



Avis Blackthorn: Is Not An Evil Wizard!

Jack Simmonds

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The children's, teen and young adult fantasy magic bestseller about a not very evil Wizard...

Avis Blackthorn's family is the most evil family in all of the Seven Magical Kingdoms. The problem? Avis isn't evil. Not one bit. His magical wizarding family will do anything to make Avis's life a misery. Even the horses that pull the carriages don't like him.

But he has a way out at last... "*Hailing Hall School for Wizards*," a sanctuary, a place for good wizards, where he can make some nice, normal friends, learn magic and live a normal life, finally escaping the notoriety of the Blackthorn name... or so he thinks.

That's where the real adventure — *humorous, haunting and mysterious* — begins.

Come along with Avis as he tries desperately to prove he isn't evil like his family. And join tall, thin, bespeckled Robin and accident prone Hunter, Avis's friends from the Outside — the same world as yours in fact — as they discover Wizard's Spider Soap, the wizarding sport of Riptide and even the ghosts that do the laundry!

Of course, in a magic school full of teenage wizards there will always be drama. But stranger things are brewing and Avis finds himself at the centre of it. After spotting Malakai — the most evil Sorcerer around and his parents employer — coming into the school in the dead of night. Avis wonders why? And why will no one believe him?

The mysterious, beautiful Tina might know why. When Avis and Robin spot her creeping round in the dead of night, she tells them about the quest and a thrilling mystery unfolds. Yet, everything goes horribly wrong for Avis. After being accused of something terrible, he is ostracised from his friends and lives high up in the clock tower. Everyone thinks he's evil, just like his family...

Avis must uncover the biggest of quests with the help of Tina and Robin and finally prove once and for all, that he is a *good wizard*. Avis has to make a big choice to make — his friends, or his family, and the choice... might just kill him.

Avis Blackthorn: Is Not An Evil Wizard! Details

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From Reader Review Avis Blackthorn: Is Not An Evil Wizard! for online ebook

Elsbeth says

Yes, in many ways it reminded me of HP. But after getting to know Avis better, I really got to appreciate the differences. His world is so very different and worth getting to know. I really enjoyed this story!

Linda Todd says

Wow amazing story I can't wait to read more of this wonderful authors books this book I would give it more than 5 stars but 5 will have to do. A very colourful array of characters a truly exceptional story my heart felt thanks to the author for the pleasure of reading one of his books. this book I would be extremely delighted to recommend this wonderful book to all my friends so to all happy reading from wee me. xxx♥

Tashia says

Similar to Harry Potter

This was very well written. It is similar to Harry Potter but with a twist. I would recommend this as a must read for Potter fans. Lots of twists and turns every page.

Gay says

The story was very good. Avis is from a very evil family and he is not evil. During his first year at the Wizarding School he comes across the most evil person anyone seemed to know. The writing is difficult to read at times. Mostly due to a cultural difference but some of the sentences don't make sense. If you can overlook these things, you will like the story. I am reading the next one.

Jacques Coulardeau says

Anyone who knows about fan-literature may be reluctant to get into a novel that is so close to the most famous Harry Potter line. I will not get into all the similarities because that would be unfair and anyway vain, and I would even say the vain vanity of someone who wants to impress the people in front of him or her with know-it-all expertise. Let's pray I do not fall the prey of such a vain vein of inspiration.

I must insist on the originalities, and they are many.

Poor Avis Blackthorn is surely brought up in a hostile environment but it is not some kind of distant fat uncle and his despicable family, especially son, somewhere in London suburbs, but it is Avis's own family, his

father, his mother and his six brothers and sisters, which makes him the seventh son and that is a curse in this world of seven Magical realms. Seven is the most magic word you can imagine. Seventh sons escape evil, are protected against evil and black magic. Good for young 12 year old Avis, but it is a lie in a way since he is the seventh child but only the fourth son since he has three sisters. But hush it up, this is a secret you mustn't tell.

