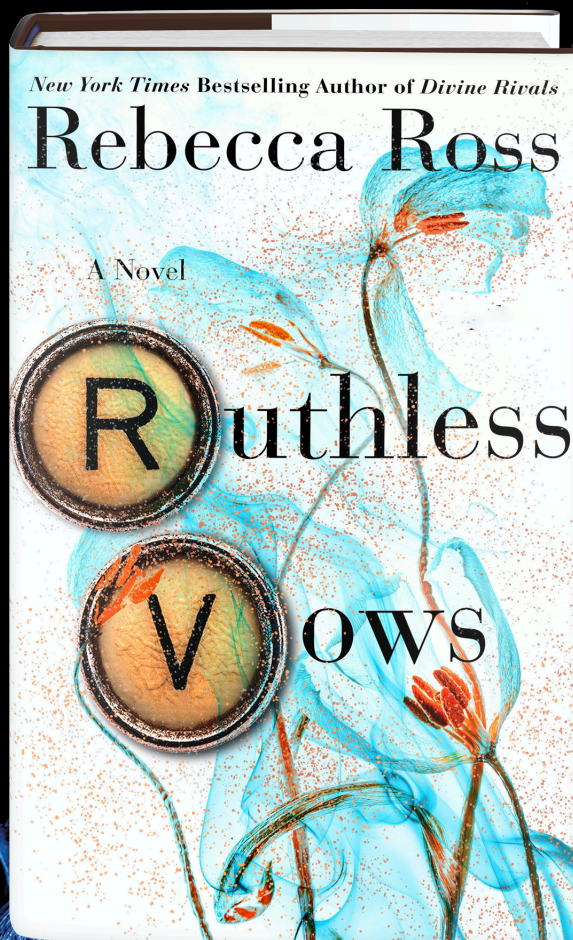
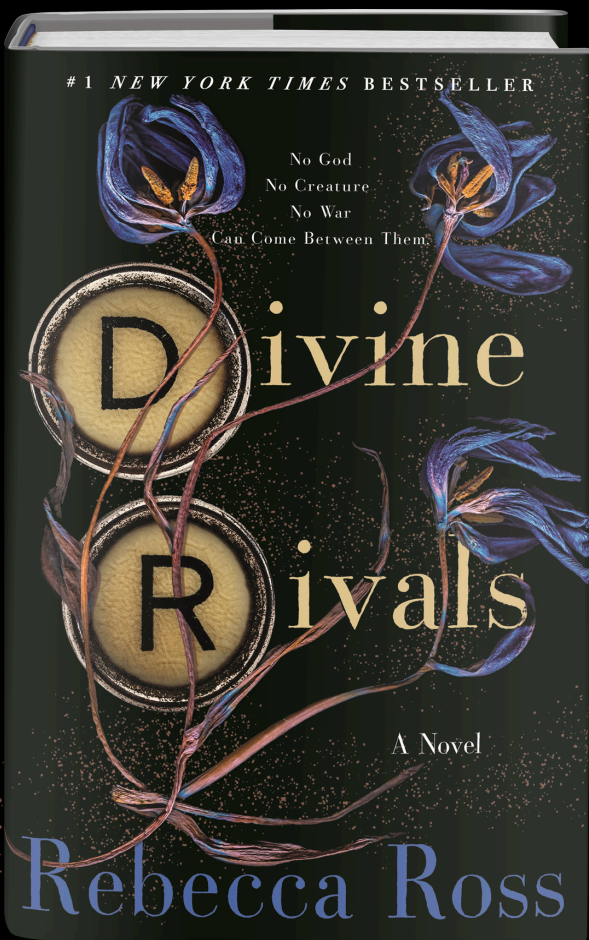


# Letters of Enchantment

*DIVINE RIVALS & RUTHLESS VOWS*

## BOOK PARTY KIT

This kit includes discussion guides, a printable Oath newspaper, menu & decor suggestions, playlists, and an activities guide.



## DEAR READER,

It's no secret that I often leave pieces of myself behind in my stories. Sometimes they are intentionally woven into the narrative, inspired by places that I've been to, emotions that I've felt, dreams that I've dreamt, experiences that have shaped me. But other times? It is a natural, seamless thing. I don't realize what I've left behind until the draft is done and I've taken some time away from it. Only when I read my words again with fresh eyes do I see those traces. It is a good reminder that to write is to breathe, and all of us have stories in our lungs.

