



# Spindle Fire

*Lexa Hillyer*

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*A kingdom burns. A princess sleeps. This is no fairy tale.*

It all started with the burning of the spindles.

No.

It all started with a curse...

Half sisters Isabelle and Aurora are polar opposites: Isabelle is the king's headstrong illegitimate daughter, whose sight was tithed by faeries; Aurora, beautiful and sheltered, was tithed her sense of touch and her voice on the same day. Despite their differences, the sisters have always been extremely close.

And then everything changes, with a single drop of Aurora's blood—and a sleep so deep it cannot be broken.

As the faerie queen and her army of Vultures prepare to march, Isabelle must race to find a prince who can awaken her sister with the kiss of true love and seal their two kingdoms in an alliance against the queen.

Isabelle crosses land and sea; unearthly, thorny vines rise up the palace walls; and whispers of revolt travel in the ashes on the wind. The kingdom falls to ruin under layers of snow. Meanwhile, Aurora wakes up in a strange and enchanted world, where a mysterious hunter may be the secret to her escape...or the reason for her to stay.

## Spindle Fire Details

Date : Published April 11th 2017 by HarperCollins

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Author : Lexa Hillyer

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# From Reader Review Spindle Fire for online ebook

## Hailey (HaileyinBookland) says

2.5 ish?

SO MUCH POTENTIAL

This seems to be a recent trend where I'm super excited to read books because they sound amazing and then I actually read them and I'm like ????? WHY. Unfortunately, this was the case here. UGH.

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## Suzanne says

Had some good moments but to be honest I found my concentration roaming during a lot of this book. If you like fairytale retellings a lot than check this book out for sure.

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## Red\_Queen\_Lover says

\*\* There are Spoilers in here\*\*\*\*

This book was so creative and detailed I didn't want it to end.

I enjoyed the imagination and creativity in this book. I mean, Fae who TITHE the powers from the princesses instead of giving?? I would have never thought of a re-telling of Sleeping Beauty to be like this.

In this re-telling of Sleeping Beauty, we have Aurora and her bastard half-sister, Isabelle or Isbe.

Aurora's mother hates Isbe because it reminds her of the king's first love, causing her jealousy to become hate towards Isbe. At Aurora's christening, the Fae Claudine had given her Beauty in exchange for her voice.

Almandine took her sense of touch for beauty (her parents agreed because not feeling pain would be the best for their daughter, even though not all touch is painful). Malfleour (who's basically the Maleficent in this re-telling), comes to the christening to tithe Auroras youth. Her parents refuse for her to even get near Aurora, causing Malfleour to curse her with the original curse of Sleeping Beauty. Violette, who tithes eyesight, changed the curse so that Aurora could be awoken by true loves kiss, but wanted her eyesight in return.

The parents trick Violette and give her Isbe for her to tithe her eyesight instead of Aurora. Later on, over the years, Aurora and Isbe create a language controlled by how many times they tap into each other's hands. Years later, Isbe and Aurora are caught eavesdropping on the court and learn that Prince Philip and his younger brother have been murdered. The court is furious and reveals their plans to have Isbe taken away, which would have originally happened the day after the wedding, but since the Princes have died and Isbe has gotten into trouble again, they carry out their plans then and there.

Gilbert is Isbe's lifelong friend and is in love with her despite her obliviousness. They've only kissed once, which had been a delightful accident according to Isbe. Gil is ecstatic that Isbe is getting sent away because he too had to leave. He convinces Isbe to run off with him and she agrees. Before she leaves, Aurora and she have an argument which causes Isbe to leave a few short hours later.

The night of Auroras birthday, she heads out into the woods hoping to find tracks of where Isbe has gone. She gets lost and settles into a cottage. She notices strange objects in the cottage such as a Spindle wheel which belonged to Malfleours twin sister, Belcour who she had slain.

Aurora accidentally touches the spindle wheel and FEELS it. She's thrown into a world where she can speak and touch and feel, which causes her to be overwhelmed in the best way possible. She meets Heath who saves her countless times throughout the book. The rest of her kingdom sleeps while she does.

Meanwhile, Isbe finds about the sleeping sickness, where whoever touches or becomes near the princess falls into a deep sleep close to death, and sets out to find the youngest prince who will awaken her sister with true loves kiss. Binks, the Fae who tithes luck, cheats Gil in a game of cards causing Gil's luck to be taken away. When shipwrecked, Isbe cannot find Gil and has to set out on her own. Eventually, she does find the prince and they set out to help her sister. Sooner or later, Prince William falls for Isbe and proposes. She declines, insisting that her sister will awake and marry him. The story ends with William kissing Aurora and nothing happening, causing Isbe to accept his proposal.

