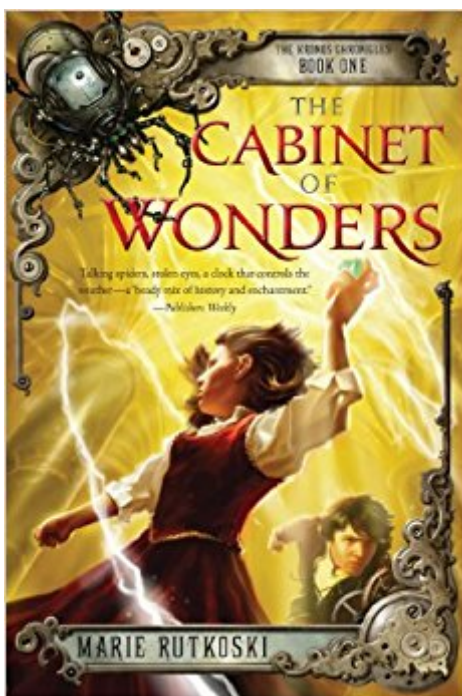


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# The Cabinet Of Wonders: The Kronos Chronicles: Book I



## Synopsis

Marie Rutkoski's startling debut novel, the first book in the Kronos Chronicles, about the risks we take to protect those we love, brims with magic, political intrigue, and heroism. Petra Kronos has a simple, happy life. But it's never been ordinary. She has a pet tin spider named Astrophil who likes to hide in her snarled hair and give her advice. Her best friend can trap lightning inside a glass sphere. Petra also has a father in faraway Prague who is able to move metal with his mind. He has been commissioned by the prince of Bohemia to build the world's finest astronomical clock. Petra's life is forever changed when, one day, her father returns home – blind. The prince has stolen his eyes, enchanted them, and now wears them. But why? Petra doesn't know, but she knows this: she will go to Prague, sneak into Salamander Castle, and steal her father's eyes back. Joining forces with Neel, whose fingers extend into invisible ghosts that pick locks and pockets, Petra finds that many people in the castle are not what they seem, and that her father's clock has powers capable of destroying their world. *The Cabinet of Wonders* is a 2009 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

## Book Information

Series: Kronos Chronicles (Book 1)

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Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 9

## Customer Reviews

Add this heady mix of history and enchantment to the season's list of astonishingly accomplished

first novels: in Rutkoski's multilayered version of late 16th-century Bohemia, magicians coexist with peasants and courtiers, a tribe of gypsies use specially endowed ghost fingers, and the fate of Europe hangs on the schemes of an evil prince. As the novel opens, a metalworker with extraordinary gifts has returned from Prince Rodolfo's palace in Prague, having finished his commission to build a magical clock but the prince has gouged out his eyes, so that he can never duplicate the clock or, worse, better it. Even more disturbingly, the prince wears the eyes himself. Vowing to recover her father's eyes, 12-year-old Petra sneaks off to Prague, with little more than the company of Astrophil, an erudite tin spider who can communicate with her. Proving herself a worthy relative of, say, Philip Pullman's quick-thinking, fearless heroines, Petra navigates her way past sorceress countesses, English spy magicians, dangerous gypsies and through bewitched palace halls until Rodolfo, wearing the ill-gotten eyes, catches sight of her. Infusions of folklore (and Rutkoski's embellishments of them) don't slow the fast plot but more deeply entrance readers. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 5 Up •Set in 16th-century Bohemia, Petra's father, who was commissioned to build a clock for Prince Rodolfo, returns home blind. The prince gouged out his eyes so that the metalworker would never be able to create a more beautiful clock. Determined to retrieve her inventor father's eyes, the 12-year-old girl travels to Prague with Astrophil, a tin spider created by her father, to locate them. Marie Rutkoski's fantasy (Farrar Straus, 2008) is narrated by Lorelei King who gives distinct and appropriate voices to all the characters. However, while the text states that the people in Prague sound quite different, this is not reflected in the reading. Also, King sometimes replaces "want to" and "going to" with "wanna" and "gonna." Although Rutkowski takes some pains to introduce Roma (Gypsy) culture to readers, it is shocking that she perpetuates the negative stereotype of Gypsies as a culture of liars and thieves, an image Carla Stevens decried in a 1974 article, "The Image of Gypsies in Children's Literature" (Interracial Books for Children, Vol. 5), and the kind of negative stereotype that would not be acceptable about any other minority group today. Although the story is exciting and involving, this audiobook cannot be recommended for that reason. •Louise L. Sherman, formerly at Anna C. Scott School, Leonia, NJ Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Cabinet of wonders was a fantastic book, but only a good audio book. The story has interesting

characters peopling a fascinating world. The setting mixes history, fantasy, steampunk, and adventure. The villain is truly chilling. The magic, innovative. The secondary characters are unforgettable. Some readers may be put off by the slightly open ending. While the current adventure does conclude, there is still a bigger plot line yet to be solved, making way for the rest of the series. Far from leaving me unsatisfied, this book left me wanting more. Although the book is about a girl, the boys in my household were captivated and never felt this book was "too girly." They loved the mix of technology and magic set in a less industrialized society. I have read this book before and so was disappointed the narrator did not do the story justice. Her voices were caricatured and slightly annoying which kept pulling me out of the story. The narrator also had such a juvenile tone, that she turned off the older kids in my household. If this is the only copy of the book you can get, get it anyway, but it's better in print.

