



Sapphique

Catherine Fisher

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The only one who escaped... and the one who could destroy them all.

Incarceron, the living prison, has lost one of its inmates to the outside world: Finn's escaped, only to find that Outside is not at all what he expected. Used to the technologically advanced, if violently harsh, conditions of the prison, Finn is now forced to obey the rules of Protocol, which require all people to live without technology. To Finn, Outside is just a prison of another kind, especially when Claudia, the daughter of the prison's warden, declares Finn the lost heir to the throne. When another claimant emerges, both Finn's and Claudia's very lives hang on Finn convincing the Court of something that even he doesn't fully believe.

Meanwhile, Finn's oathbrother Keiro and his friend Attia are still trapped inside Incarceron. They are searching for a magical glove, which legend says Sapphique used to escape. To find it, they must battle the prison itself, because Incarceron wants the glove too.

Sapphique Details

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Author : Catherine Fisher

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From Reader Review Sapphique for online ebook

Kira Simion says

~~Someone want to buy this for me?~~ 0-0

Megan Baxter says

I gave the first book in this series a bit of a light ride, because I was intrigued by the ideas, and thank goodness, it was something different in a mass of fantasy books that were decidedly running together. So although there were things left unexplained, relationships that seemed strained, I hoped those would be delved into in greater depth in later volumes, and let it pass. Unfortunately, the second book doesn't resolve any of the problems, and seems to be the end of the series, so, where am I left?

Note: The rest of this review has been withdrawn due to the changes in Goodreads policy and enforcement. You can read why I came to this decision [here](#).

In the meantime, you can read the entire review at [Smorgasbook](#)

Krista (I remember you, Min) (Critical) says

This just wasn't as good as the first.

I liked how Keiro and Attia were still trapped in the prison, so we weren't cut off from its awesomeness entirely, but somehow it didn't feel as interesting in this one. The character of Rix was pretty annoying and he thoroughly grossed me out. I did like how Keiro and Attia stayed together, even though he claimed not to like her, you can tell he does.

What annoyed me was the lack of character development. Keiro, Attia, Claudia, and Finn all stay exactly the same and we really don't learn anything new about them. Also, there wasn't enough of Finn. It was mostly a book switching between Attia and Claudia's POV, which I didn't like. Especially since I don't like Claudia, and she gets considerably more selfish and annoying and cold in this book; you'd think she'd grow as a person, but...not really. We get Finn's POV only a handful of times, and for maybe one or two pages at a time, and I just felt kind of cheated, because the first book was so clearly HIS, and then he sort of drops off the radar and just becomes this pathetic character feeling sorry for himself. Though, he still wasn't as annoying as Claudia ;)

Also, the revelation about Outside and what it is really like...was extremely depressing--and in a bad way. And the ending...is basically where the book just...ends...and the characters are all like, "Well, we'll probably all die soon." It just felt like nothing was resolved, except for a couple of small things. It also made me really angry that we never find out any of the mysterious about whether Finn really is Giles, or why he has those seizures, or why he continues to have them after he supposedly gets all his memories back, or if Sapphique is real, or if he's alive etc... Sure, there are little hints, but most of them are just misleading.

There was really only one scene in the entire book that I actually enjoyed...which is weird since I gave this four stars...The book kept me interested and was hard to put down because there was so much action, but I tend to prefer character depth over simple action, and there wasn't much of that.

What happens with Jared is also kind of depressing and entirely creepy.

Also, I wanted to strangle Claudia for being all, "Oh, we have to get my poor daddy out of the prison. He matters more than Keiro and Attia." She didn't say those exact words, but close enough. I mean, it was HIS choice to lock himself in there!

And I don't like the idea of Finn and Claudia getting married. I really do NOT see that. There were one or two hints about Keiro and Attia maybe liking each other, despite all of their denials, but, like I said, the end leaves you hanging. And I also thought the "end" was too easy. What happened with the queen was ridiculous; I just couldn't see it. I mean, it makes sense, but it's kind of disappointing. It feels like Fisher only wanted to write one book, but then realized the one wasn't enough to even come close to finishing the story, so she was forced to write a second one. It's like I could tell she wasn't enjoying herself writing it as much as the first.

So, it was an entertaining yet annoying read, and while I'd like to read the first book over again, I don't think I ever want to split the covers of this one apart ever again. Not because it was bad, but because it just isn't something I ever want to return to...

