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The False Prince

Abigail Packard

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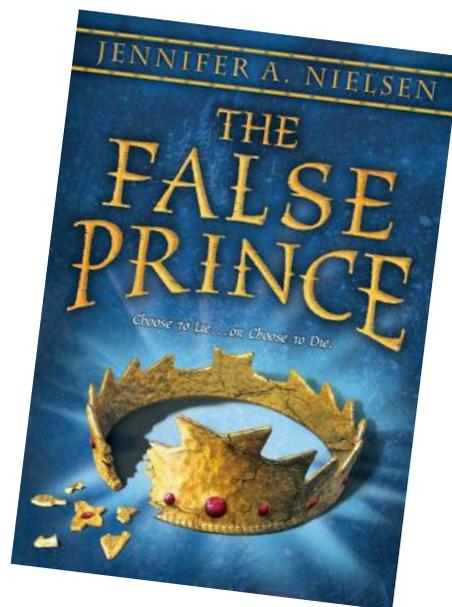
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Book Review

Title: The False Prince
Author: Jennifer Nielsen
Reviewer: Abigail Packard
Publisher: Scholastic Paperbacks
Publication Year: 2013
ISBN: 9780545284141
Number of Pages: 352
Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult
Rating: Outstanding



Review

Sage insists that he wants nothing to do with becoming Carthya's missing prince when he is taken from the orphanage by Conner, a nobleman of the court. However, Sage quickly becomes entangled in Conner's plan to train the four boys he's taken and then choose one to pose as the lost Prince Jaron to take the throne after the murder of the king, queen, and crown prince. Sage and the other boys undergo a rigorous two weeks of classes and information, intrigue and competition in hopes of becoming the prince of Conner's plan. But Sage has his own plan; at the culmination of the two weeks and in a huge twist we discover that Sage is in fact the lost prince himself (Prince Jaron) who has been posing as an orphan for the last four years. Sage, or rather Jaron, takes his rightful place as the king of Carthya and topples Conner's traitorous plan to the ground.

Jennifer Nielsen's writing is spectacular. Sage is an engaging character full of spunk and attitude. Even though he already begins the novel as a well-rounded character, Sage also goes through a lot of growing as he learns throughout the course of the book, which is very satisfying to the reader. The twist at the end is unexpected as the reader may have their suspicions about who Sage really is, but Nielsen's excellent craft has her audience convinced that Sage really is an orphan stuck in an impossible situation. The only bothersome thing is the overly brief timeline; it just seems like two weeks is too short for all that happens to happen. The twist helped the timeline seem a bit more plausible, but it is a little difficult to suspend disbelief fully. Despite this, Nielsen's story is very entertaining and readers should be very excited to read the next in the trilogy. An engaging read for intermediate and young adult audiences alike.

*Contains mild violence.