



The Princetta

Anne-Laure Bondoux

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Princess Malva--the Princetta of Galnicia--flees her kingdom and an arranged marriage, only to find herself betrayed by the very man who promised to help her. Orpheus is the son of a sea-captain-turned-pirate and is determined to make a name of his own commanding a ship in Galnicia's royal armada. But when their paths cross on the high seas, so do their destinies. Together the Princetta and Orpheus will travel to edges of the Known World and beyond . . . a journey from which only one of them will return alive. Shipwrecks, shark attacks, barbarians, and mysterious archipelagos await readers in this lavish fantasy-adventure written by one of France's most celebrated authors.

The Princetta Details

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Author : Anne-Laure Bondoux

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From Reader Review The Princetta for online ebook

Sarah says

ZERO STARS. One of the worst books I have ever read (bottom 10 for sure, probably even makes bottom 3). Poorly written and paced, cliché and pointless. To call the characters 2-dimensional would be one dimension too generous. I had no hopes at all for the book after the first 10 chapters or so, but continued reading out of a morbid sense of curiosity (and maybe a pinch of masochism). Even with such low expectations I managed to be shocked by the incredible stupidity of the ending. I am not being flippant or sarcastic when I say I would rather have food poisoning than read this book. I'm serious. DO NOT waste your time. If you must, at the very least check it out from the library instead of wasting the \$9 on this drivel. Rubbish.

Susy Goldstone says

JUST FOREWARNING THAT THIS REVIEW WILL CONTAIN SPOILERS SO IF YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS DON'T READ THIS POST.

I chose this book because I wanted to read something that neither I, nor my friends, had ever heard of; I wanted to be surprised. And, pleasantly, I was.

The plot is simple. Set in a sort of middle-aged fictional world, the Princess of a country called Galnicia decides to escape as a stowaway on a ship on the night before her arranged wedding. This main character is called Malva. However, we have a second character by the name of Orpheus, who is a member of the crew sent to bring her home. The chapters alternate between their viewpoints until they meet and the chapters merge – a technique which I have always liked. This adventure book bears similarities to Pirates of the Caribbean films and is a good read for anyone who likes that sort of thing.

Yet, there were several things that annoyed me, and this is where the spoilers come in. You have been warned:

Orpheus: Don't get me wrong, I like Orpheus. It's just his death that I disagreed with. Yup, you heard me, he dies. Normally, I am the first to kill of main characters, but only if it contributes to the plot which, in this case, I don't think it did. I honestly don't see why he had to die, and I disagree with it.

Ending: As with many books, this one ends with the revelation that Malva, all along, has been writing this book as a document of her travels, gathering information from Orpheus's old housemaid in order to write chapters from his viewpoint. How convenient. Personally, I don't like it when books end like this. It's almost as bad as when books end with "it was all a dream". Almost. But not quite. I just feel like shouting at Malva, "No, you didn't write it, the author wrote it." Plus, the book is in third person, so why would Malva write about herself like that?

Positives, yay positives!

Imagination: The imagination behind this novel was outstanding. The countless names of far away lands and seas and worlds is just mesmerising. Well done, Bondoux, well done. Not much more I can say on this topic. Moving on.

Character depth: It is key to a large chunk of the story that each of the characters in that section has an intricate back-story and history, which the author provides brilliantly. These are characters which I can relate to and understand their actions.

CAN I JUST RANT ABOUT SOMETHING, THOUGH.

The cover. I mean. Come on.

I know this is only one of several covers, but time and time again I see these covers which have the face of a girl on them looking dramatic/mysterious/sad/whatevertheystillannoyme. It's just a wasted opportunity to create a really beautiful cover, particularly for this book where there is so much to choose from, where the imagery is so great that a cover could easily be accurately drawn up. Bad move on the publisher's part.

So yeah. If you see it on a bookshelf, I recommend you read it. Good book right there.

Artemis says

I really don't know where to start with this book... So I shall start with: I love it so much, but it also broke my heart.

