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Curses

Rachel Wadham

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Book Review

Curses

Author

Lish McBride

Reviewer

Rachel Wadham

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Pages

448

Year

2021

ISBN

9781984815590

Publisher

G.P. Putnam's
Sons Books for
Young Readers

Refusing to marry the man her mother has chosen because she thought the fortune-hunting scammer she loved would return, Merit receives a fairy godling's curse for her disobedience. Now time is running out, and Merit is forced to marry whom her mother deems worthy, because surely, no one would love a beast. Turning to con artist Tevin Dumont, who is forced to pay his mother's debt after she tried to steal a rare flower, Merit is sure that he can help her not to be deceived by a man again. Tevin, along with his brother and cousin, put on a grand con to weed out poor suitors and to charm the ones that remain. However, neither Tevin or Merit realize they are risking their own hearts, and when one suitor is more duplicitous than they realize, it takes true love to ride to the rescue and break the curse.

This delightful mashup of several fairy tales, including Rapunzel and Beauty and the Beast, is a rare treat. All the characters have strong personalities, and even the minor ones shine out with some diversity represented in a gay and nonbinary character. Filled with delightful humor, the characters' banter is especially entertaining. There is certainly not much tension, as you know who the villain is from the start, and it is clear that there will be a happily ever after ending. The setting, while rich, has a range of magical constructs and creatures that are not fully contextualized. But overall, this lighthearted story is clever, and it is an engaging read that will appeal to fans of Hale, Meyer, and Levine.