Rachel says

Sometimes when I'm sitting on the couch at night reading, loopy with exhaustion, I look over at my cats and start thinking about how weird it is that they're sentient beings who have feelings and communicate in ways that I will never understand. Then I pass out with my book on my face. But if you are like me and have a hard enough time grasping animal consciousness, then you will probably also have a hard time taking seriously the idea that a prison is not only a sentient being but wants to build a human body to escape -- *from itself*.

That is one of the story lines in *Sapphique*, which I hadn't planned to read upon finishing *Incarceron* until my YA book club's fabulous discussion of that book. We were all curious: Would Keiro and Attia ever escape the prison too? Is Finn Giles? Is the Sapphique mythology just a myth or a true story? Would anything ever come of Jared and Claudia's father/brother/*lover* relationship (as we had all taken to calling it)? Emphasis on *lover*, because that's what about half of us wanted to happen and half of us thought was icky. I'll let you guess which camp I fall into. If you know my thoughts regarding smart older men, it shouldn't be too tough.

I want to be nice because the last chapter of this book is really fabulous and moving and *tricky*; after reading it, I wanted immediately to rate the book higher than it deserves. Some of the images are executed very well -- I loved the dark carnival feel of the opening scenes featuring Rix and Attia, previewed at the end of *Incarceron* -- and Fisher's prose continues to be rich and poetic, compared to the blander norms of YA writing.

But, in the interest of honesty, the book is a mess. Fisher has got so much mad genius subterfuge going on here that I had to keep flipping back through the pages, wondering if I had missed something or if a twist really had come out of nowhere. There's bouncing back and forth many times per chapter, from Keiro and

Attia in the prison trying to find the portal to escape, to Finn and Claudia trying to prove to both the Realm and themselves that Finn is the rightful Heir to the throne, to Jared researching the portal himself, to Incarceron (hilariously) wanting to escape itself. I tired quickly of how much action was happening, but how little these subsequent plots were being furthered as the pages piled up, how little the characters I'd grown to like by the end of the first book were developed. To reference a metaphor from the book: yeah, I guess they were all just pawns after all.

Pawns to what purpose? I couldn't even tell you. I can't imagine how others have digested this book amidst the convoluted layers. Is it a noble cause to want to stop Incarceron from abandoning itself, leaving its prisoners to die without food and warmth, as Attia wants? Sure. And once you get past the silliness of a prison wanting to escape itself, it's cool to think about the idea of artificial intelligence becoming so intelligent that it wants its own freedom. I would read another book about that -- one that gives the idea more space and me more breathing time to think it through before sending me into some inconsequential sword fight with a (regrettably, not ass-to-mouth) human centipede or a climb up or down yet another chain-link ladder for what seems like 50 pages or whatever.

Nikoleta says

Το δε?τερο μ?ρος μου ?ρεσε κ αυτ? π?ρα πολ?. Δεν μου θυμ?ζει καν?να βιβλ?ο που ?χω διαβ?σει ?ως τ?ρα. Δεν ?χει love story, οι ?ρωες με εξα?ρεση δ?ο, δεν ?χουν αγν?ς προθ?σεις, κ?νουν υπολογιστικ?ς κιν?σεις, γ?νονται αντιπαθε?ς και ξ?ρουν να επιβι?νουν, και ναι αυτ? ε?ναι ?να απ? τα στοιχε?α που μου αρ?σουν σε αυτ? το βιβλ?ο, γιατ? το κ?νει να ξεχωρ?ζει. Επ?σης η ιστορ?α ε?ναι απ?στευτα πρωτ?τυπη, μια φυλακισμ?νη φυλακ? που θ?λει να ελευθερωθε? και ?νας κ?σμος ?ξω απ? αυτ?ν που ψ?χνει και ο ?διος δι?ξοδο. Στο βιβλ?ο γ?νονται πολλ?, μια απ?στευτα περ?πλοκη πλοκ?, με πολλ? μυστ?ρια, που με ?κανε να αναρωτι?μαι «πως θα τα καλ?ψει η συγγραφ?ας ?λα αυτ? που γρ?φει; Πως θα τα εξηγ?σει;» Η αλ?θεια ε?ναι ?τι στο τ?λος πολλ? δεν τα εξ?γησε, κ σε πολλ? με μπ?ρδεψε. ?μως αυτ? με χ?λασε απλ?ς λ?γο, γιατ? με γ?μισε τ?σο πολ? η ατμ?σφαιρα, με κ?ρδισε τ?σο πολ? η γρ?γορη πλοκ? και το μυστ?ριο, που ?κλεισα το βιβλ?ο πολ? ευχαριστημ?νη απ? την αν?γνωση του.

