



# Skybreaker

*Kenneth Oppel*

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## **Skybreaker** Kenneth Oppel

A legendary ghost ship. An incredible treasure. A death-defying adventure.

Forty years ago, the airship *Hyperion* vanished with untold riches in its hold. Now, accompanied by heiress Kate de Vries and a mysterious gypsy, Matt Cruse is determined to recover the ship and its treasures. But 20,000 feet above the Earth's surface, pursued by those who have hunted the *Hyperion* since its disappearance, and surrounded by deadly high-altitude life forms, Matt and his companions soon find themselves fighting not only for the *Hyperion*—but for their very lives.

## **Skybreaker Details**

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Author : Kenneth Oppel

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# From Reader Review Skybreaker for online ebook

## Rick Riordan says

This is the sequel to Oppell's *Airborn*, which I read and loved last year. If anything, I liked *Skybreaker* better. Oppell does a great job capturing the spirit of "classic boy adventures" like *Treasure Island* and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (which admittedly I never read as a boy, but I caught up with later). In *Skybreaker*, our young hero Matt Cruse spots a ghost ship of the air, the *Hyperion*, and inadvertently launches a frenzied hunt for the massive treasure that is supposedly on board. The only problem: the *Hyperion* is hovering above 20,000 feet, which makes it almost impossible to reach with conventional airships. Lots of adventure, a little romance, and a good sense of humor made this a quick, exciting read. I've tried to "book talk" these books to my son, so far without success, because it's difficult for me to explain the world of airships that Oppell conjures so well. Still, these books are definitely worth checking out.

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## Emily says

### Skybreaker by Kenneth Oppel

\*\*\*\*4\*\*\*\*

Matt Cruise made a name and some money for himself after the fateful trip that brought Kate de Vries into his life. Now studying at the Airship Academy Matt feels like his future is in sight. During one of the training missions however, the ship Matt is on, the *Flotsam* rises thousands of feet into the air by mishap, reaching above the clouds and showing him a glimpse of the *Hyperion* a ship of legend missing for forty years.

Matt returns back to the Academy to find that not only does Kate de Vries want to know the coordinates of the *Hyperion*, which only Matt know, but so do any number of unsavory beings. Teamed up with a mysterious gypsy girl, a haughty pilot only interested in making a fortune and Kate, Matt takes off on yet another daring adventure.

**Skybreaker** was not quite as good as **Airborne** but still very enjoyable. I found the story took a little bit longer to get started and so I faltered slightly at the beginning. Once it was running though the authour kept up with his same writing technique, great story, very colourful and descriptive imagery and best of all his full and believable characters. I really like how this feels like an adventure story mixed in with science, and the character of Kate de Vries is probably still my favorite. She still has some growing up to do but her love of science and exploration reignites those feelings in myself. Great second novel, the ending had some similarities to **Airborn**, similar villains throughout but looking forward to book three, **Starclimber**.

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## Iain says

Perfect juvenile adventure story. This is what they should be making into a film, rather than messing about with the next Harry Potter clone.

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## **Lara says**

Ok, I can now officially say that I LOVE this series. I would never have thought I'd enjoy this so much based on that boring, boring cover, but I really, really did. And I also never would have thought I'd enjoy this one more than I did the first one in the series, but I did that too! Ghost ships? Treasure hunting? A mad inventor? Yes, yes, and yes. Also a handsome rogue, a beautiful, fiesty gypsy, a group of sherpas, the sky over Antarctica, romance, danger, intrigue...so, so fun. I thought it was fantastic, and I will definitely be purchasing these as soon as possible. Moving on to the third book immediately! Hurrah!!!

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## **Qt says**

I thought this was a great sequel to "Airborn;" it was full of the exciting action and well-described characters--not to mention a most intriguing "world"--that made the first book so good. I really like how the author mixes an old-fashioned era with technology, and Matt Cruse's world is realistic and memorable. I was a little surprised by how eerie and scary (for me) some of the chapters and scenes were; I probably shouldn't have been reading those at night ;-) Not that that was a bad thing--I was just a bit surprised by it. I am definitely looking forward to more of Matt's adventures.

