

SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL

O'NEILL, Cathy. *The Princess Revolt*. 352p. (Unraveled: Bk. 1). S. & S./Aladdin. Mar. 2022. Tr \$17.99. ISBN 9781534497740.

Gr 4-7—When 13-year-old Cia finds herself no longer needing to sleep, her best friend, Indian American Romy, theorizes that pale-skinned Cia is a vampire. But Cia seeks a better solution and tracks down Madam Fredepia, fortune teller and sleep whisperer. To her astonishment, Cia learns Madam Fredepia placed a fairy-tale counter spell on her when she was an infant. Cia's mother wanted her baby girl to grow up strong and independent, not like a fairy-tale princess. Now all the familiar fairy-tale elements are backfiring on Cia: she is being stalked by a deer, her school locker is full of shoes, and she is losing her hair. After her crush turns into a beast, Cia becomes desperate to break the spell before her friends are injured and a league of irate princesses take her down in order to restore their perpetual Happily Ever Afters. **This original spin on modern fairy tales stands out for its delightful voice. Cia's first-person narration, by turns insightful, intelligent and snarky, keeps readers engaged and giggling. However, the story also prompts readers to consider the downside of beloved fairy tales. Do they promote unrealistic standards of beauty? Do they discourage self-reliance in girls? Are they racist? O'Neill leaves readers with enough questions to begin critically examining the tales as old as time while keeping the magic intact. VERDICT Readers will be captivated by Cia's lively voice while discovering that they may wish to view fairy tales through an updated lens.** A solid purchase for middle grade collections where fantasy is appreciated. —Nancy Nadig.