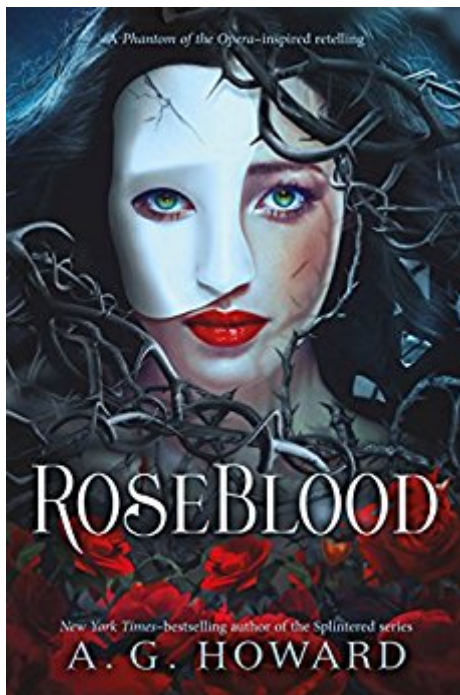


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RoseBlood



Synopsis

This YA novel from New York Times bestselling author A. G. Howard marks the beginning of a new era for fans of the Splintered series. Rune Germain moves to a boarding school outside of Paris, only to discover that at this opera-house-turned-music-conservatory, phantoms really do exist. *RoseBlood* is a *Phantom of the Opera*–inspired retelling in which Rune’s biggest talent—her voice—is also her biggest curse. Fans of *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* and the *Splintered* series will find themselves captivated by this pulse-pounding spin on a classic tale. Å Rune, whose voice has been compared to that of an angel, has a mysterious affliction linked to her talent that leaves her sick and drained at the end of every performance. Convinced creative direction will cure her, her mother ships her off to a French boarding school for the arts, rumored to have a haunted past. Å Shortly after arriving at *RoseBlood* conservatory, Rune starts to believe something otherworldly is indeed afoot. The mystery boy she’s seen frequenting the graveyard beside the opera house doesn’t have any classes at the school, and vanishes almost as quickly as he appears. When Rune begins to develop a secret friendship with the elusive Thorn, who dresses in clothing straight out of the 19th century, she realizes that in his presence she feels cured. Thorn may be falling for Rune, but the phantom haunting *RoseBlood* wants her for a very specific and dangerous purpose. As their love continues to grow, Thorn is faced with an impossible choice: lead Rune to her destruction, or save her and face the wrath of the phantom, the only father he’s ever known. Å A. G. Howard brings the romantic storytelling that *Splintered* fans adore to France—and an entirely new world filled with lavish romance and intrigue—in a retelling inspired by a story that has captivated generations. Fans of both the *Phantom of the Opera* musical and novel, as well as YA retellings such as *Marissa Meyer’s Cinder*, will devour *RoseBlood*.

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Customer Reviews

Ugh. I do not want to give this book a 1 star rating, but I did and let me explain WHY. This was a highly anticipated book by me, because on top of my fascination for all things Wonderland [and yes, yes I did foam at the mouth over the Splintered series minus a few flaws with it.] So why wouldn't I also foam at the mouth when a retelling of one of my childhood favorites comes to light? About a girl who is cursed with a voice of the angels and what she is capable of? And then... her counterpart, her phantom who has been mentored by the actual phantom! Slips into the story, in a historical, faraway place in France. It sounds interesting, the cover is beautiful, but but but... it literally took me almost two months to finish it, because nothing really happens to begin with. I mean, sure some things happen, but it's mostly touching on the historical aspect of the story which is nice, but it also takes away from the actual story that Howard is trying to tell. Instead of getting me invested in the story I'm stuck on tangents of the past and the angst is through the roof on both parts. Things become weird as the book draws on and it comes to light just what Rune is and who Thorn is and what he is capable of, as well. It had the potential to be a really unique take on Phantom of the Opera, but it was lost on me. I think I would have been keen on Thorn if I was allowed to be invested IN the characters. The constant draw away from them made it difficult. I was more than halfway through the book when I wondered the story was actually heading. I'd put it down and make myself continue to read it. I think the story would have been better if the historical aspect [the original phantom,] was a backdrop to the actual story instead of an invasive story that seemed to overshadow the REAL story. Still, that doesn't solve the strange, strange quality to this tale. The unbelievable supernatural aspect that just seemed too far fetched and over the top. Ah, well!

