



Spiral

Jacqueline Levine

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Still adjusting to life with his new stepfamily, complete with annoying twin sisters, seventeen-year-old Jack Hansen thought his Christmas Eve dinner couldn't get anymore complicated - until celebute Cherie Belle walks into the room. The niece of Jack's new stepfather, Jack had no idea the young starlet was even in the family. But his initial excitement quickly fades when the teen queen ruins dinner, humiliates his little brother, and storms out, leaving the blame for the night's demise to fall squarely on Jack's shoulders. As usual.

But then tragedy strikes for America's tabloid princess, and Jack and his family are all Cherie has left. Suddenly, Jack finds himself riding the roller coaster that is Cherie Belle's life: fending off the paparazzi, moving to California, and being cast in the tabloids as her new boyfriend. That part would be fine if it were true. Instead, Jack missteps onto Cherie's bad side and becomes the target of her diva mood swings and mean-spirited pranks, as she goes to ridiculous lengths to make his life miserable.

Just when Jack is through playing nice, his life turned upside down, Cherie shows up drunk and sobbing, revealing she is far from over her parents' deaths. He realizes she's giving the public exactly what it wants: an epic fall from grace. Jack knows he should tell someone that Cherie is spiraling out of control. But once Jack begins to care about Cherie, it becomes harder to keep her secrets; especially when Jack becomes her biggest secret of all.

Spiral Details

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From Reader Review Spiral for online ebook

J. Dominique says

It's really 4.5 stars, but five stars simply because I enjoyed this book.

The story is simple enough. Our protagonist, Jack, finds out he has a step-cousin who is a celebrity. Cherie is everything he expected her to be: rotten, spoiled, a brat, and determined to make his life miserable. But he can't deny the attraction he feels to her. When his whole family picks up their lives and moves to California to support Cherie, Jack doesn't realize how much that will change his life. He's pulled into the paparazzi's tangled lies (or truths?!), and even better/worse, Cherie Belle's life.

We have two main characters, Jack Hansen and Cherie Belle, and the rest can all be classified as minors. While Jack and Cherie, despite their flaws, are both likable and well-developed, the lack of other supporting major characters irked me. We have an unfair stepfather, a caring mother, two evil twins, a boy with an imaginary friend, a stereotypical nerd, and a few others. While some of these characters are actually interesting in their own way, I felt like there should've been more. Other than Jack and Cherie, it didn't seem like the others had that many problems of their own.

As for Jack, I loved him. It was refreshing to have a male protagonist. He had his problems, his flaws, but he was definitely likeable. Cherie was a bit harder to get to know, but I assume that was the author's intent. She starts out bratty, but several times through the book we get to see the true side of her. Now, the only thing missing from this book is what I find missing from a lot of books: Where are the backgrounds, the interests? We know a bit about Cherie and Jack's background, but I'd like a bit more. Exactly how did Cherie get into the business? What else were the consequences of Jack's problems? And what about what they do for fun? We know Cherie likes acting (well, maybe), but what else? What about Jack?

The plot was pretty straightforward. Although the beginning was filled with a bit of exposition, the rest of the story flowed pretty well, and I didn't feel like it was too rushed, except maybe at the ending.

The writing was nice, however, I felt like there was a lot of lacking description. What did the setting look like? The characters? Levine did dialogue well, but I just wish there was more description. While I noticed a few typos and grammatical errors, this book was really well polished, and I was impressed by it.

Levine wove the themes of the book through the story excellently. By the time I turned the last page I could clearly see why the book was written, which is a problem I have with a lot of books. No complaints here, though.

Overall, a highly enjoyable book. I read it all in one sitting, and at night when I was tired, too! Because of the love I hold for the characters, I'm also pretty sure I will read the sequel, *Twist*.

(Also, it's just plain awesome that I received this book through Goodreads First Reads -- it's SIGNED!)

