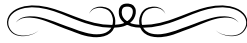


MEGAN MORRISON

# DISENCHANTED

*The Trials of Cinderella*



ARTHUR A. LEVINE BOOKS

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Summary: For generations the Charming men have been cursed, but now that the witch Envearia is dead the curse should be broken— however things are complicated at Charming Palace: King Clement is still nasty, Queen Maud has fled with the help of her son, Prince Dash, and Ella Coach (called Cinderella) would rather be at home sewing than living in the palace at Charming Prep school.

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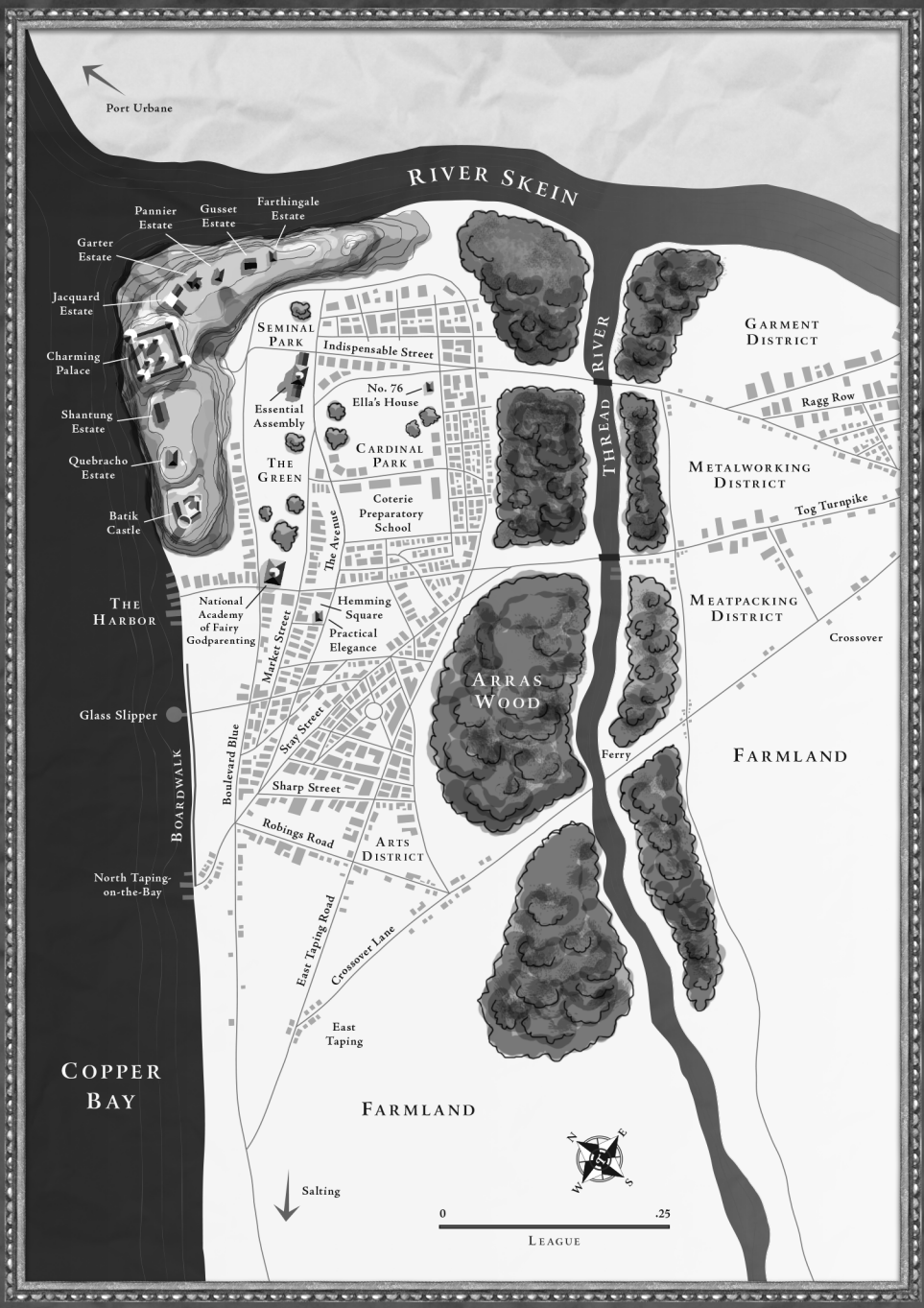
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TYME



# QUINTESSENTIAL



Port Urbane

RIVER SKEIN

Pannier Estate  
Gusset Estate  
Farthingale Estate

Garter Estate

Jacquard Estate

Charming Palace

Shantung Estate

Quebracho Estate

Batik Castle

THE HARBOR

Glass Slipper

COPPER BAY

FARMLAND

GARMET DISTRICT

METALWORKING DISTRICT

MEATPACKING DISTRICT

FARMLAND

ARRAS WOOD

SEMINAL PARK

THE GREEN

CARDINAL PARK

Coterie Preparatory School

Hemming Square  
Practical Elegance

ARTS DISTRICT

Indispensable Street

No. 76 Ella's House

Essential Assembly

National Academy of Fairy Godparenting

BOARDWALK

Boulevard Blue

Marker Street

Soy Street

Sharp Street

Robings Road

East Taping Road

Crossover Lane

East Taping

RIVER  
THREAD

Ferry

Ragg Row

Tog Turnpike

Crossover



0 .25  
LEAGUE



## ELLA

WHILE her roommates dressed for Prince Dash's return to Coterie Prep, Ella Coach waited for her moment.

