



Twelve Days of Faery

W.R. Gingell

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King Markon of Montalier is at the end of his tether. His son, Prince Parrin, is afflicted with a rather nasty curse that slaughters, maims, or brutally attacks any woman with whom he so much as flirts. After the rumour that sweeps around the kingdom, promising that any woman breaking the 'curse' will be eligible to marry the prince, there is no shortage of willing volunteers. Unfortunately, there is also no shortage of bodies piling up.

Markon needs to do something, but what? Can a visiting enchantress from Avernse help, or is she simply another accident waiting to happen? And will Markon be able to give her up to his son if she does break the curse?

Twelve Days of Faery Details

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From Reader Review Twelve Days of Faery for online ebook

Lyndi W. says

This was cleverly written and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The plot was fun and the characters were witty Mary Sues. You never doubted they'd succeed and any problems were solved with a MacGyver kind of ingenuity.

It's a clean romance with some magical action and suspense. Zero character development, just straight action and a teensy bit of 'falling in love' angst. It was exactly what I needed on a lazy Sunday. I didn't have to think too hard and I didn't have my emotions jerked around by soap opera levels of angst. It was just good, fast fun.

I doubt it would win any awards, but for what it is... it's pretty damn good. I'll definitely check out the author's other works.

Suzannah says

A bit of mystery, a bit of humour, a bit of romance, and a lot of fun.

Sadie Forsythe says

Honestly delightful in an irreverent, slightly absurd, but purposeful way. I love that the POV is slightly off from what you would expect for a fairytale, that what Markon thinks of himself and what we're shown don't align in a charming way, that Althea runs circles around everyone without even batting an eyelash, that the hero/heroine are mature (Markon in his mid forties at least) and that the whole thing is written in a witty, engaging voice.

My only complaints are that I'm never pleased with the whole scorned woman turns villainous trope and some of the challenges were overcome a bit too easily. Though, to be fair, they weren't meant to be the focus of the book anyhow.

What can I say, I finished the book and immediately looked for more Gingell stories.

Talltree says

3.5 stars!

Kira Simion says

1st impression: I liked the title and the cover so they both dragged me in. I am ready for cuteness and faeries!

[Edit: 9-30-17]

- Cute moments every-so-often.
- Unique fairy plot. Who doesn't like a 'good' murder? Though, it did get a little boring for me (remember I am one person, so you or another may like it more), it was mainly because the only large plot I could find was centered around the murder and there wasn't much tension anywhere else to me.
- Definitely a lot of characters (which can lead to/be a fun and more complex plot), but I wasn't able to care for each character.

Though, I did like the main 2 characters somewhat. They were interesting and nice to read about.

3/5 enjoyably light stars.

Olga Godim says

King Markon has a problem. Every girl his son, Prince Parrin, seemed to be interested in – a fiancé or a sweetheart or simply a ballroom flirt – has met an unfortunate accident. Some died. Others disappeared or ended up maimed. Nasty magic is obviously at work, and the poor prince is now reluctant even to smile at anyone, lest she suffers. Royal succession is in jeopardy. The king needs help to find out what is going on and remove the vicious curse.

Enchantress Althea offers her services. If she succeeds, she would be named queen. But first, she must survive the curse and find the perpetrator.

This novella was a fast and sweet read, an original fairy tale with a murder mystery slant and two charming protagonists. Althea is an unusual sorceress, and Markon is definitely not your standard king. The politics and court intrigues certainly exist in this world, but they linger on the periphery of the story, not pertinent to the plot.

Magic is rampant, the mysterious villain appears dangerously all-knowing, and the faeries are obnoxious or downright evil. While the two heroes are searching for clues to the culprit's secret identity, their adventures in Fairyland would satisfy any thrill seeker.

The only blot on this enchanting tale was the ending. It rather disappointed. Otherwise – delicious.

Athena says

4.5 stars

I really enjoyed this short novel, so much that it set me off on a (very worthwhile) W.R. Gingell reading binge. She writes wonderfully readable, interesting prose; good sturdy stuff that makes it darned hard to put-the-story-down-and-get-to-sleep-cuz-it's-3am-already!

Gingell has created a fascinating world where, amongst other things, magic is a routine matter, practiced by some people but not all, and generally taken for granted in the same way we viewed early technology. She's included a Fae population, usually dangerous and truly non-human in motivation as well as action, instead of the too-often found tarted-up human-like beings who exist merely to further the hero's journey (yes I'm pointing at Tolkien even though I adore his works - way to ignore the Unseelie, JRRT!). Anyway ...

