The Wave Runners

Books Reviewed:
The Wave Runners [1]
Issue:
165 [2]
Reviewer:
David Self [3]
Editor's Choice:
Newsflash:
off

Media type:
Book
BfK Rating:
1

Kai Meyer is a prolific fantasist. Not yet turned 40, he has already written 45 books, most of which demonstrate his self-professed ?talent for fast-paced action writing?. It is not an empty boast: he is extremely popular in his native Germany and also in Japan and America.

He is well-served by his translator, Anthea Bell. This, his latest book to appear in English, reads naturally and easily. That said, it demands the resurrection of such old-fashioned terms as ?swash-buckling?, ?buccaneering? and ?pirate kings? ? for this is a tale of 17th-century daring-do, rum, cutlasses and canon fire set among the islands of the Caribbean. That?s the realistic part.

In this setting, we follow the two heroes, Jolly and Monk, who are teenage pollywiggles. Pollywiggles can run across the surface of the ocean, provided they don?t trip over the waves. Jolly?s protector pirate and his ship are seemingly done for by a ghostly galleon and poisonous spiders. She escapes in a hollowed-out ship?s figurehead to be rescued by Monk whose parents are then killed by a sea demon controlled by a malevolent force called the Maelstrom from a parallel world. In turn, Monk and Jolly escape thanks to the Ghost Trader ? a character who trades not in slaves or ghosts but souls. That?s just the start.

For those like your present reviewer who prefer a smidgen of credibility even in their fantasies, the book simply doesn?t work. Nevertheless it comes with a bizarre assurance from its publisher that it meets ?legal safety requirements? ? despite rather a lot of violence and under-age drinking.

Running Order:
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[3] http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/david-self