

The Looking Glass Wars Frank Beddor

Reviews

Amazon.co.uk Review

The first of his *Alyss of Wonderland* trilogy, Frank Beddor's *The Looking Glass Wars* is a storming, imaginative tour-de-force that deserves to be not overlooked. Using Lewis Carroll's classic children's story, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, as his inspiration, Beddor has created something new and original, something fresh and exciting.



Beddor imagines that Alice's wonderland did indeed exist. That it was not fairy tale. Princess Alyss Heart was heir to the throne of Wonderland, but was cruelly usurped when her Aunt Redd stormed Wondertropolis and murdered her parents. Fleeing for her life, Alyss was transported to our world, to the world of Charles Dodgson and literary Oxford in the late 19th Century. Taken in by the Liddells, Alyss at first steadfastly refused to denounce her true bearing as fiction. But after years of convincing nobody of her origins and noble birth--Alyss Heart became Alice Liddell. And it was Alice Liddell who inspired Dodgson to write his legendary novel about her--despite Alyss's accusations that he has cruelly twisted her story to make light of her heritage for entertainment.

Alyss's Wonderland is an occupied land that must be freed. And Alyss eventually realises that she must once again go back to her true home and try to reclaim it. And it is going to be a bloody reckoning.

Beddor has pulled off a wonderfully complicated twist of creativity and his ambitious novel is on many levels enormously satisfying. The author has previously been a ski champion, stunt double and actor, but it is perhaps his continuing role as a Hollywood film producer that most influences his debut novel. The book is a visual feast that is begging to be made into a film. But for now, its life as a book is a deserved one. (Age 10 and over) --John McLay

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Customer Reviews

★★★★★ **Fantastic**, August 25, 2005

Reviewer: **jamesaudley** from Birmingham, UK
There are very few books that i will sit down and read for several hours at a time and finish in one day, but this was one of them. The style of writing draws you in and pulls you along all the way to the end. The story just flows along, Beddor doesn't write page after page with endless description that would add nothing to the story, he doesn't leave a moment for it ever to get tedious.



The story is based on a brilliant concept, and Beddor has created a world unlike any other in the sheer scale of the imagination it took to create it. You really get to know and care about all of the characters (except the bad guys of course!). The only other books i read so quickly and eagerly are Harry Potter and i can honestly say that i found Beddor's book much more fun. There is more of a unique style to the writing and the story is genius. It's one of the few books that i think can truly span all generations of readers, no matter what your age you should read this book.

I only wish there was more! Please Frank, write a sequel! (or several!)

I cannot recommend this book highly enough, without a doubt one of the best books i have ever read.

★★★★★ **Captivated**, August 15, 2005

Reviewer: **A reader** from England

I was captivated by the looking glass wars.

The concept of Alyss having to go to a new world, forget her childhood, and then revisit the place that she had to forget.

I was integued by the transformation from one of the most imaginative people in wonderland to having to rekindle her childhood tomove forward.

I loved this book and will no doubt read it again.

A very good read and will always bring back my memories of childhood as i read the new adventures of Alyss and can not wait for the rest of the trilogy to come out and read.

★★★★★ **The Looking Glass Wars is a great book!!**, July 18, 2005

Reviewer: **xxemyxx** from England

I really really enjoyed the Looking glass wars, i thought it was very emotional and gripping. I loved all the scenes of war and the imagination in it was beautiful. I loved Alyss' character and thought the romance in it was very sweet. I went on a Frank Beddor website and it mentioned something about this being a trilogy which i didn't know it was. I'm really really dying to know if it is and if it is, where on earth are the other books?? LOL!!

★★★★★ **love it! love it! love it!**, June 22, 2005

Reviewer: **Nette** from England

Just by looking at the cover I knew that I'd love it. I love the new and exciting way that Beddor has explored and changed the original characters to make them even more exceptional. If you are well acquainted with the original 'Alice in Wonderland' you'll be able to instantly recognise the transformed characters and love them even more.

I just love the whole book and insist on reading it over and over again. It is indeed fantasy but the feelings and relate-ability in it are so real that you can't help but be sucked in.

In this tale Alyss (as she is now named) is a princess whose whole family are murdered by her vicious Aunt Redd. She finds refuge in our world where she is forced to forget all her childhood memories. Here she eventually finds solice in a kind family until, after many years, she is confronted with her old forgotten life.

