



# The Dragonfly Pool

By Eva Ibbotson

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A beloved *New York Times* bestselling author returns to paper!

At first Tally doesn't want to go to the boarding school called Delderton. But soon she discovers that it's a wonderful place, where freedom and self-expression are valued. Enamored of Bergania, a serene and peaceful country led by a noble king, Tally organizes a dance troupe to attend the international folk dancing festival there. There she meets Karil, the crown prince, who wants nothing more than ordinary friends. But when Karil's father is assassinated, it's up to Tally and her friends to help Karil escape the Nazis and the bleak future he's inherited.

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## The Dragonfly Pool By Eva Ibbotson Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #522750 in Books
- Brand: Puffin
- Published on: 2009-10-15
- Released on: 2009-10-15
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.80" h x 1.00" w x 5.10" l, .66 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 384 pages

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 5–8—Tally, 11, attends Delderton, a progressive boarding school in the Devon countryside, and though she doesn't want to leave her loving father, London in 1939 is not very safe. As it turns out, she thrives there, good-naturedly setting herself to solving the problems of students and staff alike. When Bergania, whose king has refused to let Hitler's armies march through his (fictional) country, announces an international children's folk-dancing festival, Tally convinces her school to attend. During their visit, the king is assassinated, and she and the Delderton troupe rescue 12-year-old Prince Karil and smuggle him to England. Kept virtually imprisoned by his snooty wellborn relatives, Karil longs for a normal life, and eventually finds a way to escape his royal obligations, attend the school, and be reunited with his friends. Tally has a bit of Sara Crewe about her; she is singularly compassionate and generous, beloved by almost all who meet her. Her worries and imperfections make her wisdom lovely rather than irritating. Prince Karil and several adults receive meticulous and fascinating character development, but many others remain one-dimensional, known mainly by their eccentric traits. The unsympathetic characters are easy to dislike, so unremittingly negative is their depiction. Although the battle between good and evil is painted with a broad brush, Ibbotson treats most issues with a wise, subtle, and humorous touch; her writing is sublime. The satisfying epilogue, set six years later, will have readers giggling through their tears.—*Eva Mitnick, Los Angeles Public Library*

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From [Booklist](#)

Eleven-year-old Tally doesn't want to leave London for boarding school in the country, but with Hitler amassing power and war on the horizon, her father insists. Tally expects Delderton to be full of posh bullies and cruel teachers, but it turns out to be a place where the students are free to learn in their own way. When the school is invited to participate in an international folk-dancing festival in Ibbotson-imagined Bergania, where the king has gained notoriety for refusing Hitler's demands, Tally overcomes all odds to put together a troupe. In Bergania, Tally and Karil, the lonely crown prince, become fast friends, and after the king is assassinated, she and her friends smuggle Karil out of Bergania, intending to hide him at their school. While selfless, optimistic Tally is a little too good, Ibbotson's trademark eccentric characters and strongly contrasted principles of right and wrong brighten and broaden this uplifting tale. The thrilling war story, complete with chase scenes, clashes at first with the nostalgic school tale, but they eventually come together in celebration of freedom of all kinds. Grades 5-8. --Krista Hutley

Review

The book, based on the author's own childhood experiences, is a romantic tale of friendship, loyalty and heroism, and her fans will not be disappointed. -- *Kirkus Reviews*

## Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Shelia Coggins:**

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