The story started with the heroic, independant and rebellious heroine, Princess Malva of Galicia. She didn't catch my attention, for it seems like that every YA novel comes with the author's most ideal strong heroine. However, as the story continue on, I find that there is something that seperates her from others... An air of... Difference, I suppose.

As for the hero, Orpheus, he is even better. He is unique and exciting, not the same as the dark, dangerous bad-boy that is quite the trademark of YA novels, but a nice gentleman. And haunted by the memories of his childhood and the lie told by his father.

Their seperate journey through the Known World was fun and exciting, but what really makes this adventure special and fun is during their time in the south of the Known World, a whole new world, basically where weird things seem to happen as if they are ordinary.

((more later!))

Sarah Schanze says

This was just brutal, and I almost gave up. All the characters felt flat and lifeless and I didn't care a great deal about any of them, let alone what happened to them. The ending was a gutsy surprise, but not something that seemed to fit with the story. It seemed to happen just because it could happen, not because it should have. What was kind of annoying was how long it took to get to the more interesting parts of the book, which are the islands. The cover has an image of a ship for crying out loud, but you have to read half the book to get that far. Everything before seemed superfluous. If the whole book had focused on the islands, just getting there and trying to get out, maybe with deeper dangers, it could have been a cool book. Or at least better and less disjointed than this feels.

Mara says

But of coarse i LIKED this book!

I read it years and years ago, and perhaps it was the heart-ache, but i've never forgotten it since!

However...

The ending wasn't the best one Anne-Laure could have done, why not have a happy ending to a hard, sad, life? I fell in love with all of the charectors and to see so many of them die was soo sad... But then to kill off the Captain? Now that was abit over the line. I was soo hoping for some happiness, because well the book had absolutley none. It was one of those, 'there dead but i'll suvive' books! If i had to judge it on the ending i would say zero stars... But the book as a whole, the adventure as a whole makes up for it.

SO even though i shed about a thousand tears for this book i still LIKE it.

4 stars- despite the ending.

Roxane V says

The ending broke my heart. Just when you think it's all over and everything is going to be alright. This was a book worth reading. It was recommended to me by a friend when I was 11 but even now eight years later I continue to love it.

Hannah says

This book is really captivating. I really dislike the fact that Orpheus dies at the end. I believe that Princess Malva and Captain Orpheus should have ended up together and both alive instead of only Malva alive and wishing Orpheus was alive. Overall, the book was very good and i enjoyed the story very much.

Emma Maguire says

THIS BOOK IS SO FAB.

And sad.

But mostly fab.

Camille says

I knock off two stars for the ending.

I absolutely loved this book, it had a great plot, and I was curious to see how it would end. I was like, "Alright, how are they going to keep everyone happy without the Princetta returning home? Hmmm interesting" I really liked this book... until the last four or five chapters. She really could have made this book very good! But she just made the worst ending in the world! I was so upset by it. Oh! Oh well, it was good but I really do knock off two stars, could have been a four star book.

Cid Tyer says

When I first started this book, I had no idea it was a translated novel. I was flipping through it and eating my lunch and saw a bit in the back about the translator. As a translated book, I had no idea. It reads smooth and there wasn't anything that did not appear to me as out of place. I say, props to the translator and publisher for that!

The Setting — is adventure. From humble Galnicia, to the shipwrecks on the high sea, to the harems and the Arpeggio, *The Princetta* has a vivid, exciting setting. There are times when you feel the sea breeze as you're reading or smell the aroma of the cooks fire or even capture in your mind's eye the beautiful scenery of Bou-Bou.

