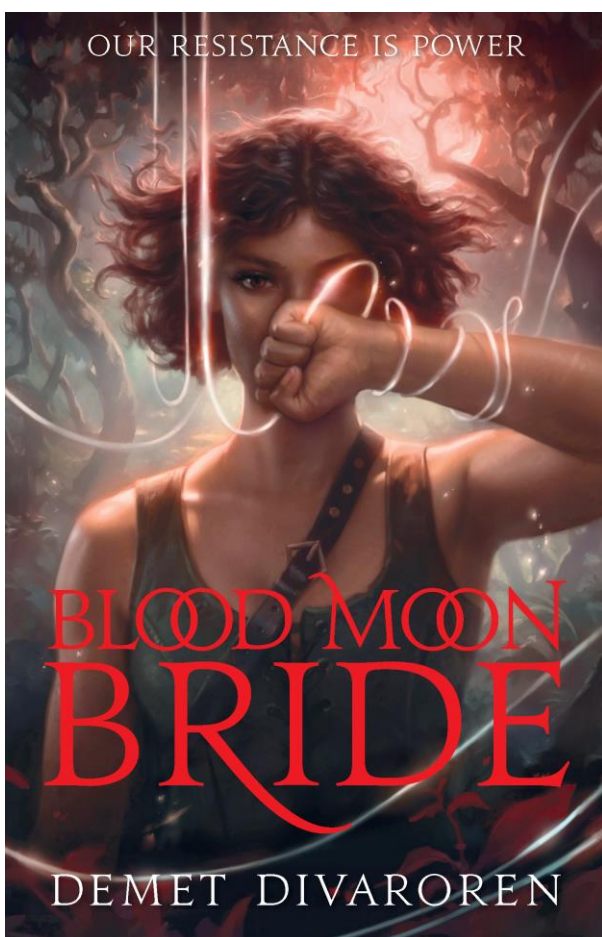


Blood Moon Bride

By Demet Divaroren



Forced into marriage for her valley's survival, Rehya must decide: submit or rebel against a ruthless system? A brilliant, fierce and compelling YA fantasy perfect for fans of *The Prison Healer* and *Children of Blood and Bone*, from the acclaimed, award-winning author of *Living on Hope Street*.

RECOMMENDED FOR

14 – 18 (Secondary)

THEMES

Fantasy, equality, feminism, oppression, power, magic, rebellion, courage

ISBN (AUS)

9781761180279

SYNOPSIS

Rehya is a hunter with uncanny magical abilities – and magic has long been outlawed in Mennama Valley.

Every winter, on the night of the Blood Moon, young women enter forced marriages for the valley's advancement and prosperity. But this year Governor Kyra has decreed that girls of just fifteen must become Blood Moon Brides, making Rehya eligible.

When her Pa dies, Rehya's plans of escape evaporate and she is paraded in front of suitors on Show Day. And when she is chosen to be a bride, she lashes out.

As punishment, she is sent to the Nest. There Rehya must decide: should she submit to the life of a Blood Moon Bride, or rebel – and risk everything to fight for justice?

A powerful and fierce YA fantasy novel by the award-winning author of *Living on Hope Street*.

'A richly realised and provocative fantasy, *Blood Moon Bride* shows that even in the midst of great hardship, magic can find a way.' - C.S. Pacat, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Dark Rise*

'Richly folkloric and tragically timely, *Blood Moon Bride* is a visceral tale of fierce women and bright, raging hope, drenched with blood and the light of stars.' - Lili Wilkinson, author of *A Hunger for Thorns* and *Deep is the Fen*

AUTHOR MOTIVATION

'I want to draw attention to the plight of girls around the world, especially those from impoverished backgrounds, and inspire conversation about gender inequality, the rights of girls to an education and self-determination, and how we can bridge the gap in our day-to-day lives. I also want to draw attention to unjust and discriminatory political systems and show that great power and strength exists when like-minded people raise their voices and advocate for a better and more just world. I wrote *Blood Moon Bride* for young adults, in particular, to challenge and inspire them to never turn a blind eye to injustice and gender-based oppression, and to always embrace their truth, raise their voices and live with courage.'

Demet Divaroren

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Demet Divaroren is the award-winning author of *Living on Hope Street* and the co-editor of CBCA-shortlisted anthology *Growing up Muslim in Australia*. Her writing has appeared in *Griffith Review*, *New Australian Stories*, *Island* magazine, *The Age Epicure*, *The Big Issue*, *From the Outer* and *Best Summer Stories*. *Blood Moon Bride* is her second novel.

IN-CLASS DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- **Book's Title:** What do you think the title *Blood Moon Bride* suggests about the themes or mood of the book? Consider the symbolism of 'Blood Moon' and 'Bride' in your response. The phrase '*Our Resistance is Power*' appears on the cover. What do you think this statement might mean in the context of the book? How might resistance and power play a role in the protagonist's journey?
- **Book's Cover:** The cover features a young woman with a determined expression, glowing lines around her arm, and a fiery wooded background. How do these elements contribute to the mood created by the cover?
- **Before the Story Starts:** Why do you think Demet Divaroren chose to include the excerpt from '*The Book of Khali*' before the story begins? Look closely at the excerpt and see if you can find any clues about the coming story.
- **Genre:** The description of the story on the back cover, also known as the book's blurb, mentions that this will be a '*a powerful YA fantasy*'. What makes a novel a fantasy? What other novels have you read that could be described as 'fantasy'? Why do you think fantasy novels are popular in contemporary society?
- **Exploring Dystopian Elements:** Mennama Valley is a society where young men are sent to endless wars, forced marriage is institutionalised, and education is restricted. How do these elements contribute to making this world a dystopia? Can you draw any parallels to real-world historical or contemporary issues?
- **The Hero's Journey:** The hero's journey follows a common pattern where the protagonist starts in their normal world, faces a challenge that pushes them into an unfamiliar situation, undergoes trials, and emerges transformed. How does Rehya's story follow this pattern? Identify key moments that represent important stages, such as her call to adventure (when she is forced into a situation she does not want), her big ordeal or turning point (when she faces a major challenge), and her return or transformation (when she takes action to change the world around her). How does her journey not only change her but also impact her society?

- **Perspective shift:** *'She is cruel. Full of hate. There is no reasoning with her, Arrie had said.*

But part of her was also like a helpless child.' (Page 297)

Retell the story from the Assessor/Ihnaki's point of view.

- **Parents:** *'It had been love and fear that drove her mother to be so cruel, just like it did Ma and Pa.'* (Page 309)

In *Blood Moon Bride*, Rehya and Ihnaki's parents commit cruel or morally questionable acts because they believe it is necessary for their child's survival. How do their actions complicate the idea of love and morality?

- **The Role of Magic:** The sentence, *'Nature is the birth of true magic'* is quoted throughout the novel. Magic is banned in Mennama Valley, yet Rehya seeks to restore it. What might magic symbolise in this story? How could its return challenge or change the Valley's rigid society?
- **Gender and Power Dynamics:** The 'Blood Moon Bride' system forces young women into marriages for the prosperity of the Valley. What does this tradition suggest about gender roles and power structures in this world? How might Rehya's rebellion inspire change?
- **Moral Dilemmas and Resistance:** Rehya faces serious consequences for standing against the system, including being sent to the Nest. Do you think rebellion against oppression is always justified, even when it puts individuals at great risk? What ethical dilemmas does Rehya face as she fights for justice?