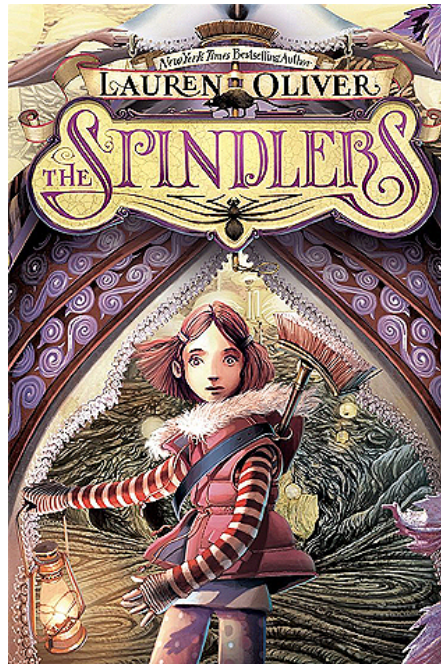




The Spindlers

Lauren Oliver , Iacopo Bruno (Illustrator)

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Evocative of *Alice in Wonderland*, this novel from *New York Times* bestselling author Lauren Oliver is a bewitching story about the reaches of loyalty and the enduring power of hope. Perfect for fans of the author's other middle grade novels: *Liesl & Po* and the Curiosity House series.

Looking across the breakfast table one morning, twelve-year-old Liza feels dread wash over her. Although her younger brother, Patrick, appears the same, Liza knows that he is actually quite different. She is certain that the spindlers—evil, spiderlike beings—came during the night and stole his soul. And Liza is also certain that she is the only one who can rescue him.

Armed with little more than her wits and a huge talking rat for a guide, Liza descends into the dark and ominous underground to save Patrick's soul. Her quest is far from easy: she must brave tree-snakes, the Court of Stones, and shape-shifting scawgs before facing her greatest challenge in the spindlers' lair, where more than just Patrick's soul is at stake.

The Spindlers Details

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ISBN : 9780061978081

Author : Lauren Oliver , Iacopo Bruno (Illustrator)

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Download and Read Free Online The Spindlers Lauren Oliver , Iacopo Bruno (Illustrator)

From Reader Review The Spindlers for online ebook

C.G. Drews says

It's not the most original fantastical underground adventure I've ever read, **but this is still ten buckets of adorable magicalness!** It reminded me of Alice in Wonderland with a dash of Narnia and (I haven't read it yet) but the premise rings Gregor the Overlander tunes. It's a pretty cute tale of 12 year old Liza going to rescue her brother's soul from Below. Siblings are CUTE. I love sibling stories.

Things I liked:

- Siblingness (duh)
- The writing style. It's nearly old fashioned, kind of in a quaint but easy to keep up with way. I LOVE THE WRITING.
- It's magical but practical.
- Liza is a fabulous protagonist, although her knees did knock through most of the adventure (I'm not going to blame her too much) she stuck to her goal with only a few temptations to quit. Loved her honesty out look.
- The obstacles and mystical adventures Liza had to overcome where clever. I EVEN SOLVED THE RIDDLE. (mwhaha, let me cheer for myself, okay?! I suck at riddles.) *Although* to be honest, none of them surprised me. I felt like I'd read it before. (But hey, there's nothing new under the sun, right?!)
- The plot hinges on a lot of injustices which makes sense because there's NOTHING as annoying when you're young as unfairness and lying and people saying "well life's not fair, get over it". GAH.

Things I didn't like:

- Probably the unoriginality. But, hey, if I was 12 I wouldn't have READ so much and therefore wouldn't notice.
- Sometimes I thought Liza acted a little too young?? I probably wouldn't been carried away with crazy imaginings at 12, but everyone else I've known was pretty much over it by that stage.
- I couldn't figure out how old Patrick was. It didn't seem consistent! One minute he's coming down stairs on his butt (is he 3??) and the next he's spelling with his alphabet cereal (is he 8??).
- Aaaand, it's possible the middle dragged too much for the super speedy ending. (view spoiler)
- AND, with any adventure story, I always question how it takes 200 pages to get there, and 5 pages to get home. IT JUST ISN'T LOGICAL, OKAY?!! *breathes deeply*

I loved the imagination and the gumption and the delicious writing! I enjoyed it 99% even though I'm like, um, 10 years too old. I'd totally give this book to my kids, if I had any (which I don't). And I'd easily recommend it. Totally enjoyable!