R.J. says

This book was SO AWESOME (like its predecessor) in so many ways, and yet emotionally so agonizing! Please, please, please, Catherine Fisher, write a third book, I don't care what you have to do to the plot, just resolve all these emotional threads you left hanging! Don't make me write epic Jared/Claudia fanfic just to ease the pain!

So much cool stuff in this book, though. So much that I know I'll have to read it at least twice (as I did INCARCERON) just to keep it all straight in my head.

Christina (A Reader of Fictions) says

I reviewed Incarceron a few weeks back and, although I didn't like it, I already had a copy of the ARC. Sapphique was not better than the first book in the series, but it was easier for me to get through, perhaps

because I had much lower expectations. All of my problems with the first book still remain here.

The characters, all of them, are pretty much entirely unlikeable. Jared, Claudia's tutor, is the character I most liked, but the reader has known since the beginning of book one that he has an incurable disease, distancing one's affection for him. Claudia is obnoxious, power-hungry and mistrusting. Finn alternates between being emo and arrogant. Keiro is as he has ever been. Attia never really seems to coalesce into a definite personality. And those are just the characters you are supposed to be rooting for.

Romance is not to be found in *Sapphique*, even though the book ends with an engagement in place for two of them. Those two characters have absolutely no chemistry; in fact, the girl is clearly in love with someone else.

If you liked *Incarceron*, I doubt you will be disappointed by *Sapphique*. Otherwise, don't bother.

Lucijaa says

I enjoyed this book more than the first one, but it was hard for me to get into the story in the beginning. But once when I got into the story, I couldn't stop reading.

Keiro was my top character again, his personality and his attitudes were the best part of the book. I have to congratulate Catherine for getting him out of the prison. But Attia could've stayed in the prison, because I dislike her a lot.

The whole *perfect* world everyone was living in started falling apart, and I liked that. We finally saw how everything was old and repulsive.

This book has very happy ending. Usually I am happy because of it, but I think this is just too much. In the end there were at least dozen problems, and in five pages they all cleared up and everyone lived happily ever after.

I mean, wtf? Jared becoming *Incarceron*, and solving all of the problems? Just no. Well, I just hope he won't die because of his illness, he seems likeable.

Ashley Daviau says

I'm a little unsure how I feel about this book. I did enjoy some parts, especially the steam punk element. But a lot of it had me feeling very meh. I still did enjoy the concept and the twists and turns that kept me guessing just like with the first book. But the ending left me feeling very unsatisfied. In a way I feel like instead of wrapping up the series, this book left me with more questions than it answered.

Bry says

So yeah - I gave up. This book was a complete let down after how amazing the first book *Incarceron* was.

But sadly my copy was due back at the library and considering I hadn't picked it back up in over a week and a half I figured I would rather spend my time reading books I am still interested in.

This book's worst problem (just as in the first book) was characterization. All of the characters were like cardboard cutouts. They told you a story but I didn't get any feeling from it. Not to mention Finn and Claudia have less chemistry than any other set of characters I can even think of. I did not think they would make good romantic partners or even friends for that matter.

The action came in highs and lows, yet the highs were only 'ok, this is kind of interesting' and the lows were 'oh my god somebody just do something already!'

In the end I have no regrets about not finishing this book as half the reviews touch on the odd and unsatisfying ending, so I figure I stopped where everyone else should have. Besides I have over 100 other *hopefully better* books waiting to be read. I'll just go get one of those.

Nora says

This was one of the most amazing books I have read in a long time. Let me start by saying that Fisher is a true wordsmith. Her prose is always lyrical and just so so lovely. It's been a long time since I've read such quotable and enjoyable writing.

The plot moved much more quickly in this book than it did in the first, and I was grateful for that. At the same time, there were parts with no real plot, but not one of these scenes felt unnecessary or boring or out of place. Each of them contributed to my understanding of the characters, plot, and world of the novel, and I really appreciated that.

Besides the writing, I think the other strongest point of this book are the characters. Each has his or her own distinct personality, backstory, and narration. I've come to really love so many of them. What I also appreciate is how nuanced they are. Not one character is entirely good or completely horrible. Even the best characters made some mistakes and bad decisions, and even the worst characters were sympathetic at some points. Let's take Keiro, for instance. Yeah, he's an asshole and he's by no means a noble hero, but I love him anyway and I think he's such a well-developed and complex character. Attia grows so much in this book too, and she makes a bunch of difficult decisions that she wouldn't have in the first book. The relationships between all the characters in this novel also were awesome. (Btw there's little to no romance at all in here, unless you squint. Normally I like at least some romance, but in this case I think it worked out really well.) Not one relationship is perfect. Connections between characters grow and shift and change, for better and worse.

