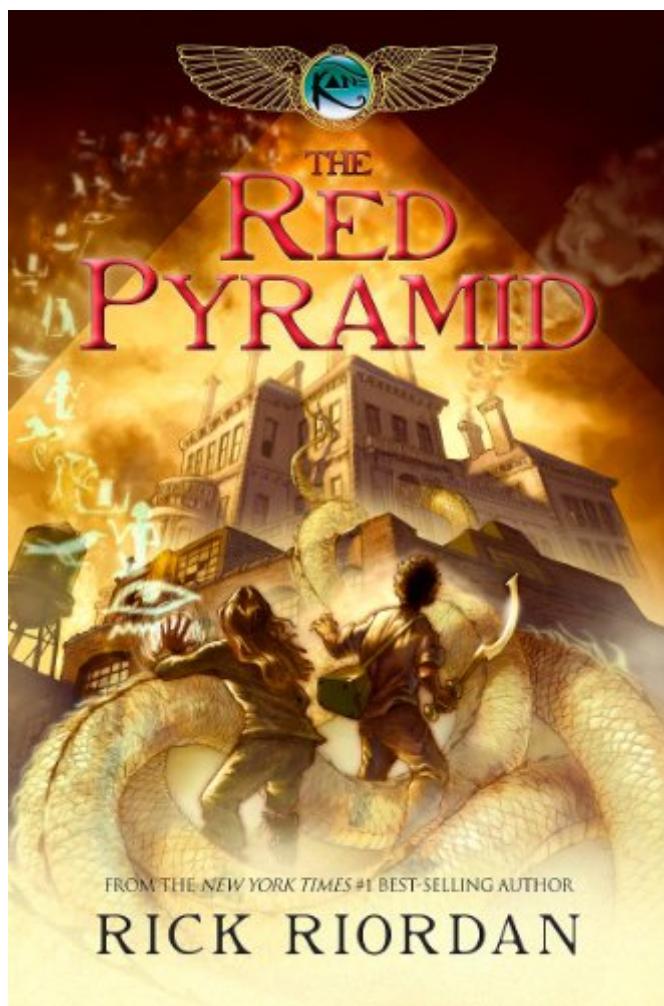


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The Kane Chronicles, Book One: The Red Pyramid



Synopsis

Since their mother's death, Carter and Sadie have become near strangers. While Sadie has lived with her grandparents in London, her brother has traveled the world with their father, the brilliant Egyptologist, Dr. Julius Kane. One night, Dr. Kane brings the siblings together for a "research experiment" at the British Museum, where he hopes to set things right for his family. Instead, he unleashes the Egyptian god Set, who banishes him to oblivion and forces the children to flee for their lives. From the creator of the hit Percy Jackson series.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This review originally published on my blog: www.lookingforagoodbook.com. Rated 2.5 of 5

Rick Riordan is a big hit with my kids. I read the Percy Jackson series that my children enjoyed so much (I thought it was well done and offered a great way for young readers to start making sense of the complicated relationships in classic mythology. And on the heels of this success, Riordan attempts to do what he did for Greek mythology with Egyptian mythology. Enter, The Red Pyramid. Perhaps Riordan tries just a little too hard to recreate the Percy Jackson magic as the similarities are a little too close, which feels a little strange to write, since I would describe the action differently than I