I also believe that certain stories meet us at just the right moments, as authors and as readers, and *Divine Rivals* is no exception. I think back on the moment when I first found this book—or perhaps book found me: I vividly remember that it was a cold November night in 2020, and I had been struggling for nearly a year with writer's block. But when I saw Iris sitting on her bedroom floor, writing a letter to her missing brother with an enchanted typewriter, I was intrigued. I found Roman next, the boy who reads everything she writes. At first it's only a "tactical advantage" to him, since Iris and Roman are competing for the same columnist position at the newspaper where they both work. But all too soon, Roman is swept away by her words, and when Iris decides to go to the front to report on the war, it will forever change the trajectory of their lives.

Woven into this story is my nostalgia for newspapers, my love of typewriters and snail mail, and my penchant for the rivals-to-lovers trope. Found families and mythology and the childhood wonder of wardrobe doors. My adolescent obsession with *You've Got Mail* and the 1940s film *The Shop Around the Corner*. This story is also threaded with my thoughts on grief and loss and duty, as well as hope and bravery and sacrifice. I realize now that *Divine Rivals* is many things, but most of all, it is my own love letter to storytelling and words, and how both have been with me through the difficult moments of my life as well as the luminous ones. And what magic books are, truly: I wrote this story in quiet moments through a long winter, uncertain if it would ever be published, and now it has found its way into your hands.

I hope that you not only enjoy Iris and Roman's journey, but that their story feels like coming home. Happy reading!

All my best,

Rebecca R.

Rebecca Ross



PHOTO CREDIT: RACHEL G. WHITE

# DISCUSSION GUIDES

## Divine Rivals

1. How do Iris and Roman contrast and complement each other?
2. What role do myths play in the story? How does that knowledge and belief—or lack thereof—affect and influence the people in the city of Oath and the land of Cambria?
3. How does Enva and Dacre's myth reflect characteristics of the human realm? Or perhaps the human realm reflects the divine one?
4. Both Iris and Roman experience grief and loss, but they provide comfort, healing, and support to each other. Were there any passages in *Divine Rivals* that resonated with you when it comes to grief and loss?
5. Found family is an important theme in this story. Other than Iris and Roman, was there another character in *Divine Rivals* that you felt drawn or connected to?
6. The Alouette typewriters form a magical connection between Iris and Roman, which allows them to fall in love through words. If you had your own enchanted typewriter, who would you write a letter to?
7. Just for fun: do you prefer salty or sweet? Sunrises or sunsets? What is your favorite season?
8. What are some of your predictions for the sequel, *Ruthless Vows*?

## Ruthless Vows

1. In what ways has Iris changed and grown from the experiences she had in the first book? Similarly, how has Roman changed and grown?
2. What symmetry and parallels can you draw between *Divine Rivals* and *Ruthless Vows*? How do the two books mirror and complement each other?
3. Were you surprised by Roman's memory loss? Did you have theories as to how he would regain his memory? Likewise, were you surprised when Iris decided to break into the museum to steal the First Alouette?
4. How does Enva and Dacre's relationship provide a foil for Iris and Roman's?
5. While Dacre is actively involved with humankind, Enva prefers an indirect, often oblique approach to interacting with mortals. Did these approaches, as well as the shades of gray both divines possess, surprise you in *Ruthless Vows*?
6. Was there a particular relationship in this book, aside from Iris and Roman, that you felt deeply invested in? Attie and Tobias, Marisol and Keegan, Forest and Sarah?
7. There is an underlying motif of birds, flight, and wings woven throughout *Ruthless Vows*. How did this theme connect to certain characters or reflect their emotional arcs?
8. Was there a particular moment or line from this book that you loved or spoke to you the most?



# The Inkridden Tribune

THE  
VOICE  
— of —  
OATH

The Voice of Oath / Vol. CXV Edition 157 / OATH,

ENVA'S DAY, 4th AVRIL, 1917 / 5 Coppers

## THE UNEXPECTED FACE OF WAR

### OBSERVATIONS FROM THE WAR FRONT

by *Inkridden Iris*

AVALON BLUFF, WESTERN BOROUGH OF CAMBRIA—A war with the gods is not what you expect it to be. You expect what history tells you of mortal affairs, which are battles that rage for days and nights, sieges, heavy casualties, food rations, ruthless tactics and generals, secret missions that lead to surprising success, and a white flag of surrender. You expect numbers and heavily guarded maps and a sea of uniforms.