Shannon says

I absolutely loved Liesl and Po, which was also written by Oliver and is middle grade fantasy as well. It was one of my favorite books from last year and one I highly recommend. I unfortunately can't say the same about "The Spindlers."

There were some highly quotable passages from this book that I truly loved, but I just didn't find that level of emotion sustained throughout. It felt like Oliver was trying to create the sort of charming creepiness that authors like Roald Dahl are known for, but she ultimately failed. I wasn't attached to the characters, I particularly *hated* the rat sidekick, the journey through Below was tedious, and almost every single creature Liza encountered was either mean, awful, or a combination of the two. **The magic in this**

world is spiteful and particularly *unfair*, (as Liza would say, ad nauseam,) and the message this tale is trying to tell ends up feeling muddled and rushed in the end.

Liza spends the majority of the book whining, being annoyed and disgusted by her new rat "friend," and running away from things that are trying to kill her, all in a quest to save her brother's soul from spider monsters called spindlers. I have a really close relationship with my younger brother, and so I thought that Liza's pursuit to save her brother from the spindlers would tug at my heartstrings, but that didn't happen. Oliver attempts to blend stories about people in the real world, such as Liza's parents, her babysitter, and her neighbor, and fold them into a teachable lesson for Liza, but it all falls flat. I don't think Liza really understood what the Below was trying to explain to her and I just ended up pitying her instead of sympathizing. **Liza apparently has no friends except for the babysitter who is away at college, her parents think she's a liar whose mind is stuck in a fantasyland, and her brother doesn't even appreciate the fact that she saved his soul from the spindlers.** It's all kind of sad and depressing and not the type of middle grade book I would enjoy as a kid or as an adult. It just wasn't any *fun*.

I was really sad when I got to the halfway point of this book and realized I wasn't enjoying any of it because Liesl and Po was a wonderful story. When I think of that book and The Spindlers they seem like they were written by completely different authors, and I hope if Oliver tries her hand at middle grade again she manages to capture the melancholic magic of Liesl and Po instead of just the depressing melancholy of The Spindlers. **I'll gladly give her another chance, but it'll probably be the last one.**

A copy of this book was provided by HarperCollins Children, through Edelweiss

Evelyn (devours and digests words) says

Liza found out one day that her baby brother is not truly her real brother. She is convinced that he was stolen into the night by creatures called The Spindlers. She decides to bring him back, with the aid of a talking rat, by venturing down where magic, and mystical creatures of the Below collide with each other.

For such a promising storyline. This was super..... *unimpressive*.

The Spindlers reads more and more like a mash up of Coraline and Alice in Wonderland. So yeah, this is not very original. The turns and twists were predictable. Like in her other MG book, Liesl & Po, I feel that the characters in this one has zero depths into them. Liza's and Mirabella's friendship felt forced and awkward. At some parts of the book, I felt bored because I know how it will turn out. Meh. This one is mediocre at best.

~~Maybe I'm just too old for middle grade books.~~

But I still have to admit that Lauren Oliver has a great writing style. If only she just delved deeper into her characters.

Adam Silvera says

WOO! Another awesome MG from Lauren Oliver, this one with an adventure more action-packed than her lyrical (and my favorite) "Liesl and Po". I'll be writing up a full review for it in the fall, but for anyone wondering whether or not "The Spindlers" is worth piling on top of their already mountainous TBR piles,

I've got a list of selling points for you. (Gotta love lists!)

You will LOVE "The Spindlers" if you love...:

- Alice and Wonderland, The Redwall series, Roald Dahl (particularly "The Witches"), and Coraline (Creepy family thing! AHH!)
- Rats with names more beautiful than they actually are, and gamble, and dress up.
- Watching spiders get whomped.
- Strong female protagonists who fight through their fears to rescue the ones they love.
- Pinecone Bowling. (Don't tell me you've NEVER played Pinecone Bowling. Go call up your parents and demand forgiveness. This is a wrong to be righted!)
- Riddles! Three headed dogs! Troglods! Oh my!

You will NOT LOVE "The Spindlers" if...:

- The spindlers stole your soul, which is a valid grudge. (Though, if you're wondering HOW to get your soul back, you should probably just give in and read the book. Just sayin'.)
-

Jessica says

"Evocative of Alice in Wonderland?" Well, only if you haven't read Coraline or Gregor the Overlander! Also had a bit of a Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH vibe going. Very fun for middle grade readers.

