



The Wrinkled Crown

Anne Nesbet

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Up in the magical, wrinkled hills, Linny breaks an ancient law. No matter how musical a girl may be, she must not so much as touch a string of a lhourka before she turns twelve, or she'll be spirited off to Away. When the curse meant for her strikes her best friend instead, Linny must leave her home behind to try to set things right. If you walk down out of the wrinkled hills, you will never find your way home--everyone knows that other law. But Linny has the gift of not getting lost, and she will risk everything to rescue her friend. With her father's young apprentice, Elias, she travels down into the Plain, where science may have found a cure for magic. Linny and Elias soon find themselves caught up in the age-old battle between the wrinkled places and the Plain. Can Linny keep the fractured land from falling apart—and save her best friend?

The Wrinkled Crown Details

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Author : Anne Nesbet

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From Reader Review The Wrinkled Crown for online ebook

Arabella says

I haven't actually read it but im too lazy.

Cheryl says

Nesbet's voice, her style, is original. I couldn't immerse myself in this and race right through; every time I started to speed through as I can with most genre children's books I had to backtrack to catch what I missed.

For example, it's told in third person, which is excellently refreshing, but at the same time we're often inside Linny's thoughts, sometimes without being warned that we are: "How much time had Linny wasted... just because she was tired?" See, that's Linny asking herself that... but at the same time it's a poke to the reader, because the reader knows she needed that nap; it wasn't a waste of time.

Very clever, fun, exciting... with a lot of heart. Will encourage a child to really think about things, like the value of technology, for example. I bet the author's first impetuous was conflicted feelings about e-books vs. paper, or maybe fantasy vs. science fiction.

Recommended to all readers who have enough room in their schedules to read more than just a few pages at a time.

Jennifer Alvarez says

A fresh voice in children's fiction! Anne Nesbet's writing is unique and captivating. I don't summarize plots in my reviews (who has time!), but this is a rollicking, adventurous tale. Linny will steal your heart and Elias (that Lummo) will have you laughing out loud.

On a deeper level, this book explores the tensions that exist between the scientific Plains people and the magical people who live in the Wrinkled Hills. The metaphor for all of this is found in Linny's *Lourka*, which is like a banjo/violin/guitar. The *lourka* is science and magic all rolled in one, but working together instead of against. And with her *lourka*, Linny produces music, harmony. Now if only the people could be played like a *lourka*! I enjoyed this book and I highly recommend it to all people.

Ms. Yingling says

E ARC available at Edelweiss Above the Treeline.

Had its moments, but I have a library of medievalish fantasies that no one checks out any more, so probably will not purchase.

Tamara (Tamaraniac) says

(I wrote this review AGES ago but I forgot to post it here. Opppps.)

The Wrinkled Crown by Anne Nesbet is set in a world that has two sides: the plain side based in logic and science, and the wrinkled side where everything is made of magic and stories can come true. This is a very interesting middle grade novel, but it is confusing and hard to follow, the plot moves rather slowly and the characters fall a little flat. It reminded me a little bit of Fly by Night by Francis Hardinge and other historical England inspired middle grade high fantasy novels that are maybe just a little bit longer than they need to be. (But isn't that cover illustration gorgeous?)

Sam says

Huge thank you to Harper Collins Canada for this ARC!

Some of my favourite kinds of middle grade novels are often the ones that are the most quiet and gentle. There's a lot to learn, there's often a good balance of morality and magic, which is exactly what we have in Anne Nesbet's *The Wrinkled Crown*.

If I'm being honest, I think what I loved about this book the most was just how gorgeous the writing is. It really does an amazing job of drawing the reader in, and it's rich in description. The story itself is cheeky, as we follow Linny, a heroine who has broken an ancient law in her world, in that if she touches a lourka before she turns twelve, or she'll be banished to Away. Unfortunately her best friend ends up having to pay the price, and it's up to Linny to make this wrong a right. I loved this story, though it definitely had some slow points for me.

I really can't get over how fleshed out these characters feel. I adored Sayra and her love for Linny, I thought Elias was a cutie, and Linny... she reminds me of Tommy from *Rugrats*, always doing what she shouldn't be and then trying to figure out how to fix a problem before things get much, much worse. Linny is adventurous, daring, clever, she's someone I think a lot of younger readers would easily be drawn to because she is so capable, yet she's not always confident in herself.

The Wrinkled Crown is a such a delightful fantasy novel for anyone of any age. There's so much for children and adult alike to appreciate! The story is delightfully charming, with wonderfully vivid characters and fantastic writing. It's definitely worth checking out if you are a fan of authors like K.E Orsmbec or Claire Legrand.

