

Star of Deliverance

Mandy Madson Voisin

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A strong main character with a mission is someone for girls to look up to in this compelling teen-fantasy novel.

When her entire race is threatened, seventeen-year-old Emi knows it is up to her to save them all, even if it means risking her own death. In her suspenseful fantasy adventure, *Star of Deliverance*, Mandy Madson Voisin successfully packages a morality tale in an entertaining teen romance.

Emi is a girl born into slavery. Her mother is killed for treason, and Emi is left to be raised by the village healer. When a boy from another village shows up in the night with a mysterious illness, Emi realizes the only hope for saving him is to travel to the capital and seek out a cure. When she finds herself an accidental contender in a competition to marry Prince Corban, she must keep her true identity a secret long enough to save the boy and the rest of her people.

This is Voisin's first novel, and hopefully not her last. Her main character is someone young girls can look up to. Emi is strong and willing to take on a dangerous challenge, yet her occasional lapses of confidence and vulnerability keep her relatable. She grows through hard work, and even though she finds herself falling for the prince, she never loses sight of who she is and what her goals are.

In addition to creating a compelling main character, Voisin also crafts a detailed fantasy world, complete with its own political system, style of medicine, and languages. The social structure consists of two races: the Savians, who slave away in the country's orchards, and the Brockans, who live privileged lives. Voisin shows the human side of both and has readers rooting for them all as a whole.

In a time when teen fiction is growing more graphic with sex and violence, it is refreshing to read a novel that still brings the exhilarating thrill of romance and the looming threat of death in a milder way. Parents who aren't comfortable having their middle schoolers and teens reading *Twilight* and *The Hunger Games* will find this a great alternative. It still has the moral dilemmas of a society divided between the haves and have-nots, and the suspenseful actions of a girl who fights to save her people, but it's all within a PG rating.

CHRISTINE CANFIELD (Winter 2015)

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