Bri says

What I liked: This story was dynamic and kept me entertained throughout the entire time I read it. Jack was a character who, while pressured to try and be the perfect son by his mother, is clearly someone who does what he can to protect the people he cares about. It shows very early on with his sister and it shows over and over again as the story goes on with him protecting different people. Cherie is different from him in several ways, but the connecting point between the two is they understand each other. She has a way of getting Jack to let down his walls without much effort, and I found that something I really liked about her character. The could be who they really are with each other, and it was sweet. Some of the characters in here managed to surprise me by the end, though not all of them were good. It came from their actions, things I picked up on early on with certain ones managed to change by the end. Some of the characters were bad news from the start, and while I had pegged certain ones as characters who would cause trouble, a couple managed to surprise me by not actually being that in the end. I loved reading the little things in between chapters about the gossip about Cherie and Jack were receiving from the paparazzi, it was interesting to see how he was being written about and how people thought about him in the media.

What I didn't like: Not so much as I didn't like it, but I would have liked to see more of the family dynamic and how everyone adjust to living in Hollywood. Despite having some money, Jack's family is clearly nowhere near as wealthy as what Cherie has become by being a celebutante and they would doubtlessly have to adjust to how Hollywood is from where they came from.

Overall Review: This isn't your typical Hollywood story, Jack and Cherie are two characters who are wonderful and the plot suits these two characters very well. You can see how Cherie is used to being a big name person by how she handles the paparazzi while Jack, so used to living in the shadows of media seems to adamantly dislike it, even seeming horrified about how much attention she's receiving in reaction to the death of her parents. There is plenty of heartbreak and some moments of tears that really just get you in this story. It's very well done and entertaining and all around a beautiful story about the downfall of girl who's lost her parents in Hollywood. It managed to exceed my expectations from when I started it and I'm so glad it did!

Recommend?: Yes! It's so very lovely and wonderful. I do recommend you read it!

Ally says

I won a copy from Goodreads First Reads.

When I first got this book in the mail, I was eager to read it. So eager that I wanted to move the book up my reading list. (But I didn't move it up because I don't make exceptions to my rules. Especially not unless someone other than me starts sending me emails to read the book. It didn't happen with this book, unfortunately).

Spiral (is a nice change because, for once I'm not reading sci-fi or something like that) is a wonderfully written book. I totally love it despite how stupid and obvious the book sometime is. (I mean, the author isn't stupid, but the teenage hormones that practically runs the book is). Spiral is awesome, a book for YA audience and people who likes reading about the Elite social groups.

The plot of Spiral (like I said before) is running on teenage hormones, especially of the two main characters, Jack and Cherie. (Anyone else think that every time they hear "Jack" they think of Jack Dawson from Titanic

movie?) Basically the characters are driven on...Wait, I'll tell you more later. Anyway, the writing of Jacqueline Levine (heh, this name reminds me of my bestie) is addicting and new, from my old wise ancient wise eyes. (I know I said "wise" twice, but try saying that two times in a row.)

What else? Oh yeah, the character development. Ehh...I don't know what to say about the character develop. They weren't obvious, but they were they. I'm not sure what you guys want me to tell you.

Now the characters: Cherie Bell struck me as a spoiled driven (along with hormones and drugs) girl, who is lashing out with anger and sadness because of her parent's death. Over the course of the book, she calms down a little, but is an actress to the core. I would remain skeptical of her until I see the full picture.

Jack, the good angel (not a true angel, of course), is the boy who takes care of the family when everyone else before him fails. First his father, then his mother, now him. Taking care of his family since he was thirteen years old, he's knowledgeable in the art of babysitting, gentlemen manners, and wise sayings. (I know, a dream and sigh worthy guy, not to mention he's a football player.) As the plot goes on, Spiral reveals a hidden side of Jack that hides when his stronger side appears.

The ending of Spiral has me begging for more. The excerpt to the next book isn't even out yet. I'm hoping it will come out soon. (Yeah, it's good.)

Rating: Four out of Five

Michelle says

Review originally published at Michelle Abbott's Blog

I seem to be on a roll lately, the last few books I've read have all been 5 stars and Spiral continued that trend. I liked the family dynamics and the realistic squabbles that occurred when children from three different families were forced to live together. Jack had to become the man of the family when his father left. He was great with his younger siblings but inside he was still hurting and needing attention. He was a real gentleman who just got on with it when things were heaped on his shoulders. He cared for Cherie even when she was mean to him. Cherie seemed like a spoiled brat at first, but then we are shown the true side of her. Being in the public eye and scrutinized is awful, especially for a sixteen year old. I was rooting for them to get together. I look forward to book 2 and will be stalking the author.

