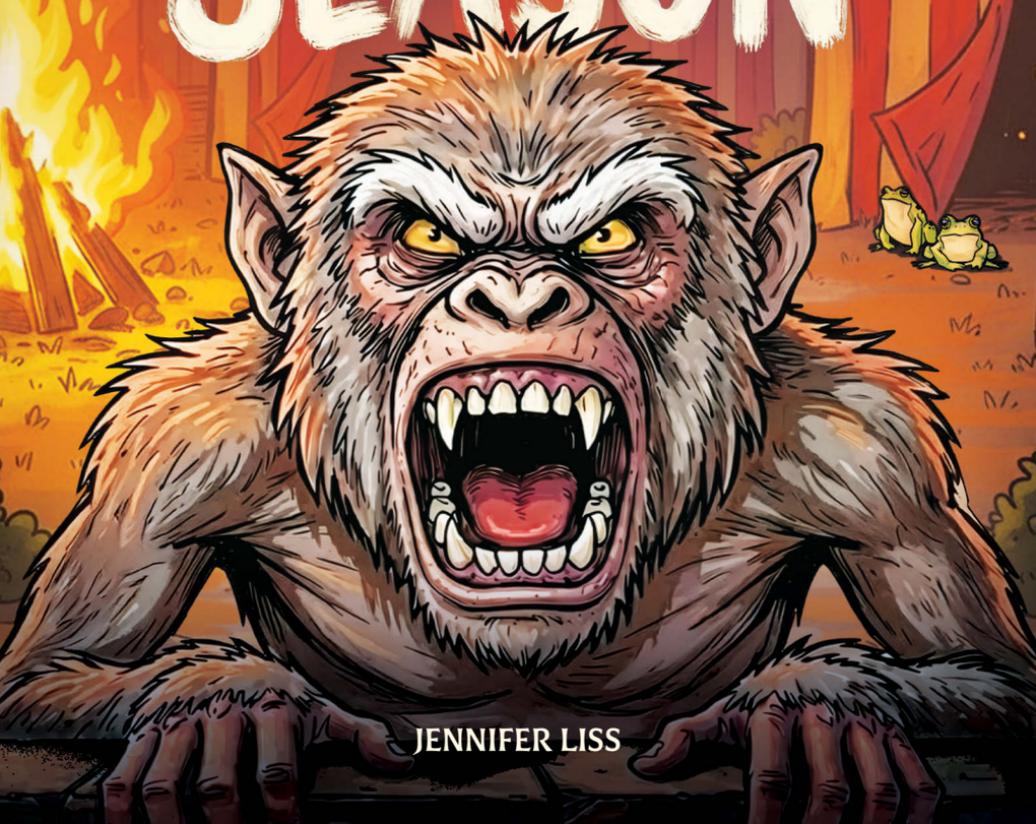


THE JOURNEY IS YOURS

BLUSHWOOD



THE SUMMER SEASON



JENNIFER LISS



TO BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY...

In the kingdom of East Blushwood, not everything is as it seems. Sure, there's a queen. People work in the villages. The seasons change. Winter is cold. Flowers bloom in spring. There are caves, hills, and vast meadows. Birds fly. But here, dragons soar across the sky. Witches make deals with ghosts. Goblins beg for meat. In this extraordinary place, trees are guardians of secrets, and purple-winged owls speak half-truths.

You are the Soothsayer, or Truth-Teller of East Blushwood. Queen Rozala relies on you to keep the kingdom safe. She sends you on missions whenever there are threats. Your razor-sharp senses and powerful visions help you along the way. Your parents, who died a long time ago, also had special gifts.

In a small cottage in the woods, you were raised by your grandfather. He is old, but he still has the spirit of his youth. You two laugh often and share stories. But you keep quiet about your assignments from the queen.

On your missions, answers are not always easy to find. Tough decisions need to be made. The truth may be painful to face. But when you fail, you try again. When you get stuck, you look at things in a new way.

Ready to begin your journey? Go to page 3.

► **Your journey begins.**

Drummers pound their drums. The thunderous sound is accompanied by the lively, playful notes of flutes, fiddles, harps, and horns. The big bonfire crackles as its flames stretch toward the sky.

A girl with curly red hair grabs your right hand. Her smile is wider than a canyon.

Then a boy with braided brown hair reaches for your left. “Come on!” He laughs.

Both children pull you into the dance, and you gladly join.

It is late at night, but the sun is just setting. This is the peak of summer in East Blushwood. Everyone is having a good time at Queen Rozala’s summer party. The energy is electric. You feel that anything and everything is possible.

This event is held in the meadow near the castle,

and it will last all night. It always does. People have traveled from near and far to be here.

The beat of the drum slows, followed by the other instruments. Then the music fades away.

People turn to a large stage as Queen Rozala steps onto it. She carries Syfer, her pet fox, in her arms. Silent but smiling, the queen looks around at the faces in the crowd.

Everyone waits in anticipation for the queen to speak.

► **At the summer celebration, you and the crowd await Queen Rozala's speech.**

“Welcome, all!” the queen says. “This is truly my favorite night of the year. We gather in peace and relish in the magic, light, and hope of the summer season. Many of you have traveled days to be here, and I thank you greatly for having done so. The East Blushwood community and I welcome you with open arms and joyful hearts.”

It's only for a split second, but you see the queen's smile falter. Something is wrong. There's tension below the surface. It's a crack in her façade.

You look around at the area. *What's wrong?* you wonder.

“It has been a great year!” Queen Rozala continues. “Everything is working harmoniously. The rivers flow after a healthy spring. We will have a bountiful harvest this fall. Now it's time to relax and celebrate . . . together.”



The crowd cheers. Queen Rozala leaves the stage.
Music begins again.

Someone else tries to pull you into a new dance.
But you step back and smile, politely declining.

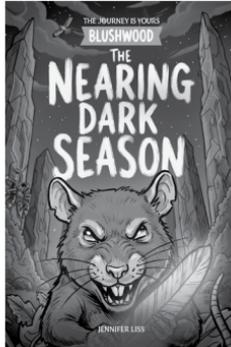
Then something brushes your leg. It's Syfer's
tail. The fox stares at you with her coal-black eyes.
The queen has sent Syfer to get you. Your help is
needed.

THE JOURNEY IS YOURS

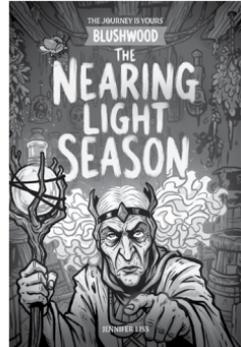
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THE JOURNEY IS YOURS

BLUSHWOOD



THE SUMMER SEASON

It's summer in the kingdom of East Blushwood, and people far and wide have gathered for Queen Rozala's seasonal celebration. Though she appears joyful at the party, the queen shares her worries with you. She is concerned that someone in the crowd is trying to threaten royal leadership and ruin the festivities. Your mission, Soothsayer, is to find out who has intentions to do so and to prevent them from putting their nefarious plans into action.

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