The worldbuilding in this one truly knocked my socks off too. We get to know the Realm and Incarceron very well, and yet the more information Fisher gives us, the more mysterious and incomprehensible the world of the novel seems. What struck me the most while reading is how basically impossible it is to discern reality from illusion in the novel. Very few things are set in stone, and the novel seems to ask us to accept varying and even contradictory versions of reality. Truth and facts are relative, and this may be frustrating for some readers. I was a little annoyed by this at first, but by the end I think this toying with the real and unreal is what really wowed me. The ending ties up all major loose ends and is pretty satisfying, while ironically still leaving basically every question unanswered and posing that maybe the truth isn't really as important as we think it is in the grand scheme of things and that a lot of times it's better not to know some

things. Still, I wish there was a third book. Overall i definitely recommend you pick up this series. The first novel wasn't that special, but I promise this one more than makes up for it.

Beth says

I still don't love these books. I think the story line is very interesting but the characters just aren't "something" enough - there is no one to really hate or love or pull for, so i don't have the connection. I also don't think there is enough back story. Why are they in this artificial time and what was the war about? It is mentioned but no real details.

Ng?c says

Hm...Khi ??c xong cu?n này ch? mu?n ??p b?p m?t phát cho h? gi?n.Ti?c ti?n quá mà, v?i 140k cho Incarceron và 145k cho Sapphique thì nh?ng gì mà nh?n ???c không h? x?ng ?áng t?o nào.Th? n?n sau khi v?a ??c xong, t?c là cách ?ây vài ti?ng ?y, mình ?ã d?n lòng là th?i, ??i cho bình t?nh l?i ?ã r?i vi?t sau=))Nói cho ??n sáng mai c?ng ch?a ch?c ?ã h?t nh?ng ?i?u mình không ?ng ? cu?n này.Th? nh?t, mình r?t ghét cách ?an xen 3 th? cùng m?t l?c.3 th? ? ?ây là g?i??u tiên là b?n trong, Ng?c Tù ?y, th? hai là b?n ngoài, th? 3 là m?y m?nh gh?p to nh? l?n l?n không li?n-quan-m?y ??n nhau b? c?t gh?p pha tr?n ?? ki?u t? nh?ng th? ?âu ?âu mà mình ch?ng bi?t là cái kh? g?.Có ngh?a là khi mình v?a m?i h?nh dung ra h?nh ?nh c?a m?t chi ti?t tí xíu, khi mà mình ?ang d?n th?ch nghi v?i không kh? ? th? này th? t?c gi? l?i l?i tu?t mình sang th? kh?c ngay-1?p-t?c, m?t s? tr??ng h?p p?n ch?a k?p th?ch nghi mà ?ã b? g?i h?n r?i=.=Làm mình c?m th?y nh?p truy?n n?i nhanh c?ng ch?ng ph?i mà n?i là ch?m c?ng không r?t kh? ch?u.Th? hai, cách miêu t? r?t "h?i h?t"(!)(do tr? t??ng t??ng m?nh k?m) n?n t?t c? nh?ng gì mà bi?t v? b?n trong ch? là cái b?nh xe(wft!?) có r?ng c?a=))Bên ngoài th? là th? gi?i qu?y t?c hoa ch?m-c? x?n-l?i ph?ng-c?y tr?ng r?t chi là sang tr?ng, có v?a kh?c ?i qua n?i ng??i nghèo ? mình v?n th?y r?t chi là sang tr?ng=))Xin th? l?i cho cái suy ngh? h?m h?p v?a r?i c?a m?nh=))Ok.Tính cách nh?n v?t th? không nh?t qu?n(v?ng, c?u Finn ??p trai h?i l?n t? ti ?ây ?), có th? ?? cho vi?c ch? ?y b? x?oa tr? nh?, nh?ng t?i sao l?i h?nh th?nh m?t nh?n v?t v?a n?i không bi?t l?i n?o là th?t l?i n?o là gi?, t? ti, mu mu?i l?i v?a ?i?m t?nh, bi?t hi sinh b?n th?n v?i ng??i kh?c, có kh?i ch?t nh? vua ch??Kh?ng ph?i hai v? gi?a ch? "l?i" t?n t?i c?ng l?c ?âu, mà là cách nhau t?m v?i ch?c trang gi?y ??y ?!Ông này ch?c ch?n không b? a nh?n cách ?âu tin m?nh ?i=))Claudia th? ?óng ki?u m?nh th?ch(trong t?p n?y), Ja th? v?a m?i b?i?t m?t amazing fact v? ?ng(v?a m?i th?i n?n sinh nh?t l?n th? 30 cách ?ây không l?u), v?y mà miêu t? trong truy?n v? ?ng nh? ki?u 80-90 tu?i g?i ?ó=))Wow=))Th?i ch?e n?y nh?n v?t th?i không l?i ?n g?ch b?o sao nh?n v?t n?o c?ng gh?p.Th? ba, t?c gi? tham lam nh?i quá nhi?u nút th?t xong h?nh nh? v?i nh?c n?n không ch?u tháo ra?N?u s? s? th? ch?c t?c gi? vi?t th?m cu?n th? ba ch?c c?ng kh?ng g? xong ?âu=))[-Sapphique là ai?t?i sao ông ta l?i mu?n ch?y tr?n, t?i sao l?i là ?ng mà không ph?i ng??i kh?c, ?ng có g?i ??c bi?t?-Rix và qu? kh? c?a ông ta?gi?i th?ch cho nh?ng h?nh ??ng ? hi?n t?i?-T?i sao ph?i l?p ra nghi th?c?b?n? ho?ng ??y và qu? kh? c?a b?a ta?th?i k?i th?nh n? cái g?i g?i ??y là cái g?i?-T?i sao ph?i t?o ra incarceron?m?c ?ích g?i?-T?i sao ng?c t?u l?i có th? nh? th?n?l?i là g?i?(nh? vi?c n? b? ?i?n ch?ng h?n?)-m?y cái ông ch?u công ? m?y m?nh c?t gh?p gi?a các ch?ng là ai?c?u h?i t?ng t? v?i vua Endor và m?t s? các nh?n v?t kh?c?-Ngu?n g?c h?nh th?nh nh?m S?i th?p?-?i t?i ng?i g?i quá t?m d?ng ? ?ây v?y=.=]K? mà ??a cái c?t truy?n này cho m?t t?c gi? kh?c kh?o l?i có rating c?a m?nh 5*=))Hai tr?m trang cu?i c?ng ? cu?n này ch?ng gi?i quy?t th?m ???c cái g?i...Haiz, ti?c cho m?t c?t truy?n th? v?...