This amazing book is filled with adventure, humour and even a little romance, which for me is always welcome.

As you will have noticed I have used the word love alot but that is simply because it is the only word I can use to describe the feeling I have towards this book and all its elements.

I can't wait to read the sequel which I hope will come out soon; I can read the first one over and over only so much.

★★★★★ **Fantasy writing at its best**, May 11, 2005

Reviewer: **genrichards** from London

I loved this book, which is strange because I don't usually read fanasy fiction. The cover caught my eye and the tag on the back reeled me in. I read it cover to cover in 2 days and because the writing is as good and as fast flowing as the plot it's an easy read that keeps you wanting to know more. The characters are easily recognisable as those we know, and love, from Alice in Wonderland and somehow bring something more to the tale. Adventure, fantasy and dash of romance....what more could we ask for?

★★★★☆ **The looking glass wars**, March 30, 2005

Reviewer: **Miss K C Marchington** from Sheerness, Kent United Kingdom

Frank Beddor has managed to create a modern take on the original wonderland with some fantastic dark characters. If you like anything dark and that tranports you to another world then this book is for you. Both me and my partner found this book thoughly enjoyable, however we did both feel that the ending was a bit rushed but don't let this put you off. I also found this book a lot easier to read than the original Alice books. --*This text refers to the [Hardcover](#) edition.*

★★★★★ **Nothing at all like I expected**, January 4, 2005

Reviewer: **distillation** from Peterborough, UK

When I picked this book up, I expected the usual "drugs"-type accusations to be thrown out that form the usual idea of "truth" behind Carroll's work. I did not fully brace myself for what leaped at me, caught my mind and wrapped it into this wonderful world.

Beddor writes with the same fast-paced original grasp on fantasy that shot Pullman to fame (and fortune) and I can only hope the same happens to Beddor. His writing is racey, new and a definite breath of fresh air on an old story. Taking a truly new idea, he slowly weaves fact and fantasy together to form a truly amazing story.

It is rare I find myself with a book that is so hard to put down that I find myself getting up in the night to read this. I am almost proud to say that this book lost me many hours sleep, but I am eternally grateful to it for exchanging those with hours of pleasure.

★★★★★ **the wonders of wonderland**, October 17, 2004

Reviewer: **tangiecandy** from Ontario, Canada

To all the fans of Alice in Wonderland this book has a very different perspective than the real story, you may not like it. It seems by looking at the other reviews that this is the kind of book that you either really like or despise it. I thought that the book had an interesting new perspective of the original story. It doesn't describe the wonders of wonderland and its details. It hardly described wonderland at all even though most of the book took place there which was disappointing. I still enjoyed this book and recommend it to people who like a book with a lot of action in it.

★★★★★ **Alice meets the Matrix**, October 14, 2004

Reviewer: **Matt Sherlock** from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

I'm a U.S. citizen who picked this book up on a trip to Ireland and it was a good read for the flight home. While it seemed written with an eye towards adapting it for the silver screen, I liked the re-imagined characters and the fight scenes were clearly written. I look forward to the next book in the series.

★★★★★ **Darkly Original**, October 13, 2004

Reviewer: **A reader**

I honestly enjoyed this book a lot more than I expected to! I really don't see what the uproar so far has been about...worse has been done to the Alice story than this (i.e. American McGee's "Alice" videogame for PC). Not only that, Mr. Beddor's version comes off as a completely different tale. The world is darkly imaginative, and in some ways more real and substantial than fantasy Kingdoms generally are. The characters are engaging, though I really wished for more by the end. I hope the sequels come out soon; I haven't gotten nearly enough of Hatter Madigan, Dodge, Molly, or any of the characters we meet in this story. Perhaps if other novels displayed the cross-gender appeal of this one, more young people would find it worth their while to stray further than Harry Potter into the literary realms. May Alyss's Wonderland live on!

★★★★☆ **An inventive take on a classic story**, October 8, 2004

Reviewer: **A reader** from Los Angeles, CA

This book had me hooked from page 1. It illustrated a very interesting take on the classic story of Alice in Wonderland. The darker elements provided something new and different, and it kept me wanting more. Mr. Beddor does a good job of leaving questions unanswered, but providing some finality to his story. I would love to see a sequel that continued the journey into this new Wonderland. I definitely recommend this, and eagerly await the next adventure. Hopefully this will make it to the big screen where the true vision will come to life.

