have the so-called help of the cantankerous carpet, a cranky genie in a bottle, a dishonest soldier, and a very opinionated black cat. Will this motley crew be able to find the djinn's mysterious dwelling and rescue a castle full of princesses?

Castle in the Air Details

Date : Published April 22nd 2008 by Greenwillow Books (first published 1990)

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Author : Diana Wynne Jones

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From Reader Review Castle in the Air for online ebook

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Castle in the Air (Howl's Moving Castle, #2), Diana Wynne Jones (1934)

Castle in the Air is a young adult fantasy novel written by Diana Wynne Jones, and first published in 1990. The novel is a sequel to Howl's Moving Castle and is set in the same fantasy world, though it follows the adventures of Abdullah rather than Sophie Hatter. The plot is based on stories from the Arabian Nights. The book features many of the characters from Howl's Moving Castle, often under some sort of disguise.

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Beatriz says

Le había puesto tres estrellas de primero, pero me lo he pensado y he cambiado a dos porque el machismo que impregna esta historia no me dejaba disfrutar de ella. *El castillo ambulante* es uno de mis libros favoritos, y toparme ahora con ESTO, de verdad que no lo entiendo.

Aunque no continúa la historia como tal después de *El castillo ambulante*, sí aparecen sus personajes allá por el último tercio del libro. Pero, vamos, para lo que hacen, mejor que no los hubiese metido en la historia, porque están irreconocibles.

Yo no sé si es porque la autora situa la acción en otra cultura que no es la suya y eso le da la excusa perfecta para desatar su racismo y machismo. El amor a primera vista, el tratar a las mujeres como objetos de los que los hombres pueden apropiarse en cualquier momento, tratarlas de inútiles (a no ser que se dediquen a cuidar críos), el presentar a la religión musulmana como inferior y machista cuando en Ingary están igual... En serio, yo flipaba con cada página que pasaba. Pensaba que con la aparición de Sophie se arreglaría, pero NOPE, fue a peor.

En serio, le he dado dos estrellas porque me gusta mucho la autora (y porque hay un personaje que se llama Beatrice, así de tonta soy) y ha habido momentos que he podido disfrutar del libro y he conseguido engancharme, pero es que es tan jodidamente machista que casi lo quemo.

Krystle says

Castle in the Air is the sequel to Howl's Moving Castle. That being said I picked this up with trepidation because I was rather disappointed the book wasn't going to be from the main characters in the first, nor would it have a direct focus on it. But they do occur later on.

That being said, I loved this book! I loved how she managed to turn this into another one of her witty, light-hearted, but not lacking in depth, fantasy tales. It was unique, original, and if I hadn't read spoilers beforehand I would have been quite shocked at the twist at the end. It was quite ingenious how she managed to trick us throughout the whole book. Her descriptions and writing were fabulous as always, and she never manages to fall into the cliché.

Definitely a wonderful book. Even if the summary doesn't sound as engaging as the first novel, give it a chance because it's an excellent read that will more than satisfy you at the end.

Victor Almeida says

Terminar uma leitura sorrindo não tem preço. Não tinha dúvidas de que esse livro seria fantástico, assim como O Castelo Animado.

A escrita da Diana é fora do comum. Ela sabe fazer com que a história brilhe e transborde magia. A forma como é escrito, parecendo quase uma fábula antiga, te imerge em um universo magnífico e deslumbrante, com personagens maravilhosos e completamente diferentes. Eu me apaixonei tudo de novo. Fiquei surpreso em me deparar com algumas coisas de O Castelo Animado — não achei que teriam elementos ou se passaria no mesmo universo, então foi uma descoberta bacana. Ao mesmo tempo, toda essa temática de deserto, gênios, princesas e tapetes voadores me deixou encantado.

O ritmo é perfeito e a narrativa mega fluída, e isso me envolveu de uma forma muito forte. Li super rápido e tive a mesma sensação do outro livro: gostaria que tivesse mais 500 páginas. A história é muito bem elaborada, interessante, cheia de reviravoltas e com um toque de magia (sem exagero) que unifica tudo isso. Acho que já gastei todos os meus adjetivos positivos nessa minha breve opinião, então vou concluir apenas dizendo: leiam.