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## **Beth says**

Two sisters, close even against the odds, until Aurora blood causes her to be swept away to an alternate world where she meets Heath...while Aurora appears to sleep in this world.

Isabelle wants to save her sister. She finds everyone in the palace has a sleeping sickness and she must go in search for a prince that can wake Aurora and hopefully save the day from the evil fae Malfleur.

Malfleur is a faerie, building an army to take LaMorte, Aurora and Isabelle's kingdom, after she killed her twin, the Night Faerie.

I couldn't help but think of *Spindle Fire* as a twist taken from the *Sleeping Beauty* with fae and just for that I would of been all in. The premise was incredible, completely what I would love in a book...but the execution missed its mark. It just seemed choppy and lost my attention often. Lots of potential, extremely creative and yet I had a hard time with continuing. I'm sure this will hit its mark with some young adult fantasy fans. But for me, I appreciated the imagination behind the plot. I appreciated the strong female character, especially Isabelle, and in the end that is what made me like it and continue on.

I received this ARC copy of *Spindle Fire* from HarperTeen in exchange for a honest review. This book is set for publication April 11, 2017

My Rating: 3 stars

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For Reviews and More Check out: <http://tometender.blogspot.com>

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## Natalie Monroe says

### 2.5 stars

*"One night reviled, before break of morn, amid the roses wild, all tangled in thorns, the shadow and the child together were born. The bright sun did spin, the moon swallowed day, when one her dear twin forever did slay."*

### What happens in Spindle Fire, a retelling of Sleeping Beauty, you ask? Here's the short version:

Half sisters Isabelle and Aurora: Omg, we love each other!

Isabelle: I would do anything for you!

Aurora: I would do anything for *you*!

Evil government agent: Isabelle, we're sending you to a convent.

Isabelle: No, I don't want to go!

Isabelle's childhood best friend Gil: Yo, babe, I'm hitching a ride to my relative's house forever. Wanna come with?

Isabelle:

Um, yeah. Btw, I hate Aurora now because she's a princess and I'm not.

(They leave)

Random faerie: \*does faerie things\*

Aurora: \*wandering around sad in an aesthetic way\* I have to get Isabelle back. I'm going to go after her right now—Ooh, an abandoned cottage! Ooh, shiny thing...

(She falls into a deep sleep and wakes in Sommeil, a land in a dream dimension)

Aurora: Wh-where am I?

Hot stranger Heath: Are you a malevolent spirit? ANSWER ME! No? Then \*presses his finger to her lips\* chill, babe, I'll protect you.

Aurora:

Random faerie: \*does faerie things\*

Isabelle: Oh noes, my country has the sleeping sickness!?! I must save my sister!

Gil: \*thinking how much he loves Isabelle, but can't act on it because of honor\* Huh? Oh, yeah, sure. Let's get in this boat.

Boat guy: We're a whaling ship. Here, blind girl, you man the harpoon.

Isabelle: \*pulled off the boat and disappears into the sea\*

Boat guy: Huh. Maybe that wasn't such a good idea.

Aurora: I have to return to my world, but Heath is so hot. When he touches me, I just—

Isabelle: I'm alive! I have to find my sister's betrothed Prince William because only true love can save her. \*breaks into the Prince's royal chambers\* You have to come with me right now to my virus-ridden country!

Prince William: Well, it is highly unorthodox, but okay. We have to sneak out because my advisers would selfishly stop me from going.

Aurora: Oh, Heath. I mean, Isabelle. I have to go back.

Random faerie: \*does faerie things\*

Isabelle: Oh, Gil, love of my life, I miss you so. But William is really sexy. No, bad Isabelle, he's for Aurora.

Prince William: \*breathes\*

Isabelle:

Random faerie: \*does faerie things\*

Isabelle: This convent that kindly took us in seems to be hiding something. Let's investigate!

Prince William: K

Nun: What the flip do you think you're doing?

Isabelle: Um—

Nun: That seems like a reasonable explanation. Come, you must make haste to rescue the princess!

Isabelle: Who? Oh yeah, her. Sorry, I've been really busy angsting over Gil and William.

You get the idea. I love that the sisters are physically disabled (Aurora is mute and has no sense of touch, and Isabelle is blind), but the story surrounding them is lacking. Too much time was devoted to the multiple romances and not enough on the sisters' relationship. And the middle dragged like a cram school kid's backpack.

Another great premise gone to waste.

*ARC provided by Edelweiss.*

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### **Cait • A Page with a View says**

Ok hear me out because the story idea is absolutely incredible and I was totally expecting to give this 5 stars.

