



## **Beauty and the Beast and the Enchantress**

*Finley Aaron*

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They say I'm evil.

They've called me jealous, petty, obsessive...wicked.

But none of those who call me a villain realize what I was up against, and how my actions saved the prince and the kingdom. For years I told myself it didn't matter what they thought—I knew the truth, and that was enough. As time goes on, though, it's occurred to me that history often repeats itself. And we came so close to losing everything the last time.

There is a fate worse than death, and it almost befell us all.

In order to understand that, you've got to know the whole story.

So here it is, my story.

Beauty and the Beast and the Enchantress.

## **Beauty and the Beast and the Enchantress Details**

Date : Published November 7th 2017

ISBN :

Author : Finley Aaron

Format : Paperback 298 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Fairy Tales, Fairy Tale Retellings, Beauty and The Beast, Retellings



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## **From Reader Review Beauty and the Beast and the Enchantress for online ebook**

### **Lita Acevedo says**

Oh my gosh, I loved this story. I've been a fan of Finley Aaron's works since reading his Dragon Eye series, but this is the first revised fairy tale I've read by him. As always, he did a superb job of building a complex wonderful story with lovable characters. I especially loved Rosalina and Death. Who would have thought one could give so much personality to Death? In keeping true to the Beauty and the Beast story, the spoiled prince is cursed and at practically the last minute kisses the Beast and confesses her love, thereby breaking the curse and they loved HEA, etc, etc, etc. But this wasn't just about the stars and the story didn't end there. I won't give anything away, but I will say I'm going have to double up on my chores tomorrow to make up for all the time I spent reading today.

I think is probably classified as YA but I'm 62 and I loved it.

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### **Leia Rose says**

3.5 Stars

I'm pretty sure I've never read a story from the Enchantress' point of view. That alone made this unique.

I really liked Rosalinda and Death. Their interactions, the problem they faced with Alexander and how they went about solving it was a lot of fun.

I honestly would've liked LESS from Beauty and the Beast (also I hate when the girl's name is actually Beauty because what the HECK were her parents thinking?!) since they weren't as interesting of characters to me.

I was shocked when the story jumped ahead 5 years, though duh that's when most of the story takes place. But by the time we jump it felt like we had a huge part of the plot solved.

Basically Death has to fulfill the last requests of Alexander's parents. He needs to get a wife to have a kid and then be a good king. Well, despite the fact that Alexander is still a beast after the 5 year jump, it's clear that he's reformed. He's now a good person and technically a good king, just one who can't rule while frightening everyone with his beast form.

Both Death and Rosalinda were shocked the Beast turned out so ugly (outside match your inside) which means he really had to be a horrible person. I would've liked to seen that terrible person change to such a nice one. I missed out on that process and that was too bad! Beauty did nothing to reform him, she just needed to love him to break the spell.

Also, I wanted to see more of Death and Rosalinda's interactions since there was clearly a story there. I really wanted to see that.

So while I would've gone for less Beauty/Beast story and more Death/Rosalinda, I did enjoy the story a lot. I

liked that the Enchantress had a reason for doing what she did and that she stayed to help. I liked that there was a darker plot going on beyond, "some overreaching minister wants to takeover". I liked that the Beast had a more central role than Beauty. (usually stories are done with her as the focal character)

Overall I'd have liked to see some different things, but this provided a very different retelling and I didn't want to put it down.

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### **Allison says**

I am quite fond of fairy tale retellings, and this one is among the best I've read. Without any spoilers, there are three story lines artfully intertwined. The Beauty and the Beast one may be the one that holds it all together, but it is only the tip of the iceberg. The characters are believable, likable and reflect surprising depth considering the length of the book.

I am going to give it my highest accolade: I read it in e-book format on my Kindle and now plan to get a paper copy as it is one I would like in my permanent collection.

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### **BobbieJ says**

#### **Surprising and Beautiful**

I've read -- and watched -- many, many, MANY versions of Beauty and the Beast including the original -- and my all time favorite -- Cupid and Psyche, but none quite as unexpectedly beautiful or as full of surprising twists as this one.

One of the more surprising twists (don't worry this is NOT a spoiler, it's the setup in chapter one) is that the Enchantress, who is also the narrator in the story, is the beloved of Death.

Yes, I said Death. The actual personification of Death in the character of the Grim Reaper! (You know, skeletal form, heavy full-length hooded cloak, scythe, every girls' dream prince!)

Even more surprising -- as if Death wanting to marry the enchantress who curses the beast isn't enough of a surprise -- is the fact that Death becomes not just one of the best characters in the book, easily, but one of the best characters in fantasy fiction!

I'm not going to give away anything else. This is by far the sweetest and most beautiful and original Beauty and the Beast retelling I've ever read or even heard of! If you even just like Beauty and the Beast you have to read this! I guarantee, as a writer and avid reader myself, that you won't regret it!

