



Spindle

W.R. Gingell

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This is an alternate cover edition for B00XHLVMZ6

She's not a princess . . . but then, he's no prince.

Polyhymnia is deep in enchanted sleep. High in a tower, behind an impenetrable barrier of magical thorns, she sleeps, dreams, and falls ever deeper into her curse.

Woken by a kiss, Poly finds herself in an alien world where three hundred years have passed and everyone she has ever known is dead. Luck, the enchanter who woke her, seems to think she is the princess.

Understandable, since he found her asleep on the princess' bed, in the royal suite, and dressed in the princess' clothes.

Who cursed Poly? Why is someone trying to kill her and Luck? Why can't she stop falling asleep? And why does her hair keep growing?

Sometimes breaking the curse is just the beginning of the journey.

Spindle Details

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Author : W.R. Gingell

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Genre : Fantasy, Retellings, Fairy Tales, Romance

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From Reader Review Spindle for online ebook

Sylvia Mercedes says

I'm offering a giveaway for a paperback copy of this AMAZING book on my website! Along with a hardbound copy of "Strange the Dreamer," another incredible read. **Visit my page to enter the giveaway.** Open to everyone, including internationals!

So you know how I said I read HOWL'S MOVING CASTLE as a kid, loved it, and now spend my reading life trying to find books that can somehow recapture THAT feeling?

W.R. Gingell's Spindle is, BY FAR, the closest thing I've found to match!

It's certainly not the same plot. It's not the same characters. But it is so much of the same STYLE and MAGIC and MOOD and WHIMSY, that I could almost believe I was reading a Diana Wynne Jones novel! Only Gingell maintains her own distinct voice all the while.

Okay, before I lose myself in gushing, let's get on to the review . . .

WHAT I LOVED

Well, obviously, I loved that it gave me all those throw-back Diana Wynne Jones feels. This book, though written in a contemporary style, has that old school feel that I just love. There's richness to the language that isn't flowery or overblown but just . . . clever, somehow. And addictively readable. Honestly, you can't separate the writing from the story with this book, because the plot wouldn't be as good without the distinctive writing style, and the writing style wouldn't work without this plot. It's such a perfect marriage of the two!

Poly--I loved the heroine. She's smart and capable without being too overly plucky or abrasive. I love how her soft heart is revealed via her interactions with Onepiece (the puppy . . . who's not really a puppy . . .), and her growing bond with him was one of my favorite parts of the book. Her relationship with Luck, the enchanter who rescued her from her three hundred year sleep, was SUPER fun to watch unfold.

Luck was also tremendously fun. He's a bit like Howl, he's a bit like Doctor Who . . . and he's a bit obnoxious, to be honest! But that's all part of his charm, ultimately. I can totally sympathize with the heroine wanting to slap him half the time! But . . . yeah, he can be pretty dreamy too . . . in a totally NOT standard sort of way . . .

The plot was crazy twisty-turny, and I couldn't possibly begin to describe it here without dropping major spoilers. Suffice it to say, Gingell expects her readers to be SMART. She drops clues and hints and plot threads early, and she expects her readers to remember them when those threads come back later. She doesn't spoon-feed her readers but believes in their ability to keep up with her. And I LOVE it.

WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE SO MUCH

Well, obviously I gave this book five stars, so there wasn't a whole lot I disliked! But it did have its problems, I'll acknowledge. There were plot threads that never did quite make sense. A few storylines that I

looked forward to seeing how they'd work in and resolve that never quite . . . did. That was a wee bit frustrating, I won't lie.

But I'm not going to knock a star for it because I just enjoyed the read so very, very much. And I fully intend to read everything else Gingell has written or will write, because she is just my kind of author! I bought this book directly after reading *MASQUE* (her *Beauty and the Beast* retelling), and I will probably go buy *BLACKFOOT* (another retelling) soon now as well, because I won't be able to wait long before diving back into the crazy, magical, wonderful world of the Two Monarchies.

This book, along with all the other books I read for May and June, is up for my Book of the Month award . . . which is technically going to be my Book of Two Months award this time, since I'm squishing two months together due to lack of reading time in May. (Sorry!)

