

The King in the Window

By Adam Gopnik

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Oliver Parker is a ten-year-old American boy miserably trapped in Paris, where his father is stationed as a journalist. Intimidated by his French school and its prickly teachers, oppressed by gray and wintry Paris, and feeling curiously remote from his father--who spends more and more time staring dully into his computer screen--Oliver longs to return to America.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Award-winning adult author *Adam Gopnik*'s first children's book, an adventure set in modern day Paris starring an American boy who finds himself at the center of a war between window and mirror spirits, is an mixed bag of fantasy, technology and history that doesn't quite hang together as a whole. One January evening, eleven-year-old Oliver receives a vision in his bedroom window of a young boy in 17th century dress. This apparition informs him that he is the new King in the Window, a hero elected by kind window wraiths to assist them in their centuries-long war with the soul-stealing evil mirror spirits. Soon, Oliver finds himself in The Way, or the parallel universe on the other side of mirrors. Here, he engages in battle with the diabolical Master of Mirrors, chats with Nostradamus, and helps rescue an elderly Alice in Wonderland. In addition, there is a subplot concerning a super computer atop the Eiffel Tower! , an examination of 17th century French court life, and an on-going discussion of quantum physics. Whew! Gopnik's promising premise quickly sinks under the weight of top-heavy symbolism, arcane literary references, and a seemingly endless supply of quirky characters. As a result, the narrative loses its thread, and ultimately, it's target middle grade audience, who will be unable to tie together the divergent strands of this convoluted tale. In sum, less would have been much more. --*Jennifer Hubert*

From School Library Journal
Grade 5-9–A fantasy that is as ambitious in theme, sophisticated in setting, and cosmic in scope as the works of Madeline L'Engle. The unlikely and eponymous hero is Oliver Parker, an 11-year-old American boy living in Paris with his mother and journalist father. After he finds a prize in his slice of cake on the night of Epiphany and dons the customary gilt-paper crown, the boy is plunged into a battle over nothing less than control of the universe. His enemy is the dreaded Master of Mirrors, who rose to power during the reign of Louis XIV, when Parisians developed technology for making sheet glass. This faceless, evil being, capable of capturing souls through mirrors and enslaving them in an alternate world that lies beyond all mirrors, now seeks to dominate the entire universe by mounting a quantum computer on the Eiffel Tower. Oliver's mission is to defeat the Master of Mirrors and save his father's stolen soul. Empowered by the ideas of the French Enlightenment–logic, rhetoric, and his understanding of the difference between irony and metaphor–Oliver is aided by a wild assortment of living allies, along with spirits from the past who dwell in windows, longtime enemies of the Master of Mirrors. Nostradamus, Racine, Molière, and Alice Liddell make guest appearances. The story starts slowly, for its complicated and rather far-fetched premises require quite a bit of exposition, but rises to an action-packed climax. The book's strengths are its engaging characters and its lovingly and specifically evoked setting.–*Margaret A. Chang, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, North Adams*
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From Booklist
Gr. 5-8. Gopnik, *New Yorker* writer and author of the adult best-seller *Paris to the Moon* (2000), tries his hand at writing for children, with mixed results. Eleven-year-old Oliver Parker is an American living uncomfortably in Paris, where he feels out of place and ignored by his father, a journalist busy on a story. Through a series of unexpected and magical events, Oliver learns that he is the King of the Windows, the leader of a court of window wraiths centered at the palace of Versailles. The history of the wraiths and their battle with the malevolent Master of the Windows seems, at times, interminable and is so filled with twists and turns that it would be impossible to follow if Gopnik did not periodically recap; the confusion wrought by stepping through a mirror takes on a literal meaning for the readers. On the plus side, Gopnik writes beautifully, especially when he is describing Paris and his characters (the enigmatic Mrs. Pearson is especially well drawn). But it will take a child who loves, or is as intrigued by French history as Gopnik is to

carry on to the finish. *Ilene Cooper*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Larry Gutierrez:

Reading can called mind hangout, why? Because while you are reading a book specifically book entitled The King in the Window your mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe unidentified for but surely will end up your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a e-book then become one form conclusion and explanation which maybe you never get before. The The King in the Window giving you another experience more than blown away your head but also giving you useful information for your better life in this particular era. So now let us demonstrate the relaxing pattern here is your body and mind will likely be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a sport. Do you want to try this extraordinary shelling out spare time activity?

Barbara Robbins:

The King in the Window can be one of your beginning books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to set every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing The King in the Window nevertheless doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest and also based confirm resource details that maybe you can be considered one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand new stage of crucial considering.

Betty Peoples:

Reading a book to get new life style in this year; every people loves to examine a book. When you examine a book you can get a large amount of benefit. When you read guides, you can improve your knowledge, due to the fact book has a lot of information into it. The information that you will get depend on what kinds of book that you have read. If you would like get information about your examine, you can read education books, but if you act like you want to entertain yourself look for a fiction books, this sort of us novel, comics, as well as soon. The The King in the Window provide you with a new experience in studying a book.

Sean Ward:

What is your hobby? Have you heard in which question when you got pupils? We believe that that concern was given by teacher for their students. Many kinds of hobby, Everybody has different hobby. And you know that little person similar to reading or as looking at become their hobby. You must know that reading is very important and book as to be the matter. Book is important thing to provide you knowledge, except your own teacher or lecturer. You discover good news or update regarding something by book. Numerous books that can you go onto be your object. One of them is The King in the Window.

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