



The School for Good and Evil #2: A World without Princes

By Soman Chainani



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Witches and princesses reside at the School for Girls, where they've been inspired to live a life without princes, while Tedros and the boys are camping in Evil's old towers. A war is brewing between the schools, but can Agatha and Sophie restore the peace? Can Sophie stay good with Tedros on the hunt? And whose heart does Agatha's belong to—her best friend or her prince?

Soman Chainani has created a spectacular world that Newbery Medal-winning author Ann M. Martin calls "a fairy tale like no other, complete with romance, magic, humor, and a riddle that will keep you turning pages until the end."

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Behind the Scenes of The School for Good and Evil with Soman Chainani: What inspired you to write The School for Good and Evil?

We didn't have cable when I was young, so all we had was our rickety TV set and VHS tapes of every single Disney animated movie. Until age eight or so, that was all I pretty much watched. Everything I learned about storytelling, I learned from Disney. When I went to college, though, I became fascinated by the gap between the original tales and these Disney revisions. As a relentless student of the Grimms' stories, what I loved about them was how unsafe the characters were. You could very well end up with wedding bells and an Ever After—or you could lose your tongue or be baked into a pie. There was no “warmth” built into the narrator, no expectations of a happy ending. The thrill came from vicariously trying to survive the gingerbread house, the hook-handed captain, or the apple-carrying crone at the door—and relief upon survival. Somewhere in that gap between the Disney stories and the retellings, *The School for Good and Evil* was born. In recent years, fairy-tale mash-ups, retellings, and revisions have become popular—and for good reason, given how enduring and inspiring the source material is. That said, I had my sights set on something more primal: a new fairy tale, just as unleashed and unhinged as the old, that found the anxieties of today's children. To acknowledge the past—the alumni of the genre, so to speak—and move on to a new class. As soon as I started thinking in those terms, I knew I wanted to do a school-based novel. I was walking in Regents Park in London before a meeting when I had the first image . . . a girl in pink and a girl in black falling into the wrong schools. . . . I got so caught up thinking that I missed my appointment entirely.

Which school do you think you would belong to? Why?

I can be comically high maintenance (my friends joke that Sophie is the real me), so I'd surely be an overachieving Ever and the most regular user of the Groom Room (the medieval spa, which only the top-ranked students are allowed to use). That said, Evil's classes have no boundaries—for sheer entertainment value alone, I can see the allure. That's if I had a choice. In the process of writing the book, I realized I wasn't quite sure which school I would actually end up in—so I created an online assessment to answer that question. I wrote all the questions myself and there's a bank of over 100, so the questions change every time. I've taken it a number of times, trying to be as honest as I can, and I always end up 75% Evil and 25% Good. Those who read the novel will agree that this isn't a surprising result in the least.

Which class would you most like to take?

Henchmen Training, for sure. I just think the challenge of trying to wrangle these rabid, nasty creatures who hate the idea of being subservient henchmen sounds like a recipe for complete disaster and drama . . . two things I adore.

Describe The School for Good and Evil in three words.

- Intense
- Mischievous
- Effervescent

From School Library Journal

Gr 6 & Up—Sophie and Agatha have returned home from the School of Good and Evil, figuring their troubles were over. Friendship won the day, and the girls gained their happy endings. Or have they? There are wishes left ungranted and it seems their unusual victory has changed the very nature of the School itself—and not in a good way. The girls find themselves drawn back to the School once more, destined to face malevolent magic, danger, and treachery. Can Agatha find a way to put right what's gone wrong, and still save her best friend? Can Sophie keep the Witch at bay? Happily ever after never seemed so far away. This second title in the dramatic fantasy series will be eagerly read by fans of the first title, *The School For Good and Evil* (HarperCollins, 2013), but will likely prove confusing for newcomers. The writing has gained some polish moving into this second installment, but an about-face plot twist creates a disconcerting set of messages regarding the girls and boys of the School and may put off some readers. The conclusion remains mostly open-ended and there are several cliff-hangers that will presumably be resolved in a third title. This will appeal most readily to readers with a taste for fairy tales and drama similar to Shannon Hale's "Ever After High" series (Little, Brown).—Stephanie Whelan, New York Public Library

From [Booklist](#)

Sophie and Agatha left *The School for Good and Evil* (2013) as friends. Now, back in their village, they are having their Ever After, but as it turns out, their friendship isn't quite enough for Agatha, whose lingering feelings for Prince Tedros are upsetting their relationship. When the girls are forced to revisit the school, they learn that everything has changed. Now, it's the girls against the boys, and the female school is run by the manipulative Dean Sadar, who thinks that girls should write their own happy endings, without boys, and is willing to go to war with them to make it so. This sequel is stronger than the original and offers readers plenty to think about, especially when it comes to gender, love, relationships between sexes, and, of course, the most slippery aspects of good and evil. As Agatha notes, "Every fairy tale could be twisted to serve a purpose," and here, the stories bend and twist on themselves right up until the last pages, leaving readers anxious to find out in the next book exactly who ends up with whom—and why. **HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY:** The first book in the series debuted on the New York Times best-seller list, has been translated into languages across six continents, and will be a Universal Pictures film. Now that's a high-demand backstory. Grades 6-8. --Ilene Cooper

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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Daniel Grinder:

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