



Spy Toys: Playtime Is Over

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The world's leading toy manufacturer makes playthings for the rich and famous, and every toy they create contains a tiny computerised brain and a unique personality. These toys are seriously awesome! But every so often there's a faulty toy ...

Dan is a Snugliffic Cuddlestar bear – he should be perfect for hugging. But because of a faulty chip, Dan is so strong he could crush a car. Thrown on to the rejects pile, he meets Arabella, a Loadsasmiles Sunshine Doll, who has a *very* short temper and is absolutely NOT good with children. Soon Dan, Arabella and Flax (a custom-made police robot rabbit gone AWOL) are recruited by Auntie Roz, the 'M' of the toy world, and together they make up THE SPY TOYS.

Their first mission: to protect the prime minister's eight-year-old son from being kidnapped ...

Spy Toys: Playtime Is Over Details

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Author : Mark Powers

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From Reader Review Spy Toys: Playtime Is Over for online ebook

Ms. Yingling says

E ARC from Edelweiss Plus

When the Snaztacular Ultrafun toy company finds toys that don't meet their exacting specifications, they are sent to the discard pile. On the way there, Arabella (a doll who hates children) and Dan (a teddy bear who hugs too hard) manage to escape from the factory only to be caught in a net just outside. Luckily, they meet and are rescued by Flax (a toy police rabbit gone rouge). Soon, they are recruited by Auntie Roz, who wants them to be undercover bodyguards. They have very sketchy training and are soon sent to watch the prime minister's son. There is a conspiracy masterminded by genetically engineered cereal mascot, Rusty Flumptrunk, an evil elephant, and it's up to the toys to make sure he doesn't cause too much trouble. They make some mistakes along the way, but in the end, the toys are able to triumph over evil.

Strengths: These are lots of pictures, and the length of this is just over 200 pages, which is perfect for middle grade readers. There's a fair amount of good spy details, lots of goofiness, and

Weaknesses: The addition of toys makes this more of an elementary school title, since middle school children whose parents are in positions of power are always guarded by other middle school children.

What I really think: I'm going back and forth on this one. On the one hand, my struggling readers are also slightly immature, so they might be okay with the toys, as long as there are pictures. On the other, I didn't much care for any of the characters in the book, which makes it hard for me to really get behind the story.

Melissa Mcavoy says

Lots of irreverent, fast-paced, somewhat goofy fun. Dan, Arabella and Flax are misfit toys. (o.k. technically Flax is a rabbit-shaped policebot designed for information gathering.) Slated for destruction they are recruited by the Department of Secret Affairs, their mission: prevent horrible, blowey-uppy, kind of things from happening. An army of corporate mascots has run amok, wreaking vengeance on the companies that exploited them and the misfit toys are perfectly suited for thwarting their kidnapping plan.

Julie Kirchner says

3.5 Stars

I finished this a couple of days ago and forgot to write a review. A quick read about a group of misfit toys finding a purpose and they end up protecting a young boy. I think there are kids who will enjoy the book, especially those who find Toy Story enjoyable, but it isn't a book that I feel will be super popular.

Beth says

Book 3 of the Hull children's book award 2018 books. This was a lovely read, I actually really enjoyed it. Loved the idea of all the super duper toys, cooler versions of normal toys. Very entertaining read :)

Bruce Gargoyle says

I received a copy of this title from Hachette Australia for review.

Ten Second Synopsis:

Three toys destined for the reject pile are given a top secret mission to protect the Prime Minister's son from a villainous elephant-human hybrid company mascot.

We on the shelf, being a little bit not-quite-right ourselves, thoroughly enjoyed this original, fun, fast-paced, funny early middle grade offering. Dan is a teddy bear designed for hugging but could crush a child with his malfunctioning strength chip. Arabella is meant to bring sunshine into a little child's life, but has a snappy comeback that could burn your ears off. And Flax...well, he's a bunny with a problem with authority. These three toys, after managing to save themselves from the reject pile, are charged with the job of protecting the Prime Minister's son - what better way to hide bodyguards in plain sight, than to disguise them as toys? - and so the intrepid trio become...Spy Toys! While it's a steep learning curve for our sharp-clawed, sharp-tongued and sharp-eyed friends, they must do all they can to protect the Prime Minister's son from a criminal gang run by an elephant-human hybrid ex-circus clown, or perish in the attempt.

