

Carnival Quest: The Candy Shop War: Book 3

Brandon Mull

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In Brandon Mull's exciting fantasy novel *Carnival Quest*, a carnival of terrors has the power to warp a person's dreams.

During the summer before Nate enters the sixth grade at a new school, the Dreams and Screams Carnival comes to town. Soon, its sinister side is revealed: it begins to grow in size, and people begin to disappear. The carnival draws the attention of a group of magical enforcers who are tasked with policing the magicians of the world. But since the carnival limits the entry of adults who practice magic, it's up to Nate and his friends to explore the grounds and report on what they find.

Nate is an excellent hero. He's courageous and a quick thinker, and his outsider status keeps him grounded and approachable. As he and his group explore the mysterious carnival grounds, they're forced to tangle with evil clowns and scheming magicians who are bent on world domination.

The carnival is a wondrous place featuring special tickets and carnie coins that unlock its hidden levels and depths. Nate and his friends hope to gather enough of both to gain entrance to the off-limits sections of the park and find out its real secrets. Against Nate's group stands the Swindler, a huckster who claims to be able to win any game of chance that a contestant suggests, from guessing numbers to board games. He entices people with the promise of the best prizes. Facing him, Nate and his friends struggle to discern what's a dream and what's reality.

Carnival Quest is a fun fantasy novel in which plucky children explore an evil-infused carnival to save the world from its creepy embrace.

JEREMIAH ROOD (March / April 2023)

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