The nifty sort-of-18th-century world we find in *Twelve Days* is the setting for several of her writings. Here she's telling the story from the POV of a middle-aged king who's behind in his paperwork and dealing with annoying political scut-work while trying to keep his kingdom prosperous and on good terms with the neighboring countries. This is King Markon, who works hard at his job, is a trifle harried and getting a bit of a bald spot. His only child and heir Prince Parrin gives every evidence of having been the victim of a particularly cunning and unpleasant curse setting the scene for the entry of youthful, clever, efficient enchantress Althea who wants a shot at lifting the curse, and we're off to the meat of the tale.

Twelve Days features tweaked western fantasy tropes along with plot twistings and turnings, adding enjoyable characterizations and an interesting plot line to Gingell's fun-to-read writing style. The only thing that kept this from 5 stars was that it was easy to see where the story was going, but even with that it was a terrifically fun read that I'll probably re-read fairly soon.

Elisabeth Wheatley says

I loved this book and not just because the author spells "faery" the same way as me. I lost count of how many times I busted out laughing because of the snark and sarcasm. Markon is a wonderful narrator who manages to be both sympathetic and entertaining. It was wonderful to have a fresh slant to the "cursed prince" archetype and the author made it amazingly new. Things like the repeated pie-related proverbs were particularly funny.

The plot:

I read this in two sittings with one brief break for lunch. In case you hadn't guessed, I was hooked. A clean, fun slant to fairytale retellings, the story sweeps you along like an undercurrent. I was impressed with the degree and skill of the character development the author wove in during the (implied) timeline of only twelve days.

The characters:

Oh, Markon was adorable. Despite being king, he gets flustered and indignant (mostly internally). When he tries to be flirty, there's this sweetness and boyishness to it that earns all the <3 's. He is a little jaded and a little cynical, but who wouldn't be, considering his circumstances? His interactions with his son were precious and the mentions of his past war feats and the woes of his reign helped remind us that he's been through a great deal.

Althea was an equally anomalous portrayal of the "great enchantress" archetype. Dressing more like a school ma'am than a sorceress, she is nonetheless powerful, strong-willed, and independent. I truly appreciated her portrayal and how the author managed to embrace the feminine aspects of her character.

Most of the other characters come and go, but I mostly enjoyed them as well. The depictions of the fae as being neither benevolent or necessarily evil reminds me more of the original mythology.

Cloistered in my dorm room, I enjoyed this immensely and have already downloaded the next book. I cannot wait to see where the story goes!

Intisar Khanani says

Actual Rating: 4.5

A fun, intriguing, puzzle-box of a story. Oh, I loved this read. First off, standing ovation for a story told from the male POV (King Markon, who is not young, dashing, and full of passion, but actually turns out to be older, able to dash quite fast upon demand, and both practical and passionate) that also stars an extremely clever, fast-thinking and capable young-ish woman (enchantress!) who really, really carries the story. Oh my goodness, I *loved* Althea. Talk about smart, spunky, and doesn't do random dumb things to forward the plot. She comes from a scarred past, but she's impressively resilient and I so, so want to read more about her. Sadly, although this is a series, it looks like each book features a different set of characters. However, since our characters do retrieve a shard of two of the broken sword which the series must take its name from, I hold out hope that at some point there will be a massive character reunion and I'll at least get to see Markon and Althea one last time.

Okay, sorry, I'll focus on the story itself. So, the love interests of Prince Parrin have been dropping like flies, and good old dad, King Markon, has spent the last two years trying to find someone or something that can break the curse on his son. With a cursed heir, the succession of the crown is in jeopardy. Also, he feels pretty bad for his son. And really awful about all the girls who've suffered because of him. Just as Markon is deciding to call it quits, declare another heir, and--well, he still doesn't want to wall Parrin off from the world--Althea shows up to break the curse. Markon does not precisely give her permission to make the attempt, but Althea goes right ahead and works her way into the thick of things before he knows what to expect. But everything she does, however risky, is a considered risk, and she typically has a trick up her sleeve to handle it. Markon finds himself tagging along as they track down the source of the magical "curse" which seems to have something to do with fae magic... But why would the fae be involved? Is it really the fae or someone who has a hold on them? And what would that hold be?