would describe the Percy series, but in the reading (listening) it felt weirdly similar. In The Red Pyramid, we have Carter Kane, son of an Egyptologist and used to traveling the world with his father. Carter's little sister, Sadie, has been sent off to live with her grandparents in London, so Carter and Sadie haven't spent a lot of time together. But during one of their times together, during the Christmas holiday, their father brings them to the British Museum where a mysterious figure appears and does something to make their father disappear. Carter and Sadie learn that the ancient Egyptian gods are awakening and that somehow Carter and his family are the key to controlling these gods. There is plenty of excitement and a lot of action and, like the Greek gods series, a good deal of education about the different gods' relationships and powers. But unlike the other series, there is also a fair amount of ... I'll call it goofiness ... that I just found annoying. Specifically, the orangutan. Yes...there is an intelligent orangutan that plays an important role in the action, and it feels like a Disney-fication of the book (let's put in some funny animals that interact with the humans!). Carter and Sadie are perfectly fine as the protagonists of the book, and their relationship feels very true, but the course of action feels very 'made.' Things happen around them, but they don't seem to happen as a result of their plans or even as part of a plan against them, even though that's not quite the case. It's just that Sadie and Carter almost appear to be extras in their own story. I listened to this book on Audible. The book is set up so that both Carter and Sadie tell part of the story, and the Audible version has two readers, Kevin R. Free and Katherine Kellgren, reading these parts and they do a really nice job. In fact it was the quality of the reading that kept me going with this as I thought the story itself was just too much of a pastiche of YA fantasy novels. Free really captures the innocence and wonder of the youthful Carter and Kellgren is very believable as the young Sadie. Any disbelief, specifically in regards to how old Carter and Sadie act, is on Riordan, and not Free or Kellgren. Looking for a good book? Lighting doesn't strike twice for Rick Riordan, as The Red Pyramid doesn't hold the same magic as Riordan's more popular Percy Jackson series, though the readers of the Audible book make it lively and fun.

Exciting Fun History. This book is great...the story is fun and fast-paced. My kids loved it and so did I. As a parent, I really loved it because my kids learned Egyptian history and mythology without knowing it...and so did I--I found myself constantly looking up different things about Ancient Egypt on Wikipedia while reading this book. I followed-up this up with a trip to the Ancient Egypt section of the Field Museum in Chicago--it really made the museum come alive. While certainly not a textbook, there was enough history mixed in for this to be much more than just another mindless kid book. I highly recommend it.

The Red Pyramid was recommended to me by my nine-year-old grand niece. She loved the book. I didn't love it, but, it was too flawed. The book features two siblings, Sadie, 12, and Carter, 14. Unfortunately, they are so cliched as to be cardboard caricatures. Each chapter is told in the voice of one of these two - and while the reader is told who is narrating, if you don't look, you may not be able to tell the difference from one chapter to the next. Sadie and Carter almost have no personalities. Carter is subdued and grew up traveling the world with his Egyptologist father while Sadie is brash and grew up in the care of their grandparents. Riordan apparently believes that those facts are sufficient to provide the reader all they need to know about his narrators. I think many young (grades 4-9) readers will love this book. There's lots of action and both good and bad characters. Along the way, they will learn about ancient Egypt. My grandniece, who read the book a couple of years ago, liked the book a lot.

This young adult fiction was also fun for me to read as an adult. It was recommended to me by a friend who read it after her children had finished it. Told from two different points of view, the story moves at a good pace. I gave it five stars simply because I picked it up and finished it in two days without the big sigh halfway through that says, "Please get on with the story will you?" I also like that it wasn't gratuitous, nor was it heavy, in how it handled the concept of death. If I had any criticism at all, it would be twofold. First, sometimes it was easy to lose sight of who the speaker was and I had to scroll back to the beginning of the chapter on my ebook to double-check. Second, the twelve year old girl sometimes reacted to her 'love interest' in a way that seemed more appropriate for a fourteen or fifteen year old. Then again, it's been a while since I've spent time with twelve year old girls so maybe I'm the one that's out of touch. At any rate, neither of those two points spoiled my reading experience and I would recommend it to others who like young adult fiction and metaphysical themes.

I fell in love with Rick Riordan's writing via the Percy Jackson series. I loved how the Greek gods had personalities and also how the characters develop. For that reason, I'm feeling that the Egyptian gods series is a bit flatter and lacking: the gods themselves don't get up to much, nor do their personalities develop. The whole link between gods and mortals doesn't seem as real or pronounced as in the Percy Jackson series. Sadie and Carter are interesting, but the action isn't as visual or as non-stop as some of his other books.

When I first started THE KANE CHRONICLES, I didn't really see it as fun. After a year of my dad telling me to read it I finally read it, and it was bursting with fun and action. What I learned from this book is that the beginning might not be so action filled, the rest of the book might be action-packed. That is how ANCIENT EGYPT became fun.

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