

ASH

by Malinda Lo

Published in 2009

Rating (0 stars is the absolute worst, 10 stars is the BEST BOOK EVER)



Genre(s):



Contemporary



Action/adventure



Science Fiction



Fantasy



Romance



Horror



Mystery



Nonfiction



Historical fiction



Other: Queer

Ash, by Malinda Lo, is a retelling of the classic Cinderella story at its core. The main character is a human girl named Aisling, though her full name is hardly used throughout the book. As the tale goes, her mother died and eventually her father dies after marrying her "evil" stepmother. Ash's father left debt for her stepmother's family after dipping his hand in her savings and from that point on, Ash acts as a servant to repay the debt. Ash is unfamiliar with status having grown up as a simple lady on the countryside and her new reality is new, cruel, and especially sudden. Ash deals with her problems via escapism and throughout the book Ash is growing into her own limbs figuring out what fits and what doesn't. The reality of her ability to escape is so brisk it almost whisks her off her feet until she let's herself realize what she needs isn't to run away with a fairy, but run to a future that happens to involve a huntress.

I think if I am going to enjoy a retelling there needs to be good reason for the story to be retold. Sometimes it's simple, for example a retelling to rekindle nostalgic feelings. While Ash does manage this it also manages to be as mesmerizing as the fairies in the story. Which is certainly why I'd recommend reading the book. There is room for improvement in the story, but this also gives the book a sense of growing into itself just like Ash herself does. Malinda Lo has made books after Ash and she has made more fantasy stories worth reading so while Ash and the Huntress may not get another cameo, Lo's story hasn't ended at Ash!

By Michaella J, 9th grade