



Holly Farb and the Princess of the Galaxy

Gareth Wronski

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Holly Farb is not the Princess of the Galaxy. She may be top of the class in every subject, but she can't even win a school election, never mind rule the Milky Way. The aliens who kidnapped her have gotten it all wrong.

Unfortunately Holly's alien pirate kidnappers believe that she's the princess they've been looking for, and so she finds herself hurtling through space on an alien pirate ship together with her teacher, Mr. Mendez, and Chester, the most annoying boy in her class. Now all she has to do is escape the pirates, find the missing princess, and get back to Earth in time for her big test on Friday.

But it turns out that space is a pretty big place, and before they can go home, Holly, Chester, and Mr. Mendez must face down space cruise liners, bounty hunters, giant worms, perky holograms, cosmic board games, sinister insectoid librarians, and a robot who is learning how to lie.

Between running from space pirates, defying the President of the Universe, and meeting a host of rather unusual new friends, Holly starts to wonder if there might be more to life than being top of the class after all.

Holly Farb and the Princess of the Galaxy Details

Date : Published June 6th 2017 by Simon & Schuster/Aladdin

ISBN :

Author : Gareth Wronski

Format : Hardcover 320 pages

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Science Fiction, Adventure, Pirates, Humor, Juvenile

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From Reader Review Holly Farb and the Princess of the Galaxy for online ebook

Anna Priemaza says

Holly Farb has a very important test on Friday, so it's terribly inconvenient when space pirates appear out of nowhere and kidnap her, another kid, and her teacher. If she doesn't figure out how to get home, she might be killed--or worse, miss her test!

I became especially excited to read HOLLY FARB AND THE PRINCESS OF THE GALAXY when I heard it compared to HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY, and it did not disappoint. This space adventure is full of exactly the type of ridiculous but intelligent humour I adore. The president of the galaxy is a squirrel, the robot who's along for the ride insists he can only tell facts (fact: this is not entirely true), the department of justice is named after a soda company that provides it funding (and gets to mandate all its policy in return)...and so much more. I giggled pretty much non-stop. Super delightful!

Beverly says

The author lives in Toronto, so I am going to assume that the Earth-bound parts of the story are set there. However, when Holly is mistaken for the Princess of the Galaxy, and kidnapped by a bunch of space pirates, most of the rest of this humorous, action-packed story takes place on spaceships and other planets. This book probably will not win any of Canada's prestigious book awards, but it is a fun, delightful read for those who like science fiction and space opera.

Sharon Tyler says

Holly Farb and the Princess of the Galaxy by Gareth Wronski is a middle grade novel. Holly Farb is not the Princess of the Galaxy. She may be top of the class in every subject, but she can't even win a school election, never mind rule the Milky Way. The aliens who kidnapped her have gotten it all wrong. Unfortunately Holly's alien pirate kidnappers believe that she's the princess they've been looking for, and so she finds herself hurtling through space on an alien pirate ship together with her teacher, Mr. Mendez, and Chester, the most annoying boy in her class. Now all she has to do is escape the pirates, find the missing princess, and get back to Earth in time for her big test on Friday. But it turns out that space is a pretty big place, and before they can go home, Holly, Chester, and Mr. Mendez must face down space cruise liners, bounty hunters, giant worms, perky holograms, cosmic board games, sinister insectoid librarians, and a robot who is learning how to lie. Between running from space pirates, defying the President of the Universe, and meeting a host of rather unusual new friends, Holly starts to wonder if there might be more to life than being top of the class after all.

