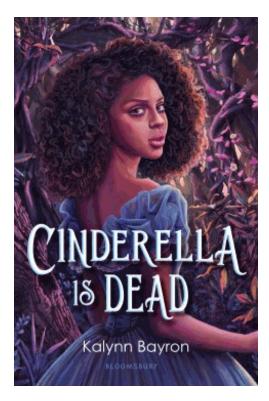


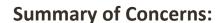
CINDERELLA IS DEAD



Young Adult

By Kalynn Bayron

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This book contains references to sexuality and sexual activities.





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251	Constance turns her back to me and slips her arms out of her tunic, pulling it up over her head and tossing it to the ground. I am unable to take my eyes off her. She removes her trousers and tosses them aside. As she pivots toward me, I have to make a concerted effort to keep my mouth from falling open. A blanket of freckles covers her chest and shoulders and trickles down on to her arms like a sprinkling of stardust. Her hair, a mass of red, luminescent curls frames her face like a halo. She doesn't look away or try to cover herself. A wave of yearning threatens to consume me. With a smirk, she wades in until the water rests just below her shoulders.
255	I unbutton my vest and set it aside. Amina turns completely away, but Constance raises her eyes to the sky. I slip out of my tunic and trousers and wade into the pool. I brace for the chill of the water, but it's like stepping into a warm bath. Constance levels her eyes at me, and something shifts in her. Her mouth opens and then closes, like she wants to speak but can't. And while she looks me over, taking in every inch of me, her gaze lingers longest on my eyes.
286	My heart races. I don't know what to say or do. All I know is that I want to be close to her. I lean in and she reaches up, running her fingers down the side of my neck, tracing my collarbone, My stomach twists into a knot. Before I have a chance to overthink it, I press my lips to hers. Her hands move to my neck and face. A surge of warmth rushes over me as she presses herself against me. There is an urgency in her kiss, like she's trying to prove to me how much she cares, and I yield to her, unconditionally. The fire in me that has smoldered for her bursts to life in a way I never knew was possible. I'm lost in the tide of her breathing, the sweet smell of her skin, the push and pull of our bodies against each other. Each touch sends a shiver straight through me. In this moment, nothing else matters, only the surrender to the feelings we share.
296	She puts her opposite hand on the small of my back and leans close to my ear. I think she'll speak some other bit of useful information, but instead she lets her lips brush against the side of my neck.
235	She runs her hand over the small of my back as she gets up. A warm shudder courses through me. I watch her as she walks toward the front of the cottage. The feeling stays with me in the chilly nighttime air.
	She reaches down and runs her fingers over the back of my hand. For a moment I think she might turn her face up and press her lips against mine, and while I want that more than anything, I can't bring myself to slip my hand under her chin and bring her mouth closer. My feelings for Constance grow with each passing second, but my feelings for Erin hang heavy on my heart.
147	Her knee presses into mine on purpose. Testing her boundaries a bit. I don't move away.
149	Her body backlit by the flames, is like a vision. She is tall and strong. She's got her sleeves pushed up; a wide, jagged scar runs over the muscles of her upper arm. They flex as she stokes the flames. I imagine how they might feel wrapped around me, and I wonder if she can tell how enthralled I am with her.