Cat says

Going back to reread one of favourite childhood authors has opened my eyes to some of the problematic aspects of Jones' writing.

First of all, I tried to understand the story through Abdullah's narration. There is a possibility that he was not a reliable narrator, so Flower-in-the-Night's beauty could have been greatly exaggerated. Still, every chance he gets, he describes her astounding beauty--oh, and she's also clever to boot, so that's a bonus, but definitely not needed. It irritated me that they could fall in love so quickly--they knew each other for less than three days before they were married in a double wedding--under false pretenses. Abdullah only loved Flower for her beauty; Flower only loved Abdullah because he was the first man besides her father with whom she had made contact. Both of them were incredibly naive, having had no chance to get to know each other before they were married. When Flower was acting coldly towards Abdullah, I thought, "Great, the other princesses have educated her about her plans for a hasty elopement. Now she knows that Abdullah only valued her for her beauty and, while it was nice of him to come to her rescue, she certainly didn't need him." But, what happens instead? She acts all haughty because he didn't kiss her. Of all the things to get mad at him for--this scene was truly a giant face-palm.

Speaking of hasty marriages, what was that scene between the soldier/Prince Justin and Princess Beatrice? He only chose her because she was one of the least attractive people in the room and she "looked like she could mend his clothes"? Who agrees to this kind of marriage proposal? Oh, Princess Beatrice of course. Again, two characters who do not know each other at all somehow end up together because the woman is naive enough to comply.

I guess what I'm working towards is that the females in this world are so weakly written that they become part of the landscape rather than characters themselves. The women do nothing but clean (Sophie in the first book), cook (Martha), sew (Princess Beatrice), and have babies (almost all of the Hatters immediately after the events of Howl's Moving Castle). While there's nothing wrong to choose these lives for themselves, I felt it a great injustice to have their heroism taken away by men with magic. Sophie, a great magician herself, must rely on the Wizard Sulliman, Howl, Abdullah, the soldier, etc. to save her. Clever and logical Flower had to wait around for Abdullah to rescue her. Even Lettie, Sophie's strong-willed sister, was made to keep her powers secret because "Ben doesn't like people to know that I can do magic". The only thing worse than their constantly getting overshadowed is the fact that the men view nothing wrong with this. Abdullah doesn't like Sophie for being strong-willed. He views this trait--as well as other traits like being fat--to be undesirable in women. And, of course, he is right, for the two "fat, ugly girls" that he was nearly "forced" into marrying are vain and stupid--just as he predicted--and have no problem spending the rest of eternity in exile with an immature and spoiled djinn. Great. What a strong message for young girls who read this story.

While I certainly haven't lost my awe for Jones' vivid imagery and her descriptive writing of these far-off magical kingdoms, it seems that I have lost respect for her characters.

Kristijan says

Zamak u oblacima donosi u istoj meri ono što nam je doneo i njegov prethodnik - pregršt šarenila i avantura. Zbog tematike na momente sam morao da se podsećam da ovo nije Salman Ruždi, već neko drugi... Stil pripovedanja, ali i pisanja, je otprilike isti kao u prvom delu, i može se naslutiti kako će se roman završiti, kao i "prošlost" određenih magijskih predmeta ili likova. Jednostavno Italac može da "nanjuši" sumnjivog lika ili sumnjiv predmet i da pretpostavi šta se u njemu krije. Interesantne su paralele koje je spisateljica povukla sa pričama iz 1001 noći - duh, arapski tepih,... ali na momente nekako deluje da je u romanu nagomilala mnogo toga...

I da... korice za srpsko izdanje su očajne... prosto ne znam ko bi (a da ne zna šta se krije iza tih korica) uzeo knjigu u ruke. Šteta što se stalo na drugom delu (postoji i treći). Verujem da bi knjiga imala bolju prođu da su korice drugačije i da se knjiga malo više popularizovala.

Sesana says

Castle in the Air is indeed a companion to Howl's Moving Castle, but the first thing to accept is that you won't be seeing much of Howl and Sophie. Once I did that, I was able to relax and enjoy this entirely different book.

