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The Thief Lord



Synopsis

The enchanting international bestseller with bonus back matter and a beautiful new cover! Two orphaned brothers, Prosper and Bo, have run away to Venice, where crumbling canals and misty alleyways shelter a secret community of street urchins. Leader of this motley crew of lost children is a clever, charming boy with a dark history of his own: He calls himself the Thief Lord. Prosper and Bo relish their new "family" and life of petty crime. But their cruel aunt and a bumbling detective are on their trail. And posing an even greater threat to the boys' freedom is something from a forgotten past: a beautiful magical treasure with the power to spin time itself.

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Imagine a Dickens story with a Venetian setting, and you'll have a good sense of Cornelia Funke's prizewinning novel *The Thief Lord*, first published in Germany in 2000. This suspenseful tale begins in a detective's office in Venice, as the entirely unpleasant Hartliebs request Victor Getz's services to search for two boys, Prosper and Bo, the sons of Esther Hartlieb's recently deceased sister. Twelve-year-old Prosper and 5-year-old Bo ran away when their aunt decided she wanted to adopt Bo, but not his brother. Refusing to split up, they escaped to Venice, a city their mother had always described reverently, in great detail. Right away they hook up with a long-haired runaway named

Hornet and various other ruffians who hole up in an abandoned movie theater and worship the elusive Thief Lord, a young boy named Scipio who steals jewels from fancy Venetian homes so his new friends can get the warm clothes they need. Of course, the plot thickens when the owner of the pawn shop asks if the Thief Lord will carry out a special mission for a wealthy client: to steal a broken wooden wing that is the key to completing an age-old, magical merry-go-round. This winning cast of characters--especially the softhearted detective with his two pet turtles--will win the hearts of readers young and old, and the adventures are as labyrinthine and magical as the streets of Venice itself. (Ages 9 and older) --Karin Snelson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Wacky characters bring energy to this translation of an entertaining German novel about thieving children, a disguise-obsessed detective and a magical merry-go-round. After their mother dies, 12-year-old Prosper and his brother, Bo, five, flee from Hamburg to Venice (an awful aunt plans to adopt only Bo). They live in an abandoned movie theater with several other street children under the care of the Thief Lord, a cocky youth who claims to rob "the city's most elegant houses." A mysterious man hires the Thief Lord to steal a wooden wing, which the kids later learn has broken off a long-lost merry-go-round said to make "adults out of children and children out of adults," but the plan alters when Victor, the detective Aunt Esther hired to track the brothers, discovers their camp and reveals that the Thief Lord is actually from a wealthy family. There are a lot of story lines to follow, and the pacing is sometimes off (readers may feel that Funke spends too little time on what happens when the children find the carousel, and too much on the ruse they pull on Prosper's aunt). But between kindhearted Victor and his collection of fake beards, the Thief Lord in his mask and high-heeled boots, and a rascally street kid who loves to steal, Prosper's new world abounds with colorful characters. The Venetian setting is ripe for mystery and the city's alleys and canals ratchet up the suspense in the chase scenes. Ages 9-12. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the third copy of this book that I am buying--having loaned my first copy never to be seen again (the child I loaned it to loved it so much...) and given the second copy as a gift to another child who started reading it while visiting and got totally absorbed in the story--so she took it home with her 'for keeps'...Funke writes well, and in this book she outdid herself--the story of Venice: its architecture, its magic corners and old houses and mysterious past, all come to life through the eyes of the children in the book. Even if one never went to Venice, they may feel like they know it a little

after reading the book... The story flows wonderfully, with just the right touch of suspense and twists and turns (pun intended...). Lovely. I highly recommend it for children ages 9 and up.

I read this after my grandson, who will be 11 next month, told me how good it was. He is right! The main characters, a group of endearing (but not always angelic) children, are absolutely charming!! Then there are a few adults woven in - some nurturing and some villainous. The adventurous story moves along at a nice pace and keeps you totally engaged. And a little bit of charming fantasy at the end. I was totally enthralled - what a lovely story!

Wow! This book was well written. It all works...the setting in Venice, Italy, the plot, and the well put together characters. It includes suspense, loyalty, and mystery. The plot: Twelve year old Prosper and five year old Bo are two close brothers. Their now dead mother told them a lot about the city of Venice, Italy. If they don't want to become orphaned, they will have to be placed in the care of their Aunt Esther. But she wants to adopt Bo, and not Prosper! The siblings fled from Hamburg, Germany, where they previously lived, to Venice because they don't want to be separated. They make friends with Mosca, Riccio, and Horner, other orphaned kids their age. They are in the care of thirteen year old Scipio, the Thief Lord. Scipio steals valuable things so he can provide the homeless kids with vital necessities. The thief lord claims to be an orphan himself, but later in the book you find that this is untrue. Meanwhile, Esther suspects the children might be in Venice so she and her husband go to that city. When they get there, they hire Victor Gutz, a detective to find the boys. But is he too kind? Cornelia Funke has created a masterpiece I couldn't stop reading. A few notes: This book is originally German! It was translated perfectly into English. Some Italian words are used but the book contains a glossary. This is a compelling and superb read. Worth the price. Get it, now

I really liked this story - lots of tension, ebbs and flows, wonderful young characters and a couple of adult heroes, too. What a fun and fantastic ending! In fact, I am now reading it out loud to my 8 & 9 year old kids. I think they are enjoying it too, since my 9 year old decided to go as The Thief Lord for Halloween this year. It was originally written in German, and some of the English translations are a little odd, but I don't feel that detracts from the story very much (probably only something bilinguals would even think about). Once we are done with the story, I plan to rent the movie and watch it with my kids. The movie was also made in German, so not sure if we'll get subtitles or voice-overs.

I kept fluctuating between 3 and four stars. Ultimately I'd probably opt for 3 and 1/2, but since that's not an option, I'll go with four because I think it's more of a personal taste thing over the quality of the book. I'm a huge fan of "Inkheart" so had high hopes for this novel. I quickly realized the two have very different styles, and rightfully so, as this book is (at least I assume) geared for a younger audience. The cast of characters is delightful, each with their own stories and personalities, and you can't help but hoping the "good guys" win. The plot was interesting, but I did feel that there were two stories/plots going on, and that the first half of the book wasn't quite the same as the second half. Also, I'm not entirely sure what I think of the ending, the "messages" etc. Nothing bad, just I'm not sure what I think of it. I finished the book and still had questions as to the why, and what would happen - but, perhaps that was Funke's intent, that she didn't want everything neatly wrapped up. (again, back to the personal taste thing) I did enjoy the book, and was curious to learn how it would end. It wasn't predictable on certain plots, so kept me guessing. I also enjoyed the style of writing, the settings were vivid and it was fun to read a book set by the canals and winged lions of Venice.

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