



## **The Rose Bride: A Retelling of The White Bride and the Black Bride**

*Nancy Holder*

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## **The Rose Bride: A Retelling of The White Bride and the Black Bride Nancy Holder "ONCE UPON A TIME" IS TIMELESS**

When Rose's mother dies, her only comfort is the exquisite rose garden her mother left behind. The purple blossoms serve as an assurance of her mother's love. But Rose is dealt a second blow when her father dies and his greedy widow, Ombrine, and her daughter, Desirée, move in and take over the manor in true Cinderella fashion.

Fate has been cruel to Ombrine and Desirée, too. So despite their harsh ways, Rose has compassion. But these feelings are bitterly tested when, in a rage, Ombrine tears out the garden. Rose nearly gives up all hope--until a chance meeting with the king. Happiness might be within her reach, but first she must prevail over Ombrine. And then she must determine if she has the courage to love.

## **The Rose Bride: A Retelling of The White Bride and the Black Bride Details**

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Author : Nancy Holder

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Nancy Holder**

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## **From Reader Review The Rose Bride: A Retelling of The White Bride and the Black Bride for online ebook**

### **Lizzie says**

So I've never read or heard of "The White Bride and the Black Bride," but I decided to still read this book. When I read the synopsis, I realized that it sounds a lot like "Cinderella." In both the mother dies, father remarries, the stepmother is terrible, the father dies, and the stepfamily hate the daughter. The only thing that keeps me from thinking that they're the same stories is that "Cinderella" is French and this story is German.

I started off liking this book pretty well. I felt bad for Rose, both of her parents were dead and she had to put up with her stepmother, Ombrine, and sister, Desiree, who treated her terribly. The only things she has left are her nurse, who Ombrine eventually fires, the statue of Artemis, and the purple roses that grew in the garden after her mother's death. The other story that happens is of a young king whose wife dies during her pregnancy.

I was worried from the beginning that Rose and the king would end up together, but I'll get to that later. Rose grows up and when tended to her roses, her long lost half-brother shows up. They don't realize who each other is, but he buys some of the flowers. Rose looks just like the dead queen, so the king has her sent to him. However, Rose goes missing and Ombrine uses magic to make Desiree look like her stepsister. Desiree, pretending to be Rose, and the king marry. Rose was turned into a doe, and watches all of this happen.

After a couple months, Desiree pretends to be pregnant and tells the king to kill Rose the deer, who he has become close with. While trying to kill Rose, Desiree is killed and her glamor falls. Rose turns into a human again and the king realizes his mistake. Rose could have stayed a deer and become the mate of the deer leader (?), but she chooses to become a human. They don't get married, because Rose doesn't want to. However, they eventually do get married. I was not happy about that.

I can't believe I used a Taylor Sift gif cause I can't stand that bitch.

[image error]

But I love Anderson Cooper!

I'll add a third!!

### **Rose**

I liked you, until you married the king. Dumbass. He only likes you cause you look like his DEAD WIFE!!!

### **Ombrine/Desiree**

They're pretty much the same person and I hated them both.

### **The King**

I think his name was Jean-Marc or something, but I think it should be Dick-Head instead.

Overall, I didn't like this and the only thing enjoyable was the purple roses. I love roses so much! I hope the other books in this collection can lift my spirits!

For this review and more, go to my blog [Lizzie the Sarcastic Blonde](#)

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### **Emily Fauble says**

Wow, I was unfamiliar with this tale (a retelling of the story of the black bride and the white bride) and maybe that was my mistake. We all know that fairy tales have happy endings but usually have some hardship in between the intro and the "happily ever after," but this story was ridiculous. The events making up the majority of the book were so dismal and depressing that it wasn't worth reading for the very abbreviated "happy ending." As the reader I was left so shaken by all of the rest of the book that I couldn't recover at the end to enjoy it. This is a loose interpretation of the story, which I looked up and discovered to be somewhat different, but not much happier, though since the original was shorter there wasn't the time for as many excruciating events to take place as in the book. The "morality" or lessons of the book were also vague, strange and unhelpful.