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## **John says**

Surprisingly good!

I was only going to give this a 3/5, but the last quarter was solid, especially the tie-ins to Greek mythology.

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## **An Odd1 says**

[ and saves him (hide spoiler)]

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## **Skip says**

[against pirates and a fuel consortium (hide spoiler)]

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## **Kathryn says**

Another great full-cast audiobook version! I very much enjoyed this worthy sequel to the excellent "Airborn" which I loved.

(SPOILERS FOR ANYONE WHO HAS NOT READ AIRBORN. And, if you don't want to know a thing about what happens in "Skybreaker" stop reading now and just go read the book!! It's awesome!!!)

The story begins with a bang as Matt Cruse finds himself in the midst of a storm while on board an airship. It was strange at first that he wasn't on the Aurora but, of course, he has joined the Academy and is augmenting his coursework by crewing some non-passenger vessels. In the giant updraft from the storm, Matt spots an almost ghostly looking ship and realized it's the Hyperion, long-fabled to hold vast treasure, lost some forty years ago. The captain of Cruse's ship, blinded by lust for the treasure, orders the ship to climb even higher so they can lock onto the Hyperion. Matt knows this is terribly dangerous and altitude sickness begins to consume the crew. Perhaps because he has always felt he belongs to the sky, Matt is ultimately the only one among them capable of any conscious thought or action and while the captain greedily, groggily mutters "keep ascending!" Matt takes control of the ship, taking her back to Paris, saving all their lives. Whew! Quite the opening chapter!!!

The story builds from Matt's sighting of the Hyperion. He meets up with Kate in Paris—where he attends the Airship Academy and she is going to University. Kate tells him that Grunell, the man behind the Hyperion and all its cargo, was supposedly an amazing inventor and also some sort of zoologist and that the ship is rumored to have an amazing collection of taxidermy with creatures long thought to be extinct. Kate wants to get the Hyperion for its contribution to Science. Matt is a bit preoccupied with the treasure reported to be on board—not that he longs to be a rich man for himself, but even with his reward money from the end of "Airborn" he barely has enough money to put himself through Academy and send money home for his mother and sisters to live on, let alone live comfortably. As ever, Matt's kindness and humanity radiate throughout the story! But Matt is also the only person who knows the true coordinates of the Hyperion. He also knows instinctively that the man who has come to him claiming to be a relative of Grunell is an impostor—and that point certainly drives home when Matt's life is put at risk. Now assemble the rest of the primary characters for this story. Nadera, a spunky and attractive Gypsy girl, who claims to have the key to open the vaults on the Hyperion. Matt trusts her completely, though her loyalty is often cast into doubt. And Hal, brought into the mix by Kate. He has the "skybreaker" ship that can take them to the high altitudes where they will find the Hyperion. A "self-made" man, he has plenty of courage, a bit of grit, and a gentlemanly demeanor—and he seems to have designs on Kate.

I loved the beginning segments of the story! I loved the ending of the story, filled with one mini-adventure after another, made all the more dramatic and poignant since I'd come to care for the characters so much. I'm giving the story only four stars because I don't think it was QUITE as good as "Airborn" because the middle segment (maybe 1/4 of the book) when they are making their way to the Hyperion, seemed to drag a bit. I appreciated Matt's introspection about his deepening feelings for Kate—and his undeniable attraction to Nadera—and Hal's potential aims on Kate—the jealousy and excitement and tenderness and doubt of teenage romances brought into a pleasantly sensitive and thoughtful light. But, given the overarching "feel" of the story, I wanted a bit more excitement/action to be interspersed with the romance bits and I think much of Oppel's target audience would feel the same. However, the second half of the book more than made up for that and I was rapt, so very curious as to what would happen, all the way to the end.

I can hardly wait for the third book in the series. It's not coming out on full cast audio until the middle of October so I may just have to read in good-old, hand-held paper form! :-)

\*Please excuse the spellings since I didn't actually see the names in print.