Whichever book I pick as my Book of the Month I'll be giving away to one lucky mailing list subscriber! So be sure to sign up if you'd like a chance to win!

Andree says

Reread this again last week, because I wanted to read the rest of the series. Actually, I wanted to read something light and fun, so I read the entire series. This one might be my favourite of the trilogy. I enjoy the mythology in it, and how it's done. Also, Poly is awesome, and I like her dynamic with Luck (even if he is annoying). Also, Isabelle is my favourite, and I'd forgotten her introduction in this one.

xxx

I seriously enjoy how W.R. Gingell writes. Are there flaws? Yes. Is the magic system always perfectly clear? Not always. Is it a lot of fun? Yup.

This is just really readable. It plays with a lot of familiar tropes, but it's just told in such a nice way. The character work and the dialogue is particularly good. And I like the setting. Poly is a fun character. Luck possibly needed to be smacked upside the head a few more times, but mostly because I have no patience for people who refuse to answer sensible questions.

It's just a well told story, and one that is delightfully not bleak. In fact, despite being wanted by multiple factions because she's powerful, when our heroine meets several people, and *they do not all turn out to be evil*. Seriously, she even goes off on her own with at least three of them, and there are no catastrophic consequences, because *not everyone is evil*. Some people are evil, but not every single person our heroine comes across except for the hero. This even includes at least one character that the hero does not like. I was a bit sad at how much of a novelty that was.

Enjoyed the heck out of this.

2018 Reading Challenge - Your favourite prompt from the 2015, 2016 or 2017 POPSUGAR Reading Challenges (a.k.a. a book based on a fairy tale, because that was one of my favourites)

Sage Knightly says

***I received a free physical arc of this book from the author, in exchange for an honest review. (Sorry it took so long!)**

****Also posted on my blog Fishing For Books.**

Rating: 4.5/5 Stars

This book is incredible, as is the author. It took me far too long to finally read *Spindle* as I got much busier than expected, but now I have read it and I can say it's definitely worth a re-read. I rarely re-read books.

The characters in this novel are so lovely you can't help but fall in love with them! They're well crafted, seem fairly real, and there's this way about them that you just can't ignore, nor explain. For one, Luck is far more than he seems. He's not so fond of people (as was shown when he forgot about/ignored helping the villagers with their magical problems continuously [he's the village wizard, as they call him]), is often in his own world (while he and Poly were traveling to his home he often had distant eyes and tended to ignore her), and seems to rarely care about those around him. However, he is extremely smart and always has a plan (he tricked Poly's curse to wake her, and then fully broke it a long while after, as he did not wake her with a lover's kiss as was needed), and he actually cares very deeply about those he considers family or loves (he did everything in his power to break Poly's curse, as well as made sure she was safe and protected). That's just one example of a well crafted and lovely character W.R. Gingell has created. And there's plenty others to come, I'm sure.

I adore the world, the descriptions/imagery, as well as the plot. I admit, the story started off a bit confusing as we were immediately thrown into Poly's confusion and lack of memories as the action happened around her, but it cleared up and we were left with a fantastically written world (shifting villages, houses that grew from nature and continue to, the Frozen Battlefield, The Forest, and the counsels: Wizard counsel, Black velvet.) with great descriptions. I honestly had a hard time putting this book down, and devoured 95% of it the day I started reading it.

I also adore how the author writes her curses. They're never easily solved, and while they aren't simple, they aren't too complex either. I love how the curse needed a true loves kiss to be broken, and Luck was able to trick it and still wake her with a kiss without loving her. I also like how she kept falling asleep, and how the author went about writing it. It flowed well and I enjoyed the little things as much as everything else. I also love how a character(view spoiler) hid (view spoiler)magic and was able to get it back by travelling through certain timelines(view spoiler).

Overall, I really enjoyed reading *Spindle* and I definitely recommend it!

Elisabeth Wheatley says

Full review to come.

Cherry (_forevermint) says

"How long have I been asleep? I only meant to have a little rest because of the Midsummer Night Festival." Luck slid her a narrow-eyed look. "My time scales are relative, but even I don't call three hundred years a little rest."