Holly Farb and the Princess of the Galaxy is the adventure of one young lady that has never felt in control, but has always tried to get her attention by being smart- because that is what she is good at. All she wants is to be important, to matter, and she does not even seem to get that at home. When pirate kidnap Holly, her teacher, and the new kid the real adventure starts. I loved the twists and turns, and while I expected a twist as to who the princess was, that twist was only one of the several possibilities that I had considered. I liked that while I knew something was coming, it was not so completely obvious that it was my only thought. I also

liked how interconnected, but unusual, some of the turns the story took. The only thing that happened that I completely expected was the President of the Universe's attitude when push came to shove. While Holly began as a pessimistic and self pitying character, her actions and thoughts were understandable and I liked how much she changed and grew as the story continued. Chester, while not what they seemed at the beginning, changed and grew with Holly. I think it was their relationship and changing understanding that really pushed the book forward, even more so that the danger and adventure from space pirates, asteroid belts, the criminal element in a dive bar, and more that they faced along the way. I really liked that even in the moments of highest drama and danger there was an underlying sense of humor and fun. I love a story that does not take itself too seriously, and this book hit the balance of fun, danger, and emotional growth very well.

Holly Farb and the Princess of the Galaxy is a middle grade adventure with a coming of age story arch and sense of humor that appealed to me, and that I think will appeal to many other readers that have ever felt as isolated and 'other' as Holly.

Jaclyn says

This was a cute space adventure featuring seventh grader, Holly Farb. The highlight was the narration by the robot that was interspersed throughout the adventure. However, I personally found that the story relied heavily on humour at the expense of the larger message that was just out of sight. Holly has no friends at home, but on this space adventure she finally gets one. I didn't find that the friendship was really developed to what it could have been. This one had its moments but ultimately didn't deliver anything new.

Tonja Drecker says

Tests and school blast far, far away in this exciting adventure, where flubby pirate aliens, nut nibbling presidents and robots with a more than mighty vengeance come up against the most uninteresting creature in the entire universe--a human girl named Holly Farb.

Holly's life centers around one goal; being the best at school so as to gain acceptance into the highly exclusive Falstaff Academy. When a new boy enters her class, who seems to know the answer to all questions, it's almost more than Holly can stand. When three strange men show up and ask if she's an important person, her only answer is 'yes'. But that's the wrong answer. Kidnapped by space pirates, who believe her to be the Princess of the Galaxy, she suddenly discovers that aliens do exist, and she's about to become alien mince-meat.

This book is fantastic! Adventure, action and tons of quirky fun roll off of every page with a similar whimsical style as The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Holly is an average, know-it-all middle school girl, who kind of wishes she had a couple more friends. During her journey through space, she discovers the answer to all of her questions, and not exactly in the most expected or desirable ways.

There is never a boring moment as Holly not only meets all sorts of creatures, but finds herself in the middle of a slimey, alien nest of intrigue. Luckily, she's has two friends from her school at her side, who aren't what they seem but at least, as true as alien blue.

This is a definite 'must read' and hits the top of my Summer books for kids list. But then, even the larger of us useless Earth creatures are sure to enjoy a dive into Holly's universe and wish we'd run into some space

pirates of our own. I truly hope this isn't the end of Holly's adventures and there will be tons more to come.

I received a complimentary copy from the publisher and absolutely loved this book, so of course, I want to leave me honest thoughts and opinions.

Kari says

Meh, not much of a main character. Silly and kinda forgettable.

Diana says

It took my five-year-old and I months to read this book, basically because it's somewhat meaty, and we read one chapter at a time, broken up by other, shorter books... and then packed it for the move, misplaced it, and finally when found again, I had to skim to where we had been and then do a refresher night. I'm so glad we did.

This is starter science fiction in the truest sense. A nerdy, bookish overachiever, universally disliked by her peers and pushed hard by her workaholic mother, is kidnapped by space pirates who mistake her for the Princess of the Galaxy, and she is off on a string of unbelievable space adventures that involve aliens, blasters, murderous reprogrammed vacuums, brainwashing, and a messy space cowboy bounty hunter. Somehow along the way, she *gasp* makes friends (girl, I know that feeling IRL), learns that politicians do not care at all about anyone but themselves, and figures out that sometimes your friends don't even mind you being a smug bastard as long as you never forget whose side you're actually on. We learn that it's ok to come to terms with the fact that your parents may not have been the best humans on the planet, that sometimes we run from overwhelming responsibilities, and that maybe you can sort that out.

