

## **Queen of Blood**

**Sarah Beth Durst**

**Reviewed by: Mikha Kounouho, 15**

**Star Book Reviewer for Be the Star You Are! Charity**

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High in the treetops above the land of Renthia lies the kingdom of Aratay, far from the dangers of the forest lurk far below on the forest floor. This magical land created by Sarah Beth Durst is filled with spirits—fire, water, earth, air, and earth—of every shape, size, and form, seeking to do only two things: build and kill. There inherently opposing desires to create and destroy force them to submit to the control of a single chosen human Queen, a Queen whose duty it is to protect all of her people from the spirits. Daleina was 10 years old when the spirits destroyed her village, leaving only her family and devastating destruction in their wake. Spurred on by the Queen's failure and determined to protect her family and those she loves, Daleina dedicates her life to the Academy, hoping to become the next Queen. But no amount of training could ever prepare her for what she would face. As new dangers test her courage and her strength, she is forced to question whether she really is worthy of the role as Queen or if she will even survive to obtain it. As trust is broken and friendship is tested, the young girl is forced to face a dark future she never could have dreamed of with nothing but her determination to keep her alive.

*The Queen of Blood* is a thrilling fantasy that feels so real in its own magical way. Sarah Beth Durst creates this beautiful land in the trees where enchanted creatures come alive. This mesmerizing adventure is told from multiple points of view that intertwine to create this captivating story. Daleina's story is one of courage, determination, and selflessness as she battles spirits and her own self-doubt. Ven's story is one of strength, friendship, and hope as he fights for a better future. The Queen's is one of sacrifice, trust, and acceptance as she struggles against her fears. Together, their stories, create this impossible to put down book that will have you hanging on every last word.

The first book of The Queens of Renthia series, *The Queen of Blood* is a phenomenal introduction to this new enchanted world, but even alone, the book is one of a kind. This book was a fantasy story like no other with the sense of reality that it harnessed despite its fictional setting. The whole adventure feels real and endlessly captivating as the reader zips through the trees with Ven or soars above them with Daleina. Though this story does become slightly violent as the protagonist faces threatening dangers, her action filled battles add to breathtaking adventure and the setting of looming ominous forest. This book is perfect for older fantasy lovers 13 years and up who love action and magic in far away lands high up in the trees. This would also make the perfect gift for a fantasy loving teen hungering for a new adventure they can take over and over again.

### **Recommended Titles**

The Reluctant Queen by Sarah Beth Durst (The Queens of Renthia Book #2)

The Queen of Sorrow by Sarah Beth Durst (The Queens of Renthia Book #3)

Sorcery of Thorns by Margaret Rogerson

The Enchantment of Ravens by Margaret Rogerson