

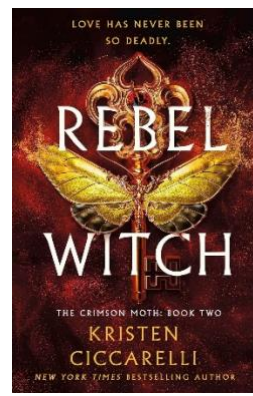
## Rebel Witch

By Kristen Ciccarelli

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Star Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Continuing in the thrilling sequel of the *Crimson Moth* duology, two months after the previous events, Rune forms an alliance with Prince Soren of Umbria for military forces against the New Republic for Cressida Roseblood to overthrow. However, Cressida captures Gideon, but Rune assists him to escape and return home as his hostage. Nonetheless, their plans go haywire after riding the *Arcadia* and facing serious consequences: betraying their close friends. In their reuniting love story entangling trap after trap, they fall into the final duel of death against Cressida.

I appreciated the focus towards the main characters' ways of manipulation and how they affect each other. On board the *Arcadia*, Gideon secretly tells of his planned betrayal to Rune in turning her in for execution. This complexion intrigued me along with other possible readers about the emotional resonance within the novel. Secondly, the extended world building created an intrusive experience to explore more about the protagonists' world. Third, the action-packed fighting and allure captivated mine and others' attention to discover how they overcome their captors and escape the threats they meet along the way.

On the other hand, there was too much focus toward the main characters that left the side characters underdeveloped or forgotten. At times, a few scenes felt rushed as the story only meant to last for two books. It may have done better if it spread out to a possible third book in order to give justice for the side characters involved, such as the guards on the *Arcadia* and Rune's friend and ally, Verity de Wilde. The plot, although cramped and condensed, still lived up to the title through its political aspects along with romantic and complex narratives all throughout.

Overall, the recommended age to read this is about 15 years old and up based on these discretions. This book has a similar rating as its prequel, *Heartless Hunter*, including what still appears to be "self-harm" for the female protagonist as she uses fresh blood to cast varied types of spells. Other mature themes such as mentions of sexual harassment, violence, and murder are topics the book does not shy away from. It does not describe in explicit or graphic details, yet it does involve subtle caution when it comes to the intense fights. Nonetheless, it can be a perfect gift for those who loved the prequel and wish for the epic ongoing tale between Rune and Gideon.

Recommended Titles:

**Powerless**, by Lauren Roberts

**Throne of Glass**, by Sarah J. Maas

**Truthwitch**, by Susan Dennard

**Six of Crows**, by Leigh Bardugo

**Magyk**, by Angie Sage