



My Sparkling Misfortune

Laura Lond , Alla Alekseyeva (Illustrator)

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Lord Arkus of Blackriver Castle readily admits that he is a villain and sees no reason why it should stop him from being the protagonist of this book. After all, Prince Kellemar, an aspiring hero, has defeated him in a rather questionable way.

Bent on revenge, Arkus attempts to capture a powerful evil spirit who would make him nearly invincible, but a last-minute mistake leaves him with a Sparkling instead—“a goody-goody spirit that helps heroes, watches over little children, and messes up villains’ plans.”

Bound to Lord Arkus for five years of service and sworn to act in his best interests, the Sparkling is not easy to get rid of, and of course his understanding of “best interests” is quite different from what Lord Arkus has in mind.

My Sparkling Misfortune Details

Date : Published January 18th 2011 (first published April 28th 2010)

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Author : Laura Lond , Alla Alekseyeva (Illustrator)

Format : Kindle Edition 127 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Humor

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Download and Read Free Online My Sparkling Misfortune Laura Lond , Alla Alekseyeva (Illustrator)

From Reader Review My Sparkling Misfortune for online ebook

Darlene says

What a fun little story, and clever! How cool to read a story from the bad-guy's point of view. Villain's have feelings, too! They have their pride and want to feel good about themselves. Well, here we crawl into said villain's head as he faces his demons.

Thanks, Kimberly Boehm, for suggesting this read. I look forward to the next book!

J.A. Fleming says

Love Lond's writing style and the way she develops both the setting and her characters. Her plotting is good too. Can't say enough good about her books.

Gina (My Precious Blog) says

Summary

When Evil Lord Arkus of Black River Castle, self proclaimed villain, is double crossed by Lord Kellemar, an aspiring hero, he can think of nothing else but avenging his name. So, he concocts a dangerous and diabolical plan (as any villain in this position would do) involving the capture of an evil spirit, a gormack, to assist him with his sinister plight. When he accidentally indentures a "goody-goody" spirit, a sparkling, by mistake, everything he stands for is being threatened. Now Lord Arkus faces a new, more serious challenge. How will he be able to uphold his evil name, with a sparkling as his wingman for the next five years?

Ramblings

BACKGROUND

Laura Lond is a self employed freelance writer with a Bachelor of Arts in history. Her book My Sparkling Misfortune (The Lakeland Knight) took a little over 3 months to write. It was originally published by a small press, but she recently canceled her contract. This book has now been released independently. Laura has plans for a potential trilogy of The Lakeland Knight Series, but a sequel for certain is in the works.

SETTING, PACE AND STYLE

My Sparkling Misfortune takes place in a mythical land, a faraway place where castles, villains, heroes and monsters still exist. Even though its advertised as a fantasy book, it reads more like a classic fairy tale with a twist. Its a story told from a villain's perspective. The book is very short, it can easily be read in one sitting. Laura Lond's writing is light, cute and extremely fun. The story is absorbing, filled with sword fights, epic battles and lots of action. The reader is never quite sure where the adventure will lead.

CHARACTERS & PLOT

The main character of this story is Evil Lord Arkus of Black River Castle. He's a self proclaimed villain. He's

witty, entertaining and extremely funny. Even though he's the "bad guy" one can't help but fall in love with him because of his good nature and ability to do what's right.

His nemesis, Lord Kellemar, is an aspiring hero, a man who simply falls flat on his face when it comes to upholding a code of honor. He doesn't have any problems backstabbing, lying or cheating to achieve his goals.

This story is about finding one's true self. Its meant to show young readers, villain or hero, a person's actions speak louder than words, titles or labels.

Recommendation:

If you are searching for a short, light, easy to read book which is just a pleasure to read, than pick this one up. Its a spirit lifter. Even though this is advertised as a Middle Grade fantasy book, I'd strongly recommend this to all audiences, especially those who like fairy tales - funny ones. Its super cute, entertaining and witty. Just an all around charming tale which can be enjoyed by men, women, boys or girls. Don't miss out on this one!

PERSONAL NOTE

My Sparkling Misfortune is the type of book intended to teach a lesson. I believe the take home message is to gently remind us to always give each person a chance to show his or her true colors. Claims of being anything from a philanthropist to a complete miser should always be backed up with actions and not just words. Beware, anyone can spout off about how wonderful he/she is, but what truly counts is how certain situations are handled. Take a moment to stand back and quietly observe people, then and only then will you get an idea of what they really are like, no matter what they claim to be. You might just be surprised by what you see!

