

Title: *Fable*
Author: Adrienne Young
Genre: Adventure/Fantasy Fiction

Reviewer Name and Grade: Alex Z., 8th Grade

Date Reviewed: March 27, 2021

This is a fiction book by Adrienne Young about a teenage girl named Fable, who is left on the thief-filled island of Jeval by her own father. She was left there by her father Clove after their ship, the *Lark*, sank in the Tempest Snare. Her mother Isolde died with most of the other members of the crew. Her father tells her that if she could find her way off the island by herself, she could go with her father and her crew. With little money and food, she had to learn to survive on her own, and rely on the skills taught to her.

Did the plot (for fiction) or presentation of information (for nonfiction) keep you interested?

Yes, I believe the plot for this book was interesting enough to keep me interested. Many exciting things happen to keep you interested like when she learns about her father.

Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?

The pace of this book was good. Things didn't happen too quickly or too slowly.

What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for?

This book is appropriate for 6 to 9th grade.

What type of reader would you recommend this book to?

I recommend this book for readers who enjoy fantasy or adventure books.

What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?

There is killing in this book if anyone is concerned about this.

Rating:

4 stars: I enjoyed this book and found it worthwhile reading.

This book was very interesting in its story, and the family of Fable was interesting. We learned a lot about the characters as we go on, and new characters were introduced as the story went on.

The story is interesting. An example of this is when we learn more about Fable's father.

Reviewer Name and Grade: Sophia S., 8th Grade

Date Reviewed: March 28, 2021

Fable is a book about a young girl, abandoned by her father at 13 years old the day after her mother died. She was cruelly left on an island called Jeval to fend for herself. The story begins four years later, when Fable, the main character, has learned the practice of dredging - diving deep underwater in order to obtain precious gems in coral reefs. Jeval is a harsh island, full of thieves and cruel realities. She is saving up coppers - the currency among the inhabitants of this world - in order to buy passage to Ceros, the city where her father resides. Her goal - to

prove him wrong when he said that she was not made for this world. She had almost saved up the coin she would need to trade for passage when her suspicions that several other dredgers are teaming up against her are confirmed. She barely escapes death when another dredger follows her to the place where she had been finding pyre. At that moment, she realizes that she must get off of the island immediately. Using her skill and focus, she narrowly evades death once again. Fable leaves the island by bartering for passage on the *Marigold*, the ship she has been trading with. Finally off of the island, Fable begins the search for her father.

This story takes place in the Narrows, a highway for trade. Many ships sail this stretch of sea, but it's a very treacherous business. Jeval, Dern, and Ceros are some of the major locations in this book. Jeval, as mentioned before, is an island of dredgers and rough people who barely manage to stay alive, ending up stealing when they can. Dern and Ceros are two trading cities, with Ceros being the center of trade in the Narrows. The time period, though not clearly stated, resembles that of trade during the 1700s. No form of modern technology is even mentioned in the book, but we see characters using maps, compasses, and stars to navigate. There are many references to parchment and candles as well, which points to a period long ago.

Fable, as previously mentioned, is a girl of about 17. She is strong and resilient, and her way of life has taught her to be brutal. On Jeval, her only mission was to survive and get off the island, which has taught her courage and harshness. The ship she uses to get off Jeval, the *Marigold*, has only five crew members: only about half of the usual number for a ship like that. It consists of Willa, Paj, Auster, Hamish, and West, the helmsman and captain. West is a young man who speaks little of himself, but as quoted from Willa, tends to "make other people his problem." He is rather cold on the exterior but is shown to care deeply about his crew, and is a very skilled helmsman. Just like Fable, the years in the Narrows have turned him into a ruthless person, the trait that was necessary to survive in the world of trading. Saint, Fable's father, is yet another major character. He is a highly accomplished sailor, by far the most successful in the Narrows. He has more than twenty trading ships under his control and is the envy of all the Narrow's merchants. He is shown to be by far the most hardened and brutal character out of all the rest and is the most experienced as well. He is skilled at making people stay indebted to him forever.

Did the plot (for fiction) or presentation of information (for nonfiction) keep you interested?

Yes, the book began with some exciting action scenes that kept the reader hooked. As it went on, it progressed into a captivating storyline, creating a book that was quite impossible to put down.

Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?

The pace of the book was just right. The author presented information at a perfect rate, and dropped carefully worked out and unpredictable twists at just the right time.

What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for?