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### **J.M. Stengl says**

I loved this story!

This is a unique and awesome take on the basic fairy tale, told from the first-person POV of Rosalina, the enchantress who cursed the prince into his beast shape. We learn that she was pushed into cursing the spoiled prince by none other than Death himself (who has taken a fancy to her), and she is highly motivated to help the beast break his curse. For should the beast fail to win Beauty's love before the deadline, Rosalina must spend eternity in Death's company (giving whole new meaning to "deadline").

I loved all four main characters, and the story development held a few delightful surprises along with the satisfying main points of the classic tale.

Don't miss this one!

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### **Baugh says**

#### **Another great nook by Finley Aaron**

I was beyond excited to see a new book by this author who quickly became one of my favorites. I've read the dragon series a couple times already and was so happy to read this one. It was so imaginative and different from other fairy tales being that Death was a main character but it added such a great twist to it. I definitely recommend every book that Finley Aaron has written.

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### **Bethany says**

The beginning was great. I was intrigued by the Enchantress's dilemma with death and her subsequent transformation of the Prince. I was still with it until the I think about the middle and the end. The prince and Beauty were still excellent. I liked their interactions. The slow build up of their relationship, Beauty coming to terms with the Beast's appearance and her own appertain vanity although she hadn't thought she was vain or hung up on looks. The enchantress however was selfish, obtuse and generally got on my nerves. She was self-righteous and still couldn't let things go even when her own arguments were turned back against her. And since she was the narrator in this book. I was stuck with her.

Death was pretty interesting. (view spoiler)

Overall pretty good, although it dragged in some places and the Enchantress could have been less annoying. Seriously she was the only one not learning from the experience. Everyone else was.

Recommended? Sure. Especially if you like the story of Beauty and the Beast

Buy/Borrow? Eh borrow first.

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### **Marquise says**

3.5 stars rounded up based on my "bonus point for creativity" idea meant to acknowledge original plots and twists in a book.

Finley Aaron's retelling of *Beauty and the Beast* is relatively short, but does pack enough "meat" to be a generally good story. It has an equal amount of pros and contras, though the nature of each varies.

The pros are:

#### **1. It's from the enchantress' POV.**

I've never read a B&B story told from the witch/fairy/enchantress point of view before. And whilst normally a story retold from the standpoint of the "villain" tends to smell suspect to me for reasons I won't explain here, this one not only escaped the barrier set up by my wariness but managed to dismantle it.

In the original Villeneuve tale, the villain is an evil fairy that can't possibly be redeemed and isn't meant to be redeemed in any case. But the one in this book is not Villeneuve's nor based on her; instead it's the enchantress from the Disney animated film, whose motives and nature are different. In Disney, we're not told whether she's evil or good, just that the Prince earned his curse for behaving like an odious brat (never mind that he was a child) and mistreating an old woman that came to his castle seeking refuge and a warm hearth.

I've always had huge, *huuuge* issues with this reinterpretation of the origins of the curse; so much that it's almost single-handedly the reason I am not a fan of Disney's film despite the gorgeousness of the art (that I do like). I do have other issues with the film, but none compares to this one, and when I realised Aaron's enchantress was the film's old hag, I was ready to drop the book and move on. Until Death appeared.

Yes, there's a character that's Death in person, whose role is essentially to draft the enchantress into the curse for the Prince. That was very intriguing, and I decided to read on and find out. Turns out that, whilst the enchantress does curse the Prince for his misbehaviour towards her in her old hag disguise, the reason isn't the misbehaviour at all. The real reason is a very good one, that sounds sensible when you take it in its context and learn the motivation, and eventually it's what makes the Prince's redemption possible. To read it all in the enchantress' voice makes you more understanding as well; and we also get to know her own backstory before and after the Beast.

**2. Two romances plot.** In B&B retellings, the romance is always just Beauty and Beast. In this one, there's two romances running parallel, and for once, you might even come to think you prefer the other romance to the one between the usual suspects.

And as for the contras, there's these:

**1. Awkward chapter breaks.** I hope I can be excused for the plain speaking: this book has the worst and most horrendously inadequate chapter breaks I've found in all my life as a reader.

I'm not exaggerating or being hyperbolic, trust me. You can download a Kindle sample to see it for yourself if you need firsthand proof. Finley Aaron has no skill at all and not the slightest clue as to how to end a chapter, or even scenes within a chapter. The way she breaks a chapter is in the middle of a conversation/dialogue between characters or in the middle of an action scene, sometimes even both at once! It makes it read as if the power went out in the middle of her writing a passage, or as if she cut it with a knife and simply continued in another blank page. Seriously, it's not even cliffhangers. At least cliffhangers leave you in suspense and with expectations/curiosity to see how it continues. This is simply like someone was gagged whilst about to speak.

As if that wasn't bad enough, it's not even that she does it just for some chapters. It happens with every single chapter, every single chapter has terrible breaks, unfinished-looking endings. If not for the premise and the entertaining story, I'd have rated it lower just for this flaw.

