



Wink Poppy Midnight

April Genevieve Tucholke

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Every story needs a hero.

Every story needs a villain.

Every story needs a secret.

Wink is the odd, mysterious neighbor girl, wild red hair and freckles. Poppy is the blond bully and the beautiful, manipulative high school queen bee. Midnight is the sweet, uncertain boy caught between them. Wink. Poppy. Midnight. Two girls. One boy. Three voices that burst onto the page in short, sharp, bewitching chapters, and spiral swiftly and inexorably toward something terrible or tricky or tremendous.

What really happened?

Someone knows.

Someone is lying.

Wink Poppy Midnight Details

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Author : April Genevieve Tucholke

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From Reader Review Wink Poppy Midnight for online ebook

C.G. Drews says

Ohhhh this book **was delightfully messed up**. Seriously, psychos, the lot of them. AND YET SOMEHOW THAT WAS VERY WONDERFUL TO READ. (Ahem.) Although my brain is spinning right now, because I think I just paddled about in a bucket full of crazy.

BUT HERE WE GO WITH THIS REVIEW.

What To Expect In This Story:

(Since it's the kind of story where it's hard to know exactly what's gonna go down.)

- Magical, fairy-tale writing
- Seriously, whimsical is at level 100 right now.
- A love triangle
- But the most messed-up triangle you have ever seen
- Mind games
- Characters who mess with each other because what the heck; they're teens; it's summer; lets read your tarot cards and predict DEATH MWAHAHHAHA
- Minor magical realism
- Plot twists that will leave you splattered upon the ground
- A heck of a lot of strawberries
- Poisonous friendships
- Probably the feeling that you want to strangle several people but also feel incredibly sad and bad for them...

...ahhhhhhem.

So yes, I DID very much like it! I was *really* in love with the whimsical vibe. It's told **by 3 POVs**, which usually has me screaming with frustration, but I put up. In Wink's chapters everything is like a story. She views the world in fairy-tale format. IT WAS REALLY MAGICAL. The other chapters are still equally vaguely whimsical, too.

A little snippet at the 3 main characters? (Who were all SO messed up.)

- **MIDNIGHT:** He's a boy and kind of like...hm...a very sad lonely pancake that everybody wants to eat but IDEK WHY because he's kind of insipid. But adorable???? Like I thought Midnight was super cute and I think he was definitely emotionally (borderline sexually) abused by Poppy. I really wanted him to get some backbone, but yeaaaah.
- **POPPY:** She's a psychopath. Like, the end. SHE IS ONE. She plays mind games, hates everyone, has no feelings, and ruins lives for the lolz. She's the "mean girl" and like basically a manic pixie dream girl, tbh.
- **WINK:** She's Midnight's new next-door-neighbour...like the feral wild child who's grown up with a tarot-reading mother and 5 siblings and they all just tumble around in permanent fairy tales. She believes in supernatural mystical things. SHE IS ALSO TOTALLY A PSYCHOPATH. So diagnoses me, anyway. (I'm totally qualified, *obviously*.) Idek, she's just not really into reality, okay? Which is fair, reality sucks. But she's so very calm and unemotional the whole book, but whimsical and small and endearing.

Basically I did *like* them in the sense that they were super interesting to read about and SO VERY MESSED UP...but duuuude, they were all psychos dipped in crazy sprinkles.

It's basically a revenge/mystery/discovery plot. Midnight wants to get away from Poppy; Midnight falls for Wink; Poppy tries to break them up; but Poppy has a thing for Wink's brother. Like duuuude, I say **love triangle, but it's much more complicated than that.** And I, an avid triangle hater, ACTUALLY LIKED IT.

Okay but I DO have several pet peeves. Definitely stopped it from getting the full 5-stars, even though the story gloriously reminded me of other magical realism books I adore.

- The **description** was so repetitive I wanted to STAB MYSELF IN THE EYE WITH A TREE OMG. If I'd been reading it (I listened to an audio) I would've skimmed and it wouldn't have been so bad. BUT. I couldn't. Ergo I had to suffer through every. single. time. we mentioned Wink that she had red curly hair and green green eyes. EVERY TIME.
- It's a very **sensory orientated book WHICH I LOVE** but it just relied on the sAME words and phrases and feelings over and over and over and noooooooooooooo.
- Also "green green eyes" is a really bad description.
- ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE NOT *KINDA* GREEN EYES?
- Dude there are so many other words for green. What about "pistachio green eyes". That's so romantic.
- Midnight. is. an. idiot. This did bother me.

AND BECAUSE I GOTTA TALK ABOUT THE ENDING OR I'LL EXPLODE:

(view spoiler)

I generally enjoyed it. Even though *some* parts (aka the repetitive description) made me wish to devour a brick wall. BUT I DIDN'T! THE WALLS ARE PROUD OF ME! It was whimsical and mysterious and I *honestly* had no idea what exact crazy twist would happen or whether ghosts and murderers would pop out of the woodwork. It was so *sensory* that I literally could taste/smell/see the foresty setting and I LOVED Wink's awesome family.

