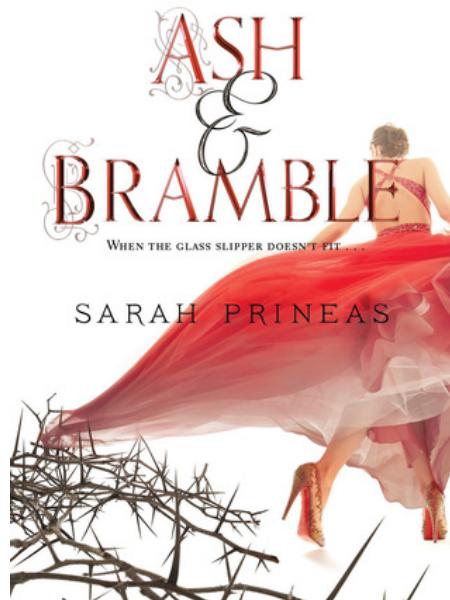


"A uniquely new fairy tale, full of beauty and danger. Splendid!"
—TAMORA PIERCE, author of *Madef*



Ash & Bramble

Sarah Prineas

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Ash & Bramble

Sarah Prineas

Ash & Bramble Sarah Prineas

A prince.

A ball.

A glass slipper left behind at the stroke of midnight.

The tale is told and retold, twisted and tweaked, snipped and stretched, as it leads to happily ever after.

But it is not the true Story.

A dark fortress.

A past forgotten.

A life of servitude.

No one has ever broken free of the Godmother's terrible stone prison until a girl named Pin attempts a breathless, daring escape. But she discovers that what seems to be freedom is a prison of another kind, one that entangles her in a story that leads to a prince, a kiss, and a clock striking midnight. To unravel herself from this new life, Pin must choose between a prince and another—the one who helped her before and who would give his life for her. Torn, the only thing for her to do is trade in the glass slipper for a sword and find her own destiny.

Ash & Bramble Details

Date : Published September 15th 2015 by HarperTeen

ISBN : 9780062337948

Author : Sarah Prineas

Format : Hardcover 464 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Retellings, Fairy Tales, Romance

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From Reader Review Ash & Bramble for online ebook

Vilma Iris says

Sinister, suspenseful and spellbinding—Prineas re-imagines the much-loved story of Cinderella in a way that made it impossible to stop reading.

Sarah Prineas weaves a story blurred by magic and fate, shackled by happy ever afters. She deconstructs the well-known story of Cinderella, unexpectedly twisting elements and forging them with recognizable facets of other fairy tales. The result is an imaginative, sinister and suspenseful tale which is somewhat ironical, but entirely enchanting.

A dress as bright as a flame, a glass slipper expertly crafted, a ticking clock, a godmother, a prince, a seamstress and a shoemaker. Blood and sweat, servitude and solitude, fate and free will. All these things tumble together as the story ‘begins’ with a girl, hair savagely shorn, forced to work day and night as a seamstress. She has no other memories. Hunched over yards of silk, stitching together gowns fit for a princess, Pin works for the Godmother. She lives a life of servitude with many others, in a fortress surrounded by bramble-covered walls.

“We are a line of gray-faced, gray-dressed, bony clockwork females. It’s as if the individual part of each of the other has been stripped out, leaving behind only their skills. I was Nothing. And then I was Seamstress, like them, but ... I have a secret, a secret, a silver thimble hidden in my apron pocket.”

After witnessing brutal punishment and enduring the same hungry, brutal days without end, a plan flickers to life. Pin meets Shoe (a shoemaker) and in a desperate attempt to flee and seek what’s beyond, they escape... aided by unexplained magic in a thimble.

But just as sparks burn into flames of hope, Pin is captured again, forced to live in a story we know all too well... but this time, the Godmother’s plans are not exactly what we think.

“All I know is that she wants me for something, and I cannot let her have me.”

The Cinderella story we know is re-imagined, as the race to understand the truth begins. Shoe must free Pin from her fate, even as they are hunted through the woods, joined by allies from other fractured fairy tales.