The Characters — I think fit the targeted age. I've seen some reviews that harp on stereotypes, but I think that as an adult reading a young adult book, I have to take a step back and realize that at some point stereotypes are new and interesting. *The Princetta*, Malva, is adventurous and intelligent and running from something. Her actions start the snowball affect that touches many lives around her. There is a hero, who is shy and unassuming and must grow into his role. There is the best friend, who changes character once because the original co-conspirator and Malva get split up. Both of the friends I thought had lovely story arcs in themselves; they showed Malva things and how to be better friends and think beyond herself. I liked how the characters had little subplots between themselves. And then there was the antagonist, who I will not refer to in here by his name because it is a bit of a twist. I thought this was the weakest character; it followed a rut and while useful in story telling I wished this character would have been a bit more imaginative.

The Plot — was a delightful, adventurous romp across the Known World, experiencing brushes with danger, intrigue and the unbelievable made believable. I went through much of the book thinking it would be something lovely to sit down and read with a young girl, reading a few chapters at a time. The plot isn't the kind of whirlwind adventure that will make you turn pages for hours; in fact I think it hasn't taken me this long to finish a book since.... well, I can't remember. I sort of got lost during the trials in the arpeggio and who was facing what, but I was at least interested. The part I found hardest to believe was the ending. Not when they returned to their homeland, but how the book ended. After the ending, I will not suggest this book.

I'm going to spoil the ending now. If you don't want to know, do not continue reading.

Still want to know? The hero, the shy, unassuming hero who falls in love with Malva and who teaches her all about life and loves him in return – dies. It was such a touching, subtle arch – okay, you knew it was coming – that I was all set up to read the end as a: and they lived happily ever after. But no! I feel as if the author wanted to do something a little different, bring in a bit about sacrifice or realism into the story, but for the tone of the book up until now, it ruined it for me. I wouldn't read this to a daughter or suggest it to anyone because it takes that fuzzy warm feeling the book fostered – and burns it. I read over the ending of the book and flipped pages through the buy-me-next's looking for the real ending because I just couldn't believe that was the ending. I was upset, because I was ready to suggest this to mothers to read to their daughters, and now I have to say: Don't read it.

Kerry (The Roaming Librarian) O'Donnell says

Liked the book, hated the ending. Blah blah, she grows up and learns her lesson for running away,

meanwhile the guy who was the main focus of half the story dies! His entire life was pointless, which sucks because I liked him better than the princess, who was the main character of the story. Other than that it was an okay story. A bit strange but it managed to hold my attention. Most of the characters were fun to watch (so to speak) and the plot certainly had its twists, but I don't know how much the audience will enjoy its ending. I didn't. It was certainly a much better premise than an actual story. I feel like I can sum up my review by saying, good idea, but the follow through needs a bit of work.

Tammy says

After having read this book, I looked at other reviews and was surprised to see what a difference of opinion existed over it. Five stars down to one: it has achieved them all. Most readers hate the ending, and deservedly so...it is terrible. There are those who are able to get caught up in the adventure and romance, but for me it was just good enough keep reading...and not good enough to rise above two stars.

Sierra Abrams says

Malva is a beautiful, strong-willed young lady, the princetta of her father's kingdom, Galnicia. But there is one problem: Malva is being married off to the Prince of Andemark, a man she hardly knows and doesn't love. With the help of the Archont, her tutor, and Philomena, her chambermaid, Malva manages to escape her country – but only to fall into adventures she would have never dreamed of.

A couple things about this book caught my eye. One, the name...a twist on the title "princess". And two, the art. It swirls and twists and the colors are bright and they contrast beautifully together.

This truly was an adventure. The characters grow in such a way that makes them real and easy to understand. I could relate to most of them in different ways. They all had their own special gift or personality to give to the story to make it less and less like a book and more and more like a work of art.

If you are looking for a book that has a perfectly happy ending, don't pick this one up. I am a big fan of books that end with sacrifice and sometimes even tragedy, because it gives the book a deeper sense of reality. Now, I don't have anything against happy endings...in fact, I'm a hopeless romantic who just LOVES a happy ending, especially if it is involved in a love story. However, when an author goes against what everyone else is doing and creates a sense of mortality in the characters, while still giving them enough class to stay loved and adored for a long time, I cannot help but stand and applaud. This is exactly what Anne-Laure Bondoux has done, leaving me a happy reader.

www.yearningtoread.wordpress.com

Anastasia says

Originally posted on January 24, 2009 at Here There Be Books.