Whenever I hear something compared to Alice in Wonderland, I think, Is it full of biting political commentary on the state of the Empire under Victoria? No? THEN DON'T COMPARE IT TO ALICE.

Okay, rant aside. This is a fun, creepy little book about a girl going in search of her brother's soul, which has been stolen by the spiderlike spindlers. I love Lauren Oliver's writing, but I felt that this book pulled too many punches for me to really love it. The spindlers were great, Liza was a charming protagonist, and there were many creatures and encounters in the world Below that left me wanting more . . . and it wasn't there. I felt like the moments of peril were over too quickly, that the stakes weren't high enough, that the world wasn't layered enough to support the creatures that lived in it. I would have liked to see her really dig her teeth in and show us a big, frightening world below our own. On the other hand, I have no reservations about passing this on to my 8yo, as I know that it will be spooky without giving him outright nightmares.

Crystal ☆ Lost in Storyland says

I'm in love with Lauren Oliver's writing all over again. Before I Fall and Delirium showed us that she can write emotional, heartwrenching novels. I haven't read Liesl & Po yet (where have I been?), but Spindlers has shown me that she can write magical fantasies that will capture the heart and inner child of middle-grade readers everywhere.

As I've mentioned in some past reviews, I'm an older sister myself, and I can easily relate to Liza. Yes, siblings get in fights, but they're your best friends. Half the time, they do the opposite of what you ask them to do, but they're also the ones who understand you best and truly care about you. This is the case with Liza. She remembers the annoying habits of her brother Patrick, but all faults are forgiven when she realizes that her brother's soul has been stolen by Spindlers. Without thought for herself and in spite her her fears, she

decides to rescue him.

This book reminded me of Gregor the Overlander, which is also about an older sibling who goes "Below" to save a younger sibling. However, Spindlers is more magical and seems to be targeting a slightly younger audience. I love the portraits of the various characters that show up at the beginning of each chapter and only wish that the pictures were larger. The drawings are gorgeous and the world so magical that I wish there were more illustrations accompanying the text. On the bright side though, this also means that we get to imagine the world ourselves.

I love middle-grade fantasies for the fantastical worlds they bring to younger readers. Inside, I'm still a bit of a kid and get excited whenever I find an especially extraordinary fantasy book. While I may also enjoy darker, more mature works for young adults and the occasional adult paranormal/urban fantasy read, there's something about the innocent magic of middle-grade fantasies that calls out to me.

Spindlers captures that essential element.

This book is about sibling relationships, friendship, and taking courage in oneself. As I've also mentioned before, Lauren Oliver is one of my favorite authors. I am looking forward to seeing more new works from her, young adult and middle grade alike and whatever else she comes up with!

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For more of my reviews, visit my blog Imaginary Reads.

Sonia says

LAUREN FREAKING OLIVER

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sonja P. says

I really wanted to like this because I LOVED Leisl and Po, but it just didn't have that special something. The best way I can describe is that at several points I was reminded of other works, and I kind of wished I was reading them instead. Throughout I was reminded of The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland, and I wished for the same sense of magic and charm. At another point I was reminded of the Hobbit, and I wanted to be reading about Bilbo and the dwarves. At points I was even reminded of Leisl and Po, and I longed for that book. I wanted to read about loss in that book, and not about how life wasn't fair in this one.

The point was belabored, and it was frustrating. Liza had her moments, but I didn't like her the way I liked Liesl or September. I didn't care about the characters. You can have scary things in children's books, but there needs to be something special there. I am reminded of the Girl Who Fell Beneath Fairyland. Valente deals with the darker side of fairyland, but she doesn't let it take over the magic. I never felt the magic here. I just felt some cool ideas that weren't well-executed. I wanted more.

I'm hoping Oliver makes another foray into children's literature again, but I hope its better than this one.

Wendy Darling says

I'm so, so happy Lauren Oliver has written another middle grade novel. Can't wait!

