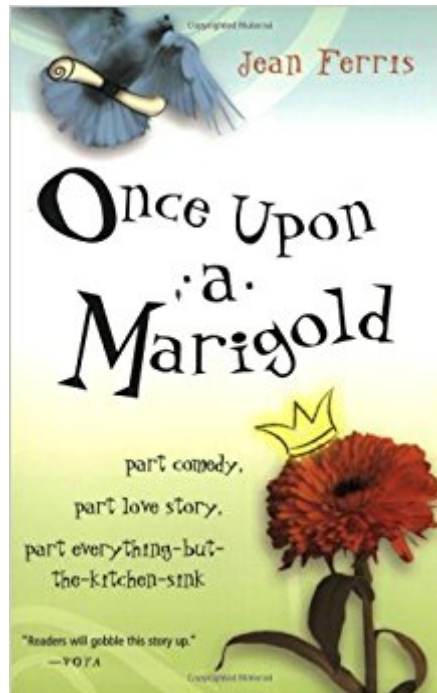




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# Once Upon A Marigold



## Synopsis

Christian is gaga for Princess Marigold. But he's just a commoner, and no match for royalty. Heck, he lives in a cave with a troll! And now he's discovered another reason to put his love-soggy heart on ice: Queen Olympia is scheming to take over the kingdom--and she'll bump off her own daughter to do it. Can Christian foil her diabolical plans?

## Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Harcourt Paperbacks (June 1, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0152050841

ISBN-13: 978-0152050849

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.6 x 7.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 156 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,847,457 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #50 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Collections](#) #1653 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Royalty](#) #22467 in [Books > Children's Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy & Magic](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 2 - 5

## Customer Reviews

In a gratifying fantasy that contains elements of classic fairy tales, Ferris (*Love Among the Walnuts*) breathes new life into archetypal characters by adding unexpected and often humorous dimensions to their personalities. The protagonist, Christian, has been raised in the forest by a troll named Edric. As he nears manhood, Christian decides it is time to see the world--or at least the section across the river, where the lovely Princess Marigold resides. Having spent many hours gazing at Marigold through a telescope and corresponding with her by "p-mail" (letters sent by carrier pigeon), he has already felt the sting of Cupid's arrow by the time he lands a job in court. Marigold readily returns his affections, but unfortunately, she is about to become betrothed to Sir Magnus.

Meanwhile, Marigold's evil mother, Queen Olympia, is plotting to murder both Marigold and her kindly, doting father, King Swithbert. Readers swept into the lighthearted spirit of this novel will likely not be bothered by the predictability of outcomes. As in fairy tales of old, jabs are made at social

values and norms, and concepts of nobility and ignobility are painted in very broad strokes. Nonetheless, heroes and heroines emerge as convincing, well-rounded characters embodying flaws as well as virtues. Their foibles-Edric's tendency to mix up adages, Christian's stubborn streak and Marigold's penchant for "awful" jokes-make the good guys all the more endearing. Ages 10-up. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Grade 5-9-As the cover proclaims, this story is truly "part everything-but-the-kitchen-sink." Readers first meet Chris when he is a strong-willed, clever child of six. He has run away from home, determined to live on his own in the forest. Edric, a troll, finds him and gives him shelter but cannot make him go back home, and Chris grows up with Edric and his dogs as his family, guided by an etiquette book found in the forest and Edric's own wisdom. As the boy grows, he continues his interest in inventing and watches the princess in the castle across the river. She is headstrong but lonely, and when Chris contacts her by carrier pigeon (or p-mail), they become best friends. When he takes work at the castle, there is no way that Chris, a commoner, can tell Marigold who he is, and he can only stand by as she is to be married to an unsuitable suitor. When he learns that her life is in danger, he must find a way to save her and the kingdom. This complex, fast-paced plot, a mixture of fantasy, romance, comedy, and coming-of-age novel, succeeds because these characters are compelling, well developed, and sympathetic. Quirky personalities and comic subplots give the story additional texture. Readers will be drawn into this world and be satisfied by the denouement. This blend of genres will appeal to a wide range of readers, and it's all great fun.Shara Alpern, The Free Library of PhiladelphiaCopyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Christian, who wandered into the care of Edric the troll when he was 6, falls in love with Princess Marigold across the deep river between their homes; eventually he leaves home and takes a job in the castle, and they are both embroiled in plottings and chaos and weddings and dogs.(Though reviews are inherently subjective, I prefer to provide some organization to my opinions through the use of a personal rubric. The following notes may contain spoilers.)Plot and Setting: 4.8 -- Plot is engaging from start to finish. Has many unique elements, no major holes, and a sense of focus. Setting and timeline are reasonably clear and believable. This story is full of humor and intrigue, with a good dose of love (both familial and romantic) thrown in. Never a dull moment. And while there's a bit of a teaser for the sequels tacked on at the very end, it's a very complete and satisfying