As soon as I read the prologue, I knew I'd like this book. Strong-willed female lead? Check! A world slightly different to our own, slightly different but still recognizable? Check! Adventure on the horizon? Double check!

I liked Malva, even though she tends to be obstinate and stubborn. I liked most of the characters, in fact, even poor spineless Orpheus. The writing style was perfect: it's formal enough to bring that air of old-fashioned fairy tale wafting in, but friendly and gentle enough to be engaging. The story itself reminds me of a Greek myth. Something like *The Odyssey*, maybe-- and of course there's the little thing of Orpheus' *name*. And though the plot is a little predicable, I certainly *did not* expect the ending. It was sad, because of a certainly spoiler-y thing which I don't want to mention, but I think it fit in with Malva's characterization. I didn't expect to be okay with it, but I am.

The only real problem I had with *The Princetta* was that there were these massive time skips several times throughout the story, and I was never entirely sure how far away I was from the beginning of the story. Made me feel a little lost, and even a little confused.

There are some things in the book that I feel I should mention, because they're possibly objectionable for younger teens/kids/their parents: suicide, torture, a harem full of kidnapped girls, assassination attempts, fighting (including stabbing and beheading), and death. None of them are explicitly described, and I'm sure that younger kids probably wouldn't even think that much of them, or even really understand them, but nevertheless I'd recommend the book for maybe...14 and up?

I really did have a fun time reading this. It's a terrific adventure, with plenty of action and romance and creepy creatures and character growth. And, as it was originally written in French, the translation was fantastic. (I didn't even notice it was a translation until I read the about-the-author bit.)

Read: January 2009

Douglaseng04 says

Hillary Chappus-McCendie Advisory: 205

1. Did you enjoy the book? Why? Why not?

Yes, I really enjoyed the book because it took place a really long time ago. It took place in the time of princesses and princes and I love reading books that take place in those times because it gives me a sense of what life might have been like back then. I love how girls wore gigantic fancy dresses all of the time, how there was a lot of royalty and how everything was just so different. I also love how there was fantasy in the book, for example, there was a place called the Archipelago, which was a faraway place that had moving islands, talking rock monsters and invisible people. I just love books that have events which could never happen in real life because it's really interesting and amazing to see what out-of-this-world kinds of things the author can come up with.

2. Were the characters realistic? Would you want to meet any of the characters? Did you like them? Hate them?

In a way, the characters are both realistic and non-realistic, for example, Malva was a princess locked up in her kingdom of Galnicia who wanted nothing more than to escape and explore the rest of the world and to have an adventure. I'm sure most people can't relate to that, since most people aren't royalty and they don't live in a castle. On the other hand, I think a lot of people can relate to her desire to get away and to have some sort of adventure faraway that they'd remember for the rest of their lives.

Orpheus, on the other hand, was a boy with a father who was a famous sailor, causing Orpheus to get many privileges in the sense that he got everything handed to him, meaning he didn't have to work for anything.

Orpheus wanted nothing more than to accomplish something in his life that would give him his own name so he wouldn't have to live in his father's shadow. Most people wouldn't be able to relate to the fact that he has a famous father since that's not something everyone has. On the other hand, I think a lot of people can relate to his situation, being judged based on their family's name and their reputation and not on whom they are as an individual.

I would definitely like to meet Malva and Orpheus because I really liked both of them since they seemed like really nice people who would do anything for those whom they loved, even if it meant putting their lives in danger. For example, when Orpheus rescued Malva from Temir-Gai's prison, it was very dangerous in the sense that Orpheus could have lost his life if he was caught, but he attempted to save her anyways. This was because she was his friend and he didn't want her to lose her life.

