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A Face Like Glass



Synopsis

In the underground city of Caverna, the world's most skilled craftsmen toil in the darkness to create delicacies beyond compare—wines that remove memories, cheeses that make you hallucinate, and perfumes that convince you to trust the wearer, even as they slit your throat. On the surface, the people of Caverna seem ordinary, except for one thing: their faces are as blank as untouched snow. Expressions must be learned, and only the famous Facesmiths can teach a person to express (or fake) joy, despair, or fear—at a steep price. Into this dark and distrustful world comes Neverfell, a girl with no memory of her past and a face so terrifying to those around her that she must wear a mask at all times. Neverfell's expressions are as varied and dynamic as those of the most skilled Facesmiths, except hers are entirely genuine. And that makes her very dangerous indeed . . .

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

****STARRED REVIEW**** "Using beautiful prose, Hardinge builds a richly imagined world that twists as much as the carefully orchestrated plot. Readers will eagerly follow noble Neverfell through its tunnels, marveling at the extraordinary sights and catching their breath at her daring escapades." (Booklist)"Hardinge's imagination here is as ever—ebullient, lavish, and original. Whether she's anatomizing expression as fashion accessory, describing the effects of certain wines, or likening human maturation to that of cheeses, she needles into some of our dearest desires and foibles with sharp psychological insight. Her enthusiasm for language play

brightens dark Caverna with the sparkle of wit; but most notably, she suggests how fundamental to human interaction our facial expressions are." (The Horn Book)****STARRED REVIEW**** "Hardinge excels at wordplay and worldbuilding; witty but not trite, her utterly original setting and chaotic, fidgety protagonist anchor a cracking good story that raises important ideas surrounding the nature of friendship, the value of honesty, and the danger of too much, whether luxury, ambition, power, or desire...like Grandible's cheeses, this may cause visions or just make your head explode (with delight)." (Kirkus)****STARRED REVIEW**** "Hardinge is at the top of her game with this entrancing and action-packed adventure. Her voluptuous prose is full of sensory details and wildly imaginative descriptions...A compelling and triumphant follow-up to *The Lie Tree* for those who love to become immersed in a good story." (School Library Journal)****STARRED REVIEW****"Hardinge's characteristically lush and sophisticated language will entrance readers, and she makes wonderful use of her singular setting and wildly eccentric cast to pose haunting questions about reality, artifice, and the things we attempt to conceal." (Publishers Weekly)****STARRED REVIEW****"There is wit in the writing style and cleverness the development of this crackling world, and readers will connect with Neverfell, the one girl who can't hide what she is feeling in a world that has no idea what that is like." (Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books)****STARRED REVIEW**** "Frances Hardinge writes at full throttle, with luscious language, viscerally evocative descriptions and more plot twists and turns than the Minotaur's labyrinth... the wily storyline and gorgeous writing that will leave readers longing for a new Face to express their devotion to the author." (Shelf Awareness)"To identify any aspect of this book is necessarily to sing its praises. The characters are engrossing, their relationships moving and lovely; Neverfell's innocence and capacity for love and kindness carry her through enormous social upheavals, while the mystery of her lost memory burns hot and furious and hidden inside her. But above anything else what astonished me about *A Face Like Glass* was its construction, its pure perfect pace, the mechanical gravity of its plot moving through its beat with meticulously crafted finesse... *A Face Like Glass* is everything like magic." (Amal El-Mohtar NPR)

Frances Hardinge is the winner of the 2015 Costa Book of the Year for *The Lie Tree*, one of just two young adult novels to win this major UK literary prize. She is the author of several books for children, including *Cuckoo Song*, *The Lost Conspiracy*, *Fly By Night*, *Well Witched*, and *Fly Trap*. She lives in England. www.franceshardinge.com.