IT WAS SO MESSED UP AND I LIKED IT.

(That's messed up to admit, omg.)

(Also a **note on the audio:** I'm not such a fan? It was narrated by 3 people, but the narrator of Poppy put way too much drama/inflection in, so Poppy had this SUPER irritating voice from the get-go. This made me hate her unconditionally, whereas if I'd read the book myself I think I would've cared more about her? But it was nasally and irritating and arghghgh. I'm glad it had 3 narrators though, because with the 3 POVs all in 1st person...it would've gotten irritating. Also the narrators WERE SO SLOW. Another irritation. Don't drag it out. Get. to. the. POINT. Ahem. **Not my favourite audio;** although it did make the whimsical story telling part magical.)

Laura says

April Genevieve Tucholke's writing is absolutely beautiful. I wasn't quite sure what I was reading at times, yet it cast this spell on me that wouldn't let go. The story is strange. There's mystery, romance, and plenty of suspense. The promise of an unreliable narrator..possibly even three adds a bit of intrigue. Wink Poppy Midnight has this hazy sort of tone making it unlike anything else I've read in young adult fiction. The most similar thing I can think of would be We Were Liars, though the two are entirely different, unique stories.

Wink is one of the Bell kids. Everyone else thinks they are weird, so she's viewed as sort of the mysterious oddball. She gets lost in books of adventure and fairy tales. Wink lives on the farm that Midnight just moved next to.

Poppy is THAT girl. She's a cruel and calculated bully that is even the leader of her own little group that everyone calls the Yellows. She is spoiled, beautiful, and used to getting whatever she wants. Midnight lived three doors down from her until he moved.

Midnight is the lonely boy caught in between. I know this may sound like a complete love triangle romance sort of book, but it's really not. The romance that's even involved is very strange. It doesn't overtake the plot. That focus is more the mystery. It's hard to describe, so you'll have to see for yourself.

All three characters are the narrators of our story. Each has a completely unique and engaging voice. If the names weren't provided at the beginning of each section, you still wouldn't have a problem knowing who is speaking. There is even this fairy tale feel to the story at times thanks to Wink, which only adds to it's atmospheric quality. There are slight nods to stories and tales, but she also goes a step further declaring Midnight the hero and Poppy the villain. I loved that whole aspect to the book.

I know I'm being vague. There's no other way to be with this kind of novel. This really is such a hard book to review for that reason. April Genevieve Tucholke has this eerie style of writing that creates a dreamy sort of feel. It has this way of captivating you. If you enjoy stories where you are never quite sure what is going on or who to trust, you might really enjoy Wink Poppy Midnight.

Jesse (JesseTheReader) says

i randomly had the urge to pick this one up today & ended up reading it in one sitting. i enjoyed the writing style, but didn't love the story overall. will share more of my thoughts in an upcoming recent reads.

Polly says

More like a 4.25/5 ?

I really hoped I would love this book and I was not disappointed!! This was right my street, it was so lyrical and atmospheric and THE WRITING WAS COMPLETELY GORGEOUS.

I know this kind of book won't be for everyone but the complex, morally grey characters, the beautiful setting and the magical, descriptive writing completely hooked me to the story and I read it in almost one

sitting.

I loved the theme of good and evil and who is the hero and who is the villain of the story, I thought it was done so well.

The twists and turns of the plot honestly weren't as shocking as I'd hoped them to be and sometimes a tiny bit obvious but I still REALLY enjoyed the way things turned out. I'm going to go and recommend this book to everyone now ?

Rose says

Another book where the characters dialogue is basically poetry?

You said I was a natural, laughing at all the mortals and their maudlin, trivial lives. . .
This life, my life. . .
It's not trivial.
It's. . .
Mine.
Mine, mine, mine.

rolls eyes

I only finished this book because **A.)** I bought a physical copy and never read it, **B.)** I liked the cover. **Great reasons, I know**, but still. And now that I've finished it, it feels like every second spent reading this was a waste.

This is me trying to explain the plot:

Poppy is a cruel, spoiled, and beautiful girl who strings along lots of people, but mainly Midnight. **Midnight** is her neighbor and totally in love with her, until he moves and decides to break off their messed up friendship (?) He moves in next to **Wink**, a girl with lots of siblings and who doesn't care for other peoples opinions.

Then, Midnight falls for Wink in like .02 seconds.

Also, a sort of love triangle happens.

And other random confusing stuff happens.

The first 10% I didn't like, but then it got a lot better *for a little* and then took a nosedive. Midnight was always so clueless, Poppy **thought** she was some sort of mastermind, and Wink had no personality, in my opinion.

1 1/2 stars from me. Mainly because the writing really is beautiful, and because I was entertained at certain points where *normal conversations* were taking place. Somewhere in between the tying a girl to a piano, stories of the unforgivables or something, and Poppy acting like a **worse version** of Margo from Paper Towns, **I stopped caring.**

Alyssa says

Huh. That was... weird. As Tucholke's books always are, but...