In Spindle, W.R. Gingell takes the fairytale Sleeping Beauty and creates a story that's overflowing with magic, taking the reader on a journey across a fantasy land, falling in and out of reality right alongside the heroine all the while a curse looms over her head and falling back asleep is a constant threat.

Sounds like a lot right? Well it is. And it is more wonderful than anything I could have expected! Honestly, I didn't have very much expectations. I prefer to read books blind and sometimes I ignore the synopsis all together but this time, it was the synopsis that hooked me. Gingell specifically states that our main character is not a princess...but the man who rescues her might think so, she was after all wearing the princess's clothes and in her bed. I couldn't ignore such an interesting premise and immediately wanted to find out who Poly really was and why she was forced into an enchanted sleep.

Despite being confused by Poly's own inability to remember her memories, I felt all sorts of confusion alongside her. Her initial dislike and distrust towards Luck was completely understandable. Poly is level-headed and sensible, quickly adapting to her surroundings but not without showing a little kindness along the way. Poly annoyed me during some parts of the story but overall, she's a character that I would love to meet and become friends with.

As Poly's rescuer and an overall enigma, Luck can be infuriating, annoying, rude and insensitive at times but as his character unfolds, it's hard not to like him. Or maybe that was just me? It would have been nice to get more backstory about him and how he became the man that he is though. On the other hand, the adorable little Onepiece is definitely one of my favorites—he's too cute not to love. I really like that we get to see him grow up throughout the story.

The story itself reads and feels like a fairytale. Right off the bat, I found myself falling into Poly's world completely and trying to make sense of everything. It was a bit disorienting at first, but as things started to fall together, I couldn't stop myself from devouring half the book in one night (or technically one very early morning).

Poly's journey begins right away with Luck trying to get her to go to the Capital despite the wayward magic she insists she doesn't have. After a few chapters of this, I began to wonder when things were going to start happening, not realizing that things were already in motion. And with sudden clarity, that age-old saying, "it's not about the destination, it's about the journey," came ringing in the back of my head.

From beginning to end, I was completely satisfied with this story and loved every new twist and turn. This is a fairytale in its own right, there is no doubt about it. You'll find yourself drawn to Poly and her journey to discover the truth behind her sleeping curse. I would recommend this to anyone who enjoys a good fairytale, though it might be too complicated for younger readers. Like the magic in the story that can come out in wispy strands and occasionally get tangled, this story can sometimes feel like a knotty mess that you're trying to set straight again, except the only way to do so is to keep going with the story. The journey is the story.

This is the kind of book that I would happily read a second time to experience the story anew with all the

information I didn't have the first time around.

"It occurred to her that she wanted, more than she had ever wanted, to hit Luck. And then perhaps to hug him, and kiss him, and—"

You'll just have to find out for yourself what comes next.

Many thanks to the author and Netgalley for providing me with a copy of this book.

MB (What she read) says

[With that name, and with his dual nature, I was expecting him to have some major role to play in breaking the spell. I guess not. Now they have an adopted dog/boy to raise/adopt??? Hmm.... (hide spoiler)]

Intisar Khanani says

This story had an almost dreamy quality to it, and while you figure out the villain early on, just how things will come together, and what exactly the curse is doing to Poly and why, will keep you guessing. I could have wished for a slightly stronger conclusion to the curse itself, but the story as a whole had a lovely (and humorous) climax. Another enjoyable read from Gingell!

Actual Rating: 3.5 stars

Denae Christine says

New and familiar

The end felt jumbled together rather than exactly satisfying, but I loved everything else!

Reader thoughts: This book is a LOT like Howl's Moving Castle. In both, the girl is keeping a secret, the boy is a powerful/self-interested wizard trying to break her spell, she has to save him, he has magical doorways, she has magic she doesn't understand, he pretends to visit ladies in order to break the curse, she finds a dog person, he never explains enough, she's not as old as she looks, and they have to fight the powerful magician who cursed her. And the feel of the book and world was very Howl's Moving Castle-ish. In both, the magic wasn't explained, just assumed to be roughly instinctual. It was laid out in curse rhymes and threads and layers. In both, I would have liked a final five pages of denouement to wrap things up with a nice bow. I like tidy endings, like a short walk at the end of a sprint. As it is, this book closes when the story is still mid-sprint.