RATING

5 out of 5 Rings

Katy says

Book Info: Genre: Fantasy/Villain as Hero Reading Level: Any age

Disclosure: I picked up a copy while it was free on Kindle last fall; in exchange, I'm happy to provide an honest review.

Synopsis: Lord Arkus of Blackriver Castle readily admits that he is a villain and sees no reason why it should stop him from being the protagonist of this book. After all, Prince Kellemar, an aspiring hero, has defeated him in a rather questionable way.

Bent on revenge, Arkus attempts to capture a powerful evil spirit who would make him nearly invincible, but a last-minute mistake leaves him with a Sparkling instead — “a goody-goody spirit that helps heroes,

watches over little children, and messes up villains' plans.”

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My Thoughts: Shortly after I discovered this book, I also discovered Lord Arkus on Facebook. You should definitely track “him” down, he’s a hoot.

I really enjoyed this book – it was a lot of fun! Lord Arkus may be a villain, but he’s a villain with a heart of gold (he probably stole it from the next kingdom over), and, of course, he believes in having manners, so sometimes people might get the wrong impression about him just because he’s trying to be polite. Tulip the sparkling – whom Arkus calls Jarvis – is a wonderful friend to Arkus, full of fun and teasing. I also enjoyed Prince Philip’s character. I will definitely be looking to acquire the next book, *My Royal Pain Quest*, just as soon as I can come up with the funds. It’s been on my wishlist for awhile now, but now I want it even more than before!

At any rate, if you like to root for the villain, if you like a light-hearted and fast read, be sure to check out *My Sparkling Misfortune*. Highly recommended.

Desinka says

This has turned out into a slightly spoilerish mini review. I didn't know what to expect of the book at all and was extremely surprised in a very pleasant way. For a kids' fantasy book, this was much better than a lot of adult ones!

The story was extremely entertaining. It was told from the POV of a self-professed villain, who miserably failed at being one. His interactions with his sidekick (who was supposed to be an evil spirit but turned out to be an extremely benevolent one) were hilarious. And so were his attempts to convince everyone he was not a hero:)

I loved the story, the characters and the humour of the story. I'm only sorry that the story was too short and as it ended on a cliffhanger, I really want to go on with the second book!

Majanka says

Read the review on my website.

My Sparkling Misfortune is the hilarious fantasy tale of the evil Lord Arkus of Blackriver Castle. Being a villain, and pretty good at that, Lord Arkus is well on his way to becoming the most notorious villain in the entire kingdom. However, when a deal with Prince Kellemar – the supposedly good guy of the story and hero-in-the-making – goes horribly wrong for poor Arkus, involving a raging animal and the destroying of several protective white towers, Arkus is forced to leave the kingdom, and hopefully find a way to protect himself from the monster that’s trying to eat him alive, and meanwhile re-establish his position as criminal mastermind. In an effort to solve his problems, he incidentally catches a sparkling, a creature often seen accompanying heroes. While Arkus certainly is no hero, the sparkling called Jarvi feels like giving the ol’ lord

a shot anyway. That's when Lord Arkus goes through an adventure that might not only change his life, but his entire reputation as well.

The award for most hilarious villain ever definitely goes to Lord Arkus. Whereas he is a nasty fellow who enjoys torturing messengers, doublecrossing princes and backstabbing other villains – but only after they have backstabbed him first, he does have manners – there is quite a noble side to him as well. He is hilarious in the way he describes both himself and his opponents, how he analyzes his own actions and those of others. He is a brilliant character who at times made me laugh out loud. A lot of books try to be funny, but it feels forced and unnatural; that's definitely not the case with My Sparkling Misfortune: this book simply is hilarious, even without trying.