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### **Echo says**

I normally love retellings of old fairy tales, but this one was not good. There was enough french in the story that it would be confusing to anyone without a passing knowledge of french, and there were many things not rapped up. Several pages from the end actually, a lot of these untied endings are brought up in a question format before the book ends without either having answered them or using a cop out such as "the gods only know why." I appreciated the Greek mythology used in the book (for those who argue Artemis shouldn't be prayed to for children, while she's the goddess of virgins she is also the goddess of mothers and childbirth), however mixing witchcraft with Greek mythology led to a confused sense of how magic works in this setting, and the story drug on for too long on Rose's demise in her castle.

I feel this book had some nice concepts, but ended up being too confusing for an enjoyable read.

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### **Kiera Beddes says**

Genre: retold fairytales, fantasy

Summary: Rose's mother exchanges her life so that Rose will know the meaning of true love. This book is an odd mixture of Greek mythology and French fairy tales. With the death of her mother, Rose is an orphan because her father dies shortly after he hears of his wife's death, raised by an evil stepmother and stepsisters who make bargains with sorcerers and the God of Shadows. The king of the land lost his young wife and when he sees a portrait of Rose (painted by an artist who stumbled upon her) he wants to marry her because she is the exact look-alike of his dead wife. Rose's stepsister and stepmother use magic to hide the stepsister's face to look like Rose. Rose is changed into a deer by Artemis. The plot comes to a head when the King calls a hunt to go after the Rose-deer. He cannot kill it however, and the fake Queen tries to finish the deed when she is killed by an arrow from Artemis. Rose marries the King and they live happily ever after.

Response: This was a silly book. Normally, I like retold fairytales. Normally, I like fantasy. However, there must be a limit to the ridiculousness. French names and mannerisms DO NOT mix with Greek myths and

legends. Keep the cultures separate, please. There was too many trials for Rose for her to learn the value of "true love," it didn't seem like a fair bargain. Not my favorite book in the world.

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### **Historyprincess says**

"The White Bride and the Black Bride" is a lesser known fairytale from the Brothers Grimm. It's basically another interpretation of the little cinder girl. That being said, this book has accomplished a feat few other books have: It made me cry.

Rose Marchand is the daughter of a wealthy merchant and his second wife. On her thirteenth birthday, while Rose's father is away, her mother presents her with a beautiful garden filled with purple roses. But straight after, her mother passes away. And her father doesn't come home for months.

When Rose hears that her father is on his way home, she rides out to meet him. But later, she's told that her father too has died, and his third wife Ombrine, along with her teenaged daughter Desiree, move in and take over the manor. But instead of being spiteful, Rose is compassionate, because Ombrine and Desiree have experienced misfortune as well.

However, it becomes clear that Rose's only friend is her godmother Elise. But soon, Ombrine dismisses the servants and even tears down the rose garden to save money. Rose isn't sure if she can sink any lower, until she hears that she might be a candidate to be the second wife of King Jean-Marc. But before she can finally live happily ever after, she'll have to outwit her stepmother and stepsister.

This was a beautiful book. The imagery, the prose, everything about it moved me to the point of tears, which rarely happens when I read books.

These are the ratings I'll give for the following.

Story: 10/10

Heroine: 10/10

Hero: 9/10

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### **Karen says**

This is a strange strange book. I've never read the original fairy tale for this one, but I wonder if the original could possibly be as strange. A bit like Cinderella, the main character has a wicked step mother and wicked step sister who try to take the prince/king away from her. It's a really bizarre tale of love and hate, good and evil, deers and purple roses, and the goddess Artemis... whose methods of teaching seem to me to be about the same as a tricky leprechaun. Overall it was good-ish. If you like simple short novels with magic and fairy-tales and if you're not expecting some great novel, it might be quite enjoyable for you.

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### **Dawn says**

It was ok. I'm not familiar with the fairy tale it was retelling, but it was ok. There times I figured I was

missing a part of the story, but I kept on. It really only took me a couple of hours to read it.

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### **Josephina says**

This is definitely not the best of the Once Upon a Time stories. I confess I'm not terribly familiar with the original fairy tale. I know I've read it before, but I don't really remember it.

