



A Wild Ride Through the Night

Walter Moers

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A fantastical new comic adventure from the author of the international best-seller, **The 13 1/2 Lives of Captain Bluebear.**

In a world between legend and dream, in a time between childhood and adulthood, Walter Moers narrates the exhilarating adventures of 12-year-old Gustave, a boy who aspires to be a great artist. But first, Gustave must pit himself against giants and a Siamese Twin Tornado. He will also encounter the Most Monstrous of All Monsters, rescue a beautiful damsel from a dragon, traverse a forest swarming with evil spirits, navigate a Galactic Gully, and meet a dream princess, a talking horse, and even his own self. Having made a wager with death for nothing less than his life and soul, Gustave must travel from the earth to the moon and back in a single night. Using drawings from the work of Gustave Doré, the most successful illustrator of the 19th century, Walter Moers has once again created a wondrous, utterly enchanting tale.

A Wild Ride Through the Night Details

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From Reader Review A Wild Ride Through the Night for online ebook

Tanja Berg says

A beautifully illustrated book about a young boy who receives six quests to conquer Death. Rather than die immediately that is. As witty as all Moers book, eloquent, thoughtful. The plot leaves no open ends.

Saskia Marijke Niehorster-Cook says

How to explain why Mr. Moers is a genius? One must read his books in order to see why I feel so strongly about it, but his genius does not stop there! No, Alas! Walter Moers illustrates his own books, and not only are his words out of this world, his etchings leave nothing to be desired. Each time I encounter one of them, I spend a lengthy time exploring it, drooling a little, for they are a sight to see. As an illustrator myself, I can only hope to learn from him and perhaps come up with a semi-decent account of my own.

The story "A Wild Ride Through The Night" is an epic tale of a fantastical journey that lasts a night, but what a night!

The etchings themselves, for the first time are not Mr. Moers, and though if you are a fan of his etchings, you too will despair a little, wait till you see the etchings Mr. Moers chose to illustrate his book! Inspired on 21 etchings of Gustave Dore, a French painter, sculptor and illustrator from the 1800's, this book's illustrations are just as magnificent and detailed. The story wraps itself around them, and creates a new meaning for them that have us sailing through Natural Cataclysms, rescuing sexy amazonian-style damsels, meeting a dream consultant, confronting a forest of enchanted furry fearies, anagram giants, and many monsters who brag about being the most monstrous monsters ever, traveling through an "Einsteiniam" Universe and a honeycomb future, just to turn around and meet death and it's demented sister on the moon. If that is not enough to exhaust someone, I don't know what is... (197 pgs)

Just remember: Carpe Diem et Noctum...

David Edmonds says

Some of you may or may not remember, but a couple of months back I had found a copy of The Rime of the Ancient Mariner with the accompanying Gustave Doré illustrations? Well, much to my delight, last weekend I stumbled across Walter Moers' A Wild Ride Through the Night. I'd heard about this book, but had had a terrible time locating a copy anywhere. Cut to last weekend, and I'm standing in the Borders Outlet and discover a pile of them for \$4 each. I was ecstatic! Well, it turns out the reason I haven't been able to find a copy is because it hasn't been released in the States yet (September something, I think) and this is a UK edition (it is priced £16.99).

Walter Moers' A Wild Ride Through the Night is a very clever book. Moers takes 21 of Dore's illustrations

and uses them to create a story of how Doré grew up to became the artist that he did. The illustrations are taken from The Rime of the Ancient Mariner, Orlando Furioso, The Raven, Don Quixote, Legend of Croquemitane, Gargantua and Pantagruel, Paradise Lost, and the Bible. While the story can seem a little simplistic in some parts and rather contrived in others, but remember, he's needing to create a story to fit around previously created works of art.

The idea works well. We meet Doré as a young boy, who happens to be captaining his own ship, which is being chased down by Siamese Twin Tornadoes. The ship is destroyed, his crew scattered to the heavens by the storm, and Death and his sister, Dementia, are waiting to take his soul. Doré strikes a deal with Death. If he is able to accomplish 6 tasks (such as traversing a forest filled with evil spirits while bringing as much attention to himself as possible; and bringing Death a tooth from the Most Monstrous of all Monsters).

You can tell that Moers spent a great deal of time in choosing just the right illustrations to use to create the story, as it all flows nicely together and they all work well as plot points. Moers will usually give a description in the story of what is happening in the accompanying illustration, which comes in handy, as there is usually so much happening in a Doré illustration, I found it very helpful to have a "map" as to the action going on in the illustration, and I noticed things in the drawing that I don't think I would have noticed before. It is a fairly fast read, but it does raise some interesting ideas about time, death, life and the purpose of life. Overall, an enjoyable little book.