This early chapter book is pure, unadulterated fun from beginning to end, with oodles of line drawings throughout to add zest to the action. There's no mucking around with boring filler either: from the moment Dan is singled out as a defective toy it's non-stop action, escapes and chases until the thrilling (and quite dangerous!) finale. Clearly the author isn't afraid to throw in a bit of silliness - the human-animal hybrid gang being a case in point - but there are also some nicely touching scenes in which the Prime Minister learns a bit about being an attentive parent - awww! The Snaztacular Ultrafun toy factory also had something of Willy Wonka's chocolate factory about it - I can imagine kids desperate for a golden ticket to visit such an exciting place!

The three heroes are loveable, in a defective sort of way and I can't wait to see where this series goes next. As an early chapter book, it's the perfect length for newly independent readers who love action, adventure and comedy all rolled into one. Spy Toys is definitely an intriguing opener to the series and I can't wait to join Dan, Arabella and Flax on their next spy-tastic adventure!

Susan says

Thank you to @Kidlitexchange and @bloomsbury publishing for providing a review copy of this book which will be released on January 16, 2018. All opinions are my own.

Spy Toys is a great book for kids who are just beginning to be ready for chapter books. The font and entertaining illustrations on almost every page encourage the reader to continue reading this engaging story about misfit toys who are recruited to be "spy toys". These are not ordinary toys. These are toys which have a computer chip that controls their actions, and unfortunately each one of this trio has a malfunctioning chip. They would normally be dismantled for parts, but luckily they are chosen to be repurposed to utilize their misfit powers in for special spy missions.

There is a lot of action on almost every page which might prove to be a little scary for younger readers. However, it should be to be an enticing read for most students in grades 2 and up.

Amber Webb says

Spy Toys by Mark Powers was a quick, easy read that had you laughing and hoping for the best all at the same time. The premise of the story with defective toys being asked to help was intriguing and funny. The book brought to light the sad state of affairs with the relationships between children and parents. That parents just no longer have time to engage with and watch their own children and those jobs are now left to toys. It was sad, but the book handled it in such a hilarious way that you couldn't help but enjoy the story, characters and plot. I think that reluctant readers will find this book fun, engaging and easy to read with limited text on the page with illustrations scattered throughout. You will quickly fall in love with Dan and his crew and wonder what adventures they will go on next!

Cherie Smeltzer says

A fun series for fans of Captain Underpants and the like. Lots of illustrations and white space, yet definitely qualifies as a Fantasy chapter book.

Jim says

Enter of world of sentient toys and genetically engineered mascots. I liked the idea of this story!

But there was something about it, that I just didn't enjoy. One example - in one scene, in the pictures, the restraints look like ropes - but in the text they are described as straps or constraints. The only reason I noticed this was because I wondered why Dan couldn't break a simple rope if he was so strong? (He can rip off the door of a van but can't break a rope?)

And I feel like a lot of the story was like this - it was a cute idea, and had some potential - but the execution was a bit silly and pointless.

I mean, I know it sounds stupid to say that this story about 3 living toys wasn't realistic, but you know when writing feels like it's actual dialogue versus when it's just contrived and doesn't really sound like somebody would say it out loud? It has the feel of a self-published book without much editing.

Sometimes the level of silliness makes it sound like it was written *by* kids, not *for* kids.

I just didn't think it was particularly good or funny.

Thanks to NetGalley and Bloomsbury USA for a copy in return for an honest review.

Carolien says

This is such a fun read. It has the added bonus that the book is equally enjoyable for adults with some brilliant British humour while engaging children. My daughters enjoyed the story and laughed so much at some of the dialogue - Ursus idiotus was a firm favourite. We're looking forward to the next instalment. (Goodreads has the series order incorrect. This is book 1 of the series).

TheBookishFairy (Lauren) says

Our protagonists are 3 toys with very different personalities, 2 of which are considered 'broken' toys. Throughout the course of the first book and continuing into the second book, these 2 toys struggle with their seemingly negative attributes. Dan the teddy bear is designed to be super cuddly, but he has a fault that makes him super strong. He is deeply upset by this and throughout the course of the book struggles with having the confidence to do anything as he may be too strong. However, he shows that if he works hard enough, and believes in himself, he can control his strength. As a teacher this is an important message for children and it's refreshing to see it in a book that is also packed full of action and adventure.