I've found this series in general to be rather hit-or-miss, and this book was definitely in the latter category. It had potential, and there were even some things I enjoyed about it. I liked some of the imagery, for example.

I'll admit that the writing style threw me quite a bit. I'm actually a huge fan of Greek mythology, but my brain somehow refused to wrap itself around the mythology in this book. It seemed fairly contradictory.

In parts, I found the author seemed to try a little too hard to be "flowery" with her prose. I am a reasonably intelligent adult, or so I flatter myself, but there were some paragraphs I had to re-read to get a sense of what was going on.

The very first chapter is Prologue, and it begins, "In the Land Beyond...Crown Prince Jean-Marc, son of His Royal Majesty Henri III, Heir to the Throne of the Land Beyond, Beloved of Zeus...Now, maybe it's because I've just re-read the Percy Jackson series, but I had to sit and wonder if this was supposed to be a "real" world event of if the Land Beyond should be considered to exist as a part of mythology, itself. Like this world's Lane of Faerie. Every time the kingdom was named, my brain wanted to interpret it as some Other land, apart from the world in which the book was set. I don't know why, except that I think that the clash of cultures was something that my mind flatly refused to accept.

It's not a bad book. It is filled with Very Bad Things that happen to the heroine. There are many, many Very Bad Things. I confess I skimmed through many pages, as I found the book dragged a bit. Partly, no doubt, because the strange clash of cultures and my brain's insistence upon interpreting the Land Beyond as a realm of fairy people or something...well, it made it hard to get into the book.

I'm also not a huge fan of some of the prose, as I said, which certainly didn't help.

It is not a bad book, honestly, it just wasn't my cup of tea. So far, it was my least favorite of the Once Upon a Time books, and I'm quite glad to be through it.

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### **earthy says**

Very confused by the French-speaking, Greek-god-worshipping society. And the requests for children directed at Artemis (seems to me if you want to pray to someone for a kid, you might not want to direct said prayer to a virgin maiden goddess who's not too keen on the opposite sex, particularly when they spy on her in the bath).

Setting, cultural, and religious issues aside, this story is so very centered around the many (and I do mean MANY) trials and tribulations of Rose, a hard-working, long-suffering Cinderella figure who has very little other than her self-indulgent righteousness to recommend her. Everyone hurts her, belittles her, torments

her, makes her life So Very Hard, and yet she must persevere, which basically means little more than Getting The Guy (whom she initially gets only because she is, for some inexplicable reason, the exact physical copy of his dead wife).

Kudos for Rose's determination to be truly loved before she gives her heart away (i.e., being a dead-ringer for the king's dead wife isn't enough to make her prepared to marry him); however, the rest of this mess of a story is just one giant, self-pitying woe piled up on top of another.

I haven't read the original fairy tale on which this story is based, and if this book is any indication, I'm not missing much.

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### **Jean says**

From the first book I picked up I've liked the Once upon a Time series, and I've always loved retellings of fairy tales. I found this particular book at a thrift store, and promptly picked it up because of the others.

One of the things I liked about these reworkings was, even though the books claimed it was based on one fairy tale, they were almost always a mix of two or more fairy tales. While this one is a reworking of 'The White Bride and the Black Bride', it is also has aspects of 'Cinderella'.

It's a clever retelling, taking place in a world both familiar and foreign, and the characters are giving both depth and reality then in the original stories. One thing I didn't care for was how for much of the book the heroine just suffered, without really doing anything for herself. Things happened to her while she made very little happen herself, which annoyed me. The pacing is also painfully slow, taking the entire first half of the book to retell what has been summarized on the back cover. And two characters' backstories are left with no explanation, which makes the story as a whole feel hollow.

I really do like what the series is doing, and the books are short and easy to read so I recommend every one of them. Though far from my favorite in the series, this one does make for a good quick read.

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### **Lorraine says**

**SUMMARY:** When Rose's mother dies, her only comfort is the exquisite rose garden her mother left behind. The purple blossoms serve as an assurance of her mother's love. But Rose is dealt a second blow when her father dies and his greedy widow, Ombrine, and her daughter, Desirée, move in and take over the manor in true Cinderella fashion.