Margaret Chind says

I started this one by reading an advanced copy, but I finished it up via the audiobook version through the Overdrive library system. This was an interesting read and one I plan to keep on the shelves. I also plan to watch for more stories from Lauren Oliver in the future. *The Spindlers* is the adventure of one girl named Liza who is searching for her real brother's soul and she believes he has been replaced by evil spider-like beings that suck out his soul. As she sets off to find Patrick she comes up against many different tests to find him again, or at least attempt to... This has a flavor of *Alice in Wonderland* and on some elements I even got a hint of *Harry Potter* here and there, and even *Coraline* but really it's just the bringing out historical mythology of legends past.

This is a neat and interesting story that keeps a reader hooked, but that's not the important part. This is a book about maturity, about what matters most, about the truly important things. It touches on lots of issues that current in-between age children may see or experience but not really understand in relation to their siblings, friends and parents. This is a quest novel through an unbelievable underworld and has just the right amount of scary, and just the right amount of challenge. It is one of those that I truly think a reader can find his or herself growing in the end.

There is also a Discussion Guide available.

I received this product free for the purpose of reviewing it. I received no other compensation for this review. The opinions expressed in this review are my personal, honest opinions. Your experience may vary. Please read my full disclosure policy for more details.

Will be posted to CreativeMadnessMama.com

Brenda says

The Spindlers tells the story of Liza, who wakes up one morning to find her brother Patrick has changed. In fact the opening line goes like this from Goodreads: "One night when Liza went to bed, Patrick was her chubby, stubby, candy-grubbing and pancake-loving younger brother, who irritated and amused her both, and the next morning, when she woke up, he was not. In fact, he was quite, quite different." Liza tries to test this new Patrick by asking him questions but when he ultimately fails her tickle test, she knows that she must find her real brother. Liza's parents are no help they just want her to grow up and stop all this childhood fantasy. Liza however was told about creatures called Spindlers that can steal your soul by none other than her old babysitter/friend Anna, so she feels that they must be real. Liza determines that she must travel "Below," so armed with just a broom, Liza goes down into the basement searching all around in the dark space behind the bookcase. Ultimately, she falls through a leaf floor and lands on a talking rat named Mirabella. Mirabella promises to lead Liza to the Spindlers nest, but their path will not be a easy one.

With this book I see influences from Maurice Sendak's book *Outside Over There*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Lion Witch and the Wardrobe* and even the movie *Labyrinth* influenced Liza's adventure below but that just gives it the feel of these other classic books and movie to me. There is so much to love about this story. Liza's faith that she will find her brother, despite him being annoying and her strength to come face to face with the Spindlers themselves. A wonderful adventure story that isn't very scary either. It's a very fantastical world filled with unique creatures and some lovely imagery that guides the story. Plus just look at that cover and the illustrations at the beginning of each of the chapter which are gorgeous. My copy was purchased, after reading *Liesel* and *Po*, I knew I wanted to own this one as well. 4 out of 5 story for me.

Kyle says

To read my reviews sooner/see more of my reviews (I wrote this review about two weeks ago . . . and am just posting it now because I'm lazy like that) please check out ze blog, [Living Is Reading!](#)

I guess it's safe to say that I'm a pretty big fan of Lauren Oliver. I have yet to read a book by her that I don't like at least a little bit. *Delirium* wasn't quite her best, and as time has gone by I'm not quite on the bandwagon for *Liesel & Po* (yet it was still satisfying), but I loved *Before I Fall* and I really, really enjoyed *The Spindlers*. I still have *Pandemonium* checked out from my school library and have yet to read it, but that's a different story (although I read the first two chapters and that was good).

Obviously Oliver has incredible prose. Like, it's up there with Laini Taylor (although don't go fooling yourself by thinking that Oliver is the superior prose writer, because she's not, so you need to stop imagining things). It's safe to say that she tones it down a lot in her middle grade novels, but it's still prevalent, and it's still has this magical twinge of beauty to it, that seems to be lost in a lot of books, whether it be middle grade, young adult, or adult. Her writing makes everything seem like a fairy tale, if it's about demonic spiders living underneath our world, or a dystopian society where love has been declared an illness, or mean girls finally learn the damage that they, or any others that bully, can inflict on those around them.

The idea behind this one involving demonic spider beings, rats fighting for civil equality, and a girl off on a quest to save her brother's soul is obviously quite original (well, maybe not the part about a girl off to save her brother - *Blood Red Road* for example). I also found myself loving that it wasn't just about the fantasy elements with this book. It's also a brief exploration at the inside life of people living in our country now dealing with financial issues and what that can do to people, and therefore how it affects the rest of their family.