Sugar Hiccups says

What a fun read this was! I think this is my book of the year so far. And Gustave Doré is no fiction, by the way...although winking gryphons and entrepreneurial, dragon-slaying naked women are. I wish they weren't though. The Time Pig reminded me of Pink Floyd for some reason????

Spoiler Alert!

This book is fantastic for one reason: beneath its kitschy, playful exterior Walter Moers ponders on the pain of first love, the peer- pressure effect of society on the individual (the Titans that make up the Natural Sciences laugh at Gustave when he tells them his dreams of being an artist), philosophical meanderings on the absurdities of time (courtesy of the Time Pig) and finally, the meaning of life itself. Moers manages to weave all this into his writing with his signature usage of metaphors, and Gustave, with his naivety, manages to complete the tasks with gusto. I'd recommend this to anyone starting out on Walter Moers' books anytime.

Miriam says

His ship destroyed by a Siamese Twin Tornado and his crew drowned, a boy named Gustave is forced to accept an impossible-sounding set of challenges from Death as his only chance at survival. But the deck is always stacked in Death's favor, isn't it?

Very fun, clever fantastical wild ride through a surreal landscape of personifications and ideas. I enjoyed Moers writing very much and am looking forward to reading something else of his, although I have a slight

concern that he may pall at greater length (this book is even shorter than the page count indicates, as it included art reproductions and an appendix), as there were already points in the middle where I felt a tad bored.

(Weird coincidence unrelated to the book itself: although I did not take the above photo, I did once have that same green shag carpet.)

Kate Sherrod says

"I've got no idea what's gone wrong with your dreams of late, but they've definitely been getting wilder." When your own dear personal psychopomp aka "dream princess" who is also your late great-great-great grandmother tells you this, you know you're in for a weird adventure. Of course, by the time twelve-year-old Gustave Dore meets his ancestress and hears this observation, he's already been on one for a good bit: captaining his own ship and all but losing it to the "Siamese Twin Tornados", meeting Death and his sister Dementia, saving a Damsel in Distress from her Dragon but learning that he kind of misread that situation a bit...

Wait? Meeting Death? Yes. Death wants the kid's soul, like now, and the only way young Gustave can avoid complying is by performing a series of tasks. Welcome to the wild, weird, wonderful world of Walter Moers, here exhibited as part *Where the Wild Things Are*, part *Maakies* (Drinky Crow and Uncle Gabby would have felt right at home on Gustave's ship), with a dash of the *Twelve Labors of Hercules* thrown in.

Every Walter Moers book I pick up becomes my new favorite Walter Moers, and *A Wild Ride Through the Night* is no exception, despite the absence of Moers' cartoons. That's not to say the book is unadorned by illustration, though; far from it. The story took its inspiration from twelve engravings by 19th century French engraver and illustrator Gustave Dore*, and these appear sequentially in the book (and, being engravings, look pretty okay in e-Ink, to my surprise), making it at least partly a sort of wry commentary on sequential art and how any sequence's story can be altered by any amount of interstitial storytelling; it can even be made into an imaginary portrait of the artist as a young man.

I've been a fan of Moers since I first stumbled across *The City of Dreaming Books* in the new books section of my public library a few years ago. With a title like that, how could I pass it by? That book was nothing like I'd expected, but altogether wonderful -- and the lovely thing about his *Zamonia* books* (I mean, besides their inherent charm and their amazing, adorable illustrations) is that any one of them is a wonderful introduction to this world, populated by sentient, literate, civilized dinosaurs, adventuring educated dogs, blue bears who captain ships, and yes, dreaming books. But also, any one of them is a total gateway drug; once you've sampled from it, if it's at all to your taste, you will feel utterly compelled to go and get them all. So, you know, here.

A Wild Ride Through the Night is an earlier work than the *Zamonia* books, but already quite a mature one: Moers has already worked out his signature style (and so has his translator, John Brownjohn), blending whimsy, satire and pathos with fairly strong character creation (Lil' Gustave is no Rumo, but who is?) and a whole lot of just plain WTFery. If you don't laugh at loud at some of these bits, see your psychiatrist. And while a lot of the weirdest stuff (like a monstrous flying pig with lizard/goat legs) originated from the fevered imagination of Dore, I really don't think Dore could have come up with the kind of dialogue Moers

gives to such grotesqueries. Truly, he is like no other writer, living or dead.

But you know, if you can't have Moers illustrations in a Moers book, Dore will do. Yes, yes he will.

This one needs SIX stars. SIX.

*Illustrations used are taken from "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", Orlando Furioso, "The Raven", Don Quixote, Legend of Croquemitane, Gargantua and Pantagruel, Paradise Lost, and the Bible.

Selwa says

I had no idea what this was when I picked it up.