Although aimed at middle graders, the adventure of Lord Arkus and his sparkling Jarvi, may appeal to fantasy fans of all ages. While telling a humorous tale, the story offers some valuable lessons as well. One of them being that a villain must not always remain a villain, and that not all heroes are as good and decent as they might appear. Prince Kellemar is the prime example of this. Although being a prince, and aiming to become a true hero one day, he doublecrosses Lord Arkus in their agreement at the beginning of the book, and continues to do things throughout the novel that made me very skeptic about his worthiness for the hero status. On the other hand, the fact that the sparkling Jarvi sees something in Lord Arkus that nobody else sees, and decides to give him the chance to actually do the right thing for once, also holds a very valuable lesson, namely that sometimes you just need to believe in people to make them do the right thing.

The story is action-packed, fast-paced and highly amusing. The dragons, castles, magical creatures, all make the story come to life, and actually read like a classic fairytale. Lord Arkus and his misfortunes could be standing right next to Cinderella and Robin Hood on the bookshelf. If I had to give a complaint about My Sparkling Misfortune (and the reason why I gave 4,5 rather than 5 stars) is that it's too short. It seems like the sequel-virus has gotten hold of Laura Lond as well. She leaves an open ending, and hints at dark events in Lord Arkus' past on several occasions, leaving the path open for a follow-up. I would have liked it more had she made this book slightly larger, and added all the additional facts, and a proper ending to this one. My Sparkling Misfortune is strong enough as a stand-alone novel, and although I would enjoy reading more about Lord Arkus' misfortunes, I do also like it when a book is nicely tied up.

Although Lord Arkus is by far the most witty, sarcastic and intriguing character in this novel, Jarvi/Tullip is quite the enjoyable fellow as well. He is entertaining, good-natured and kind-hearted, and totally the opposite of the Arkus we meet at the beginning of the novel. That they even get along at all, is amazing. Another nice bonus is that the book is filled with wonderful illustrations of the characters and their adventures. The art looks really good, and it adds a nice touch.

I would advise everyone who loves a good laugh, from middle graders to adults, to read this book. It's a quick read, and it will make you laugh aloud and forget all about the world around you. Lord Arkus is an admirable character, for a villain, with an amazing writing voice and a hilarious personality. The story itself is anything but predictable, the writing style is amusing, and the premise (a story from the villain's point of view) is very original. What are you waiting for? Go read My Sparkling Misfortune!

OpenBookSociety.com says

Review brought to you by OBS staff member Annabell

I was first introduced to author Laura Lond through her novella, A Merman's Kiss which I very much enjoyed so I was happy to have a chance to dive into another one of her books. My Sparkling Misfortune was

such a fun and humorous read!

The story revolves around Lord Arkus of Black River Castle, who is determined to make sure the reader sees him as nothing less than a villain mastermind. Lord Arkus is visited by Prince Kellemar who wants to strike up a truce with Lord Arkus in order to come off as a hero without actually having to defeat the villain. Lord Arkus agrees but secretly plans to take down Prince Kellemar. But Lord Arkus plans don't go as planned. He is forced to leave his own kingdom when he chased down by a beast that is determined to kill him even it takes till the end of time. Lord Arkus comes up with a plan to get rid of the beast by catching a Morgon but instead winds up with a Sparkling, a magical creature who helps heroes. Lord Arkus wants to get rid of Jarvi, the Sparkling, but Jarvi made a promise and he intends to keep it. Lord Arkus and Jarvi set out on a crazy adventure which may end up proving that Lord Arkus is more hero than villain—much to his horror.

Even though My Sparkling Misfortune is geared toward middle grade age, I think many who love the Young Adult genre will have a fabulous time reading it. Lord Arkus is the oddest and hilarious villain I have ever read. Lord Arkus is definitely a villain enjoying backstabbing other villains (who have betrayed him first) and double-crossing princes. But he also has manners and a certain sense of nobility and elegance to his character. I love the way he describes everything around him and the characters he interacts with! He is sarcastic and amusing, offering many laugh out loud moments. Jarvi is just as fun. He knows how to push the right buttons to drive Lord Arkus crazy. Jarvi is also kind-hearted, caring and even-tempered. I love the relationship between Jarvi and Lord Arkus.

The story is filled with great action and absolutely amusing characters. The pacing and writing are both fairly well done. The dialogue offers many amusing quips as does the plot but there were moments the writing could have flowed better, seeming a bit choppy. I also wanted more of a backstory to Lord Arkus past and why he chose to become a villain. I was also disappointed in the fact that story was novella length once again. Author Laura Lond has great ideas but she continues to create stories so short in length, which in reality is a hindrance to her, since it limits what she can do with a story and becomes frustrating for those who do enjoy her books.

