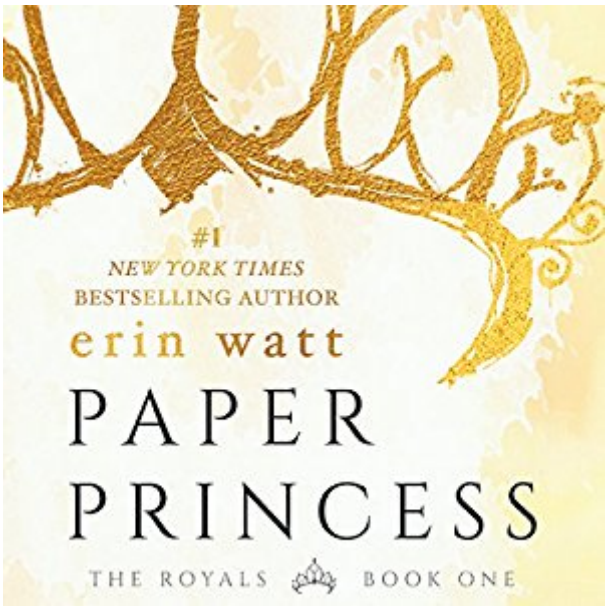
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Synopsis

From strip clubs and truck stops to southern coast mansions and prep schools, one girl tries to stay true to herself. These Royals will ruin you... Ella Harper is a survivor - a pragmatic optimist. She’s spent her whole life moving from town to town with her flighty mother, struggling to make ends meet and believing that someday she’ll climb out of the gutter. After her mother’s death, Ella is truly alone. Until Callum Royal appears, plucking Ella out of poverty and tossing her into his posh mansion among his five sons who all hate her. Each Royal boy is more magnetic than the last, but none as captivating as Reed Royal, the boy who is determined to send her back to the slums she came from. Reed doesn’t want her. He says she doesn’t belong with the Royals. He might be right. Wealth. Excess. Deception. It’s like nothing Ella has ever experienced, and if she’s going to survive her time in the Royal palace, she’ll need to learn to issue her own Royal decrees.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I need to say right up front: This book is marketed as "Young Adult", and it is anything BUT. The category is defined by the themes contained within the story. Just because your main characters are all about 17-year olds, that doesn’t make you a YA book. YA and I are so close we’re practically family. This book was like a stranger at the dinner table.I actually interrupted another book to read this one, and I’m still not sure why. It’s not even in my normal genre preference. I just remember reading the summary, seeing the cover, and thinking "I’d like to read that." Ella Harper was an interesting main character, full of spirit, and she led her story well. The writing was even pretty decent for the first 2/3rd of the book.Call me old-fashioned, when we decide "attempted date rape" is the best catalyst for getting the two leads to hook up, the story stops being enjoyable. Now, the

male lead, Reed Royal, did not actually attempt the date rape, but when Ella is drugged and the Royal brothers save her, how is the natural conclusion "Someone is gonna need to 'help' her with her drug-induced horniness." Sorry, what? WHAT? So maybe Reed Royal didn't attempt the date rape, but he's 1000000% guilty of engaging in dubious consent."I feel like I'm taking advantage of you."Yes, Reed, because you are! Ella is high on a date-rape cocktail, and you're like "Well, but she said she was okay with me 'helping' her, so..." This isn't even the only incident like this in the story. At one point Reed actually *propositions* her while they're out yachting, saying that she's a dirty whore but he'll take care of her sexual needs as long as she doesn't touch the rest of his family. Ella's second morning in the household, two of her new "brothers" joke about raping her. To Ella's credit, she does point out to the readers "Sexual assault isn't about getting laid. It's about power.", indicating they don't need to use sex to have power over her.Ella's actually very good about playing it smart. It's something that made her extremely likeable as a character. (Up until sex was involved, and suddenly she can't think at all.) She knows a handsome face doesn't make someone a good person. Ella gets the difference between what her body wants and what her mind wants. She knows the value of education as a means to rise above poor circumstances. Ella Harper has lots of qualities that make her a great main character.Remember when I said the writing was good for the first 2/3rds of the book and was not Young Adult? The last third of this book read like a smutty magazine you'd find under a mattress. Nevermind that Ella was smart and self-sufficient. Once she and Reed hook up, it's like sex-sex-sex all the time on her brain. She can barely look at Reed without wanting to get busy with him, and the book goes into GRAPHIC detail about their sexual encounters. Look, bedroom doors were invented for a reason. These are 17-year olds. I don't need to hear all the gory details of whose fingers are going where. ...I'm gonna say it again for good measure: SEVENTEEN-YEAR OLDS.It's a shame that I power read through the first 2/3 so quickly because the story was engaging, yet it's the uglier remaining third that's leaving such an imprint on my mind. The first part of the book actually had a good premise, familiar but solid. Poor girl with nothing gets plucked from obscurity into a life of riches. I didn't even take issue with the idea that she was stripping when we first meet her, because she's doing it to survive. Can't fault someone for surviving, and she's smart about her work, putting her safety and schooling first. I actually had to pause around page 55 and split a side from laughing. "Four boys who rule the school, and their decree sets the law for how poor-girl Ella will be treated." I've seen this premise before, and lemme tell ya, I LOVE Hana Yori Dango. Downside? The boys in HYD weren't such *complete* a-holes, unlike the Royals, and they actually learned and grew from their experiences in the story. The only redeemable character in this bunch is Easton. He's the only one that makes up for his initial

