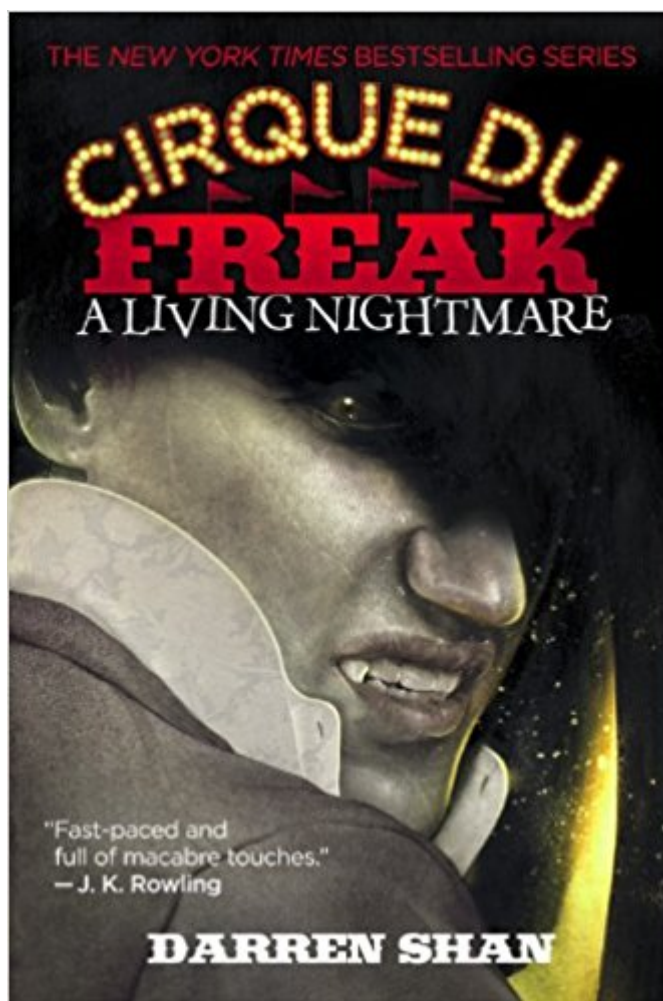


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# Cirque Du Freak: A Living Nightmare



## Synopsis

From the Master of Horror comes the first gripping book in the twelve book >bestselling Saga of Darren Shan. Start the tale from the beginning in the book that inspired the feature film

## Book Information

Paperback: 266 pages

Publisher: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (June 1, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0316605107

ISBN-13: 978-0316605106

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 878 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #45,624 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Magical Realism #92 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Paranormal & Urban > Vampires #149 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Myths & Legends

## Customer Reviews

Anyone who loves the humorous but hair-raising horror in R.L. Stine's Goosebumps series will devour British author Darren Shan's first novel with equal zeal. Some books are born with a surrounding buzz; this one even has Harry Potter creator J.K. Rowling's stamp of approval: "Fast-paced and compelling, full of satisfying macabre touches," she writes. Warner Brothers will be making it into a movie, and the rest of the series is already in the works. Given all that, you'd expect a tour de force! Really, though, Cirque Du Freak is a thrill ride that will keep even the most reluctant readers turning pages, but will never take its place in the literary canon. Darren Shan, author and narrator, sets the book up as a true story, warning readers: "Real life's nasty. It's cruel.... Evil often wins." Indeed, evil begins to win when Darren and his buddies find a flier for "Cirque Du Freak," a traveling freak show promising performances by the snake-boy, the wolf-man, and Larten Crepsley and his giant spider, Madame Octa. Darren and his friend Steve wouldn't miss it for the world. So, Saturday night they sneak out to the old theater, tall and dark, with broken windows. "Every act you see tonight is real," croaks Mr. Tall. "Each performer is unique. And none are harmless." That's for sure. (A werewolf bites off the hand of someone in the audience, for instance.) Things grow very serious for the two boys when Steve not only recognizes Mr. Crepsley as a famous vampire, but