Liza says

My reaction summed up in a gif:

Why. Why why why do pretty covers have meh books inside?

This book had an interesting premise. People living in a "wrinkled"(aka magical) town has a tragedy happen and the main girl has to solve the problem she caused.

It's such a good setup most of the time....however for me it fell flat on its ass for this book.

The thing is, I just never gave a crap about anything. Liny's quest? I felt like she was stupid. It is one thing to make a lourka and doom yourself but to show your friend it with the risk? It just felt like the conflict was forced.

The whole trip felt dull and a lot of times I wondered when something was going to happen. And whenever it did, I just did not care. I ended up skimming the last part but yeah, nothing there caught my attention either.

Beth says

This isn't just a children's fantasy. This is a *conceptual* fantasy - a really good one. It's not high fantasy; there's no epic battle between dark and light. There's just Linny and Elias, who need a medicine for their friend Sayra, who's being pulled Away.

And so they have to head down to the city, where they've never been, to find Linny's aunt and a cure. They're never been, because, says the legend, people who leave the wrinkled mountains never find their way back. Wrinkled areas can't be mapped, you see. Linny, though - Linny knows the risks. And she thinks she can find her way back.

And so the book's foundational concept is established: there's one city with two sections, Plain and Wrinkled. The plain side has mapmakers and surveyors and Progress, and the wrinkled side has legend and rebels. And yet things aren't clearcut: one of the greatest things about this novel is the way Linny isn't immediately met by people who can help her. (view spoiler) The rebels aren't representative, and neither are the Surveyors. Instead, there's a sort of uneasy coexistence between wrinkled and plain, and a determined mingling by the fair. There's a fantastic examination of the way reality is distorted over the years, when Linny stumbles upon a real labyrinth. And prioritizes neither way.

(view spoiler)

There are some places where the concepts feel a little thin. The idea of storytelling creating reality, for example: (view spoiler) And there's another imprecise comparison between the two extremes, (view spoiler)

I feel like I'm making the novel sound fairly linear. It's not. You're flung into the novel, and while sentences seem to follow the patterns of conventional English, nothing makes sense, not really. There are ideas presented that fairly shout their importance but not enough context yet to understand them.

The really great thing about this book is the way the writing furthers the wrinkled worldbuilding, the way it scrambles along, headlong and madcap and scattered. Just the way Linny does. Linny, who's more instinctive than considered, who flings herself after decisions that make no sense. Who's more than a little bit wrinkled

herself, but who loves maps. Linny, whose mother is a mystery - whose aunt is a scientist -

Because she, Linny, was like this world. She was always going through both doors at once, wrinkled and Plain. She didn't have the words to say this properly, but there are more ways to speak than words.

She swung her lourka off her shoulder and held it out to to the crowds.

"See?" she said. "The whole world is in here: measurement and magic, both at once."

And she shook the stiffness out of her fingers and played that for them as a song, simple and sweet.

Those parallels shape the story, which crackles along, and shifts sideways, and sometimes goes startling places.

Highly, highly recommended.

Katie says

[The Plain Sea (hide spoiler)]

Brandy Painter says

Originally posted here at Random Musings of a Bibliophile.

Anne Nesbet is one of those authors who always surprises me. Her book like they will be one thing, but they have so many fascinating layers. The Wrinkled Crown is my favorite book she's written yet.

Linny has been tethered to Sayra all of her life. From the moment it became obvious Linny had a talent for music, she was put at Sayra's side to keep her safe. To keep her from even picking up a Lourka and allowing her talents to be realized. In the town of Lourka if a girl even brushes against a Lourka accidentally before her twelfth birthday, she is spirited off by mysterious voices to the Away. Linny and Sayra have developed a special bond, and they have secrets. Sayra allows Linny to run free in the woods. Linny unable to resist the call of music uses these times to craft her very own Lourka. Sayra feels she's failed Linny and wishes that Linny's fate would be hers. When that is what happens, Linny feels guilty but also determined to be the one to rescue her friend. In addition to music Linny possesses another gift: she never gets lost. She can find her way anywhere. With her Lourka on her back, Linny sets out to find a way to save her friend. Even if it means leaving her home and traveling to the Plain-a place no one from Lourka has gone to and then returned from. She is reluctantly accompanied by her father's apprentice, Elias who has his own motivations for rescuing Sayra. The Plain is not a welcoming place though, and soon Linny and Elias find themselves at the center of a political battle. Linny appears to everyone to be The Girl with the Lourka, whose return everyone is eagerly awaiting so that she can right the wrongs of the world. There are people who want to exploit her and people who want to make her disappear.