I would argue that this book is appropriate for 8th grade and up. The two main reasons for this are violence and language. Though there are no graphic descriptions of extreme gore, some situations characters are in may be unnerving to younger readers. For example, in the very beginning of the book it is mentioned that Fable sees a corpse floating in the water, chained to a rock and being eaten by fish as a result of not repaying debt. Though this is a great way to show the reader the type of world Fable lives in, it can certainly be disturbing to the more young and sensitive reader. In addition, this book has some foul language. Though not excessive, a rather strong curse word shows up right in the first sentence.

What type of reader would you recommend this book to?

I would definitely recommend this book to a reader who enjoys adventure but can handle rather dark themes. Though this book shares elements with *Pirates of the Caribbean*, it is far darker in terms of morality and what it takes to survive. Though the adventure aspect is exciting, the gruesome reality that the need for survival prevents you from being kind shines through.

What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?

This book, as mentioned before, is set in a world reminiscent of *Pirates of the Caribbean* and uses a lot of sailing terms that may be helpful to know. For example, positions such as helmsman and dredger can be inferred, and some are explained in the book. Nevertheless, it is helpful to know what they are in greater detail.

I would rate this book *5 stars*.

The storytelling, as explained before, is wonderful. The writing itself is captivating and very descriptive. Adrienne Young uses creative and unique metaphors to skillfully set the scene on every new page, which is part of what makes the book a wonderful read. In addition, the world-building is done perfectly. Just a few chapters in, I was able to understand how the Narrows functioned, and by the time I was halfway through the book, I understood the dynamics of a trading world I had never even lived in. The brutality of the traders is shown masterfully, and the reader understands the cost of what it takes to survive. Though the Narrows aren't real, their authenticity made me feel as though I was a part of their world. Little details that the author put in, as well as important ones such as the currency, made me truly understand this richly-constructed world.

Reviewer Name and Grade: Karan S., 9th Grade

Date Reviewed: March 29, 2021

Fable, a seventeen-year-old, is the daughter of the most dominant trader in the Narrows, her father, Saint. One night, her mother had drowned in a terrible storm, leading to a series of events that one could only imagine. The day after, Fable is sacrificed by her father to an island filled with thieves and a lack of food. Her mother, however, before she died, had taught Fable a wide variety of survival skills. With these survival skills, Fable is determined to survive, and fulfill her passion for standing beside her father and his crew.

She starts surviving by scavenging for gems, especially in the water, and selling them. Along with this, she seeks the help of West, another young trader on the island who Fable has been selling gems. Fable pays West in order to help her get across the narrows, providing a passage to get to her father. However, when Fable gets to the Narrows, she finds that the whole trading enterprise, especially those owned by her father, is more dangerous since the last time she was on the Narrows. Also, Fable's connection with West starts to depreciate due to the little trust shared between them.

Fable can be characterized as a passionate and determined person. This is because of her passion and determination, even after being sacrificed on an unknown land, to be part of her father's business and crew. Saint can be characterized as authoritative and powerful. This is due to holding the biggest trading enterprise within the Narrows and being respected by many other traders. Although little said about Fable's mother, she can be characterized as helpful and caring. This is because she cared a lot about Fable, and even put in the effort to teach her survival skills

and techniques. Lastly, West can be characterized as greedy and unreliable. This is because of his necessary payment to help Fable, as well as the very little trust and communication with each other.

Did the plot (for fiction) or presentation of information (for nonfiction) keep you interested?

The plot of this story was unlike anything I've ever read. The development of the plot, however, was somewhat similar. For instance, in many books I've read there's a challenge for the main character and to perform this challenge requires help from another. In this case, it would be Fable trying to get back to the Narrows, and requiring help from West. Apart from this, the plot was very interesting and definitely kept me engaged.

Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?

The pace of the book felt to be a little too fast. For example, in my opinion, I felt as if the way the story was developed could've used a little more detail and a little more imagery to help describe to the reader what was going on at current moments in the book.

What grade level(s) is the book appropriate for?

This book is appropriate for anyone in middle school to early high school in my opinion. I say this because although this is a good read, I wouldn't say it's as advanced for someone to read in high school.

What type of reader would you recommend this book to?

Fable was stranded on an island, by herself, with little food, and still was able to get back to the Narrows. Because of this, I would recommend this book to someone who likes to solve challenges that seem impossible.

What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?

Some other information is that this book could be a little confusing and may require a re-read for some. In other words, due to the copious amount of characters and events, understanding future characters and events might be a little troublesome.

4 stars: I enjoyed this book and found it worthwhile reading.

I greatly enjoyed this book and found it to be a worthwhile read. Apart from the minor inconveniences such as the pace of the book, and the extensive amount of events and characters, this book's plot, and development of the plot, was very intriguing.