

THE CRUEL PRINCE

by Holly Black

Published in 2018

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



Genre(s):

☐

Contemporary/Realistic

☐

Action/adventure

☐

Science Fiction

☒

Fantasy

☐

Romance

☐

Horror

☐

Mystery

☐

Nonfiction

☐

Historical fiction

☐

Other:

The Cruel Prince by Holly Black is a YA fantasy novel that follows Jude, who was taken to the land of the Fae after her parents were killed, as she traverses through the complexities and deep politics of Elfhame. Led by her ambition and thirst for power in a world that looks down on her, Jude is determined to prove her worth.

Holly Black's writing style is very lyrical, and that really makes Elfhame seem even more magical, but also more dangerous. Her descriptions are able to encapsulate both the beauty and brutality of the world, and while her writing style is wildly different from other typical novels, it's still not hard to understand and is very distinct. For me, I'm always one for good prose, so I really enjoyed this aspect of the book, and I feel like others who are like me will enjoy it also. In addition to this, Jude, the main character, is a very strong female protagonist who knows what she wants, and is willing to do pretty much anything to reach her goals. She's strategic and isn't afraid to be just as, if more, deceptive than the Fae. That being said, she's a flawed character and is morally gray. However, I think that in Elfhame, that makes sense, since the world is full of betrayal and shifting alliances. I feel like a reader that likes complex worldbuilding and reading about political intrigue would enjoy this novel.

On the flip side, while Elfhame is magical and the characters are great, I did find this book to be very slow. Not too much action was happening in the beginning, as the book was mostly focusing on Jude's life and her struggles. While I enjoyed learning more about Jude and the world around her, I did find most of this book pretty boring. However, it picked up a little the further I got into it. Also, I feel like this book is mostly advertised as very romance heavy, which it's not. While I didn't go in for the romance, I still feel like it's important to emphasize this. The Cruel Prince mostly focuses on Elfhame's politics, and the romance is not the main focus. Something else that I feel should be pointed out is that the book does include violence, so younger kids should probably steer clear. Even with all of this, I would still recommend this book.

By Kandy S, 11th grade, enjoys reading contemporary, mystery, fantasy and action/adventure