A basic overview of the first 20% --

Aurora is 16 and set to be married to Prince Phillip so she can have power through marriage. She has no sense of touch or voice. Her half sister Isbe is blind, so the two communicate through their own form of listening & sign language in Isbe's palm.

The fae Malfleur is building up an army in the kingdom of LaMorte after she killed her twin Belcoeur, otherwise known as the Night Faerie.

Isbe runs away after Prince Phillip is killed so she won't be sent to a convent for the rest of her life (a lot of random things just *happen* like some checklist). Aurora goes after her and finds a cottage in the woods, pricks her finger on a spinning wheel, and then ends up in some wraith-type borderlands place with a guy named Heath. And Isbe finds out everyone at the palace has some kind of sleeping sickness.

Ok so those bits SOUND like a really awesome plot, right?!? It's definitely a creative idea with a ton of potential.

But the writing and execution were so painfully bad that I had to call this a DNF. Every other chapter was told through a different character (none of whom were particularly strong), it was all in a stilted present tense, and **it felt like someone was explaining the plot to me rather than there being an actual story**. It was just impossible to get into or connect with.

The book felt like it was trying to have a badass YA fantasy plot while still talking down to the reader through characters who were either cliches or overly simplified figures from a children's story. **Plus, the worldbuilding was one of the biggest infodumps of choppy facts I've ever seen.**

I really wanted to find a reason to recommend this story because I ADORE fairy tale retellings and fantasy worlds with strong female MCs, but that's pretty much all this book had going for it. I guess the general concept of Isbe's connection with night & darkness had potential? But it just didn't work for me in the end... I

hope others like it more than I did!

Thank you to the publisher for sending me an ARC.

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## **Isabella says**

### Meine Meinung

Bei diesem Roman hat vor allem das traumhafte Cover mein Interesse geweckt – und da ich Märchen-Nacherzählungen liebe, habe ich mich vom Klappentext ebenfalls sofort angesprochen gefühlt. Wie der Titel schon erkennen lässt, handelt es sich hier um eine Dornröschen-Adaption. Die Grundidee, das Märchen als Geschichte zweier grundverschiedener Schwestern zu erzählen und mit Magie zu würzen, hat mir wirklich gut gefallen.

Meine Begeisterung hat nach den ersten paar Kapiteln allerdings schnell einen Dämpfer bekommen. Denn selbst ich als absoluter Romantik-Fan fand, dass die Liebesgeschichten den Roman in diesem Fall eher gestört als bereichert haben. Isabelles und Auroras Romanzen standen viel zu sehr im Mittelpunkt und waren noch nicht einmal besonders glaubwürdig geschrieben. In beiden Fällen ist es Liebe auf den ersten Blick der unrealistischsten Sorte, zudem kamen mir viele der romantischen Szenen klischeehaft und abgedroschen vor. Beide Schwestern verlieben sich im Grunde einfach in den erstbesten heißen Typen, dem sie begegnen.

Hinter dem ganzen Romantik-Gesülze tritt die eigentliche Handlung leider in den Hintergrund, dabei wäre sie an sich gar nicht schlecht. Die Szenen, in denen es wirklich Action gab, waren spannend und konnten mich gut unterhalten. Wenn Aurora nachts durch einen magischen Wald irrt oder Isabelle bei einer Waljagd mitten im Ozean über Bord geht, blitzt kurz das unglaubliche Potential auf, das diese Geschichte eigentlich gehabt hätte. Ich bin sicher, mit ein bisschen mehr Spannung und weniger „warmen, festen Oberkörpern“ hätte dieser Roman großartig werden können.

Ich bin mir immer noch nicht sicher, ob ich das Worldbuilding nun märchenhaft und poetisch oder einfach nur vage finden soll. Dank der wunderschönen Karte vorn im Buch konnte ich mir die Fantasywelt gut vorstellen, allerdings hat es mich gestört, dass die Königreiche einfach auf ein paar simple Eigenschaften heruntergebrochen werden. Komplexes und originelles Worldbuilding sieht anders aus. Der Schreibstil ist grundsätzlich nicht schlecht, schließlich ist die Autorin selbst Editor, doch das Kopfkino wollte nicht so richtig in Gang kommen. Lexa Hillyer findet schöne sprachliche Bilder und schreibt in klaren, kurzen Sätzen, man merkt dem Text jedoch an, dass die Autorin auf Teufel komm raus poetisch sein wollte. Manche der Metaphern und Beschreibungen sind so kreativ und künstlerisch, dass es zwar wundervoll klingt, man sich das Beschriebene aber gerade nicht mehr vorstellen kann.

