

Immortal Blood: A Fairy Tale

Shawna Bennett

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Set in a rich realm between the magical and the mundane, the fantasy novel Immortal Blood finds a young man facing a supernatural assault on his lineage.

In Shawna Bennett's swift fantasy novel *Immortal Blood*, a family prepares to confront an unknown threat to both the human and fae realms.

Sawyer and her husband Julius built a happy and peaceful life together, raising four children. But then destiny comes crawling in. Sawyer, it is revealed, comes from a new bloodline of fae, created under the eye of the earth spirit Gaea. Because of her human husband, her children can thrive in both the human and fae worlds—until their singing ceremony activates their powers in full.

The couple's oldest son, Simon, is the first to reach the ceremonial date, but also the only masculine fae to have ever existed. Days before his ceremony, souls trapped within a mist beseech each of the children for aid, forcing the family into a perilous situation.

As Simon transitions from a curious young man to being a chosen one, he comes to anchor the story. It is revealed that his family line was created for the singular, ambiguous purpose of saving humanity. As Simon tackles his responsibilities, though without fully understanding the threat, he gathers both allies and information. His siblings are likewise motivated to serve their purposes in personalized ways, their activities ranging from studying ancient books to mastering their individual powers.

Shocking revelations throw Simon off of his balance, though, including of the reasons that a vengeful trio of fae—the Furies of Greek mythology—once targeted humans; these three are now restrained in their own realm, a secluded, near-surreal domain in which their bodies are distinct, though they communicate in a singular, eerie, unsettling voice. The varied cast of fae and human characters are also personalized, making it easy to follow the book's fast conversations.

In the opening chapters, the story reads like a spoken fairy tale, its clear and lyrical prose complementing its magic. Its presentation shifts and becomes more robust as it progresses, describing characters and settings with depth and taking on the qualities of an urban fantasy, an adventure story, and even of science fiction. Despite such changes, the book remains focused on Simon's preparations for the coming threat.

At first languid to make room for establishing its atmosphere and cast, the book's pace speeds up exponentially as Simon's powers develop and others overcome their obstacles. References to a previous adventure are made, leading to some narrative confusion, including with a nod to Julius's past that is not explained until late in the book.

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JOHN M. MURRAY (January 13, 2021)

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