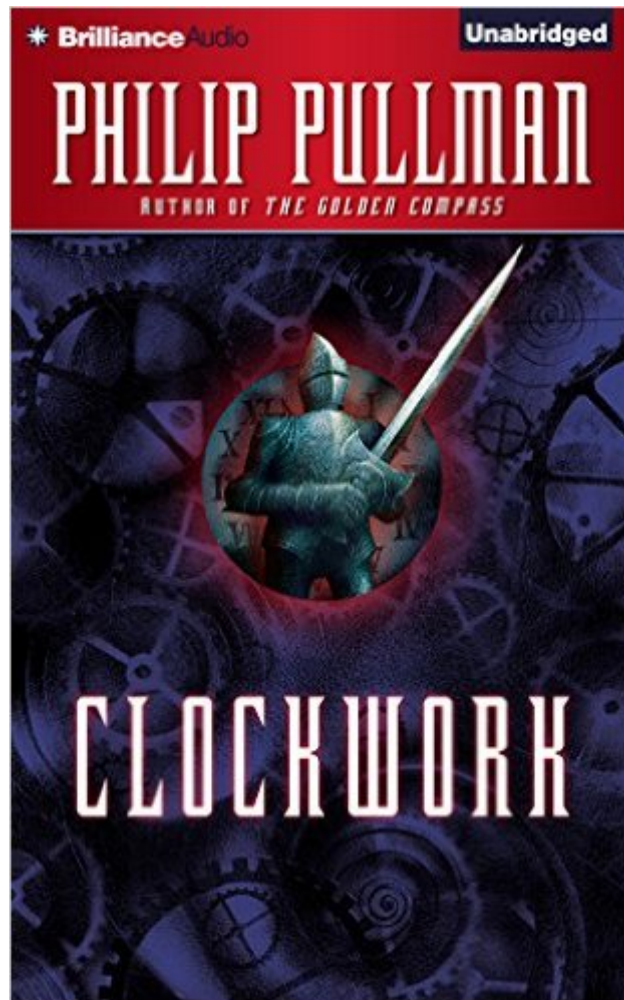


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# Clockwork: Or All Wound Up



## Synopsis

A tormented apprentice clock-maker and a deadly knight in armour. A mechanical prince and the sinister Dr. Kalmenius, who some say is the devil. Wind up these characters, fit them into a story on a cold winter's evening and suddenly life and the story begin to merge almost like clockwork.

## Book Information

Audio CD

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars See all reviews (80 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #17,217,277 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #33 in Books > Books on CD >

Authors, A-Z > ( P ) > Pullman, Philip #4400 in Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction >

General #96699 in Books > Children's Books > Action & Adventure

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Great book. Very creepy, with some great suspense. The illustrations are beautiful and very appropriate. Some readers have pointed out that the characters are underdeveloped--yes, they are, but that's not at all a fault, as this is a story in the style of folktales, where the characters aren't meant to be fully developed. They don't have to be. All of you who were enchanted by Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials trilogy will want to check this out. It's an entertaining quick read, and it will satisfy your hunger for more Philip Pullman books.

As you would expect from Philip Pullman, 'Clockwork' is a skillfully written book with more depth than might be apparent to the younger reader. The events and characters fit together as neatly as the teeth of the clockwork Pullman describes, and the illustrations and textual 'asides' are delightful, offering complementary and contrasting views of the action as it progresses. It is a book which has an enormous amount to offer readers of all ages and is gripping enough to keep you turning those pages. A post-modern version of Grimms Fairy Tales, 'Clockwork' has a certain gothic horror

element to it, whilst retaining an underlying 'adult amusement' value. Pullman effectively combines the two, eliciting fear one moment and laughter the next. All the characters are well crafted but Dr Kalmenius is clearly the best, scoring 10 out of 10 on the villainy scale. CLOCKWORK: OR ALL WOUND UP is an example of 'children's' fiction at its very best.

Having read and enjoyed Pullman's 'His Dark Materials' trilogy, I decided to read this tale. It is definitely a fairy story in the tradition of the Brothers Grimm -- not for very young readers, but very entertaining for kids over 10, I'd say. Three interconnected stories revolve around the deeds of the mysterious and ingenious Dr. Kalmenius and his dealings with princes, apprentices and clockwork mechanisms. Though it is 109 pages long, the type is big and there are over 20 full-page illustrations, so this would be a good book for a child who shows an interest in the genre and seems ready to move on to a lengthier and more complex format.

My nine year old daughter and I stumbled upon this book in a bookstore. Philip Pullman has since become one of our favorite authors, starting with this book. The story is suspenseful, engaging, extremely well written and hard to put down. It's a tiny bit scary (for a nine year old struggling to stay awake so she can savor each line), but perfect to read together with your children. I don't know who enjoyed it more, my daughter or me!

I am a huge fan of The Golden Compass and The Subtle Knife, the first two in the 'His Dark Materials' trilogy, and am anxiously awaiting The Amber Spyglass, the third. Even though this is a different style of writing it is still very good. It has an amazingly complex plotline for such a short book. Set in a small town in Germany, it's about Karl, a clockmaker's apprentice, who must make a new clockwork figure for the famous clock in town square, Fritz, a novelist, who must finish his oddly spine tingling story, Clockwork, before it's too late, and Gretl, a young barmaid, who becomes our brave heroine. It's an intriguing story that I recommend to anyone who enjoys the utterly strange mixed into their fantasy. (Note: The characters aren't very advanced and need imagination)

I just recently discovered Phillip Pullman while doing research on the Whitbread Children's Book Awards. His fantasy novel (for children? young adults? adults?) The Amber Spyglass won the award for both Best Children's Literature and the over all Book of the Year Award in 2001. That novel is the third in the His Dark Materials trilogy. Clockwork is a much shorter, perhaps less ambitious work, but in many ways just as complex. The story takes place in a German town, "in the

old days..." when "...time used to run by clockwork." It is the evening before the unveiling of the next great mechanical figure for the town's famous clock. Everyone in town gathers at the local inn, including the Clock Maker's apprentice (whose clockwork figure will be his "graduation" present to the town), and the local story teller. Karl, the apprentice clockmaker confesses to Fritz the story teller, that he has failed to complete his clockwork figure, that he indeed has nothing at all to offer for the unveiling the following day. He is despondent and speaks of killing himself before the sun comes up. So the book begins, or one part of the book, as there are layers here: stories within stories, like the complex workings of a mechanical clock. Fritz the story teller is at the inn that night to read his next great novel aloud, a story which we learn he has not finished but hopes to be able to come up with an ending as he goes along. Along with a somewhat fairytale quality to it, Clockwork has elements of suspense and horror. This was the most "creeped out" I have been with a children's book since first reading Coraline by Neil Gaimon. Highly recommend this book for children ages 11 to adult (if they are not too easily scared...)

One of Pullman's shorter works, his dark yet excellent writing is still a joy in this teeny tiny novel. A strange story is told in a bar at night--about a prince who was so determined to have an heir that he replaces his dead infant son with a mechanical one, then goes to terrifying lengths to keep him alive. In the tradition of "Count Karlstein", this takes place in a wintery part of Germany and is full of shadowy darkness. Unfortunately, though the writing is excellent, it has none of the wacky dark funniness of "Karlstein." If you are a fan of Pullman, then this book is a must. Even if you are not, this is a nice way to spend 45 minutes on a rainy night!

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