How to explain what I loved?

Poly wore glasses. She was so perfectly the narrator, but the reader still knew more than she did. She kept forgetting the spindle, but the reader knew it was there. Her plans weren't brilliant, but they were interesting. Some reviewer wrote that Luck reminded them of Dr Who. Not quite. He's more of a mix of Dr Who and

Howl.

One piece! So much of what he said didn't make sense until paragraphs or pages later, which is neat trick. Well done, Gingell.

Fairy tale retelling? Sort of. More of a fairytale extension. So, it didn't have the clues and familiar feel of, say, Sleeping Beauty, but the story was able to be surprising instead.

(Some retellings are ripe with references to the original tale, like Spelled or The Hero's Guide to Saving Your Kingdom. Others are subtler, like A Curse Dark as Gold or Royal Deception. This book, if either, was more like the latter, despite a thorny hedge.)

I seriously had a hard time putting down this book. I kept reading while brushing my teeth and such. So fun.

Writer thoughts: There were pieces where a reader is confused when Poly is. This is hard to pull off without annoying the readers, but I thought WRG did it well. For one thing, it wasn't once or twice but several times (so I know it was on purpose and not just a fluke). This happened sometimes with the magic, especially when Poly was convinced she did not have any magic.

I also think it is neat that WRG somehow made Luck a likable character. She did it in a similar way that Howl was likable, by making him powerful, having him put his life on the line for Poly at the end, and having it revealed that his intentions have always been good despite appearances.

The only thing I didn't like about him was that he was so old. I'm kind of against the idea that magical people have to live so much longer than normal human beings. You'd think 80 years would be plenty.

J.M. Stengl says

I absolutely loved this one!

A sleeping beauty retelling like none other, filled with magic and mystery.

The opening can be confusing, since we experience it through the eyes of the heroine while she awakens from an enchanted sleep, and into a time and reality she didn't expect.

I love Poly--our talented, plucky, strong-willed heroine who has to figure things out with almost no help. I adore Luck, who would no doubt drive me crazy in real life but is a marvelous fantasy hero! And One-piece. Who could not adore him? A magical boy/puppy rescued by Poly and now devoted to her.

My favorite read of 2017, I believe. Try it and see if you aren't enchanted too!

Adina says

REVIEWED ON BOOKLIKES

Spindle is a retelling of the story of Sleeping Beauty.

One that spans from the minute our "princess" Poly is awakened, rudely, by a kiss. She was put under a spell long ago and you'd think being awoken solves everything, but things only get more strange and complicated from there forward. Why are people trying to kill Poly and Luck, the wizard who broke the spell? Why are

they running, from whom, why can't Poly remember so many things about her past? What leads to her lying in the princess's bed (she isn't the princess), and sleeping for 400 years? (And why is Luck so infuriating that he won't answer all these questions?)

From there forward, they travel through colorful and magical landscapes full of strange and quirky characters at every twist and turn, trying to fully break the spell as Poly keeps falling asleep and her very long hair keeps acting out...

If I had to sum up this book in one word, I'd say FUNNY. It made me smile and giggle, Not only was the dialog so laughable, but the situations the characters got themselves into, even in perilous moments. It gave the book a light and warm feeling despite the moments of danger and despair.

Poly reminded me in a way of Sophie from Howl's Moving Castle. The characters and dialogue in general, too. If you've ever read this classic by Diana Wynne Jones, you know this means I find her very likable. And Luck, too. Combined, this story has a very airy, easily distracted wizard and a very oblivious "princess"- and hilarity ensues. They bicker like an old married couple from the minute they meet. Or like young school children. I can't decide. (And take for ever to realize their love for one another!)

It's got a precise and thought out system of magic, as well as array of magical creatures- a dog-boy, a dragon, wizards, enchantresses, gremlins... all different and delightful.

And it is a book in a series, so I might just read the next.

I'd give this one a read if you want cozy type of fairy with a perfect fairy-tale ending, but also interesting characters and a rich and fast-paced plot.

I won this book in a Booklikes giveaway, thanks W.R Gingell!