### Fazit

Eine magische Geschichte, die jede Menge Potenzial gehabt hätte. Leider wird die an sich spannende Handlung von gleich zwei unrealistischen Liebesgeschichten in den Hintergrund gedrängt.

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## Adam Silvera says

I love this gorgeous fantasy novel, the first of two books. I thought it was going to be a Sleeping Beauty retelling with a couple twists but instead it's a strong reimagining that includes badass faeries, a narwhal attack that still gives me chills, a dream world with frights, and a tale of sisterhood. This is Aurora like you've never seen her before, along with a sister Isabelle you've never met. Pumped for the sequel! If you're a fan of Marissa Meyer's HEARTLESS or the faeries in books by Holly Black and Sarah J. Maas, you're going to fall in love with this one.

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## Jess says

**Update: 28/06/2016**

COVER!

I'm praying for zero romance and hella sister dynamics.

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## rachel • typed truths says

*Spindle Fire* was a really different read and I am still not quite sure exactly what I think of it. There were certain elements and characters that I loved reading about and others that just did not work for me. I know that the majority of the readers DNFed this one but the more I read, the more I found myself getting into the story, and by the end, I was completely engaged and into the story... so as a whole, I guess it was kind of midline? I don't know!

I think the reason a lot of readers didn't enjoy this one was because the plot was all over the place and the pacing was quite iffy. I think that was mainly because of the weak beginning. It really affected my enthusiasm to get into the story, especially because the author's writing style at this point was very clunky and full of information-heavy sections. We had to wade through some very dense and tedious passages to get to the meat of the story and it was hard to devote the energy to do that when we barely knew all the details we needed to understand the story's context. We were very much thrown in the deep end and the little information we knew about Deluce, the sisters' home country (which they are meant to be the princesses of), made it hard to feel grounded in story. The protagonists' 'escape', which was meant to get the story going, felt rushed and random. I was honestly not very engaged in the story until Isabelle and William's stories intertwined.

My favourite aspect of *Spindle Fire* was undoubtedly Isabelle. I enjoyed her plotline much, *much* more than Aurora's storyline. I've always been a sucker for journey adventures between an unlikely pair, especially when they dislike each other despite the obvious sexual tension between them. This trope is such a guilty pleasure of mine and William and Isabelle made such a great duo. I was engaged and invested in Isabelle's unyielding desire to save her sister, no matter what the consequences may be, and found her easy to root for. I was also surprised to find myself attached to William almost immediately. I adored his sense of humour and his sense of duty to his kingdom. I wanted to read more about how he planned to defend his home country (which I am hoping will be a major focal point in the sequel) so I was able to fly through Isabelle's chapters very easily.

While Aurora's plotline was not nearly as captivating, I did like that her arc brought out the retelling aspects of the story. I loved that Hillyer was able to draw in so many elements of both *Sleeping Beauty* and *Alice in Wonderland* while making sure her world remained unique. My biggest problem with Aurora's storyline was the fact that the entire Borderlands situation - or whatever that place was called - was not particularly well described or developed. I struggled to tie the Malfleur backstory with what was happening to Aurora and the significance of the 'clues' was lost on me. I didn't really understand what made the Night Faerie (whose name is completely slipping my mind) so powerful or what the point of the Impressions was or how they connected to everything else. This was probably only problematic because of how undeveloped the fae lore was in general. The author mentioned tithes numerous times and implied that this was the 'type' of magic that faeries held but the details of it were confusing. Did tithing mean they had the ability to 'steal' a particular something from humans, like their luck or sense of smell? How does this work? If they are born fae, why is magic dwindling? I really struggled to wrap my mind around these details and I would have appreciated more information about it in the story, especially to clear up the Malfleur/Night Faerie subplot.

I was also not as invested in Aurora's relationship with Heath as I wanted to be. Heath did not have much personality and I found it hard to connect with him, let alone ship him with Aurora. I did like that he was unwilling to accept his imprisonment and actively tried to find a way out but there was not enough substance to him for me to truly care about him. The situation with Wren - and the implied love triangle - was entirely unnecessary. It just added drama where there did not need any to be.

### **Overall?**

Once I got into this story, I did enjoy it. I had a lot of problems with Aurora's storyline and the development of the fae lore but this was mostly balanced out by my love of Isabelle and William. I liked seeing a different kind of retelling play out and I have high hopes for the sequel since this story reached an exciting point by the end. I am eager to see what Hillyer will take our characters next. I definitely want more Isabelle and William!

*Review copy provided by the publisher for an honest review.*

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### **Sarah says**

(I received an advance copy of this book for free. Thanks to HarperCollins and Edelweiss.)

