



A Creature of Moonlight

Rebecca Hahn

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A stunning debut novel about a girl who is half dragon, half human, and wholly herself.

As the only heir to the throne, Marni should have been surrounded by wealth and privilege, not living in exile-but now the time has come when she must choose between claiming her birthright as princess of a realm whose king wants her dead, and life with the father she has never known: a wild dragon who is sending his magical woods to capture her.

Fans of *Bitterblue* and *Seraphina* will be captured by *A Creature of Moonlight*, with its richly layered storytelling and the powerful choices its strong heroine must make.

A Creature of Moonlight Details

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Author : Rebecca Hahn

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From Reader Review A Creature of Moonlight for online ebook

~Tina~ says

3.5 stars

Long ago, a princess of her realm, was lured into the shadowy woods, but unlike most of the girls who venture there, she came back, but she wasn't alone. She was pregnant and the child she carried was presumed to be the dragons daughter. Her brother the prince, could not condone her existence and killed her for her unspeakable crime, but their father, begged his son to spare the child. And so he did. Ever since the day her gramps whisked her away, Marni lives by the borders of the woods in a small hut with her gramps (the former king) and lives a quiet life tending her flowers and being at peace. But as time passes, Marni grows into a beautiful women and the village lords and lads are taking notice. But they are not the only ones. The woods are moving in, silently but forcefully trying to lure Marni back home. An alliance is suggested, for not only is Marni half-human/half-dragon, she is also the only heir to the kingdom. But she is torn as to where her rightful place should be. Is it with her uncle and his court who never wanted her or with the father she's never meet. Marni must choose her own path and her own fate in this magical tale of two worlds pulling her apart, but where does her heart truly belong?

After reading this story, I had very conflicting emotions. **A Creatures of Moonlight**, is a fantasy fairytale with a very pretty story and is solely about one girls self-journey to find a place in between two worlds, the kingdom and the woods, who both want her for their own selfish gain. The writing is beautifully captured and quite lovely, but it lacked a dire-effect that I crave for this particular genre. That spark, that moment where I'm completely captured and connected into this world and emotionally dedicated with the characters wants and hopes and needs. This book was like a soothing lullaby, quaint, charming and hauntingly beautiful, but it never had any real adventure, suspense, intrigue or even romance, which quite frankly I was expecting given this featured dragons and other mythical creatures, and while they were all stunningly descriptive, It still felt like the story was hidden underneath all the pretty words and any action took a back-seat. I needed something more tangible for that heart-pounding factor and a challenge for my imagination. I was moved by the surroundings, was touched by the sad stories and even lost myself within the dream-like world, but I was never fully affected by Marni's true purpose. Never felt the emotional impact of all that she lost or how alone she felt. I could grasp what she wished for herself and even found the unfairness of her entire situation. After all, she never asked to be an heir or even a dragon's daughter, but in the end it still felt like it was missing something, even though the story comes to a full circle and nothing more could have been resolved.

With that said, I still very much enjoyed this book for what it had to offer. Which was the stunning writing style. This is Rebecca Hahn's debut novel, and you can tell that she was truly born to write. The pacing and flow could have been more even and the plot could have been more exciting, but her words were like reading poetry in motion, especially when describing the whispering woods. Everything was so crisp and alluring and yet you could still *feel* the dangers and darkness lurking in the same breath. I only wish I could have *seen* it. I also enjoyed that Marni is extremely strong willed and knows exactly what she's always wanted. She's bitter and jaded but she still held herself with dignity and grace. This was especially noticeable when she dealt with her uncle or Lord Edgar's persistence and then later when she confronts her father. She has fire in her veins and she decides her own fate. I was also glad we got to spend a little time in the woods, the entire story felt like a fairytale, but being in the woods made it feel like fantasy and I couldn't help wish I got to spend more time in that space. It was fantastical and I wanted more.

All in all, I rather enjoyed this book, it may not have been the escape I was expecting, but it still had some moments that left an impression. If I take away anything from this experience it would be Rebecca Hahn's

writing. This is definitely one author to look out for and I look forward to reading her next book.

