



The Escape of Princess Madeline

Kirstin Pوليوff

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The Kingdom of Soron is known for many things: its rolling landscape, haunting history, fiery sunsets, and beautiful princess. Princess Madeline woke on her sixteenth birthday to realize that her future had been planned out, a life full of privilege, royalty, and boredom... a life with a husband and knight champion that she did not choose. Using her charm, strength, and stubbornness, she defies the King at every turn, determined to keep her freedom on her terms.

But freedom quickly turns to disaster as she finds herself seized by a group of wandering bandits. The kingdom is in turmoil over her capture—her Knight Champion eager to prove himself, a group of dedicated suitors determined to win her hand, and a group of exiled wizards joining forces in the hunt to rescue her. Follow Princess Madeline in this adventure to find freedom and love.

The Escape of Princess Madeline Details

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Author : Kirstin Pulioff

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From Reader Review The Escape of Princess Madeline for online ebook

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

This middle-grade novella is plagued by a foolish main character, inconsistent characterization, unbelievable twists in the story, and a pretty ridiculous insta-love that is even more unbelievable than in most fairy tales. I understand that this is intended to be a short read, and for a younger audience; even so, there are certain standards and I do not believe this story lives up to them. It is very, very possible to write an engaging fantasy story for middle-grade readers, Gail Carson Levine and Patricia C. Wrede are some of my gold standards, and this story doesn't belong anywhere near their hallowed repertoire.

The premise: Princess Madeline is fed up with her sheltered life as a pampered princess and only daughter of a doting king. Upon hearing that she has to fulfil her responsibilities as a princess and marry, she runs away. She trades clothes with a poor peasant girl, giving her a bag of gold in exchange, putting the poor peasant girl in danger in the process. She gets kidnapped by a nefarious (aren't they always) band of ne'er do wells. Her prince (actually, knight) charming who has fallen madly in love with her since she was barely a teen, valiantly rides off to her rescue, wanders into some kind of magical elf-land, has all sorts of magical visions, and SAVES THE DAY. YAY! All in 100 pages.

I can think of some positive things about this book, the descriptions are well done and the emotions evocative. This book definitely has aspirations of being a fairy tale, in a fairy tale setting, with beautiful surroundings, lovely clothes, knights in shining armor. All the descriptions and place settings are beautifully written.

"Sunsets in Soron were a sight to see. The way the colors melted together—the reds, oranges, yellows—made it look as if the sky were on fire, truly melting the sunlight into darkness, the beauty radiating and reflecting off the clouds in a way that amplified every color to the extreme."

That's where it ends. Now, onto the bad.

Princess Madeline: Readers should sympathize with the main character. I do not. I found Madeline to be overall, a spoiled brat who has no idea what she's getting herself into. Her beauty enchants, but her actions are foolish, her escapades and her escapes are unbelievable, given her privileged background and lack of knowledge of the world outside her sheltered existence. She is one of the king's two surviving children from his late, beloved wife, and as such has been given her way her entire life. When she is forced to marry, she rebels (understandably), but she repeatedly defies her father before this happens, throws tantrums, and was altogether intolerable throughout the book, despite her plight.

"...she said defiantly with a little stomp of her feet."

she whined with another little stomp of her foot, her lower lip pouting out and trembling.

She's freaking sixteen years old. She stomps. She pouts. She whines. She cries. I die of hate.

Her reactions to her eventual kidnapping once outside of the castle are equally doubtful, they're along the line of, oh, this is bad, but hey it could be worse, I could be forced into marrying an old man! Middle-school me would not have found her actions believable or cute at all. Finally, she realizes...**"she didn't have a plan. There were plenty of visions and dreams of adventures and places and experiences, but no real idea on**

how to get them."

Her father: majorly inconsistent character. He is someone who still mourns his beloved wife, and loves his two children deeply, yet he is portrayed here half as a villainous character. Here is a character who **"quietly cried into the night"** He spoils his daughter with gifts, seeks to protect her in all manners, nervous over his sixteenth birthday present for her. "He looked up to see her twirling around the corner and smiled. **"How does it fit?" he asked eagerly, his smile stretching across his face.**" Yet later on in the book he is described as malicious and plotting, with a **"wrath-filled smile"** as he plots to wed her to a man closer to his age than hers. Still later on, he is seen sobbing away into the night while she is on the run.

His character is inconsistent, but others in the book can only be described as one-dimensional. Take her brother, the stereotypical perfect twin brother, as different from her as night and day, **"everyone thought her brother was perfect, perfectly charming, perfectly mannered."** The perfect sibling is a typical fairy tale trope, but it doesn't add anything to the many lacking characteristics in this book.