Review posted on The Eater of Books! blog

Wink Poppy Midnight by April Tucholke

Publisher: Dial Books

Publication Date: March 22, 2016

Rating: 4 stars

Source: ARC sent by the publisher

Summary (from Goodreads):

Every story needs a hero.

Every story needs a villain.

Every story needs a secret.

Wink is the odd, mysterious neighbor girl, wild red hair and freckles. Poppy is the blond bully and the beautiful, manipulative high school queen bee. Midnight is the sweet, uncertain boy caught between them. Wink. Poppy. Midnight. Two girls. One boy. Three voices that burst onto the page in short, sharp, bewitching chapters, and spiral swiftly and inexorably toward something terrible or tricky or tremendous.

What really happened?

Someone knows.

Someone is lying.

What I Liked:

I'm just going to say this now - this review is going to be vague and weird and probably not make a lot of sense. Which is fine, because it'll reflect the book really nicely. You'll see!

This book was so strange. All of Tucholke's books are strange. I loved *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, and really liked *Between the Spark and Burn*. I liked this new book too! Tucholke weaves a beautiful and strange tale of two girls and a boy, each the hero and villain of their story.

This book is so strange, I don't even know how to summarize it. Usually I'd try to summarize the book in my own words, in the second paragraph of this section. I don't even know where to start. We have Wink, how is one of those weird Bell children. Wink is quiet and imperturbable, impossible to bully despite being a perfect target. She's a dreamer, living in books of magic and fairy tales. Midnight is lonely boy whose mother and stepbrother moved to France, leaving him and his father. Poppy is a mean, cruel bully, a girl who has all the attention.

This book is told from each character's first-person point-of-view. The story starts with Midnight's. In the beginning, we find out that Midnight and Poppy have a sexual relationship. Poppy doesn't care about Midnight, but Midnight is infatuated with her. They're neighbors. And then he and his father move to an old

house next to Wink's farm. Midnight decides that it's time to let Poppy go. But you leave Poppy when she lets you go, not when you want. Midnight doesn't want to be anything to her anymore. Especially when he officially meets Wink, and feels peace with her.

And then things get weird. Poppy doesn't like that Midnight is walking away from her. Sure, she doesn't care about him. She doesn't care about the other two boys she has sex with, either. But she doesn't want anyone to not want her, or not want to be her. Everyone hates her, and she knows it a little, but she craves the attention that her parents don't give her.

So when Midnight starts hanging around Wink... that's when the story takes off. I won't spill anything more. I never liked Poppy, but it was intriguing to be in her head. I didn't hate her, but I didn't like her at all, but I felt a little bad for her too.

I liked Wink, with her weird tendencies and her head-in-the-clouds way. She's very smart, and eclectic. My favorite character had to be Midnight though. As much as this story is about Poppy and her jealousy, and Wink and her determination to live a fairy tale, the story seemed to move around Midnight. Everything came back to Midnight. His character development was the most important, of the three of them.

You're probably thinking, this book has love triangle written all over it. It actually does not! Wink and Midnight are a thing pretty much from the moment they meet. Before they meet, Poppy has her claws in Midnight. But he knows how toxic whatever they have is (they are not dating, and Poppy is having sex with other people besides Midnight). The romance is strange, definitely not a type that you're used to seeing in YA... you'll have to experience it for yourself.

This whole book, really. You have to read it to know how strange and mystical and odd the book is. I can't even summarize it, or explain specific things I liked and disliked. It's so different from other books in YA, and not just in terms of the writing style. This book is weird! How many times have I used that word? Probably too many - but you get what I'm saying!

I liked the parallel story that was being told. Wink reads a story to her younger Bell siblings, with Midnight listening. This story kind of parallels the actual story. Which makes sense, because Wink wants to be living a story, a fairy tale. Interesting part of this book!

I enjoyed this book, weirdness and all. There is a bit of mystery to it, coming down to the end. There seems to be paranormal elements, but it's a contemporary novel. I liked this book a lot! If you haven't read one of Tucholke's books, I highly recommend doing so, to experience how vastly different this book is, from most YA books!

What I Did Not Like:

This is one of those books that leaves you wondering, am I even sure of anything that I just read?! I had that feeling a lot, especially as the book started to wrap up. Not a bad thing at all! Just slightly bothersome if you're like me and want concrete statements, not the go-around. Also, I would have liked the romance to be something else (not saying anything specific), though I totally see why the author went about it the way she did. *vague Alyssa is vague*

Would I Recommend It:

I personally recommend this book (or Tucholke's debut duology), her books are ones that you want to

experience. There are so different from most YA books, in almost every way. Unconventional writing style, storytelling, character development, world-building, romance, ending. Everything is nothing like you've seen (in my opinion)! And the stories are good, too.

Rating:

4 stars. Another Tucholke success, for me! I liked this book (a standalone, yay!), and I can't wait to read the next story Tucholke has for us, whenever that may be.