I loved the story—an ingenious twist on what we hold dear. I loved the darker, more suspenseful tone and the exploration of what a story is and could be. If you’re a fan of fantasy and re-tellings, this is one you shouldn’t miss.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Follow Vilma's Book Blog: [Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Brandi says

**** Any quotations used are subject to change by final print – this review is based on the ARC ****

I think I need to let go of the fact that there's a retelling out there I could love.

Ash & Bramble is a Cinderella retelling and the best thing I can say about it is that is *worlds* better than Cinder was for me. I'm not rating this high (it's just ok for me) but I think if you're someone that enjoys retellings, and likes a dark twist to them, you will probably love this book.

The story is told through two perspectives, and Pen's is first person present tense which is my favorite, but then the other perspective changes to third person present tense, and it's not done all that terribly, but it wasn't my favorite way to read a story.

This book is about the wicked Godmother and the Story that controls more than a city's worth of people. It starts out nice and dark (I have some quotes to follow) and I was so hopeful that this would be The One for me, but alas, the girl was meant to be some hardcore badass and I just found her tiring.

Looming over us is a fortress dark as a storm cloud; a clock set in its tallest square tower watches grimly over all. Around the courtyard is a high, bramble-covered wall. In the middle is a wooden post with chains and manacles hanging from it.

Maybe it is safer in this gray fortress to hide your essential self deep within, where no one else can see it.

Not quite enough food, not nearly enough sleep, a little exercise, and punishments now and then to keep us from getting too dull.

We cannot live long, I think, in service to the Godmother.

YES, GIVE ME MOAR! I love darkness in stories, they're so much harder to pull off and are so much more intense than bubblegum filler – which has a time and place and can be just as satisfying, but typically I'm after dark and painful.

I'm totally normal, I swear.

There are feminist messages in here but I was never fully behind them – they were a bit too forced for me. Our main girl, Pen, makes it plain – over and over and over – that she will be the master of her own life and

won't be thrust into a relationship against her will. This is a message I would totally get behind if I didn't find her so annoying more often than not.

I'm going to get into the things that brought me down so **DO NOT READ** them if you don't want to be spoiled. I'll keep it as vague as I can, but if you read it don't get pissed at me if it gives something away – you've been warned.

These are in no particular order. (view spoiler)

She discovers her thimble can bring back memories after one of the boys points it out, and what was funny to me about this was she had a similar thought not even a couple of pages prior, but as soon as he said it she was like, oh wow, great idea! Siiiiiiigh. Then she doesn't use the damn thing on herself to see if it would help her. She then says how Cor already knew most of his before so it wasn't really a risk to give him his memories back but again, how dafuq does she assume he knew most of his Before?

All this time I hadn't really cared that the passage of time wasn't explicitly marked because the story *is* good enough to pull that off, but then later one of the boys gives his specific age of when he was taken and says how he'd been a slave for a really long time. I don't know how he knew how long he'd been a slave. Pen never knew how long she was there while she was a seamstress. Then, later, we're told the number of years that had passed and I realized it's the first time I knew what age bracket they were.

In another scene there's a big battle and Pen is being all hardcore badass and saving the day when she's needed to rally other slaves – because, of course. So she leaves the battle and then enters the castle where she stops, catches her breath, and stomps the snow off her boots. Because who cares about her friends that are outnumbered amiright?

And holy mother of gawd – each and every single time Cor, or anyone, mentions his mother they make sure to add "the queen" after. I'm telling you the truth – every, fucking, time. Totally goddamn unnecessary.

Now the ending kind of confused me because Pen decides, finally, what boy she loves and yet (and again, I think this is supposed to make me cheer since I'm a feminist) and had left him while he recovered from the climax of the story. So, she eventually comes back and the boy says how he didn't know if she would, she agrees, then she says she won't be a wife and there are no happily-ever-afters, and then tells him true love is what they feel when they kiss. Now, the kissing and feeling part I can get behind, it's the rest that I was like, whuh? Although I guess it fits with her anarchist views that the marriage institution is a sham and puts too many constraints on her (she must be familiar with Emma Goldman's "Marriage and Love," LOOOOL).
[hide spoiler]

Jeez, I have a long list of things that got on my nerves or didn't make sense to me. I'm (hopefully) coming out of a wicked slump that's lasted pretty much the entire year so far – ugh, and this book was readable enough for me to finish it, which is great.