Daniel: insta-love. Only on his part, apparently. He falls in love with the very young Madeline a few years ago when she hands him a rose as he is sworn into service as a knight's apprentice, and despite zero attention from her, he maintains his love and her memory throughout the years, and will do anything to rescue her. She, in contrast, has barely noticed his existence since, and only then in contrast to the many miserably ugly and old candidates presented to her.

There are no true villains here, there are the stereotypical ugly prince candidates to whom she might be wed, like Prince Alleg, **"his skin was dry and scaly like a lizard, with red sun blisters lined at the top of his scalp,"** and the too-handsome-to-be-true Prince Paulsen, but they're not truly villains even if hints were given that they're not whom they seem. They're never bad, they never plot. The men who kidnap her are more of a foil than true villains, given how incompetent they are. I can't even say things are black and white, because there's no villain there to darken the day. This book is just about the escapades of a stupid, spoiled princess and her equally foolish, blinded love.

Ally Shields says

This is a delightful, fairytale-type story of knights and princesses written for middle grade to young YA. Princess Madeline is a spunky 16-year-old who is tired of everyone else making all her decisions. The last indignity is her father's intention to choose her husband from suitors at a ball. Her decision to defy his edict lands her in immediate trouble--and getting out won't be half as easy as getting in!

Madeline's adventure is a quick read, with content that is age appropriate. I hope the mysterious epilogue foreshadows future adventures to come for Madeline and her kingdom. Recommended read!

Ashley Torbeck says

Reviewed by Ashley T of Fae Books Blog (www.faebooks.co.uk)

At first glance, The Escape of Princess Madeline did not sound like a story I would typically pick up to read. But I'm glad I did.

The story opens with the birth of a princess and the death of a queen. The reader is made to feel the king's

grief and anguish at the loss of his wife, and it sets the scene for the king's behavior throughout the rest of the story. The author does a great job of opening the story and grabbing the reader early on.

The story then moves ahead to what would be present-day, and Princess Madeline is to attend her ball to choose a suitor among the princes of the country. The only problem is, she isn't ready to settle. The author brings you inside the mind of the terrified and immature princess as she finagles a way out from under her father's thumb and out on her own. But freedom comes with a hefty price-one that she wasn't even aware of-and she questions her need for freedom.

Luckily, her Knight Champion has already been selected and is on the hunt to find and return the princess to safety. But devastating news rips through the kingdom, and it's up to her Knight Champion to save her. But Princess Madeline's future may not end up the way she had hoped.

Honestly, this author did a phenomenal job. There were only a couple of suggestions I would make, and they are based on my personal taste and very minor things. One is that the time and place is not really set, though it is implied. I would have liked to see the time period and location be set toward the beginning, but again, that's just my preference, and in no way do I feel it hindered the story. The forest scene was a bit harder to follow, since the voice of the story floats between Madeline and her Knight Champion. Again, I ultimately don't feel it did any damage or took away from the story, it was just a little hiccup.

The book seemed to be written to appeal to a slightly younger crowd in the Young Adult genre, but has enough elements that I think many age groups could easily enjoy this story. It's a quick read, fast paced, and a page turner. It was fun to see the transformation from child to woman in Princess Madeline, and while I don't want to give away any secrets on the ending, I was pleased with how it left the opening for a second book, turning this into a series. Many kudos to the author for a wonderful read. I gotta give it 5 stars. Well done, Kirstin!

Julie Grasso says

Poor Madeline finds herself in an impossible situation. Her 16th birthday approaches and she is expected to marry. Although she is a twin, her brother is not at all expected to marry, which of course creates quite a disparity between the siblings. That kind of double standard would be enough to cause siblings with the best of relationships to falter of that I am certain. Her father prepares a celebration for her betrothal, and many willing suitors attend in anticipation of the young girls decision.

Madeline's world implodes when she makes a rash decision to leave the safety of the castle, her father the king and brother. She is captured not long after, and now the very thing that Madeline is running from, is the only thing that may be able to provide her salvation.

When the king discovers Madeline has fled her responsibilities, he is distraught, and will do anything to get her back, even promise her hand to one of the most creeper suitors in the land Prince Paulsen.

Enter a young knight called Daniel, determined and somewhat smitten with Madeline. Each will stop at nothing to find her.

Meanwhile, Madeline isn't helpless, she formulates a plan of escape, which isn't very successful but it was a very good attempt.

