



2018

The Cruel Prince

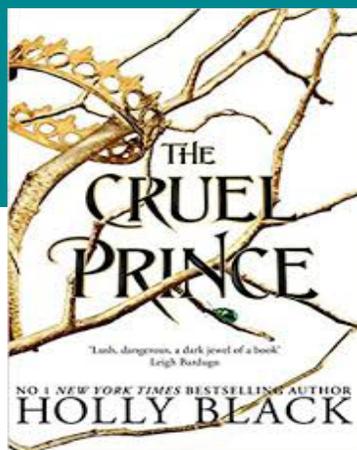
Karen Abbott

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Author

Holly Black

Illustrator

N/A

Reviewer

Karen Abbott

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Young Adult

Pages

384

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Little, Brown Books for

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9780316310277

Book Review

The Cruel Prince

Madoc, the general of the Faerie King's army, strikes down his unfaithful wife and her mortal husband. He claims his daughter, Vivienne, and her twin mortal sisters, Jude and Taryn, and they are now raised in the Faerie King's court as Madoc's children. Jude and Taryn are now at an age where they must find a place in the faerie world as wives or as knights. Jude desires to become a knight, Taryn a wife. In school and out they are cruelly mistreated by Prince Cardan and his friends. Jude is foiled by her father in her desire to become a knight, but Prince Dain, the heir apparent, recruits her as his spy. As a spy she learns more about fighting, sneaking, and stealing. This added to her father's intensified training in swordsmanship, fighting, and scheming makes her a formidable opponent. When a coup created by her father topples the crown, Jude steps up to save her step-faerie-brother, her arch-enemy Prince Cardan, and the entire kingdom of Faerie that has become her home.

The plot and story line are sufficiently complex to give this book an outstanding rating, but the interweaving of the characters and Jude's feelings for her home, her family, and her desires take the story even one step further. It is challenging for an author to take enemies and turn them into believable allies, and to take twin sisters and tear them asunder to create new enemies, but this is skillfully done as enemies come to need each other's support to survive and sisters turn against each other for love and desire. The story is told from Jude's perspective and the reader watches her become ruthless but still loyal to those she loves and to the kingdom that she loves. The reader empathizes with her transition to adulthood and feels the need to fight for the causes that she embraces. This is a compelling and fascinating journey into the intrigue of power and princes that is definitely worth a reader's time.

*Contains severe violence and moderate sexual content.