



Stoneheart

Charlie Fletcher

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A city has many lives and layers. London has more than most. Not all the layers are underground, and not all the lives belong to the living. A twelve-year-old boy named George Chapman is about to find this out the hard way. On a school trip he's punished for something he didn't do. In a tiny act of rebellion, he lashes out at a small carving on the wall - unexpectedly breaking it off. And then something horrible does happen: a stone Pterodactyl unpeels from the wall and starts chasing him. George is already running before his mind starts trying to tell him this is impossible.

LENGTH

9 hours, 39 minutes

Stoneheart Details

Date : Published May 30th 2018 (first published August 2nd 2006)

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Author : Charlie Fletcher

Format : Kindle Edition 500 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Fiction, Adventure

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From Reader Review *Stoneheart* for online ebook

Allison says

from the first line I had very high expectations for this book. I was very excited to read the story, and really interested in how the author would deal with a character who seemed determined to keep the world at a distance. As I read, I waited patiently for some depth, some mystery that would finally grab my interest. Unfortunately, I found the book flat- not bad, or unbelievable or poorly written- but just ordinary. There was nothing unique about it, nothing that kept me anxiously turning pages, and to be honest, I felt nothing for the characters. With the exception of Gunner and Edie's "elephant scene", I found nothing overwhelmingly unique or interesting in the book, and after hitting page 212, I realized that I couldn't care less what happened to Edie and George.

I'm giving this book a two for a few reasons. First, since I was able to stick to it for 200 pages, the writing and story can't be all that bad. It was not an unenjoyable read, but it was just so unremarkable that I felt no real reason to continue reading. However, because I read so many books by a variety of authors, the fact that I was willing and able to put down this book (for good) after hitting the halfway point means to me that I cannot rate it anything over "it was ok", i.e. two stars.

As the book's high rating indicates, a lot of people disagree with me, but it just didn't do it for me!

Jonathan Terrington says

Stoneheart is one of those more unusual fantasies and as a work of fiction goes to show that children's literature does not need to be insipid or uninspiring. There is a kind of supremacy that I sense in literature that suggests that the only truly great literature is that which targets an 'adult' audience. In other words that literature which is dark, gritty, grim and full of blood and gore - issues that children are far too innocent to deal with.

The problem I note here is that many people seem to believe that a great novel is made by creating a work which somehow contains additional mental and emotional nuance through grittiness and adult realism. That books such as *Gone Girl* or *Game of Thrones* are somehow better than books that can be read by children like *Alice in Wonderland* or *Peter Pan*. And I respectfully disagree with this assessment. Novels are made great not simply by the ingredients they contain but by how those ingredients are delivered and most 'adult only' books do not deliver those ingredients in an all-inclusive manner.

This to me is an issue, in that it means they cannot have the same kind of universal appeal of other works. I believe the best novels are those with universal appeal and I believe universal appeal is best found when, instead of targeting one demographic with a set of ingredients, authors write to include everyone. Which means not writing a blood, gore and lust type of novel outright but in being more subtle and delivering the ingredients in a more inclusive manner. That said, I do not believe this novel is quite as high as others when it comes to universal appeal, yet it is a book aimed at 12 to 16 year olds that can easily also be read by adults.

The plot of *Stoneheart* is about George Chapman slipping into another world when he breaks a statue in London. This other version of London is a version where statues come to life to do battle with dark and

dangerous powers, and where those dark and dangerous powers stalk across the city. With the aid of a girl with special powers to see the past, George must find a way to fix his mistake. Of course he also has the aid of good statues - more humanoid statues - who fight their war against evil statues - gargoyles and co.

Either way my point stands as this: I recommend people to give reading children's literature a bigger shot. Although not necessarily this novel I do recommend finding some of the classic children's literature works. Read them, analyse them, discover what makes them great. Because there really is no need for there to be any such divide between YA, children's and 'more serious' adult fiction. Each division of literature, if you will, has some great fiction and some terrible fiction within it. Simply look for the works of fiction which are the best, regardless of type and you will do fine.

Hilarie says

I have always loved sculptures. I can remember visiting the museum with my parents as a little girl and being truly frightened by some of the more monstrous images carved in stone, with their malicious smiles that exposed far too many teeth for my small child imagination. I think deep down I was always afraid they were going to suddenly come alive. In *Stoneheart*, that is exactly what happens to George Chapman, a 12 year-old English boy who expresses his frustration in the wrong way at the wrong time.

