



★ **Daughter of the Salt King**

A. S. Thornton

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In A. S. Thornton's romantic fantasy novel *Daughter of the Salt King*, a princess strives to find peace and happiness with the jinni she loves.

Just as Emel's dreams are about to come true, tragedy robs her of her last chance to marry and find freedom beyond the confines of her father's palace. In the midst of her despair, she learns the true source of her father's wealth and power: Saalim, a jinni imprisoned in a glass that never leaves the king's side. As their love grows, an impossible choice looms: one of them will have to sacrifice everything to secure the other's freedom.

Despite her royal status, Emel is as much a prisoner as Saalim. When she is not being forced to perform for potential suitors, she sneaks away to a nearby market to visit friends and learn about faraway places. After meeting Saalim, her world expands, and her desire to explore it deepens. The camaraderie between them blossoms, only to wilt under misunderstandings and jealousy before growing back, stronger than ever.

Sumptuous settings include the ruined but still beautiful city Saalim once called home, and the marketplace that grows ever quieter as mysterious brigands threaten the Salt King's domain. Intricate designs at the start of each chapter and ephemeral illustrations add to the story's atmosphere. As secrets are revealed and danger creeps ever closer, Emel keeps hope in a stranglehold, refusing to be cowed by her dire prospects and cruel father. Saalim's love emboldens her to take power where she can find it. But the most important lesson she learns is how to put herself first, even when the whole world tells her she is nothing.

Daughter of the Salt King is an unforgettable fantasy novel about love, freedom, and the discovery of self-worth.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (March / April 2021)

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