

Brilliance of the Moon (Tales of the Otori, Book 3)

By Lian Hearn

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In the third volume of the phenomenal series that began with the best-selling ACROSS THE NIGHTINGALE FLOOR and then GRASS FOR HIS PILLOW, the teenage lovers, Takeo and Kaede, are now married. But their destinies are determined by forces beyond their control. Takeo leads an army into battle, and Kaede, far from his protection, is treacherously betrayed. Their love will survive until death -- which, in the savage, beautiful world of the Otori, is only ever a lightning sword-stroke away. 'Lian Hearn is creating an imaginary world every bit as absorbing as Middle Earth and Hogwarts ...This is the same mysterious oriental landscape that beguiled Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon audiences' Guardian 'Quite simply the best story of magic, love, sex, revenge and suspense since Philip Pullman.' Independent on Sunday

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Lian Hearn's third installment in the Tales of the Otori series *Brilliance of the Moon* brings a mystical and violent conclusion to the saga of Takeo Otori as he fulfills his destiny to reclaim the Otori lands. At the climax of *Grass for his Pillow*, Takeo's passion for his beloved Kaede was finally realized with their secret and forbidden wedding. As spring approaches, Takeo and Kaede prepare for war and embark on a campaign to reclaim their respective realms. But just when victory seems certain, Hearn characteristically uproots her characters with unseen treachery and the two lovers are again separated. Takeo must summon courage from his conflicted heritage as he marches towards his destiny. The fates of other Otori characters are also determined in a succinct and magical finale.

This third chapter in the Otori saga lives up its predecessors. Hearn's mythical ancient Japan is again brought to storybook life. Although the novel's climax comes suddenly and almost unexpectedly, the afterword hints at another tale to be told by the heirs of Kaede and Takeo's legendary rise. --*Jeremy Pugh*

From Publishers Weekly
Set in an imaginary medieval Japan, the pseudonymous Hearn's third elegant installment in her epic fantasy (after 2002's *Across the Nightingale Floor* and 2003's *Grass for His Pillow*) is a fragrant blend of romance and martial-arts action. Her warrior hero, Takeo Otori, feels destined to fulfill the potent prophecy of a holy woman: "Your lands will stretch from sea to sea, but peace comes at the price of bloodshed. Five battles will buy you peace, four to win and one to lose." Intrigue, heartaches and battles ensue as Takeo, of mixed blood and conflicting loyalties (to the pseudo-Christian Hidden, the noble Otori clan and the dangerous, supernaturally gifted Tribe), seeks to unite the Three Countries. Desperately in love with Kaede Shirakawa, whom he secretly wed at the end of *Grass for His Pillow*, Takeo must now assist her in reclaiming her lands of Maruyama while balancing his own need to avenge the deaths of his blood father and his adoptive father, Lord Shigeru. The fates of such characters as Kaede's lover, Dr. Ishida, and her nemesis, Lord Fujiwara, who's determined to possess her, provide some cool aftershocks, while the afterword adds another—that a book four may follow. FYI: Hearn is the pseudonym of Australian children's book author Gillian Rubinstein.
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From School Library Journal
Adult/High School–Kaede and Takeo find themselves in danger after their hasty marriage. Lord Fujiwara is furious that Kaede chose to marry another man when he considered them betrothed, and the warlord Arai considers Takeo presumptuous. The Tribe is split over the decision to kill Takeo. The young lovers must find allies in unexpected places to claim the domains that are rightfully theirs. In the end, they are both saved by a timely earthquake. This is a satisfactory conclusion to the story line, although the afterword virtually promises a sequel. Hearn's writing is evocative and subtle. A great deal of the excitement and intrigue of the first book is missing, but readers who have stuck with Takeo and Kaede will want to continue following their adventures.–*Susan Salpini, TASIS–The American School in England*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Katie Doll:

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Janice Oconnell:

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