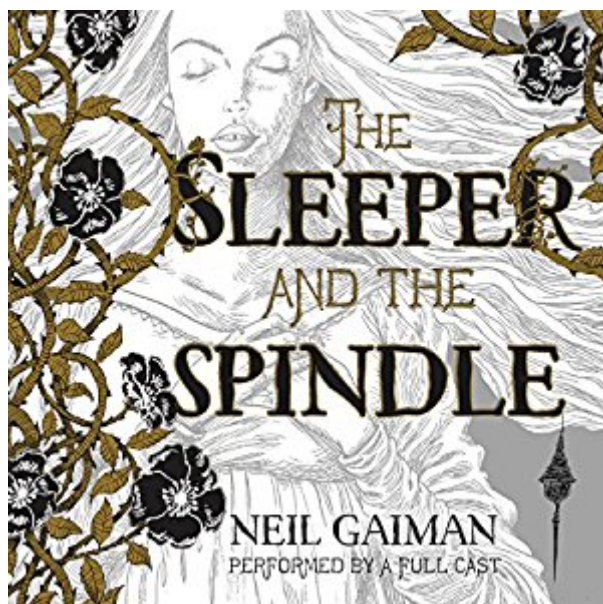


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# The Sleeper And The Spindle



## Synopsis

A full cast audio production performed by Julian Rhind-Tutt, Lara Pulver, Niamh Walsh, Adjoa Andoh, Peter Forbes, John Sessions, Michael Maloney, Sean Baker, Jane Collingwood, Clare Corbett, Allan Corduner, Katherine Kingsley, and Daniel Weyman. It was the closest kingdom to the queen's, as the crow flies, but not even the crows flew it. You may think you know this story. There's a young queen about to be married. There are some good, brave, hardy dwarfs; a castle shrouded in thorns; and a princess cursed by a witch, so rumor has it, to sleep forever. But no one is waiting for a noble prince to appear on his trusty steed here. This fairy tale is spun with a thread of dark magic, which twists and turns and glints and shines. A queen might just prove herself a hero if a princess needs rescuing....

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Version: Unabridged

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Best Sellers Rank: #99 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Children's Books > Fairytales & Folklore #187 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Fairy Tales & Folklore > Adaptations #445 in Books > Teens > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Myths & Legends

## Customer Reviews

This review appeared on my blog - [www.medusaslibrary.com](http://www.medusaslibrary.com) The Sleeper and the Spindle is a new novelette by Neil Gaiman with illustrations by Chris Riddell. I imported it from the UK because I couldn't wait for it to be available here in the US. (I also got the UK edition of Shades of Milk and Honey because it has two extra chapters. I'm not obsessed. Hush.) First off, let me just say that this is a gorgeous book. The picture to the left doesn't even really do it justice. The picture of the sleeper is printed on the actual book cover, then there is a velum dust jacket that has the title and the roses. The vines are all detailed in gold. I can't find a good picture of the actual cover, and my cell phone can't do it justice either, so I'll leave it for you to search. As with so many things Gaiman has done, this book weaves fairy tales together. The two

main stories are Sleeping Beauty and Snow White, but there are hints of Rapunzel, Red Riding Hood, and others I'm sure I'm not catching. Three dwarves set out on a quest to get the best silks for their queen. But when they reach the neighboring kingdom they are met with stories of a plague, a sickness, a curse, a spell. People are falling asleep. Everyone knows that there is a princess asleep in the castle. She's been there for 70 years, but everything outside the castle full of roses, on this side of the haunted forest had been fine. Until recent. The sleeping curse is spreading west at two or three miles a day. The dwarves rush back to their kingdom to tell the Queen. She can do math and determines that the curse will reach her kingdom in a matter of weeks. So, she puts off her wedding, kisses her prince, and rides to the east. Dwarves are magical and only sleep once or twice a year, so they should be able to withstand the curse. And the Queen has already overcome one enchanted sleep, so she should be fine too. This story leaves the Princes behind. In fact, Snow White's prince is patted on his pretty face and never thought of again. This book breaks conventions, while still being very much a classic fairy tale. It was noticed by several media outlets for this picture: That's Snow White waking up Sleeping Beauty with a kiss. It ties nicely into this year's other non-traditional Sleeping Beauty kiss (Spoiler) in Maleficent. Now, I will say that the picture is slightly misleading. This could be considered a SPOILER, so I'm going to ramble on for a bit in case you don't want to see SPOILERS to give you time to click away from this page. There is not a happy, lesbian romance between Snow White and Sleeping Beauty. I just want to get that out there. So if you're really excited about that or deeply offended by it, either way, bring it back in, because that's not the direction this story goes. The kiss is more or less out of pragmatism. The Queen is the most logical person in the party (consisting of herself and three dwarves) to break the spell. Ok, now that that's out of the way. I liked this story. I liked it very much. This is very much the story of the women involved. The dwarves are there, but they're support. The Prince is barely a footnote. It's beautifully illustrated and beautifully written. I can't recommend it enough if you like fairy tales. The Queen (she's never actually called Snow White in the book) takes agency. She is the Queen. She must go face this threat to her kingdom, but she also uses the quest as a way to reset her life, which is spinning slightly out of control. Another warning that is really more like a reminder. Neil Gaiman wrote this. You know, that guy who writes the things. Don't look for a standard fairy tale ending from this book. It's a satisfying ending. It's a meaningful ending. It's a beautiful ending. But it's not a promise of Happily Ever After. I can't say enough about Chris Riddell's illustrations. He has a very definite style, which is very much in evidence