**2. Modern language for olden times.** There's the usual Americanisms and "okays" for settings that are essentially Medievalish European in inspiration. I can excuse it in this case because it's Fantasy and not Historical Fiction, so I'm not that bothered here, but others might.

All that said, would I recommend this book? Well, I think it's more for fairy tale retelling and B&B enthusiasts, so for them I would say to give it a try. It's not likely to appeal to readers outside this target audience, however.

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### **Alison Blane says**

I enjoyed this book although not as much as Finley Aaron's retelling of Cinderella, which I could not put down. This book is told from the point of view of the enchantress in the beauty and the beast story. It is an original and refreshing retelling, even if a little slow in places. The character of death is interesting and I like how the development of beast is shown, however I found the protagonist (the enchantress) somewhat selfish, obtuse and irritating. Although some of this this was required to see the parallels throughout and in the ultimate ending, for me it was too much. There was also some discussion of philosophy and a nice description of the included theorists for someone unfamiliar with their work. Overall, with the story and writing, it was a nice read, although unlike the Cinderella retelling, I am unlikely to read it again. 3 stars.

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### **Kristen Kooistra says**

A refreshing take on an old story. Loved having a story from the pov of the Enchantress.

Wish I could've seen more between Death and Rosalina. And also followed the transformation of the Beast's character as it felt like the time jump erased how he went from selfish to good.

But overall really liked seeing the story in a whole new way and this stands out as something new in a world of retellings.

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### **Kathleen says**

Rather than a review, I will provide the live-tweeting I did of the plot. It was extremely amusing to live-tweet and I don't believe reading it gives away anything of substance.

So the book I'm currently reading is a retelling of Beauty and the Beast in which Death plays a prominent role. #unexpected <https://t.co/iV5V4F8E41>

— Kathleen Farley (@katitarian) January 5, 2018

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### **Elisha Baker says**

My 10 year old recommended this book to me. Beauty & the Beast is my favorite Disney movie so I thought it would be fun to read a new twist on the classic story. It was a nice, quick read with an interesting take. While definitely written for a YA audience it was still a good story that kept my interest.

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## Dragon says

### One of your best

Finley Aaron what a great job you did writing this story Beauty and the Beast from the Enchantress side of the tail.

This story was filled with action, adventure, excitement and mystery from start to finish. I urge to not to let this story get past you. This is a must read.

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## Debbie Brown says

### 4.5 rounded up to 5 stars

The Enchantress who turned the prince into a beast gets the Maleficent treatment. Love it!

It's all told in first person from Rosalinda's point of view. She doesn't really WANT to cast her spell on him at first. She didn't even know about the orphaned 16-year-old Prince Alexander or his bad behavior, nor does she particularly care once she learns about it. She has been alive for a century, learned magic, honed her craft and become immortal, and she enjoys managing her domain without interference. But when Death shows up and requires her to intervene, he doesn't really give her a choice. Either Rosalinda must protect the bratty prince from assassins and get him to shape up before his 21st birthday or she will be forced to marry Death and give up all that she's worked for. Alexander gets turned into a beast for his own good. The curse is for him to look as ugly on the outside as he is on the inside, and the results shock even Death and Rosalinda. Since it appears that whoever wants to murder him is among his staff, everyone in the castle becomes part of the enchantment.

As we all know, the beast needs a woman to fall in love with him in order to break the spell. While five years seems like plenty of time to find someone to fit the bill, the problem is that it takes several years for him to work through various stages of emotions before he accepts his situation enough to start working on it. Then, any maiden he manages to get into the castle runs off screaming as soon as she sees him. The gossip is that a beast has either killed the prince or he's being held prisoner. Fortunately, Beauty (that's her name) is made of sterner stuff, but even she has trouble when she first sees the beast.

That's not the only love story going on here. It doesn't take long to figure out that Death really has a thing for Rosalinda, but she can't get past his hideous skeletal visage. The two are rooting for the beast and Beauty to break the curse, especially Rosalinda since she REALLY doesn't want to marry Death. However, at times she wonders if he's actively working against breaking it.

There's also a bit of intrigue. Who was behind the murder of Prince Alexander's parents and the assassination attempts against his life? What's the motivation?

You do have to accept that this is very modern-sounding; there's little-to-no pretense of copying speech from this era. The chapter breaks are a bit bewildering, too.

However, it's edited well (I always love when I don't come across a boatload of misspelled words and grammar errors!) and it's a cracking good story. I really enjoyed it, and I think most readers will too.

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### **Desiree Jacobson says**

#### **Fabulous**

I enjoyed this rendition of beauty and the beast as told from the enchantresses perspective. I loved the double story and over coming our own internal prejudices. We often try to give advice that we should really be taking our self. Clean with no swearing. Happy to recommend if you enjoy well written and different takes on fairytales.

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