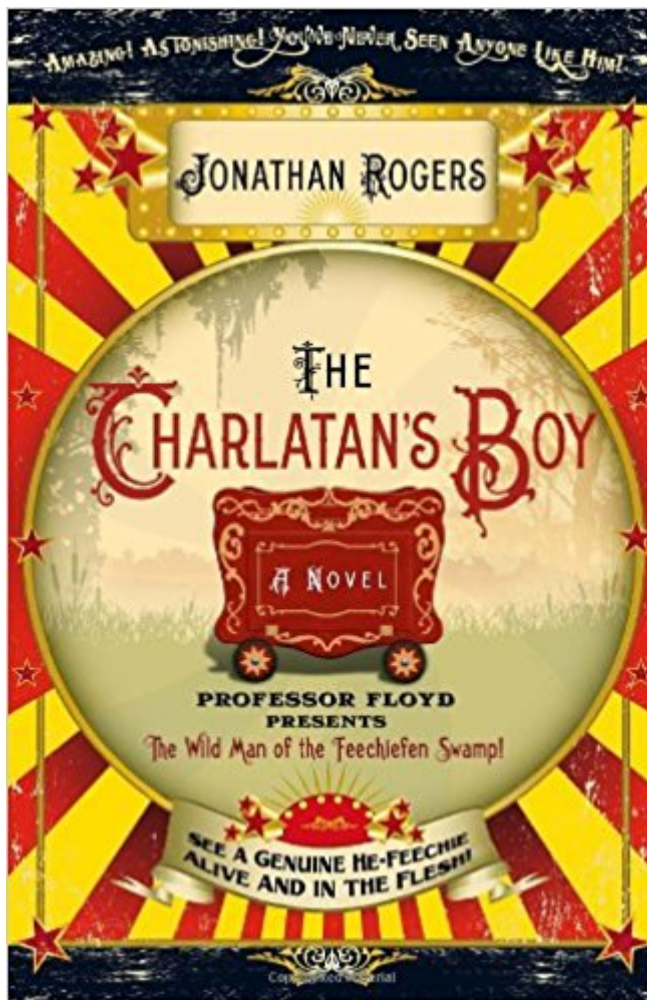


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# The Charlatan's Boy: A Novel



## Synopsis

“I only know one man who might be able to tell me where I come from, and that man is a liar and a fraud.” As far back as he can remember, the orphan Grady has tramped from village to village in the company of a huckster named Floyd. With his adolescent accomplice, Floyd perpetrates a variety of hoaxes and flimflams on the good citizens of the Corenwald frontier, such as the Ugliest Boy in the World act. It’s a hard way to make a living, made harder by the memory of fatter times when audiences thronged to see young Grady perform as “The Wild Man of the Feechiefen Swamp.” But what can they do? Nobody believes in feechiees anymore. When Floyd stages an elaborate plot to revive Corenwalders’ belief in the mythical swamp-dwellers known as the feechiefolk, he overshoots the mark. Floyd’s Great Feechie Scare becomes widespread panic. Eager audiences become angry mobs, and in the ensuing chaos, the Charlatan Boy discovers the truth that has evaded him all his life—and will change his path forever.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for Jonathan Rogers “The unusual settings and characters keep the surprises coming, while Rogers’s lovely descriptions and distinctive voice keep the pages turning.

Faith fiction readers of all ages should enjoy this.” Publishers

Weekly “Jonathan Rogers knows how to tell a story. He’ll take you to fantastic lands that somehow still feel close to home and keep you happily guessing until the end. His fantasy

tales ring of folklore and seem to spring up out of history like old willows in an earthy bog. Dr. Rogers never fails to serve up uncanny adventures that, like some impossibly nutritious brownies, are ridiculously tasty and deeply fulfilling. • Wayne Thomas Batson, best-selling author of *The Door Within Trilogy* “Jonathan Rogers has created a new kind of story—part fantasy, part southern fiction. It’s sad and funny and heartwarming. Imagine a southern version of a C. S. Lewis story or a Christian version of a Mark Twain tale. Imagine a world where dragons are alligators, the American South is an island kingdom of cowboys and swamp dwellers, and ugliness, it turns out, is profoundly beautiful. Jonathan Rogers, a Georgia boy with a PhD, a strong faith, and a healthy imagination, gives us a timeless story no one else could have written. I loved it.” • Andrew Peterson, author of *The Wingfeather Saga*

Jonathan Rogers grew up in Georgia, where he spent many happy hours in the swamps and riverbottoms on which the wild places of *The Charlatan’s Boy* are based. He received his undergraduate degree from Furman University in South Carolina and holds a Ph.D. in seventeenth-century English literature from Vanderbilt University. He lives with his family in Nashville, Tennessee.