My Sparkling Misfortune is filled with great moments filled with laughter and moments that will touch your heart. The story and writing is suited for a much younger audience but that shouldn't stop older fans of the young adult genre from enjoying this novella. A story told from a very witty and well-mannered villain, an original concept you won't want to miss out on!

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/la...>

Randy Brown says

Entertaining. A quick, amusing story that captures your attention. Very well written. I look forward to the next episode.

Audrey says

Ohman!!!! Gush, gush, gush, gush, gush! I absolutely ADORED this book! And I mean ADORED! It is the cutest book I have read since, well, since I read The Enchanted Forest Chronicles by Patricia C. Wrede. And that's appropriate because, with a debut like My Sparkling Misfortune, Laura Lond really might just be the next Patricia C. Wrede. If you've read them, think of Princess Cimorene's quirky primness coming from a

bad guy who is actually good but would never want to admit it and replace the dragons with sparklings, and you've got My Sparkling Misfortune.

If you've never read those books, well, what are you waiting for? Pick them up, but only after you've read My Sparkling Misfortune. You won't be disappointed!

The story starts off when evil Lord Arkus of Black River Castle, who is forever chased by a horrible otherworldly beast and can only take refuge in white towers (which are a good guy thing) is tricked and deceived by a prince. In order to redeem his evil name, he somehow finds himself being aided by a Sparkling, a magical creature from another world that can only do good and only help the good guys.

What then ensues is snarky hilariousness, magical wondrousness, and nonstop intrigue. I am not the kind of person who can normally read a book in one sitting, but this one I absolutely did. It's short (because it's aimed at middle grade readers) and every single word was necessary and wonderful. More than that, it's also one of those books with a message. Don't judge people - labeling is just confusing, and there is always more to any given person than a label could ever tell.

Don't be deterred that this was written for younger readers. IT IS FABULOUS (and that's coming from a 28 year old). It is perfect for middle grade readers, of course, but I think it can be enjoyed by adults of all ages, and I do hope you'll give this book a chance!

Kimberly says

I absolutely LOVED this book. It was fun, endearing, and exciting, and even made me tear up a few times. What a neat little story about friendship and loyalty! My only complaint is that, while very well written, it would greatly benefit from better editing: commas were sometimes used incorrectly (which really confuses me as a reader), and I felt the last paragraph was rushed and weak and should completely be done away with, especially considering the story resumes in the next book. I can't wait to read more of this series and am going to look into other works by this author. Highly recommended to children and adults alike!

Misty says

3.75-ish

This is...going to be a bit of a weird, catch-all review, because the fact is, I have never listened to an entire audiobook. I've tried, I really have, but generally the reader gets about 3 sentences out before I say, Um, no. The farthest I've ever gotten in an audio was about 1/4 of the way through The Forest of Hands and Teeth - and though I really actually did like the narration, the only reason I even picked it up was to refresh my memory on the story and style. So agreeing to review an audio was a gamble, as I let Laura know. And I'm going to try to address both the story and the audio aspect, but in the end, I feel like I can't quite separate the two, and couldn't tell you whether I liked the story because of the narration, or liked the narration because of the story.

Because I did like it. There was a huge adjustment period, though. Probably the first 40 minutes was spent with me not being able to focus and finding that my mind had drifted and 10 minutes of audio had passed with out me really absorbing a thing. And I can't really blame that on the story or the narration, because I don't think either was to blame. It's just...I don't like being read too. I was the weird kid that didn't say "Read me a story" but said "I can do it myself!" My mom has this habit of bringing magazines or articles to my

attention and saying, "Did you see this?" and proceeding to read them to me. I'm sure most people would find them endearing, but my mom *should know better*. She knows I *hate* being read to. I really, really do and I couldn't not tell you why. It just makes my brain feel...cluttered. And I'm sure part of it is some insane control thing, too. So yeah, like I said, this was a gamble. I process differently when I'm listening instead of looking, and it took my brain a bit to switch over and accept that this was how the story was being told.