I do think it's a much better version for a retelling than the one I'd read in the past (cue my hate of Cinder) and I'm confident that it will be a hit for those that enjoy books like this. It's clever, it's different, it offers action, adventure, love, conflict, and at its heart it's about being able to choose your own path.

As for me? I'm giving up on retellings.

Christina (A Reader of Fictions) says

Pages read: 83

sighs

I was so excited for Ash & Bramble. All of Sarah Prineas' books have sounded like Christina books, and HELLO I AM HERE FOR ALL THE FAIRY TALE RETELLINGS.

The thing is that fairy tale retellings tend to either be amazing or womp womp. This one's a womp womp for me.

I just don't care about the characters who are, for plot reasons, without memories, so they're pretty much blank slates. They're cardboard to the max. Also, they go by Pin (because she's a seamstress) and Shoe (because he's a shoemaker), which I just can't take seriously.

It sounds like the book might get better later on but I am so bored and I have so many books to read.

Michelle says

4 Stars *spoilers*

Through this entire story I was thinking about how I was going to rate it. My rating changed so much through the story's ups and downs. Overall this was a **very** interesting story. The concept is nothing like I have seen before and I was craving more and more of it.

I love that it wasn't a simple retelling of Cinderella even though this is what grabbed my attention in the first place (I love Cinderella retellings). However, it wasn't just about meeting a prince, going to a ball, and returning by midnight, oh no. There is so much more to the story.

The story starts with a Seamstress named...well she has several but let's call her Pin for now. She is trapped working as a seamstress (you guessed it) in the Godmother's Fortress. In this story, the Godmother isn't all perky, kind-hearted, and compassionate. Instead she is controlling, cruel, and has a heart made of ice (not a fact but my suspicion is strong). She is in charge of the Seamstresses, Shoemakers, Jacks, Spinsters, Glassmakers, and all of the others that are involved in creating those iconic pieces of fairytale history. They are not happy workers who whistle while they work but are slaves who do the Godmother's bidding; if they fail, the punishment is worse than a prick on the finger or being trapped in a tower. Pin learns quickly that something is wrong, out of place, like she doesn't really belong there. She plans an escape to see the world outside of the Fortress but needs the helps of her fellow workers, particularly a Shoemaker name Shoe (seriously). Shoe is her co-conspirator and they become something more than just friends (of course). Once they escape, they learn there is something much more devious going on. You will have to read the book to know all of the details but the happily ever after is not at all what it seems to be.

Even though the Godmother is a grand evil manipulator of the story, her boss is the real villain of the story. The Story. Really, it is the stories themselves. People are thrown into the stories and can only follow the path that the Story has set up for them, no choice, no hope for choosing their own paths. An overarching theme of this story is that everyone should be able to choose how to live their own lives and that happily ever after is not always the best choice, nor is it the only.

Pin is smart, quick-witted, tough, and a great main character. Her life is complicated and makes several turns. She gets thrown into her own story, Cinderella's story. She learns quickly that marrying a prince may not be all she wants in life. Shoe is a sweet and strong balance to Pin. When one is weak the other is stronger and vice versa. Cor, the Prince, is so sweet and he isn't so simple-minded to just want to marry the mysterious girl. Instead he actually wants to get to know her which is a nice change.

Fairytale lovers will appreciate the references to other popular fairytales such as Rapunzel, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Princess and the Pea, the Twelve Dancing Sisters and so much more. You can see how those stories were strung together but don't expect an ending where everyone is happy with the path Godmother has chosen for each of them. Then there is the Witch. She is the one who gave the poisoned apple to Snow White and wrapped a castle in thorns which guarded a sleeping princess. She is not the villain but a hero. Someone who wanted to stop Godmother from controlling the lives which needed some severe intervention to stop the not-so-happy ever after.

I think this was a refreshing twist for the fairytales we still know and love. You may feel the need to question some of your favorite fairytales after reading them and wonder if the princess really wanted the prince and vice versa. Don't worry though. There is plenty more to think about while reading this book.

I gave this a 4 instead of 5 stars because there were some parts that were slow and I got a bit confused in certain areas of the story but this is not a story to be missed.

I don't know if this book is for everyone. Fairytale lovers should definitely give this a try. Even if you are not that familiar with fairytales in general, there is still the idea that forcing someone into a life they didn't ask for nor wanted, I think, many people can understand or relate to.

