



The Blue Moon Circus

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Together with a magician, a snake handler, a Russian animal tamer, and a nine-year-old orphan, ringmaster Lewis Tully tours the American West in 1926 with his circus act for one last time before settling down.

The Blue Moon Circus Details

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From Reader Review The Blue Moon Circus for online ebook

Donna-Jo Webster says

Take one vindictive camel, one deranged monkey, one orphaned boy and one middle-aged man down on his luck but determined to persevere, and you've got the ingredients for a Blue Moon Circus. Both poignant and laugh-out-loud funny, this atmospheric tale will have you smelling the hay and the cotton candy in no time flat.

Pamela says

Such a euphoric feeling, stumbling upon a lesser known literary gem, such as, the expertly penned and delightful to read: The Blue Moon Circus. I simply adore this little gentle giant of a book. It's a grit-n-grace story of orphan-turned-circus-owner, Lewis A. Tully, and his ragtag "family," encompassing the bygone era of independent traveling shows filled with eclectic menagerie, daring feats, long clowns, and straw shows. There's even a snake charmer and an old contrary, U.S. Army camel thrown in the mix. Truly it's a wide-spectrum excellent read, with everything from rivalry to camaraderie, fisticuffs to cozying-up, castaways and keepers, stalkers and creepers, laughter and sorrow, historical and the rhetorical, and what it means to find your accepted place in this oftentimes judgmental world. And if you liked the movie, "Seconhand Lions," I believe you'll thoroughly enjoy this novel. It has the same flavorful essence.

Diane says

I don't give 5 stars very often, but this book is so enchanting I had to. Raleigh is a great story-teller, and this tale of a small circus traveling through the midwest from Oklahoma to Montana is an enthralling story. It reminded me of several of Ivan Doig's novels, another favorite author of mine. I highly recommend this book.

Sue says

It took a while for me to get into the book and figure out each character. The setting (time and place) made for interesting reading. The small western towns of Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming in 1926 were described beautifully. One could feel the hot days, cool nights, rainy downpours.

Tully and his circus employees were so alive, so sincere, dedicated and loyal. I enjoyed reading a book with so many loving characters. Even better, goodness and happiness triumph in the end.

Great characters, great setting.. plot just okay..

NK says

Michael Raleigh is a fabulous storyteller. Very descriptive, with charming characters that pull you in. Easy read and quick because you don't want to stop.

Linda Johnson says

What a wonderful book, I absolutely LOVED it! The Blue Moon Circus is everything that a good book should be.

Rob Hood says

This book is simply splendid!

Peggy says

I really liked this book about a 1920's travelling circus. Excellent story and very good characters, based on historical events, added together to make this a book I could not put down.

Lewis Tully, a former circus owner, gets his old troupe together with some new additions, and goes on the road in the West to entertain the folks in small town America. The circus has its troubles, weather, supplies and harassment for another, bigger circus, but all the folks in the circus care for each other. As the boy, Charlie says: It is like a small town where everyone makes sure there is enough of everything, including love, to go around.

Mary says

It's been several years since I read this, but I often think about it. Raleigh tells the story of a small circus in the 1920's. Lewis Tully has a dream about creating his own circus and calls upon several of the characters he has worked with over the years. This story leaps off the page with joy and sadness. This book should have made Raleigh a household name. It is far better than "Water for Elephants".

Harron68 says

Three and a half stars, to be honest. Light, but tells of the hard life to get and run a circus in the 1920s. In my 60 plus years I've seen some small circuses, and can understand what their world is like. Films like W.C. Fields "You Can't Cheat An Honest Man," "When The Circus Came To Town," "At The Circus," and "Carney" each have their take on the insider world of circus people.