He goes to a school for wizard that is of course somewhere in a very wild and isolated place you can only reach by train and you have to take a train from a station that does not look like a station and is hidden behind some plain house door in a plain ordinary street. But it is very original because it is a standard train with plenty of passengers who are simple people – and some are pickpockets – going to any station before the station of the school. And since some people from “outside” meaning the non magic world are coming to the school on that train, the train must start running in this very outside. Though be careful and do not pester the conductor, he is a magical monster of some sort.

Then the story is all normal and standard for a school for wizards. Nothing surprising, really, coats of armors, ghosts (who are the slaves of the whole school), all kinds of traps and tricks, and some strange sport but no brooms or broomsticks and no wands, just channellers. And of course charms, curses, spells and other magic formulas.

But the main difference is in the main character himself, Avis. He is the seventh child of a family that is famous for their evilness. They work for the most horrible and nasty evil creature, in fact wizard, Malakai, and their job is to dominate, exploit, blackmail or eliminate all the wizards in the seven magic realms. The whole plot is built around a magic book of secret names that contains the secret names of all wizards and the person who controls the book can control all the wizards whose names are in that book. The point is that the secret names of seventh sons are not in this book, but is it true of seventh children, and so they escape the control of any evil person who uses this book as his possession, hence of Malakai.

The question is: Does a seventh child who is a fourth son benefit from this privilege just like a real seventh son? Does Avis benefit from this privilege?

The next main difference is that Avis is extremely bad – though not evil at all – and he is hated by everyone because of his name but he is not able to frighten everyone or even anyone because he is awkward, shy, unskilled, frightened, in one word a loser. When he tries it ends up as a catastrophe and he has to run away, be isolated, live in a clandestine place in the school with only one friend, a ghost and it will take him a tremendous amount of time to find out who this ghost was.

And that's the secret of the book: to bring together tidbits of mystery to rebuild some kind of dramatic plot in which Avis is drowning. In other words it is well done and different enough from the pot-making teenager to be more than interesting, in fact fascinating in many ways. Don't try to skip a page or a paragraph: you will lose the logic of the story. The style is dense and does not like beating about the magic bush too much, though it beats about the magic food a lot. The story telling is bow, arrow, target and shoot, over and over again, even if these bows and arrows are magic spells, most of the time fiery and colorful.

On the next part, second year Avis in the school will have to be very creative to go on differentiating himself from the earthenware bed-pot maker especially since Ms. J.K. Rowling has decided to bring her earthen pot maker back in the bookstores – and on the stage – with this time the son of this more than famous Harry Potter, hence a teacup maker. I hope too these characters could become slightly more modern – and this is true for Harry Potter too – and start having computers, smart phones, tablets, iPods and all other modern technology which is magic in itself. We do need to enter the world of cyber magic and magic hacking. After all CSI has become CSI Cyber. So let the new world enter our magic literature, like Lestat de Lioncourt has brought rock and roll into the landscape of vampires.

Dr Jacques COULARDEAU

Lisa Eiff says

I wasn't really sure what to expect when I first started reading this book. I first began to notice quite a few similarities to the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling and The Wizard of Earthsea by Ursula K. Le Guin. If you've read either of these series and enjoyed them, then you obviously already enjoy the idea of experiences encountered at a magical boarding school and youngsters feeling it is more of a home away from home.

While there are several similarities between all of these series', the main idea behind this story is definitely nothing like either of the other sets I've spoken about in this review. There are lots of new characters to meet, many new experiences to live through, and an all around good time with Avis and his new crew of friends. I highly recommend for younger readers that are looking for another book about young people learning in a magical world, and even adults that are interested in discovering writing that is similar to the Harry Potter series, but still different enough to be set apart as an entirely new experience altogether.

Chu-Salyer Sharon says

This book is for young adults. The first book is about young Avis Blackthorn not being an evil wizard. And his family is well known for their evil in the entire seven Magical Kingdoms. Avis is now old enough to go to Hailing Hall, A school for young wizards where they can learn magic. But , Avis is dragged into a thrilling mystery , with the help of a few of his closest friends. and Avis defeats the most evil, powerful sorcerer in the entire seven Magical Kingdoms. I really enjoyed the story and reading about Avis Blackthorn, his friends and how he was outcast by the school, except for a few of his true friends. Sweet ending, where one of Avis's older brothers accepts Avis for who he is and he is falling in love. I am looking forward to reading the next book. I could not put the book down, finished reading it in one night.