This story took so many twists and turns, even though I figure out the arch villains halfway through, the how and the why kept me guessing. I'll admit to wishing one of the baddies, a bit lower down on the totem pole but of great import, had had a bit more depth and intelligence to her. I tend to find the vehement, angry, self-serving villains not quite so persuasive. Then again, she was a tool for others, so I suppose that works. Depth and intelligence would not have made her a particularly good tool. Note also that this is somewhat light-hearted in the sense that, while dark stuff happens, this book is not filled with deep themes and emotional turmoil. It's fast, and fun, and I laughed out loud at least twice.

This is my first by Ms. Gingell, but I immediately pre-ordered the next book in the series when I finished it. How does this book not have more ratings and reviews? I can admit that I wasn't drawn in by the cover (nope) and the title made me wonder if this was a spin-off of a Christmas story (nope), but I have never been more glad that I actually read the blurb and then the sample. Go get this story now! You won't regret it.

Overall, a solid 4.5 stars.

Estara says

On my 2nd read I still really enjoyed it. Made me grab my other favourite of hers, Spindle, and am now reading that. Might reread Wolfskin after that. She has a voice of her own and I like her world and

characters.

This book can be read standalone, as the protagonists of the other books in the series switch over. The shards of the sword being the thread that binds the story. There'll be a single volume edition at the end of Januar 2017 so I'll get that and see what happens (it includes a short story with Carmine, how could I resist after this book).

ETA: I now remember how I came across this - it was suggested in the Goodreads side panel and then I clicked on the link as I quite liked the cover design, and looked at reviews, and there was a very good one by Intisar Khanani, whose books I have enjoyed, as well. It is quite detailed but I don't mind getting a lot of info usually, because the way through the book is the actual reward of reading it, not the bones of a summary.

Andrea says

A very readable story, and plays thoroughly into my appreciation of competent female mages. Althea is very enjoyable (except, perhaps, for a little too much blushing).

Markon was a nice, honourable king, but what I call 'plot blind'. There are so many things that he failed to notice or realise and so (while the man was not by any means incompetent) I was frequently exasperated with him. I did think we would have benefited from more time spent with the culprit before the denouement, but did appreciate the inevitable fate of villains who tangle with Faerie.

Still, a solid, short read. Will probably continue with the series. Many thanks to Estara for the gift.

Loralee says

I enjoyed reading this fun book written in a light, almost playful style despite the terrible things that keep happening to the girlfriends/fiances/casual female acquaintances of the heir apparent to the throne of Montalier. Althea, an enchantress, comes along, a practical level headed lady who doesn't do dumb, random stuff (unlike some characters I've read about who do dumb, random stuff, usually only because the author told them to) and who moves the plot forward with her intelligence, wit, and spunk. And of course, she wants to help do what she can to undo the "curse". What follows is a very entertaining, and unexpected tale which I found very enjoyable. I highly recommend this entertaining and well-written book!

C.J. Brightley says

I adore everything I have read by W.R. Gingell and this is no exception.

Jane says

I must admit that it was surprisingly engaging for me. It wasn't the best fae book out there, but I did like the world Gingell had come up with. Yes, there were some parts I wish that had been explained in more detail or

given more background information about, but overall it was an enjoyable reading experience for me and I didn't spot any glaring mistakes.

Would I recommend this book? I'd lean more towards yes than no. It was enjoyable but it wasn't memorable and I don't think I will remember much about it in some time.

Sherwood Smith says

What a thoroughly fun story!

We have a fairy tale secondary world, with Doors appearing from Faerie, not a great thing for humans: as the mysterious mage Althea says to Markon, the king whose son and heir keeps losing fiancées to a horrible curse, the Seelie will off humans with a smile, and the Unseelie with a wink.

But if they are going to solve this mystery--and get Althea positioned for the future, something hinted at in the curious contract she signs with Markon--they're going to have to venture into Faerie, with all its dangers. And Faerie is just as wondrous and perilous as it ought to be.

This is a short, quick-paced tale that can be read over a couple of tea breaks. If it had been longer, perhaps the villain would have been more interesting, and Althea a bit less one-note mysteriously competent, but those are very small quibbles. (Even smaller, a couple of grammar oopses.) Overall, it was a fun, vivid story, making me want to read more by this author.