Ai Haibara says

UPDATE 19/2/15

Sees cover

Aside from the fact that red is soooo not a Cinderella colour, why the fuck is there a girl on the cover with the most fucking generic looking red dress ever. What the hell happened to creativity?!

And can we talk about the proportions of the model?

The wonders of photoshop. ~~Seriously though, someone needs to fire who ever did the cover because aside from the terrible proportions edit, the cover looks amateur as fuck. And this is being published by HarperTeen.~~

I almost forgot- GOLD SHOES?

GOLD SHOES WITH FUCKING CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN RED SOLES?!

A prince.

A ball.

A glass slipper left behind at the stroke of midnight.

The tale is told and retold, twisted and tweaked, snipped and stitched, as it leads to happily ever after.

But it is not the true Story.

A dark fortress.

A past forgotten.

A life of servitude.

No one has ever broken free of the Godmother's terrible stone prison until a girl named Pin attempts a breathless, daring escape.

Fairy Godmother is EVIL?

But she discovers that what seems like freedom is a prison of another kind, one that entangles Pin in a story that leads to a prince, a kiss, and a clock striking midnight.

To unravel herself from this new life, Pin must choose between her prince and another—the one who helped her before and who would give his life for her.

Torn, the only thing for her to do is trade in the glass slipper for a sword and find her own destiny.

Tamara says

1,5 STARS

The Number of UGHs:

1. The names (A seamstress named Pin? A shoemaker named Shoe? WHAT THE F-? I can't take a character called Shoe seriously, ok?)
2. The whole plot
3. The execution (Wonderful idea used so poorly)
4. The writing and the dual povs (The writing was so plain and how it switched between first and third person at the worst times bothered me a lot)
5. The pacing (the dual povs hurt the story so much. Whenever things started to get a bit interesting in Pin's pov, the scene was cut and Shoe's boring and useless pov was shoved down our throats)
6. The characters (They had no depth or any REAL characteristics)
7. The insta-love (one word: HIDEOUS!!! If you need a textbook definition of instalove definitely read the very first chapters of this one) and the cringe-worthy/half-hearted love triangle
8. (NO)(PROPER) worldbuilding (It has massive holes)
9. Things are ALWAYS too convenient
10. PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING ELSE...

Why You Should Give It A Chance:

1. Interesting premise.

The main characters live in a world where the Godmother is evil and kidnaps people, erases their memories and uses them to make 'the story' more powerful.

Every person that comes across to Godmother is caught in an inevitable scene, intent on acting his/her parts in service to the story. Some act their part in the cities, being puppets in the hands of the Godmother, others work in the Godmother's Fortress like slaves, barely eating or getting any sleep, not speaking, not touching, not loving, doing nothing else but working so that Godmother gets things like candles, dresses and even a glass slipper to use in the stories and happy endings she builds.

Our main characters Pin and Shoe are both slaves in the Fortress. They escape but Pin gets captured by the Godmother and gets her memory erased so that Godmother can force her into a happy ending to make the story more powerful. Shoe decides to save her (but ends up being a big cock-blocker *ahem* I mean storybreaker. Whatever). At one point the prince shows up, there is a ball, a love triangle, confusion and Pin trying to find out who she is and who she loves the most, there is a big fight, our heroes win but there is also redemption for the bad characters and...I think I've said enough.

2. Umm, that's it. I've got nothing else to sell this book.

Why You Probably Should Stay Away From This Book:

1. BO-RING. After Pin loses her memories the plots gets more interesting but man, getting there was so painful.

2. Because I'm telling you. Cause I like you (If I dont hey, you can read the book. I'm totally ok if you want to share my pain.)

3. May cause a severe reading slump.

4. I cant even make fun of this book. Or rant. In a fun way. Cause you know, I didnt have fun. At all. NADA FUN HERE.

The Additional Thoughts:

- I want a magical thimble too. It makes everything possible. *rolls eyes*

- #notbuyingthissht. SO MANY 'LOGIC FAILS' MOMENTS! For example; oh, sure, lets trust the villian guy because he seems kind. Gentle. Yeah who cares that he was hunting you like 5 seconds ago? He just offered you help to escape so he must be one of the good guys, right?