"Not like *that*." Dimity Gusset smacked her maid's hand away from her complicated upsweep of red hair. "That's last month's fashion. Skies, isn't it your job to know that?"

"If your girl isn't good, you should get a new one from Lady Trim's school," said Tiffany Farthingale, who applied a deep red stain to her lips while her own maid buttoned her clinging white dress up the back. "That's where Mother hired mine, and she's so current and clever."

"Father *says* I'm on the List for a fairy godparent from the Slipper," said Dimity with a sigh. "He's paid them an absolute fortune, so I *should* get my contract any day. Until then, I'll just have to put up with Miss Mediocrity here."

The maid plaited a tiny, perfect, gold-threaded braid and wound it into place around Dimity's tower of hair. The girl's plump fingers didn't stumble, but her blush told Ella all her feelings. Ella looked down at the woolen slipper she was knitting and started another row.

"I'm just so glad that Dash is back!" said Chemise Shantung, Ella's third roommate. "It's been so long, and there are so many rumors — do you really think he's bald?"

"I heard the witch cursed his hair off," said Tiffany. "Poor thing. He'll need comfort after all he's been through."

"You're dreaming if you think he wants your comfort," said Dimity. "You know he's Lavalier's."

Tiffany rubbed a bit of red stain off one front tooth. "They're not betrothed."



Dimity rolled her eyes. “Hurry *up*,” she said to her maid, who now knelt at her feet, buttoning up her high-heeled shoes. Dimity kicked at her, striking her fingers with a jewel-encrusted toe. The maid yelped in pain and cradled her hand against her chest.

Ella gripped her knitting needles with sudden force. “Button your own shoes,” she snapped.

Dimity swiveled on her stool and pinned her narrow green eyes on Ella. “*You* look like a slum that someone set on fire,” she said, raking her gaze over Ella’s unfettered curls, her homemade clothing, and her battered black fishing boots. “You’ll never get near the prince if you look homeless.”

“Perhaps that’s for the best,” said Tiffany, wincing as her maid plucked an errant hair from between her brows. “Dash is used to a certain quality of company.”

“The kind who can’t put her own shoes on?” Ella retorted.

Dimity smirked. “Buttoning shoes and tating socks, or whatever you’re doing there, is servants’ work,” she said.

“Tating is lace,” said Ella. “This here is knitting. Your whole gown’s covered in lace, and you don’t know the difference?”

Dimity and Tiffany exchanged glances, and then both of them laughed — little tinkling laughs that made Ella want to shove her knitting needles right up their noses.

The assembly bell tolled. A general squeal of excitement arose both within the room and outside it, and Ella unclenched her fists. She didn’t have to live with these people anymore. Chemise threw the door open. Ella’s roommates squeezed themselves into the crowd outside, and Tiffany’s maid slipped out through the servants’ door at the back of the chamber. Ella was left alone with Dimity’s maid, who still knelt by the vanity, clutching her kicked fingers, her face turned to the wall. Ella heard her snuffle.

“Is your hand all right?” Ella asked gently, kneeling beside her. “Can I help?”

The girl wouldn't look at Ella. "It's fine, Miss," she whispered.

"Call me Ella, hey? I'm no quint." Ella smiled, but the girl did not respond. "What's your name?"

The maid wiped her tearstained face and got up from the floor. "Excuse me, Miss," she mumbled. She curtsied and fled through the servants' door.

Ella looked down at her hands. Rough and worn. Funny how Dimity and her kind never missed that Ella was working class, but the servants couldn't see it. To them, Ella was just another rich quint they had to serve. They couldn't trust her, and she didn't blame them — but it left her nowhere, with no one to talk to.

She had to go home.

She grabbed her old knapsack from under her canopied bed, shoved her knitting into it, and slung it over her shoulder. She put her ear to the door and listened until she heard no more stragglers, and then she left the dormitory room and headed for the building's exit. She could catch the day's second coach to Salting if she hurried. All the school guards would be busy overseeing the prince's safety. Nobody would see her bolt.

She'd reached the top of the back stairwell when a loud rap behind her made her tense, and she turned. Mother Bertha, matron of the girls' dormitory, stood in the corridor, looking ominous, tiny and hunched though she was. "Make your way to the assembly," she croaked.

"Need the infirmary," Ella lied. "I'm going to retch."

"Don't give me any of your crass southern lip, Elegant Coach," said Mother Bertha. "Turn around and do your duty, or I will call a guard and have you dragged."

She would, too. She'd done it before.

Ella gave the stairs a longing glance, but for the moment she was beaten. With the tip of Bertha's cane against the small of her back, she proceeded to the welcome breakfast for Prince Dash.