Kat says

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I'm amazed at how long the romance in Spiral continues to drag on when it was evident that it couldn't. Honestly, half of me wants to cry in frustration at the unreasonable romance and the other half just wants to sigh in adoration at the sweet ending. But the reviewer part of me takes over and tells myself to "man up." That ending, although quite perfectly done, did not match up with a few events in this book. It may also just be a bad case of, *"it's not the book, it's me..."*

At the very beginning of Spiral, we are introduced to the male protagonist Jack Hansen, who is presumably very fond of his hair and will go to many lengths to protect it. The reason for the usage of the word "presumably", is because I felt that the emphasis on his hair was not needed in the plot. A few times it was randomly thrown into the story for characterization, and there was one major scene in which Jack's love of his hair actually mattered, but for the most part it didn't feel real at all. Other than that, the backstory explaining how Jack got his temper from fell flat for me. I just couldn't vividly imagine or feel what Jack was going through that altered his personality. What turned me off from him even more was his incomprehensible, unwavering support and love towards Cherie.

Moving on to the female leading character - Cherie - in the story, she too invoked an equal number of, if not more, eyebrow-twitching and lip-pursing. I just can't get the characterization in Spiral - characters can change their emotions in a millisecond and I'm often left confused or annoyed, which is mostly the case with both male and female protagonists in Spiral. Cherie (isn't that taking a little too far with unusual, quirky celebrity names? I mean, really - Cherie?? Couldn't she have gotten a more normal and safe name which would've helped decrease the level of annoyance I felt towards her? This is probably an irrelevant issue and I should really stop babbling now, but this name has been irritating me a lot.) immediately gives off an "this girl is a bitch for sure" vibe as soon as she appears in the story, but *nooooo!* **NO.** I am thrown around like a toy as Cherie goes from total spoilt bitch to lovely girl with manners to sad, lonely teen diva who actually needs help and attention. Later in the story, we were told the reasoning behind those sudden mood swings but it missed the mark. I still hate this girl and I don't think she's worth all of Jack's attention.

The romance was *so incredibly ridiculous*. To the point where I wanted to take Jack's and Cherie's heads in both my hands and smash them together repeatedly. If I had a piece of cake every time I rolled my eyes at the romance, there would be a mountain of cake slices and a very happy Kat backstroking through them (now's not the time for cakes, Kat!!). Honestly, I felt the romance was tilting dangerously towards being a toxic one at some times. I just didn't understand the Romeo and Juliet aspect; Jack was always pining after Cherie, who was being mean towards him, and it had to drag on and on and on, like pulling something through thick mud. Of course, there were a couple of things that happened between the two of them that might've justified the romance, but by that time I was already fed up and thinking, "*what is the point, if the two of them will just continue in the same manner anyway?*"

The romance failed, the characters failed; which was really too bad because the writing was quite enjoyable and I also particularly loved how magazine articles on Cherie and Jack were included now and then between chapters. Some of the aspects of the story appealed to me, such as Cherie being a Hollywood starlet. Ultimately though, I don't feel too positive towards this story. ~~Or maybe I'm a passionless dumbass who's just not romantic enough for this story...~~

Angela Hankinson says

Good book couldn't put it down

Charlotte Gerber says

The story starts out normal enough – a family having a holiday dinner. That is the only thing normal from thereon. The writer takes us on a rollercoaster ride that had me shaking my head and feeling sorry for every young girl that has ever desired to become a Hollywood starlet. Incidents throughout the novel are reminiscent of the dirty secrets and indiscretions that are fodder for the scandal sheets. Many of the chapters

in the book begin with just that – ripped from the headlines dirt on the latest celebrity disaster via “Dirterazzi”.

What may be more unsettling in the book is a relationship that develops between two of the main characters – the starlet and what is supposed to be her cousin, under normal circumstances. They aren’t blood relatives, but they are “family” nonetheless. Cringe-worthy? This jury is still unsure.

