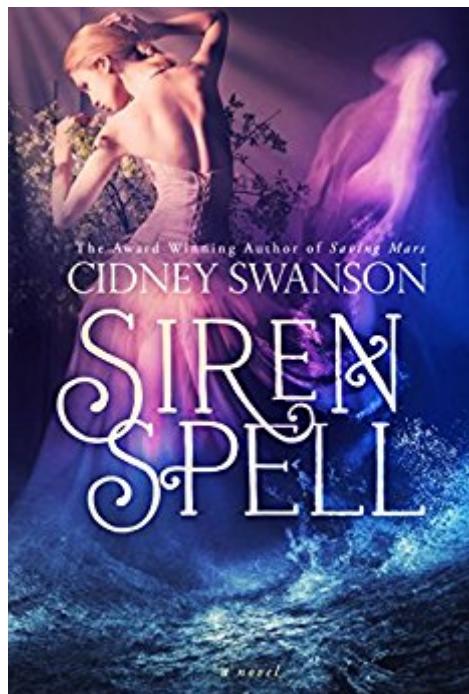


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Siren Spell



Synopsis

All Giselle Chekhov cares about is securing the principal role in the ballet for which she was named, but her Russian grandmother warns that the ballet, featuring cruel siren-like maidens, will draw the vain creatures back to town. Every decade or so, sirens swarm to Foulweather, Oregon killing indiscriminately and then vanishing again. At the same time that her dreams for the stage are falling apart, Giselle begins to suspect just who the sirens are really after.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Short version: This is a nicely written coming-of-age story that I'd recommend to anyone interested in: life in a ballet family, negotiating art vs. life, Russian folklore, immigrant experiences, older vs younger generations. It's very character-driven, and has a touch of the supernatural though it never gets too dark. This book really resonated with me. As someone who was once a performing-arts-obsessed teen, the protagonist rang so true. I think the author excellently portrays

her desires, concerns, and struggles around her art -- as well as broader issues of growing pains, family dynamics, and "living in two cultures" as the child of immigrants. I actually went into the book expecting a darker story with more fantasy/horror elements (like, ballet meets Lovecraft). If that's what you're after, this book may disappoint. But taken for what it **is** -- a coming of age story with some supernatural undertones -- it's lovely. The human drama was compelling and I'm actually glad it wasn't overshadowed by the fantastical elements, which instead catalyze the interpersonal drama and lend some interesting symbolism. (Let's just say that supernatural creatures whose deal is dancing people to death... come across a bit differently to folks whose lives are devoted to dance.) The writing style is clear and doesn't draw attention to itself. Part of me wishes it were more lyrical, but given that (a) it's a first-person narrative of a teenage girl and (b) a big theme of the novel is how dreams need to be rooted in reality, I think the more realistic style suits it. There's also a nice use of cultural references, with invocations of Russian folklore and food, ballets and Shakespeare plays, Harry Potter, classical music, and even Star Trek. Perhaps because the culture I consumed/studied as a teenager strongly invokes my own sense of nostalgia, it really helped create the atmosphere for me. So even though I went into this book expecting something quite different, I love what it turned out to be. I'd heartily recommend it to anyone with an interest in the topics it touches on.

I adore Cidney Swanson's work. I've read her two very different (and completely awesome) series and now this wonderful entertaining standalone story. She works as beautifully in the fantasy genre as in the sci figure genre. Ms. Swanson, I love your writing. Please don't stop. I can't wait for whatever you choose to share with us next.

I loved this story, it was really a great look into a mother/daughter story and realizing your mother has a life outside of just being mom.

Once again, Ms. Swanson knocks it out of the park. Her writing style is outstanding, and makes this such an interesting story. But she makes the reader feel the story. I highly recommend this book.

Kept my attention. Cidney Swanson has a wonderful imagination. I would recommend this book.

Siren Spell was so good! I couldn't put it down! I would highly recommend buy this book!

I bought this book yesterday (Nov 16) and didn't put it down until I dropped my tablet on my head. I finished it during nap time (cuz who needs clean dishes anyway??)

Well constructed, original, and beautifully written.

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