3. What about the plot? Did it pull you in; or did you feel you had to force yourself to read the book?

The plot was amazing because the whole story was packed with a bunch of unexpected twists and turns. For example, when Malva, Orpheus, and the rest of the crew of the Fabula (the ship on which they were supposed to ride home), ended up in the Archipelago. There they were presented with either the choice to live there forever or to go on a crazy and nearly impossible quest where each member of the ship must first face their deepest and darkest fear and then proceed to find the exit in a limited amount of days. On top of that, if they failed at the latter choice, they would be doomed to the Immuration, a place of suffer and torture for the rest of their lives. The crew had already gone through so much: finding Malva, helping Malva escape from Temir-Gai's prison and fighting off the Archont (an evil man out to get rid of Malva and to take over her country), to name a few. The fact that they would have to face another huge challenge was just unthinkable because they had already gone through so much. It got to the point where I wondered how the author kept coming up with these crazy ideas to keep the book going. The only reason I say that is due to the fact that so much happened during the whole story. What was amazing is that I couldn't put the book down. It was just so interesting! Everything was just so unexpected that I just had to know what happens next.

4. Did the book end the way you expected?

I am a firm believer in happy endings. Unfortunately, this ending was anything but happy. After Malva and Orpheus discovered they loved each other, the Archont came again and tried to kill Malva. While Orpheus was trying to save Malva, he got stabbed, and died. This was devastating, because I expected that it would be a happy ending, where Malva and Orpheus defeat the Archont and proceed to bringing the kingdom of Galnicia back after its great depression. Instead, Orpheus died, leaving Malva all alone. What was nice was that the death of Orpheus didn't stop Malva from saving Galnicia. After a while, with Malva's help, Galnicia was on its way to getting back to normal. As a way to commemorate Orpheus and the others who died on their journey, Malva wrote the story of her journey with Orpheus and the rest of the crew of the Fabula. The ending was sad because Orpheus died but the ending was also kind of happy in the sense that there were many possibilities for the future that lied ahead.

5. Would you recommend this book to other readers? To your close friends?

Yes, I would definitely recommend this to other readers and to my close friends because it is extremely interesting, suspenseful, and unexpected. Sometimes it gets dark and sad, but I think it's definitely worth reading because it is a great story of adventure, friendship, magic and love, and I can't think of anyone who wouldn't like adventure and magic. Something that's amazing about this story is that you feel the emotion of what's going on in the story. For example, when Orpheus died it almost brought tears to my eyes because it was so sad. That has never happened to me while reading a book before and I think it's truly amazing when a person can actually feel the same emotion of the situation in the story.

6. What was your favourite part/scene of the book?

My favourite part of the book was when Philomena, Malva's former chamber-maid, and her husband Uzmir returned to Galnicia to visit after Malva after Orpheus's death. The way I describe it makes it sound like it's one of the more sad times of the story, but it really isn't because Malva meets Hainur, Philomena and Uzmir's son. It was such an amazing part of the book because it had some complex feeling to it. It was just such an overwhelmingly happy but somehow melancholy moment. The only reason that it was a slight bit sad was because Hainur gave Malva a Chibuk, a gift normally meant for married women as it represented eternal love, but it was nice because it reminded her of how much she loved Orpheus and all of the good times they had together. It was just so sweet of Hainur to give Malva such a great gift that meant so much to Malva, which is why that part is my favourite part of the book.

7. What was your least favourite part of the book?

It took a lot of contemplating on which was my least favourite part of the book. I don't mean that there were a lot of bad parts. I mean that there was one part that was extremely sad but also really beautiful. The scene I'm talking about is when Orpheus got stabbed by the Archont, and right after Malva killed the Archont, this is what the story says:

"Head back on the straw, Orpheus smiled at Malva as she leaned over him. How beautiful she was! Her face, her amber eyes, her black hair... but why was she crying? Why was her mouth moving like that? What was she saying?
She's saying my name, Orpheus told himself. She loves me.
Those were his last thoughts."