Overall, this book is a fascinating read. It was like getting a glimpse into the lives of your favorite celebrity just as they are beginning to go off the rails. While there is a compulsion to watch as the train begins to crash, there is a part of you that hopes that somehow they’ll come out of it okay. I felt the same way about the characters in this book. I want the best for them, but like all teenagers, they will go out in the world and make their own mistakes.

Gina says

LOVED, LOVED, LOVED this book!!!! From the first page I was sucked into this little world of Jack and Cherie and loved every minute of it. I enjoyed Jack's "crazy" family, and I thought it was very relatable to how most families are now a days. I enjoyed seeing Jack and Cherie mature individually and also together. I also enjoyed seeing gossip from the celebrity's point of view, and how most of the time fame really is a curse not a blessing.

I can't wait to see what is next for these two!!!

I would and am recommending this book to everyone I know :)

Bianca says

*Originally reviewed on Pages Of Forbidden Love

Whether you care to admit it or not I am sure you have seen/read some piece of news about a celebrity getting a little (okay a lot) crazy. Maybe it was quick and unavoidable, a magazine you stared at too long in the check out isle or a channel you couldn’t change fast enough. Then again maybe you took the time to actually read/watch it. Either way we all know it isn’t difficult to find some piece of news about the latest celebrity gone wild. It is everywhere and the more famous and younger the celebrity the bigger the scandal. Gossip sites/magazines get the scoop. Whether it is all true or not. No one cares.) Scandals involving drugs, parties, alcohol, nudity, reckless behavior, etc and everyone else sucks it all up. You know what I am talking about, former sweethearts gone sour, and I more than a few people come to mind. The most recent-ish ones being Lyndsay Lohan, Amanda Bynes, and everyone’s new favorite person to criticize and talk about Miley Cyrus. You’ve heard the stories one or another and that is exactly how Cherie’s life is going in Spiral. Just wanted to paint a little picture before I continued on to tell you about this drama filled book.

Cherie is a young celebrity who loses the most important thing in a young girls life. Having to make new transitions is hard, especial ones you do not wish to make, but having it all documented is even hard. It doesn’t take long for Cherie to lose it. She won’t let herself grieve properly and in public she is a cold-hearted bitch to those who want to help her the most. With her entourage calling the shots Cherie’s partying

slowly gets worse and worse but after the bars have closed and everyone has gone their separate ways it is Jack picking up the pieces.

This isn't the first time Jack has had to be the glue for someone falling apart. Abandoned by his father at 13 he had to be the one to take care of his mother and 2 siblings until his mother found herself again. Now part of a new family Jack feels like an outsider. Then unexpectedly his family get a new addition and his feelings are all over the place. He is her rock, they hate each other, they are friends, they can't stand each other, and then Cherie is sleeping in his bed? Talk about messing with a guys head.

Cherie was quite the unlikable character when she was being a diva. I couldn't stand how she treated Jack. Always rude in public then seeking comfort when no one was around. You can see her vulnerability and sadness though and you can't help but feel for her. She should never have treated Jack as a dirty secret but then I would get angry at Jack for letting her. He wasn't completely innocent in all this but I probably would have hated him if her turned her a way. No way to win. Sorry Jack. Although often angry (with the situations life has thrown at him and his family who wouldn't be?) he truly was a great guy and seeing how he cared for his youngest sister Brittany and Cherie you can't help but fall for him.

Besides it being an addicting story that throws your emotions back and forth I was pleasantly surprised to find that Spiral was not in Cherie's point of view. Everything was told from Jack's perspective. I really thought it would go back and forth between the two but it was perfect just the way it was. You could really understand everything Cherie was going through without being in her head. You could still see it all through Jack's eyes. I loved the gossip articles between the chapter detailing Cherie's life as if she was in a real magazine. It was a great touch.

Jacqueline Levine gives you the story behind the gossip rag. She lets you see into the things you don't know. It may have been hard sometimes to like Cherie and Jack but Jacqueline created a story that has you rooting for a happy ending. You know the tragedy is happening but you can't stand to see Cherie or Jack go through anything more. I am sure Jacqueline has more curves to throw at as so this is definitely one series I will be looking forward to continuing.

