



The Full Moon (The Faeries' Promise)

By Kathleen Duey

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In simultaneous hardcover and paperback editions, the final book in a four-book chapter book series, a companion to *The Unicorn's Secret*. The faeries have returned to their beloved meadow near the village of Ash Grove. Winter is coming and they are working hard to prepare for the storms—and to stay hidden. Alida saved the villagers' crops from Lord Dunraven's greed, but now the people of Ash Grove know that the faeries have returned. Will they tell Lord Dunraven's guards? The faeries live in fear of being discovered and Alida wants desperately to find a way to make her family safer. Then a frightening accident in the woods outside Ash Grove brings even more danger, and an opportunity for Alida to forge a friendship that could change the faeries' lives forever. The risk is terrible—Alida can only follow her heart.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Kathleen Duey's works include the middle grade American Diaries and Survivors series, as well as the well-reviewed chapter book series *The Unicorn's Secret* and its companion series, *The Faeries' Promise*. She is also the National Book Award–nominated author of *Skin Hunger*. She lives in Fallbrook, California.

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The Full Moon

Chapter

1

Summer was gone.

Nights were getting chilly.

One morning Alida could see her breath as she sat up in the nest she shared with her sister. Terra was already awake.

Alida stretched and tucked her wings under her shawl.

Then she followed Terra downward through the branches of the massive old oak tree. The edges of the leaves were turning brown.

The sun was barely up, but the meadow was already full of faeries.

No one was flying. They were all walking, their wings hidden beneath cloaks and capes and shawls.

Every day Alida's mother made sure there were faeries perched high in the trees, watching the forest and listening for the sound of hoofbeats. No one knew when Lord Dunraven's guards might come looking for them again.

Near the middle of the meadow, Alida waved at her sister and Terra waved back.

Then they both hurried to begin their work. Today Alida would help weave sturdy floor mats from river grass.

There was a lot to do before winter closed in. The day before, she had helped her aunt Lily sort through all their blankets. Some had been torn on the journey home. Aunt Lily had taught her a simple mending magic. It had been hard at first, but Alida had practiced it until she could help repair the old blankets.

They would need many new blankets and warmer clothes before winter came. The weavers were doing everything they could to get their looms up and working.

Most of the faeries were headed toward a wide, tangled circle of berry bushes and sapling trees. Any human coming into the meadow would think the bushes were part of the forest. That was exactly what the faeries wanted them to think.

But they weren't.

Alida had searched for seedlings in the woods. Everyone had. They replanted them here, in huge, crooked circles.

A slender mulberry tree Alida had carried home was twice as tall already. The young blackberries, blueberries, wild pear trees, and woods' roses had all grown incredibly fast too.

Alida's mother said there was a thousand years worth of magic in the soil. Her sister Lily said it was even older than that.

Whatever it was, the uneven circle of trees and bushes was tall enough to hide the weavers' and cheese makers' houses the faeries had built—and their storage sheds.

They had planted a second circle of jumbled trees and bushes at the other end of the meadow. That one hid a pasture for their cows and goats.

Alida looked at the faeries around her. Almost no one was talking. No one was smiling or singing.

The faerie flutes and harps were packed away. No one dared to play music in the evenings now.

Everyone was worried. They were always ready to run.

Everyone knew exactly what to do.

If Lord Dunraven's guards came, the faeries would race to the tall oak tree on the edge of the clearing. They would stand close together so Alida's mother could use her new magic to make them invisible.

It had worked twice.

Both times, when the guards couldn't see anyone, they had left.

Alida sighed. Her mother had taught her the magic too, just in case. Every night before she went to sleep she recited the odd, ancient words. She practiced gathering her own magic and reciting the names of all the faeries, too.

Alida knew the guards would probably come again, sooner or later.

And when they did, it would be her fault. She was the one who had helped the humans. She was the one they had seen.

Walking to the creek to gather a stack of tall, strong grass, Alida made herself stop worrying long enough to concentrate on the new magic she was experimenting with. It wasn't big magic.

It was small magic—the safest kind.

First she used the usual cutting magic her father had taught her and watched a wide swath of the tough, wiry grass fall neatly on the ground.

Then she tried to mend it.

About half of the grass jerked upright and balanced on its stems, but then it fell over again.

She tried a second time, then a third.

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