And if this wasn't for review, I probably would have given up. But I didn't. I had chores that needed doing, and where I normally listen to music while cleaning (because that is the *only* thing that gives me incentive to clean or *gulp* do laundry), I instead put in my headphones and settled into to listen to MSM. I was all prepared to slog through, and you know what? I instead found myself really liking it. I guess having mindless busy work to do gave me enough to focus on that my brain couldn't wander, and I actually started to absorb the story! I did *more* chores so I had an excuse to keep listening. Guys, this audiobook thing is *genius*.

So once my brain switched over and I could actually listen to the story, I found I really liked it. It's not necessarily anything I'm going to rave about or push on all of my friends, but my friends with sons will probably hear about it. It's funny and fairly wholesome, and I was surprised to find myself actually smiling on multiple occasions. Smiling is not something that normally happens while I do dishes... Weirdly, I think that the audiobook helped in this aspect. With an audiobook you can't look ahead, even accidentally, so things do take you by surprise and catch you off-guard, and this humor that crept upon me actually made me chuckle as a result.

And the voice acting was pretty magnificent. A.T. Chandler, who does the narration, reminded me a bit of Danny Elfman as the singing voice of Jack Skellington. (And I know, you're like, Why doesn't he remind you of Chris Sarandon, who did Jack's speaking parts? *Is there singing in this book?* But there's just a *way* that Elfman uses his voice, and though Sarandon does it too, I'm sure, it's most memorable and noticeable to me in Jack's songs.) Chandler did lots of different voices, and they all seemed seamless; I never had trouble knowing who was talking, because the voices were all distinctive and memorable. And he was good at accents and ages/sexes. The way he used his voice and the accents he used were part of what made me smile. I couldn't help picturing Jack, as I said, or Groundskeeper Willy, and a few other people. It was...neat. Where I generally have issues with the voices of narrators, I couldn't fault Chandler at all.

And in the end, I did end up liking Lord Arkus and his journey. He's a fun, unwillingly round character, who grows a lot and *hates every minute of it* (he says), and it was pleasant. I most especially loved the symmetry between Arkus trying to be a villain and ending up a hero, while his nemesis is trying to be a hero and ending up a villain. It was a charming, fun story that I think will appeal to young boys looking for an adventure story, and mothers who don't want their kid's adventure stories to be gruesome or age-inappropriate. And it convinced me that audiobooks aren't the devil, so I have to give it points for that. :)

Gavin says

This was a fun book with an interesting twist on the fantasy genre. The story was told from the POV of the self confessed villain Lord Arkus of Blackriver Castle. After being outwitted by an aspiring hero, the neighboring Prince Kellemar, by less than heroic means, Lord Arkus decides he needs some help to gain revenge. He aims to do this by capturing an evil spirit and bending it to his will. Unfortunately his plan goes awry and he captures a Sparkling instead. The Sparkling is a goody-goody spirit that helps heroes, watches over little children, and messes up villains' plans. Arkus is initially outraged but decides to retain the services of Tulip, the Sparkling, after Tulip fends off the monster that has been hunting him for years.

After his defeat by the Prince and his disastrous capture of a Sparkling instead of an evil spirit Lord Arkus decides to lie low in the next kingdom over until he can regroup. Only with Tulip looking out for his best interests his villainous plans go hilariously awry and before long he is being hailed as a local hero! His own belief in manners and courtesy do not help him convince the Royals of the Kingdom that he is not the hero they think him to be.

All in all this was a fun read that had a similar feel to a Disney movie. Despite his denials Lord Arkus proved to be a likable and worthy hero. I loved how Arkus developed over the course of the story and how he learned the value of loyalty, honor, and friendship. The secondary characters like Tulip and Philip were entertaining and likable. The "hero" of the story Prince Kellemar was an interesting adversary for Lord Arkus.

The only problem with this book was that it was too short! Thankfully there is a sequel.

Rating: 4 stars

Audio Note: This was narrated fantastically well by A. T. Chandler.

Maxine Mathew says

My Sparkling Misfortune is a story spinning around the self-proclaimed villain, Lord Arkus of Blackriver Castle. After being backstabbed by the not-so-honorable wannabe hero, Prince Kellemar, Lord Arkus is now putting his villainous mind to work to think about a deserving revenge for Prince Kellemar. But the first and the most crucial step of the plan goes disastrously wrong as he captures a Sparkling (a good spirit) instead of a Gormack (an evil spirit). For Arkus, the only good in having a sparkling as his servant for five years is that now he is seemingly safe from the monster who has been trying to kill him for many years. But as he soon finds out it is a bit difficult to be evil with a sparkling around who is bent in making him good.