Judith Paolercio says

Thoroughly enjoyed every minute reading this book. I was brought into the lives of the characters and hooked from the beginning. I felt Jack's frustrations and feelings for Cherie. Cherie's character was true to the image of today's TV idols and I was happy to see her finally in the arms of Jack.

This book will grab you from page one. I give this a five star rating. Well done!!

Maggie says

I opted to review Spiral because I have read books about teen/young celebrities in the past and really enjoyed them. Spiral did not disappoint and was a fun, guilty pleasure read, much like the gossip magazines.

While this is billed as a young adult novel, I would say this is for older young adults. I wouldn't want my kids reading this before 16 years of age but that's just my opinion. I also do feel that this crosses over very well into adult fiction.

I was a bit confused at the beginning before Jack's family make-up was revealed. I wasn't sure who was who and was still a bit unsure when Cherie entered the scene. I think that's the only aspect I was not 100% positive about.

Otherwise, this was a fun read. From the beginning, Spiral held my attention and entertained me. As I mentioned before, reading this book was a lot like indulging in reading gossip sites or magazines, but knowing you're doing anything really bad, since the players aren't real. Adding to this feeling was the updates from the "gossip site", Dirterazzi.

Leading off of that idea, I was a bit stunned to read how much the paparazzi violated Cherie's life and privacy. While I'd like to think not, I'm sure this is pretty close, if not completely accurate, to a celebrity's experience in current times. It's also sad that the people were supposed to protect Cherie only looked out for themselves, which I'm sure also happens to young celebrities.

I was sent a copy of this book in order to provide a review. All thoughts are my own.

Stephenee says

This was a great book! I loved the family dynamics that the author set up as well as the realism in the battles, the fights and attitudes of the characters. There is a great story line and plot to the book, and of course the ending leaves you asking what is next for them? I feel like i could have been a part of the family if I was asked :)

I love that the book is going to be a series and can't wait until the next book is out!!! I highly recommend this book to anyone looking for a fast read that you won't want to put down!!

Sarah says

The traumas of being a celebrity:

'Spiral' by Jacqueline Levine follows two teenagers, Cherie and Jack, as they find themselves thrown together by tragedy. But with Cherie's stardom and Jack's troubled, angry past, the relationship is not a straight-forward boy-meets-girl and the two find themselves at the mercy of the media, in particular 'Dirterazzi'. And if that wasn't enough, the two are also having to adjust to Cherie's guardians being Jack's mum and step-dad... so they are having to live together in her glamorous Hollywood mansion.

Throughout the story we are given news stories from Dirterazzi, providing a glimpse into the media circus reporting on Cherie and Jack. I liked the tone of these pieces – you could really imagine these being on a gossip site and reflected the frenzy that you so often see today with celebrities. Shortly after Cherie's parents are killed, Jack is under strict instructions not to visit such gossip sites because of the "news" that is reported. This is great, until there is a showdown between Jack, Cherie and his family/adopted sisters and suddenly it feels as if all of the characters are believing the news reports. I found this quite frustrating as it felt like Jack did not have a chance to defend his actions until the final scenes and left me wondering why his family suddenly believed such gossip sites.

It was frustrations like this that made me get a little bored with the narrative. After a while it was clear where the plot was going and whilst I did not predict the final scenes, found that the story lost a little substance half way through. With Cherie going "off the rails", her behaviour and Jack's reactions were typical of her trying

to make Jack feel jealous. And it always worked. That being said, it was cute to read how Jack and Cherie finally do overcome their feelings and realise that, distractions and interferences aside, they genuinely want to be together. Indeed, the ending came across as quite conclusive so I was surprised to learn that there is another book in the series. I'd definitely be keen to know what happens next to Jack and Cherie – can they overcome the pressures of being in the spotlight?

In this novel, Levine does not make much of Jack's siblings. He is part of an extended family and although some background is given to his troubled past and why his dad left them, I think it would have been great if the author had given Jack's siblings a bit more of a spotlight in the story, such as how they adjusted to moving to Hollywood, or having a famous celebrity living with them. True, the twins become Cherie's accomplices against Jack, but I think giving some insight into the family tensions that are implied throughout the story would have added more dimension to the plot.