But it's also a town that must lock itself up during the night, to hide its light from stalking hounds. A town that must be vigilant even more so during the day, prepared for earth-shattering consequences provoked by something as gentle and ordinary as walking the street you grew up on.

It's a school turned infirmary, filled with wounded



bodies and souls, and yet they are people so full of bravery and hope. It makes you hold a mirror to your own self when you're alone—to find and name what lurks within you: relief, shame, determination, dread, and why such things are there in your bones, when you've yet to give yourself up to something so

selfless.

It's wondering what tomorrow will bring. What the next hour will bring. What the next minute will bring. Time suddenly feels sharper than a knife grazing your skin, capable of cutting you at any moment.

*continued on page 3*

## GOULD'S



## CAFE

Where the tea never grows cold, and the scones are always warm

Come try our new blend of tea. Complimentary jam and biscuits served at three o'clock every afternoon.

Find us on Broad Street just shy of the museum.

### FIRE IN AN ENCHANTED HOME TAKES HOURS TO EXTINGUISH

by *Rainy W. Doone*



A townhouse on Roswellia Street caught fire late Alva's Day, around eleven at night. The fire brigade spent hours extinguishing the flames, believing the family inside to have perished. But when the fire was at last tamed, the brigade was amazed to find the father and his two sons hale and unscathed within. While only a few rooms were charred, the family plans to move to a mundane and "blessedly predictable" town house at once. Investigation as to how the fire began is still underway.

### OATH'S PRESTIGIOUS ORCHESTRA CONTINUES TO POSTPONE ANNUAL SPRING PERFORMANCE

by *Dany T. Treanne*

Conductor Isla Dewitt has made the announcement following Chancellor Verlice's steady ban on stringed instruments. "This orchestra is a family," said DeWitt in a rare interview outside the opera house this past Mir's Day. "And we have made the collective decision to postpone rather than engage in music with missing pieces. While we must comply with the chancellor's verdict, that is not to say that we respect it or think it is necessary. Music is part of our history, our healing, our future. To ban it is a fearful thing, indeed, especially when the days have been stained by war."

There is still no end in sight for the ban on stringed instruments, which include harps, violins, violas, cellos, and bass.



# R.R. NOTICE



Attention passengers! Most routes to the Western and Southern Boroughs have been suspended or redirected due to the western conflict. We apologize for any inconvenience but know it is to keep you safe. Please see updated schedules below:

Cars leave Oath for Granthall, Lincolnshire, and Putnam at 8 am sharp every odd numbered day.

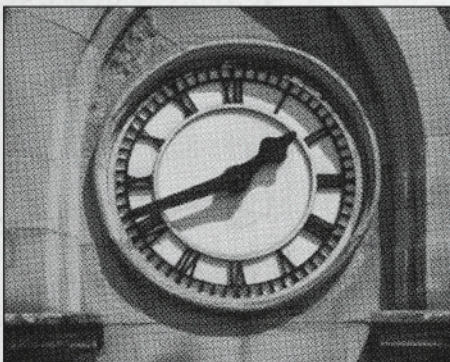
Cars leave for Hartford, Wynne, Shorefall, and Hawk Shire at 10 am every even numbered day.

Cars leave for Avalon Bluff\* and Halethorpe\* every sixth day.

\*The Kitt Railroad is not responsible for any loss of life or injury for those who choose to travel to destinations that are within the active war zone.

## SHOULD OATH PREPARE FOR A CURFEW?

*Opinion Column  
by Jackson N. North*



As news of the war continues to trickle across Cambria's rolling hills, a few sharp-eyed denizens of Oath are now wondering, "Should we prepare for a city-wide, government-enforced curfew?" While some believe the war will never reach our city, I believe it is something we should brace ourselves for.

*Continued on page 3*

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



Mr. and Mrs. Theodore S. Bale are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Miss Thelma L. Bale, to Mr. Andrew F. Conner, the son of Mr. and Mr. Frank O. Conner. The nuptials will take place on the first Mir's Day of the month of Jullian, in Alva's Cathedral.



Mrs. and Mrs. Shauna A. Parham are pleased to announce the birth of their twin daughters this past Luz's Day. The girls arrived with a lively cry just after midnight, weighing 6 lbs and 5 lbs 3 oz respectively. They are thriving and healthy. Meals and cloth diapers for the family are welcome and can be provided via Alva's Charity.



Miss Lola Z. McCallister is pleased to announce the grand opening of her atelier, where she is creating the latest smart fashion. The workshop is now taking custom orders every Enva's Day of the month and can be found on the corner of Broad and Pax.