Selena Yukino (The Lioness: hear me roar) says

[image error]

Tammie says

A Creature of Moonlight is a slow moving, beautifully written, character driven story that drew me in from the very beginning. It reminded me in some ways of Janet Lee Carey's books, namely Dragonswood and Dragon's Keep, and also Seraphina by Rachel Hartman. It was nice that it was a stand-alone too. I will be looking for more books from this author.

Tabitha says

My imagination held hostage

The woods are a magical place, one that the people in *A Creature of Moonlight* have been taught to fear their whole lives. These woods come and go, moving forward and backward gobbling up or giving back land on a whim. It even has a taste for young girls on the cusp of womanhood! Treacherous sounding isn't it? These young girls frequently disappear into the woods never to be seen again. Except once one particular girl does return. Sounds like a place full of magic, danger and temptation to me – I was all in.

Marni lives in exile at the edge of the wood in a small hut with her grandfather the former king. Learning why these two are in exile is all part of the slowly unfolding mystery in *A Creature of Moonlight*. With a lush descriptive prose and a vengeful young heroine I couldn't help but be entranced by this world and most of all its magic. The writing style and tone of this book is quite unlike many of the other young adult books that are coming out today. The pace is slower and the prose style just feels different. It required some thought and there is a lot of inner dialogue and descriptions from Marni as in the first quarter of the book she observes more rather than interacting with people. Some might find it takes a bit of time to adapt to, but I flowed into it with ease as I literally felt Marni was telling me the story rather than I reading it.

Good girls don't play in the woods

The magic of the woods and the creatures within it remind me very much of elemental or fey spirits. Everything seems to have magic. The trees, the flowers and all of the creatures. Some float on the wind and there is a lady that knits and weaves magic from everything around her and indeed this is something Marni learns to do as well. Pulling moonbeams and light together with pine needles and moss and whatever other bits of the world to create beautiful new creatures or to even knit a vengeance upon her enemies.

Why, hello, tall dark and devious

Marni eventually finds herself in the castle and we see a possible romance developing between her and a powerful but young Lord, Edgar Ontrei. But Marni is determined not to let anyone dictate how she is going to live her life and what she is going to do in order to achieve her goals, not even some ravishing man who makes her laugh, especially when she knows he has ulterior motives. Even though there is some romance I have to stress that this is just a side focus and by no means the main plot at all so you love hungry readers should know that going in – this is not in the teen fantasy romance category. It is very much a coming of age

story.

Blood is sweet and vengeance bitter

A Creature of Moonlight has some overtones of darkness to it that I really loved. I always think of anything reminding me of fey as something that cannot be trusted and here I got to see Marni as she learns all about who she is, what she really wants, the truth and who can be trusted. **An excellent read and the author says it was written as a standalone folks so snatch it up and enjoy because you get some actual freaking closure for once at the end of a YA novel!**

Dark Faerie Tales says

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: Hauntingly beautiful, raw, and powerful, this story stays with you even after you turn the last page. I can't stress enough how gorgeous and eerie this novel is.

Opening Sentence: All summer long the villagers have been talking of the woods.

The Review:

This connected to me on an emotional level, and I don't remember the last time I left a story with such pleasant feelings. Delirium? Twilight? Harry Potter? Wow, just wow. *A Creature of Moonlight* is about Marni, a princess who lives with the King in a flower selling hut a little ways from a village. Gramps (the King) gave up his place at the throne in order to take care of Marni and spare her life, because her uncle was going to kill her, right after he killed her mother. She isn't fully human, either. Her mom, just like other girls, was lured by the magical presence of the woods, except unlike the rest she came back, pregnant. And only strange, mystical creatures live in the woods . . . the most strange and mystical of all, the rumored dragon. Marni isn't immune to the trees and creatures and magic, but her fragile life is about to be uprooted much like the flowers she sells, and it is time for her to fight to right herself again.

The style of writing is like nothing I've heard before. It's simple, and yet intricate. It looks at the deeper meanings of things that are yet to be understood, and grasps at every detail in colorful storytelling. Marni is the most introspective character I have ever known, other than Lena of *Delirium*, and that's saying a lot. I adore her and her personality, strengths and weaknesses, mistakes and emotions. She is, quite bluntly, a fabulous character.