Pre-publication squees:

Basically I will read ANYTHING April writes.

EDIT, 08/14/2015: LOOK AT THIS COVER.

JUST STARE AT IT IN ALL ITS STUNNING GLORY.

Joce (squibblesreads) says

UPDATE: AFTER 48 HOURS OF MY THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS BOOK CONSUMING MY LIFE, I HAVE FINALLY FIGURED OUT HOW I FEEL ABOUT IT. I upgraded it from DNF -> 1.5 stars to my final rating of 2.5 stars.

So, one of my best friends adored Wink Poppy Midnight and I don't think I could have written a review as to why I felt the way I did about this book without speaking to her first, so I did. I was also told by someone yesterday to finish the book before formulating thoughts about it, after I angrily DNFed at 50%.

The premise of this book is an interesting one, and it would have taken mad good execution skills to pull it off. In the end, I think those skills weren't quite there as much as I would have liked them to be. Basically, it takes the tropes of hero, innocent "good" girl, and vixen/siren "bad" girl, throws a mystery and some literary references in, and it's the reader's job to figure out how the mystery plays into these tropes, and whether the characters are true to how they are initially set up. Naturally, the book takes on the theme of "**are people who they portray themselves to be?**"

The writing is dreamy, floaty, and has a nebulous quality to it. It also uses repetition frequently. For example:

Wink just laughed, chinkle, chinkle.

I thought the writing was unique and bold as compared to the usually straightforward writing in YA. The mystery element also had a folksy, old-horror story based in legend type of feel to it, which matched the overall tone.

However, where I ran into issues regarding the writing was that the book switches between Wink, Poppy, and Midnight's perspectives, which are all written in first person. However, the writing style doesn't change at all between them, and furthermore, it doesn't change when comparing the way different people spoke. The same airy quality, and the same repetition. This made it unique compared to other books, but difficult to distinguish between characters.

The reasons why I originally DNFed it at 50% (but came back and finished it) was because of the use of the following lines in the building of the vixen/siren "bad girl" trope:

"[...] a short, swinging yellow skirt that barely covered the parts it needed to cover."

"She was wearing another short, swoopy sort of dress, that kind that showed more than it hid."

These lines were used when a character was speaking in first person, so it was definitely that character's subjective observation, and I cannot fault someone for thinking something, even if it is not congruent with my own ideals. **However, from a feminist point of view, I just think these lines could have been completely eliminated without alluding to parts "needing" to be covered, or hid.** There are other ways to show that she used her sexuality as a means to manipulate others without slut-shaming.

I believe this is a fault on behalf of the author. I don't think the construct or fulfillment of the vixen/siren character or the opinion of the character speaking needs to be changed, just the way that it was executed.

Another issue I had is seen in this review's comments section, which gives an example of how a girl (who had just made some deplorable comments - BUT THAT IS REALLY NOT AN EXCUSE)'s physical assault was sexualized by the mentioning of her "boobs jiggling" in the following passage:

"He beat DeeDee into a coma, right there on the school's cement steps, he pounded her head on the concrete, knees pinning her down by the chest, her boobs jiggling, his red hair flying around his lanky shoulders, the snow-capped mountains in the background."

The use of these lines inducing shame regarding females wearing revealing clothing (not the act of using sex as a manipulative weapon, because that is something that is done in real life and can be smartly addressed in books - not exactly the same, but similar to What We Saw), and the sexualization of a girl's physical assault was unnecessary and **these elements are what made me quit the book the first time. Again, I don't think the construct needs to be changed at all, and I think the message of the book is a bold one to tackle in the way that Tucholke did. It's just the presentation that was problematic.**

A.G. Howard says

That cover is gorgeous and chaotic and luscious. Also, anything April writes is beautiful and eerie. CANNOT wait for this one! <3

Nat says

"Every story needs a Hero."

This review contains ***spoilers***.

I honestly wasn't planning on reading this book, yet the first sentence pulled me right in and I'm glad that it did, but this book was so strange.

The first 50 pages really held my attention and it felt like the start of a great book, but then it started to lose its magic bit by bit with the characters.

We have 3 main characters: Wink, Poppy, and Midnight.

"A hero. A villain. A liar. Who's who?" (I still have no idea)

Wink is the odd, mysterious next-door neighbour from a big family.

I didn't quite know what to take from Wink's character, but the more I got into the story, the more interested I got in her.

She'll definitely be on my mind for the next few days.

What I initially liked about her was that her family gave off a very similar feel that Blue's family gave me in *The Raven Cycle* (I really liked that I got to see the famous tarot cards in a different world). But then we never got to see much of the family as the main focus was on Wink, Poppy, and Midnight.

And looking back I can firmly say that I only took interest in Wink because of her family, and the fact that they reminded me of my favorite characters that are set in a completely different world (and yes, I will always find a way to mention **The Raven Cycle**).

