A dark, atmospheric forest scene at night. The trees are tall and thin, their silhouettes against a deep blue and black sky. In the foreground, a young girl with long hair and a young boy are sitting on the ground, looking towards a bright, glowing light source on the forest floor. The ground is covered in fallen leaves and twigs. Numerous small, white, spark-like particles are falling from the sky, creating a magical, ethereal atmosphere.

THE CIRCLE

BOOK ONE OF THE SIDHE

CINDY CIPRIANO



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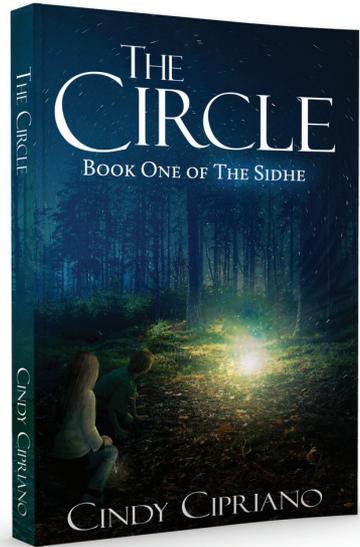
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THE CIRCLE: BOOK ONE OF THE SIDHE

Calum Ranson is sure of three things: his cousin Finley is alive, Calum will find him, and no one knows Calum and his family are Sidhe. No one until Laurel shows up at his mother's bookstore wearing a dark clan's mark.

When Calum learns the details surrounding the disappearance of Laurel's brother, he suspects the evil Hobayeth clan. Calum and Laurel work together in the Realm of Man and the Otherworld to rescue her brother—revealing a connection between Calum and Laurel that may cost Finley his life.



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“*The Circle* is full of magic and mystery. Readers will be engrossed in faerie realms, charming characters, and a state of wonder and imagination. *The Circle* is for those who delight in reading fantasy and exploring mystical worlds.

—Kathleen Fox, *LibraryGames.com*

***The Circle* is the first in a seven-book series.
For more information, visit www.thesidheseries.com**

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THE CIRCLE

An Excerpt

Calum looked at Lauren, trying to measure her sincerity. “Aren’t you a little big for fairy tales?”

“Can you please just tell me if you have any books like that or not? If I don’t hurry up and get over to that realtor’s office, my mom’s gonna freak.”

“Sorry. Yeah. They’re over here.” He showed Lauren the Nature and Folklore section, and tried to smooth things over. “I guess your mom doesn’t like you reading about fairies.”

“She doesn’t believe they exist, but I know they do.”

Calum stared at her hard. She didn’t seem to notice. He watched her hand move to her neck. A gray stone with an ill-formed cross hung from a long silver chain. She held onto it as she scanned the titles on the stack, the fingertips of her free hand gliding over the spine of each book.

“I’ll try this one,” said Lauren. She pulled *An Encyclopedia Of Fairies And Other Natural Oddities* from the stack. “I’d better pay for it now.” She carried the book to the cash register where Calum scanned the book’s barcode.

“That’s seventeen dollars and twenty-five cents,” he said.

Lauren laid down a handful of money. “I have change.” She reached into her pocket and pulled out a quarter. There was a spark and a soft pop as Calum took the coin from her.

“Ouch!” he said, quickly withdrawing his hand.

“It must be static electricity,” said Lauren. She tucked the book inside her tote bag along with one of the lavender flyers.

“Yeah, I guess,” said Calum. *Static electricity? In the summer?*

The shop bell chimed. Andrea Werner was back. “Sorry, kiddo. Your dad wants both of us to look at a house.”

“Now?” asked Laurel. “But I didn’t get my books yet, and I only have a few weeks to read them before summer’s over.”

“We’ll have to get them later.” Andrea looked around the shop for Kenzie. “Would you please thank your mom for me?”

“Yes ma’am,” said Calum. “Do you want me to put the books on hold?”

“No thanks,” said Andrea, hurriedly. “We’re staying two doors down at the Whitney Hotel. We’ll come back tomorrow.”

Calum drummed his fingers on the desk as he watched them leave the store. He wanted to know more about Laurel, and her interest in faeries. Or maybe he just wanted to know more about *her*. Calum wondered what Laurel thought about him, although he didn’t know why it should matter. He hid between the stacks, quietly following them through the bookstore, listening to their conversation.

“Well?” asked Andrea, as they approached the door.

“He seems nice,” said Laurel, in a hushed whisper. “Not at all weird like John Phillip said. And, he doesn’t seem to mind that Dad’s going to be the assistant principal. Maybe I could be friends with a boy.”

“Imagine that,” said her mother as they closed the door.

“Imagine that,” said Calum. He watched through the window as a car rolled to a stop in front of the bookstore.

“Imagine what?” asked Kenzie, stepping from behind a nearby stack.

Calum jumped at the sound of her voice, knocking several books to the floor. “Geez Mom, don’t sneak up on me.”

“Especially when you’re sneaking up on someone else, right?” A wave of Kenzie’s hand returned the fallen books to the shelf. “You’re right to be curious, though. I’m sure you saw it hanging around her neck. I wonder how that girl got a token from one of the darkest of faerie clans.” Kenzie squinted as she watched Laurel climb into the backseat of the Stanton Realtor car.

“I don’t think she knows what it is,” said Calum.

“Either way we’d better keep an eye on her.”

My summer just got a lot more interesting, thought Calum.

THE AUTHOR
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Cindy Cipriano lives in North Carolina and has taught middle school science since 2001. She was named a North Carolina Outstanding Science Teacher in 2009 by the North Carolina Science Teachers Association. In 2012, Cindy received the Burroughs Welcome Fund PRISM award. Cindy has a M.Ed. and is a National Board Certified Teacher. She is a North Carolina Certified Environmental Educator.

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