Tressa (Wishful Endings) says

I think I just found a new favorite author. I loved Spindle that much! I've been thinking about how to put into words this crazy, eccentric, magical, steady roller-coaster (yep, those two descriptors don't make sense when you read them like that, but if you read this story you would understand) story and failing at the exact proper words. I will do my best.

The characters. I loved Poly. She is Luck's rock to his crazy forgetfulness (although it's really more of a focus that he has because his brain is always going and he see's things when you think he doesn't see them, but he really does). She's very smart, which also is a match to Luck's. And powerful, compassionate, kind, fierce (when she needs to be), and all around likable. Now, I've already brought up Luck. He's all over the place, both figuratively and physically. I could see how he could get on Poly's nerves (and mine sometimes), but it was really just the portion he let others see. He has such an amazing mind, is powerful, loyal, and a little sly. I loved how he pushed and prodded Poly without her even knowing that's what he was doing and vice versa (although I think he knew what she was doing, but wanted to let her do it). I loved how well they work together and the constant sparks that fly between them - how they stand up to each other and go through some serious stuff together and how it makes them stronger. Together.

Then you have this crazy and amazing fantasy world. It shifted and changed and was something different depending on where you were. There were interesting characters, scenery, and magic. Sometimes it stretched my brain trying to keep up with it all.

Finally, the plot. It was steady, while also having intense moments, and also having this tension that kept

building and building. I literally felt I was going to explode if it wasn't ALL explained or if Polly didn't regain ALL her memories or if they didn't figure it ALL out... I laughed in several spots, sighed in others, even wanted to cry a few times. And then the ending... So. Freaking. Good. Perfect for this book.

Seriously. If you enjoy fantasy, Alice in Wonderland (and remakes of such since this one reminded me of that type of story), and stories that drive you crazy in a good way, then grab Spelled. Now I need to see about getting my hands on the other two books I've seen like this one: Wolfskin and Masque.

Content: Clean

Source: I would like to thank the author for my complimentary copy, which did not affect my review in any way.

Lauren (Shakespeare & Whisky) says

Awesome indie book. First few chapters were a little rough. But as it went along the story was engaging enough to override the poor prose. This is the second time recently I have read and loved an indie book. (The other is The Silence of Medair and you should check it out as well).

The story was sweet and funny, the relationship between Onepiece and Poly was a delight and the dialogue, after an indifferent beginning, gets very snappy and funny once the author is in her stride.

Will fix up later, today is the weekend... so it's already the middle of the week and I still haven't finished this. Oops...

As this is a lesser known indie I'll explain a bit what it is about:

PREMISE

The MC, Polly is awoken from a sleeping beauty style spell. She is mistaken for a princess. She was actually a lady in waiting. As the book progresses we discover more of why and how this happened.

Her parents are missing, caught up in some unfortunate magic, but they do their best to protect Polly. Polly is bookish, unsure of herself and wears glasses. She has been pushed around a lot.

She is found by an enchanter, Luck, who is rude, indifferent and thoughtless (think a young Einstein) and they soon adopt a magical puppy called Onepiece. Polly actively forgets anything related to her past and the spell that put her to sleep. It's important to keep this in mind because it was a little confusing at first until I worked out what was going on. This made for some very amusing situations and dialogue.

"Oh, is that what they are? Do you wake up a lot of cursed girls, then?" "Spindle."

"What?"

"Spindle."

"What spi- ow! Let me go! What is that? Where did it come from?" "Well, this is just ridiculous," said Luck."

The plot then revolves around the consequences of Polly (a presumed royal) being awoken.

PROSE

Not gonna lie- it starts off very rough. The first few chapters particularly are very over written. The author uses 10 words when 5 would suffice and often adds awkward qualifiers. It was so bad near the beginning that I almost DNFed it but it improved as the story went along.

Honestly I probably became more forgiving as I became engaged in the plot and characters.

CHARACTERS

Polly, Onepiece and Luck are great, original characters. I read indie books because I love finding fresh, original stories about weird, unusual characters. Usually I rage quit within a few chapters due to intolerable writing quality but occasionally I find a book with something so great, important or fun that I remember why I keep trying indie books. This is one such book. Polly is a bit of a speshul snowflake but that's ok. This is a fairytale retelling, and don't mind an OP character as long as their powers don't turn them into plot breakers.