professes his true desire to join him! To make matters worse, the spider-obsessed Darren goes back to the old theater to steal Madame Octa so he can teach her tricks in his room. (He does, with mixed results.) The plot further coagulates as Darren is faced with some terrible decisions about what to do to save his bloodthirsty friend Steve. Readers may be too enthralled to notice some clumsy editing (the aforementioned bitten-off hand is later referred to as an arm, Darren stops dead in his tracks when he's already stopped, etc.). They may also not notice that the boys constantly use adult-sounding expressions like "his breath stank to the high heavens," though the book is clearly set in the 21st century. If this book gets under your kids' skin (and it probably will), they're in luck--we haven't heard the last of the Saga of Darren Shan. (Ages 10 and older, not for the faint of heart) --Karin Snelson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A boy sneaks out to an illicit freak show, and his life becomes entangled with a vampire spider-wrangler. "The author mines the exploitative history of early 20th-century sideshows to create an artfully macabre 'Cirque du Freak,' " wrote PW. Ages 10-up. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I remember reading this book as a child and loved it back then. I am now an instructional aide for some 6th graders. They really were not invested in reading until I gave them this book. There was one scholar in particular who would not read any book given to them because they were not "good" at reading until they picked this one up. They have read this book enthusiastically and actually want to complete their work quickly so they can get back to reading the book. Any book that can truly change a scholar's perception of reading is truly a marvelous book. I'm glad to get them for the scholars of my class.

Sounds freaky for parents - Vampires!!?? But the topic is treated very humanely. The boy in question is very concerned about his predicament and reluctant to hurt anyone. The series has very positive messages about friendship and responsibility.

I loved this series when I was a kid so I am happy that I was able to find it. The product description was (really good) but honestly its (ok). The book however is legibly so I am pleased.

I had a terrible time getting my son to read. At the time, his school recommended thirty-minutes of reading at home every day and it was always a fight to get him to sit down and read. A friend of

mine said her son really enjoyed these books so I ordered them in the hopes that he'd enjoy them. Because I'm a tad overprotective, I decided to start reading the books prior to giving them to him. I was instantly hooked. I'm not a huge fan of teen books (never read the very popular Harry Potter or Twilight), but these books were fantastic. I found myself reading them very quickly and then anxious to have the next book to continue the story. The characters are well developed and the stories were age appropriate (he was in 5th grade at the time). Eventually he ended up reading the entire series of 12 books (and so did I!). Some time later the movie came out... sadly it wasn't very good. Since he's read these books he's developed a love of reading and devours almost everything we get him. I know that these books aren't 100% responsible for this new love of reading but I feel like they definitely got us moving in the right direction. I would definitely recommend them to any young teen or even adult!

I originally bought this book for my brother who doesn't read very often in the hopes of spurring his inner bookworm. He loves the books and has gotten emotionally attached to each of the characters and their story lines, even being brought to tears on quite a few occasions. While I may be off toiling at college, I still found myself enthralled by Darren Shan's world of "Cirque Du Freak" and joining in on the tears and thrills. My entire family has picked up these books and fallen in love with Darren and company (an experience not shared since a certain author who graces the cover of each book in Shan's series wrote a book about a boy who lived). If you are a parent who is hoping to inspire your child to read, this book is for you. Just remember not to be afraid to pick up the book and see what this phenomenal 12 part series has in store. I'll miss Darren Shan and all who are found within this story that I'll always wish was true.

I love this book, I read it when I was a child and could never stop reading it, even after I finish the whole story. It gets boring at the first few chapters in the first book, gets better later on. Those that love horrors or bump in the night, this book will get the mood going, it does not matter if you're a child, teens, or an adult. I recommend this book for all ages as I had bought the whole series, great book to pass down through generations.

I started the series foolishly not realizing how much \$ each installment cost/how many there are. That is entirely my fault. However, while the story is interesting, it isn't interesting enough to support a commitment of what is essentially 12 short expensive stories. The plot doesn't advance enough/have enough in it to justify the price. You could just as easily read the first, read the

summary of the next 10 and read the 12th installment. If each installment were \$1.99, that would still be expensive (for what should be 1 or 2 books max), but it makes more sense than \$7+ each.

This book is amazing. I have read every book up to this one so far, and have been truly amazed at Darren Shan's ability to continuously pump out such amazing books in such detail. He's written it in a way that just keeps you hanging on tight to your stakes at night, and describes it perfectly down to the very last grotesque little detail. This is another set of books to add to your collection, right in between the The Saga of Larten Crepsley series and Steven King's The God Project. Fingers off to you, Darren Shan, and even in death may you be triumphant.

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