



## 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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Have you spare time for a day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity to get spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open as well as read a book eligible *Just Ella* (The Palace Chronicles Book 1)? Maybe it is to get best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have various other opinion?

#### **Raymond Hernandez:**

The publication untitled *Just Ella* (The Palace Chronicles Book 1) is the book that recommended to you you just read. You can see the quality of the publication content that will be shown to anyone. The language that writer use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The writer was did a lot of analysis when write the book, and so the information that they share to you personally is absolutely accurate. You also can get the e-book of *Just Ella* (The Palace Chronicles Book 1) from the publisher to make you far more enjoy free time.

#### **Sarah Ford:**

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#### **Cassandra Tucker:**

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