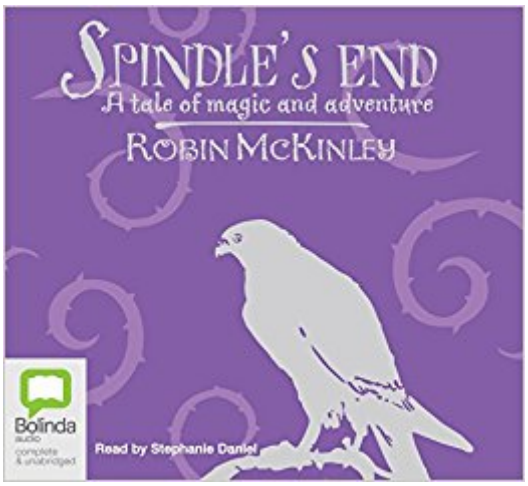
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Spindle's End



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Synopsis

The princess has been missing since she was a baby. And Rosie, an ordinary girl, is growing up in an unremarkable little village far away from the royal city. nremarkable, that is, in a land where magic is so common that it settles over everything like dust. But a fairy curse is the kind of magic nobody wants, because it always comes true. And Rosie cannot stay ordinary for ever .... obin McKinley, winner of the Newbery Medal, reweaves a classic fantasy tale, sparkling with magic and adventure, some wonderful animals and birds and - of course - fairies, both good and bad. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Renowned fantasy writer Robin McKinley, author of the lush "Beauty and the Beast" retellings Beauty and Rose Daughter, has produced another re-mastered fairy tale, this time about the dreamy Sleeping Beauty. Much like in the original story, the infant princess, here named Rosie, is cursed by an evil fairy to die on her 21st birthday by pricking her finger on a spindle. That same day, Rosie is whisked away into hiding by a peasant fairy who raises her and conceals her royal identity. From that point on, McKinley’s plot and characterization become wildly inventive. She imagines Rosie growing up into a strapping young woman who despises her golden hair, prefers leather breeches to ball gowns, and can communicate with animals. And on that fateful birthday, with no help from a prince, Rosie saves herself and her entire sleeping village from destruction, although she pays a realistic price. In a final master stroke, McKinley cleverly takes creative license when the spell-breaking kiss (made famous in "Sleeping Beauty") comes from a surprising source and is

bestowed upon the character least expected. Although the entire novel is well written, McKinley's characterization of Rosie's animal friends is exceptionally fine. Observations such as "...foxes generally wanted to talk about butterflies and grasses and weather for a long time while they sized you up," will spark reader's imaginations. It won't be hard to persuade readers of any age to become lost in this marvelous tale; the difficult part will be convincing them to come back from McKinley's country, where "the magic... was so thick and tenacious that it settled over the land like chalk dust...." Highly recommended. (Ages 12 and older) --Jennifer Hubert --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

With a protagonist known mostly for being gorgeous and drowsy, Sleeping Beauty may seem an odd choice for a retelling by the author responsible for inventing the staunch, action-oriented heroines of Beauty and The Hero and the Crown. But as Newbery-medalist McKinley embroiders and expands upon this tale, readers quickly will see that she has created a character (indeed, a cast of characters) worthy of these fictional predecessors. When the evil fairy Pernicia lays her seemingly fatal curse upon the infant princess, the royal child's nanny entrusts the baby to Katriona--an orphan brought up by her powerful fairy aunt--to rear in the safety of her distant, cloistered village. In one of the many sequences that endow this novel with mythic grandeur, Katriona and her charge travel surreptitiously through the fields and woods, while the female animals of the countryside (vixens, a she-bear and countless others) suckle the royal baby to keep her alive. This unorthodox diet may be the reason the princess--whom Katriona and her aunt call Rosie--can communicate with all creatures. Unaware of her royal heritage (and bored by fairy-tale fripperies), Rosie makes a best friend of Peony, the wainwright's niece, and becomes an apprentice to Narl, the kind but uncommunicative village blacksmith. When the princess's true identity is finally revealed, and the fate of the realm hangs in the balance, Rosie, Narl and Peony fight a true battle royal to defeat Pernicia's schemes. Dense with magical detail and all-too-human feeling, this luscious, lengthy novel is almost impossible to rush through. Additional treats include a vast array of believable, authentically animal-like characters, complete with inventive, evocative names (a cat called Flinx, dogs that answer to Zogdob and Throstle, and so forth). By the end of this journey through Rosie and Katriona's enchanted land--so thick with magic dust that good housekeeping remains a constant challenge--readers will feel that they know it as well as their own backyards. Ages 12-up. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

