

## **Flunked (Fairy Tale Reform School #1)**

**Jen Calonita**

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Gilly lives in an old boot with an energetic, large family, but not quite enough to go around. Her father's business was ruined when the Fairy Godmother stole their glass shoe design, leaving them with little money to sustain themselves. In retaliation, Gilly steals small trinkets from the rich royalty that pass through her town. But when she is caught for the third time, she is sent to FTRS, a fairy tale reform school to help make model citizens out of law-breakers and criminals.

My favourite part about this book was the diverse and engaging cast. The teachers range from the Big Bad Wolf teaching History to the Sea Witch for Etiquette, all reformed villains to set a good example for the students. It's hilarious how the author spins the personalities we know and love into something humorous, but in a way that is fitting, detailed and positive. Enter Gilly, a sardonic, spunky narrator with a strong dedication to her family. Her voice is interesting and fresh, and really weaves through the plot to create a magical effect. In addition, the supporting characters were unique and varied. Even though their back stories were not as descriptive as hoped, there is plenty of potential for development in the next few books.

Flunked also had a delightful and fascinating setting, each new page revealing an interesting aspect of Enchantsia. In the story, we see clever details in every corner, from charming store names to small references to other fairy-tales. Some of the elements felt unexplained and random, but this spontaneity contributed to the fairy-tale like, enchanted atmosphere. The plot has an abundance of action and adventure, with minor plot twists here and there to mix it up. Although the initial storyline was basic and simplistic, it was not overly predictable, and fit in well with the theme of the novel. Flunked is a light-hearted and well structured story, perfect for middle schoolers ages 8+.

### **Recommended Titles:**

Grounded: The Adventures of Rapunzel (Tyme #1) by Megan Morrison

Fairest of All (Whatever After #1) by Sarah Mlynowski

Story Thieves (Story Thieves #1) by James Riley

The Tail of Emily Windsnap by Liz Kessler

Half Upon A Time by James Riley