Scratch that. I only knew what the blurb said, which was that this is the story of a boy named Gustave who must do 6 impossible tasks in order to cheat death. What the book *really* is, is a tribute to the artist Gustave Doré. If you're unfamiliar with Walter Moers' work, he illustrates his own books. Except this one. For *A Wild Ride Through the Night*, Moers used Doré's illustrations and wrote a story around them. And, if you're unfamiliar with Gustave Doré, he was a French artist/engraver of the mid-19th century.

The creativity astonishes me. In fact, I'm so astonished, I don't have room to be envious haha!

Anyway, this was a relatively quick read, and also strange. I don't know who I'd recommend this to. I suppose fans of Gustave Doré!

Orestis Geo says

A grand book. Part Pratchett, part Twain, part Bradbury, though slightly more subtle in his own way, Moers really keeps it going.

It really was a wild ride, full of fantastic allusions and an amazing sense of humor. Will definitely re-read next year, and the year after, and the year after that.

What I found truly remarkable was the ease with which Moers approached and dealt with many fundamental questions, wherever they sprouted during this adventure. Hell, he seemed absolutely logical in a remarkably illogical way- a rare skill, and one which I absolutely appreciate.

Would recommend to everyone, especially parents who want to get their children started with creepy bedtime stories so that they may one day grow up to become awesome, if not a bit deranged-in-a-cute-way, adults.

Best two quotes:

"You're a servant of Death?"

"Aren't we all?" (recurring numerous times)

(The monster Anxiety, speaking to Gustave)

"But before you go, didn't you wonder, while listening to my story, whether there was some kind of point to

it?"

"Oh I enjoyed it anyway, point or no point"

"That's good, because there wasn't one".

GO AND BUY THAT BOOK. YOU NEED IT.

sj says

Wow. Seriously, wow.

I knew I'd enjoy this going in (cos, c'mon, it's Moers), but I was worried because I knew it didn't include HIS illustrations.

It was stupid of me to worry.

Holy crap, this was fantastic.

It reminds me of when my husband and I were first married and he'd come in to our room to find me half asleep with the lights on and my glasses askew on my face. He'd take my glasses off and turn out the light, but I'd invariably wake up and ask him to sit with me and tell me a story until I fell asleep.

The crazy things he'd come up with (far different than the bedtime stories he now makes up for our children) would make me giggle myself to sleep with their sheer outlandishness. This book seems like it could have been one of those stories. A silly bedtime tale for adults that also explains where the great Gustave Doré got his ideas.

I kind of want to meet my dream consultant now.

AnjaAndBooks says

This was very quick to read, but it was still magical. Solid three stars.

Auntie Terror says

Kept me entertained and walking for 20+ kilometres today, with a 19-kilo-backpack.

This wasn't quite as fantastically absurd as the Zamonien-novels, but still very entertaining. I have no doubt that Moers-Fans will enjoy the story, especially as it is a recording by Dirk Bach who to me was the perfect voice for Moers' stories.

Steffi says

Ganz großartig wie Moers um 21 (übrigens in sehr guter Qualität reproduzierte) Bilder von Gustav Doré eine Geschichte des 12jährigen Gustave entspinnt, der sich auf einen Deal mit dem Tod einlässt und in der Folge zahlreiche Abenteuer zu bestehen hat. Die Geschichte ist voller Anspielungen und ungemein komisch – angefangen mit der verrückten Schwester des Todes, weinerlichen Monstern bis hin zu den letzten Tieren, die man bei verschiedenen Todesarten zuletzt sieht: Diese sind umso schöner und exotischer, je schmerzhafter der Tod. Stirbt man normal an Altersschwäche im Bett gibt es nur ein Huhn. Wunderbar!

Donna says

This is the second book I've read by German author and artist Walter Moers, the first one being *The City of Dreaming Books* which I liked for its imaginative and fantastical elements, but which I felt was rather long. So wanting to try another book by the author, but not wanting to invest as much time in it, I gave this one a whirl since it clocks in at 197 pages, many hundreds less than most of his other books. I also wanted to read it because I was curious about the format. It contains 21 reproductions of famous woodcuts by Gustave Doré, a 19th century French artist who illustrated books for many of the greatest writers, from Balzac to Milton to Dante to Byron and more. And here he is, around a hundred and twenty years after his death, illustrating this book. But wait! How can that be? It's because Moers had the clever idea to write his story around the existing illustrations, instead of him doing what he usually does which is illustrate his own books when writing his story. And not only did he use the artwork of Doré, he used Doré himself as the main character of this book, though as a boy of 12 when Doré had dreams of becoming an artist. But first, in this fictional fantasy story, he had to survive his childhood and an encounter with Death to grow up and become the artist of his dreams.

