

The Creator's Perspective

Allison Barrows

I wrote this as a response to the drooling gagaism over the French film, "Amalie". At the risk of sounding a little crusty and mean-spirited, I couldn't stand anything about the film. Its attempt to take Jane Austen's perfectly wrong-headed and meddling Emma, who eventually learns she can't – and shouldn't – try to order everyone's life according to her idea of perfection, and rethink her as a twee, saccharine cartoon character – well, it made my teeth hurt. Those who loved the film found it charming – similar in sweetness to the Jackie Gleason movie "Gigot", or "Chocolat", with the glorious Juliette Binoche. I just . . . didn't.

The irony, or rather, my punishment, for my pop culture heresy? Several years later, I was hired to write a series of books called "Goofyfoot Gurl", the main character of which was based on Amalie's character (not Emma's). It was great fun! I loved doing it, I loved all the characters, the people who hired me gave me carte blanche to do whatever I liked so long as I kept to the basic intent, and I wound up loving my Amalie-inspired character, Suki. Crustiness degruffed!

