



## Breath of Life

*Christine Pope*

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## **Breath of Life** Christine Pope

Anika Jespers, a homesteader's daughter on a Gaian colony, thinks she's destined for a dull existence on her family's farm. But when her father makes an impossible bargain with their neighbor, one of the alien Zhore, she faces a future different from anything she could have possibly imagined.

The familiar story of Beauty and the Beast takes on new life in this inventive SF romance novella, with the Beauty a homesteader's daughter and the Beast an alien on a faraway colony world.

Novella: 32,000 words, approximately 120 pages

## **Breath of Life Details**

Date : Published (first published June 10th 2011)

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Author : Christine Pope

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## From Reader Review Breath of Life for online ebook

### Erika says

3 stars

This story had great potential for me, seeing as I like the Beauty and the Beast theme. But it was flat and lacked emotion. Keeping the hero a mystery for the whole book didn't work for me. Just kept me detached from the story. The setting was somewhat depressing as well. I didn't rate it lower though because I liked the world-building.

Clean story, sex-wise.

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### Lyndi W. says

Predictable in the way that all fairy tale retellings are predictable - nobody goes too far off the rails with these things. No real backstory or world building, just straight up Beauty and the Beast with gas masks.

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### Sa says

I don't like alien romances, but this one was pretty good. MC isn't stuck up or whiny, and the love interest is actually intelligent and caring instead of being a pretty looking jerk.

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### Rhode says

Hmm. Innocuous. I admired how the author found natural-feeling ways to turn this unusual setting into the classic story. Much of it would have made perfect sense plot-wise even if it were an entirely new story idea.

Except, well, instead of being pleased their daughter isn't a slave or being raped, the parents are outraged she's happily married. In a fairy tale meant for children, that makes sense, but not in this context. Also, as some other reviewers mentioned, I wish she had admitted her feelings before she saw his face, after all the original story is not about falling for a beautiful man. Quite the opposite.

There is no explicit sexual content aside from kisses and fade to black. It fits the quiet tone of the piece, the introverted nature of the heroine and the hero's explicit need for privacy. And it was a bit of a relief. The payoff of the story is HEA of the heart and family, not raunchy. I liked that.

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## **Ira says**

3.5 stars.

It's a sweet romance book but it too close with the original story.

I wanted more twist in the story:(

A bit boring but the second story or more like the epilogue was nice.

Btw, this is not YA book but I think they can read this book just fine:)

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## **Leyla says**

### **Hello again readers!**

*So... I fell back again on my reviews. Life happens! But here I am. So shall we begin?*

*I read the blurb, saw the cover and I was drawn immediately to state the truth.*

*A guy with a hoodie is always a plus! The sci-fi version of Beauty & the Beast was too much of a tempting offer to miss out on. In my core, I hoped the novel wouldn't ruin one of my favorite stories. So expectations were high ladies and gents...VERY HIGH!*

**So at first I pondered and then I took the chance and began reading.**

*I wasn't disappointed at all. While most may not like our heroine, our hero is a great compensation. It delivered what it proposed page after page. So much so, that I thought I was sinking even deeper as I read along.*

*This is the beauty and the beast in a more realistic version I'd say, despite the futuristic details. It's pretty down to earth, smooth, sweet and moving. One wishes to have more character background and detail, but instead, we witness a portion of their actions and history. Much like the old novels, slow paced and scene details that leave you breathless... With a modern touch of course! And it has achieved it marvelously! It reminded me of the feeling you get when you read a Jane Austin novel, but modernized. It was superb in achieving that. There where dialogues and silent scenes that delivered goosebumps.*

*Through the whole book... I was submerged in this pure slow paced romance.*

**Every scene, every description of the characters actions and moments were...**

*I ate this novel! Yes I felt it could have had a little more length, because it's short. Yes, I felt there was a hesitation on making scenes too passionate, and at some points it needed that extra punch! That is only delivered in the end of the novel. And I think our heroine Annika has a lot to do with that small failure. Too cold for my taste.*

**BUT! You the truth is, that Sarzhin is the true character who makes this book worth reading. And its not because of his hood!**

*No...It is his personality and his actions! He is worth it!*

*The plot could have been a little more twisted, a little more daring. But simplicity works too. There are no sex scenes, no passion. Simple cute affection. That works too! Especially for romance lovers. But I still think it could have had more depth. I wanted more! So KUDOS Christine Pope! I loved it! Thank you!*

**I recommend this book 100%. I bid you farewell and hope your future reads are fab!**

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### **Katherine Tomlinson says**

This beautifully written version of Beauty and the Beast features an alien/human love story that is achingly romantic and lovingly detailed. All of the elements of the story are here, but with new twists that make the tale a 21st century pleasure.

