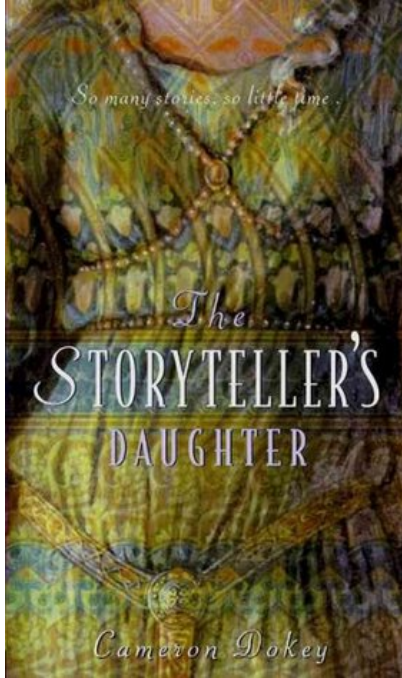


Book Reviews

The Storyteller's Daughter

Cameron Dokey



The Storyteller's Daughter starts out with the heroine, Shahrazad, speaking directly to the reader and informing them that she will be telling her story in her own way and that it won't be like the stories the reader has heard before. Shahrazad tells her tale in her old age. This gives the reader the advantage of knowing that she survives the harrowing tale into old age. Once the tale begins, Shahrazad describes how her father met her mother and brought her back from a foreign land to be his wife. They had Shahrazad together and shortly thereafter, Shahrazad's mother passes away and her mother's blindness passed onto Shahrazad. This blindness enables Shahrazad to read her mother's story cloth and tell all the fantastical tales her mother once told. Despite being treated badly by the other children growing up and being seen as an outsider as a young adult, Shahrazad still has a selfless attitude, and when her father remarries and has another daughter, Shahrazad takes care of her new sister after her mother-in-law passes away. In the same way that she willingly takes care of her sister, she also wants to take care of the people who have rejected her as a foreigner. When the king is betrayed by his wife, he becomes enraged and vows to take a wife every month and, after the first night of the marriage, he will have the woman executed. He promises, however, that if a woman voluntarily marries him, he will only imprison this woman and not kill her. Shahrazad sees this as her destiny to save the women of the kingdom and convinces her father to let her marry the king. She has a plan, however, and she asks the king to let her tell her beloved sister one more story before he has her executed. He grants her wish and Shahrazad starts telling her sister a tale in the presence of the king. By the end of the night, the tale she started is still not finished and the king is so enthralled that he lets her live another night. This continues until another betrayal shakes the kingdom to its core. The king and Shahrazad are both imprisoned, and Shahrazad must find the strength to tell the king that she loves him despite the danger that he

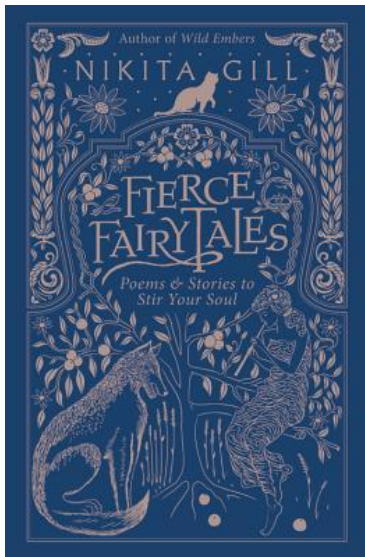
may not love her back. In the end, Shahrazad's courage and selflessness save the kingdom and the king.

(<https://bit.ly/2jz9ncQ>)

Dokey, Cameron. (2007). *The storyteller's daughter*. New York: Simon Pulse

Fierce fairy tales: Poems & stories to stir your soul

Nikita Gill



Hear me roar, hear me sigh, hear me cry out, hear me whisper magic into the abyss. If you enjoy poems that will set your soul onto fire and make you look at the world in a new way, Nikita Gill's fierce fairy tales are for you! Twisted look on cliché fairy tales, with Sleeping beauty punching the prince when she wake up to a stranger kissing her, Snow White staying in the forest and sang it to life, Little Riding Red Hood being the wolf the entire time, or how magic can be a weapon in the hands of women. How toxicity can be look at in different perspectives by the world. How healing is very important for you as an individual. This book is highly recommended for anyone even if they do not read poems because

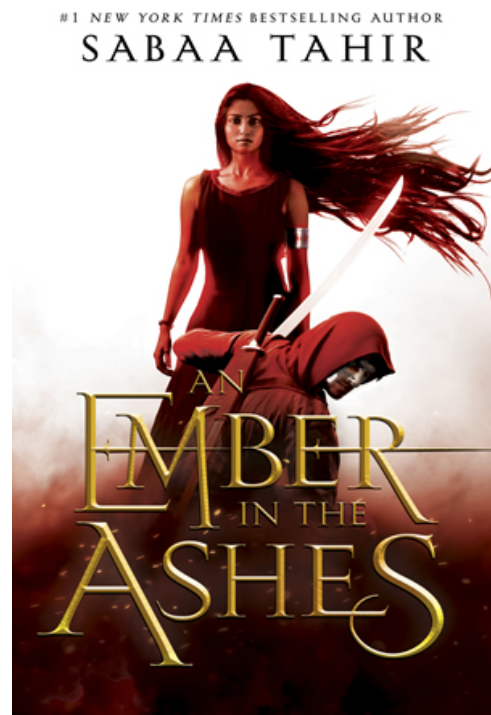
Gill also blend into short stories and they are so relevant to the current ongoing issues in feminism, and equality rights.