Lord Edgar is the supposed love interest, cocky, confident, and charming. He had me wondering whether they'd end up together or not, because for all the pros about him, there were signs that they could end up apart. I kept changing my mind about what would happen, and in the end, I was surprised (and I'm not telling you how, you'll have to read and find out)!

The lure of the woods was ever there. It was always a ghostly pull in Marni's head, and I felt myself actually wanting to follow it. If I could rate top 10 settings, along with Hogwarts, there would be the woods. If you've read *Splintered* and loved *Wonderland*, don't deny yourself the pleasure of reading this book. It's almost physically painful to read and want to know how everything ends up, and I was tempted quite a few times to skip ahead, but I am an honorable reader and stayed true to the course of the chapters.

Young or old, I think anyone will love this. Period. It was amazing to me; it will be amazing to you. *A Creature of Moonlight* has my highest recommendations, and I swear to you that after reading you will have

no regret that you did so! Sometimes when reading this I physically smiled, or laughed, or covered my mouth with my hands and gasped, and I haven't felt this close to a book in a while. It sounds cheesy, but a real reader will know the feeling when you find a book that will grow to be a favorite. Don't wait any longer than necessary to pick this up!

Notable Scene:

It's our choices. It's our changing, every day, into creatures who might do something completely different from the day before. It's our stupid stubbornness and our constant unpredictability, and the irrational way we have of holding on to our love, our anger, our hate, letting them grow within us until they're a part of us as sure as our hands and feet, as sure as the laughter that catches on our breath, the moonlit tears in our eyes.

It's magic too, in a way.

FTC Advisory: HMH Books for Young Readers provided me with a copy of A Creature of Moonlight. No goody bags, sponsorships, "material connections," or bribes were exchanged for my review.

Olga Godim says

I received this ARC through NetGalley from the publisher, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

This novel is like a myth, mysterious and dreamy, elusive and multilayered, open to different interpretations. I don't think simple **like** or **dislike** could cover it. Everyone will see in its pages something that belongs exclusively to them, something close to their heart.

What did I see? What is close to my heart? I saw a sixteen-year-old girl longing for freedom – the freedom to choose and the freedom to belong. But those two freedoms are exactly the opposites, and their demands rip her soul apart. If she wants to belong, she has to conform. If she wouldn't conform, she can't belong, unless she is strong enough to make her own rules, to create her own world, but that's the hardest road of all. The book starts slowly. The entire first part of it is broody and misty like an impressionist's painting. Marni, the heroine, doesn't belong anywhere except in a hut with her grandpa. She is a daughter of two worlds. Different. Alone.

Her mother was a princess from the human realm, but Marni's uncle, the king, rejected her before she was born. When Marni was a baby, the king killed his sister, Marni's mother, and only her grandfather's protection keeps Marni alive now.

Her father is from the realm of magic. He is a dragon, commanding an enchanted forest, sending his trees and his fey creatures after his daughter. But Marni doesn't know what she wants. Should she stay in the human kingdom and avenge her mother by killing her murderous uncle? Or should she go into the magical forest and surrender her human self?

Her journey of self-discovery is painful and fraught with doubts. In the king's court, she encounters love but she wouldn't succumb to it. She stays alone and aloof, rejecting love because it makes her soft, happy, forgetful of her bitterness and animosity towards her uncle. She doesn't wish to forget or forgive. Hatred dominates her being, defines her. Its venom slithers into Marni's heart and takes control, transforming the girl into a cold, merciless avenger. Almost...

Of course, her uncle hates her too. He hated her first. He had started this endless circuit of loathing. Between him and Marni, the hatred festers, feeds on itself, grows into a huge and ugly monster, bigger than the dragon, bigger than the kingdom. It almost destroys them both. That part of the book reads like the etymology of hatred, a study so intense it poisons the readers too.

When Marni finds herself in the dragon's world, the emotional intensity drops, and the bitterness dissipates. The narration becomes fluid like magic, but the reader's concern for Marni's well-being doesn't ebb. Would

she abandon her humanity for the easy, sweet allure of magic? Would she let go of being a mortal woman? Would she relinquish her rights to choose?