story by itself. Minor issues with setting and timeline: we don't learn the name of Marigold's kingdom until the very end, and the age dynamics of her triplet sisters (who were at least 15 when they married) and the twin princes (who, according to my math, were no more than 14 when they wed) feels odd. Characters: 5 -- Relatable, realistic, interesting, dynamic characters. Even minor characters have depth, as do the relationships between characters. Lots of unique, amusing, and interesting characters. Edric, Christian, Marigold, and the dogs probably get the most coverage, so we get to know them best, but there's also Swithbert, the triplets, and even Magnus, who all have distinct personalities and significant moments. And Olympia, though she's pretty solidly in villain territory, isn't entirely predictable. I really enjoyed the bond of the father-figures with their children, and all of Christian and Marigold's relationship, from p-mail messages to being blissfully, happily married. Mechanics and Writing: 4.8 -- Few, if any, typos, punctuation issues, or word errors. (

When Ed, an entrepreneurial troll comes across a young boy in a blue velvet suit, he has little interest in taking the boy in. However, the boy, Christian, has even less interest in returning home, wherever that is, so Ed takes him in as his own son. When Christian grows up, he makes friends, via p-mail, with the last remaining princess at the castle and quickly falls in love. How can a commoner like him and a princess like her make it work, especially when Princess Marigold's mother, the despicable Queen Olympia, has other plans? This is a story about being yourself in a world where others' expectations are desperately trying to form you into someone completely different, a story about friendship and about love. Both boys and girls can relate to this book and is great for gradeschoolers on up!

There you have it, folks. A true modern classic and a new traditional--and yet fresh--fairytale that I will most definitely read to my children and grandchildren. My heart aches with love for this story and its message.

As a fairy tale this book has everything: A young commoner of mysterious origin, raised by a conscientious troll and two faithful dogs. A young princess with a curse. A queen with dubious plans to marry off said princess. A doddering king. And a young love made stronger by p-mail (pigeon mail). This may sound like your typical fairy tale, but that's where the "typical" part of this fairy tale ends. What results from Jean Ferris' imagination is a very comical twist on the traditional fairy tale. One in which you may guess early on what the end result is going to be for our two main characters but will read on in delight just to find out for sure. Along the way you'll get some brief lessons in

Greek mythology and learn some truly awful jokes. At 272 pages this book is actually a very quick read. I typically don't finish books in one day but I was so thoroughly engrossed in this entertaining tale that I cuddled up in bed with my dog and was through most of the book in just a few hours. The recommended age on the back of this book is 10 and up and that is probably fairly accurate, although this would be a marvelous story to read aloud to even younger children. While not overly complex, this is a sophisticated children's book and one that any fairy-tale loving adult would enjoy. I'm looking forward to checking out more of Ferris' novels. I highly recommend this book.

The book was absolutely fantastic. The story was great and the confrontation between Ed and Queen Mad was amusing. The reason for the 4 stars is that the novel could have been longer and the topic of a boy finding he was a prince has been done. Over all, amazing. It was hard to put the book down when I needed to.

This book was totally adorable and hilarious! A while back a friend of mine told me to read it; that it would make for one of the most entertaining reads of my life. Of course, I thought she was exaggerating, but she was absolutely not! It is relatively short, but it's the kind of book that gets better every time! I definitely would recommend.

It was cute, romantic, extremely creative, funny... in a cheesy way of course, contained very likeable characters, and was vivid in detail. Where else can you find glowing crystal caves, castles with walls made of teeth, a forgetful tooth fairy, a silly troll who mixes up modern sayings, and a princess who picks her nose? This is definitely one of my all time favorite books, and although essentially it's for mid-to older teens and females, I truly believe everyone can and will enjoy at least one aspect of the book, if not the entire book.

Cute book! It could be read on its own, but I will be continuing the series since I like the world that the author has created. I'm not sure about things being built with children's teeth, but other than that nice take on fairy tales.

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