Heroine Annika is spunky and believable, and her relationship with her spoiled sister is pivotal to the plot, and the mixture of love and exasperation is one of the grounding elements that "sells" the sci fi.

There is sensuality here, and not just in the love scenes. Pope brings her alien planet to vivid life, and her descriptions of everything from the food to the flowers to the alien's skin are textured without being overwritten.

This is not a gimmicky story at all but a new twist on a timeless tale. Lovely.

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### **Vanessa says**

I found it impossible to keep this book down even when I just needed to go to the loo. With such an enchanting story like that, it seemed to me that the author knew and understood what she's writing and about to present to her readers. Like I said before, 'sci-fi' is one of those genres I have avoided from reading but somehow, she made the genre likeable and entrancing. The plot was simple and quite Beauty and The Beast, without the handsome prince of course, yet it's very mature unlike the Disney version and truly engaging. I had the feeling of sentimental while reading, admittedly speaking. Apart from that, I really liked the two main characters, Annika and Sarzhin, as they seemed to be mismatched physically, but emotionally they are two similar persons who share one feeling in common – loneliness. Annika for me is a strong, independent character and the first person narration fitted well with her personality. Through her perspective, I literally felt everything she touches, sees, hears and smells vividly, as if I, as the matter of fact, were Annika myself. And Sarzhin, I just couldn't help but feel sorry for him. Despite his freaky alien nature, like everyone else, he just wants to love and be loved in return. Another thing about the story that pulled me in was the setting itself. The alien imagery made me value planet Earth, its beauty and my freedom to breathe fresh air easily more than ever before. Nonetheless, the author's description of Annika's surroundings and other planets as well were in fact photographically superb!

I hardly found anything I dislike about this book; overall it was very well-written. I wished it was longer though. What's left to say now is that I've genuinely enjoyed Breath of Life that I think I could read it over and again. This book certainly has its place in my 'Favorites' lists and I would love to read more from this author in the future. I would recommend this book to everyone, especially those who love both sci-fi and

young adult romance.

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## **Hayat says**

### **3.5 stars**

I really enjoyed this SF version of Beauty and the Beast with quite atmosphere, slow developing plot and romance.

\*\*\*Full RTC\*\*\*

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## **Spuffed says**

This is a goody two shoes/alien romance. I enjoyed the story but what was lacking was hot alien sex. I have not researched the categories of this novel but it seems like it's more for the young adult crowd and I feel like it would have been a better novel if there were actual sex scenes involved instead of "fade to black".

Quick Rundown: Younger Chick is the second sister in a family where her parents gave up everything they have in order to be initial colonizers of a planet that needs people to eventually make a new planet habitable without having to use oxygen masks as it's a process to make a planet that way. The family finds themselves in poorer situation than they were in the below ground existence they had on the moon. Yeah, they get to go outdoors now but not without an oxygen mask and find they have to keep their atmospheric generators (which over time will make the planet more hospitable) running in order to escape heavy fines. They are pioneers that had been sold a line of goods that were not accurate and their lifestyle has become that of pretty poor poverty. The oldest daughter (along with her good looks) has acquired a scholarship on another more hospitable planet leaving our Chick to help run the farm with her father and a mother who has pretty much withdrawn into herself. A mishap by the father puts this Chick into the hands of their neighbor who happens to be from a planet where they completely enrobe themselves so no one knows their secret about their race. She goes willingly knowing there's nothing else she can do to get them out of this situation only to find that this guy who lives in such luxury among such a harsh environment could turn out to be her savior.

Characterization/Plot: This was very well done. I understood the personalities of all the characters despite the fact that Dude is so secretive in the beginning. The Chick's family is also very well done and I got a complete feeling for this second daughter's position within her family and in regards to Dude. The mystery of the always encloaked dude was what kept me reading and I wasn't disappointed in how all that turned about. what I was disappointed in was the "fade to black" intimate scenes. I get the feeling that this was written for tweens in that sense. A kiss or two and that was it. So, if you are looking for steamy, then you won't get it here. The ending was fairly pleasant. I wasn't needing more but damn, no sex scenes? Ugh...

Overall: A sweet Alien/Syfi read but nothing steamy about it which I found lacking. If I was 13, I would have been satisfied but as a 37 year old, I wanted some alien dick. Literally!