When Prince Paulsen's men catch up with the bandits that have captured Madeline, the young girl is bound and gagged, but she manages to secret away, amidst the fight. Finding, only her gown, Prince Paulsen returns to the king with the dreaded news that Madeline is lost to him forever.

Daniel, however, will not give up. He searches and finds her, and brings her home, but not without a club on the head in the process. Madeline, realises, what Daniel has done for her, and would do for her, and her heart begins to open like a rose of first love.

Madeline returns to the King and is welcomed with open arms. She chooses Daniel as her intended, and thus ends the tale and begins the further adventures of Princess Madeline.

I enjoyed this very sweet tale, which felt a mix of a coming of age, parable of the lost sheep and the prodigal son/daughter.

Madeline's character development was lovely and reminded me also of another book that I loved when I was a teen, "Chatain's Guardian (Annals of Lystra) by Robin Hardy.

I do feel that this is perhaps an early Young Adult read as I don't feel many 9-12 year olds would be yet interested in the very appropriate love story, but ages 13-16 would find this completely endearing.

My bottom line, I give it 4 stars and am looking forward to the further two books.

Georgette says

I think the thing I'm most confused about is the target audience versus the actual protagonist age and theme in this book. Isn't Middle Grade supposed to be the pre-teen era where pimples, cracking voices and training bras are suppose to be the main problems?

On her 16th birthday, Princess Madeline is rudely surprised when her father informs her that she will pick a husband from a selection of royal suitors coming to her ball that night, not unlike how Cinderella's Prince Charming held a ball to meet all the eligible young ladies in the kingdom. This immediately tells you why she had to be 16; another day closer to Middle Grade and this book won't have seen the light of day.

Like all fairy tale princesses, Madeline is headstrong and wants to make her own decisions but the King was not hearing any of it because she is clearly a pawn piece to be married off for better kingdom perks. So she runs away, a plan she cobbled together in maybe an hour, and made up the rest of it as she went along. She gets kidnapped by bandits, who menaces her as menacingly as possible with readers whose average ages are just rolling over into the double digits. Which is to say they barely did anything except save her from the trouble of where to run next.

Meanwhile, her love interest is a young knight who fell in love with her at first sight. She wasn't aware he existed until he won the role as her champion. (view spoiler). Sigh.

I think this novella is fine if you're young and don't have very sophisticated expectations in story plots or character development. Here's a spunky princess with a problem. Here is a princess getting into deeper trouble outside her safe zone. Here comes her knight in shining armour.

I like the spunk and wanting to break out of roles assigned to you by the patriarchy. It's just that we don't really get to know the characters enough to sympathise or relate. Perhaps the constraints of the MG category is to blame here, because the writing was actually quite pleasant to read.

This reading copy was courtesy of NetGalley.

Serenity says

This is a cute, good, and quick story. Madeline is a princess who just turned 16. She had just been given this amazing dress that fits her so perfectly. She steps out of the room to show the King just how she looks. He tells her she will look wonderful for the ball, which happens to be set up as her ball. In which there will be men that will be her husband. Madeline isn't thrilled at this news, she doesn't want to do it, but she must as Princess it is her duty. Then it hits her, Sophie her best friend would know what to do. Madeline goes to find Sophie and she just tells her it's her duty and doesn't really help her much. So when it came time for the party Madeline was in a different dress and wasn't so into the whole pick a husband thing which made the King angry. All night he kept bringing men to her and each time she just tried to get away, which she finally does and runs to her room to escape the party. The King says she is ill and he has the men stay the night so that the next day the games can begin. These games is where she will crown a knight to protect her when she moves out of the kingdom. Madeline however does not like anything that is happening around her. She doesn't know any of the men, nor does she love them. So she goes and leaves the kingdom. I don't blame her, the King is just trying to marry her off to someone HE deems suitable, not a person Madeline would want. Not to mention that her twin brother is just doing his own thing in the story. He is the same age and yet he isn't being married off or forced to do anything. So now that Madeline is away from the kingdom she is off on her own journey. In the story we get to meet Daniel, who is pretty sweet and cute in this story. When he showed up I wanted him to be with Madeline, he just seems right for her. This book is just filled with cute romance and it is the type of book that you read to yourself or with your child. Its a really cute, fun, adventure that is fit forever and maybe getting you to dream of your prince. Also the details is really great for such a short read, but its the detail that helps bring out the fairy tale to life.

Dianne says

I guess I just need that innocent fantasy fairy tale every once in a while, the one where the world you are entering is full of princesses and their kingdoms, a little conflict, but nothing over the top!