I don't exactly come from a lot of money. Not poor, but I'm middle class all the way. My family is pretty stable, so maybe I can't relate entirely to the situation that Liza's family seems to be going through in the background of the story, but it's not something so foreign that I'm left scratching my head in an elaborate mansion counting my money, completely frazzled at the idea that not everybody can fly around in a private jet.

It's something that a lot of people can relate to though, and I appreciate Oliver putting this in there, instead of focusing completely on some ten year old girl having a perfect family in a perfect town off on some perfect journey to Wonderland to save her perfect little brother.

The characters themselves are pretty engaging, and the story itself was interesting enough to hold my attention the entire way through. Liza is a flawed heroine, she's prejudiced against certain things (namely

rats wearing make-up and whatnot, but I guess all of us are a little bit against rats deep down), and at times has a more narrow view of the world. However, I guess that's where Mirabella comes into balance it all out, and to question things that our society poses as what's "normal" and what's "abnormal."

This is a quick read, and clocks in at only 246 pages, so it shouldn't take you too long to get through this. It's a light, fun adventure story about a girl in a not-so-perfect world to go on an adventure and learns that there is hope and beauty even in a world full of darkness (even if that sounds a little cheesy).

Maddie (Heart Full Of Books) says

This gave me Coraline, Arthur and the Invisibles and The Labyrinth vibes. It was an odd mixture of things but predictable because of its associations in my mind.

Lisbeth Avery {Domus Libri} says

I haven't read Middle Grade books for years yet a middle school book by Lauren Oliver I had to read and I'm glad I did. This book was original and cute. I really loved it and didn't want to write a review but since it's a ARC, I haz to. Be warned, I'm not really sure how to review this. It's probably going to be a very short review.

If you loved Alice in Wonderful, Coraline, or maybe the Redwall series, you'll love this one too. Even though it's not exactly YA, it's still a cute book to read. Let's start the review guys!

Characters:

Liz was strong, kind, and loyal. She never gave up even when the times got tough. She wasn't exactly the smartest but she was very brave. Liz seemed like my brother, full of imagination and spunk. She also seemed a lot like Coraline from Coraline and Alice from Alice in Wonderland. She was adorable.

Mirabella was he rat from the Below. A fashion obsessed rat that is highly offended by the word "rat". She is sweet, sarcastic, and witty. Mirabella cracked me up on more than one occasion.

All the characters seemed very familiar. They all seemed like characters from Alice in Wonderland which I really enjoyed.

Plot and Writing:

Plot:

It wasn't exactly the most unpredictable plot. I guessed most of the book from around 10% in. The plot was cute and more or less unique. I did enjoy it and found myself grinning like an idiot throughout the book. It was cute but if I looked more into the plot like I usually do, it wouldn't be as enjoyable. So, my rule: read this one, don't look deeply into it.

Writing:

It was childish, much more simple than what I'm use to, yet it was lyrical and Alice-ish. It will be downgrade if you don't often read MG books. I really don't have too much to say about this.

What I liked and disliked:

Liked:

- * Nice characters
- * Cute plot
- * Alice and Coraline references

Disliked:

- * Predictable
- * Boring riddles

In conclusion:

I really enjoyed this book, it wasn't anything special really but it was nice as a lazy read which is what I needed right now. I recommend reading it even if you're way past the MG range.

Favorite Character: Mirabella

Favorite Quote:

That they [her parents] dreamed at all was a revelation. She had always assumed, in some way, that they powered off at night, like computes, and booted up again in the morning, with a whole new series of downloaded complaints and annoyances and problems and irritations. She could not begin to imagine what they would dream about. Taxes, perhaps...?

Find more at: <http://domuslibri.wordpress.com/>

hayden says

THECOVERTHECOVEROMGOMGOMGOMGOMG

Rebecca says

I like to think of myself as a diverse reader - I'll pick up pretty much anything that catches my interest, no matter what age group it's meant for. The only thing I tend to avoid like the plague is nonfiction. I'd like for that to change, but honestly it probably never will. I always tell myself that I want to read middle grade books more, but for some reason they're always the first stories to get put on the back burner, to read "later" (which is code for never). Probably the only real reason I picked up The Spindlers when I did is due to the fact that I loved the first two books in Oliver's Delirium series, and I wanted to see how she would handle a children's novel.

