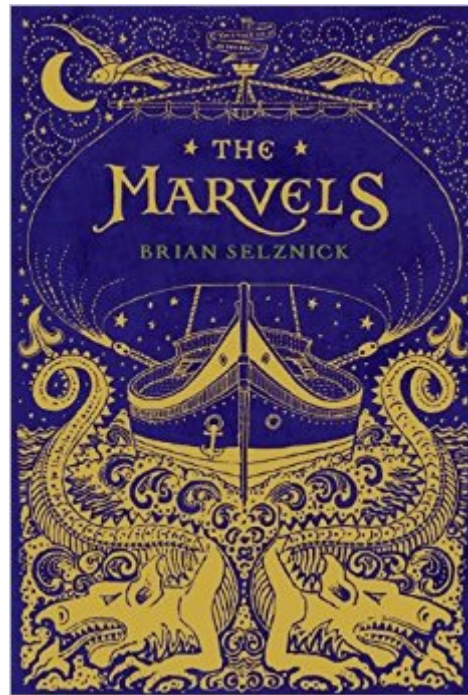


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# The Marvels



## Synopsis

From the Caldecott Medal-winning creator of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* and *Wonderstruck* comes a breathtaking new voyage. In this magnificent reimagining of the form he originated, two stand-alone stories--the first in nearly 400 pages of continuous pictures, the second in prose--create a beguiling narrative puzzle. The journey begins at sea in 1766, with a boy named Billy Marvel. After surviving a shipwreck, he finds work in a London theatre. There, his family flourishes for generations as brilliant actors until 1900, when young Leontes Marvel is banished from the stage. Nearly a century later, runaway Joseph Jervis seeks refuge with an uncle in London. Albert Nightingale's strange, beautiful house, with its mysterious portraits and ghostly presences, captivates Joseph and leads him on a search for clues about the house, his family, and the past. A gripping adventure and an intriguing mystery *The Marvels* is a loving tribute to the power of story.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 770 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 672 pages

Publisher: Scholastic Press; First Edition edition (September 15, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0545448689

ISBN-13: 978-0545448680

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 2.2 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (111 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #13,109 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Theater](#) #7 in [Books > Teens > Mysteries & Thrillers > Historical](#) #30 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Books & Libraries](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

I almost don't have the words to explain how much I loved this book. I can't remember the last time a book left me speechless. I love Brain Selznick's books and "The Marvels" may be his best.

Selznick weaves together the story of the Marvels and the story of Joseph, a runaway, using both illustrations and a standard narrative. But nothing and I mean nothing is as it seems. You think the pictures tell one story only to find a whole other story has framed it. You think Joseph moving in with

his uncle will be a typical ghost story, only to find it anything but typical and not ghostly at all, though maybe still haunting. Ultimately "The Marvels" is a love story, an unexpected love story that is somehow both subtle and grand, fantastic and wild and, in the end, perfectly normal and beautiful. Breathtaking. What a journey Selznick takes us on.

My ten-year-old daughter and I enjoyed reading this book together over the course of several days. We are both great fans of Brian Selznick's previous novels, *THE ADVENTURES OF HUGO CABRET* and *WONDERSTRUCK*, and were eager to discover the delights of his latest offering. The first half of the book which traces the history of a particular clan over several centuries, was particularly beguiling as the story unfolded via nothing but Mr. Selznick's amazing drawings. This is a great method of storytelling, especially as it invites readers to delve into the story even deeper and try to uncover the various themes underlying the narrative. The second part is all words and at times, felt a bit of a drudge to get through. I am thinking of my young students who would have loved the first part but getting antsy and rather impatient for the story to move along during this second part of the novel. I feel this part of the novel could have benefited from some editing. However, as several other reviewers have mentioned - parents and educators need to be aware that there are topics in this book that are not quite appropriate for younger readers, elementary-middle school, and should be approached with caution. I liked the book and had a positive discussion with my daughter about the contents but am uncomfortable at having that same discussion with impressionable young students, as some parents will not be comfortable with such content. So final verdict: gorgeous artwork and compelling (if at times plodding storyline) with controversial themes that might require more active parental involvement.

To be honest, this is the first book I've read by Brian Selznick, so I wasn't very familiar with his work and wasn't going into this book with neither high nor low expectations. I just watched a review about it on YouTube and the way the YouTuber expressed his feelings over it really got me curious enough to check it out. The excerpt, which is the sample, I only glanced at, but the dialogue between Frankie and Joseph was what drew me in even more. When it arrived (a day early, by the way - thank you, ), I tore the box open and, at first, I just stared at the cover/dust jacket for a few minutes. It's a lot prettier than it looks on the picture. Then, after I got over that, I began my adventure through the Marvels. I read everything in less than 12 hours (with constant interruptions, and at one point I had to go out shopping) because I just couldn't have it out of my sight for too long. I just had to know what happened and how everything clicked together. I have to say, the ending

blew my mind. As I was reading along, I was coming up with theories as to what was going on, and never did the actual twist come to mind. At the end, I was very devastated. I didn't want the adventure to end, but it did. It was a beautiful adventure, though. It's been such a long time since a book has left me feeling all heartbroken but full of joy all at once. This has become a new favorite for sure. Now, I'm aware of some negative comments this book has been receiving and... I've got some things to say about it. 1) The homosexuality is barely even there! It doesn't even focus on it at all. 2) As an aspiring author, I find it very rude for people to point out what they think are "flaws" in the story, especially when it's something like this. This is how life is NOW, you can't shelter your children from the knowledge that gay people exist. Stop spreading homophobia; it's not healthy. 3) AIDS is indeed mentioned, but it's doesn't even go into detail as to how it's contracted. I was talking about the topic with my fiance, and his little brother (he's eleven) was listening. Even he said, "That's stupid that people are complaining about that being in a book. It's just a disease you die from." Kids aren't stupid, and they SHOULD know what's out there. Plus, they go on the internet. You think they haven't read "AIDS" anywhere else? Ridiculous. All in all, most of these negative comments didn't even make sense to me after I read it all.

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