George is in the middle of a school field trip to the Natural History Museum in London when in a fit of anger he breaks a piece off the facade of the museum, and suddenly finds himself pursued by a stone pterodactyl, intent on his destruction. The worst part? No one else can see a thing, except for Edie, a mysterious girl who has been cursed with seeing such things for reasons she doesn't understand. George is saved by the statue of a WW1 gunner, and learns that he has found himself in the middle of a war. Within London is "unLondon," where the statues made in human form, "spits," have long fought against the "taints," sculptures of gargoyles, dragons, and other non-human creatures. George and Edie struggle to understand the rules of this strange "unLondon," not knowing who or what they can trust.

I really liked this book, for both the concept and execution. Fletcher has done a great job of describing London. I was very interested to read in the author's note that all of the statues he has included in the book are actually in existence. I must admit, it made me want to visit some of them for myself. I would highly recommend this book to readers who are looking for an intense adventure. Because of the intense peril and scary situations experienced by George and Edie (which the author describes in very vivid and descriptive language) I wouldn't recommend this book for younger readers. I am looking forward to the next book in the series.

Alyssa says

Only got to page 30. The writing was... not the best. A ton of passive voice, with fragmented sentences (and concepts) that made it difficult to get into the scenes. I was going to try to push through... Then I came to this gem of action writing:

BLAM.

The thing stopped.

BLAM.

The thing looked surprised.
CRASH.
Something else landed in front of George.
Something with steel tacks on its boots.
Something with a gun.
Someone.

At that point, I decided I was done.

Norah Una Sumner says

Okaaaaay...

This was *okay*. The story has a lot of potential but everything is just so confusing in this part. It's like you're only getting information but nothing is actually solved. That's why it was very hard for me to get into the story of Stoneheart. The characters, on the other hand, are interesting. I really like George and Gunner. I hope that the sequel is better.

There are three stages of reading this book:

1/3:

2/3:

3/3(in this case...You go,George!):

Favourite quotes:

I did have a couple of quotes I really liked but I can't find the original quote anywhere online so I'm not gonna translate it myself and ruin everything, haha. K. Bye.

Kathy says

The book itself is probably a 3 star book (3 stars isn't bad - it means I liked it). HOWEVER the audio version is narrated by Jim Dale so that upped the rating. Jim Dale can turn an average book into something very entertaining.

<http://iamareadernotawriter.blogspot....>

Ithlilian says

This book seems to have fallen into the same pattern that many other YA books fall into. The first book is one long chase scene with little actual information being presented. The Alchemyst and Percy Jackson are two other examples. While I didn't mind the breakneck pace in those books, I did mind it here. Percy finds out who and what he is, and so do the twins in The Alchemyst, the characters in this book have very little idea of what is going on other than some statues and good and some are bad. We don't find out too much about what a Glint is, John Dee isn't explained very well, and the war that has been started is only eluded to. On top of that, the characters are irritating. George is a coward and Edie is rude. There may be reasons they act that way, but they are a bit too grating to be enjoyable. Also, the bad characters were weak. The book switched to the viewpoints of the bad guys occasionally and they were walking somewhere or having a conversation, not really doing anything too menacing. I'm not a fan of changing viewpoints for no reason, and I feel that was the case here. We get no new information by reading about a raven flying over a part of the city, but it was a nice change in pace if anything. The characters run from place to place, occasionally meeting a statue that tells them where to go next. Sometimes fast paced books work well and keep readers on the edge of their seats. Stoneheart had me flipping pages and skipping paragraphs instead. There simply is not enough substance. Bad statutes are chasing a boy around because he punched one of them, good statues are helping the boy survive and fix what he started. It's not enough for me. The book wasn't bad, but it wasn't great, and too much like other YA books out there.

Kat Heckenbach says

I picked up this book a couple of years ago and for some reason never got past the first few chapters. I don't remember it being bad, just not particularly sweeping me away. I gave the book to my son (who was twelvish at the time) thinking he'd enjoy it. He did, as well as the two books following. Recently, he decided to clear off his bookshelves and I decided to hold onto the series and give it another try.

SO GLAD I DID.