The Escape of Princess Madeline by Kirstin Pulioff is the perfect read to share with younger readers where their imaginations can run wild and the heroine is strong and resourceful! Imagine waking up one morning and learning your life has been planned out for you, for the good of the Kingdom. That's exactly what happened to Princess Madeline, and in her heart, she knew that being married off to someone she did not love was wrong! Determine to remain free to choose with her heart, Madeline manages to get into some hair raising trouble that would cause vapors in a princess with less spine. Will anyone be able to save her? Perhaps the wizards? Maybe her very own Prince will come along and earn her love! Ahhh, the beauty of fairy tales!

This is the perfect book to share with children, while encouraging them to learn to love the joy of books in a world of make believe!

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Genre: Children's Middle Grade Fantasy

My Rating: 5 stars

Available at: Amazon

For more reviews check out Tome Tender's Book Blog or find us on Facebook.

John Dolan says

This is a good old-fashioned fairy tale, rooted in its characters and driven by personalities – as were all the best yarns of Hans Christian Andersen and the Brothers Grimm. For sure there is a sprinkling of magic (and dragons are mentioned) but this is a very human story about love and relationships, hopes and dreams.

It is also a ‘rites of passage’ narrative as its headstrong heroine learns a lesson or two about life and responsibility.

Ms Pulioff creates a believable medieval land populated by fawning courtiers, power-hungry royals, chivalrous knights, enigmatic magicians and brutish villains. At the heart of the story sits a father-daughter power struggle as a king seeks to impose his ruler’s will on his rebellious teenage daughter. In this respect it is a tale that parents and children alike will relate to.

Lots of children (although I have to be careful how I deploy that term these days!) are going to enjoy reading this, and I suspect many adults will also relish it. This is a charming book, and one that thoroughly deserves its popular status.

Take a bow, Kirstin Pulioff. Or maybe a curtsy!

Ashley Byland says

This book has been by the the best written book that I have ever read. This way this author uses language to describe exactly what is going on is amazing. I find myself at a loss for words, the writing is so eloquent, I was instantly drawn into this book. I was disappointed that this story wasn't longer, but that didn't at all take away from the story.

The main character Madeline, is very relatable, aside from the fact that she is a Princess and being forced into situations she doesn't want to be in because of the fact that she is a Princess. She has the same dreams that most 16 yr old girls have. Has an adventurous spirit which is being reeled in by her 'do as your told' father. Her father isn't a bad man, but he doesn't see that his little girl doesn't want the same life that he has.

What happens to Madeline while she is out of the kingdom actually surprised me. I did not see that coming, but it made for an intense and exciting read. I won't say too much more, as I don't want to spoil it for anyone. I would have loved to have a lot more of the story here, so much more that could happen :)

Once we met Daniel, I knew that he was the perfect guy for Madeline and I was pulling for him to win her over, I just wasn't sure how that was going to happen. This is another place where I think there could have been more story, or maybe I just want more!! But he was a character I liked from the first time we were introduced to him.

The Escape of Princess Madeline is a very fast and fun read. If you are looking for an escape for a little while, this is the perfect book for you. You will fall in love with Kirstin's writing and will be eager for more, I know I am!!

Krystal says

“NO! NO! NO! That can't be the end! I want MORE!” my heart screams as I read the last page of The Escape of Princess Madeline by Kirsten Pulioff. This was a heart-warming and charming story about growing up, making choices, dealing with the consequences of those choices, and love.

The tale opens on the King of Soron having a nightmare on the night before his children's birthday. The reader finds out within the first paragraph that this isn't just a nightmare but a memory as well. The Queen has just died after giving birth to twins. The wizards in the Kingdom have done what they could to try and save her, but it wasn't enough. The wizard Elias uncomfortable with the ensuing silence tells the King that the Queen's death was a necessary sacrifice to save the Kingdom. This statement enrages the King, and causes him to exile the wizards. The King wakes from the dreams and says softly to the memory of his beloved Queen that though it has been sixteen years he and the children still grieve for her.

In the first chapter, the reader meets Princess Madeline. The reader also learns that since Madeline is sixteen years old, she is to begin fulfilling her duties as Princess. That night there will be a ball, not only to celebrate the twins' sixteenth birthday, but for Madeline to choose the man she will marry. She is not at all pleased with this news, and she seeks a way to get out of the whole ordeal. She ends up having to attend the ball, but after meeting three of her potential suitors she feints illness. After literally dashing off to her room and bed, she is awakened the next morning by Sophia her childhood friend. Still tired and groggy, Madeline is hurriedly dressed by Sophia. As Sophia is brushing out Madeline's hair, Madeline learns that her suitors are still there, and a tournament is being held to determine which knight will be her Champion. Madeline is upset by this but must go along with it.