-Spuffed

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## **Katy says**

This was a cute sci-fi adaptation of Beauty and the Beast.

I didn't like Anika at first. Whereas Belle was lovable, Anika was kind of a foolish brat. All the "whatever" and "okay, fine" made her kind of annoying. And when her father was telling his tale, she was more focused on what the Zhore looked like than about what happened. And maybe I'm reading too much into the Beauty and the Beast comparison, but when her father told her what she gave up, she accepted to get away and experience something new than to reluctantly go and sacrifice herself for her father.

But she did grow on me a bit later, and once I started liking her, I started liking the book more. The alien explanation for everything was definitely hmmm... interesting in a bizarre type of way. I will say that I kind of wish that Anika had realized she loved him before she saw his face. Part of her hesitation was not knowing his appearance, and I know she already did but her realizing it before she saw his face would have made the story a bit more impactful in my eyes.

Still, it was a quick, fun read, and it was interesting in a weird type of way.

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## **Moon Shine Art Spot ~ Lisa says**

I read this story last night in a single sitting because I couldn't wait to see if it ended well. I am not usually a sci-fi type of person because I get lost in the unimaginable descriptions, but that was not the case here. I loved the characters, and even in the dreary conditions Ainka lived in, I do appreciate that she was not a whinny teen with the poor me syndrome. She was quite the opposite with a might as well make the best of the situation, even when she had to go live with the alien next door (presuming that she was going to somehow be a servant or something).

I liked the characters and their appreciation for honesty in the story. I am so glad to finally read a book with a girl willing to sacrifice herself for her father and make the best of her dreary living conditions before her decision, rather than sitting around complaining & wallowing in self pity.

I was pleasantly surprised at the fact that the arrangement she agreed to with the alien to keep her father safe proved to be a learning experience. I wondered if the story was going to teach a lesson in prejudice & I guess in a way it does. The alien does his best to make her comfortable and even allows her contact with her family which I did not expect.

I hate to compare it to Beauty and the Beast because it is so much more than that in many ways.

I loved the descriptions of the different planets and moons which made it all feel real and make sense to me as I read, without pouring on too many strange names and losing me in made up words like a lot of sci-fi type stories do. This was a good read because of the excellent character development and the admirable qualities found in both of the main characters. I loved that the ending had the little surprise twist.

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## Lucy says

When an author pulls me in to where I can't put the book down, despite there being no hot and sexy scenes, it's a **really** good book. My version of this book had a short story following this borderline novella which involved Anika's parents coming over to Sarzhin's and her house for Christmas where she springs the marriage and pregnancy upon them. That was also good and very enjoyable and I was glad the author gave us just a bit more of Anika and Sarzhin's story. (This is actually v. 3 of the series bundled with this book called A Simple Gift.)

In the novel, basically, her father agrees to give Anika Jespers to their alien neighbor, a Zhore named Sarzhin, after an accident that causes him to damage the neighbor's property. Anika's poverty-stricken family has moved to an inhospitable planet or moon that is being terraformed by it's inhabitants. Anika is self-sacrificing for her family and goes to live with the mysterious neighbor hoping things will turn out "OK" and gets so much more. The Zhore wants marriage but will not reveal himself to her and hides behind dark robes. Nor will he explain why. Anika wants honesty and Sarzhin just thinks she wants to see if he's a monster or not.

If you like sci-fi with a little alien romance, I highly recommend this book and will be checking out others in the series.

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## Rachel- Goodbye Borders says

Anika is a homesteader's daughter that is stuck on Lathvin. Lathvin is a planet that is currently being terraformed to be an inhabited planet. There are multiple different types of aliens. One is the Zhore. They are secretive and not much is known. Sarzhin is a Zhore. Anika's father has an accident. Sarzhin wants Anika, so Anika decides to go and stay since her family can't afford a lawsuit. (Should he try to sue).

I would have liked more background information. Given the length, there wasn't much. I still enjoyed the story once I get involved. I wish Anika hadn't been so fixated on what Sarzhin looked like. Some sexy times would have been nice too. Overall, I was interested in the world and am curious. I am open to reading book 2 or book 3 (I have book 3; was a freebie at one time). I think this could be a series that could be okay to read out of order.

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## Selena Yukino (The Lioness: hear me roar) says

Damn it, I wanted sexy scenes between Anika and Sar. Damn it all. Excluding that, it was a pretty damn good book.

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