Fate has been cruel to Ombrine and Desirée, too. So despite their harsh ways, Rose has compassion. But these feelings are bitterly tested when, in a rage, Ombrine tears out the garden. Rose nearly gives up all hope--until a chance meeting with the king. Happiness might be within her reach, but first she must prevail over Ombrine. And then she must determine if she has the courage to love.

**REVIEW:** This was an unfamiliar fairy tale to me, but I enjoyed the retelling in an adult version. This one was written much more in the fairy tale style with all the ingredients of hero, heroine, magic potions, spells, changelings, evil stepmothers/stepsisters etc. It was much darker than the others that I have read so far. The

elements of love, grief and death are central to the theme of this book.

I did feel like the deep devotion to the Greek Gods and the mixture of French words thrown in now and again were a bit incongruous. But it was obvious that the devil was the enemy along with the witchcraft. Overall a good book but I didn't care for it as much as the others I have read so far.

FAVORITE QUOTES: "It's not your love that holds her hostage. It's your need. True love wants, but it doesn't need. True love things of the beloved first."

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### **Elevetha says**

1.5 stars. A retelling of "The White Bride and the Black Bride" though it felt more like "Cinderella meets Bambi" to me. In the Author's Note, it claims that the book was inspired, in part, by the movie *Ever After*. Which, by the way, is fantastic and because I've seen that movie more times than I can remember, I could certainly draw some comparisons, especially in the beginning of the book. Like when, barring one word, there is a small line directly from the movie. Some events and themes were straight out of *Ever After*. That being said: don't read this book and use your time wisely. Watch *Ever After*.

(view spoiler)

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### **Selena says**

So I had to tough this one out until about seventy pages in.

#### **The good:**

The writing's not too bad, and once the story starts rolling, it gets interesting.

#### **The bad:**

Lack of knowledge of history. Did Holder not take history in high school? I'll admit my knowledge of European history isn't too great for anything before War of the Roses, but a quick trip to Google showed me that when Greeks lived in France, they weren't in "France" and they didn't speak French. The French did not worship Greek Gods as far as I know, and this seems to take place in the time periods I learned about in AP Euro. I think the story would have been just as interesting set in Ancient Greece, and so if Holder really wanted Greek gods, she should have set it then and there rather than France.

Also, I despise when people throw in tidbits of whatever language the characters are speaking. The book's in English. Write it in English. It's assumed that they're speaking French if they're in France. If you throw in French randomly, it's like they weren't speaking French the whole time.

#### **The ugly:**

The characters were very inconsistent, especially the main character. Rose was strong only when the story needed her to be. Until the end, she kept bouncing between, "I'm a strong character!" and "My life sucks. Boo hoo hoo." I understand being downtrodden, but the changes were so sudden it was like swapping one mask for another. There was no real transition. I see what the author was trying to do, though she might not have been up to the task.

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#### **Amy says**

A very confusing fairy tale full of insta-love and promises that make no sense. Pretty much, if you request anything of Artemis she will probably kill you off...while claiming you as a best beloved. Mix of gods that made no sense (and lets face, even when they did make sense those 'gods' were utterly useless) and characters that are Evil For No Apparent Purpose (oh, except that their 'hearts were closed by hardship')

Oh, and there is also a bunch of freaking talking roses.

I seriously was confused with the King's age...I thought he was a lot older than Rose. The King Deer guy was super random/awkward. Rose is presented with all these hardships and dumb options...like 'to remain a deer for life'.

Anyway, not the best Once Upon A Time...that's for sure.

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#### **Katie says**

This was the absolute WORST book I have read in a long time! Rose who is put on this "journey" to know that she is loved, loses her mother, father, everthing she loves. She is starved, abused, and ends up with a Stepmother and stepsister that put Cinderella's Stepmother and sisters to shame. And the supposed HERO of this book is some stupid heartbroken guy that ends up hoodwinked by the evil steps and married and sleeping with the evil stepsister. NOT COOL!! This whole book was painful to read and the context was poorly written, and confussing at best. I wasted my time reading the first half of this book hoping it would improve only to find myself wishing the end would happen soon, so I could get on with my life.

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