Harmonyofbooks says

"D??ar?"ya ç?kman?n bir yolu var. Sapphique buldu. Anahtar deli?i küçük, bir atomdan bile küçük. Ve kartal ile ku?u onu korumak için kanatlar?n? kald?rm??lar."

3,5/5???

Serinin ikinci kitab?na Finn'in kan karde?i Keiro'dan ayr?lmas?yla ve hak etti?i unvana ad?m ad?m yakla?mas?yla ba?l?yoruz. Di?er yandan da Claudia'n?n Üstat Jared ile ?ncarceron hakk?nda ara?t?rmalar?n? okuyoruz. Bu kitap ilkine göre daha dolu doluydu. Zaten seriden en çok bekledi?im ?eylerden biri buydu. Ayr?ca Attia ve Keiro'nun ko?u?turmas?nda etraflar?ndaki mekanlar, insanlar ve ya?ananlar daha detayl? tasvir edilmi?ti. Kitab?n ortalar?na kalmadan sahte bir Giles"?n kendi göstermesiyle Finn'in de tahta o kadar kolay yürüyemeyece?i kan?lanm?? oldu. Bu kitab? asl?nda ilkine göre bir t?k daha be?endim ama yine de ikinci kitap da sonuna do?ru beni tatmin edemedi. Olay örgüsündeki gidi?at gayet güzeldi, daha heyecanl? ve okumak için daha hevesliydim. Sapphique'nin ortaya ç?kmas?, ?ncarceron'un asl?nda ne kadar büyülükté oldu?unu okumam?z da art? yanlar?ndan biriyydi. Fakat seride genel anlamda amaç edinilen gaye bana yetersiz geliyor. Amaç bence sadece Finn ve Keiro'nun yeniden bir araya gelmesi ve Finn'in tahta geçmesini sa?lamaya ilave olarak hapishanedeki herkesin refaha kavu?mas? olmal?yd?. Di?er tüm fantastik serilerde okudu?umuz gibi son kitapta daha kesin olaylar ya?anmal?yd?. Fantastik konusu benim için çok güçlü de?ilken bir de romantizmden de muzdarip olmas? en büyük eksи yönüydü. Yine de severek okudu?um bir seri oldu. Ortalaman?n bir t?k üstü bulsam bile keyif alarak okudum. ?lk kitab?n yorumunda da belirtti?im gibi bu türde çok fazla okumad?ysan?z önbilece?im bir seri kendisi. Benim gibi çok okuduysan?z büyük bir be?eniyile sar?lamayaca??n?z? söyleyebilirim. Keyifli okumalar dilerim..