Its brilliant and subversive in the best way, the side characters are delightful (ASTRO FTW!) and the narrator is kind of hilarious. Highly recommended. There are indeed some murders (dusting by blaster, mantis-person customer service cannibalism, carnivorous spider librarians, etc.), and other off-screen deaths (Jalya's parents, who die in not the greatest way), so it's probably not for a kid who isn't ok with that kind of thing. But if your kid is a adorably creepy weirdo like mine is, they'll love it.

Alexandra Ott says

I really loved this book! It's laugh-out-loud funny, with lots of fast-paced action and adventure. There are space pirates, robots, and aliens! Holly Farb is such an endearing protagonist, and the whole cast is endlessly entertaining. Highly recommend for fans of humorous middle grade adventures.

Malena says

ebook given through Netgalley which doesn't affect my opinion

I loved it! It's funny,interesting (even though I'm far from target audience) and it's fast pacing! I loved the

characters, the writing, the humour - everything! This is perfect for those who love funny middle grade books who are also in love with fantasy. A must read for children and all of you who still feel young :)

Amanda Searcy says

This book was so much fun! It's like a middle grade version of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy meets Doctor Who. This would be a great family read-aloud. There's something in it for everyone.

Max says

When this came across my desk at the library, I knew I needed to check it out, and it turns out that I was totally right to do so. This book is as Farbulous as its heroine. It's basically like if a Muggle Hermione Granger was dropped into The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Holly is a typical overachieving seventh grader who's stressed because she got absolutely no votes in the school election (she feels voting for herself isn't right) and there's a big entrance exam for the local private academy this Friday - and if she doesn't get in to that, she'll never go to a good college. So, when a kid who knows even more than she does shows up in her science class one day, Holly's not happy. And when she, the science teacher, and the new kid get kidnapped by space pirates, Holly's downright angry and just wants to get back home. Of course, Holly can't get back to Earth as easily as she'd like, and in the course of the story, she becomes embroiled in the troubles of the Princess of the Galaxy, learns about how corrupt politicians can be, survives shoutouts to a number of sci-fi stories, and maybe even manages to figure out that most human of diseases: friendship.

Wronksi's writing is fast and funny, and the framing device of the story is a big source of the humor. In a narration style a bit like a hateful Lemony Snickett, Holly Farb is being told to the audience by a storytelling robot who views humans as pointless. At one point the robot goes on a rant about how human history is nothing but wars and splitting into different groups to have wars about. There's some fun bits where the robot inserts sound effects, and overall I can imagine that this would be a great audiobook or read aloud experience. The other humor in this book is good, and riffs a lot on other sci-fi stories (a Mos Eisley style cantina inside of a Dune space worm, for example) and on the real world. There's a great sequence when Holly and her buddies get to the capitol of the universe and discover that every department is under corporate sponsorship.

The characters are also great. Holly has a nice story arc about responsibility, freedom, and running away from life - and the point that doing what you're told can be a form of running away is very well made. This book manages to do the archetypical over-planned kid routine without it being an awful cliché. Chester/Jayla is cool because she's a nice version of the girl disguised as a boy thing, and because in a lot of ways she's dealing with the same issues as Holly, just on a bigger scale. The other characters don't get as much development, but they're still fun, and I especially loved AsTRO the encyclopedia bot. His need to state Fact before every statement reminds me of HK-47 from the Knights of the Old Republic video game. There's a great cast here, and they work perfectly in the great adventures they have.

I highly recommend this book to humorous sci-fi fans of all ages. I'm surprised I haven't heard more buzz about this, but I'll certainly be recommending it to plenty of my friends. It might technically be a kids book, but there's plenty here for adults to enjoy too, and I think that makes it especially great. I hope that there will be more adventures with Holly, and if so, I can't wait to read them.

Ella M says

Delightfully silly! I've been longing for some lighthearted sci-fi, and this hit the spot!