Donna says

Although this book was written for children (which I'm definitely not!) I enjoyed it immensely, and would recommend it for both older children (it's a bit scary in places for younger ones) and adults. I listened to the audiobook and the narrator did an AWESOME job of really bringing the story to life, with all the different voices, and even singing the songs of the ghosts! I'd definitely recommend listening to the audiobook if that's an option for you. Either way, if you love wizard stories then this is definitely the book for you. Now I'm off to read the rest of the series!

Linda Grant says

If you like Harry Potter you might like Avis Blackthorn

I enjoyed this book even with the typos. Although there are similarities to Harry Potter it is different enough to keep you reading, I was expecting there to be a twist at the end e.g. the last person you expect being in

cahoots with the evil, powerful wizard Malakai, but there was no twist which I was glad about because I would have hated it if one of Avis' new friends - Robin, Tina or Ernie - was an enemy, not to be trusted. I'm sure Avis' next adventure will be just as entertaining as this book was.

Brenda Mcallister says

My granddaughter chose this as her next after school read. At 11 she has read h. potter and wanted more. We read 3 chapters and I was ready to give up. Nothing original and the writing was terrible. Words were used incorrectly, many, many errors in grammar, verb tense changes from one sentence to the next, error after error just in the first 2 pages. (Retired teacher\ librarian, this was awful.) Tia convinced me to continue, so we finished the book. The ideas did get better, something different was added. It held her interest to the end, but it desperately needs editing.

I always allow for a few mistakes, because we all make them, with or without help from spell check. However, I have a hard time believing the author ever reread what he wrote. I think towards the end he found his own story and some good stuff was written, but the poor grammar and word usage were constant. This book was free on InstaFreebie. Don't pay for it.

Thom says

For the first half of the book I thought, not bad for what amounts to Harry Potter fan-fic; but at about the halfway point Simmonds literally loses the plot. This book is living proof of the necessity of editors. Characters introduced and abandoned, more characters introduced at the very end of the book, plot points developed only to be ignored. There's an entire chapter after the story has ostensibly come to an end where the main characters explain to secondary characters EXACTLY WHAT HAD ALREADY TRANSPIRED! They describe the plot of the book! Who is this for?!

Anyway, Simmonds, keep at it. You're not a bad writer. But, for Christ's sake, get an editor!

Aaron Leyshon says

Avis Blackthorn is not Harry Potter and That's a Damn Fine Thing

Simmonds has wrangled a rollicking story out of the most evil family in the land. And Avis is doomed to be the good one in the midst of Malakai's faithful. Can he triumph over his gut of a brother? Will he learn to harness his fear of ghosts? Or will something blacker take him out before he has a chance to shake his dreaded family? I could tell you... But I won't... I'll let you find out the fun way... Read the damned book, you'll be glad you did. I was.

Nancy Foster says

This book had been in my TBR list for around 1 year (hey, at least I'm tackling my list even if I'm slow!), and I had fully open expectations of this book because I never read the blurb beforehand.

If you have read Harry Potter, this book will obviously sound familiar to you: a 12 year old magician with an unusual upbringing and his own fame leaves the family that detests him to start his exciting first year in magic school without really knowing what to expect. There is an evil wizard that is set to kill wizards and topple the government. The protagonist makes a friendship with a wizard from a non-magician background, he falls in love with an eccentric witch that captivates him from her beauty and perseverance, a grouchy middle aged teacher that doesn't like the main character all that much for no apparent reason, an elderly headmaster of the school that doesn't help the MC (more like he acts like a jerk to him during most of the book and uses him as a pawn) and there is a LOT of bullying!

Okay, so, blatant HP comparisons aside, there is one thing that makes this book vastly different: Avis is the black sheep from a well-connected malignant wizard family and he doesn't want to be like them. Figure if Draco Malfoy decided to rebel against his family and had befriended Ron Weasley and Hermione from the beginning of the novel, just that Avis's family didn't really like him from the day he was born and his attempts at making friends in magic school are just a reflection of who he was from the very beginning.