This was a retelling of *Sleeping Beauty*, featuring Aurora and her illegitimate half-sister Isabelle.

Aurora and Isabelle were both strong characters, and both managed to do well despite the senses that had been taken from them. I felt quite sorry for both Isabelle and Aurora when it came to light exactly how they had lost their sight/sense of touch respectively, although Isabelle probably got the worse end of the deal.

The storyline in this was about Isabelle leaving the palace rather than being sent to a nunnery, and Aurora going after her. Aurora then came across a spindle and fell into a deep sleep, whilst Isabelle learned what had happened and did her best to reverse the spell on her sister. (view spoiler) I have to say that this book really struggled to hold my attention though, and I kept wanting to put this down and not pick it up again. I didn't like most of the romance, the bits following random fairies were just confusing, and overall I just felt bored.

The ending to this didn't really tie anything up, the book just stopped on a bit of a cliff-hanger.

### **nat. (semi-hiatus) says**

*“One night reviled, Before break of morn, Amid the roses wild, All tangled in thorns, The shadow and the child Together were born.*

everyone gets a broken heart here, including me. yay!

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### **Mike and Becca (Books and Looks) says**

I am a huge Sleeping Beauty fan and this book did not hit the mark for me. I wanted so much to love this story but the plot is strung out and the characters are not likable. The story revolves around two sets of sisters-Aurora and Isbe (whose adventures we follow) and Malfour and Belcour (the fairies responsible) so you think this will be a tale of sisterly love and family. Let me tell you-it is not. There is no family present and everyone has resentment and hates each other the whole book.

Its biggest fault: THEY DRUG OUT AND POORLY WROTE THE "MYSTERY." While I do think unanswered questions can make a book mysterious, the way it was written just made this book annoying, drug out, and a bit confusing. Once we got the answers (at least the few that we do get), I was frustrated because there was no reason to prolong some of them and I did care about anything at that point.

The story was unoriginal and just not that exciting. There were multiple love triangles (at least 3)-all of which I found unnecessary. I could hardly care less for ANY of the relationships in the book so I had no interest in finding out who ended up with who or whatever. I had a hard time pushing through the book and really wanting to know the resolve that the characters were destined to get. I really wish the writer didn't try so hard with all the "mystery" because it was just done so badly that eventually I just did not care. And good thing I didn't care, because you get no resolve. NOPE-they had to make this a series, with a cliffhanger ending that just gets you pissed you ever spent all that time reading this book to begin with.

Poor writing and lack of interest for these characters made this a trudge and I am sad to not be fully enveloped in my favorite fairy tale. I doubt I will continue this series.

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### **Andreea Pop says**

May we please take a step back and appreciate the glorious beauty of this cover? 'Kay.

And SJM and Bardugo?!? **SAY NO MORE.**

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### **Debra says**

3.5 stars

"If this is what it means to be a true princess—making difficult decisions that could risk uncountable lives—she's gladder than ever that she isn't one."

Fantasy, Fairy tale, curses, magic, warring queens, sisters, etc.

This book is a retelling of sleeping beauty but with the Author's own spin on the tale.

Isabelle and Aurora are half sisters. Isabelle is the illegitimate child of their father's. Her sight was tithed by fairies. Aurora is the legitimate daughter who had her sense of touch and voice tithed by fairies. The sisters are close and have developed their own way of communicating with each other. They spend their days together until news comes that Aurora will marry a neighboring prince. Tragedy happens as it often does in fairy tales and her prince does not arrive. Then it is announced that Isabelle is to be sent away. In one day their entire lives are changed forever. Both sisters go their way.

Soon Auror pricks her finger and falls into a deep sleep. Only the kiss from a true love can awaken her. Sounds familiar right? This is where things get interesting. Isabelle attempts to save her sister. I don't want to give too much away but their is romance, adventure, fairies, etc. What is also nice is the atmosphere in the book. It is also very much a character. The Author does a great job at creating atmosphere and describing locations, events, etc. This really helps to set the mood and to help the reader visualize the happenings in this mood.

The bond of the sisters is really the gem here...well that and the beautiful writing. I also liked how the sister never let their disadvantages( i.e. blindness, inability to speak) get in their way. They are both strong in their own right but I have to say that Isabelle stole the show for me. I enjoyed her part of the story so much more than that of her sisters.

There were times when I wanted to hurry this book up a little. Long passages of writing where I thought it would have been nicer to have more actions but overall I enjoyed this book. There is going to be another book in the series so that might explain how this one ended.

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

See more of my reviews at [www.openbookpost.com](http://www.openbookpost.com)

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