Did I mention this is a children's book? Or is it? With some of the mature subject matter and frightening or erotic artwork, I'm going to say it's suitable for ages 13 and up, to be on the safe side. It begins with young Gustave piloting his own ship complete with his own crew, and soon finding himself in the midst of not one, but two tornadoes that bring him to Death's door--literally. Death doesn't usually make deals, but thanks to his sister Dementia spilling the beans, he makes one with Gustave who will be spared an early death should he complete six challenging tasks. But there's a catch. As if the six near impossible tasks weren't enough, Gustave must complete them all in one night.

Will Gustave be up to the tasks? And will Death keep his word and spare him if he is? The answers are in this book which made me laugh at times, though also grimace and sigh in exasperation, especially since I had been hoping for a much more satisfying and original ending, considering the inventive premise. But as I mentioned, this book was intended for younger readers, so taking that into consideration, the ending would be more satisfying. There were also nods within the story to many of the classics the woodcuts were originally fashioned for, making this a treat for adults familiar with the references. So all in all, this was a fine story for young teens on up, with the inclusion of some great artwork in an inventive book I'm glad I read.

Bine says

Als Hörbuch kam es mir noch kürzer vor :O

Aber irgendwie kam es mir auch intensiver vor. Ich liebe es bei Moers, dass man je älter man wird und je öfter man es liest, man immer mehr aus den Werken gewinnen kann. Dieser Umstand ist mir bei "Wilde Reise durch die Nacht" wieder besonders aufgefallen.

Es ist wirklich krass, wie philosophisch das Werk eigentlich ist und dabei ist es trotzdem noch so witzig :D So viel zu entdecken in so einem kurzen Buch. Ich kann es einfach immer wieder lesen!

Nicht ganz 5 Sterne, weil es nicht mein liebstes Buch von Walter Moers ist und man natürlich nicht immer die Bilder von Doré vor Augen hat, auch wenn sie im Booklet vorhanden sind.

Überhaupt finde ich die Aufmachung des Booklets und die Gestaltung generell sehr toll!

Weitere Rezension, die ich für die Homepage des Hörverlags verfasst habe:

Nicht bloß ein Abenteuerroman

Der 12-jährige Gustave Doré gerät mit seinem Schiff „Adventure“ Zwillingstornados in die Quere, worauf er mitsamt seines Schiffes auf den Grund des Meeres gezogen wird. Dort begegnet er dem Tod und seiner Schwester Dementia, die um sein Leben spielen. Doch der Tod gibt ihm noch eine letzte Chance, sein Leben zu retten: Gustave soll einige schier unlösbare Aufgaben erfüllen, die ihn auf die Insel der gepeinigten Jungfrauen, in einen Gespensterwald und ins All führen werden. Auf dieser wilden Reise begegnet er einem guten Freund, aber auch der Zeit und sogar schließlich sich selbst. Frage ist nur, ob das alles ausreichen wird, um den Tod schlussendlich gnädig zu stimmen...

Da ich das Buch schon mehrere Male gelesen habe, habe ich mich wahnsinnig gefreut, als ich gesehen habe, dass es auch ein Hörbuch dazu gibt, und dann auch noch gesprochen von einem meiner liebsten Hörbuchsprecher, Dirk Bach!

Meine hohen Erwartungen wurden nicht enttäuscht. Dirk Bach spricht das Hörbuch wie immer so lebhaft, dass es die Figuren, von denen man durch Dorés Bilder ohnehin schon eine konkrete Vorstellung hat, einem noch plastischer vor Augen stehen!

„Wilde Reise durch die Nacht“ ist eine sehr schnelllebige Geschichte, die ein ungeheures Tempo vorlegt, ohne jedoch zu überfordern. Man kann das Hörbuch mit seinen etwas mehr als vier Stunden problemlos zwischendurch hören, kann sich aber auch, vielleicht beim zweiten Hören, etwas mehr Zeit damit lassen, da die Geschichte doch gerade was die Themen Tod, Zeit, älter werden und die Welt an sich angeht, recht tiefgründig ist. Immer wieder werden zwischen ironischen und skurrilen Stellen ernste Töne angeschlagen.

Dennoch ist und bleibt Wilde Reise durch die Nacht ein Abenteuerroman mit viel Action und Spannung, der schnell begeistert, gleichzeitig aber auch das Genre des Abenteuerromans aufs Korn nimmt. Welche Jungfrauen zähmen denn schon Drachen oder gewinnen aus ihnen Sonnenschutzcreme?

Alles in allem ein wirklich hörenswertes Hörbuch! Da dies jedoch nicht mein Lieblingswerk von Walter Moers (meinem Lieblingsautor) ist, muss ich fair sein und nur 4 Sterne vergeben. Dennoch ist dieses Hörbuch, gerade auch dank Dirk Bach (er Ruhe in Frieden), ein kleines Meisterwerk.

Derrick says

A very fun book, I can't wait for my boys to be old enough to read it to.
