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The Princess in Black Takes a Vacation

by Shannon Hale & Dean Hale, illustrated by LeUyen Pham

Publisher: Candlewick Press

RRP \$22.99

A delightful chapter book series that caters for many young girls' interest in princesses, and their pleasure in reading about independent females.

Enter Princess Magnolia who wears frilly dresses and is a sweet-natured young lady - until her glitter ring alarm sounds. Then she throws on her Princess in Black gear and leaps on to her pony, Blacky. Off she gallops to fight the monsters that invade the pasture, determined to eat the goats. It's a never-ending battle that exhausts the princess.

Fortunately, Duff the goat boy, has decided the princess needs help. It's time for the Goat Avenger to take over battling the monsters and give the princess a holiday.

The princess is so happy she gives her pony a rest and rides her bike to the seaside. But just as she's settling into her hammock, a roar from the ocean disturbs her rest. Oh no!

Copious, colourful illustrations enliven the pages and help readers keep track of the storyline. The characters are likeable and humorous – even the rather dim-witted monsters. Pink, swirly borders and plenty of white space enclose the clear typeface.

Short chapters, amusing characters, attractive illustrations, and beautiful design make this an ideal series for introducing young readers to chapter books. Published in hardback, with slipcovers which give a 'grown-up reader' appearance to the books.

Princess in Black's website:

www.princessinblack.com

Illustrator's website:

www.leuyenpham.com

Reviewed by Jean Bennett