But one part I didn't really get was why Wink and Midnight got romantically involved the day he moved next door, they seemed better off as friends. Especially when he kept comparing between Wink and Poppy.

"I turned, so I could see her face.

The summer sun was bringing out Wink's freckles. They were darker than they had been just a few days ago. Her freckled skin was so different from Poppy's perfect milky white. And I liked it. I liked it so much it hurt."

After finishing the book I still have no idea why Midnight and Wink got together. It all just happened too fast.

Strange, strange, strange.

Also, Midnight's character was a little over the top for me. He compares himself to his half-brother, Alabama, one too many times and his pretentiousness was a little too much.

"I want to be a treasure hunter."

I probably should have said something realistic and normal. Something like "professional soccer player" or "film director" or "private investigator."

I waited for her to laugh. Poppy would have laughed. But Wink just looked at me.

"I don't want to find relics, though, like the Arc of the Covenant. I want to find music, and art. I want to find lost Bach compositions in German monasteries. I want to track down the missing paintings of Vermeer and Rembrandt, and the lost plays of Shakespeare. I want to crawl through castles and dig through attics and search through cellars."

And, of course, Poppy- just thinking about her makes me extremely uncomfortable because everything she

did was either immature or extremely petty.

“It was coming back, the feeling from earlier, the calm, peaceful feeling . . .

Laughter.

I looked up.

The Yellows were staring at us. Poppy too. She said something and they laughed again. And then she repeated it. Louder.

“I bet Feral Bell has little-girl underwear on. I bet she still wears white cotton panties with polka dots or butterflies. What do you say, Yellows? Should we find out?”

I’m glad her chapters weren’t too long.

But when she disappeared towards the end, the plot started to really disappoint. It felt drawn-out and the disappearance added unnecessary conflicts.

And there was this one part that stood out to me for its ridiculousness—when Poppy "spoke" from Wink’s body, I kept imagining it as that one scene from **The Suite Life of Zack & Cody**:

But those 50 last pages really, really confused me. I literally have no idea what happened and it’s kind of making me mad.

What happened with Wink?

Why is no one mad at her?

What happened between Wink and Poppy?

So I was really hoping to like this book because of its strong start, but I was unfortunately misled.

Wink Poppy Midnight was a different and strange read, and I’m just really glad that it was a short book.

But while the characters definitely irritated me for the majority of the storyline, they did leave me thinking about them for a long time afterwards (I’m still trying to decide if that’s a good thing) (probably not).

Note: I’m an Amazon Affiliate. If you’re interested in buying **Wink Poppy Midnight, just click on the image below to go through my link. I’ll make a small commission!**

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This review and more can be found on my blog.

Whitney Atkinson says

[thomas jefferson voice] whaaaaaat?

I think it should be noted that this is one of the most interesting books i've read, maybe ever. I have so much to say about it that I don't think I'll be able to express just in a written review. I don't even know where to start. This book is both amazing and underwhelming at the same time. I love the vibe that this book has. It's very atmospheric and almost hallucinogenic. Mainly, this book reads like a character study between these 3 characters and it highlights the good and bad in people. The characters are so quirky and individually dynamic that it reminded me almost of Rainbow Rowell characters. I think the main thing that's making me feel weird about this book is that there's so much angst and build-up and mystery, but there's never that satisfaction of a cathartic and emotional climax. Everything seemed to get solved conveniently with no hard feelings, which felt slightly unbelievable. In the end, I was slightly confused, but it was a sort of confusion that I felt content not knowing what I just read. Does that make any sort of sense? The characters in this book were so interesting to read about that I didn't even care when they did a bad job at being characters.

The main thing to consider is that this is definitely not a book for everyone. It's very strange and it's not supposed to be taken literally or at face value. It's very twisted and open to interpretation, so if you were a fan of *We Were Liars*, you would probably love this.

Micah Francis says

I give this book 3.5 stars. It had me hooked from the beginning and I could not put it down. In part this was due to the way it was written. No chapters. Sections narrated by each character and they would give me just enough information to make me want more and keep reading. Then THE THING happens. There was so much build up until this and afterwards it just felt anticlimactic. I was surprised to find out what happened but not in a good way. It was more of a I feel let down, and that's it? kind of feeling. I did enjoy the writing style and the magical realism feel to the book. I wish the magical realism would have been explored more. It served no purpose in this book except for the seance scene. Wink's narratives hinted toward magical realism that was never explored. Such as the fairies and the unforgivables. Again, the ending felt anticlimactic and made the entire experience in the Luck house feel as if it were all for nothing. I felt that issues were left unaddressed and unanswered. I was left with questions and feeling slightly confused. That being said, I did mostly enjoy this book and I may try to read it again later. I would like to give this author another try. Hopefully, other people will enjoy this book more than I did.

