



## The Perilous Princess Plot

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## **The Perilous Princess Plot** Sarah Courtauld

This is the story of two very different sisters--Eliza, who longs to ride into battle against villains and dragons, and Lavender, who would give anything to be a pampered princess. Before the end of the story both of them have had a chance to fulfill their dreams, though not quite in the way they intended...

Accompanied by their depressed goat, Gertrude, with their granny's warnings about the Black Death ringing in their ears, they head out into the forest and come face to face with an evil count who definitely does not have their best interests at heart.

## **The Perilous Princess Plot Details**

Date : Published May 5th 2015 by Feiwel & Friends (first published July 3rd 2014)

ISBN : 9781250052773

Author : Sarah Courtauld

Format : Hardcover 192 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Humor, Childrens, Middle Grade, Fiction, Chapter Books

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## From Reader Review The Perilous Princess Plot for online ebook

### Barb Middleton says

If you want to study the literary device of using parody to exaggerate the fairy tale genre for comedic effect, then I suggest picking up this book. Or if you just want to snort laugh your breakfast cereal out your nose, then I suggest this book again. Eliza and Lavendar live in Old Tumbledown Farm in The Middle of Nowhere in the land of Squerb, where Lavendar dreams of being a princess and Eliza dreams of strangling her neck. Just kidding. Eliza is stuck with all the chores and is just annoyed by her princess-loving sis. But honestly, first time we meet Lavendar she sees a man in the distance and cries out, "A knight upon the high road! I may faint!" It's a bald man named Bob. Lavendar then proceeds to faint and asks Eliza to rate her faint. This drama queen makes Anne of Green Gables romantic tendencies look tame in comparison. When Lavendar gets kidnapped by an archetype villain, it is Eliza who rescues her showing that Eliza will do anything for her cornflakey sister.

Eliza is a foil to Lavendar. While Lavendar wants to be more princessy than a princess, Eliza dreams of being a hero, defeating dragons and traveling to far off places. The cornucopia of puns and play on words, and run-on sentences reminded me of the character voices in "The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom," by Christopher Healy. The villain sets out to kidnap a princess identifying her as a girl that sings badly, dances, pick flowers, and wears a pointy princess hat - all traits found in Lavendar. Except she also sings in the romance language, French. Badly. When Lavendar is kidnapped she gets it in her head that the villain is really a handsome prince disguised as an ugly person like in Beauty and the Beast.

There are some fun twists and turns in this goofy tale. Eliza tries to change Lavendar into seeing how absurd all her prince dreams are while Lavendar tries to prove that they are true. By the end the two have adventures that have them understanding and tolerating each other a little more, but it isn't always easy. It is always funny though. This story is pretty outlandish. My favorite minor character is the grandma that tells bedtimes stories full of pestilence, murder, and death. She reminded me of Jon Klassen's picture books.

Her story is about William who came down with the Black Death. "'And from that day on, he was covered in spots,' she said serenely. 'And then came the lumps. And then his skin started to wither. And then he collapsed. And then his fingers fell off. And then his legs fell off. And then he died.' she smiled. 'The end. Would you like another story?'"

Yes, please. I'm looking forward to more Squash and Buckles.

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### Josiphine/Tessa says

This book was so ridiculously funny. It was full of weird footnotes and literal metaphors and puns. So. Many. Puns. It made me laugh out loud every few pages. I really enjoyed it.

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## **Robin Rowles says**

My Title: A belly full of laughs and endless entertainment for everyone!

Author Sarah Courtauld has put together a very entertaining read that kids will really love. This is a tale about two very different sisters. Eliza who likes nothing more than battles against villains and dragons, and Lavender who just wants to be a pampered princess.

This book contains loads of quirky illustrations which beautifully adds to the zany storyline. (My personal favourite illustrations being Grandpa Joe, the villain Mordmont, the tearful rhinoceros, and the monstrous green moat-dragons!)

Expect your child to be very easily engaged with this book because of its vast amount of fun, humour, wit, jokes, fabulous adventures and its delightful characters.

Despite Granny's warning about the Black Death ringing in the protagonists (the girls) ears, they head out into the haunted forest and come face to face with an evil count – when Lavender gets kidnapped in the forest of Toothy you can expect an unpredictable and bumpy ride!

What will happen? - Both girls have a chance to fulfil their dreams...

It really is an entertaining read. This is a book that children will want to read over and over again!