here. The illustrations are all elaborate black and white drawings with gold embellishment. They're just breathtaking. There are tiny details in all of the pictures that make you want to just sit and stare at a page for ages. One of my personal favorite pictures is that of the Queen in bed. She has gold skulls all over her coverlet. That just seems so perfect for Snow White. Sleep is a short reprieve from death for both these women. The skull motif carries on with the Queen's armor. They aren't leering skulls or demon skulls. They're just small reminders. It's just lovely. Also, I now really want to cosplay Snow White from this book.

I just finished this wonderful story, and was in tears, but tears created out of wonder and hope! This is a fairy tale as it should be told, not the usual drivel about a princess being saved by a prince. Stories like this and "Into the Woods" give full meaning to the people who inhabit them and for the fullness of life that can come out of making our own choices and moving forward. Have other women in my life, both young and old who need to read this book, but will be purchasing a second copy so that can pass to more than one person at a time. I agree with other reviewers on .uk who loved the illustrations.

The Sleeper and the Spindle is a dark and twisted fairytale that takes components of Sleeping Beauty and mixes in Snow White and three of the dwarves. A sleeping enchantment has been spreading across the neighbouring kingdom and it won't be long until it starts effecting Snow White's people too. As the queen it is up to her to put a stop to it so Snow happily puts her wedding plans on hold, swaps her gown for chain mail and sets out on a quest to wake Sleeping Beauty and her people. I'm not going to tell you if she manages or not so you're just going to have to read the book to find out. I loved fairytales as a child, in fact I still love them now as an adult, but I got a little sick of reading about princess who sit around waiting to be rescued by their handsome prince so I absolutely loved this story for bucking that trend. There are no handsome princes in sight, well there is one but he's only mentioned in passing as Snow White postpones her wedding to go off and save a fellow princess so he doesn't really count! This is a story where girls take centre stage and prove that they are more than capable of fighting their own battles and I loved every minute of it. Neil Gaiman has written a fabulous story that turns the usual fairytale tropes upside down and the twist at the end was fantastic. I can't review this book properly without talking about Chris Riddell's gorgeous illustrations. The black and white drawings with gold foil accents are on every page and they're so beautifully detailed that I probably spent longer looking at the pictures than I did actually reading the words of the story! The illustrations really bring the characters to life and help to make

the story even more special. The hardback is just stunning, from the transparent slip cover to the gold foil throughout this is a book to treasure and it would make a wonderful gift for children of all ages.

Neil Gaiman is quickly becoming one of my favourite writers, more so his children/YA books than his adult books. Recently, I've even started reading his graphic novels, something I probably should have done years ago as I've come to realize how absolutely fantastic they are! This one is no different, as he brings to life two fairytales and combines them effortlessly that you don't see it coming. Intertwining different aspects of Snow White with Sleeping Beauty, he takes you on a journey that is new and into uncharted territory, in the process creating a completely new story. I loved the twists and turns, I love the unpredictable ending and the creepiness of it all. I've already ordered Hansel and Gretel, and I'm sure to expect a lot of new twists added to that fairytale. Can't wait.

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