



Kings of the Castle

Victoria Turnbull

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George didn't want to waste the night moonbathing. He wanted to build a sandcastle that would turn any monster green-eyed with envy. But when George meets the strangest creature he has ever seen, the night takes an unexpected turn.

Kings of the Castle Details

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Author : Victoria Turnbull

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From Reader Review *Kings of the Castle* for online ebook

N says

A little bit Shaun Tan, a little bit Alexis Deacon with a splash of *Where the Wild Things Are*.

Beautiful cover and a most adorable short pants wearing sea monster.

Peacegal says

4.5 stars -- I loved the ethereal quality of the book, with its gently surreal illustrations just slightly blurred. This reminds me of a dream you might have if you fell asleep reading *WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE*.

Baby Bookworm says

This review was originally written for The Baby Bookworm. Visit us for new picture books reviews daily!

Hello, friends! Today, we're reviewing *Kings Of The Castle* by Victoria Turnbull, a lovely story of friendship breaking through barriers.

When night falls, young monster George is excited. He won't waste a moment of the moonlight; tonight, his goal is to build the biggest sand castle ever. Unfortunately, his excitable dog Boris keeps impeding his progress. He is about to give up when a very strange and different-looking monster appears from the waves. George tries to say hello, but the monster, though friendly, doesn't understand his language (though the new monster, Nepo, and Boris seem to understand each other's yips and barks). George is ready to leave the new arrival, but Boris convinces him to give the newcomer a chance. And with a bit of creative thinking, George and Nepo find that they have much in common – including the desire to build a sandcastle more amazing than either could build alone.

This was a gorgeous story with a subtle yet powerful message. The adorable pair of George and Nepo, plus Boris, are illustrated in a gorgeous dreamlike style, with soft soothing colors that evoke a shoreline at night. But the story here is key: it's a tale of reaching out, making connections, and showing kindness to those who may not look like you or even speak your language (to hear that Turnbull was drawing parallels to refugees is not a surprise). So while the characters and settings are firmly fantastical, the message of acceptance is as real and pertinent as it gets, and is imparted beautifully. The length is great, and JJ really enjoyed this one, so we are definitely calling it Baby Bookworm approved!

Be sure to check out The Baby Bookworm for more reviews!

Liane says

I loved this book! Simple text and GORGEOUS illustrations (how did Turnbull make it look like the stars were shining??) made for a delightful story of friendship and imagination. We could all take a cue from George, Boris, and Nepo to look past what makes us different, to find the similarities within.

Bonnie Lambourn says

Victoria Turnbull has an amazing way of simply showing magical tales of friendship. Here she cleverly creates images with obvious nod of homage to Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*, yet more like a *Little Bear* story with monsters and magic swirled in.

Distinctly Turnbull's own story, where Monsters are the norm. The little monster main character is keen to build a wonderful sandcastle, but his little dog in trying to help keeps destroying it.

When the monster meets an odd sea monster he has never seen before he tries to connect, but it does not speak. Yet the little dog and sea monster connect, and they end up creating an amazing castle together [seen in "reality" and in fantasy images] and becoming best friends.

Great book to explore the topic of making new friends with someone who looks different, communicates differently, lives differently.

I am personally thrilled that VT has broken the wall fully of magical realism in picture books for children to a new level.

Kaethe says

Kings of the Castle - Victoria Turnbull An homage to *Where The Wild Things Are* with less rumpus. A good choice for a quiet book about staying up all night. Very attractive, especially the centerfold.

Library copy

Garrett says

Okay, but how did could they READ the same words when they didn't even speak or understand the same language?

A.K. Klemm says

Beautiful illustrations, adorable characters, and a delightful message to kids about communication and making new friends.

Melissa Mcavoy says

4 1/2 stars. Spectacularly beautiful and charming illustrations and a winning story of sand castle ambition, a strange new acquaintance and something lasting that is worth having. I think children will find this very satisfying. There are obvious references to Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* and I wonder why the author/illustrator didn't mention that in a note.

The Brothers says

A (land) monster sets out along the shore to make himself a fantastic sand castle. What should he come upon but a (sea) monster. They have a tough time communicating at first, but eventually develop a lovely friendship while building a sand castle together.

Illustrations are ok.

Hαα???? ?ι???? says

This book was interestingly illustrated. The story was a bit hard to follow.

However, the moral of the story is that even if you don't understand someone at first, it's good to give them a chance because they can turn into lasting friends.

Megan says

George and Nepo's friendship has my heart forever. I love this beautiful story of friendship, different types of communication, cooperation, and fun, with a very sweet ode to *Where The Wild Things Are* for older readers who may have grown up reading Sendak!

Mischenko says

To see this review as well as this week's favorite children's books please visit www.readrantrockandroll.com

Kings of the Castle is a cute children's story about friendship. George heads out at night with his dog Boris to build a sand castle and meets a strange creature he has issues communicating with. Will George find a friend in this new found creature?

The story is simple and the illustrations had a Shaun Tan feel, which we loved. I think the story needs a little more substance, but we still enjoyed it.

3.5 stars

Dolly says

Sweet, but utterly forgettable tale about making friends at the seashore. The concept that even monsters need friends, too, is nice. And the colored pencil illustrations are very expressive and muted to convey an evening at the beach.

But I wasn't engaged by the story and even the surprise result with the fold-out pages isn't enough to make me want to read this one again. The cover page is reminiscent of *Where the Wild Things Are*; perhaps it is an homage to that book. Good, but not great.

Leilah Skelton says

I loved Victoria Turnbull's first book, and this second offering is another truly magical experience. Where *The Sea Tiger* set a scene beneath the sea, *Kings of the Castle* explores another mysterious, hidden world – those unseen hours between the dusk and the dawn on a beach beneath a blanket of stars.

George is a bold and determined little monster, and Boris is his enthusiastic pup. Nepo is a most unusual, fan-tailed, flipper-footed sea-dragon creature, and is both shy and kind. When it appears that a communication barrier might stop their adventures before they begin, Boris finds a way to work around it. This is a story of a friendship that overcomes obstacles of language and difference, it is about finding a way to work together to achieve our goals, and it is about the rewards that come from a little patience and perseverance. It is unbelievably beautiful, and the briny colours and quiet humour and kindness make it a perfect bedtime read.

The text is sparse, but it is steeped in a visual narrative that make this a story one that you will want to return to again and again. Every page is an absorbing work of art and what Victoria creates in her work is as close as it comes to reading a dream, I think. A truly unmissable, future classic kind of book.