This message continues into our second book with Arabella, a doll who hates children. Arabella has to live with a child in order to help with the mission and she is certainly not looking forward to it. This book is even more action packed than the first, and I actually found the plot even more exciting. I found myself giggling at times so I just know that children will find this hilarious. These books are so much fun! What I especially like about them is that they are easy to read and full of lovely illustrations, but they are not simplified for children. There is still some interesting vocabulary (which makes me very excited as a teacher!).

There's not too much more I can say without spoiling the endings and that would be awful. Teachers, parents, adults who know children, adults who love children's books, I highly suggest you picking up these books as they are great fun.

These books are now sat happily on my Book Tree in my classroom ready for the children to descend upon them!

Originally posted at: <https://thebookishfairyblog.wordpress...>

Laurie says

Interest Level: 3-6

What would you do if you were a toy that had a malfunction and could not be trusted around kids? You join the team of Spy Toys! This is such an action-packed book that will also have you laughing out loud. Ben is a teddy bear that is made to cuddle with his owner, however, his malfunction is that he is so strong that he will crush whatever (or whoever) he hugs. When he finds himself in the reject room he meets up with Arabella, a Loadsasmile Sunshine doll that has a very short temper. Arabella convinces (or really forces) Ben to help her escape they find themselves in the woods outside the toy factory caught in a net. This is where they meet Flax, a custom-made police robot rabbit. Together they make up the Spy Toys team sent out to protect Sam, a senator's son who is in danger of being kidnapped. Can these three bands of misfits work together to save Sam and in the process find where they belong?

This is such a great chapter book that has super-cute pictures to go along with the text. I can't wait to see the next mission that this trio goes on.

Thanks to the @kidlitexchange network for the review copy of this book - all opinions are my own.

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Nathar Ufo says

This book combines two of my favorite concepts- secret agents and toys being alive. Although at the beginning it was not what I thought it would be like, I enjoyed it very much. Four and a half stars. I discount half a star because at the ending, it seemed that the author was a bit desperate to get it over with and was running out of ideas. I hope there is a sequel (or two).

Kelly says

Spy Toys was a surprisingly pleasant read. It's been a while since I read a book like this and it reminded me why I fell in love with reading when I was so young. The ability to escape into another world or story was something I just loved and I think this book will provide that experience for many little readers.

Who didn't wish that their toys could come to life when they were younger? I know I certainly did and so even my older self was thrilled to see that this story was based around that very concept. It was nice to see how this story showed young readers that even the 'faulty' toys who weren't good enough to be sold could become the heroes of the story. There were some great morals in this book that I think would resonate with young readers and would certainly bring discussion points for parents reading this with their children.

I loved how silly this book was (and I mean that in a nice way!). There were silly names such as 'Loadsasmiles Sunshine Doll', 'Snugaliffic Cuddlestar bear' and so many more. The irony of these names as you get to know the characters they are associated with will not be lost on any adults reading these books either.

This book is also crammed full of some really fantastic and eye-catching illustrations. It's not often I read books with illustrations so these were a welcome addition for me but I'm sure any young readers will enjoy looking at these as they move through the story too.

With a fantastic, exciting adventure and a whole host of wonderful characters, I'm sure this will grow to be a series that kids everywhere will love.

Susan says

Aimed at children aged 8-11, this is a really fun book about a group of reject toys such as Dan the Snugaliffic Cuddlestar, a teddy bear who is just too strong or Arabella the Loadsasmiles Sunshine Rag Doll with the personality of a bad tempered rattlesnake or Flax the custom-made police rabbit who was designed to gather information but went AWOL... They are gathered together by Auntie Roz at the Department of Secret Affairs and her job is to stop the 'horrid blowy-uppy' kind of things happening in the world, so she wants to create the toys into a Top Secret Team.

Sam Spinks is the eight year old son of the Prime Minister and he is in danger. Can they protect Sam from kidnappers? With fun villains, an interesting setting and some great characters, this is a really great read for boys and girls. I think it is a great idea and there are lots of fun black and white illustrations to illustrate the book. Best of all, there is a sequel planned, and I know that my daughter is looking forward to reading on.