Every character in this book has his own color, his own personality, but Marni is the focus that binds them all. The author follows her on her voyage of self-discovery to the very end, and her exploration puts everyone through an emotional wringer, the readers as well as the characters.

...you don't stop a story half done. You keep on going, through heartbreak and pain and fear, and times there is a happy ending, and times there isn't. Don't matter. You don't cut a flower half through and then wait and watch as it slowly shrivels to death. And you don't stop a story before you reach the end.

Does Marni find her happy ending? Does she find a place to belong? I'm not sure. But I know that this book will stay with me long after I finished the last page.

4.5 stars

Highly recommended.

L A Lucia says

The stars you see at the top of this review are because this book started off so, so beautifully. The reason there are only two stars is because the book didn't just go south after about the first half - it dropped off the globe altogether. UGH.

Ugh. Really!

So. Three parts of a book: the writing, the characters and the plot.

The writing here is lyrical, practically poetry. It is gorgeous stuff, and beyond. This is a fairytale, and it captures the essence of what we love about fairytales brilliantly. The mystery, and the fear, and the longing for a wildness that lies beyond our ability to categorize and comprehend. Ms. Hahn writes it extraordinarily well.

But you know, even lyrical poetry needs to be about something.

The characters are not very likable. The main character - the dragon's daughter - is not, in the end, much of anything. Her grandfather gives up his kingdom in order to raise her. He also gives up anything resembling female companionship at the same time. (this once, but not future king abandons his people and his throne, and sex too apparently without a blink, and takes up changing dirty diapers as well as cooking and cleaning without any kind of assistance. Just one day the castle, and the next day poopy pants. What?) I am trying to write something about Marni (our heroine) but the thing that I remember most about her is that even though she is 16/17 in the story she seems to have zero interest in boys - she barely sees them, and although there is a handsome young Lord who seems to be genuinely interested in her, the author has him regularly saying the WRONG thing which justifies her rejection - her endless rejection - of his suit.

The plot well, there isn't much of a plot. The author's interest is clearly Marni Finding Out Things. The net result being that she goes over here and then she goes over there. Does that sound like an "on the road" sort of story? It's not. She travels from her hut, to the castle, to the city, to the woods - all within maybe a mile? Two miles? No great distance anyway.

Taken all together, A Creature of Moonlight is a heartbreaking Could Have Been.

Read instead:

Arafel's Saga by C.J. Cherrhy

Any of Robin McKinley's faerie tales

and of course, any/all of the classics from the Brothers Grimm, and Hans Christian Anderson

Susana says

Arc provided by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Children Books through Netgalley

This is a review that I simultaneously want to write and one that, at the same time, fills me with a healthy dose of dread.

The reason is very clear: I loved this book to bits, and if I could, I would make sure everyone with whom I spoke would get a chance to read it.

Truth is, it's because of books like these that I will never stop reading. It pulled at my heart strings with its beautiful language, it captured me with its voice, and amazing scenario.

"So I stopped listening, and I stopped looking. It's been many years now since I followed whenever the voices called from the woods. I no longer talk back to birds with people's faces, or watch as misty creatures dart through the brooks."

My only fear for this story is that, in a market saturated by new releases, it has become increasingly difficult to find gems _like this one _ amongst the more common and usual YA stories that sell so much.

My wish for this story is that it finds its **intended audience**. The right audience who I know will love it madly. Maybe a more mature audience, instead of the expected YA one. People who want to read about magic, while keeping both feet firmly on the ground.

You see, I'm perfectly aware that this book will not be loved by everyone. This is not a story filled with action and heartbreaking romance. Two ingredients that are, today, common marks for a story's success.

This is a story that takes its own time to get where it needs to go. Sometimes it feels as if it meanders a little, and for that I gave it 4 stars (a very strong 4 with sparks of 5 star ratings), only because of that.

This is a story of a sixteen year old girl: Marni; who lives with her grandfather at the edge of the woods. Magical, scary woods. Woods in which girls disappear, woods that are slowly taking the place of all the Land in the Kingdom.

Marni's background is one filled with sorrow and blood, and it seems that her life is once again in peril.

Mostly this is a story about family ties, vengeance, and growing up.

About trying to find your place in life and be content about it.

And, most importantly, Marni's struggle to keep being her own independent self.

