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The Book of Story Beginnings

Sarah Wanlass

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Kladstrup, Kristin. *The Book of Story Beginnings*. Candlewick Press, 2006. ISBN 0763626090. \$15.99. 360 p.

Reviewer: Sarah Wanlass

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Adventure stories; Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Storytelling--Juvenile fiction; Magic--Juvenile fiction; Space and time--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Fourteen-year-old Oscar Martin has no intention of changing his destiny when he begins to write in *The Book of Story Beginnings*. But that's precisely what happens: the sea and the little rowboat of his imagination become reality and he is lost in a magical adventure.

Back at The Brick, the Martins' home, Oscar's disappearance remains a mystery for nearly a century. Then Oscar's great-niece, Lucy Martin, and her family move into the old Martin homestead. Lucy is intrigued by Oscar's puzzling departure. Led by clues left by Oscar's sister, Lucy investigates the matter as best she can. She comes across the enchanted *Book of Story Beginnings*, not realizing its power, and adds her own beginning to the collection. Oscar reappears while Lucy's father, chemist turned magician, meets mishap. Lucy and Oscar join forces in a journey to save her father. Family history, magic, and adventure continue to follow them as they search for a happy ending and learn that endings are not stopping points, but rather beginnings in their own right.

This fantastic story of travel and adventure takes many twists and turns, resulting in a gripping tale. Readers will be glued to its pages with *Harry Potter*-like intensity. Great for silent reading or for sharing aloud, this is a must have for home and classroom libraries alike.