Abdullah is from Rashpuht, and this is where the story begins. As the names suggest, there's a definite "Arabian Nights" flavor to the narrative. Abdullah finds himself with a magic carpet, that he doesn't know

how to control, exactly, and meets with the princess Flowers-in-the-Night. Who is kidnapped right in front of him by an evil djinn. And so Abdullah goes on a quest to rescue his beloved, which eventually brings him to Ingary, and into contact with characters from the previous book.

There's some really fantastic characters in here. Abdullah himself, who is a smooth talker but quite sincere in his love for Flowers-in-the-Night. Flowers-in-the-Night herself, who isn't content to be in distress and who is as intelligent as she is beautiful. And Princess Beatrice in particular, though she isn't in much of the book.

The plot has a traditional fairy tale feel to it, with some twists. It also has the same sort of chaotic ending that Howl's Moving Castle had, which I liked. I'm very eager to continue the series now.

Marianne (Instagram - longmayweread) W says

I won't ever get tired of Howl and Sophie, even if there's not very much of them here. Still, a fun and enjoyable book!

Katerina Kondrenko says

8.5 out of 10

????? ? ???? ????/This review on my blog

Living A Thousand Lives (please use Chrome/Yandex browser or Android/iOS to see the page; otherwise, spoiler-tags I use to make my post compact may not work)

Short-Soundtrack:

John Me – Love Is My Drug, Is My Medicine

Genre: fairytale, fantasy

Stuff: jinn, flying carpet and castle, magic

Fail: funny, but not charismatic MC

WOW: old characters, the plot, humor

POV: 3rd person, male

Love-Geometry: none

Quote-Core:

"Fate doesn't care most of the time."

Okay, I have to admit, I pick this book up thinking only about Howl and ended up being indifferent in new characters' fates, but the story itself and the writing (especially Russian translation) were super funny and smart, plus old heroes had played their roles, so overall I'm happy and ready for more.

This installment's adventures start in **Zanzib** where we meet **Abdullah** who sells carpets and loves to dream. One day a stranger offers him an old magical item which soon changes the boy's life: he falls in love, but his sweetheart gets abducted and Abdullah has to save not only her, but his own life too. Danger is everywhere, but with a flying carpet, a nasty jinn, a skillful soldier and a few crazy cats the boy will go to **Ingary** and become a hero.

In this part we'll see Howl and Sophie, Lettie and her husband (until this book I wasn't sure whom she will marry: prince or mage), little Valeria, Calcifer and others. It's been only a year since the ending of the book #1, but there are serious news about everyone. **Howl and Sophie** now one of my favorite pairings. They aren't your typical HEA-couple, their quarrel, they fight, they know each other's flaws and don't mind them at all, 'cause you can't love a person partially, only whole. I'd love to see these two in a more mature setting, it might be firework-ish!

(c) taka0801

Again, I wanna praise the **plot**. So many different lines interlace and turn into a well-thought-out and logical netting. Silly and naive moments open up from another side, as well as characters' natures and motivations. And after you've done with the book you wanna re-read it again, 'cause so many things will be different now when you know every secret and twist. That's magic!

Diana Wynne Jones knows how to surprise and entertain her readers during their read. I wasn't bored even once. I also need to highlight Jones's wits and humor (and many thanks to the Russian translator who did GREAT). I might not be in love with the new narrator, but I did enjoy his way of thoughts and speech.

I can't say more, 'cause this book is too intricate not to give a spoiler away by touching its threads. So I just let a content sigh out and run for the book #3.

Howl's Moving Castle (??????? ????):

- Howl's Moving Castle (??????? ????) #1/3
- Castle in the Air (????????? ????) #2/3
- House of Many Ways (??? ? ??????????) #3/3

Ricardo says

4.5 / 5

Una descripción hermosa de los escenarios. Incluso poética. Un excelente y original libro de fantasía.

Reseña: <http://www.eternamenteentiniebla.com/...>

Erin says

If you read and enjoyed Howl's Moving Castle and have yet to read this, what are you waiting for? Come on

now, go read it. At once.