- Cinderella part only begins to show itself at the end of the chapter 9. Are you fucking kidding me? This story/book was too damn boring.

- Most of the time too much description but when it's necessary you cant find a proper one.

- Godmother is interesting. She rips out people from their old lives and gives them a role in whatever elaborate plan she has for that place but WHY THE FUCK SHE DOES THAT? EXPLAIN TO ME WTF SHE DOES THAT DAMN IT!!

- There are times Pin is a strong character and she doesnt let her choices be taken away from her BUT her badassness and feminist moments felt like they were way too forced. So instead of making her a cool character they turned her into a annoying one.

-

"The story gains power by forcing these endings. Happily after endings. Boring endings. They are all the same."

Umm, honey that's the point with the fairytales. That's why we like them. Shut your fucking mouth and stop talking nonse.

THE G?F REV?EW:

ME DURING THIS BOOK

THE VERDICT: Read Cinder instead if you haven't already.

Krista Wright says

This is a very odd book. The concept of this fairytale retelling is definitely interesting and new, and also quite creepy. I really liked a lot of aspects of this story, but had some issues with the characters and the writing. I just didn't feel invested about the characters at any point reading this. And the writing is so weird--it's hard to get used to. Every few paragraphs or so, the writing continuously switches back and forth between first person, second person, and third person. Not really sure who I would recommend this book to, since it was so strange.

Sarah says

This was such a strange book, and I didn't really enjoy it. I found the story quite confusing as so little was explained, and I got really bored.

5 out of 10

Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says

I'm not going to lie, what drew me first to this novel was the unusual cover. It caught my eye and demanded that I read the synopsis. When I saw that it was a retelling, and a dark one at that, I knew this would be the read for me.

What if the real villain of the story wasn't the Witch but the Godmother instead? What if we never got to choose our own endings, happy or not, but they were chosen for us? Forced onto us by a sinister power that has grown too strong over time? What if everything we thought we knew about happily ever after was all a lie?

I admit, I didn't go into this expecting to be caught up in the story, caught up in Pin and Shoe, but I was. Oh how I was.

Prineas wove a tale so enchanting, so original, and so far from the original that it was hard not to be memorized by it. Not to be caught up in the madness, chaos, and utter unreliability of the tales we have all come to love as small children as they were read to us from storybooks and watched in movies as she twisted them, made them dark and sinister and anything but those we fell in love with.

With a heroine every bit as smart, cunning and strong, as she is unwilling to depend on anyone else to save

her but herself. To create her own story, with its own ending. An ending she chooses, one she creates for herself. One where she is the hero, not the prince, not the king, not the Godmother.

This truly was unlike anything I have read before and I loved and savored every single page of it. I truly was hooked after only a few chapters and even now, after finishing it, I am still thinking about the genius behind it. The what ifs and the could have beens.

This took me by surprise and I love Prineas for being able to still surprise me when it comes to this genre, and this retelling. Where magic is afoot and anything is possible, even darkness and misery in a much beloved fairy tale that is anything but happy and cheerful.

An ARC Copy of this was provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Carla *Jen7waters* says

wait... is this a love triangle...?

Natalie (Never trust a duck) says

We all know I'm gonna read it. It's a retelling with a freaken prince at a ball. My fantasies printed in a book.

Heidi The Hippie Reader says

Ash & Bramble is a fantasy with various fairytale elements woven into it that fails to coalesce into something greater. There is a forbidding castle on the edge of a dark forest. Within that castle, men and women slave their lives away for the Godmother, a demanding, magical tyrant. One of the seamstresses, a girl named Pin, knows that she has to get out because life isn't meant to be this way. She can't remember her past, but in her pocket, is a magical thimble...

It started out well, but, like I said, just kind of fizzled. The pacing was too slow, the characterizations were just flat, the romance was no good... and the heroine never figured out how to use her powers to their true advantage. I mean, the Godmother had transformed animals into humans and humans into animals and during the epic final battle(s) with her guards, it never occurs to Pin to (view spoiler) For pete's sake. That was the first thing that popped into my head.