Elise (TheBookishActress) says

I can't decide how to rate this, so I'm going for a nice, easy three stars. First things first: **this is hands down the weirdest book I have ever read.** You thought *We Were Liars* and *The Accident Season* were weird? *Wink Poppy Midnight* is far, far weirder, and it's more because of the ending than anything else. **Most books at least give you the luxury of a sensical ending. This book does not.**

Wink Poppy Midnight follows two girls, Wink and Poppy, and one boy, Midnight. There's an odd sort of love triangle, not like any you're used to. And that's pretty much all I can say about the plot. Yep, this one relies on surprising you.

First things first: I loved the **subverting of tropes** here. Tucholke subverts the typical Betty-and-Veronica dynamic of a love triangle, as well as playing around with the hero-and-villain dynamic. I appreciated that!

I liked the **writing style**, too. At times it began to annoy me slightly, but I can't deny that it made this story incredibly **atmospheric**.

Unfortunately, the plot felt a little messy. This happens all the time in magical realism novels; the author is trying to keep things ambiguous, and you end up with a book that's confusing instead. There were moments where I felt like the author succeeded in having something ambiguous yet interesting, and moments where **the book wasn't ambiguous, just confusing**.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: it takes a very talented author to keep everything ambiguous but still develop characters well. April Genevieve Tucholke... *kind of* succeeded. Her characters are as developed as they can be considering the odd style, I guess. **Their arcs had wasted potential**. The ending underwhelmed me just a bit in terms of character work.

I still don't know how I felt about this book, but I recommend giving it a try. It's worth reading if only to have your brain screwed with.

Spoiler-Y Notes (skip these!!)

- I honestly thought at one point the author would have the two girls get together. They literally make out twice in this book.
 - Everyone says they hated Poppy but I actually kinda liked her in the second half!!
 - Wink calls herself the hero towards the end, but she's also the liar. So is Midnight the villain?
-

Lola says

People aren't just one thing. They never, ever are.

Thing is... **we already know this**, so we really, really, don't need this book to prove it to us.

There is a villain.

There is a hero.

There is a liar.

And this book wants you to figure out **who is who**. But if you refer to the quote above, you realize that there's **no need** to do that, since there is no point in labelling the characters – after all, no one is who they seem to be.

Reading this book felt like a waste of time.

We have the most-handsome-guy-in-school dating the sexiest-and-meanest-girl-in-school, but the most-handsome-guy-in-school is tired of being treated like crap so he turns his attention to the-sweet-girl-next-door and thus starts a love triangle.

Oh, dear.

Then, as you can imagine, there's jealousy, conspiracy and even cheating.

I know we're supposed to hate sexiest-and-meanest-girl-in-school aka Poppy, but there's hating and then there's **despising**.

I seriously wanted to throw her out of the book with my bare hands. But then I remembered that I'm not a violent person, so I dropped the idea.

Why is everyone around me so undeniably dumb? I want to like people, I do, actually, but they're all just so dumb.

That's Poppy you just heard. Every time I hear a character think like that, I lose a fragment of my faith in humanity.

I tried to like the characters, but they're all so unreliable that I just stopped bothering after a while. You can't trust them. It's not only that they're flawed – they're also calculating and, frankly, **up to no good**.

Sometimes the only way to fight evil is with evil.

If you wholeheartedly agree with this quote, there's a **nano chance** that you might enjoy this. The question is... are you willing to take that **microscopic chance**?

What a let down.

PS. I'm feeling somewhat generous, so I'm just going to promote Poppy's character a little more:

I looked like an angel, cherub lips and blushing cheeks and elegant bones and blond halo hair. Everyone loved me and I loved myself and I got my way and did what I wanted and I still left people feeling like they were lucky to know me.

FYI, I don't love you.

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Viktoria Winter says

I received an ARC of Wink Poppy Midnight by April Genevieve Tucholke from Penguin Teen. This is now way affects my opinion on the book or this review.

"We were like the three Fates, weaving the story together, threads of gold, red, and midnight blue."

Quirky, nostalgic, and bone-chilling.

I finished this read a few hours ago and I still don't know what else to say because of how overwhelmed I am. So, to surmise everything in a mere three words, that is precisely how I would capture this book.

Tucholke has a knack for brewing a lyrical storm. There were many times that I felt I was actually reading a

poem instead of a novel, and the imagery is so spiritually whimsical that I could practically smell "cinnamon and smoke" and feel the sticky strawberry residue on my fingertips, kind of like I was right alongside the characters, watching from afar as they destroyed and rebuilt one another. Wink Poppy Midnight is a grimoire? spilling magic and misery and thrill. I honestly couldn't put it down!

Without giving away any spoilers, I must say the best thing about this book was the insane plot-twist ending. I DID NOT see that coming until the very last moments, and when "it" really did occur, I didn't know if I should react by screaming or laughing or crying. I might have done all three. I was so pleased with the final notes, and the book wraps up perfectly even with all its sharp plot turns and crazy, (somewhat) schizophrenic characters, who, by the way, are the three words that make up the title.

Yup, you read that right.