Girl power over and over.

Finally!

Definitely recommended, and a book that I will be buying for future re-reads.

Truly amazing, for an author's first work.

Debbie Narh says

A Creature of Moonlight is 2% dialogue, 3% interesting stories about the woods, and 95% boredom which is just Marni talking to herself using beautiful prose and similes. Honestly, let's put aside the fact that many adults read young adult novels and stick to the fact that this book is for young people. Slim, very slim are the chances that teenagers want to read a boring story that's lyrically enchanting than anything else. Teenagers want action! Betrayal! and unfortunately sometimes, romance! We don't want to read something that will almost instantly put us to sleep. If I wanted to sleep I would ask my mom to tell me about school when she was growing up. Somehow, I managed to finish this one but I fell asleep at least ten times along the way.

I can see why some people love the writing style, you really need to be interested in it to actually enjoy it though. However, for others (like myself) the writing is too formal and long. There's an endless line of similes and metaphors and other crap to make the writing pretty pretty but also very boring. I couldn't help but smack myself once I started the second chapter. The writing makes everything so long and pointless and awkward, the story feels far less like a story and more like an essay about some pointless crap no one actually cares about. I also had a problem with the plot itself, it's also pointless and typical. Girl has nothing left, wants happiness, meets her father, blah blah blah, realizes crap and runs, blah blah blah, finds true home. That's the whole story, nothing interesting, I promise. The characters are worse than wet cement, they barely do anything, there's close to no dialogue, and when things are just starting to get good because of an almost-romance, it's taken away and readers are left with boring shit again.

Nonetheless, I did like the stories about the woods. These small stories are well done and will instantly captivate readers which is good but also bad because they are spread out and have tons of boring stuff in between them all.

This book is just bad. I think I knew I was in for something horrible the second I read the second line, but I kept going forward because I was hoping that the writing would get better or at least I would like the main character. I didn't. I barely liked anything about the book and I don't recommend it to anyone. It's tedious, typical, and annoying. I'm tempted to put a hiatus on dragon books for the time being since everyone that I've read has been absolute crap.

Althea Ann says

I finished this book last night, and this morning woke up convinced that I had another book by the author on my Kindle: I'd dreamed that I got a targeted ad asking me to buy it; and I was delighted to find out she had another book.

Of, course, she doesn't, yet. 'A Creature of Moonlight' is Hahn's debut. But that dream does show how much I liked it.

The story is pure fairy tale: a young woman, half-princess, half-fey. She is rumored to be the dragon's daughter, and her mother was slain for endangering the kingdom.

Exiled to a humble cottage at the edge of a village, along with the former king, she has grown up as the 'flower girl,' gardening and selling her wares to curious or sympathetic nobles. But the Woods, and the magic there, always calls to her.

However, as she comes into womanhood, the men of the court begin to show interest in more than just her flowers. Not only is she lovely, but she is also, technically, the heir to the kingdom.

A delicate touch slowly reveals a multi-layered book about decisions, maturity, and the complexity of responsibility.

Highly recommended for all fans of Patricia McKillip, and all timeless fantasy.

Advance copy provided by NetGalley. Thanks to them...

anna says

[there's never a strong sense of urgency, probably because Marni gets lost in everything herself. I felt like I just kept waiting for something truly pivotal to happen - but it never materializes. Instead, Marni slips away and the story changes.

I

Sabrina says

Before reading:

Comparing yourself to Seraphina, aren't you, book?
Those are quite very large breeches you're trying to fill.

DNF @ 32%.

Reading is one of those activities that I can't get enough of (it's right there with eating good food and—ahem—other things, you know). Despite having a family to take care of, jobs to do and well, having to live the “real” life, I'm able to read a decent amount of books in a year. I do it by reading every spare moment I can get. I read on the train, I read while waiting in line at the post office, I read when I have to wait for something/someone (I'm on time while the rest of my world is always late). Sometimes I read while I cook and, the rare times I'm alone during a mealtime, I read even while eating.

I'm saying all this just to make a point: **something's really wrong when I catch myself squishing jellybeans on my smartphone** (or checking my Facebook compulsively or doing other kinds of silly stuff).