Dark magic is hinted at but never truly explored, which would have been a good way to draw the reader deeper into the story. Take the case of Lord and Lady Meister, two characters who pop into Pin/Pen's life for tea and then are never seen again, I suppose to underline the gravity of her situation. Prineas' description of the Lady was chilling: *"I (Pen) can't look away from her smile. Then my breath catches. She is looking at me, too, straight into my eyes. As her husband's voice drones on, her smile doesn't waver. A smile, I realize,*

is a horrible thing if it's held for too long." pg 182 ebook Creepy! I thought for a moment that this book was going to turn things around, but it didn't.

One small piece of this book that I liked, (view spoiler): "*What if the stories aren't told? What if they're lived? What if you were forced to live your life in the shape of a story that is not your own, with no choice about who you are and where you're going?*" pg 265 That was a cool idea, but not enough to carry the rest of the book.

Finally, this little interchange between the main characters bugged me: "*It's because people are afraid.*" "*Of what?*" *I asked. He shrugged. Because there's just one ending.*" "*Happily ever after,*" *I said. "No," he said. "Death. Death is the real ending.*" pg 482 ebook. I've read enough near death experiences to know that death is only the beginning of another grand adventure. There are no "real endings."

If you're looking for a quality fairytale retelling, skip this one. I'd recommend picking up *Tiger Lily* by Jodi Lynn Anderson (YA appropriate). Or, if you're looking for an adult fairytale, try *Alice* by Christina Henry. That one scared me half to death, but it's excellent.

Nemo (The Moonlight Library) says

This review was originally posted on The Moonlight Library

I received this book for free from Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

SUMMARY

When Pin dares to escape her slavery of making fairytale clothing for a magical Godmother, she and her Shoemaker friend are captured and catapulted into an irresistible world where the prince is having a ball and no one recalls their past. This original Cinderella retelling has more twists than you can shake a bramble at as Pin and Shoe dare to tackle the very power that turns over a story, and a young girl demands to choose her own destiny.

WORLDBUILDING

Wowser. I loved this world. It's already set in a fantasy-type world, but for some reason there's this Story power that forces people to live the lives of fairytales, and the Godmother gets her power from that, so it's this never-ending cycle of growing power so long as everyone does as they're told. There must have been quite a few fairytales already played out such as Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, and Rapunzel, but what I really wanted to know was where did Godmother get her inspiration from? How does she know how the stories are supposed to go?

CHARACTERS + RELATIONSHIPS

There is no insta-love and there is no love triangle. Let me make that perfectly clear. It's a Cinderella retelling, so whatever Pin and the Prince feel for each other is forced upon them, and they're made aware of that. Pin feels affection early on towards Shoe, but how else are you supposed to become friends with someone? Pin and Shoe are totally lovely anyway. I love their banter, and I love the way they think about each other and care for each other. I love how Shoe and Cor become friends even though they're kinda

rivals. I love how Pin doesn't have time for silly romances yet finds a way to kiss both of them and thoughtfully compares it – because she knows she's 'meant' to end up with the Prince, but she has real feelings for Shoe. That's why it's not a love triangle, even though there is kissing two boys.

WHAT WORKED/DIDN'T WORK

(view spoiler)

I loved how homosexuality was just casually mentioned. First there was the tavern boy who flirted outrageously with Shoe, then there were casual couples dotted about. No big deal is made about homosexuality but neither is it erased.

OVERALL

I was completely sucked in to this book. I couldn't believe how quickly I read it, especially as I was coming out of a pretty bad reading slump. Although the cover is somewhat hideous (NOT because the dress is red, it works in context, but because of all the white, which unfortunately also works in context, I just don't like it – would rather see the more traditional 'girl in prom dress running through a dark forest' kind of thing), and the title is completely uninspiring, I thoroughly enjoyed this story about choosing your own destiny and I would recommend it to any fairytale fan who is looking for something a little meta, a little quirky, a little bit different to the more mainstream retellings. The quality of writing is high, the characters are three-dimensional, and there's enough originality in the retelling to make it its own kind of fairytale.

Susana says

Arc provided by Harper Teen through Edelweiss

Release Date: September 15 th

Part of me can't help wonder how much I would have _ or not _ enjoyed this title if I wasn't reviewing it.

Thing is, reading for reviewing purpose is different from reading for enjoyment: I find myself constantly trying to analyse this and that, without mentioning the fact that I am constantly evaluating which rating I should give.