At the tournament, Madeline becomes caught up in the competition and fun. One knight has already won fencing and archery, and if he wins the joust he will be her Champion. He wins. As the weight of reality hits her, Madeline sneaks out of the tournament and runs back to the castle. She isn't ready to have her life decided for her. She wants freedom, choices, and adventure. In just a few moments, she makes the decision to run away, and begins to gather things she might need. While she is packing, her twin Bradon knocks on her door. She hastily stuffs her bag under her blankets before letting him in. Bradon comes in and begins lecturing her as she sits upon her bed. She isn't listening but Bradon can tell she is upset. Thinking he has made an impact with his lecture, Bradon sits beside Madeline on the bed to try and comfort her. He ends up discovering the bag and Madeline proceeds to tell him that she is leaving. Bradon tells her no to go anywhere as he leaves her room. She ignores him and makes her escape.

Madeline slips out of the castle unseen, and once outside she must decide where to go. North and South have the possibility of dragons. East is the land of the Exiles, so she decides to go West towards the forest. But before he reaches the forest she must pass through the village. She luckily isn't seen until she trips over something in the wheat field. It turns out to be a girl. After lying to the girl, she manages to convince the girl to trade clothes with her.

Once dressed in her disguise, Madeline runs off into the forest where she ends up getting knocked out and kidnapped by bandits. Then it becomes a race for her Knight Champion and the other Knights to save her.

I absolutely loved this story. It was a little short for my tastes but I also know that I wasn't the intended

audience. Personally I would have preferred more description and knowing more of each characters thoughts, but I think that stems from the fact that I love novels around three to four hundred pages in length. For a middle grade novel the character development and the development of the setting were excellent. I thought the plot was well developed, and the story was told in such a way that I was taken captive and not released until the very end. Had this book already been written and published when I was between the ages of nine and eleven, I can guarantee it would have been among my favorites. Actually even though I'm an adult, this book ranks pretty high up there among my most liked books.

The Escape of Princess Madeline is wonderfully written, age appropriate, and charming. I guarantee when my daughter gets older I will be placing this book in her hands to read. Until then, I will eagerly be looking for more novels by Kirsten Puliuff and desperately hoping she continues Madeline's story.

Travis Luedke says

A wonderful contemporary tale set in a fantasy realm.

I was immediately engaged, entertained, and found it easy to keep reading straight through, from start to finish. Kirstin Puliuff authored a highly relevant story of a young woman's life with a single parent. Though its setting is medieval or high-fantasy, the story delves into the dynamics of a single parent upbringing, from a teenager's point of view. A very contemporary read with lessons and a message to young teens trying to find their way in today's world.

Princess Madeline faces some harsh truths about growing up. She's rebellious against her father's authority and direction of her life. She makes a foolish, brave escape, hoping for freedom from her father's control. Instead, she has turned the entire kingdom on its head, and risked her own life in the process.

This is a story of decisions, consequences, and responsibilities. Madeline and her father, the King, both learn that what matters most in all the world is keeping our loved ones close.

Highly recommended. And I am on to the next installment, The Battle for Princess Madeline!

**I recieved a copy of this novella for purposes of an honest review.

Simon Okill says

The Escape of Princess Madeline by Kirstin Puliuff has done the impossible by reminding me of my childhood with tales of Robin Hood, King Arthur and Ivanhoe. I was immediately enchanted by this sweet tale of a spoilt princess who has been forced to grow up fast by her domineering father, King Theodore. For on her sixteenth birthday Princess Madeline must choose her husband from a particularly unsavoury selection. First she refuses a dress offered by her father then she selects her husband - the young knight who wins the jousting tournament knowing her father would strongly object.

And so Madeline has little choice in her well-ordered world - she runs away only to be taken captive by a rough band of forest bandits. While the king's knights search for her, Madeline endures terrible hardships and pain. Her champion knight goes in search of the woman he loves and will not rest until he has rescued her. Will Madeline's champion come to her rescue, can she escape her captors, will she find true love of her

choice? Kirstin has pulled off a master stroke of YA fantasy seamlessly blending fairy tales of old with more contemporary problems of single parenthood, the uncertainty of a teenager's future, young love and courage in the face of overwhelming odds. This book is a FIVE STAR WONDERMENT that suits all ages. Go read it NOW!