## Advertise your business here!

Excellent rates at *The Inkridden Tribune* to advertise your business.  
For inquiries, contact:



*The Inkridden Tribune*

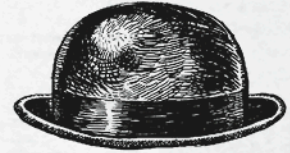
## A GENTLE REMINDER FROM your chancellor:

\*NO STRINGED INSTRUMENTS are allowed in Oath and all of Eastern Borough. This includes but is not limited to: having one in your possession and playing one in private or in the open. If you know of someone who is breaking this law, please do not remain silent but report them to your nearest authority station. This is for the good of all.

\*PLEASE DO NOT HOARD FOOD OR MEDICINE. There is no need as the conflict is kilometers away.

\*BE AWARE OF PROPAGANDA AND MISINFORMATION. Do not believe everything you hear or read about the war. If you harbor any doubts, please visit the chancellor's office.

## Hats! Furs! Capes! etc...



Available now for half price at  
Richard's & Sons.  
Come sport the latest style in  
trench coats, victorines,  
and bowler hats.

## NOTICE:

### PHOTOGRAPHER FOR HIRE.

**Ambrotypes and Daguerreotypes.**

Write to  
W. L. Owen at  
1504 E. Whistler Street  
for further inquiries.



## WORD OF THE DAY:

Mellifluous

1: having a smooth rich flavor

2: filled with something that sweetens

## TODAY'S MOON PHASE

Waxing Crescent



# MENU SUGGESTIONS

No party is complete without some snacks and a themed drink! Use our menu suggestions below to create the best food & drink pairings to celebrate the Letters of Enchantment duology.

## SNACKS:

- Blueberry scones & assorted pastries
- Tea sandwiches
- Roman's pickles
- Attie's sugar biscuits (cookies)

## DRINKS:

- Black tea (find one with lavender notes!)
- Marisol's hot cocoa

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# SERIES PLAYLIST

Each of these songs were selected by author Rebecca Ross, who said they were influential in the writing of the Letters of Enchantment duology. Use these songs as a starting point, but feel free to add the songs you think describe Iris, Roman, and the rest of the characters.

“Briony” by Dario Marianelli

“The Imitation Game” by Alexandre Desplat

“Sixteen Hundred Men” by Thomas Newman

“Supermarine” by Hans Zimmer

“Work Song” by Hozier

“A Day Without Rain” by Enya

“The Prince that was Promised” by Ramin Djawdi

“Like a Dog Chasing Cars” by Hans Zimmer and  
James Newton Howard

“The Return” by CLANN

“The Great War” by Taylor Swift

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# DECOR SUGGESTIONS

Embrace the vintage and historic feel of the Letters of Enchantment duology by decorating your party with objects and fabrics that feel apt to the story. We recommend heading to your favorite thrift store to find some of these pieces to help decorate your space.

- Typewriters
- Newspapers (new or vintage)
- Vintage stamps, letters, and envelopes
- Iris flowers or other dried flowers
- Vintage coffee cups and tea sets
- Tea candles

# ACTIVITIES GUIDE

In addition to discussing the Letters of Enchantment duology, check out these activities to have the most fun at your party! Pick a few (or do them all!) for an extra fun day that Iris & Roman would be proud of.

## DRESS UP AS YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTER

Iris, Roman, Marisol, Enva or Forest—put on your best outfit to represent the character you admire the most. Turn it into a competition and get a prize for the best-dressed guest.

## WRITE LETTERS

Letters are a significant part of the story, so pick up your pen and paper and get to writing a letter to your friends and loved ones. Take it further by mailing them out with cute vintage stamps!

## DECORATE BOOKMARKS

Grab paper, supplies, and your favorite heart-wrenching quotes from the series to create bookmarks! Keep it simple with vintage paper and markers, or take it up a notch with stickers, ink with stamps, or fabrics to make it extra special.

## MAKE A FLOWER CROWN

After that scene in *Divine Rivals* (if you know, you know), it's only apt to make your very own flower crown! Head to the craft store and pick up wire and fake flowers to create the most beautiful flower crown to wear for the rest of the party.

## CREATE YOUR OWN TEA BLEND

Any Letters of Enchantment party needs to have tea, but while you're sipping on a freshly brewed pot, create your own blend that you can take home! Tailor the flavors to your liking using dried leaves and other ingredients.