Then there's the second guessing myself, especially in cases such as this, in which the story's quality is unquestionable.

Yes, this definitely has quality and has to have had a lot of hard work behind it: the plot twists, basically

being able to interwove a great number of retellings into a cohesive plot has to have taken a lot of hard effort. And it isn't as if this is a simple story. It most definitely isn't.

But, I can't say that as a whole it was perfect.

The pace of the story

For me this was the main culprit: one minute I was wondering what was going to happen next, and a couple pages later, the story had stalled. And I was bored.

But then it would pick up again until too many descriptions would stall it once again.

The main character

I am afraid she starts and ends as a mystery, and if at the beginning that is completely understandable, I can't say I was happy about it...

No, that isn't right. It isn't the case of me being happy or not _ don't worry, the story has a perfectly acceptable finale _ it was the vagueness of it all that left me unsatisfied.

The story took so long to get there, to the beginning of a new start that I wanted a little more . I wanted to have a little idea of what was it than Pin wanted for her life.

Also _maybe that was the author's idea _ **but** I could never really fit Pin into some sort of "role". Okay, she's fierce, but also a little reckless, while keeping hold of a certain aloofness all around her.

She wants to be her own self, that's probably what best characterizes her in the end.

However besides that, I could never establish a connection with the girl: what should come out as strength of character sometimes sounded to me more like selfishness and reckless behaviour.

Also I ended up disliking the way the love triangle _ that shouldn't be a love triangle _ was dealt. Thing is, were Pin a guy, the cavalier way she deals with "certain things" would be less than tolerated.

In face of all this, it comes as no surprise that my favourite character ended up being Shoe. He ended feeling more complete and with more depth than Pen.

The fact that he reminds me of Peeta with his quiet way of being (not that it matters, but yes he has blond hair) is another point in his favour.

In here, you'll find stories within stories... do not expect a basic Cinderella retelling.

If any of you has already read Mercedes Lackey, The Fairy Godmother, book one in the Five Hundred Kingdoms you must be aware of the concept of a Story _ in Lackey's that concept goes by Tradition _ that forces characters into certain roles. Fairy tale roles. Sometimes things work out... most times they don't.

This is a dark take on a concept of a Story, determined to feed itself and to find strength in its constant never ending circle.

I loved that the author introduced some great plot twists that go against what we normally get in these type of stories: from the Godmother's role, to the evil Witch's role, to characters that are given a whole new direction like a lesbian couple whose half of it is a very well known princess.

That was great. Things like these would get a five star rating.

But then like I mentioned before we would start getting a little too much description on certain moments, and not enough on others: it was driving me insane!

This was what was going through my head while reading this tale:

"okay... 4.5 stars... no, 4 stars... maybe 3.5... this last part is boring 3 stars... but this should get at least a four... but are you enjoying it... do you think you're going to re-read it... 3.5 stars maybe... oh, God how am I going to review this?"

I wanted to know more about the thimble: well the thimbles, plural.

Why did they have power? Where did it came from? Why a thimble from all objects?

I wanted more information on the sisters. Not to mention details about how Pin's life used to be.

I didn't find logical that... how to say this without spoilers... there was someone that maybe could have shed some light on Pin's background, and she has that "attitude"?

And then she "throws the problem" at someone else?

o_O

Also, wouldn't that, place her in the same path of that... *cough* person?

Finishing a story and having more questions than answers is never a good thing.

To finish this mess of a review I can only say that I don't know if you're going to enjoy it.

The only thing I can say is that it does have quality.

Oh, and the cover girl with the red dress?

Well, there's a perfectly good reason for the colour red :D

For the modern cut of the dress?

No. -_-

For the blankness of what surrounds the girl?

Okay, it can be comprehensible due to "things"....although I would prefer to see a certain lighted path of the mushrooms in the cover ;)

"Who am I? I am nothing."(1)

(1)quote removed from arc ~don't kill me, it is just a tiny little sentence~ and prone to changes.

shady boots | #WatchPOSE says

Seriously, this is a HarperTeen book and the best they could do was *that* cover? Christ, Harper, what happened? You guys are usually the king of gorgeous covers. That is a hot mess and a half.
