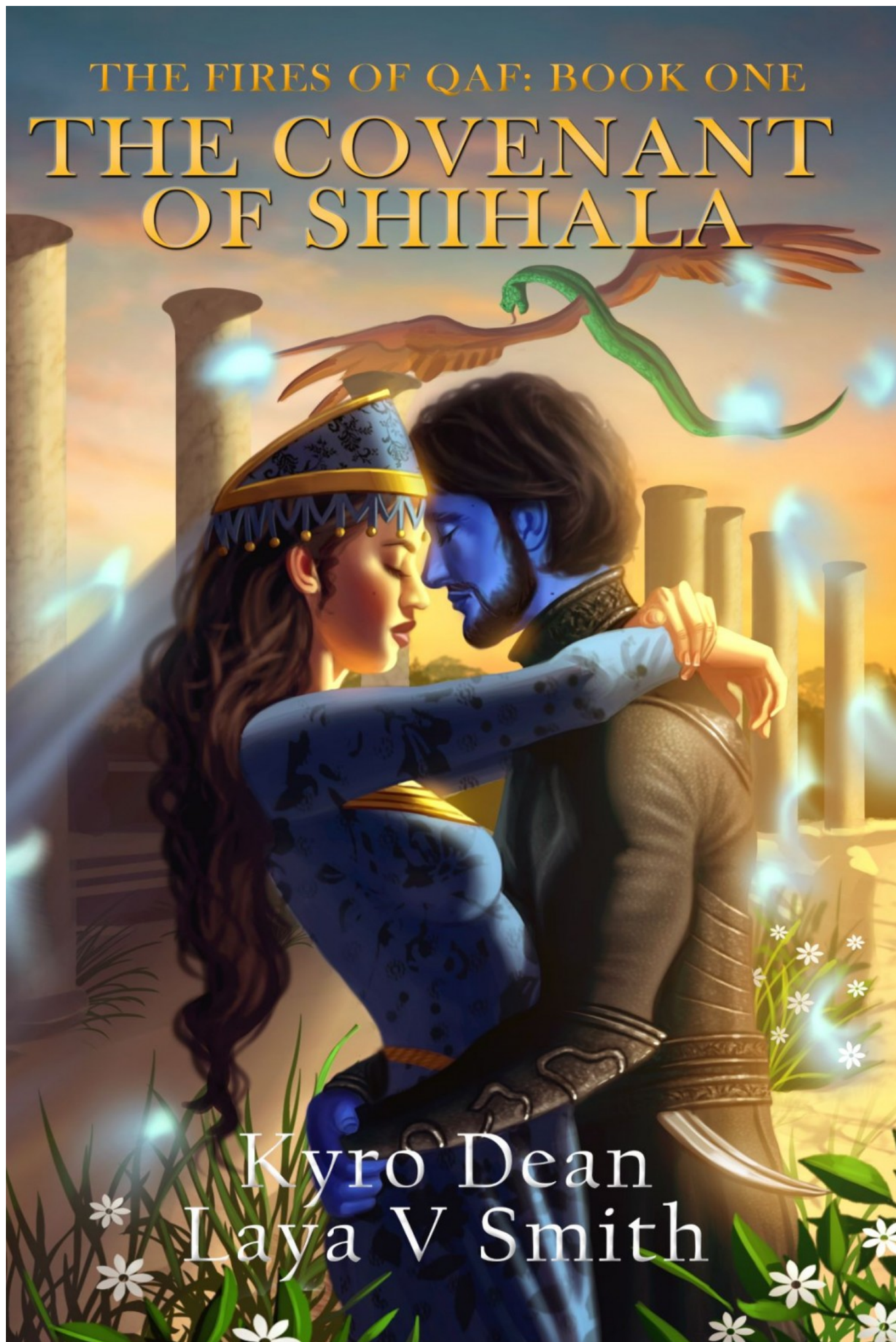


Prolific co-writers, Laya V. Smith and Kyro Dean, announce epic fantasy romance filled with magic, fire, and djinn

Laya V. Smith and Kyro Dean have announced their first co-written epic fantasy romance novel, *The Covenant of Shihala*. Published by Eight Moons Publishing, this new novel became available worldwide on March 29, 2022, in printed and eBook formats.