When I first heard the title, My Sparkling Misfortune I had no idea what to make of it. But the book won me over just after its first page. The first page alone showed the villainous intents of Lord Arkus. According to the set belief, villains are to be hated and detested but as hard as I tried I couldn't come even near to hating Lord Arkus. He may proclaim to anyone and everyone that he is a villain from heart and soul but as we read on we realize that he may take pride in being a villain but he has nothing evil in him. Arkus's sarcastic and humorous narrative will send the readers into peals of laughter. Jarvis, the sparkling, too adds to the entertainment factor with his sense of humour. It seems that Jarvis's sole occupation is to bring out the good in his master, Lord Arkus by preventing him from spending his days in 'scheming, plotting, attacking, invading, killing, plundering, kidnapping, collecting ransom and having other types of fun'. So, what does it matter if Jarvis gets a little fun out of it by sending Arkus into fits of anger?

Many of the previous books I have read have humour which seemed forced, as if the author was trying to make the readers laugh but was failing miserably. But while reading My Sparkling Misfortune, I never got such a feeling. The humour came naturally. The narrative is entertaining which would keep the readers hooked to the book. Arkus's not-so-villainous character is both lovable and adorable. By the end of the book it seemed that I had unconsciously decided to support him even if he did something evil. The situation that Lord Arkus finds himself in is hilarious. Instead of catching an evil gormack to aid him in his evil plans he

catches a sparkling named 'Tulip' (understandably Arkus changes his name to Jarvis, after all which villain would like to have a servant named Tulip), who wants to turn him into a noble and honorable person. The greatest irony in the story was when Arkus unknowingly saves the princess he had planned to kidnap and is hailed as the heroic 'Lakeland Knight'. Another thing that made the book more interesting to read are the beautiful illustrations at the end of each chapter. The illustrations not only made the characters more alive, they made it easier to visualise the characters. My Sparkling Misfortune with all its humor also sends out a message about how easily we judge a person's character without even knowing them properly. We generally distribute people into the good and the bad, forgetting that every person has their grey shades. Even the so-called good people sometimes act quite opposite to the popular conception of their characters.

My Sparkling Misfortune is funny and even gives out a good message. It definitely deserves a place in the must read lists of all fantasy enthusiasts.

Overall:

Entertaining, hilarious and now, one of my favorites

Recommended?

Yes, to all middle graders and also, to all fantasy lovers.

Ashley - Book Labyrinth says

3.5 stars

'My Sparkling Misfortune' is a super cute story that takes place in a fairy-tale like kingdom. It involves a fairy realm, the place where Sparklings (good fairies) and Gormacks (bad fairies) come from. Arkus is our main character and he thinks himself a villain, yet his actions and words prove that he's quite heroic. Arkus basically spends his life running from a beast who has been tasked with killing him, and he ends up with a new identity in a kingdom where people think he is their hero.

Arkus provides a very humorous narration. He's sort of self-deprecating and is almost teasing the reader as he keeps proclaiming what a villain he is. The relationship between the two main characters (Arkus and Tulip -- or Jarvi as Arkus re-names him) is very funny and filled with quips back and forth. As I said, this is a very cute and fun story, and my only real complaint is that it leaves off without real resolution. Some things are wrapped up, but it does leave you hanging for Book 2, as Arkus just decides to end the story at a certain point. Overall a very charming book; a quick read that I think most people would appreciate.

Misha Mathew says

Maxine's review

My Sparkling Misfortune is a story spinning around the self-proclaimed villain, Lord Arkus of Blackriver Castle. After being backstabbed by the not-so-honorable wannabe hero, Prince Kellemar, Lord Arkus is now putting his villainous mind to work to think about a deserving revenge for Prince Kellemar. But the first and the most crucial step of the plan goes disastrously wrong as he captures a Sparkling (a good spirit) instead of a Gormack (an evil spirit). For Arkus, the only good in having a sparkling as his servant for five years is that now he is seemingly safe from the monster who has been trying to kill him for many years. But as he soon finds out it is a bit difficult to be evil with a sparkling around who is bent in making him good.

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