

The Looking Glass Wars

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Frank Beddor (author)

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Genres: *adventure, fantasy*

Issues: *corruption, identity, imagination, power*



Remember Wonderland - that amazing imagined world of the White Rabbit, the Red Queen, the Cheshire Cat and the Mad Hatter? Well, this is the real story. The story of Alyss Heart, destined to become the greatest Queen Wonderland has ever known until, on her seventh birthday, her Aunt Redd invades the Queendom.

Her parents are murdered; her friends die to protect her; and her bodyguard, Hatter Madigan, takes her through the Pool of Tears to our world.

Horrified by the grey bleakness of Victorian England, Alyss finds that her Power of Imagination - her royal inheritance - is slowly weakened by her dismal surroundings, until she cannot make even a single flower sing. Desperate to retain her memories of home, Alyss tells everyone she meets about Wonderland, to be met with laughter and disbelief on all sides. Then her adoptive parents introduce her to the Reverend Charles Dodgson, who tells her he will turn her astonishing story into a book. Devastated by the comical farce he makes of her country's bloody and horrible history, Alyss realizes that she will never be believed and that she must adapt to her new world. And so she meets a prince and is about to marry when Aunt Redd's dreadful assassin, the Cat, appears. Dragged back into Wonderland, Alyss must traverse the Looking Glass Maze in order to become the Queen that her country so desperately needs if her people are to be saved from the savage cruelty of the Redd Queen.

This is a dark, rather sinister reinterpretation of a classic story, full of fear and bitter fighting. Alyss is very much a young woman in search of her identity and her place in the world - whichever world it happens to be. Friendship, loyalty, duty, justice and love are just a few of the underlying themes. The slightly surreal nature of Wonderland becomes positively nightmarish in Beddor's handling of the story, as he brings to life both the worst and the best that can be found in a strong imagination. Interesting, but rather disturbing in tone, this clever book is not for sensitive readers who are inclined to get nightmares from books