



# Ratburger

Books Reviewed:

[Ratburger](#) [1]

Issue:

[197](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Caroline Sanderson](#) [3]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

Zoe doesn't have much of a life. Her beloved Dad has taken more or less permanent refuge from her vile stepmother, the spherical, prawn cocktail crisp-scoffing Sheila. Their home is on the 37th floor of a leaning tower block, and every morning, Zoe gets flobbered on from above by local bully, Tina Trotts. As if this wasn't bad enough, her hamster Gingernut dies suddenly and mysteriously, leaving Zoe feeling all alone in the world. Things start to look up when she adopts a stray rat, Armitage, but little does she realise that this will fatally attract the attentions of the dastardly burger-purveying Burt.

**Ratburger** has all the same hallmarks as David Walliams's other bestselling children's books: revolting villains described in repulsive detail (flakes of dandruff the size of Rice Krispies?), comedy footnote asides from the author, cartoonish noises writ large on the page, amusing lists (I particularly liked 'what's the worst thing that could happen to you at school?'); and a downtrodden child heroine who refuses to give up on her dreams. However, by comparison with his previous outings which I have always greatly enjoyed, this one stretches a little thinly over its 250+ pages. Though told with the verve we have come to expect from Walliams, the story feels hastily conceived and just as hastily executed. The plot, though intentionally screwball, creaks alarmingly in places, particularly where Zoe breaks through the wall of her flat, and the ending, possible only because Zoe's Dad finally wakes up and gets his act together (and miraculously remembers a short cut), feels rushed.

That said, **Ratburger** is still tremendous fun. Let's hope that none of its shortcomings are due to lack of time from an author with many other calls on his talents. Hopefully the prospect of becoming a parent himself will provide additional motivation. Because there is a very big and loving audience out there, keen to read his books for as long as he is keen to write them.

---

Source URL (retrieved on Jan '20): <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/197/childrens-books/reviews/ratburger>

Links:

[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/ratburger>

[2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/197>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/caroline-sanderson>