It's not that I don't like reading anymore. I still do.

It's not that I particularly like playing games on my iPhone. I still much prefer reading.

So, what gives?

The answer is simple: **I stumbled upon a repellent book.**

Repellent books are those books that are so plain, so uninteresting or just so flat-out boring that, without even realizing it, you start doing other things just to keep away from them.

They can get you in a funk if you don't stop them early enough.

They are sneaky, because it's hard to recognize them for what they are, they lure you in with all the right arguments (dragons! ballsy heroines! intrigues! magic!).

How can you stop them?

Once you've recognized a *repellent book*, you ~~kill it with fire, before it lays eggs~~ ditch it. You just have to DNF it, whatever percentage you've already read, whatever other people are saying about it. Because *repellent books* are bad for you.

A Creature of Moonlight is a *repellent book*.

I had my suspicions when I saw that Kirkus starred it, sprouting one of their incomprehensible adverbs ("cumulatively stunning"—as opposed to what, "partially" stunning?).

I paid no heed to its boisterous claims ("I am the new Seraphina!") and I paid no heed to some good advice ("Skip it, it's boring.").

I had my confirmation when I realized that this book was not making any sense for me, maybe because I wasn't able to distinguish between metaphors and nonsense:

I knit with pine needles I'd picked from the ground and held in my hand as they drew out long and strong. [...] I'm wondering how fast I could knit myself a vengeance.

What the hell is that supposed to mean? What the fuck is a knitted vengeance? Is she knitting a scarf to use as a garrote?

So here I am, writing something overly lengthy just because I prefer writing a "review" about this book rather than actually keep on reading it.

Off with you, *repellent book*.

Jo says

If you are a fan of pulse pounding action on every page, this is probably not the book for you. But if you like strong characters, beautiful prose, and a heart-warming story, I would suggest this book for you. The language is gorgeous and poignant. Marni's voice is so well developed and so achingly beautiful that you want to continue on just to hear her words. I think we need books like this. Books that cause you to stop and enjoy a well turned phrase. Books that evoke a different time, when life was quiet and slow. Hahn's imagery is otherworldly. It is hard to believe that this is a first novel. Each sentence is near perfection. My only complaint was when Marni would use a double negative. I know that it was used to show that Marni did not speak as the lords and ladies did. It was jarring compared to the sophistication of her speech otherwise. Her sentences and insights were too well spoken to be cancelled out by a couple of double negatives.

In an age where we seek out strong heroines, this book adds another strong protagonist. Marni is no one's puppet, and I enjoyed the fact that she needed no man to make her complete. She negotiates relationships on her own terms. My favorite scene was when she (view spoiler). I chuckled heartily, but it demonstrates Marni's strength.

This book meanders, but it meanders from truth to truth. It doesn't simply wind along without purpose or framework. Some will be frustrated by the lack of action. It just simply isn't one of those books. I found it to be beautiful and evocative of many emotions.

Shae McDaniel says

Originally posted at <http://www.shaelit.com/2014/05/review...>

Chances are, if you're anything like me, you're interested in this story for the dragon on the cover. Dragons are awesome. I can't think of anything off the top of my head that would beat a dragon. But dragons are also hard. There have been some awful dragon books in the past, as well as some dragon books that are so great that they make the rest of the genre pale in comparison. (I'm looking at you, Seraphina.) So maybe, despite being inexorably drawn to A Creature of Moonlight, you're also scared to actually start it. Well, let me help you out by telling you that this isn't actually a dragon book, but instead one of the more beautiful fairytales I've ever read that happens to have a dragon in it.

I started to write a paragraph telling you who and what the story is about, but I'm not sure it matters. Technically, the story is about Marni, a girl who lives in exile on the edge of a forest with her grandfather and grows flowers. But it's also about the way the trees all over the kingdom are gobbling up land and the way Marni can coax flowers to grow and see creatures in the woods. It's about the rumors that surround Marni's dead mother and her unnamed father and how her grandfather was crippled and the way the nobles from the palace always walk around their small home into the garden but never through. It's about wishes and choices and free will and deciding where (or who) home is.