It's amazing because Orpheus realized that Malva loved him, which is great because he loved her too. The problem was that those were his last thoughts, which means that he died, which is extremely sad because I didn't want Orpheus to die. I wanted it to be a happy ending, because, like I said before, I love happy endings. I have to say that this is my least favourite part because, even though all deaths are sad, this one was particularly heart-breaking because he was the man that Malva loved. Orpheus's death also affected the whole mood of the rest of the book because the rest evolved mostly around how sad Malva was about his death.

8. On a scale of 1-10, what would you give this book? What would have made it better?

On a scale of 1-10, ten being the best, I would give this book a nine. This book was truly amazing, the only reason I give it a nine out of ten is because of the ending. The book would have been much better if Orpheus hadn't died. I know that the author intended for Malva to bring Galnicia back to its former glory by herself, but I can't help but wish that Orpheus hadn't died because the outcome of the story would be a lot happier since there wouldn't be any mourning about his death.

9. Did you feel that the book fulfilled your expectations? Were you disappointed?

To be honest, I had no idea what to expect of this book. I expected it to have one major conflict and when the conflict is resolved, the story would be happy and it would end. Instead, there were just so many conflicts and as soon as one was resolved, another would pop up. For example, one conflict was that Malva was trapped in Temir-Gai's prison, which was a conflict because if she didn't escape, she would eventually die, and as soon as Orpheus and the rest of the crew aboard the Fabula rescued her (the resolution), they all got trapped in the Archipelago with almost no hopes of escaping (another conflict). Then, when they finally escaped the Archipelago after many terrible conflicts, Orpheus got murdered (once again, another conflict). Overall, I can't say that I was disappointed with the whole story because it was so intriguing that I found myself not able to put it down. The only thing that really disappointed me was the ending, when Orpheus died. It was very tragic because Malva was upset for the rest of the book. In conclusion, this book did not fulfill my expectations, it did much more! I had never read a book with such a complex and extremely

interesting plot as this one, where everything was thought out and completely unexpected.

Samantha The Escapist says

*****NOTE*****

Adding a small advisory to my review since I think it turns up near the top of the page.

DO NOT LOOK AT THE DISCUSSION BOARD FOR THIS BOOK if you haven't read it. Someone posted a topic title with a major spoiler (accidentally, she was trying to get it identified and posted somewhere else entirely, but it was put onto the book's page probably by me, apologies)

I've never considered myself to be someone who demands that their endings be happy, but this book's ending felt more like a betrayal. Like someone who forces their way into your life and makes you fall in love with how wonderful they are, and then just commits suicide because they felt like it.

I'm not the first to say that Part 3 should have been left out, it just wasn't consistent with the tone of the rest of the story. Perhaps a little slow at times, I really did enjoy the bulk of the story. It was a real and true adventure, not to mention that I found the strangeness of the archipelago very very appealing (reminiscent of Sinbad, Legend of the Seven Seas, the cartoon of all things) The characters were enjoyable enough and nothing about it especially got on my nerves which is uncommon.

I suppose of all of it maybe the main character, Malva, was a little less appealing but also more real than most heroines tend to be.

Anyway, betrayed is really the best word to describe my feelings at the end of this.

Katie Johnson says

Wow, what an ending! It was so sad, but so awesome! While I do normally like to see a romantic couple end up together, It doesn't really bother me that there was no happily ever after here.

THE CHARACTERS

I disliked Malva, the Princetta, for the first half of the book. She was silly, impractical, and dragged her chambermaid across a vast desert to find an island she wasn't even sure existed. I felt absolutely no pity for her when she complained of hunger and thirst, since it was her decision to go on the expedition in the first place. By the end of the book, however, I discovered that Malva had grown on me. She matured a lot over the course of her journey, and through love and loss became an entirely different person. I liked Orpheus right from the beginning, and I think he would have been a good match for Malva, if circumstances had worked out differently. I was pretty much indifferent to the chambermaid Philomena, which is fortunate since she disappeared for the majority of the book. Lei was entertaining, as were the twins, and Babilas. The Archont, the villain, had little depth of character and existed only to pursue and continuously try to kill Malva. But for the most part, I really liked the characters.