Kitty Muse Book Reviews says

Born into royalty, Princess Madeline is pampered and loved by her dad, King Theodore; all the more so because she and her twin brother, Braden, survived their birth while their mother did not. Madeline grows up with all the pomp and splendor of her position, plus the education needed for her to take her role as queen some day.

Unfortunately for Madeline, that “someday” is upon her without her notice or her approval. On her sixteenth birthday, she is informed by her father that she must choose a husband from the invitees to her birthday ball and the next day's tournament. As stubborn as her dad, and as adventurous as her brother, she rebels against what she considers restraints on her freedom. Braden and his sweetheart, Sophia—who is also Madeline's best friend—try to get her to see that this betrothal to a complete stranger is a really good thing, but she will have none of it.

With no other recourse, she slips away from the festivities, trades clothes with a peasant girl in the village, and heads out on her own. And it isn't too much longer before she is captured by bandits. Resourceful and daring, she escapes from them, only to be recaptured.

Meanwhile, back at the castle, Daniel (Madeline's newly-dubbed knight) is as alarmed as everyone else at the news of Madeline's disappearance. For years, he has adored her from afar, and he joins in the hunt immediately. His journey takes him to the mysterious land of the eastern kingdom, where he encounters wizards. These are the same ones who have been banished from the castle for what Theodore believes were lies surrounding his queen's health, and thus her demise. They tell him of a way to find her, but it takes a long time to accomplish this quest. And when he does finally ride back to the castle, bad news greets him: Madeline's bloodstained gown has been found.

Daniel mourns his loss and berates himself for not being fast enough to find his princess, until he realizes that something about the discovery is amiss. Out of the gates he pounds again, and this time he is able to find clues that no one else has discovered.

Reunited with her knight and happy to be home again, Madeline finally has made her point to her father. This time she gets her way—just like the daughter of a doting father should.

I absolutely love headstrong, resourceful young protagonists who stand up for what they believe. In that regard, Madeline is a lot like the girl in the movie “Brave”. I cheered when she made her decision to strike out on her own, but I was also very happy when Daniel was able to fetch her home. Everyone learns a lesson about rights and responsibilities in this tale, a book suitable for anyone who loves a happy ending.

The emotions of all the characters were very real, and Ms. Pulioff did a splendid job of weaving their relationships together. Small gestures as well as great were all written in a touching way that really showed that the characters cared for each other. I would definitely recommend this book for readers from 12 to adulthood. It was a great read.

Shannon McRoberts says

This was a cute quick read and it is suitable reading for younger audiences IMO with little to no violence. It leaves you wondering though about those people in the green robes. What kind of future do they have in store for the princess? I would be interested in reading more if this is a series!

Melanie says

4.5 stars: A great start to a fun new series!! The day Madeline and her twin brother, Braden, were born, their mother, Queen Eleanor, died. Sixteen years later, their father, King Theodore, is still grieving her loss. Preparations are under way for her 16th birthday party which her father has informed her is her betrothal ball and the first event for finding her husband. Madeline is not looking to get married and isn't happy that her father is looking to marry her off. She defies him throughout the ball and the tournament where she is awarded her own personal knight champion. I enjoyed reading the power struggle between Madeline and King Theodore. They are both clever and just when you thought one of them outwitted the other, the other one did something to show they weren't done yet. It was entertaining!

She doesn't like the pressure she's feeling and wants to be free, so she runs away. She gets taken by bandits and hates that feeling even more. Everyone sets out to find her and they all have a different agenda so the race is on. Prince Paulsen offers his men to assist and wants to be handsomely rewarded if they find her. Her knight champion, Daniel, just wants to bring her home safely. He comes across a mysterious group of people, and we're introduced to the fantasy element in this story. Who exactly are they?

This book is short so I feel like it's more of an intro and am looking forward to reading more. Madeline is looking for freedom and the ability to make her own choices. It gets her into some trouble but she learns her lesson and shows some growth toward the end. We'll have to see if those lessons stick with her throughout the series. I love Daniel! There wasn't a lot of interaction between them but I loved the times they were together and look forward to more. King Theodore is a smart king and he shows his softer side when Madeline is missing.

There are some great characters and I enjoyed them all. And the ending hints at secrets to be revealed and more to this story than I originally thought! I highly recommend this to anyone that enjoys reading about princesses, knights, and the life of royalty with some fantasy added into the mix!

Mel's Shelves
