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The Butterfly Circus

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

This is a story of lost and found ? lost courage, lost memories, a lost sister. It's set in an other-world that feels magical, though any ?magic? is just illusion, because this is a world of circuses and sideshows.

Twelve year old Tansy and her big sister Belle are stars of the Butterfly Circus, trapeze artists flying above the heads of the audience as if on wings, until the day when Tansy makes a mistake, and falls. She is saved, miraculously, no-one quite knows how but though she recovers, she loses her nerve and doesn't dare climb up to the trapeze again. When Belle disappears from the circus, Tansy sets out to find her, certain that her sister must have been abducted. In this she's helped by the mysterious Rosa, who claims to be Tansy's shadow. Together they face all sorts of perils, including the genuinely creepy and dangerous Pickingill, of Pickingill's Marvellous Mechanical Machines. Tested over and again, with Rosa's help, Tansy recovers all that she's lost, and gains more besides.

At key points throughout the book we are reminded that people see what they expect to see, and Armour-Chelou does a very good job in creating a delightful fictional world, full of the sparkle of circus and fairground, everything larger than life, more vivid, more exciting. Balancing like a trapeze artist, she walks a line between the enchanting and the seriously unsettling, and if at times readers are required to accept the illusions she presents, they'll do so willingly. And for all its other-worldly setting, this remains a story with a strong message about finding the strength within yourself to achieve your dreams.

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