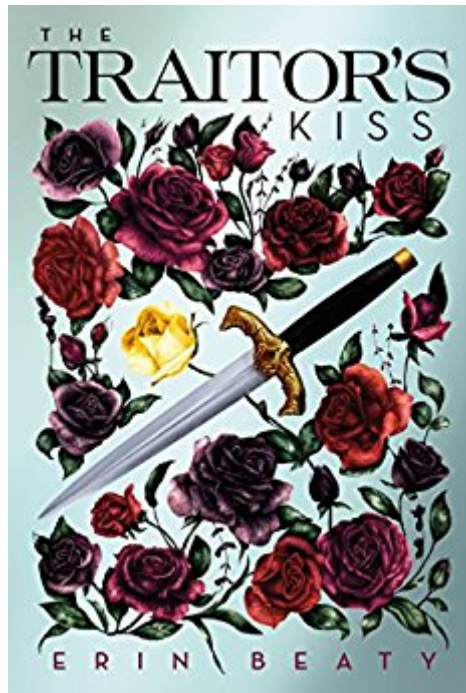




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The Traitor's Kiss (Traitor's Trilogy)



Synopsis

An obstinate girl who will not be married. A soldier desperate to prove himself. A kingdom on the brink of war. With a sharp tongue and an unruly temper, Sage Fowler is not what they'd call a proper lady—which is perfectly fine with her. Deemed unfit for a suitable marriage, Sage is apprenticed to a matchmaker and tasked with wrangling other young ladies to be married off for political alliances. She spies on the girls—and on the soldiers escorting them. As the girls' military escort senses a political uprising, Sage is recruited by a handsome soldier to infiltrate the enemy ranks. The more she discovers as a spy, the less certain she becomes about whom to trust—and Sage becomes caught in a dangerous balancing act that will determine the fate of her kingdom. With secret identities and a tempestuous romance, Erin Beaty's *The Traitor's Kiss* is full of intrigue, espionage, and lies. An Imprint Book "One of the most hotly anticipated young adult fantasy reads of 2017" • *Bustle* "An action-packed, expertly plotted story, drenched in double crosses and intrigue, with an irresistible heroine and a sweet and sexy romance." • *Publishers Weekly*, starred review "Complex characterization, deftly layered adventure story, and [a] balanced blend of political maneuvering, romantic interludes, and action scenes." • *Kirkus Reviews* "Beaty balances a taut web of deceit...readers will be carried away by the mystery." • *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* (BCCB)

Book Information

File Size: 3705 KB

Print Length: 351 pages

Publisher: Imprint (May 9, 2017)

Publication Date: May 9, 2017

Sold by: Macmillan

Language: English

ASIN: B01KFX64VK

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #20,162 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #134

inÂ Books > Teens > Romance > Fantasy #228 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Teen & Young Adult > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure #234 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure > Fantasy

Customer Reviews

well written and very entertaining! this is the kind of book i would re-read!

Sage is a strong willed young woman in a time of compliant maidens. She prefers breeches to skirts, and climbing trees to needlepoint. When forced to meet the matchmaker, she reveals her aversion to being matched. The matchmaker decides to take Sage under her wing as her apprentice, where Sage demonstrates her keen observational skills and sharp intellect. The royal guard also admires these skills, and she is recruited to gather information for the crown as they sense an uprising brewing. I would like to state, that I am a hard-core contemporary reader. However, I do delight in a fantasy novel from time to time, and especially like when the story lean towards high fantasy. I love taking that trip back to an undefined time, to another world, that is entrenched in its own history, geography, and politics. Ahhh, a true escape from the day to day grind. I was very pleased with the escape provided by *The Traitor's Kiss*. I know there are some things that will disappoint the hard core fantasy lovers out there. As far as I know, there is no map, and I know it is somewhat crucial to understand the lay of the land. Perhaps, there will be a map in the finished copy (?). And, although Beaty did a wonderful job with the history and politics of the realm, the world building was still a little lacking. Alas, this is slated to be a trilogy, and Beaty can get that done in the next book. But, like I said, I am a contemporary reader, so this did not bother me. This book was all about the characters for me. I think at this point, we expect strong heroines, and Sage was just that. She had her own thoughts and opinions. She wanted to make her own decisions, and to make her own way in the world. She valued intellect and learning over preening and being matched. She was essentially an anachronism in this undefined medieval-like time. I loved her spirit, her sass, her can-do attitude. I liked that she was not afraid to get her hands dirty. There were so many sides and layers to her. Her past broke my heart, but what a future I sense for her. "I could never be happy pretending to be something I'm not. I just wish being myself didn't cause so much trouble." I thought the matchmaker was well crafted, as well. Mistress Rodelle had this air of superiority, that came along with the power to arrange political unions, but she also had this nurturing side, which was apparent in her dealings with Sage. Some of her plotting elicited grins from me, as I knew I would love the result. She was crafty, and I liked it. The captain and his men