Parents will enjoy sharing this story with their children at bedtime. It's ideal for early readers too!

I recommend this book.

I received a free paperback copy of this book in a first-reads giveaway.

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## **Shae McDaniel says**

Originally reviewed at <http://www.shaelit.com/2015/05/review...>

Most of the time when I read books, I just enjoy the book. I don't think about target audiences or age ranges or anything like that. A good book is a good book. But then sometimes I pick up a book like this one and get thwacked between the eyes with the fact that I am not, in fact, the intended audience. And you know what? That's okay, because kids are going to love this book.

*The Perilous Princess Plot* is a funny little book. It's not very long and is definitely light on things I've come to expect in older book like character introspection, descriptions, and the like, but I think that's part of its charm. Actually, what TPPP is most like is a bedtime story a kid would make up and act out for their parents. This story has two princesses, an evil villain, a goat, a hulking henchman, a short giant, and a lot of scribbled illustrations. It doesn't always make sense and certainly isn't realistic, but who the heck cares?

Because I'll tell you this, adults will find things to giggle over alongside their kiddos. TPPP plays with puns, figurative language, and the duality of language in a thoroughly delightful manner. It's like *Amelia Bedelia* but takes a couple steps beyond ol' AB's focus on idioms. Possibly my favorite part was when Lavender displayed her wall of princes. (All of the princes are cleverly named, with the first three being the most clever and the fourth making me laugh out loud.) My recommendation? Grab yourself this book, a kid (one you're allowed to grab, not a stranger, please), and a willingness to be silly, because this story needs to be

read out loud with plenty of sound effects. Enjoy!

**Points Added For:** Puns and word silliness, the wall of princess, the illustrations.

**Points Subtracted For:** Sometimes it got a little *too* unrealistic for me, but again, not the target audience.

**Good For Fans Of:** *Amelia Bedelia*, puns, silliness.

**Notes For Parents:** Some gross jokes.

*Note: I received a review copy of this title from the publisher for review consideration.*

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### **Siyana Pavlova says**

Funny, witty and full of adventures, forests, dragons and goats (well, one goat) - what else do you need? It was definitely fun to read this book (especially after all the university lectures and assignments), the unexpected outcomes and connections between different phrases made me laugh a lot and the illustrations were simply amazing. As a (semi-)grown-up who is into Science, I love to read such stories which help my (not-so-)long-lost imagination come back to me and I would recommend this book to anyone no matter what their age and occupation is. I can't wait to see what is going to happen next. :)

P.S.: I won this book through a Goodreads Giveaway with a message from the author to Viktor (who is 6, just learning how to read, loves dragons and will love the book too, when he gets it in December).

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### **Andréa says**

I had high hopes for this book, based on the cover and the description, but in the end I just wasn't a fan. I didn't like either of the main characters; neither one has many endearing qualities. The narrator is a bit intrusive, and the childish illustrations didn't add much to the story. I'm sure there are kids who will love this book, but it didn't work for me.

*Note: I received an ARC from the publisher.*

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### **Abby Johnson says**

A laugh-out-loud funny book about a girl obsessed with becoming a princess and her practical sister who has to rescue her when plans go awry. It's a quick, easy read with lots of cartoony illustrations and wacky, witty humor that reminded me of Monty Python and/or Cressida Cowell's dragon books. This would be a fun one for kids who like fractured fairy tales and a great choice for any kids who enjoy laughing.

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## **Alana Muir says**

There is a terrible tendency in the publishing industry and in our culture in general to see books about boys as being "for everyone" while books about girls are "just for girls". This book is an excellent place to start challenging that idea. Both protagonists are girls, but there is nothing in this book that a boy couldn't enjoy as well. It's a funny story with dragons, wizards and fart jokes. There are even a few jokes that seem to be primarily for the parents. It made me laugh out loud in a few parts and I will be recommending this book to my nieces and my nephews.

The only reason I have given 4 stars instead of 5 is because I'm not a fan of introducing plot points and then not resolving them in the same book. I know it's to get people to read the sequels, but I was left a little annoyed that so much was left unresolved. It always seems a little manipulative to me.

(Disclosure: I received a free copy in a first reads giveaway.)

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## **Michelle says**

I won an ARC of this book here on Goodreads. The author was amazing and signed and doodled in the book for my daughter who was so happy to get her first personalised book.

