



The Girl of Ink and Stars

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[Ruth Williams](#) [3]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

?A myth is something that happened so long ago people like to pretend it?s not real, even when it is,? Isabella tells her friend Lupe. Isabella?s favourite myth is about Arinta the girl warrior who lived on the island of Joya when it sailed freely on the ocean. One day Yote the fire demon caught Joya, attached it to the seabed and would have swallowed it completely had not Arinta managed to save the island from destruction only to become lost in underground tunnels, never to be seen again.

Thirteen-year-old Isabella lives with ?Da? in the village of Gromera, her twin brother and mother having died. Times have been hard since the evil governor arrived some years before: he separated Gromera from the rest of Joya by a forest; residents are forbidden to travel ? a particular hardship for Da who is a cartographer; and those who disobey the governor are thrown into dungeons. However Isabella is fascinated by maps and is desperate to travel to the Forgotten Territories beyond the trees and chart what she finds there.

The opportunity presents itself when a fellow classmate is found dead. Isabella?s best friend Lupe, the governor?s daughter, blames herself and goes after the murderer into the Forgotten Territories. Isabella joins the subsequent search party, her cartographic skills coming in handy in the grim world of dry rivers, destroyed villages and vicious monsters in which they find themselves. But especially important, as she finds herself unexpectedly following in Arinta?s footsteps, is her knowledge of mythology.

Isabella is a great character, brave, empathetic and loyal, and her relationships with Lupe, Da and her fifteen year-old neighbour Pablo are very well drawn. It?s a beautifully written story, with a pleasing mix of magic, mythology and menace.

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