The Blue Moon book does a good if not great job of showing those times and people, (it's disasters (man made and natural!), and the friendships. The addition of the orphan, Charlie, helps put readers into the story thru his eyes. Rootless, a traveling menagerie of people and animals is a tiny world unto itself. The joy of the performers and the head man who has seen more failures, disasters and his own orphaned life bring the story toward a reality that deserves it's 3.5 stars. A good book when reinforcement of the goodness in people needs telling!

Marvin says

After several heavy books in a row, I was looking for something lighter. As with many lighter books these days, this one devotes most of the first half of the book to introducing readers to one quirky character after another. But in the last half, the story turns more serious & builds momentum, as the main character, a circus master, battles his PAST as an orphan & failed circus master, while taking responsibility for an 11-year-old orphan anxious about his FUTURE. Their struggles over the past & future meld as they live a life that celebrates (& fears) the unpredictability of life in a traveling circus & as both find security in the family made up of the circus people who surround them with love & affection.

Renee Alarid says

Boys and Girls...children of all ages - come on up and read a wonderful book about a little gem of a circus surviving on a wing and a prayer and a group of people that want it to succeed as much as the animals do.

I have to say that I love circuses - everything about them and it might just be because of that love, that not only did I enjoy this book but I wanted to jump into the pages and join Lewis Tully's Blue Moon Circus. It was a wonderful gem of a book with colorful characters and charming animals that made me love this book even more.

Lewis Tully is a circus man, a man with a past that is full of colorful characters. His life is a simple one and he has a natural instinct about managing and creating circuses. He knows he is not one to compete with the big circuses like the Ringlings but he good enough to give small towns a once in a lifetime night filled with mythical creatures and acts that only come alive in your dreams. In a way it is a coming of age book for many of the characters, including Lewis. A must read for circus lovers!

Bandit says

There are certain subjects that I always enjoy. Circuses is one of them. I'm yet to read a book about a circus that I didn't like and this was I absolutely loved. In a word, it was charming. Utterly completely charming. Funny, sweet, sporadically magical, with terrific likable characters, human and otherwise, and a lot of heart this was one awesome adventure. Lewis Tully's Blue Moon Circus is certainly a show not to be missed. Highly recommended.

Renee says

Underrated gem. Full of quirky characters, animals with personality and dry humour. It's not the fastest-moving story - the circus doesn't actually get on the road until halfway through the book - but the brilliant dialogue, lovable characters and adventures of a 1920s circus ensure that there is never a dull moment. I liked the fact that there was minimal cruelty to animals, it was never described in graphic detail, and the few people who dished it out always got what they deserved in the end. I enjoyed 'Water for Elephants' but liked this book more.

Adrianna says

This is a simple and quaint story of a poor yet hardworking Oklahoma man who is determined to create the greatest circus. The events take place a few years before the Great Depression so the reader gets a glimpse of the challenges it takes to create an entertaining show where the slightest glitch can ruin a man. The circus itself is on the lower economic spectrum because it travels by horse-drawn wagons as compared to the fancy circuses that travel by rail.

The main character, Lewis Tully, owns the circus. He drives the mood of the story because he is an honest and genuine man who truly cares for each member of the circus including animals. It is this desire to make a great show rather than a great profit that makes the reader cheer for him throughout the entire book.

The book is divided into two sections with the first describing each circus act and how they come to be a part of Tully's circus. My favorite is about Mr. Patel and his cobra. Raleigh writes with wonderful suspense and drama about the unique relationship between the Indian and his pet and the amusing response from Tully and the other circus members.

After acquiring all the circus acts, Tully proceeds to take the show on the road. The second half of the book describes the adventures the circus encounters as they travel through the midwest toward Wyoming. One of the more amusing events is when the star elephant gets loose, runs through a laundry line to a stand-off with a group of residents from a retirement home.

I recommend this book to young adult readers who would like to know about the circus culture at the turn of the century. The prose is simple and straightforward yet wonderfully descriptive. An extra point of interest is the character named Charlie. He is young orphan who comes to live with Tully. The reader gets to see the circus from the eyes of a child and that is a truly special treat.