We read as a bed time story over 4 nights and my daughter was constantly laughing as I read it to her. She particularly loved Grandma Maud and the whole princess name later in the story.

We just finished the book last night and today she was reading it on her own and asked can we read it all again. I recommend for a fun read for your children (my daughter is 6 but it is written for older children too). I give 5/5 stars and my Abigail said she will give it 100/5 stars.

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## **Valerie says**

This is a super take on the Princess fairy tale that I won in a Goodreads giveaway.

The story is laugh out loud funny and perfect for both reading aloud to an early reader or for reading alone. The delightful quirky illustrations enhance the tale and I would highly recommend this book to any youngster who loves a different take on a pretty princess awaiting her handsome prince. Combining talking goats, fire throwing dragons and haunted forests you have a super book for any little princess to enjoy! An easy 5\* tale!

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## **Mr. Wolf says**

What a delicious treat of silly story telling, funny characters and non-stop word play this book is. I can think of many kids who would love this book, but even more adults!

The writer seems to have been inspired by the likes of Edward Lear, Spike Milligan, Douglas Adams, Gideon Defoe, David Walliams and possibly every bad cracker joke as well (but in a good way!) -and it's

also uncannily often like my own children's book, so of course I believe Buckle & Squash to be a work of genius!- but once you're a few chapters into this tale, any references/inspirations fly out the window- probably into the author's 'the quivering gloop' near 'the front of beyond', and you get to love Courtauld's writing for her own.

I must have had a smile on my face throughout every page of this book. Whether you're a man or a woman, a boy or a girl, a pointy hatted princess or a prince with an unpronounceable name, if you like your stories to be intelligent, silly and almost Tim Vine type word play delivered, you'll love Buckle & Squash. Bring on the next instalment.

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### **Jason says**

A real good fun book, I read this to my daughter and she spent a lot of time laughing at it (funny voices were added by my as they didn't come with the book).

The illustrations in this are all pencil drawings and are really well done. The author has signed the book for my daughter and she also drew a dragon for her which she loves.

So much detail has been put into the story, even the chapter titles are inventive and there are references to previous scenes in the book so ya gotta pay attention.

Really looking forward to Eliza and Lavender's next adventure.

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### **Anya says**

4.5 stars. This book is full of punny humor and I read it in one night! There are footnotes too, I love that :D. It is a bit gory for kids though with illustrations showing detached limbs.... But fun for grown ups ha!

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### **Betsy says**

Considering that I will never but EVER write an early chapter book or, for that matter, an easy book for new readers, it's funny how often I sit around contemplating their difficulty. More precisely, I want to know which ones are more difficult to write. Easy books sounds like they'd be the hardest, particularly since it is remarkably hard to siphon a book down to its most essential parts while also making it interesting. Then again, those early chapter books are the devil. We see whole bunches of them published every year but how many are the type you'd like to read to your kids at bedtime over and over and over again? Nothing against *Magic Treehouse*, but would it kill Mary Pope Osborne to include just one tiny giant name Bonnet? Or have her characters fake The Black Death with the aid of turnip soup? I guess that's what's so great about Sarah Courtauld's early chapter book import *The Perilous Princess Plot*. Not only is it sublime bedtime reading, it's also perfect for transitioning kids to longer books, AND it's knock your socks off funny. Goat and gruel, there's something for everyone here. Unless you hate humor. Then you're out of luck.

Meet Lavender. Interests include princesses, being a princess someday, handsome princes, and princesses (did I mention that one?). Meet her younger sister, Eliza. Interests include not hearing Lavender mention anything fairy tale related ever ever again (to say nothing of her singing). The two live in the Middle of

Nowhere, in the Forgotten Corner of the Kingdom, in the realm of Squerb and their lives are pretty ordinary. Ordinary, that is, until Lavender gets herself kidnapped by the villain Mordmont who is hoping to ransom a pricey princess. Now it's up to Eliza and her trusty steed/goat Gertrude to rescue Lavender (whether she wants to be rescued or not) and to generally save the day. There just might be a couple odd pit stops to attend to first.