I absolutely loved this book this time around. Loved the main character, George, who is a typical kid with some family problems and who has to deal with not being liked very much at school. He's not completely spineless, just lost his enthusiasm for life because he lost his dad in a car accident. Then one day, on a school field trip to a museum, he breaks the head off a dragon carving on the side of a building and unleashes a power that allows him to see another London, in which statues come to life--but only he can see them! Some are good, some are evil, and some are in-between. He meets Edie, who can also see the statues moving, but for an entirely different reason.

The story world is so cool, and the lore well thought-out and given in small doses at just the right times. Lots of action, without sacrificing character building. And speaking of characters--after the initial scene at the museum, the only two actual humans in the whole book are George and Edie--everyone else is a statue of some sort--and it totally works.

The writing is really good, with just the right voice for this age group, a little humor, real emotion, and great pacing and dialog. I am definitely going to keep reading this series!

PS--the cover makes the gargoyle lover in me swoon.

My Website
Find me on Facebook
My YA fantasy series:
book 1

book 2

Mike says

3 1/2 stars.

My son said this was a good read, so I gave it a chance.

While I was a little confused about how the "layers" of London interacted and effected each other, the seeming and slight inconsistencies weren't enough to stop me.

It's a fun, fleshed-out world that Flethcer has created, and while the ending left me feeling a little flat, (Really, after all that, that's how it ends!?) I am looking forward to the rest of the series.

Josie McClain says

This was a real 'page turner'! You can't wait to read what will happen next. However, it is a challenging book. For one thing it is very British. If you were going to use this with a group, it might help to prepare the students with some visuals of London. Talk with them about even though English is spoken in London there are some main differences in what we mean when we say 'biscuit' and what someone in London means by a biscuit. For instance, the main character talks about not wanting to grass on another student, and context leads you to think this would mean rat on another student. It is a book that is full of idioms and sayings. For example: you saved my bacon and between a rock and a hard place. The book also contains very challenging vocabulary. Here are a few words I had to look up: rictussed, parabola, perspicacity, tenebrous

Teaching Ideas

As you can see, I was entertained and my vocabulary was definitely enriched. Advanced readers 7th or 8th grade and above would benefit from this book. All students would love the story. As I noted, you could also work on vocabulary, idioms and sayings. Also, the author in the first 2-3 pages builds a great deal of sympathy for the main character. It would be a good example of that.

Heidi says

I love the idea of the statues of London coming to "life" and enjoyed the transformation of George. The characters, human and otherwise are compelling, and you don't get hard and fast answers about whose side some of these characters are on. This book can be dark and suspenseful... not recommended for children who are prone to nightmares (One of the bad guys enjoys eating children, to give one example).
Ironhand, here I come!!!

Camille Adams says

Meh. I don't know if it's just me and I wasn't paying enough attention or if this is as unformed, unmapped, unplanned, undeveloped, and unclear as I think it is.

Some parts were salient and resonated metaphysically. But, for most of this book, it just felt like there was no real foundation. What keeps coming to mind is that image of J. K. Rowling's comprehensive and exhaustive outline. When reading Harry Potter, one could feel the cohesiveness because that blue print is in full effect. Rowling is drawing from and building on a fundamental foundation. This book's mythology, on the other hand, feels like a student who just free-balled an essay without scripting an outline prior.

There's potential here but my interest isn't sufficiently captivated. I won't be continuing with this series. Also, the narrator is the wrong choice. A ten year old boy shouldn't sound like a sixty year old man who's smoked his whole life and is developing emphysema.

Aleea says

Really, really neat idea. It was very well done for the first third of the book. After that point either the author liked seeing ink on paper or the editor forgot to edit. Too much telling, way too much description, too much pointless dialogue. It felt like every noun was preceded by at least two adjectives. Adjectives are good... in moderation.

I read this to my family out loud so maybe I was extra-sensitive to these faults. Not only was I catching typos and subject-verb agreement issues, I was literally highlighting what I was going to read in order to leave out some of the bulk.

It was the first book I've ever owned that I gave away. It hurt.

Steve says

2.5 stars. I'm rather conflicted by this book. It had an extremely interesting premise, but then started using too many of the standard fantasy tropes for my liking, and then it seemed to drag. I could not get invested with the characters, so the tension that the author was attempting to build didn't work to keep me interested. However, it did get interesting in the middle, but then it started dragging again and never really got going again. The chapters were incredibly short, and I'm not certain if I will continue the series, cliffhanger ending or no.

Stephen says

4.0 stars. Very engaging fantasy with some excellent ideas. It is always nice to come across a new idea that is well executed. Could be the beginning of a very good series.