Guys, Rebecca Hahn can write. The start of this story is slow, mostly consisting of Marni talking about this or that as if we were both sitting on her front porch as her grandfather rocked in his chair. Not much happens, but I didn't care. Even if I wasn't doing, I was learning, and everything was presented wrapped in this glorious, soft prose and cradled in a gentle, soothing cadence. It felt like a classic fairytale in the truest sense, which is something I haven't experienced since Shannon Hale's Princess Academy.

After the above paragraph, I sat staring at my computer screen in an attempt to decide what to praise next. I

don't know where to start. Marni? Marni is fantastic. She's such a silent, stubborn thing in the beginning, content to ignore the guilty nobles and temperamental king and shy villagers in exchange for a peaceful, reclusive life with her grandfather. She doesn't give out her smiles freely and is very firm on what she wants, but she also has moments of fear and insecurity. As the story progresses and her world expands, Marni remains quietly stubborn with flashes of insecurity and doubt, but she also learns to stand her ground. Being able to mark such concrete growth warms my heart.

The supporting characters? Gramps and Marni's aunt are pitch perfect. I don't want to give away too many details, because I think that might spoil the journey a bit, but they're such refreshingly nonstereotypical characters. Actually, all of the characters defy most of their presumed tropes and stereotypes. No one—from Marni to the king to her father to Lord Ontrei—in a strictly predictable manner. Instead of playing their roles, they act like human beings with all of their inconsistencies and flaws.

The timeless fairytale setting? I loved that this story couldn't be pinned down to one place. We are given very few proper nouns. I can think of only four names given in the whole of the book. We never learn the name of Marni's homeland or its neighboring countries. We don't even learn what Marni looks like. Marni could literally represent any girl from any race, and her homeland could be any land with a decent-sized forest and some mountains, albeit one populated by phoenixes, griffins, and one lonely dragon.

This is a book that defied my expectations. It's a dragon book where the dragon is barely shown but often felt. It's a fairytale with creatures and danger but no epic battles. It's a story of love and sacrifice and tragedy, but also holds a discussion on what happens when one doesn't love enough or the love professed isn't the kind needed. It's gentle, shimmering words threaded with a subtle, dry humor that'll nip at you and make you laugh with surprise. It's a book about power and permission, choices and free will. It's a book like pine needles—soft, quiet, but (as we learn) filled with a special danger that can turn sunlight into vengeance and vengeance into something else entirely. It is a book that neatly ducked all my expectations for its ending and still left me satisfied. It is a creature like no other.

Favorite Non-Spoilery Quotes:

She knew, as I knew, that you don't stop a story half done. You keep on going, through the heartbreak and pain and fear, and times there is a happy ending, and times there isn't. Don't matter. You don't cut a flower half through and then wait and watch as it slowly shrivels to death. And you don't stop a story before you reach the end.

“Tell me I may dream of knowing you better.”

“It's kind of you to say those things.”

“No kindness, lady, when I speak but the truth.”

“Yes. Well. I appreciate it, still. But you haven't the slightest hope, I'm afraid. You'll always know me as much as you do now, and that'll have to be enough for you. Good day.”

“I don't know who you think you are, but I'm the king's niece, and the closest blood he has left, and you'll keep a civil tongue or I will cut it out.”

“As my princess commands,” he says, “I shall now cease to worry about her uncle chopping off her head.”

Points Added For: Pretty much everything.

Points Subtracted For: Pretty much nothing.

Good For Fans Of: Princess Academy by Shannon Hale, fairytale creatures, characters who defy expectations.

Notes For Parents: None, other than a remembered death.

Note: I received a digital review copy of this title from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Pam ?Because Someone Must Be a Thorn? Tee says

A CREATURE OF MOONLIGHT is beautifully written from a wordsmithing point of view. However, I couldn't get into the story. It was the weirdest thing. I loved reading about Marni's experiences in the woods and with her grandfather. Couldn't care less about the whole go-to-the-castle thing. Loved her as a strong woman; meh about the struggles to 'find herself'.

I can totally understand the 5-Star reviews. And I would recommend this book based on the fact that Rebecca Hahn's writing is quite charming --and one ought to get acquainted with her-- but this story just sucked for me. It dragged. It lacked purpose. It dallied with my affections. It failed to deliver.

--review copy