This is an easy read and a cute romance novel. Whilst I did find it a little predictable, I wanted Jack and Cherie to find happiness. Levine does something different with 'Dirterazzi' and I liked the change in narrative voice throughout. Although everything seems to "come good" at the end, I am curious to know what the second in the series has to offer.

This book was provided to me by the author in exchange for an honest review.

Aditi says

A rich, spoilt, diva, running wild with emotions in her stardom, and a kind prince, always rushing to her rescue- might sound way too cheesy! But once you start reading, *Spiral (Spiral Series #1)* by Jacqueline Levine, you realize that it is not that kind of typical rebellious princess and the out-of-the-league guy falling in love romantic story, instead the story has got depth, which talks about how a young girl copes with stardom along with her parent's death and how this caring guy is not always the same guy that she used to thought to be.

Thanks to Jacqueline Levine, for giving me this opportunity to read and review her book.

We see it all the time either in the gossip columns of our daily newspapers or in the news feed of our social networking websites, *Cocaine found in the car-trunk of #XXX--some diva, #YYY has been seen rekindling with her old flame--another diva, blah, blah, blah*, and hence we finally fail to see their pain past through those divas. Jacqueline Levine has helped us to see past through a diva's pain and emotional torments and they easily become the emotional victims of their loss and how they become so vulnerable to the face of the world. So from the next time, I read something about some actress's tantrum, then I'll remember that she must have lost someone either by heartbreak or by death or some other emotional trauma that's eating them up.

Cherie Belle, a young celebute, is acting upon the world's nerves after she loses her parents. From drugs to alcohol to hormones, she runs high almost all the time and successfully manages to land up in some deep dark trouble almost all the time.

Jack Hansen, an adopted son, in his new family, only to realize in one Christmas Eve, that Cherie Belle is the niece of his step-father.

But how can a spoilt Holly-starlet can fall in love with a guy, having a dark and troubled past? Well, not to mention, they did, achieve that title of "couple" by the ever so glorious paparazzi. Things get complicated when Cherie loses it all and Jack's secret surfaces up. And to make it all worse, the paparazzi, jumps into their lives and invades their privacy and make them look like a fool on the face of the world.

The characterization to the plot, everything has been flawlessly written and it is quite believable on the pretext of real-life Hollywood divas. The best part being, how the author has tried to bring peace and genuine feelings among her torn and broken primary characters amidst of so many rumors. The book is all about scandals, loss, heart-break and trust, written emphatically with vivid descriptions of the hero and heroine's emotions, that for a split second, you tend to lose yourself way too deeply into this complicated tale. The climax ends with little bit of cliffhanger and will make you vouch for the next book in the Spiral series.

Do read this about a Holly diva's wrong steps and impulsiveness and despite of so much pain, and bad water, she maintains her image of being a diva!

Tina says

This was definitely a guilty pleasure read for me. While I don't usually follow celebrity gossip websites or magazines, I have to admit the synopsis on this book made me curious enough to pick it up. It reads like a gossip magazine in several ways which I enjoyed. The excerpts from the paparazzi magazine in the chapters really brought the story along for me. It gave a break to some of the teenage angst of the main characters.

Not everyone can accurately depict some of the trials and tribulations of a blended family, but Levine does a great job giving a voice to the chaos that can ensue. Bringing step-families together, especially at holidays can be challenging, let alone dealing with the tragedy of loss. While Jack's complaints are valid, they are also tainted with the angst of a teenage boy. He's impulsive and overbearing at times, but his genuine concern for his family and friends make him a great lead character.

Cherie Belle I never really grew to like as a character, but I think that was kind of intentional. She's a young actress who suffers a terrible tragedy and deals with it in a very stereotypical way. The overbearing manager and publicist story for celebrities is pretty thoroughly ingrained in this trope so those situations didn't really shock me. Some of the situations that are included are a little above a young adult audience, in my humble opinion, but maybe I'm a little out of touch with what a 16 year old goes through these days.

All in all this was a fun read that I enjoyed.

I received a copy of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review. I was not monetarily compensated for my opinion