Wink, Poppy, and Midnight are the main trio's names, which, instead of making the story stranger, made the adventure seem even more like a fairy tale. For instance, you probably won't run into any Cinderellas, but the tale about a poor girl snaring the heart of a devastatingly handsome prince isn't exactly foreign in cinema or literature. These characters, with all their seemingly normal teenage ferocity, are relatable enough that when they DO start to show signs of madness, you'll begin to question your own sanity.

I was wary about the multiple point-of-view's in this book, but the characters complimented one another so kindly that it was never a bother. (And by compliment I mean that in the hypothetical way. These three were actually quite vicious towards one another...it was terrifyingly brilliant!) Also, with the short chapters and quick switch from protagonists to antagonists, I managed to devour this novel in a few days. It's a very quick read, and it keeps you grappling for answers and searching for the meaning behind riddles.

This book focuses mainly on the aspect of being a hero versus being a villain and all the grey matter in between. The main characters embody the struggle we all face when it comes to discovering our identities and dealing with peer pressure.

Wink is the weird, freckled, rock of a girl. She never cries when classmates torment her, and she never lets bullies goad her into doing things they want. She's as eccentric as she is unmovable, like a steady rock that parts the rushing water. Her brother, Leaf, is the same, save for the small difference of a year and that Leaf will gladly throw a punch back. This is inevitably how Poppy fell in love with him.

Poppy, seemingly perfect, is a blonde with rich parents and high status. People fear her or they adore her, and Poppy is careful with how much power she distributes through her clique and the way in which she manipulates everyone around her. But Poppy is like a myth, a folkloric copy of a regal queen with a heart of thorns. Her secrets are as devastating as she is beautiful. However, Wink's brother Leaf finds Poppy quite ugly. The rejection is unwelcome and certainly unfamiliar, which leads her to lurk in other's lives...particularly one boy named Midnight.

Midnight is a confused boy with two crazy girls at each ear and a heavy heart longing for adventure. He is a curious character, and I like to think of him as "common ground" because he provides a breath of fresh air whenever the other two become overbearing. But, much like Wink and Poppy, Midnight has more to his persona than just fickle flesh and a frantic heartbeat. When he's not contemplating his choices, he's digging

up clues to answers he'd rather not know.

The setting of this book is one of the entities I most enjoyed, simply because of how nostalgic it made me feel. Tucholke leaves things to the imagination, but she provides enough to enhance your train of thought. In a way, this book feels like a dream. Reality is a POV of it's own, and we rarely get any of those chapters. Midnight, Wink, and Poppy are similar to dark, light, and grey. But where those titles are bestowed on each character is where you'll have to do some heavy thinking of your own. They are all highly complex and morally corrupt. It only made their characters more intriguing!

This book was a thrill ride from start to finish. Be sure to pick up your copy on March 22nd!

Trina (Between Chapters) says

This was the most weaksauce crap I've ever read.

ZERO mystery. ZERO plot. The characters were cardboard cutouts. I can't tell you one single thing about Midnight other than his hair color. The point of this "story" was to show that people are multi-faceted. We all have good and bad parts. But you cannot show that in characters who are never properly developed. We jump right into their narratives without knowing what their lives are like outside of these few days. The only things we learn about them are such outright stereotypes because the intent was to prove a point like "haha, they aren't what you expected in the end." (NONE OF THIS IS A SPOILER BECAUSE IT'S ON THE FREAKING BOOK JACKET. **YOU DO NOT NEED TO READ THE BOOK THANKS TO THE CHOSEN BLURBS.**) However, all this did was hold the reader at arms length for getting to know them so that at the end I gave precisely zero craps. I never knew any of their motives for any of their actions.

The "plot" isn't revealed until 60% of the way in. As little as the book jacket gives away about the premise (because there is very little premise to work with) the very fact that we know someone is lying causes you to immediately second guess everything and everyone, sucking all the fun of the "mystery." Even if you didn't know it was a mystery going in, you'd soon find it's a terribly developed mystery. The story never gave you enough time to sit with the false truths before unraveling them, so all the twists the book thinks it has just ended up being lackluster.

And the writing? I keep hearing it called "beautiful" and I was expecting it to be eerie and flowery from the one thing I've read by Tucholke before, but the writing here was just lazy. The only thing flowery about it was repetition repetition repetition. Always words in threes threes threes. Several times times times on the same page page page. Felt more like she needed to up her word count than a stylistic choice.

I wouldn't wouldn't wouldn't recommend it.

The best thing I can say about this book is that it's a quick read. (Thank goodness it wasn't a big time investment.) If you need to learn that people are multidimensional, maybe you will love this book. But *spoiler alert* I already knew that thanks to being an actual human myself. I found this book to be completely lacking of depth or quality.

Lauren says

Wink believes in fairy tales. She believes in heroes, and villains, and epic adventures. She believes that her new neighbor Midnight is the hero of her story, and she believes that cruel, beautiful Poppy is the villain. Poppy knows that she's the villain. Midnight, in love with both of them, doesn't know what to believe.