If you've read McKinley's Beauty, than you're already familiar with her ability to create the most wonderful characters with her lyrical prose. As in Beauty, the heroine in Spindle's End is a completely drawn character whose courage, intelligence, kindness and humor deviate from the stereotypical pretty princess with nothing to do but be rescued. The story is magical, the supporting characters (especially the wonderful animals) make you wish you knew them yourself and the plot keeps you engrossed throughout the novel. McKinley has an amazing talent to take what is old and make it fresh without abadoning the traditional tale entirely. Unlike Deerskin (which is another fabulous and somewhat misunderstood McKinley piece,) Spindle's End can be enjoyed by all ages. Her writing is colorful and inventive without being wordy or dense. The author's spin on the wake-up kiss and the happily-ever after-ending may not be standard, but they are satisfying. I cannot recommend this book highly enough. Parents - read it with your child...you'll both enjoy it (and you can help them out with some of the bigger words.) If you enjoy Jane Yolen or Patricia McKillip, you'll definitely like McKinley.

Everyone knows the story. A royal couple, after years of longing, have a beautiful baby girl. All their subjects and the fairies and woodland creatures come to celebrate the birth. But one evil fairy, miffed that her invitation didn't come, storms the party and curses the baby to prick her finger and fall asleep forever.In this imaginative retelling, Robin McKinley gives an alternative story. When the evil fairy, Pernicia, casts her spell, a fairy named Katriona is there. She won the lottery in her distant, small village to come to the name day of the new infant. She takes the baby in that moment of the curse and returns with it to her village. The trip takes weeks and the two are helped along their journey by the wild animals they encounter; the female badgers and rabbits and foxes providing the milk a baby must have.The baby, Briar-Rose, is raised by Kat and her mother. They give a story about it being the baby of a distant cousin who needs a home. Rosie grows up in the village with no idea about the royal blood she carries in her veins. Instead, she becomes a horse vet as she has the ability to talk with all the animals she encounters. It's a good life, surrounded by love and joy but has the ruse worked? Will Rosie escape the curse laid on the babe twenty-one years ago?This is a joyful book, full of spells and coincidences that turn out to push the story along. Rosie is no wilting sheltered princess. Instead she is a woman who knows her own mind and knows how to fight when it is needed. Robin McKinley has written several fairy tale retelling novels. She has won the Newberry Award for young adult fiction along with other awards. This book is recommended for fantasy readers.

Love this book. First read it as an early teenager and loved it then. I decided to pick up another book and re-read it and it is just as good as I remember. The ending feels a little confusing, but in a good way.

This is absolutely my favorite book of all time - I reread it a few times a year. As the description states, it’s basically a retelling of the story of Sleeping Beauty, but to write it off as an adaptation does it such an injustice it feels cheap to describe the book as just a retelling.Robin McKinley’s strength is in creating a realistically developed and described world, and the one she creates here lives and breathes on its own. As you read, you find yourself believing all the fantastic details - the magic dust that settles over the land and must be scourged clean on a regular basis, the speech of animals and what they are interest in, the commonality of faeries and the emergence of child-magic, why spindle ends become carved works of art... She has created a world that feels just as real as ours, with amazing little details that leap off the page to make it a believable setting for a tale that, in the end, is as familiar even as it is reinterpreted.The book really feels divided into two parts: while the whole book is written in third-person, the first part more or less follows the story of Katriona, and the second part is more focused on Rosie. The whole connected story tells of the cursed princess, the efforts Katriona and her aunt go to hide her, and later, as the truth emerges, how Rosie and her best friend Peony must work together to overcome the curse. The plot weaves tight around fantastically written details and characters, and the whole story moves seamlessly from featuring Katriona as a main character to switching over to following Rosie as she comes of age and determines how to deal with her dual nature - Rosie, the village girl, and the cursed princess the whole country hopes will triumph.It’s beautifully written, tightly plotted, and has a little bit of everything: adventure, fantasy, romance, mystery... I recommend it for anyone with even a modicum of interest in it. It’s well worth reading, and I find myself coming back to it again and again, appreciating it more each time.

Okay, I wanted to give this a 4 1/2 stars but didn’t know how. Why? Well, it isn’t a perfect five-star book for me because the first chapter or so she is a bit wordy. It seems she has to add a lot of description explanation that is these crazy tangents that aren’t that necessary...but then again maybe they are. Whether they are or not they were kind of distracting.BUT, then it just gets better and better. It is so creative.I liked the ending but it wasn’t what I expected.....but good nonetheless.Buy this book if you like fairy tale adaptations! I loved it. So did my 11 year old.

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