Lehi, Utah Mar 29, 2022 ([IssueWire.com](http://www.IssueWire.com)) - And with the wisps come evil.

For ten years, street musician Ayelet has been on the run from the faceless slave master who tormented her childhood. Every time she sees a wisp or the jewel-toned face of a djinn lurking in the shadows, she knows her tormentor is close and it is time to move on. Nobody else can see the wisps or the nightkeepers, so Ayelet must trust only in herself and her beloved lyre. Secretly, she longs for a home, but she knows anyone she gets close to will share in her terrible fate when the Faceless Man inevitably finds her.

Jahmil Amir, the djinn prince, and heir to the throne of Shihala have lost his army and with it his hope. The fierce drakonte riders are his only chance of retaking his fallen lands and avoiding an arranged marriage to the despicable queen of a neighboring kingdom. The desire for revenge has blackened his heart and stolen his sense of humor. Only when he hears music does Jahmil allow himself to dream of peace and hope for a new home.

When the prophecy of a traitor sends Jahmil into the human world in search of his lost cavalry, he finds Ayelet playing her lyre in the streets. She quickly plucks her way into his heart, while his diamond eyes tempt her with the dream of a real home. But the eight moons of Qaf harbor a different fate. A dark plan is unfolding that will open a rift between the human and djinn lands and unleash a power unknown in either world. To stop it, Ayelet must realize her tortured existence has forged her into an instrument of cataclysmic destruction. Meanwhile, Jahmil must let go of his thirst for vengeance and face the truth that love may be the only thing strong enough to save both of their worlds.

Praise for *The Covenant of Shihala*:

“The first of a series of books that dance between the land of Ard, the world of humans in a vaguely medieval Ottoman Empire, and that of Qaf, or the home of djinn and their Nine Kingdoms, with this novel Dean and Smith have created a lush series of landscapes for their characters to play in. Obviously inspired by the mythology of the modern-day Middle East, but with a swagger and finesse that belongs solely to its authors, *The Covenant of Shihala* is at once breakneck in pace and breathtaking in prose and an exquisite opener to what promises to be a stunning new fantasy series.”

–Rosie Amber’s Review Team: **Jennifer deBie**

“Ah, to live a life straddling the worlds of Earth and Qaf! Adventure, magic, and romance abound for the adorable nomad-troubadour Ayelet and the brooding prince Jahmil. Rarely in life does one encounter both primeval forces and a personal threat intent on dominating two worlds. But for Ayelet and Jahmil, such cataclysmic threats are but the foundation upon which a timeless love (and, perhaps, a timeless series!) are built.

Beyond the tale of these great lovers, the chroniclers of Aylet and Jahmil's journey lend a realism,

comedy, and expanse of worldbuilding that cannot be overlooked. The Covenant of Shihala is lovely, breathtaking, and uproarious in equal parts.”

–Goodreads Review: **Benst Llendran Grumblore**

Series Information:

The Covenant of Shihala is the first epic novel of *The Fires of Qaf* series which is set in the mid-1400s and based loosely on the Ottoman Empire. The entire series focuses on the two fantasy worlds of Qaf and Ard, and the intermingling of djinn and humans, whose dangerous relationships become even more so when fires of color, magic, and passion burn—both inside and out.

Utilizing sensitive readers and in depth research, they have filled out their fantasy worlds of Qaf and Ard using general traditions across the middle eastern world, including Arabic and Islamic mythology, particularly legends of djinn and other creatures, to build a tactile and fully fleshed out escape.

About the authors:

Laya V. Smith is the author of the thriller “The Lumbermill”, winner of the 2021 Maxy Award for Best Thriller. With degrees in history and linguistics from the University of Utah, she has worked as a teacher, textbook writer, and audiobook narrator. In her writing, she focuses on research and historical accuracy, while never sacrificing plot or characters.

Kyro Dean’s works live in the shadows of ghost-publishing and have received high praise and glowing reviews. Her steampunk romance, *The Baron’s Ghost*, is available on Kindle Vella. She also runs the Vanilla Grass Writing Resource blog to help writers improve their craft.

Laya and Kryo are available for interviews in all formats.

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