It's interesting. An author has a lot of ways of making a protagonist sympathetic to the her readership. Often in children's books an instantaneous way is to make them the recipient of unfair treatment. Nothing captures hearts and minds more swiftly or efficiently than good old-fashioned outrage on behalf of your heroine and that's certainly how Courtauld begins the book, with Eliza mucking out the goat pen as Lavender tra la las about. However, the real way in which you bond with Eliza is through your mutual annoyance with Lavender. Lavender is sort of what would happen if Fancy Nancy ever got so swallowed up in a princess obsession that she became unrecognizable to her family. Courtauld was quite clever to make Lavender the older sibling too. We've all seen the younger-princess-obsessed sibling motif in various books and while I've nothing against it, there's something particularly grating when someone who, by dearth of age alone, should know better yet doesn't.

In a given day you probably won't read many early chapter books for kids that feel like the cast of Monty Python meandered out of retirement to write a book for children. Funny? Baby, you don't know the half of it. Funny is hard. Funny is difficult. Funny is almost impossible to pin down because everyone's sense of humor is different in some way from everyone else's. But I simply refuse to believe that there's a kid out there who could read this book and not crack a smile once. Here, I'll give you an example. Early in the story the evil villain Mordmont is depressed. As he says, "I'm a man of simple pleasures . . . All I ever wanted was a castle, my own pride of lions, a jeweled crown, a choir of elves singing me awake each morning, sainthood, the power to make gold, the best mustache in Europe, a Jacuzzi, an elephant from the Indies, another one to be its friend, a singing giraffe, the power of invisibility, Magic Cheese Powers, a tiger with the feet of a lamb, the head of a lamb, and the body of a lamb – basically, a lamb – power over the sea, power over the letter C . . ." at which point we're told that another 4,235 simple pleasures are to be skipped over so that we can fast forward to the final one, "a meringue that speaks Japanese." It's the lamb part that really got me. Love that lamb.

So let's say you're writing an early chapter book and you have the chance to illustrate it yourself. Do you do so? Particularly if it's your debut novel? Yep. I've checked out her CV and from what I can tell Ms. Courtauld isn't exactly a trained artist. In this respect she reminds me not a little of Abby Hanlon, another hilarious early chapter book author/self-taught illustrator whose *Dory Fantasmagory* is largely aided by her seemingly effortless pencilings. In this book too the art is deceptively simple. Just pencil sketches of silly tiny things, really. Yet I tell you right now that if some fancy pants illustrator walked up and said they'd redo the whole thing for free, I'd turn 'em down flat. Courtauld has this perverse little style (in the best possible way, naturally) that just clicks with her storytelling. Some of it is obvious, like the view of a tearful rhino forced to watch Swan Lake, and some are visual gags so cheap that you just want to physically hug the book itself (like the image of people poking a girl after Mordmont talks about losing at poker). And how many early chapter book British imports can you name that contain images of Kanye West? I rest my case. Check and mate, babies.

According to a number of reputable sources this book has, "won the Sainsbury's Book Award, and has been shortlisted for the Sheffield Children's Book Prize and Coventry Inspiration Book Award." In the U.K. it was also originally released with the title *Buckle and Squash and the Monstrous Moat-Dragon*. I'm not entirely certain why the U.S. publisher chose to change that one. Perilous plots are nice and all but they can't really hold a candle to freakin' moat dragons, now can they? I mean, it's a dragon! In a moat! Still, a title change is

a small price to pay when you get a book as good as this one. Hand it to a boy, hand it to a girl, hand it to a goat, they'll all enjoy it in their own ways (though the goat may need a bit of a floss afterwards). If there are more Buckle and Squash books on the horizon, let us hope they float our way. I, for one, will look forward to those adventures. After all, the Monty Python guys can't live forever. Time for someone else to pick up the torch.

For ages 7-10.

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### **Tim Roast says**

This book has a sense of fun and a sense of adventure within its pages.

The story follows the adventures of two sisters, Lavender and Eliza, who have two different destinies. Eliza was "going to battle dragons and giants. She was going to vanquish monsters and travel to distant mountains." Her sister Lavender's destiny was "almost certainly going to feature a handsome prince."

It is because of Lavender's wish for a Prince that she gets in trouble being kidnapped for ransom in a castle surrounded by a moat where the Monstrous Moat-Dragon mentioned in the title of the book lives. It is up to Eliza, the more sensible sister as she doesn't have her head in the clouds, to save her.

The humour in the book is the same type of silly, surreal humour as made popular in the Mr Gum books. The drawings that accompany the text are pretty unique being quick pencil drawings and as such they carry a particular type of charm.

My 7-year-old really enjoyed the book. The first day we started reading it she went off and read the rest on her own, which shows her interest.

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