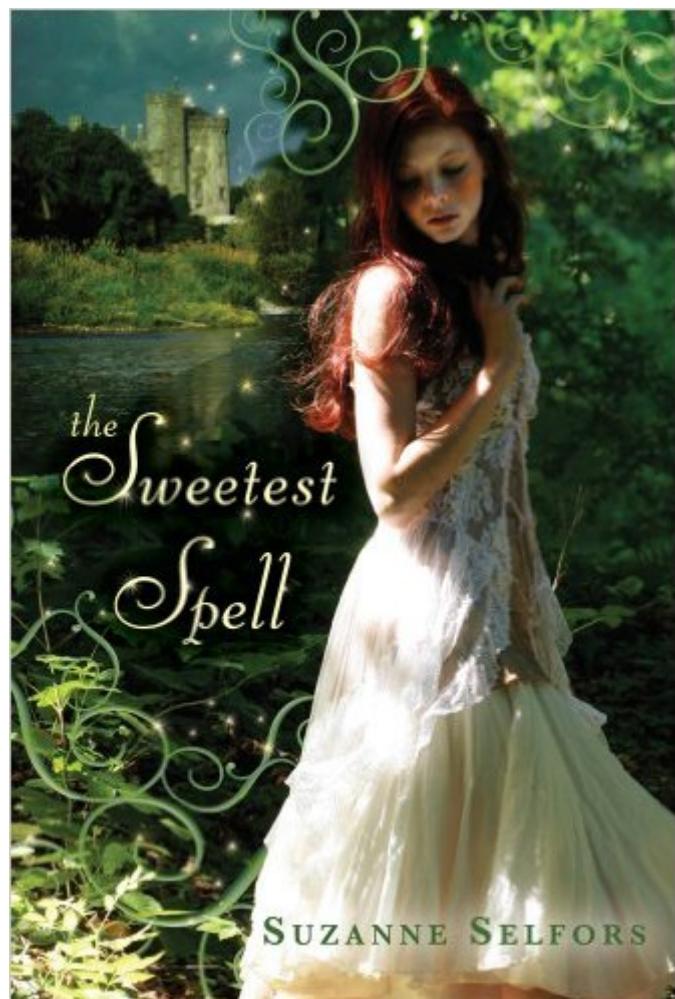


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The Sweetest Spell



Synopsis

Emmeline Thistle, a dirt-scratcher's daughter, has escaped death twice-first, on the night she was born, and second, on the day her entire village was swept away by flood. Left with nothing and no one, Emmeline discovers her rare and mysterious ability-she can churn milk into chocolate, a delicacy more precious than gold. Suddenly, the most unwanted girl in Anglund finds herself desired by all. But Emmeline only wants one-Owen Oak, a dairyman's son, whose slow smiles and lingering glances once tempted her to believe she might someday be loved for herself. But others will stop at nothing to use her gift for their own gains-no matter what the cost to Emmeline. Magic and romance entwine in this fantastical world where true love and chocolate conquer all.

Book Information

Hardcover: 416 pages

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Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 1.3 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (44 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #625,536 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #160 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Medieval #167 inÂ Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Medieval #596 inÂ Books > Teens > Romance > Historical

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

This was the book I picked for my Random Read in December. Honestly, it was just another fluffy fairy-tale reads to me. Maybe I've read a few too many lately and they're just mushing in my brain. Maybe I'm losing my appetite for them. I don't know what it was but this book just didn't hit the bar for me. For one thing, it cracked me up to no end that the premise and all the problems that ensue were over chocolate. That they were SO SERIOUS about it. Okay, maybe I kinda take chocolate a little too much for granted. Maybe I could never ever even being to imagine what it would be like not to have chocolate. So maybe I'm biased, but what can I say? It was a good laugh. But in all seriousness, beyond the chocolate, but plot wasn't that interesting. It was just your typical adventure

book, oh no she's captured! Oh yay the hot prince has to go rescue her! Oh they keep just missing each other! OOOOH! Yeah lots of O's. I mean I dunno, it was cute, but it felt like a drag most of the time. By 150 pages I was skimming to finish the last 250. I just didn't care anymore. It's not like I hated it...just..no. Nothing held my interest. The only reason I finished was because I've DNFed WAY to many books lately, and this was my Random Read. Emma was okay. She was a nice narrator but nothing extraordinaire. And I'm all about the extraordinaire. I didn't feel like I could connect to her. She was just telling the story and yes going through things and falling in love but just No. Sorry Emma. Give me backbone. Give me yourself. Maybe a little insight into who you are? Oh you don't want to? Okay then, thanks for your time. How do I even begin to talk about the romance...? It was like this: So, this girl who's like the lowest of the low moves into town.

I bought The Sweetest Spell because the sample was promising (I'm a sucker for down and out but plucky heroines), and ended up tossing it aside in disgust when I hit the 75% mark. The book started strongly, but had several issues that pushed me out of the story or made me actively dislike the characters, including:- The central premise is that the heroine is able to create chocolate. Which she does by churning cream, but instead of transforming into butter it transforms into chocolate. Presumably milk chocolate. This bugs the heck out of me; chocolate has a long and interesting history, and most of it has nothing to do with milk. Milk chocolate came around in the late 1800's in Europe, making it a very recent addition to chocolate products. To have an imaginary European-style medieval kingdom where chocolate is produced solely from milk strains credibility past the breaking point for me, and soured the entire book from the first time the heroine picked up a butter churn through until I stopped reading in disgust.- Despite being sixteen or older, the characters are without exception entirely juvenile. The level of complexity of thought for everyone, from main characters to secondary characters to villains (including adults), feels like it belongs in middle school. Probably the best example of this (without offering any spoilers) is that the main character comes across someone who claims she has studied negotiation, and their advice is "if you have something other people want, make include something you are willing to give up when you make your demands so that they feel in control." Oookay, well that's not bad advice, but it's also a pretty simplistic way to understand negotiation and isn't going to get you very far in life.

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