Whenever I find an awesome indie I just want to scream **READ, READ, READ.** I appreciate what they are trying to do and although they don't always reach the technical proficiency they could with a production team behind them, they occasionally tell genre and style defying stories.

If you are the sort of reader who doesn't get too hung up on prose this story and Silence of Medair (referenced above), or anything by Grace Draven would be decent books to start with in the indie fantasy genre.

Margaret Standafer says

3.5 Stars

After reading for a few minutes, it was clear to me I would never have the type of imagination required to write a story such as *Spindle*, by W.R. Gingell. After reading for a little longer, I started to worry I didn't have the type of imagination required to even read such a story. *Spindle* is a wild fairytale that chronicles the adventures of Poly, a princess (maybe!) woken after being under a spell for three hundred years, and Luck, the sorcerer who wakes her. Poly doesn't remember much about her past, keeps falling asleep when she starts to remember, and can't understand why Luck insists she has magic in her.

Throughout the story, Luck is on a mission with regards to Poly, but for some time, the exact purpose of his mission is unclear. Poly struggles to understand what has happened to her but Luck, if he knows anything, doesn't seem to want to provide much information at all to her. If he's not flat-out ignoring her, his responses are frequently not much more than, "Huh." Poly is frustrated and so was I, at times. It felt like it took a long time to get to a point where I had even the faintest idea of what was happening. As the story moves along, I gradually felt more comfortable with the magic and with some of the things that happened to the characters, but I will admit to being confused most of the time.

While the relationship between Poly and Luck left me wanting more up until the end when they finally developed a closer bond, those between Poly and some of the other characters in the story were truly entertaining and fulfilling. I felt like I really got to know Poly when she interacted with Margaret and Melchior, in particular.

There were things in Gingell's story that made me laugh and things that made me think, "Wow, clever author." There were times I was charmed by the world Gingell created with its shifting villages, bewitched forests, well thought-out spells and jinxes, and houses that appeared out of nature. However, there were other times when I found myself wanting to skip ahead because the action seemed to have stalled.

All in all, this was a well-written book and I would recommend it to fans of fantasy. Being very clean with respect to violence, sex, and language I think it would appeal to, and be appropriate for, younger readers, as well.

Estara says

I got this on the strength of enjoying *Twelve Days of Fairy*, so I checked the author's website and thought this one sounded really good.

It's a riff off *Sleeping Beauty* with a magic system all its own, but very much based on the European fairy tale tradition, although Fae don't make an appearance in this book. There's a cool twist on who the *Sleeping Beauty* actually is and who awakens her, and because it's all interconnected her missing memories are not mcguffins but necessary to the development of the story and Poly regaining (in some ways gaining for the first time) agency for herself.

At the end there's an action by the heroine which I did not think rang true to her previous thoughts about the antagonist and the care which she had always handled him with and so the end is open for his possible return, but really that's not a deal-breaker if you enjoyed the characters and world before.

There are plot threads left dangling, although we get a happy-for-the-forseeable-future ending. I'll put them behind the spoiler tag: (view spoiler)

Kirsty (Amethyst Bookwyrm) says

Thanks to W R Gingell for giving me this book to review.

Poly has been woken by a kiss after she has been asleep for 300 years, but the man who woke her, Luck is not a prince but then Poly isn't a princess either. Poly cannot figure out who would want to curse her and why, why she has no memories of the day she went to sleep and how come her hair keeps on growing at an extraordinary rate. With someone trying to kill her and Luck, will Poly be able to figure out why she was cursed in time. As poly discovers breaking the curse is just the beginning of the story.

Spindle has an interesting twist on the sleeping beauty story but I felt the plot and writing was a bit too complex and it was sometimes hard to keep things straight. I think part of this was that it was very slow and I felt some points were not properly explained. It had lots of twists and some romance.

Poly is a smart, sensible girl who adapts well to new situations and is kind. I think some of my confusion is from Luck as he is all over the place, is an enigma and I had no idea what he was thinking.

Spindle is an ok book with an interesting story idea but I found it a bit too confusing. I would recommend Spindle to fans of W R Gingell other books.

This and my other reviews can be found at [Amethyst Bookwurm](#)