(<http://bit.ly/fiercefairytales>)

Gill, Nikita (2018) *Fierce Fairy Tales: Poems & Stories to stir your soul*. New York: Hachette Books

An Ember in the Ashes.

Sabaa Tahir



In this Ancient Rome inspired fantasy, defiance against the Marital Empire is met with death. Society in the Martial Empire is divided into factions to ensure the rulers continue to rule those below them: Martials lead with some of their youth going off to become soldiers known as Masks; the Scholars are a race of oppressed individuals reduced to slavery by the Martials; Augurs are known as the holy men and women; and lastly, there are the Tribes of nomads.

Laia, a Scholar, ends up working with the Resistance in the hope of getting their help to rescue her brother. This brings her into the life of Elias who is reluctantly training to become a Mask. Laia and Elias quickly realize that

their two destinies are intertwined and that their choices may impact the fate of the Empire.

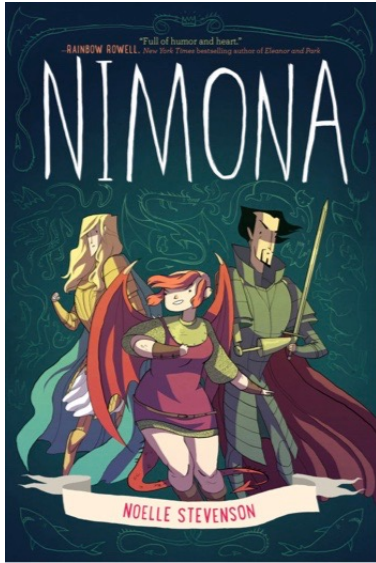
This is one of those rare books that make your heart pound and your palms sweat. Fast paced and exciting, the story is told from the perspective of both Laia and Elias. Laia finds her own strength as the novel progresses, while Elias learns compassion from Laia. Based upon Ancient Rome, the world created by Tahir is brutal, vast and only touches the surface of the world depicted in this series. The ending will make you want to run out and grab the second book in the series, *A Torch Against the Night*.

(<https://bit.ly/2Ij2vLO>)

Tahir, S. (2015). *An ember in the ashes*. London: Razorbill.

Nimona

Stevenson



Based upon Stevenson's popular web comic, this comic follows an impulsive shapeshifter known as Nimona. Nimona has a tendency for villainy and teams up with Lord Blackheart, a bigtime villain with a vendetta. Their mission is to prove that Sir Goldenlion and his crew are not the heroes that they are made out to be. Perhaps Nimona and Lord Blackheart are not the villains in this story after all.

This book doesn't take itself too seriously but is cleverly done.

Stevenson makes jokes out of well-known hero and villain tropes, making the book even more enjoyable. Stevenson

balances science and magic throughout Nimona's adventures and

turns what I thought would be just a funny comic into a complex, even sad, story at times.

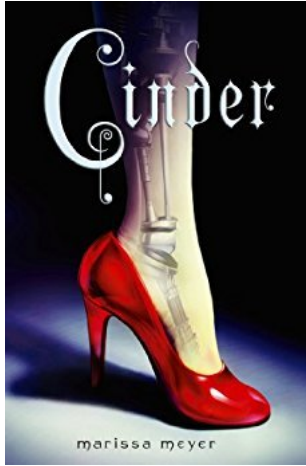
I picked this up based on Noelle' Stevenson's art, which I used to follow online, and I was not disappointed

(<https://amzn.to/2U1tZrl>)

Stevenson, N. (2015). *Nimona*. New York: Harper Teen.

Cinder: Book 1 in the Lunar Chronicles Series

Marissa Meyer



This futuristic Cinderella retelling follows Linh Cinder, a mechanic in the city of New Beijing in the Eastern Commonwealth. Her skill with machines catches the eye of Prince Kai when he asks her to fix his android. But growing closer to Kai will risk revealing her secret: Cinder is a cyborg. Part human, part machine, and discriminated against in the Commonwealth. Plus, Kai is not free to fall in love; he is set up for a political marriage to Levana, Queen of Luna.

Meanwhile, a deadly plague threatens to ravage the Eastern Commonwealth. When Cinder's stepsister falls ill, her stepmother forces her to volunteer for plague research, which everyone knows is suicide. But researchers soon realize that Cinder is immune to the disease which brings up more questions about her past that Cinder can't remember. Unravelling her own past will bring her closer to Kai and may reveal a sinister plot to take over Earth. Will Cinder be able to warn Kai before the clock strikes midnight?

Cinder is a gripping retelling of a classic story that fairy tale fans are sure to love, though, it is much more than the Disney movie we know and love. Meyer has woven elements of Cinderella into a story about family and friendship and, ultimately, sacrifice. Readers will fall in love with Cinder's spirit and her best friend Iko's spunk. The fairy tale retellings continue with the sequel to Cinder: Scarlet, a retelling of Little Red Riding Hood.

(<https://bit.ly/2qDCxbH>)

Meyer, M. (2012). *Cinder*. *Feiwel & Friends*.