Holly as a character is very entertaining. I love that she's not classically "likable" (although the balance between whining and being a grump is very thin and I'm not sure the author always pulled that off).

I LOVE the narrator. Can we have the Storytelling Robot (i forget his name) tell ALL THE STORIES, please? His narrative style is so brilliantly blunt. He actually made me laugh out loud-- and I almost NEVER laugh out loud at a book.

Mr. Mendez is also hilarious. Can we have a whole book about him please?

I guess those are this book's strong points: the humor and the uniqueness of it all. The aliens aren't malicious-- there's a species just for GUARDING DOORS! A little silly? Sure. But sometimes I need a break from murderous space monsters, you know?

Unfortunately, there are a few flaws that bothered me enough to keep it from being a five-star read.

Firstly, Chester. He's an obnoxious ass, but his banter with Holly was funny and I would've loved to see more of it. My real issue with this, though, I'm going to put under the spoiler tag. (view spoiler)

And... are we supposed to believe this takes place over the course of only ONE DAY? No. Too much happens in this book for me to believe it's only been a DAY. Correct me if I'm wrong, but Holly's mother doesn't seem to notice that she's been gone, which she would if Holly had been gone for three days (a timeframe that fit much better with the sequence of events, IMO).

It's an easy, fun read that kept me engaged till the end. I want more novels like this in my life. I definitely recommend this for kids who want a fun read that's not too emotionally upsetting but not too childish, either.

Darcy Miller says

I loved this book SO MUCH. Seriously. SO MUCH. Space pirates! Insufferable robots! Exploding aliens! Clever disguises! Friendship! Bounty hunters! Claphorian Sponge Beasts! In summary, read this book: it's the most fun you'll have all summer.

The Library Lady says

Someone described this as a cross between "Dr Who" and "The Hitchhiker's Guide." Have they watched "Dr Who," (except perhaps during the Matt Smith fangirl period) or read/seen "Hitchhiker's"?

Sorry, neither. This is a typical kids_accidentally_have_an_adventure, complete with a teacher who isn't as boring as he seems, various cute/mean aliens, and a nice neat ending. Oh, and it does feature a narrating robot who perhaps is supposed to be reminiscent of the narrating voice of the Hitchhiker's Guide, but is more like Marvin the Paranoid Android's extremely boring younger sibling. The writing is adequate, but didn't compel me to do more than skim it to get the highlights, so to speak.

Fine for kids who want science fiction/fantasy and aren't old enough to have read widely. Or, for that matter, adults who are equally new to the genre. Otherwise? #nothingnewhere

Becky B says

Holly Farb is having a stressful week. First, she lost the student elections...really badly. She's now got to really make sure she aces the entrance exam for Falstaff. Falstaff is a prestigious science academy and her next step on the way to a good university and success. And then today in science class some new kid comes in and starts answering all the questions faster than Holly. Shaken from her 'best at science' throne, Holly is now even more worried about the exam and floundering in identity questions. But all of those issues soon take backseat to a more pressing crisis when Holly, the new kid, Chester, and their science teacher, Mr. Mendez, are kidnapped by space pirates who think they know where the Princess of the Galaxy might be hiding. Holly isn't going to let anything like space pirates get between her and Falstaff.

I really wanted to love this one. The concept is fun. The android narrator's voice is quite funny. But I just found Holly a bit too annoying and self-centered. And oh boy, does it take her a long time to learn some lessons. I had trouble enjoying myself because of her issues. The rest of the book was quite fun. The President's portrayal is brilliant. The bad guy was interesting. Chester and Mr. Mendez are full of surprises. The space world Wronski has built is imaginative and fun to explore. And the theme of redefining your purpose is all around Holly if she has the eyes to see it. I think most of the target audience who enjoy scifi space adventures should really enjoy this story. I will be recommending it to several readers.

Notes on content: No language issues. No sexual content. Some aliens are eaten or vaporized, and past torturing by pirates is mentioned. Two non-gory murders that happened in the past are important to the story. Our heroes are threatened with violence repeatedly, but manage to get out ok.
