

Nahia

Patricia Bossano

WaterBearer Press

(250pp)

978-1-5320-2209-8

Set in the fairy realm, Nahia is a complex fantasy novel that should not be missed.

Motivated by love, vengeance, and family, the impetuous fairy princess Nahia negotiates the separate worlds of humans and fairies as she lives out her destiny as heir to the throne. Intricately plotted and beautifully written, Patricia Bossano's *Nahia* is an intergenerational saga that delves deeply into the fairy world, resulting in a complicated high fantasy offering.

Nahia falls desperately in love at first sight, but the object of her affection is a human. She willingly abandons her home to make a life with him in the human realm, though her fairy heritage makes it impossible to live that way for long. While she's dealing with the fallout from her decision, even more desperate developments in the fairy world draw her into an epic conflict through which her very heritage and way of life are at stake.

A brief preface details important aspects, customs, and abilities of fairies, their realm, and their relationships with humans. It sets the tone for the complicated tale ahead, which, in addition to being a high fantasy adventure with romantic undertones, delves deeply into the minutiae of fairy life and mores.

These include the etiquette of cradle gifts; the role of the moon and other natural elements in fairy life; and the technical aspects of the passage of time, physical movement between realms, and communication between fairy and human worlds. This elaborate world-building is cemented with a lush, descriptive writing style that emphasizes physical settings and emotions over a speedy or expository plot.

Short chapters are labeled by human years and decades; time passes more slowly for the fairies. In a novel of truly epic scale, which spans locations from the fairy realm to Europe and the Caribbean, these episodic chapters make it easy to keep the action and characters straight.

Strong women characters set this novel apart from other high fantasy offerings. They act on their own behalves, protecting their domains through wile, magic, and deep ties of friendship and family.

As she grows, Nahia questions her heritage and explores relationships with both human and fairy friends and enemies in resonant way. Much of Nahia's conflict is rooted in her impulsive behavior and an initial lack of empathy for those around her, a situation with which most teens can identify.

With its deep and detailed dive into the fairy realm, as well as its vivid, high-level vocabulary, *Nahia* is a complex fantasy novel that should not be missed.

CAROLYN BAILEY (May 26, 2017)

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