I liked *Castle in the Air* better than its predecessor, surprisingly. There are several reasons for this:

1. The plot makes more sense on a first read-- there's a clear mission from the get-go, and the reveals at the end aren't at all confusing.
2. It's not exactly a retelling... but there are clear, surely intended parallels to the story of Aladdin. I really liked the setting, which was a fantasy version of Arabia.
3. The biggest plus factor of all was the protagonist, Abdullah. **Oh, ABDULLAH!** He was the icing on the cake, the apple of my eye, etc etc. I feel both giddy and lucky to have read this book and it was an honor to experience 199 pages of pure Abdullah goodness. To know Abdullah is to love him. I adored his way of speaking, the manners of his psuedo-Arabian upbringing which led to delightful passages like:

"O most excellent of carpets," he said, "O brightest-colored and most delicately woven, whose lovely textile is so cunningly enhanced with magic, I fear I have not treated you hitherto with proper respect. I have snapped commands and even shouted at you, where I now see that your gentle nature requires only the mildest of requests. Forgive, oh, forgive!"

Oh, yeah, that's right. In case the Aladdin thing didn't clue you in, there is a MAGIC CARPET. And a GENIE. If this doesn't appeal to you, I can't even begin to understand your strange, strange mind. MAGIC CARPET! GENIE!

Castle in the Air might confuse some readers at first-- if you go in expecting another book full of Sophie, Howl, and Calcifer, you're in for a surprise. They don't come into the narrative until close to the very end. But Abdullah more than makes up for their absence, don't fret! (view spoiler)

It's hard to think of anything negative to say about this one. There were a couple typos? I guess the reason it didn't get five stars from me is that 1. I'm stubbornly miserly in giving away my precious, precious stars, and 2. Even though I enjoyed every second of it (Every. Single. Second.), the writing style was a tad detached, so I didn't quite get the emotional depth that I require for five stars.

I will most definitely be purchasing this book at some point. Highly recommended!

Emma (Miss Print) says

"Castle in the Air" is Diana Wynne Jones' sequel to her amazingly awesome novel "Howl's Moving Castle." It was originally published in 1990 (four years after "Howl's Moving Castle"). At first glance, this novel doesn't sound like a sequel--it sounds more like a companion book at best--but I promise it does explain more about Howl and Sophie, just not right away and not, perhaps, in the most obvious way.

That said, this story is set in the Sultanates of Rashpuht a land far to the south of Ingary (where Howl and Sophie make their home). Instead of a land akin to King Arthur and Merlin, Rashpuht is much more likely to harbor Aladdin and other desert-dwellers. This change in setting, along with a new protagonist, make for the most dramatic differences between "Castle in the Air" and its predecessor.

Abdullah works as a carpet merchant in the city of Zanzib. Abdullah's stall may not be as prosperous as his father's first wife's relatives would like, but Abdullah can't stand most of them so he doesn't worry too much. What really bothers Abdullah is the fact that he's selling carpets at all. Abdullah is convinced there is more to life and spends a good deal of his time daydreaming about what his life could be like if, say, he were a prince who had escaped bandits and disguised himself as a carpet merchant before he found his true love.

All in all, the young man doesn't give his daydreams much thought until he is sold a mysterious carpet. With the carpet, Abdullah finds that all of his dreams seem to be coming true with alarming accuracy. Whisked to a magical garden, Abdullah meets and falls in love with the beautiful and intelligent Flower-in-the-Night only to have her abducted by an evil djinn. So begins Abdullah's adventure as he and his carpet set off to rescue his true love.

This being a novel by Diana Wynne Jones, the plot is filled with charming twists and enjoyable characters throughout. The other great thing about this novel is how much Jones fleshes out the world she introduced in "Howl's Moving Castle." As the novel progresses, readers learn more about the relations between Ingary, Rashpuht, and Strangia (a land that becomes important later, trust me). At the same time, Jones also creates a completely new set of customs and even a new diction for her Rashpuhtian characters which gives the novel an impressive depth.