THE STORY

I was surprised by how much of the story took place in the Archipelago, the mysterious island chain with

elements of the supernatural. The climax was presented here, with each of the characters having to face a test of some sort. Not all of them survived, but they did eventually return to Malva's homeland of Galnicia, to find it much changed in their absence. At that point in the story, I was prepared to give this book five stars, but then there was a twist that left me feeling hollow, and sad.

THE GOOD

The descriptions were absolutely beautiful, and there was certainly no shortage of fantastical elements in this fantasy. The main characters, Malva and Orpheus, were relatable and believable. I was rooting for them to escape the Archipelago. I also enjoyed the sailing aspects of the story, and how much of the plot took place at sea. The islands in the unknown world were visually breathtaking, while the visuals of the Immuration were nothing short of horrifying.

THE NOT SO GOOD

The only thing I really didn't like about THE PRINCETTA was the excessive use of exclamation points. There are, no kidding, about three hundred of them in this book. I grew tired of seeing everything looking like an exclamation or proclamation.

BOTTOM LINE: This is an older book (published in 2004), but definitely worth a read for fans of high fantasy and adventure. Highly recommended.

Phoebe says

Wow. This is one of those books where I can't tell if I loved it or hated it....I hated the ending! Why make Orpheus, one of the main characters, die like that? Why make any of those characters die really. I still don't understand how Zeph failed his test? He's a freaking dog for God's sake! But since Orpheus died... it showed that in a way the Archont won... It's just stupid, how will the Princetta find another love anyways, not that she really deserved it... It's her fault in the first place that they all died and her home country went into war... Gah! Conflicted feelings my friends... conflicted feelings.

EDIT!!!!

I've changed my mind... I'm positive that I didn't like this book. It had a good plot and everything, everything about it was cool. Then the ending was pretty much like someone taking a knife and stabbing it into my soul... okay maybe not that dramatic. But I'm pretty upset that I wasted money on this book. The back of the book was a facade... I figured, "hey, while she goes on an adventure, she falls in love! Great! This is going to be a great book." Really what happens is, she escapes, is the downfall of her country, her parents are grief stricken and die... and on top of that, she's the cause of her love, a cook who loves fish, a 13 year old boy, and a dog to die. Nice.

Sarah says

This book is absolutely gorgeous. It tells the tale of a Princess in a fictinal land who runs away to find a mythical island. The Captain only meets her about three fifths of the way into the book. Their lives are entwined from the beginning, but they don't know each other until deep into the book, which is a refreshing change, and worked incredibly well. The ending is so beautiful and the whole book is filled with action and danger and faraway lands.

I'm going to end this review here and recommend this book to everyone I know. Seriously.

Kate Copeseeley says

This was an odd book, which I was somewhat prepared for, seeing how it was originally in French and translated by the nice lady who did Cornelia Funke's books.

What did I think... well, the first half of the book felt very rushed. No descriptions, no meaty filler, just a lot of jumbled and stilted plot and dialogue.

The second half of the book takes such an odd turn, (seriously, I won't spoil it in case you decide to pick this book up, but it is WEIRD) that it almost seems as though it is a different book. I mean, WOW. And again, there is not enough description or plot to keep me going. I essentially skimmed the last 100 pages to see where the characters would end up.

The very last part of the book is so far out of left field I was staggered. People are gone, they come back, a kingdom decimated, it comes back, villains come back and leave and come back, and holy crap, it was weird.

Maybe it makes more sense if you're French, but I would have loved to see this as a SERIES, more fleshed out, more loveable characters, and less of a hodge podge plot. It's like she just sat down and threw a bunch of stuff together and stuck it in a cover with a title.