****Review originally posted on Goodreads July 2014****This popped up as a Goodreads

recommendation, I'd never heard of the author but the book sounded interesting so I took a chance. I am so glad I did. Hardinge is an incredible world-builder, this is like nothing I've ever read before. I read someone else compared it to Alice and Wonderland, and I get where they were coming from - the whole 'down the rabbit hole' experience, but that's just the tip of the iceberg, and doesn't do the book justice. I am quite fond of the concept behind The City of Ember - the cataclysmic event, the city underground, the drive to get out - A Face Like Glass is sort of similar but on an entirely different level of awesome. The world Hardinge builds for us is wonderfully weird and fully fleshed out. The culture and politics alone is astounding. The characters leap off the page, and there is enough magic and wonder to make people draw comparisons to Harry Potter - though it's nothing like the Potterverse. There you've got wands and here we've got killer cheeses and wines. Yes, seriously. I've just finished Fly by Night and Fly Trap and Gullstruck Island and Hardinge does not fail to impress. She is the real deal and I can't believe she's not getting more attention. I imagine her books are somewhat hard to categorize - they're children's books but they aren't like anything else out there. The writing isn't dumbed down, but is full-bodied and bursting with vocabulary. Precocious pre-teens to adults will really get a kick out of Hardinge's writing, and A Face Like Glass is my favorite so far (though they are all amazing). I eagerly await her next... **Original review (if you can call it that): Incredibly brilliant. I want to go back to the beginning and read it all over again. Highly, highly recommend. 10 stars!!

This book is a pleasure to read! Its twists & turns keep you engaged and the rich world created by the author is full of characters & details that delight the reader's imagination. Elements of humor & relatability are woven throughout this fantastic tale, which I would consider appropriate for younger and older readers alike. At times I found this reading experience akin to that I had reading the Harry Potter series, though the affection I have for JK Rowling's characters & prose was more profound. If you are looking to be transported by a story of imagination, mystery, & adventure, I found this page-turner to be a real treat. Upon finishing it I immediately set out to learn about what else this author has written, hoping her other novels can transport me as effortlessly as this one did.

Yet again, Hardinge proves to be one of the most creative modern writers I've read. In this novel she creates a vivid fantasy world full of Alice in Wonderland-like magic. Down the rabbit hole, I never quite knew where the story would twist next, but I enjoyed every minute of the ride. A Face Like Glass tells the story of Neverfell, a girl who doesn't quite fit into her world, Caverna, a city below ground. In Caverna, magical foods are created and sold at high price to those who live above

ground. But the people of Caverna can never leave, nor can they make natural facial expressions; they must learn to wear them like children are taught to put on clothes. When Neverfell, with her fluidly expressive face, is discovered, she throws the strange world of Caverna into disarray.

Kept me guessing the entire time. Most novels tend to have an inevitable conclusion but this novel came together in a way I would never had guessed. Very well written and a page turner ! Highly recommend.

fabulous, unexpected, fresh, and unique. I feel as though I could go back and re-read it from the beginning and still pick up nuances that I missed the first time around. I don't know how I have missed this author in the past, and was thrilled to learn there are others to read. don't be misled by the fact that she is classified as a children's author. At 59, this was a wonderful read.

I don't think my review can even come close to doing this book justice. And I've decided to keep this short and sweet because there is a very good chance it could turn into a blubbering mess about how much I love and adore this book! What a delightfully odd and magical story! This is my first Frances Hardinge book and I am blown away by the strange magic that she so effortlessly weaves throughout the pages of *A Face Like Glass*. There seems to be no limit to this author's clever imagination. And let me just tell you this author has a way with words! It's beautifully written and the narration pulls you into the book word by word. I think it's safe to say this is definitely not your basic formula fantasy, it's so much more...If you like Fantasy, any kind of fantasy, read this book! It will take you on a strange, thrilling and magical ride through an underground society in a place called Caverna. A place that will baffle your mind and defy all sense of logic. It will introduce you to all sorts of people, many who you cannot trust but a select few who you can. Some so grand and over the top that they will leave you in awe. But it will unfold a story so mesmerizing, heartfelt and unique that you will remember it for years and years to come.

I absolutely adored this book! I had never read anything by this author before but downloaded the book after hearing a glowing review from a friend. Wow. Wonderfully written, I was so engaged in Neverfell's journey. I was found myself truly surprised at the twists and turns in the plot and found myself sad when I finished the book. I would absolutely recommend this book to fantasy, sci-fi and adventure story lovers.

One of the most imaginative novels I've read in years. Hardinge has created a truly unique fairy tale. To say more would be to spoil the adventures of Neverfell and Caverna that await readers.

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