The first few chapters are quite entertaining. Avis complains about the drafty and miserable castle he grew up in, the constant bullying from his 6 evil siblings, and how he always tries to hide in the attic or dungeons just to live a quiet (albeit lonely) life in relative peace.

His family grounded him for a prank he didn't do and he was about to miss the train to Magic School. Desperate to not being expelled, he convinces his parents to let him go so that he stops being an eyesore to their evil plans. So he shows up at the wrong train station, soaking wet, lost, robbed of all of his savings and despite it all, a friendly wizard student named Robin awakens him and they reach the school together. Avis wonders if Robin will become his first real friend...

He ends up in the same class (and living quarters) as Robin, but everyone distrusts Avis because of his surname and he feels left out. Classes start, lots of bullying and much to his dismay, his parents never bothered to give him a school uniform and a magic channeller (like a wand in the HP universe, but it can look like all sorts of jewelry). Avis is forced to grab some leftovers from the lost & found box, not knowing that the rusty bracelet he chose isn't so ordinary after all...

I find rewriting the main Harry Potter premise as a redeeming antihero to be very interesting. He isn't racist against impure wizards and simply wants to enjoy the years he spends at Hailing Heights academy. Most people treat him like crap just because of his surname and he tries to get by with poverty because his parents don't help him at all. Add to that his overt shyness and it seems like he's going to remain miserable and alone.

And then one night, he bumps into a strange witch student named Tina who is on an insane quest to defeat Malakai. Intrigued by her determination, he sort of hangs around, sometimes getting into trouble by sneaking into the library at night.

When Avis is unjustly used as a scapegoat when one of his classmates is badly injured by Malakai that infiltrated his school, the book becomes really interesting. Locked in a dungeon of the tower facing the very real possibility of being expelled with no ways of defending himself while his friends abandon him, he starts to revert back to his passive self, living like a hermit in the clock tower and getting private classes by a friendly ghost named Ernie.

Avis gets treated like dirt most of the novel, and he seems to fight between wanting to be happy, and being crushed as everyone abandons him to his luck. Little does he know that Tina and his teacher Pattington in reality were really worried about his unexplained absence and try to find where he is hiding.

Unfortunately, I found the first chapters at Hailing Heights to be too similar to HP to make the book really

stand out. The overall plot of the book is rather good, but it was missing more world building, the writing at times left a lot to be desired and it urgently needs to be revised by an editor.

Nearly every indie novel I've read has had at least 1 typo, but this book has countless typos confusing the proper use of apostrophes. The author doesn't seem to know when to use you, your, you're and it vs it's. There are countless more typos, but those are the ones that are evenly spread everywhere in the book. I understand that editors can be pricey, but the book could have really shone with a good cleanup. There are also several plot holes. Avis states at first that he was going to be a student at Hailing Height for 12 year. At the end of the novel, the academy lasts 7 years. Huh? Another plot hole is where random students are chosen to clean the castle one week each year... without magic. Kind of stupid considering they could clean things instantly with it.

To add salt to the wound, the typo problem has been consistently addressed by many prior reviewers years ago, but they haven't been fixed in this entire time. The digital kindle copy I have is from the recently released boxset, so it seems like the errors have not only persisted, they were left to stay in the boxset as well.

Will I read the sequels?

At first, I was close to giving up on the book, but the plot really redeemed itself towards the halfway point of the novel and made things very interesting. I will indeed read the rest of the series eventually.

With a decent copyeditor cleanup, the book is easily a 4 star read.

Naomi Herd says

Enjoyed

Really enjoyed this book and can't wait I read next one. Storyline is well thought out as It takes a twist and turn on the wizarding world. Lookibg forward to seeing what happens over the years of avis school time.

Carol says

I didn't mind that this book was a Harry Potter wannabe. I did mind that it was poorly written and even more poorly edited (if it was edited at all). I'm becoming sadly resigned to books which are spellchecked without being proofread and the correctly-spelled-but-wrong-in-context words that proliferate as a result, but the bad grammar and tense shifts within not only paragraphs but individual sentences became too much for me less than halfway through the book.

A pity, as I think there was possibly a reasonably interesting story in this book, if it had been written a tad more competently.
