

THE POSSIBILITY OF POPCORN - MG - adventure/fantasy

In the grim walled Kingdom Where Things Are As They Have Always Been, Josephine tries to make up for her mismatched eyes. On her 10th birthday, when the all-powerful Minister of Maintenance “fixes” her with a painful lens, Josephine remains hopeful. Maybe now her parents - the King and Queen - will take an interest in her? Maybe her life will improve? But she quickly learns that even with matching eyes, nothing will ever change, and she’s crushed.

Later, Josephine discovers a forbidden, delicious food that ignites her imagination. Is it from the other side of the Wall? What else is out there? Why must her Kingdom have a wall or be as it has always been? Jo learns from ancient Librarian about the Kingdom’s twisted past and that the mystery edible is called “popcorn.” But the Minister is onto “broken” Josephine. Faced with his secret weapon - Forgetting Serums for all manner of memory, Josephine makes a daring escape from the Kingdom, promising the Librarian to return with more popcorn.

With new friend dramatic dragonfly Nacio, Josephine marvels at the beauty and freedom of the vibrant world outside the Kingdom. As the duo quest to Popcornucopia, they contribute to the ancient Sound Collector’s song of love, stay ahead of the Minister’s bumbling Maintainers, impress diva Cheri Von Vine, unmask the monster at the Teatro Fantastico and narrowly avoid the Rapture of the Roses. Josephine gains confidence and even inspires others to be bold. Though she misses the parents she barely knew, she wonders if she could stay in this new world forever.

Josephine and her friends survive the lethal spell of the Gilties, teen silver-skinned sorceresses. But Josephine worries she’s been selfish by pursuing popcorn. She puts in her lens and starts back...but returns, re-committing herself to her quest. At the stormy Lagoon of Doom, the Minister himself captures Josephine and demands she return and maintain the Kingdom. But Josephine remembers her promise to the Royal Librarian and fights him. She escapes with her friends in the Bell Bottle...only to drift out to sea. All hope is lost. But, at sunrise, they awake on the shores of Popcornucopia! Unfortunately, it’s become the Kingdom Where Nothing Can Ever Be The Same, a horrible chaotic place, the opposite of Josephine’s own Kingdom.

Josephine and her friends use their skills and smarts to end the chaos. Rewarded with popcorn, Josephine is resolved as they fly homewards in the Royal Plimp. She is no longer her old obedient self, no longer afraid that she is different, and no longer alone. She knows it is her Kingdom, not she, that is broken.

In darkness, Josephine and Nacio slip back into the castle. But neither Josephine’s parents nor anyone else remembers her. She realizes what the Minister has done and is heartbroken. Yet, even forgotten, she will change her Kingdom or die trying! Under the understairs, Josephine destroys the Forgetting Serums but the Minister gives chase. They face off before a crowd. Josephine is rescued by the Sound Collector. His song for his long-lost love fills the air. It restores what the Forgetting Serums have wiped away. The King and Queen remember their daughter! The Librarian recognizes the Sound Collector as her beloved! People are made whole again. In a blizzard of gold, Nacio and butterflies shower the Kingdom with popcorn. Josephine has fulfilled her promise to the Librarian – and more. The Minister has vanished but so has his power. It’s the end of the Kingdom being they way it was.

Later, at the wedding of the Librarian and the Sound Collector, Josephine looks out on her transformed Kingdom as she joins her parents in a field of newly grown wildflowers.