You know when a book is so good that you're left speechless? When you

can't even form a coherent thought to write your review because of it? That is me right now because of *RoseBlood*. I absolutely adored this book. It was everything I could have hoped for from a *Phantom of the Opera* retelling. I had high expectations going into this because of the fact that I'm a huge fan of the original story. It was different than I expected but a good different. Instead of being a straightforward retelling it was more of a modern day continuation. Yes, a continuation, which means we do see the infamous Phantom (i.e. Erik) from Gaston Leroux's original tale make quite the appearance. I won't even begin to explain how that's possible or why because it would give away a major part of the story. However, it's incredibly unique and introduces something that I knew of but have never encountered in a fantasy novel before. Despite the inclusion of an iconic character who does play a key role in the book, *RoseBlood* is very much centered on Rune and Thorn's story and how their lives are connected not only to each other but to Erik's past as well. In *RoseBlood*, A.G. Howard weaves together the tale of Rune who has been sent away to a French music school by her mother in the hopes that it will cure the "stage fright" she believes that Rune has. In truth, Rune has a problem that her mother doesn't believe in – certain pieces of music seem to possess her to the point of her uncontrollably breaking out in song after which she is always left very sick. On their way to her new school this nearly happens and you can tell straight away why Rune would dread going to a school where she'll be surrounded by opera music. There's another catch, the building in which her school is located is rumored to be where the *Phantom* story first originated. Rune has taken a slight interest in Gaston Leroux's *The Phantom of the Opera* and the fact that the opera house in his haunting tale resembles her new school makes her a little paranoid. Not to mention the fact that once they pull up to her new school Rune sees a familiar figure cloaked in a cape near the school's rose bushes. He seemingly disappears, leaving dead roses in his wake. The figure, who Rune assumes is the Phantom, is actually Thorn, who lives with the Phantom and considers him a father. Rune and Thorn, who have never met, both find each other oddly familiar. Why is that? Why does Rune's talent make her sick? What does the Phantom have to do with all of this? You'll have to read to find out. Rune and Thorn were both such brilliant characters who developed so beautifully throughout the story. I was blown away by the development that occurred character wise because standalones tend to lack in the character development department. That wasn't the case here at all. Rune, in particular, is a character I feel is a rarity among female fantasy protagonist because

of the fact that while she has a gift it isn't one that she masters overnight. It takes her time and practice to gain control over it. And Thorn, I adored him. Despite everything he's been through in his life he has somehow retained so much goodness and a very forgiving heart. I feel like I can't go into too much detail about either of them because everything I want to say would give something important to the story away. However, they are both characters I won't be forgetting anytime soon. As for the romance, I was worried going into this that there would be a love triangle because of the fact that the original story has one. However, I had no reason to worry because A.G. Howard spun a unique and swoon-worthy romance without a love triangle. It was a slow build and I enjoyed every single second of it. Also, there were several secondary characters. Rune has a group of friends at her new school who all play small roles. I don't feel like there was a lot of development with them but I attribute that to the fact that this story was definitely more plot driven while being centric on the main characters. Although, there was an interesting little character in the form of a cat named Diable. His abilities include unlocking doors with his claws and being cranky and I loved it. Much like Phantom, RoseBlood is hauntingly beautiful and very atmospheric with just a smidge of darkness. I'm honestly in awe over A.G. Howard's world building. From the gothic structure of the school to the Phantom's lair to the secret places within the school grounds, everything was painted so vividly. I was completely swept away by the world she created and the atmospheric qualities in itself were so reminiscent of the original tale that all I wanted to do was listen to The Point Of No Return while reading. Everything I loved about this book aside, I have to admit that it might not be for everyone. I have a feeling that RoseBlood is going to be a book that readers either really love or really don't. The pacing was beyond slow and in a way that is a lot like the original tale, I feel. A little over half way through the book the pacing starts picking up though and doesn't slow down. It's getting to that point past all of the world building, backstory, revelations, plot twists, and overall initial introduction that is going to be tough for some readers. I thoroughly enjoyed most of it simply because I love the original story and was so immersed into A.G. Howard's writing and characters that I wanted as much as I could get. However, some could struggle with the pacing. Overall, RoseBlood was an insightful, unique, surprising, plot twist filled, and breathtaking retelling of an iconic classic. It was a book that I didn't even know I needed and if anyone was going to retell one of my favorite stories I'm very glad it was A.G. Howard because she did it so wonderfully. This is the first book I've ever read by her but let me tell you I will officially be reading everything else she's written and

anything she writes in the future. If you love The Phantom of the Opera as much as I do, then I highly recommend this book.

pooled ink Reviews: Right on the very front cover we are told that this is "A Phantom of the Opera-inspired retelling" and indeed it is! The book is chock full of little references and ties to both the original story and to the famed Broadway musical. Some are more obvious while others lie hidden wrapped within the prose but it's equally fun whenever you spot one. Overall I enjoyed ROSEBLOOD. But I enjoyed it as a YA paranormal book perhaps a bit more than I enjoyed it as a Phantom of the Opera-inspired book.

That's not at all a bad thing though, it's just that the musical in particular is so beloved and breath-taking that it's hard for anything related to come close to it. So I really loved all the references and subtle hints, jokes, or tidbits, but as a Phantom retelling? It was good. As just a YA paranormal novel? It was pretty stellar. The research was thorough, the concept of flamme jumelle was beautiful and alluring, the twist of vampires who feed off energy was surprising and interesting. This book was not entirely what I expected but I enjoyed it all the same. Definitely packed full of creativity and love for the Phantom story, ROSEBLOOD brings a 19th Century legend into the modern light unveiling a few otherworldly surprises as it goes. Read my full review on my Wordpress blog: [pooled ink](#)

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RoseBlood

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