The Wrinkled Crown is first and foremost a book about relationships. Friends, sisters, mother/child,

ruler/subject, it covers just about everything (except romance). Linny is at the center of most it. She is a determined girl who is sometimes thoughtless and impulsive, but always willing to work hard to reverse the mistakes she makes. Most of the other characters are not as well developed as she is. I got a strong sense of Sayra from the few pages she's in, but she is absent for most of the book. Elias is funny and a good foil for Linny, but I didn't feel he was as well rounded as Linny is. The characters all work together well to form a cohesive whole for the story though. There is more than one antagonist Linny has to face as she make her way through the Plain and people try to use her as an ends to their own means. These characters are shown to have strengths and flaws, but to be ultimately selfish in their goals. This is a contrast to Linny whose only wish is to saver her friend and go home. I liked how there were minor characters who helped her out in small ways as well. The unsung heroes who did little things to move her where she needed to be.

There is an interesting twist on genre in the book. While it is very much a fantasy novel with a quest and an apparent chosen one (this is deconstructed a bit), it could also be classified as Science Fiction. The most fascinating aspect of the book to me is that the strongest theme is magic versus science. Faith versus intellect plays a huge role too. Linny with all of the magic she brings from the wrinkled hills, loves maps and the science too. She is a part of both worlds. The book is about finding a balance between the two. They are at war with each other, but do they have to be? This is by far my favorite part of the story.

This is an excellent tale of friendship and perseverance that will appeal to lovers of fantasy quests and music.

I read an ARC made available by the publisher, Harper Children's, via Edelweiss. The Wrinkled Crown is available November 10th.

Charity says

For full review please go to: 5girlsbookreviews.blogspot.com, Twitter @camartinez, Facebook "5 Girls Book Reviews"

REVIEW BY: Michaela, age 11 years, 4 months

MAY CONTAIN SPOILER:

This book kind of bored me, it wasn't as magical and fun as I thought it was going to be, but my sisters would love this book.

However, I do have a favorite part and character. My favorite character is Linny because she is brave, like me. My favorite part is when Linny finishes the lourka.

Adeline says

The Wrinkled Crown is a slightly less traditional but all the more compelling take on fantasy. Showing the concepts of war, prejudice, and division from the perspective of an innocent but hopeful and engaging twelve-year old, it uses magic (wrinkledness) and science (plainness) to represent common divisions in every type of world. Linny is a girl born in a town where girls are forbidden to touch an instrument known as a lourka until their thirteenth birthday--but she is also born with music in her soul. When she breaks the rules

beyond all belief, and the punishment meant for her hits her best friend instead, Linny leaves her sheltered, wrinkled town on a quest to save her friend, and enters into a dangerous, divided world, with seemingly no one to trust. This book can be slightly confusing at times, but that only makes it better if you keep pushing through. The Wrinkled Crown is a beautiful tale about love, courage, and self discovery that any middle grade fantasy reader will love.

Anoush Emrazian says

In the village of Lourka, girls are not allowed to touch the stringed musical instrument of the same name or else they'll be spirited off to Away. Linny has music in her bones and can't help herself. After building her own *lourka* and upon Linny's 12th birthday, the voices come, but instead of taking Linny away, they steal her best friend Sayra. To save Sayra, Linny decides to travel outside the village and into the Plains, a place where magic doesn't exist and people use medicines and technology.

The plot of this book continually moves forward with something always going on and Linny always meeting new people and not knowing who she can trust or how to find where she needs to go. I liked watching Linny work things out around her, figuring out how this different world worked and what she could do about it.

I also liked trying to imagine the different places she visited and compare them to the present time.

Linny is spunky and adventurous and quite obviously the perfect person for the job of rescuing her friend and helping to heal the Plain and bridge the gap between magical and logical.

Roslyn says

What a strange experience the reading of this novel was for me. I went from irritation/lukewarm enjoyment to exasperation to shocked pleasure, back to lukewarmness and finally to joy.