Wink, Poppy, Midnight is a terrifying thriller, where no one is who you think they are, or even who they think they are. Beautifully written magical realism, the language tugs you through the slim book in a day. Perfect reading for a gray, rainy spring.

Emily May says

"We were like the three Fates, weaving the story together, threads of gold, red, and midnight blue. There would be wolves and tricks and lies and cunning and vengeance in our story. I would make sure of it."

Er... **I didn't get it.** At least, I don't think I did. At one point, I thought I was getting it, but then... huh?

In Wink Poppy Midnight, the writing is the novel's strongest point, offering up a weird mystery in a style that feels as whimsical and enticing as magical realism.

My first thoughts were positive and something along the lines of: *I am going to love this.* But, the problem is that I love poetic prose to a certain extent, though not when I feel the metaphors and language aim to cover up a case of ***not much happening.***

Some reviewers are comparing it to the style of We Were Liars, which I can definitely see:

"The dark. It was thick as drying blood, so thick I could have held it in my hands, if they were free, palms filled with it. I could feel the blackness breathing, panting, panting, the dark, the dark, the dark."

It has the same use of repetition and metaphors as Lockhart's work. So maybe you will like this more if you enjoyed We Were Liars, which was just a 3-star read for me, or The Accident Season (2 stars). It was kind of a combination of the two.

Firstly, **there is literally no story for the first half of the book**, and even when the story emerges, it is incredibly confusing. It's one of my pet peeves when authors try to mask a lack of things happening/plot with the use of pretty words. I'm only blinded by beautiful writing for a couple of chapters; then I remember that words should complement the story they're telling, not stand in for it.

So, the first half of this book is a lyrical 150+ pages of Midnight thinking about Wink and Poppy, and comparing everything about them from their appearance to their personality to the way they kiss. Wink is a

weird, wild girl who loves books and stories; Poppy is a beautiful, cold bully who uses the sweet, caring Midnight.

I found their overt quirkiness put distance between us and I never really warmed to them. Being unable to understand or sympathise with any of the three protagonists didn't help to make me care what would happen.

The book is full of the kind of **metaphorical, surrealist writing** that makes it often impossible to tell what is going on, what is actually happening, and what exists in the characters' heads. Don't get me wrong, sometimes "what is real?" books are fascinating. But that's usually because the narrator(s) are unreliable, and/or the book is very psychological. In *Wink Poppy Midnight*, you can't tell what's going on because the writing confuses you.

I especially don't like it when the weird writing shows up in the dialogue. Coming from the author, it's quirky; coming directly from the characters' mouths, it sounds silly:

"Sometimes I think there must be a hole in your heart . . . one that hurts and makes you roar like an animal with its leg in a trap. Is that it, Poppy? Is that why?"

As in *We Were Liars*, you can feel the novel setting you up for a twist. The strangeness, plus Wink's whole "Every story needs a hero. Every story needs a villain." thing, is practically begging you to consider who the hero is, who the villain is, and whether it might not be who you'd expect *gasp*

A certain type of reader will probably love this book. The kind that loves style and language more than story, or the kind ready for a stranger version of *We Were Liars*. Unfortunately, I'm not that type of reader. And the only time I enjoy not knowing what the hell is going on is if there's a compelling mystery to solve.

Bizarre and not for me.

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Jessica ❁ ⇒ Silverbow ⇒ ❁ Rabid Reads-no-more says

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

DNF at 46%.

This one I was almost positive I would LOVE, based on the preview I read on NetGalley, but when I got ahold of the whole book, after those first couple of exciting chapters . . . Blah.

Poppy was nuts in that sad, poor, little rich girl way, Wink was nuts in that eccentric, weird family/family secrets kinds of way, and Midnight was just trying to keep his head above water, caught between them.

The common denominator between the two girls was Wink's older brother, with whom Poppy was (*is?*) obsessed, and, to my mind, Wink's oddness started to take on a **The Perks of Being a Wallflower** feel, so I started wondering if Brother was more sinister than he was being painted in the girls' recollections . . .

BUT.

I couldn't bring myself to care enough to keep reading and find out. B/c the meandering, seemingly nonsensical path we were taken on, presumably to get to the truth, was . . . Blah.

Probably the most beautiful book cover of the year, though. I'll have to remember to add it to my "cover-is-a-lie" bookshelf on Goodreads.

Taylor Knight says

Wow! This book is unlike anything I've ever read before.

April Genevieve Tucholke's writing is so beautiful and unique.

The characters are so incredible. I loved them and hated them at the same time. I never knew what to expect next and each page had a surprise. Everything was dark and beautiful and I never wanted this book to end.

Cait • A Page with a View says

It's such a shame that the story was so unpleasant because the writing style is absolutely incredible! Like this crazy, whimsical, magical mess. It's very well done and the setting was interesting, but I CAN'T STAND POPPY and the story is just weird.

It's a super short read but I still ended up skimming the last bit and really didn't care to even finish.