Amelia, the pragmatic idealist says

I give this about a **B/B-** - somewhere in between "Pretty good" and "Very nice".

This book was pretty good. I think I enjoyed it more than *Incarceron*, pretty much because I was familiar enough with the basic storyline and didn't have to spend so much time figuring everything out. The pacing was pretty good, but the last 100 pages really, REALLY dragged...and it got to the point where I came dangerously close to not caring anymore...that's not usually a good sign.

And yet...

I don't want to make it sound like I didn't like the book, because I did...but Catherine Fisher is not the greatest author on the planet, and her writing style actually aggravated me. You know the phrase "show, don't tell"? Well, she pretty much *tells* how characters feel/act, she doesn't *show*. Characterization is definitely not her strong suit in this series – everybody was pretty wooden and it was hard for me to relate to them because they didn't seem very real. There was just this hollow, shell-like feel to her characters and that was a major distraction. Claudia, in particular, was just incredibly frustrating. She was easier to relate to in *Incarceron* because you understood *why* she acted like such a conceited brat. In *Sapphique*, pretty much all of her conflicts have been resolved, so why is she still so MEAN?! It was stuff like this that made reading *Sapphique* a bit cumbersome. I didn't really like Keiro, either, because to me he seems like the embodiment of Evil: he's an individual with pretty much no conscience – he doesn't know compassion or humility, and according some of my teachers (and the *Harry Potter* series), true evil is that which is excessively vain and devoid of compassion or consideration for others. I'll admit it: I like it when characters "get their

comeuppance" and he didn't get any comeuppance!

Also, the ending...very mediocre and a bit bizarre. I don't want to spoil anything, but the ending just really didn't make sense if you take into account the overall story. It seems like Catherine Fisher spent so much time creating this really intense situation, and then the ending comes and it's "ta da! We're finished now! The end!" I think the first thing I said when I finished *Sapphique* was, "ohhhkay...I'm hungry."

Let's compare that to another book...oh, say...*The Last Olympian*. I finished that book and was like, "OMG!!! WHAT AM I GOING TO READ NOW?!?!?" *hyperventilates*

It was a pretty engrossing read, most of the way through. Catherine's exceptionally imaginative, and the *Incarceron* series is one of the most thoroughly original books I've ever read in my life. However, her books aren't the best books I've ever read. Strengths: creativity and action. Weaknesses: very wooden and shallow characters and a spiraling last 100 pages...and a lackluster ending.

Jessica says

I swear that people simply must not *get* this series (I say "series" hopefully, because for right now it looks like there will only be the two books). I don't mean that in some kind of pretentious, exclusive way, it's just my only rationalization for why both books are only thisclose to being 4 stars. Are the wrong people reading them? Are people going in with certain, um, expectations and not feeling that they're met? Do people just not want to do any real thinking?

I really need to stop sounding like a douche.

"It's YA, Jessica, get off your high horse!" you might say. "But a good story is a good story! Beautiful, creative prose is beautiful, creative prose!" I'd shout back from said horse (a blood bay, if you were wondering).

Let me try and put in a few words what I love about these books.

1)They're poetry. There are about 10 outrageous metaphors on each page, and I literally have to stop and give a sage nod to individual sentences. I mean, isn't that what you do with great poetry? Her word choices and turns of phrase are so *on point*, man. Catherine Fisher had a hand in inventing the English language, methinks.

random example from random page: "*The world is a chessboard, madam, on which we play out our ploys and follies. You are the Queen, of course. Your moves are the strongest. For myself, I claim only to be a knight, advancing in a crooked progress. Do we move ourselves, do you think, or does a great gloved hand place us on our squares?*"

Oh, another: "*This was death. It was warm and sticky and there were waves of it, washing over her like pain. It had no air to breathe, no words to speak. It was a choking in her throat.*"

2)I've never seen modern lore done so well. Chapters open with historical anecdotes of the prison universe (a poem, fable, etc.). It's masterful to see it all play out and everything work and come together in the end (ok, not everything—dang loose ends—but enough). I've studied folklore and fairytales, and to see how the truth

can change in the mouths of storytellers throughout time and become its own entity entirely is so fascinating to me. The actuality of what happens becomes so warped, but the seed of truth remains and from it still comes wisdom and power.