wormed their way into my heart as well. They were swoonworthy, but also so loyal and dedicated to the crown and each other. Their bonds of brotherhood were quite apparent, and their interactions were often amusing. But what I really liked, was the way they respected Sage. Once she was pulled into their circle, they listened to her, and treated her as an equal. They considered her suggestions, and when they worked, they gave her credit. They appreciated her, and didn't underestimate her abilities. That scored them points in my book. Some reviews I have read did not like when the book took a romantic turn. Um, I love romance, and this one was totally ship-worthy. I smiled and swooned and all that good stuff. It was a slow burn, but once it got there, it was a wildfire. "Kissing her had been like tasting sunshine." This is also the type of trilogy I like - no cliffy! I am a fan of series, which have an overarching story, but also a story arc that is completed in each book. This BIG plot is not resolved, but the smaller plot is. We know enough at the end of this book to expect more, but also be sated, and that always pleases me. Overall: a promising beginning to a new series replete with great characters, battles, duplicitous plots, espionage, and romance.

Handsome captain skilled in sword fighting and fearless in combat. Beautiful tomboy girl seeking her place in the world. No sword and sorcery here. This is just the sword part, but well written and with plenty of background on the people wielding the swords, men mainly, but also women as well. And the women go well beyond the usual stereotypical roles of being at best token players in a plot built around men, or at worst chattel to be fought over. Here the women are at the heart of the action and refreshingly play innovative central roles alongside the men; even better, the author manages to pull off this feat without sounding like she's trying to grind some egalitarian axe. It's just good storytelling. The plot moves along at a great clip and keeps the reader wanting to know what will happen next. There was quite the cast of characters in this novel, along with spies, traitors, subterfuge and tricky character impersonations, but the polished writing kept all this very clear and plausible. While obviously targeting the young adult crowd, this novel is also very enjoyable for the, uh, older adult. If you're looking to read an entertaining yarn, then this is for you.

Matchmaking, politics, handsome soldiers, war espionage, smart women and cozy tea time, *The Traitor's Kiss* has everything I love. TTK is an original fantasy novel that combines a Jane Eyre-type of lead character with political and strategy plot lines. From the start, I fell in love with Sage, a smart and opinionated young woman who teaches her uncle's siblings and reams of independence. I truly pictured her as a Jane Eyre, sure of her own mind, fond of books, hurt and isolated in her social condition, but proud and outspoken. There's an aura of cozy tea times and proper manners in every

scene as it surprisingly and stimulatingly expands into political matchmaking of noble families, turmoil, covert strategy and espionage. So interesting! Matchmaking is approached as a chess game with unexpected political repercussions. A military escort comprised of brave and well-connected officers work in a double mission as they protect a group of brides intended for a traditional ceremony held in the city, but conspiracies, old feuds and treasons haunt them all the way. I really took to this beautifully clever mixture of Jane Austen's social gatherings and strategic counterbalance of political machinations. It's not adventurous in pace, but intelligent, with attention to detail, lively dialogues and a forbidden romance that will leave you breathless when the first (very passionate) kiss takes place. And the explosive plot twist that hides in the middle of the web of deceit will leave you even more breathless. It took me by surprise and really blew my mind. Then all the secrets, all the plans and enemies and surprises converge in an epic finale full of action and heartbreak! And I loved every word of it. The storyline is quite sealed, but could there be more? A second book with the general storyline? I wonder... Favourite quote: Mend a broken plate with that apology, and I'll accept it. (I'm very happy to share my honest opinion of this arc from netgalley)

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