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### **Katie Lumsden says**

A thoroughly enjoyable read. I enjoy the way Oppel writes, and the steam punk, Victorian-inspired world he

creates is just my kind of thing. Great characterisation, a fun idea and a clever plot as always.

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### **Melissa Michelle says**

Such a compelling read. Yet another adventure for Matt Cruse and Kate de Vries. Treasure hunts, adventure, and a little romance...Characters seemed to grow.

If you like Kenneth Oppel, here is another hit.

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### **FortressOfBookitude says**

Dieses Buch hätte einfach nicht als Kinderbuch geschrieben werden sollen. Es gibt keinen Platz für sprachliche Diversität, das richtige Aufbauen der Atmosphäre und die Entwicklung zwischen den Charakteren. Stattdessen dominiert ein strenges Schema, nach welchem die Handlungsabschnitte in vorgegebener Seitenzahl erfolgen (ich habe es mit dem ersten Band verglichen).

Dabei ist die Idee, den Himmel als ähnlich unerforschte Domäne wie den Ozean darzustellen genial und die Suche nach dem Schatz eines verschrobenen, reichen Wissenschaftlers in eisigen Höhen nicht die Neuerfindung des Rads, aber originell genug, um entsprechend mit einer vernünftigen Umsetzung gewürdigt zu werden.

Mal sehen, was der dritte Teil mit sich bringt.

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### **Jaemi says**

In this sequel to *Airborn*, we pick up about where we left off. Matt's taken his money and used it to enroll in the Airship Academy, sending some home for his mother and sister's. Kate has enrolled in the Sorbonne and taken up flying lessons. The adventure begins with Matt's internship about the Flotsam.

Assistant to the Navigator, he's learning things he never really took the time to notice board the Aurora. He was always more concerned with the flying than the routes. And while he appreciates his realization of the importance of the Navigator to a ship, he can't wait to be done with the Flotsam, whose captain is questionable at best. When he flies them straight into a storm, Matt is sure he's mad. When they get through, he begins to rethink his opinion...until they get caught in an updraft, and having jettisoned their ballast, are all but powerless to stop their ascent.

While floating at dangerous heights, they stumble upon an incredible discovery—an airship that has become myth, declared lost years ago. At 20,000 feet she floats, a ghost ship. The captain means to salvage her, but as the crew one by one all succumb to air sickness, Matt goes against orders, vents the ship's hydrium, and saves their lives.

Despite the manner of the discovery, the news is still magical. While he feels a deep sadness when he hears of the loss of the navigator, Matt also realizes this makes him the only person to now know the coordinates of the mythical Hyperion. He can't wait to tell Kate. Only Kate's already found out. The story, it seems, has been leaked. This makes the idea less appealing.

When a meeting with a supposed member of the family of the deceased owner of the *Hyperion* turns bad, Matt starts to second-guess everything. Whether finding the ship was a good thing after all, whether Kate's scheme to go after it is insanity or a worthwhile dream. An attempt on his life and the discovery of another man in Kate's house make his mind up for him.

And still things don't go his way. The very ship he and his newfound partner Nadira mean to hire is the same ship Kate has already hired, its owner the very man Matt spied in her house. And yet, the ragtag crew strikes a deal. Hal has the ship, Kate has the funds, Nadira the key, Matt the coordinates.

This adventure is even more fantastic than the last. An excellent read, highly recommended.

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### Julia says

4.5 really. Loved it.

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### Cara says

Get ready ladies and gents for another adventure of epic proportions with the clever Matt Cruse and vivacious Kate de Vries. This time around we find them in Paris where Matt is attending the Airship Academy, but it isn't going as well as he had hoped. He's struggling with some of his courses and isn't living up to people's expectations. Despite that he has stumbled onto another risky endeavor. Matt has seen the legendary *Hyperion* which is believed to be a floating treasure trove. Kate has gotten into her head that they have to go see what's up there. Thrown in the mix we have the dashing Hal, the self-made man who has his eyes set on Kate, and then we have the mysterious Nadira that is holding secrets. The group sets off to set out to do what no one has been able to do, to capture the *Hyperion*, but they won't be the only ones participating in the chase...

