



Just Ella (The Palace Chronicles Book 1)

By Margaret Peterson Haddix

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Being a princess isn't all that....

You've heard the fairytale: a glass slipper, Prince Charming, happily ever after...

Welcome to reality: royal genealogy lessons, needlepoint, acting like "a proper lady," and -- worst of all -- a prince who is not the least bit interesting, and certainly not charming.

As soon-to-be princess Ella deals with her newfound status, she comes to realize she is not "your majesty" material. But breaking off a royal engagement is no easy feat, especially when you're crushing on another boy in the palace.... For Ella to escape, it will take intelligence, determination, and spunk -- and no ladylike behavior allowed.

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Just Ella (The Palace Chronicles Book 1) By Margaret Peterson Haddix Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

In *Just Ella*, Margaret Peterson Haddix puts a spin on the traditional tale of the glass slippers. In her version, Ella (sans "Cinder") finds her own way to the ball (there was no fairy godmother, despite the rumors) and wins the heart of the prince. But now she is finding that life at the palace as Prince Charming's betrothed is not as great as she thought it was going to be. In fact, it's downright boring for a self-reliant and active girl to do needlework all day or listen to instructions on court etiquette from the strict and cold Madame Bisset. Worst of all, Ella is beginning to suspect that Charming's beautiful blue eyes and golden hair are attached to a head with nothing in it. Her young tutor Jed, however, talks with her about serious things that really matter. Ella finally gets up the courage to announce to Charming that she doesn't want to go through with the wedding, but when she finds herself locked in the dungeon she realizes it's not that easy to walk away from a politically arranged marriage. In the end, as in all good fairy tales, our heroine and hero do manage to live happily ever after--but with a twist.

Fairy tale retellings are an entrancing form of young adult fiction, as they add psychological insight and turn events around for a surprising contemporary angle. Teens who enjoy this delightful revamping of an age-old story may also enjoy Donna Jo Napoli's *Spinners* and *Zel* or the Newbery Honor book *Ella Enchanted*, by Gail Levine. (Ages 12 and older) --Patty Campbell

From Publishers Weekly

Haddix (Running Out of Time) puts a feminist spin on the Cinderella story, beginning her tongue-in-cheek novel where the traditional story ends. Ella Brown plans to live happily ever after when Prince Charming whiskers her from her evil step-family. But when she arrives at the castle, she discovers that the prince is a dull dud, needlepoint is now her most strenuous activity and her ladies in waiting are abuzz with a concocted tale involving Ella, a fairy godmother and a pumpkin (in fact her own resourcefulness got Ella to the ball). When she refuses to marry "Charm," as she calls him, she is thrown in the dungeon to be held there until the wedding day. Making matters worse, Jed, her one kindred spirit, unaware of her imprisonment, leaves to start a refugee camp for victims of the castle's war with a neighboring kingdom. But luckily Ella is not a girl who needs magic or a man to save her. Haddix weaves in elements of fairy tale, with colorful characters such as Lord Reston, Ella's portly, pompous religious teacher; Quog, the ogre-ish jailer; and, of course, the cruel-to-the-core Step Evils. But Ella's modern sensibility seems jarring against a chivalric backdrop (e.g., "Don't that beat all?" Ella says, imitating a servant). Still, her straightforward, often gleefully glib narrative breathes fresh life into the tale. Ages 12-up. (Sept.)

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From School Library Journal

Grade 7-9-This imaginative retelling and continuation of "Cinderella" opens two weeks after the ball. Ella Brown, now known as Princess Cynthiana Eleanora, reveals that neither fairy godmother nor magic helped her escape from her stepmother and the Step-Evils; rather, she relied on her own determination, intelligence, and sharp wits to attend the ball. Now, however, ensconced in the palace to learn royal etiquette and protocol, Ella's dream has become a nightmare. She realizes that Charm, although very handsome, is shallow and boring. When Ella attempts to break their engagement, the so-called Charmings throw her into the dungeon. Her spirit triumphs again, as she digs her way out via the latrine, and escapes to help in refugee camps being set up by Jed, a young man she met at the castle. Just Ella touches on many contemporary themes, including the components of love and happiness, the need for shared values in a relationship, the

unimportance of physical appearance, and how young girls are manipulated by society's images of beauty. Reminiscent of Gail Levine's *Ella Enchanted* (HarperCollins, 1997), and of other retold fairy tales including Donna Jo Napoli's *Zel* (Dutton, 1996) and Robin McKinley's *Beauty* (HarperCollins, 1978), *Just Ella* has a certain charm and appeal. Written for a somewhat older audience than *Ella Enchanted* in terms of vocabulary and subjects touched upon, this title can be recommended for fans of that book who are now a couple of years older and the perfect age to enjoy this new take on a strong heroine.

Connie Tyrrell Burns, Mahoney Middle School, South Portland, ME

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Cynthia Miller:

The guide with title *Just Ella* (The Palace Chronicles Book 1) includes a lot of information that you can find out it. You can get a lot of help after read this book. That book exist new knowledge the information that exist in this guide represented the condition of the world now. That is important to you to learn how the improvement of the world. That book will bring you inside new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book in your smart phone, so you can read it anywhere you want.

Dixie Santiago:

Playing with family in a very park, coming to see the ocean world or hanging out with pals is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, in that case why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not experiencing tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition associated with. Even you love *Just Ella* (The Palace Chronicles Book 1), you are able to enjoy both. It is excellent combination right, you still would like to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh seriously its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its identified as reading friends.

Joe Williams:

The book untitled *Just Ella* (The Palace Chronicles Book 1) contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains the girl idea with easy way. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read that. The book was published by famous author. The author brings you in the new period of time of literary works. It is easy to read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or program, so you can read the book inside anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can wide open their official web-site in addition to order it. Have a nice go through.

Mary Barnett:

A number of people said that they feel fed up when they reading a publication. They are directly felt it when they get a half elements of the book. You can choose the particular book *Just Ella* (The Palace Chronicles Book 1) to make your current reading is interesting. Your own skill of reading ability is developing when

you including reading. Try to choose very simple book to make you enjoy to learn it and mingle the feeling about book and looking at especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to start a book and learn it. Beside that the publication Just Ella (The Palace Chronicles Book 1) can to be your friend when you're really feel alone and confuse using what must you're doing of these time.

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