I thought it was a very enjoyable series to read. I liked the second and third books better than the first. I am a middle aged parent and actually started reading this with my third grader several years ago as it was on her Blue Bonnet list of books to read. She read a few pages and we both decided it was too creepy for her and I personally still think it is for a third or fourth grader but I suppose it depends on the child. I found this book laying around our playroom about a month ago when I was cleaning out their younger books, and thought I'd read it. I actually thought the first book was okay (not great) but went on to order the second. I really enjoyed the last two and would found the story to be very creative, interesting, and a quick read. I would recommend it to older kids and even adults if you like the sci-fi oriented books.

I found this book on the front of my Kindle on .com. the title sounded intriguing so I asked for a sample. I liked what I read so ordered the book right from my Kindle. It is so easy and within minutes I was able to start reading. Petra is the twelve year old daughter of Mikal Kronos who is a master artisan of tin. He infuses magic in his works which make them extra special. He made a tin spider for Petra who she calls Astrophil. He talks and reads and is intelligent. He is her constant companion. Of course, Astrophil is infused with magic which makes him so delightful. All of Mikal's animals are of special value because they are imbued with his special magic. Now the Prince of Bohemia commissioned Mikal Kronos to make a clock for him, a very special clock that will be infused with more than a touch of magic and will be able to do much more than just tell the time of day. He finishes his masterpiece after three months in Prague and is sent back to his home in Okno. Petra is there to receive her father but is agast at what she sees. Her father's eyes are bandaged and his is

weak and can hardly move. It seems that the Prince ordered his surgeon to remove Mikal's eyes before releasing him; supposedly to prevent him from fashioning another clock just like the one he crafted for the Prince. Petra is so sad at seeing her father with no eyes. His eyes were especially beautiful. They were a silver color and her eyes are exactly the same color. Petra goes from being sad to being very angry and starts thinking of a way to recover his eyes that were stolen from him. She always has been very close to her father as her mother died giving birth to her. Petra has a good friend, Tomik, who is to become involved in her plans to regain possession of her father's eyes. Tomik is helping her by making some spheres, magical spheres, that will enable her to achieve her goal. Of course her father knows nothing about all of this and he must not know anything as he is sure to disapprove of any action on the part of his daughter. From this point on Petra channels all of her attention and energy into figuring how to get to the Cabinet of wonders where the Prince is said to keep them. A very tall order for such a young girl. However, she finds help from the most unlikely places and from the most unlikely people. She has scary experiences in the streets of Prague that turn out to be a blessing. She meets a pickpocket who tries to steal her money but events turn in a way that he becomes her friend and ally. Through him she comes in contact with the Gypsies who are not at all bad like she has been told. And it so happens that Neel has a sister who works at the Castle. But you have to read the book to get the real thrill of all the intrigues and twists and turns this story takes. It is a real page turner and hard to put down. I loved it and would recommend it to anyone between 10 and 70+ years. I loved it. Bookworm etc.

When Petra's father, a genius metalsmith, makes a weather clock for the young Prince, he is rewarded by having his eyes stolen by the Prince who wears them as his own. Angered, Petra with her tin spider confidant journeys to Prague to steal them back. She is befriended by a gypsy boy with magical fingers and a Countess that secretes acid. This masterfully told tale is aptly named, as it is, itself, a cabinet of wonders, full of enchanting and charming magic that tickles the imagination. It is a child of L. Frank Baum, Diana Wynne Jones, and the oral tradition stirring together history and fairy tale. This is what children's literature should be: brilliant, eloquent, exciting, engaging, charming, imaginative, and just a bit grotesque. Grade: A

Easy read, compelling story and interesting characters. Would recommend, probably more for kids 8-and up, though adults might find it interesting as well

My 10 year old son and I really enjoyed this book. We liked the really inventive, imaginative

concepts. Magic is always a good thing, and the use and characterization of magic is believable and not dumbed down. We like all sorts of books but especially appreciate good writing, good plot and character development, and a world we might like to visit. This book has all of that. We're reading the second book now and are enjoying that too.

I really enjoyed listening to this one. I'm sure it would have been a good read as well. Looks like this is the only one that is audio cd though which is odd and depressing. so I'll have to read the rest if I want to continue the series, which I do. I just won't get to it as soon as I would like. with audio, I can listen during work and driving etc. it's great, I get a lot of books in that way.this is a good one.

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