Best. Book. Ever. Until the next one Dr. Rogers gives us, maybe. What makes it so good? It’s not just a fun story, though it is that. It most definitely is a rip-roaring tale full of laughter and boyish pranks. But what adds depth is the keen understanding Rogers has of human nature and the way he packages that to make us see our own folly and foibles instead of rushing by them as we usually do. Some readers may identify with the charlatan. Others might see themselves in the preening cowboys. Some of us will admit that we’ve been as easily-duped as the townspeople. If we’re honest we’ll probably see that we’ve been a little bit of all these characters at various times in our lives. We will all mostly identify with the boy, though. With every novel Rogers has written thus far he makes us long to be better people, because his boys long to be brave and good and honest. In *THE CHARLATAN’S BOY* Rogers gives us a boy who is down and out—a kid who has no one to love him. (Picture *Oliver Twist* in the American frontier days.) This boy has a longing to not only be loved, but to love others back. And out of the fullness of his heart, his mouth speaks. Young Grady opens his mouth and out drips all kinds of wisdom, winsomely disguised as longing. The kid thinks about honesty and friendship and repairing broken relationships. He’s a boy of integrity who longs to provide value for his wages. He’s a boy with clear vision, and what makes him so endearing is that he doesn’t really know he has clear vision. He’s been raised by a rascal so he’s not really sure he’s

right about things. But in his heart he feels things. He instinctively knows things. I'll give you just one bit of wisdom from the boy. After telling us about the cowboys and their devoted dogs, he says: "Floyd never let me keep a dog, but I believe I'd be a better boy if I had a critter to look at me the way a cowdog looks at its drover. I'd work mighty hard to deserve a dog's good opinion." This is Grady--aching to be loved. He's a unique character with a universal longing. And he's wise. He knows that being loved doesn't just make us feel better. And it doesn't just make us perform better. It actually makes us into better people. Grady really would be a better boy if he had a dog to love him. He'd work to become the boy the dog saw him to be. Rogers plunks this gem into the middle of a dusty field where happy dogs, with their tongues hanging out, are trotting back and forth between the cows and the cowboys. Read the book. Fall in love with Grady. Then introduce him to all your friends.

Love this! and the whole Wilderking series - absolutely a treasure.

I really wanted to love this book. I ended up just "liking" it. I'll break my review up by beginning, middle and end, as that is the most logical to me. Beginning: Hilarious and endearing. I laughed out loud multiple times as I read this. My wife even asked, "So you're still reading that book?" each night, because there has not been a book in a long time that made me laugh so much. Plus the beginning 30-40% of the book really endears you to the main character, Grady. Middle: Boring. Rogers lost me at about 40% or so. I don't remember the exact percentage read, but for a long time, I just didn't care about what was going on. I only kept reading because the book had so many good reviews and I wanted to know the conclusion for Grady. Ending: Beautiful. The last 2 or so chapters can only be described as wonderful and beautiful. Without the middle meandering so much, this would have been one of the few 5 star reviews I've ever given. It was a good book...just really wanted it to be great.

Great book by a great author. I highly recommend his work.

I loved this book. What a great adventure for an early teen boy or girl. Well written with lots of tension and a surprise ending.

I'm reading this book with my kids for the summer. It's funny and engaging, a great read.

Rogers writes fantastic read aloud books and this was no different. My sons and I thoroughly enjoyed this as a family read aloud and were done far too quick. Can't wait for the next one.

The Charlatan's Boy  
The Charlatan's Boy: A Novel by Jonathan Rogers this story is funny yet sad about Grady, a young boy, who is extremely ugly, and living with & always striving for the approval of an ever scheming huckster named Floyd. Floyd claims to have found Grady as a wee one under a Palmetto tree. Since Grady only knows of the life he has with Floyd, he feels a loyalty to Floyd, while feeling his heart is sending up red flags that would signal things are not always as they should be when Floyd hatches a plan always skimming the town's people. Grady longs to belong somewhere and even contemplates running away from Floyd, but can't bring himself to do it because, not having family where would he go? To the civilizers? No, that's not what he longs for. Grady longs for what he was created for...and on that note...I recommend and do hope you read The Charlatan's Boy! You'll be glad you did! I received this book from Waterbrook Multnomah in exchange for an honest review.

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