I was a bit worried when I started this book because I had read *Airborn* a couple of years back, but the author recaps throughout the book so I didn't feel lost. This book will definitely appeal to people who love to get lost in an adventure. What makes it stand out from other books in its genre is the concept of airships. I felt like I was actually in these ships and I could understand Matt's awe of these machines and his love for the air. In this book we get to see more of Matt's insecurities as a boy struggling to become a young man. He feels the pressure to have money, make a name for himself, and wants it so bad it hurts. He's ashamed of feeling this way, but it doesn't stop him from wanting it.

I have to talk about Matt and Kate. Their relationship is so...**vibrant**. They click even though they are so different because they get what makes the other person tick. They do hit a rough patch here with Hal woeing Kate and Matt having an attraction to the beautiful Nadira. I did wish to see a bit more character development with Hal, but other than that I have nothing negative to say. Endings always make or break a book for me and let's just say the ending is thoroughly satisfying.

The book hits all important attributes to keep readers interested, a good plot, characters that you care about and being able to immerse yourself in a new world of fantasy that is set in the air.

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## Valerie says

I nearly forgot I had read the first book which I could very well get in trouble for, seeing how many people love this series. The whole premise of historic fiction with a sci-fi twist to it is starting to have a real appeal to me now. I don't know exactly what they call it though.

Matt is just how I remembered him though he gets a bit obsessive about money, being good enough and all that. Kate is true to her character as well. Things get complicated between them, the captain, and the gypsy. I guess it was supposed to add to the drama. This I didn't quite enjoy but I shouldn't complain too much since it is dealt with sooner or later in the book.

It was well written the pacing was good –not full of action all the time but definitely a good amount. The journey and discovery of the airship *Hyperion* is exciting. The action is great and I was thoroughly engrossed during those scenes in the book.

For a sequel I think Skybreaker could stand on its own though I would recommend reading Airborn first and want to read the last for sure.

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## Ravi says

As good as Airborn but much, much higher up. 20,000 feet up!

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## Alexandra says

12/23/17 Kindle version on sale for \$3.99. Highly recommend this series.

Sequel to Airborn. I enjoyed this one at least as much as the first book, maybe more. Looking forward to reading the third in the series, Starclimber.

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## Morgan F says

OH man. I devoured this book in a few hours despite its rather large size. I was so absorbed and the pages (get ready for a pun) flew by.

This book continues Matt Cruse's saga. When it starts, he is serving as an intern on the airship Flotsam. The Flotsam gets blown off course and as it rises to heights untraveled, it discovers a 40-yr-old mystery: the location of the Hyperion, a ghost ship legend to have riches upon riches on board. Because of some complications, the Flotsam must end its journey, but that doesn't mean the journey ends for Matt Cruse. With the Hyperion's coordinates and thoughts of riches in mind, Matt Cruse along with the heiress Kate de Vries and a mysterious gypsy named Nadira, set out on a perilous journey.

I think this book maybe even better than Airborn. It was filled with the same swashbuckling action and



ripping good adventure, and the romance between a certain cabin boy and young heiress grew even tenser. Now there was even a love-quadrangle of sorts with some other new characters thrown in. I think the character development was considerably better this time around, and we finally got some emotion from Mr. Cruse.

There is just something about these books I adore. They are fun and thrilling, and there is nothing about them that makes me groan in dismay. I think that's why these books get five-stars. I'm sure they could be better, but there is nothing about them that I dislike. And the visuals are awesome. I've said it once and I'll say it again: these books would be GREAT movies.

If you know any reluctant male readers, recommend these books to them. They appeal to a wide audience. Easy enough for middle school readers, but older readers will love them too. Both boys and girls.

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### **Jamie says**

I know my friend Deb just loves Oppel, so while coming down from the Sibert jury, I thought this might be a good relaxing escape.

It really was all that and more. For a long book, it reads fast fast fast. You can't quit turning the pages. Plots twist, not in an unbelievable way but more in a slight-jaw-dropping, actually gasping/saying things out loud way.

This would be a perfect book for boys who like Alex Rider - different but the same sort of plot plot plot action action action.

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