3) Honestly, I think the third best part is everything I can't explain. I love it, I just do.

ALSO, I was inconsolable after learning that Taylor Lautner would be playing Finn in the movie adaptation. Cruel, cruel world. Must you fight good literature with such fervor?

- A) They're supposed to be British.
- B) Just, no.
- C) You know they're going to try and add in some BS romance.

Random: When I was reading this book last year, I'd have to check in with it whenever I came in to work (at a bookstore) and my managers would read the title and give me weird looks. Then my own mind would go wonky and I'd think of Sappho, the ancient Greek lesbian poet. Did they think I was reading some kind of trashy erotica or something?

Hey! Is that where Fisher got the name Sapphique any way? He *is* a poet of sorts...

Leigh Hecking says

There was just too much going on in this book. The first book, Incarceron, created an intriguing world, but it also set the stage - for an escape from prison, for Finn's rise to King, for a romantic relationship between Finn and Claudia. And while these things do happen in Sapphique, they come about in the most unsatisfying way possible. We go from one dizzying plot turn to another, with little explanation of the character's motivations. And while every page seems to bring some new action, the real action that the pages promise never comes to fruition. A duel ends with the Pretender being shot in the hand and Finn fleeing, Jared easily escapes assassination when his would-be-killer is electrocuted, the great Battle between Finn and the Queen ends before a real shot is even fired. The real opportunities for confrontation and understanding fall limp and lifeless under Fisher's hand.

None of the questions that Incarceron posed are ever answered in Sapphique. In the end, the reader has no idea who Sapphique is and if he really existed or escaped, we don't know what illness Jared suffers from, we don't know if Rix is a madman or a true magician, we don't know if Finn is really Giles, we don't know if the cube on the watch was really the prison or not, the fate of both the Kingdom and the Prison are tenuous and there's no hint that either Finn or Claudia care about each other though they briefly talk about a wedding at the end.

It would almost be excusable to fail on some of the major plot points, as Fisher has woven herself such a complicated scenario, if only the relationships shone. But in Sapphique, the interpersonal relationships fizzle - Claudia doesn't even seem to like Finn (a far cry from the girl who went to lengths to release him from prison), Keiro is at one moment untrustworthy and the next Finn's steadfast brother, Jared's strange relationship with Claudia is never explained, the Warden is cold and remote. Attia, the dog-slave who has scraped her way through Incarceron, is the only remotely likable character, but we never get to understand much about her.

None of the characters' actions were ever explained, scenes that were built up deflated in the end and the whole book sank like a overcooked turd soufflé. Do not want.

Heather says

I was so interested to read the follow-up to *Incarceron* that I ordered the UK version of *Sapphique* so I wouldn't have to wait until December to find out what happened to Finn and Claudia (and c'mon, having a UK edition is pretty cool, too).

MILD SPOILERS:

In Fisher's sequel, Finn's been sprung out of one prison and into another -- as future king of the Realm, he's trapped in all the usual politicking. He still can't remember his past life as Prince Giles, and he's plagued by memories (Keiro, trapped in Incarceron; the Maestra's death) and the lack thereof; he's got nothing but strange seizures and blackouts to back his claims of tampered memory, and a second Prince Giles has showed up to challenge Finn's claims. While Claudia handles the court intrigue, Jared tries to figure out a way to open the Portal, and what to do about the illness that is out to kill him sooner rather than later.

Meanwhile, back at the ~~ranch~~hell that is Incarceron, Keiro and Attia are chasing after the elusive Sapphique's glove as their emergency exit out of the prison, and mixing it up with run-ins with the Warden and a strange magician named Rix. Throw in some strange Sapphique apparitions, a disintegrating Realm, and a war, and you've got another action-packed story.