Whenever I actually do read middle grade, I'm always reminded why I like them so much. Most of the time it's because the storylines are just plain charming. Little kids are so much smarter than we give them credit

for, and there's something magical about watching the story play out through the eyes of the narrator. Liza was no exception; I found her very easy to like and immediately appreciated how much she loved her little brother, Patrick. Almost always in this type of book, the adults are portrayed as strict and completely blind to the magical things that are going on around them, while the child protagonist is left to battle a wide range of monsters. The Spindlers actually reminded me a lot of Coraline, another book I really enjoyed.

Lauren Oliver definitely has a way with words, and I've really missed her writing ever since I finished Pandemonium (I've yet to read Requiem). It's so beautiful and I loved the way she described the world of the Below world. The plotting is also done very well, one event leading smoothly into the other. My favorite character was definitely Mirabella the rat; I loved her quirky and nervous personality. There were those traditional moments in worlds like these when something appears before the main characters that's far too good to be true - and in this case, it's the big table of food and the four beautiful sisters presiding over it. The moment Liza ran into them, I was immediately wishing her away, because this is exactly the kind of thing you cannot trust. I also liked the three-room trial at the end of her quest, though my favorite was probably the first room.

The little illustrations before the beginning of each chapter were very pretty to look at. The Spindlers is a very cute and quick read. I will continue to pick up other middle grade novels because of it, though probably not one after the other. Though I love the lightness of stories like these here and there, one thing about middle grade is that they often lack substance. Still, if you're in the mood for something to put a smile on your face, I would definitely go with this one. I'm now really looking forward to Oliver's other children's book, Liesl & Po.

3.5 stars

Olivia says

Excuse me Goodreads, but you seem to have neglected to have a description for this book, and don't tell me "there wasn't one to put" because, FYI :

When Liza's younger brother Patrick's soul is stolen by the evil Spindlers, spider-like creatures who live underground, she knows she must set out on a heroic quest to the world Below to rescue it.

Taken from Lauren Oliver's own website.

Lauren Oliver fan :)

Donna says

I tried really hard not to draw comparisons between Oliver and Neil Gaiman but I couldn't help it. There was just such a heavy hand of Coraline in THE SPINDLERS that it was hard not to. I mean, it wasn't a bad book by any stretch of the word. THE SPINDLERS was whimsical and dark and full of adventure. But it lacked that lyrical quality that Gaiman's work ultimately has. It was a good book, but it wasn't great.

There was also a bit of Labyrinth in there as well, as the older sister travels into the underground to save her little brother. Only no goblin kings are present here. Just nasty spider people that eat children's souls for breakfast. Literally.

Ultimately it's a predictable story. You know how it's going to end up, even with a wrench thrown into the plot that really isn't much of a wrench. I did like the darkness that Oliver had in the story and how Liza was crawling through some truly nasty things in order to get to her brother (or his soul, rather). This was not a light story despite the fact that it's written for children.

THE SPINDLERS is one of those stories that it's a good enough story when you're reading it, but it doesn't leave much of an impression and it ends up being just okay. A good read for younger kids but something that's not ultimately going to leave a mark on anyone. It almost felt like Oliver wanted to write older for the story for the sheer amount of dark things that were present, but she was committed to a middle grade novel and had to tone it down. In hindsight there are a lot of nasties in here, but they're watered down and don't leave the impression that they otherwise could have had they had a chance to flourish under more robust writing.

3

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

Jessie (Ageless Pages Reviews) says

Read This Review & More Like It On My Blog!

Lauren Oliver is a truly talented writer, be it in the young-adult field, or when writing for a younger audience, like here in *The Spindlers*. I was impressed with *Before I Fall*, and I am even more so after reading this richly imaginative, darkly creepy, and thoroughly lovely middle-grade novel. I'm in my twenties and I loved every page - I can't imagine what this book would have meant to me had I read it when I was at the age of the intended audience. It's wonderful, magical, creepy adventure all about the power of love, family, hope, and believing in yourself. It's a quick read, but the beauty of Oliver's prose and her feisty main character Liza will leave a lasting impression long after the book is finished.