★★★★☆ **Why so grumpy?**, September 22, 2004

Reviewer: **elaster3** from London

It seems necessary to counter some of the ridiculously negative reviews already posted. First, to criticize a book based on its marketing push (the fact that it's being touted as the true story behind Wonderland) is ridiculous (I am aware that very few people found the review in question helpful, but still). Why don't we review books on the basis of their cover art alone, or by the blurbs on their dust jackets? At least then we'll be criticizing some part of the actual, physical book, no? Similarly, I don't understand the relevance of mentioning that the author is a producer of so-called gross-out comedies. Are we holding the manner in which authors make a living against them? What are the acceptable livelihoods for a budding author? Somebody please get back to me.

Now, for the book itself: what are "genuinely imaginative" characters? Why is Bibwit Harte, a learned albino with extra-sensitive hearing who is Queen Alyss Heart's tutor, not a genuinely imaginative character? Why isn't Hatter Madigan, leader of an elite security force whose array of weaponry is unlike anything we've heretofore seen, a well-imagined character? Why are the creatures dreamed up in this novel, such as the gwynook or spirit-dane, not imaginative? Why are the weapons, such as cannonball spiders or bombs that build, not imaginative? The few nine- and ten-year-olds I know who've read the book, have done so in no more than two days -- a sure sign that they found the book imaginative and fast-paced.

Is Mr. Beddor's book gratuitously violent? I fail to see it. A coup takes place fairly early in the story, and the violence that occurs is necessary to emphasize the villain's merciless, unsympathetic character, as well as the behavior she expects from her underlings. Whatever violent episodes that exist in the book serve this kind of double purpose.

To better enjoy this novel, Lewis Carroll fans should probably keep in mind that it uses the Alice books as its inspiration, NOT as its template. It is nothing like Carroll's work, nor does it try to be.

Since it is so easy to "review" a book with broad, meaningless statements, let me do as my colleagues: The Looking Glass Wars is the best book I've read in the past two years.

★★★★☆ **wonderful**, September 8, 2004

Reviewer: **A reader** from Wawrwickshire, England

For anybody that is really looking for the truth behind the original wonderland story this is not for you. For those who wish to escape into another world without a lot of effort buy it now! This book provides the release only found in the innocence of childhood yet the provocative use of violence in a child like manner really keeps the reader wanting to know what is about to happen next. This version of events really makes you wonder about everything as we know it.

★★★★★ **LET YOUR IMAGINATION RUN WILD!**, September 6, 2004

Reviewer: **A reader** from Edinburgh, UK

I have never been a fan of Alice in Wonderland, so I picked up the Looking Glass Wars with trepidation. However, I WAS BLOWN AWAY!!!!!! I loved it! I couldn't put it down, I loved the dark world Beddor has created and the very clever parallels to the original Alice story. It's a fast-paced, action-packed, well-thought-out Wonderlandish adventure - I can't recommend it highly enough. A SURE-FIRE HIT!

★★★★☆ **Give it a chance....**, August 25, 2004

Reviewer: **Di Jevons** from London United Kingdom

I'm sure die hard Carroll fans are having heart attacks across the country as I write, but this is an excellent book. As a life-long Carroll devotee myself, I feared the worst, but while the author uses the Alice books for inspiration, this is a whole new story (or perhaps "saga" would be more appropriate) and not particularly derivative at all. The plot has all the classic themes of a good fairy tale, but is much darker, more Brother's Grimm than Disney. It is creative, stylish, and very readable, and evokes a real sense of the universe and timeline in which the characters are set, (think Dune or Middle Earth). I believe we're going to hear a lot more from Mr Beddor in the years to come, so the Carroll-ites and critics had better get used to it.

★★★★★ **fabulous**, July 29, 2004

Reviewer: **A reader** from United Kingdom

a wonderful spin on the alice in wonderland tale, reminiscent of gregory maguire's wicked. cat assassins, card soldiers, evil queens, and a network of looking glasses show that you can still turn an old story into something original.

Cant wait for the next one!

Brilliant!