I was struck by the exuberant, gorgeous writing from the beginning, but equally, from the start there was something about the storyline that irritated me. I think it's because the division of the novel's world into 'Wrinkled' and 'Plain' seemed like such a clear and obvious analogy for magic/imagination/ versus science/logic/reason that I at times felt as though I were reading an allegory that was, at base, rather banal. Also, this is basically a quest story in which lots of adventures happen to the main protagonists, and again, this struck me as a little pedestrian, despite the fine writing. At first, Linny herself seemed like the rather overdone feisty, irrepressible girl who so often is the protagonist of MG fantasy – even though, again, she is so likeably exuberant and the writing seems designed to reflect that exuberance. And while I eventually really enjoyed most of the characters (Linny herself, and especially perhaps Elias and Linny's mother and aunt), I found some of the minor characters whom Linny meets along the way (the Tinkerman; the magician whose name I don't remember; and the leader of the Plain, whose name I also can't recall) so larger-than-life and almost cartoonish that they remained mere stereotypes to me. Even the wonderful Half-Cat – it's hard to imagine someone who loves fantasy not enjoying the Half-Cat – as vividly and beautifully drawn as he/she/it (I've forgotten) is – is a little stereotypical, precisely because the magical cat has become something of a trope in MG/YA fantasy. I did enjoy the Half-Cat, but it (she? he?) again reflects the attempt to reconcile the arbitrary division of the world into Wrinkled/Plain and for that reason didn't feel to me as original and quirky as I think it was intended to be.

So on one level the novel is the kind of protracted adventure story that's almost traditional in MG books, one I'm personally not particularly fond of. On another level, a large part of the novel does feel like an extended metaphor or allegory, in a rather too obvious way, albeit not a black-and-white one. The whole message of the novel is that you need both sides of the dichotomy – so that it's not really a dichotomy at all – and that, like life itself, it's all very complex. Despite this complexity – and despite the fact that I completely agree with these ideas – I kept feeling that there was something prosaic about the message. It's a very pointed message: this aspect of the novel felt very MG to me, while the very best MG/YA books always feel uncategorisable and not restricted to any particular age group.

I had really loved Nesbet's first book, *A Cabinet of Earths* (although even then, I felt that the plot let the book down a bit in the end, in that it didn't quite match the conceptual brilliance of the novel), and I'm wondering if in *Cabinet*, the quirkiness of the characters and ideas work well in the context of our ordinary world, while for me, *Crown* feels a bit like a too-obvious allegory because it's set in a world artificially set up to reflect the two dichotomies she's exploring. Except that she's not so much exploring them as presenting them to us as apparent opposites and then offering a reconciliation between them, represented by Linny herself – a strategy that, while I couldn't agree more with the reconciliation, again just feels a bit a bit pedestrian to me: instructive rather than exciting, perhaps.

But there are aspects of the novel, apart from the vividly drawn main characters and the gorgeous writing, that ultimately save it for me. At about the three-quarters mark, Linny's aunt reveals something that suddenly puts the whole set-up of the novel's world into a different perspective. Instead of merely being a quest fantasy in a quaint world arbitrary divided into Wrinkled and Plain, we are given an almost science fictional perspective on the whole thing that puts a totally different spin on everything. I was totally intrigued by this new way of framing the novel's world. At the same time, Linny's aunt started to feel like an absolutely fascinating character I wanted to read a whole lot more about. At that point I started to feel a new excitement in the novel. But then – the story just went off into more adventures. Not that this wasn't without interest: it continued to be beautifully written, and I loved the scene at the Plain sea, and the development of Elias's character, for instance. But I did feel some disappointment, because the aspects of the story I was most interested in (the almost science fictional framework suggested by Linny's aunt, as well as Linny's aunt herself) weren't being explored.

Having said all this, there were times when the sheer power of the language, and the way Nesbet interweaves and layers language and concepts, almost at times reminded me a little bit of Patricia McKillip. And then the last part of the book, the resolution, totally entranced me and left me totally satisfied emotionally. (view spoiler) – the whole ending felt so right and so satisfying that it set a definite mark on a book that I had felt so ambivalent about. This is what ultimately pushed the novel up from what was probably about 3 to 3 and a half stars for me to something I'm happy enough to round up to a clear 4.

Yapha says

Linny was a "hummy baby," clearly born with music in her blood. To keep her safe, her parents tethered her to Sayra for most of the time until she was twelve. (According to the lore of their village, any girl that touches a *lourka* before she turns twelve will be taken Away.) Linny and Sayra considered themselves mismatched twins and both had turns in saving the other's life. But Sarya didn't keep Linny safe -- not only did Linny touch a *lourka*, she built one herself. And on the night before Linny's twelfth birthday, she knows that she must pay the price. But even Linny is surprised at what happens. She sets off on a journey out of their magical hills to find a cure, and ends up finding much, much more than she had bargained for. A fun

adventure with an interesting underlying commentary on the junction between magic and science.
Recommended for grades 4-7.

ARC provided by publisher.