The Spindlers is a highly imaginative novel with echoes of some beloved favorites - *Labyrinth* (the abduction of a loved/hated younger brother), *Alice in Wonderland* (a hidden magical world Below filled with anthropomorphic animals), and *Coraline* (the dark, sinister aspect of a lot of what Liza uncovers.) Despite being vaguely reminiscent of those loved novels, Oliver's *The Spindlers* is a unique adventure filled with both wonder and magic. This charming tale of a young girl who uses stories and her vivid imagination to escape her tension-filled house (the casual hints of money problems at home - the overdue bills and shout-off notices, the broken plates and furniture, her mother's constant worry and pacing) is filled with creative new spins on monsters, what it means to be a friend, and the fun of seeing what weirdly beautiful creations Oliver can come up with next.

The illustrations are few - at least in the ARC edition that I was granted - but they are both lovely and easily capture the feel of what Oliver creates with her words. I fell in love with how this author writes because of this book. I loved *Before I Fall* but had some issues, but *The Spindlers* is truly engrossing and immersive, and a lot of that is down to how well Oliver can spin a tale. This fable-like story is imaginative, interesting, and above all, entirely fun and over too soon. I highly recommend this to anyone searching out a quick but moving read. My favorite quotes from the novel:

"The spindlers had gotten him: they had dropped down from the ceiling on their glistening webs of shadowed darkness and dropped their silken threads in his ear, and extracted his soul

slowly, like a fisherman coaxing a trout from the water on a taut nylon fishing line. In its place they deposited their eggs; then they withdrew to their shadowed, dark corners and their underground lairs with his soul bound closely in silver thread."

"The world is a freak, she should have said. Everything that happens in it is strange and beautiful."

"This was what her parents did not understand - and had never understood - about stories. Liza told herself as though she was weaving and knotting an endless rope. Then, no matter how dark or terrible the pit she found herself in, she could pull herself out, inch by inch and hand over hand, on the long rope of stories."

"Liza stared at her. *'Impossible.'*

Mirabella swept her tail around her wrist and gave an imperious sniff. *'That is a human word,'* she sad. *'And a very ugly one at that. We have no use for it Below.'*"

"Liza felt she now knew many things she had not known yesterday. She knew, for example, that even rats could be beautiful, and hope grew from the smallest seeds, and sometimes there was great truth in made-up stories."

This is an absolutely wonderful middle grade novel, one that holds vast appeal for older readers no matter what their age. Lauren Oliver is a wonderful storyteller and she proves it once again here, with a unique way with words that can evoke pathos as easily as breathing. I was caught up in this story, anxious and excited to see what new ideas and creatures this able author would throw my way. From nids to troglods to the nocturni, this is a world alive with promise and horror, and all the more unique for it.

Stacey (prettybooks) says

I am a Lauren Oliver super fan. *Delirium* and *Before I Fall* are two of my favourite young adult novels, and *Liesl & Po* was one of the first children's novels I read as a book blogger. I adored them all - they were like

nothing I had read before. Lauren Oliver has a genuine talent for writing beautifully and poetically. I reread her enchanting passages just to experience them again. I stop reading just to share a quote or make a note of it. It's always vivid, colourful, and empathic. It makes you feel something and stays with you long after you've closed the book. *The Spindlers* is no different.

Although on one hand *The Spindlers* is a fun (and creepy!) fantasy adventure, it's also about Liza – our protagonist – and her unconditional love for Patrick, her younger brother, that makes her risk her life and strive to save him even though they fight, argue, and irritate each other constantly. Liza's already feeling alone: her parents seem distracted and ignore her, and her favourite babysitter and close friend has left for college. The sudden loss of Patrick – even though he's been replaced by a loathsome doppelgänger – is enough to motivate her to enter the dangerous lair of the Spindlers - Below. They have taken Patrick's soul to feed on. Can Liza bring him back?

The Spindlers struck me as being a perfect story for those who enjoyed Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* - Liza enters Below through a concealed hole in the wall and discovers a hidden world full of very strange things - rats that dress up in stolen clothing, deadly forests, and little seeds of hope. Everything is described so colourfully, yet is never without a sinister edge. Its dark and spooky atmosphere carries through right until the very end.

The Spindles is an immensely magical novel with love and hope at its heart, the story of an intelligent young heroine, yet it's not all bunnies and rainbows - how about Troglods and Scwags instead?

Thank you Hodder & Stoughton for providing this book for review!

I also reviewed this book over on Pretty Books.
