

# JENNIFER A. NIELSEN



Photo © Jeff Nielsen

At the age of eleven, Jennifer A. Nielsen wrote her first full-length novel. But she abandoned the manuscript when a local locksmith halted her research on picking locks. As a kid growing up in northern Utah, Jennifer constantly read and reread *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase* by Joan Aiken. Other favorite classics included *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton, *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle, and the Hardy Boys series.

A major influence for *The False Prince*, the first book in the Ascendance Trilogy, came from the music of Eddie Vedder, the lead singer of the seminal grunge band Pearl Jam. Vedder's Grammy-winning track "Guaranteed" was the inspiration for Sage, her protagonist. From the lyrics "I knew all the rules, but the rules did not know me," Sage was born.

Although Sage's personality is his own, Jennifer borrowed two of his traits from a couple of high school students she once taught. One of them was popular, brilliant, and relentlessly mischievous. He could steal the watch off a person's wrist without his knowing and would return it to him later, usually to his embarrassment. The other student had a broad spectrum of impressive talents, not the least of which was his ability to roll a coin over his knuckles. If he had wanted to, he'd have made a fine pickpocket. As it was, he went on to become a lawyer.

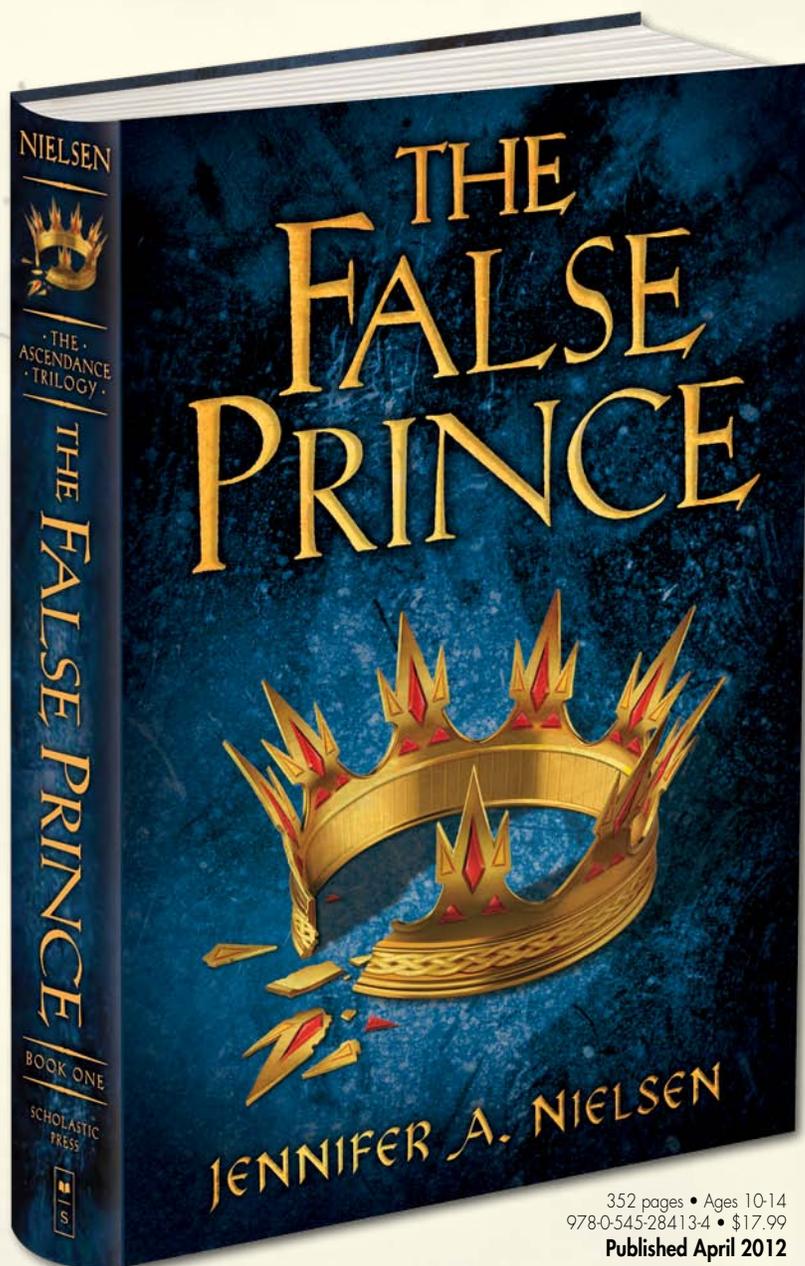
Jennifer is also the author of *Elliot and the Goblin War*, the first book in a humorous middle-grade fantasy series. She lives in northern Utah with her husband and their three children.

For more information, visit  
[www.jennielsen.com](http://www.jennielsen.com)

*Four boys.  
One treacherous plan.  
An entire kingdom to fool.*

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In a faraway land, civil war is brewing. To unify his kingdom's divided people, a nobleman named Conner devises a cunning plan to find an impersonator of the king's long-lost son and install him on the throne. Four orphans are forced to compete for the role, including a defiant and clever boy named Sage. Sage knows that Conner's motives are more than questionable, yet his life balances on a sword's point — he must be chosen to play the prince or he will certainly be killed. However, his rivals have their own agendas as well, so Sage must trust no one and keep his thoughts hidden.

As Sage moves from a rundown orphanage to Conner's sumptuous palace, layer upon layer of treachery and deceit unfold, until finally, a truth is revealed that may very well prove more dangerous than all of the lies taken together.

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