behavior and makes an attempt to be better with Ella. I see so many reviews for this story chittering on about how great all the boys are and I'm like "...Seriously?" Either their standards for men are terrible, or mine are too high. Maybe both? Easton was sweet, Gideon was neutral, and the other three were like "Please go to other side of your mansion house and never interact with Ella again, thank you."There was ONE saving grace of the distasteful sexual content that I feel warrants a shout out. Mean Girl Savannah, one of Ella's arch nemeses, takes the time to warn her of her potential date rapist (albiet too cryptically for Ella to get it). "Look, I don't like you much, but I wouldn't let even my worst enemy be sucked in by him." She put aside all her issues with Ella to warn her. I 100% support girls looking out for other girls. More of this in the book and less of the boot knocking, and this might have been the story I hoped it was going to be.I debated with myself at some length whether to round up or down for my site rating. The book was a solid 2.5 stars for me. The book had plenty of enjoyable material (round up), but it also had some really sketchy content (round down). Ultimately I had to ask myself "How much do I want other people reading this story? So I'm rounding down. I hate the idea of a young impressionable girl looking for a proper Young Adult book to find this one instead. Hell, I wouldn't even want a young boy to read this and get any ideas. I feel it's almost my responsibility to do what I can to discourage them both.

Oh, the world of the Royals. Full of glamor and glitz, but so many secrets and dirty deeds. This book had me gasping while I read it poolside on vacation, glued to my Kindle. I read this book in three hours because it was such a page turner, but it was also a really simple read. If you're looking for fiction about way-too-adult teens in a fancy private school, look no further. Ella Harper is an interesting protagonist because she takes amazing opportunities given to her and really wastes them with her high and mighty attitude. But stick a hot boy in her face and all her rebelliousness goes to mush. I liked reading more about the Royals and their family drama than I did about Ella - she's a little bit unlikeable in the first book. But with the plot twists and turns, her unlikeability becomes bearable as you race to the end to figure out the secret of the Royals - but oh wait, the ending is the biggest cliffhanger ever!

This book was addictive and a total guilty pleasure read! I devoured Paper Princess and almost finished it in one sitting (sigh, adulting really sucks sometimes!) This is book 1 in the Royals series and ends with a pretty hefty cliffhanger, but all the books are currently available.I found the story very entertaining, but I can't say that I really connect or truly love any of the characters. Everyone is broken and trying to find their way one minute and then crazy pants the next! Maybe that's why I like

it though. The events that transpire seem so far out of the realm of every day life that I can suspend reality and just enjoy this roller coaster ride. The entire book is like a train wreck that I can't look away from. Imagine Cruel Intentions, 90210, One Tree Hill, and The OC on steroids and then add in another dash of crazy for good measure. There is drama every which way and I know for some readers this will be a big turn off. Personally, I can't wait to dive into the next book ;)

My thoughts:I understand how the Royal boys are heartbroken over their moms death and acting out. But that doesn't excuse sexual harassment. They sexually harassed Ella. Not cool and even if they redeem themselves, I won't ever forgive them for that.Ella...poor ella. She just wants an education so she can have a better life. In some ways, she is older than her age. Then, she is terribly naive. I get that she is out of her element in this new world of rich kids and teenage drama, so some of her naivety is understandable. She has never had the time to engage in the petty BS that the only thing the rich kids lives revolve around. I love that she got a job.Because I am not naive to the ways of mean teenage kids, I am CONSTANTLY doubtful of everyone in her life. Whats up with Callum? What is HIS endgame here? WTF is Brooke's deal? Seriously, you know she is up to something but aside from money, I can't figure it out. Val seems like a nice girl, but is she really a friend to Ella or is she up to something too? What is going on with Gideon? See, skeptical.That ending? BRUTAL!So, I really like Ella. She has had a challenging life but knows that education is the way out. She can recognize that even though she loved her mom, her mom wasn't the best role model when it comes to men. Ella is an odd blend of overexposed and naive. It worked (for the most part) for me.In terms of the audio, I am not a huge fan of the narrator. Her attempts to do 'male' voices like Reed's were really bad and made me cringe. Also, even with the speed on 1.25, her speech was slow. I can't imagine how slow it was on 1.0. Sometimes the pauses were so long I thought my headphones stopped working.While it is a YA book based on the characters age, there are a few scenes that are racy (no sex but lots of other stuff) so it might not be appropriate for all YA readers.

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