I don't know if this was the intended effect but, even though both novels are written in English, this change in diction also creates the effect that the characters here speak a different language and that, on some level, their customs would be very foreign to those found in Ingary. One of Jones' best inventions is that buyers and sellers in Zanzib always speak to each other "in the most formal and flowery way." This habit creates a lot of conversations that function on a variety of levels much in the same way body language can add to an exchange. For example:

"It is possible that my low and squalid establishment might provide that which you seek, O pearl of wanderers," he said, and cast his eye critically over the stranger's dirty desert robe, the corroded stud in the side of the man's nose, and his tattered headcloth as he said it.

"It is worse than squalid, mighty seller of floor coverings," the stranger agreed.

Exchanges like this appear throughout the novel and make it really enjoyable to read. At the same time this type of double talk suggests that Abdullah is a shrewder narrator than Sophie might have been at the start of the novel. Abdullah doesn't always know exactly what's going on during the novel, but he always tries to make sure he comes out on top (or at least not on a forty foot pole).

On its own, "Castle in the Air" is a lot of fun as far as fantasies go. Read in combination with "Howl's Moving Castle" and "House of Many Ways" (Jones' latest novel featuring Howl and Sophie due out in June 2008) this book is excellent.

You can find this review and more on my blog [Miss Print](#)

[Name Redacted] says

Loved it. Even better than the preceding volume (which I did enjoy), because everything I disliked about Howl's Moving Castle was fixed herein.

Mark Lawrence says

Another very readable book from DWJ, and one I've just finished reading to my daughter, Celyn. Refreshingly independent princesses being semi-saved by our devoted hero, a carpet salesman from the desert city of Zanzib. He's not hero material, and never resorts to violence, but he's a good fellow and carries the story well.

We get all the standard Aladdin-esque trappings, a magic carpet, a genie in a bottle, evil djinns, bandits, sultans, camels... and for a while you think you know roughly where it's all heading. Then things veer northwards and we find ourselves treading old ground. Greener ground. Zeroing in on territory thoroughly trodden in book 1. You'll find yourself anticipating the reappearance of the Wizard Howl and Sophie.

The ending was where things fell apart a little for me, and perhaps for Celyn judging by the somewhat bemused silence she greeted it with (she's non-verbal but normally makes her views known). In a frantic rush everything seems to turn into everything else - like the Scooby Doo mask-pulling finale ... on speed.

Anyhow, it was good at the end to finally catch up with Sophie and Howl. We're moving onto the third book of the trilogy next - looking forward to it.

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Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

In this sequel to Howl's Moving Castle, the wizard Howl gets mixed up with djinni, genies (in this story they're two different species) and some Arabian Nights-type characters (from the sanitized version I read as a child). Abdullah, a humble young carpet merchant with big (day)dreams, is sold a magic carpet by a suspicious-looking stranger, which leads him to a beautiful princess named Flower-in-the-Night, a genie in a bottle, and other adventures. Abdullah is forced to leave behind his daydreams and take action when a djinn kidnaps Flower and takes her to his castle in the air to be one of his many wives.

Eventually Abdullah's and Flower's story twines together with some of the main characters from *Howl's Moving Castle*.

Abdullah's ability to use flowery language to good effect is told with affectionate humor:

"O elegant tapestry of enchantment," Abdullah said, "O carpet composed of most complex cantrips, I pray you to move at a sedate speed toward Kingsbury, but to exercise the great wisdom woven in your fabric to make sure that we are not seen by anyone on the way."

Obediently the carpet climbed through the mist. . . A hoarse and trembling voice said from the

bottle, "Do you have to flatter it so disgustingly?"

"This carpet," said Abdullah, "unlike you, is of an ensorcellment so pure and excellent that it will listen only to the finest of language. It is at heart a poet among carpets."

A certain smugness spread through the pile of the carpet. It held its tattered edges proudly straight and sailed sweetly forward into the golden sunlight above the mist.

This was a fun, delightful Aladdin type of story, great for middle grade/YA ages and anyone who enjoys children's lit. The plot is a little smoother and easier to follow than *Howl's Moving Castle*, but perhaps also a little less engaging and complex. If you've read that book, the ending of this one will be more enjoyable and make more sense, but I think it could still be enjoyed without having read *Howl* first.
