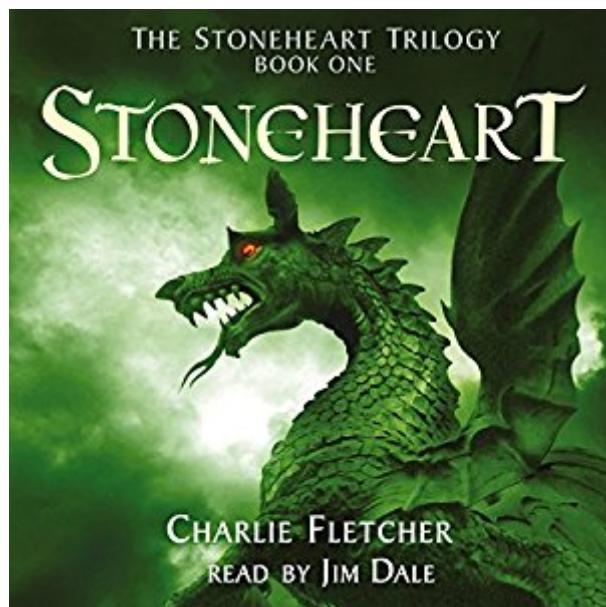


The book was found

Stoneheart: The Stoneheart Trilogy, Book One



Synopsis

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 12-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 that this is impossible!

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Customer Reviews

I had gotten a little backed up on reading my latest purchases of dragon books, and I wondered whether Charlie Fletcher's screenwriting background would translate well to prose, but then I started in on Stoneheart and completely forgot to fuss. It is a VERY good book--in my opinion, Fletcher succeeds in doing what China Mieville wanted to do but didn't quite pull off with Un Lun Dun, which surely got a lot more attention than this book. That is, Fletcher turns London into a quiet fantasy nightmare, an alternate reality, for a couple of kids, George and Edie. (Neil Gaiman would be proud!) The previous reviewer gives you a plot summary, so I won't go into that, but I will point out that Fletcher has a clean, graceful written voice, and he adds depth to his writing with well-placed metaphors, many of which are refreshingly new. Here is a snatch of description about a statue of the Minotaur: "The shoulders hunched massively below a bull's head topped by aggressively pointing horns; and so well had the sculptor shaped it, that the sound of enraged snorting seemed to lurk about it, even though it never--to the normal eye--moved or breathed at all." Of course, one of

the eerie things about this book is that to the normal eye, the statues of London are NOT coming to life and menacing (or helping) two children. The normal eye doesn't see that the Raven flying overhead isn't flying at a normal speed; instead, it is "flapping unnaturally slowly, lazily defying all laws of gravity and several of the general advisory guidelines of nature as it did so." When the book begins, George is self-pitying and Edie is cold-hearted; their characters evolve during the course of their adventures, as if Fletcher were undoing a work of dull origami and folding it into a better shape.

This book was a real phenomenon for my typical bookbuying expeditions. Rarely do I ever buy a hardcover that is not part of a series I like, by an author I like, or sufficiently hyped-up for me to recognize it. STONEHEART was none of these, but the writing sample on the back and the book description made me buy it. When George accidentally breaks off a stone dragon's head from a wall in a museum in London, he awakens a terrifying, murderous pterodactyl that chases him through London's streets and -- worst of all -- is invisible to everyone but him and, it seems, a young girl named Edie, a "glint". His life is saved by the Gunner, a statue that is somehow alive in this alternate London he's accidentally fallen into. With the Gunner and Edie he goes to solve the Riddle of the Sphinx and gets some answers, but ends up with an answer that is more riddle than what he first had to solve. So with time ticking away George and Edie have to navigate this world, full of good statues and bad ("spits" and "taints" to make it easier) and George must sacrifice the stone dragon's head on the Heart of Stone to make this whole nightmare disappear. But what if the Sphinx's answer was ambiguous...? This story was, in a word (and a very British one that you're likely to see several times in this novel) brilliant. The writing, though it deteriorated slightly toward the end, was strong, descriptive, exciting, and dramatic.

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