



Peter and the Starcatchers

By *Dave Barry, Ridley Pearson*

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Peter and the Starcatchers By *Dave Barry, Ridley Pearson*

Don't even *think* of starting this book unless you're sitting in a comfortable chair and have lots of time. A fast-paced, impossible-to-put-down adventure awaits as the young orphan Peter and his mates are dispatched to an island ruled by the evil King Zarboff. They set sail aboard the *Never Land*, a ship carrying a precious and mysterious trunk in its cargo hold, and the journey quickly becomes fraught with excitement and danger.

Discover richly developed characters in the sweet but sophisticated Molly, the scary but familiar Black Stache, and the fearless Peter. Treacherous battles with pirates, foreboding thunderstorms at sea, and evocative writing immerses the reader in a story that slowly and finally reveals the secrets and mysteries of the beloved *Peter Pan*.

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Peter and the Starcatchers By *Dave Barry, Ridley Pearson* Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Humorist *Dave Barry* and suspense writer *Ridley Pearson* have clearly taken great delight in writing a 400-plus page prequel of sorts to Scottish dramatist *J.M. Barrie*'s beloved *Peter Pan* stories. The result is a fast-paced and fluffy pirate adventure, complete with talking porpoises, stinky rogues, possible cannibals, a flying crocodile, biting mermaids, and a much-sought-after trunk full of magical glowing green "starstuff." Ever hear of *Zeus*? *Michelangelo*? *Attila the Hun*? According to 14-year-old *Molly Aster* they all derived their powers from starstuff that occasionally falls to Earth from the heavens. On Earth, it is the *Starcatchers*' job to rush to the scene and collect the starstuff before it falls into the hands of the Others who use its myriad powers for evil.

On board the ship *Never Land*, an orange-haired boy named Peter, the leader of a group of orphaned boys being sent off to work as servants in King Zarboff the Third's court, is puzzled by his shipmate *Molly*'s fantastical story of starstuff, but it inextricably binds him to her. Peter vows to help his new, very pretty friend *Molly* (a *Starcatcher*'s apprentice) keep a mysterious trunk full of the stuff out of the clutches of the pirate *Black Stache*, a host of other interested parties, and ultimately King Zarboff the Third.

The downright goofy, modern 8-year-old boy humor sometimes clashes with an old-time pirate sensibility, and the rapid-fire dialogue, while well paced, is far from inventive. Still, the high-seas hijinks and desert-island shenanigans will keep readers turning the pages. *Greg Call*'s wonderful black-and-white illustrations are deliciously old-fashioned and add plenty of atmosphere to a silly, swashbuckling story that shows us how *Peter Pan* came to fly and why he, and his story, will never get old. (Ages 9 and older) --*Karin Snelson*

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-9—This prequel to *Peter Pan* refers as much to the 1953 animated Disney film as to *J. M. Barrie*'s original play and novel. The early chapters introduce the archetypal antagonists: Peter, leader of a group of orphan boys being sent into slavery aboard the *Never Land*, and Black Stache, a fearsome pirate who commands a villainous crew. New characters include *Molly Aster* and her father. *Molly*, at 14, is an apprentice *Starcatcher*, a secret society formed to keep evildoers from obtaining "starstuff," magic material that falls to earth and conveys happiness, power, increased intelligence, and the ability to fly. Inevitably, the ships wreck off a tropical island and a trunk of starstuff is temporarily lost. Here, readers meet more familiar characters: the mermaids in their lagoon; the indigenous people who live in the jungle (modern versions of *Barrie*'s *redskins*); and, of course, the crocodile. The authors plait multiple story lines together in short, fast-moving chapters, with the growing friendship between *Molly* and Peter at the narrative's emotional center. Capitalizing on familiar material, this adventure is carefully crafted to set the stage for Peter's later exploits. This smoothly written page-turner just might send readers back to the original.—*Margaret A. Chang*, *Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams*

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Gr. 4-7. Barry and Pearson, no strangers to the literary spotlight, offer humor and thrills for a young audience in this prequel to *Peter Pan*. At sea, unwittingly heading toward a perilous fate in a cruel king's court, Peter and a group of fellow orphans become involved in a plot to steal a mysterious star substance that can make people fly. Teenager *Molly*, also aboard ship, is one of the *Starcatchers*, those who want to preserve the integrity of the substance and save it from falling into the wrong hands. Alas, there are evil, grabby hands all around, including those of the cruel pirate *Black Stache*--though by book's end, *Stache*

will have only one. It's not so much the story that's good here, though it's a rousing tale, and to the authors' credit, there are explanations for everything found in the classic story--from Peter's inability to grow up to the name Neverland. The real lure is the richly drawn characters, especially the villains, who exhibit just the right amount of swagger and smirk. The pacing is excellent as well. Although this is a long book, very short chapters make it manageable for younger readers, and the nonstop action will keep the pages turning. This deserves the hype. *Ilene Cooper*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sadie McBride:

Book is to be different per grade. Book for children until adult are different content. We all know that that book is very important for people. The book Peter and the Starcatchers was making you to know about other know-how and of course you can take more information. It doesn't matter what advantages for you. The reserve Peter and the Starcatchers is not only giving you much more new information but also to become your friend when you sense bored. You can spend your own personal spend time to read your book. Try to make relationship with all the book Peter and the Starcatchers. You never really feel lose out for everything when you read some books.

Glady Curry:

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