But there were some cons: 1. Many narrative changes, and it's not always smooth or pretty. Everything's in second person, but even within a page the author switches between perspectives so much that it's a little distracting. I kept asking myself, wait, who thinks this? Finn or Claudia? Jared? 2. Not enough Incarceron. After that whole dark, horrible, awesome world was established in book one, there just wasn't enough of it in book two. We see it in Keiro and Attia's adventures, but they always seem to be on the fringe or on the borders, in these strange exceptions-to-the-rule kind of places. 3. Not enough Finn, Claudia, and Attia. Poor Finn -- this guy takes a beating and has to keep going, over and over again. Book one built up so much anticipation for his reunion with Claudia, but in the end, it was a let-down. She's cold and frustrated, and doubts his identity. He's desperate for affirmation and gets none. Meanwhile, Attia is desperate to see Finn again, but he barely gives her a thought -- he's too worried about Keiro. The author points this out to us repeatedly, which set me up for some kind of story there, but then left all those threads hanging when the book finished (and to my knowledge, this is only a set of two -- no trilogy planned). I would have loved to see Claudia and Finn's relationship deepen to the point that she's forced to make choices about who she believes Finn really is, independent of facts and proof, and that never really happened.

Nevertheless, there are some major pluses here that kept the sequel from completely falling flat: 1. lots of action, as stated above. I never sighed with boredom or had to plod through long, dry conversations. Fisher really moves the pace. 2. More Jared and Keiro. I loved those guys in the first book, and there's so much more to them in the second. I guarantee, you'll like Keiro better once you're done reading. 3. no simple answers. Incarceron is small and big, Inside and Out. The mystery of who Sapphique is gets more convoluted, and although the questions of what makes reality, imprisonment and freedom are sort of Matrix-y, there's a fair degree of originality here, too. Sapphique somehow manages to span all cultures in the book, Out and In, and multiple histories and narratives. Everything about his story that Fisher eludes to (I love those little quotes at the beginning of the chapter) just ups the mystery factor.

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<https://knijnikrile.wordpress.com/201...>

Sarah says

WHAT?! It's over! And the ending was maddening!!! Absolutely maddening! But, let me backtrack a bit.

Plot: Slow in parts. But overall, I liked the way it moved along. This book was full of action and suspense, like Incarceron. I liked how there were many plot lines running at once, with many different characters. I actually liked how the point of view changed around a lot, because it gave me a look in everyone's motives. It was fairly unpredictable, which was cool in parts and aggravating in others.

Characters: I actually like these characters. The characters are the reason that I ordered this book from the U.K. so I wouldn't have to wait for it to be released in the U.S. The characters in this one were still the characters I loved (well, I loved most of them). I'm still rooting for Jared/Claudia, even though I've finished the book. Jared is still my favorite character, and the relationship between him and Claudia was great. There were more Jared/Claudia moments in this book, which I loved. But, they're totally separated in the end, and that's maddening. They love each other, so why do they have to be separated? I wasn't a huge Attia fan in the last book, but I really liked her in this one. Maybe that's the result of seeing more from her point of view. Although, I really wish she'd been able to teach Keiro a lesson. In fact, he's the one character I didn't like. There were times where I did, and then didn't again. I guess the reason I didn't like him more was because he didn't learn anything or change at all. I kept waiting for karma to come and beat him over the head, and it never happened. I still loved to hate Sia and her son, and the Warden. Finn however, bothered me a bit in this book. He got mopey and annoying. And I really don't think Finn and Claudia should get married. For one, I want her to be with Jared, and two, I just plain don't see that.

Ending: Maddening. Just. Plain. Maddening. Jared's fate wasn't unpredictable, but the fate of the Outside Realm was. I also really don't want Claudia to marry Finn. Anyways, it was maddening because there's not another sequel. It's maddening because it's the end of the road.

Writing: I don't mean to say anything bad about the writing (because Catherine Fisher is brilliant), although I do have a few complaints here. Catherine Fisher is brilliant for her ideas and characters, but sometimes she's not as good at going into her character's emotions. There were so many points where she could have had the relationships between characters grow or become more complicated, and make the story even more interesting, and she didn't. Which kind of bothered me. But, I have to give her credit for the brilliant idea of Incarceron, Sapphique, and for creating good characters (even if I don't like Keiro, I do think Attia could bring out a better side of him). I am keeping my fingers crossed for another sequel, if only to delve deeper into the emotions and motives of the characters and tie up the loose ends.

Overall: It was good, but not as good as Incarceron. I had high hopes for a sequel with more emotion, and just as much action, and I got some of that. Incarceron was better, but I did really like Sapphique. If you liked Incarceron, you should read this one. It goes deeper into the backgrounds of some characters, it brings minor characters into the limelight, and it explains more in Incarceron, the Outer Realm, Jared's illness, and Sapphique. Despite my complaints, I really, really liked this book.
