



# MICAH's MAGICK

*A Free Read*

NATIONAL BESTSELLING AUTHOR

ANYA BAST

## MITCH'S MAGICK

MICAH'S MAGICK by Anya Bast  
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### **Micah's Magick, by Anya Bast**

*Free follow-up story for the Elemental Witches series.*

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*Dear Reader,*

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*Anya Bast*

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Emily Randolph tripped over the threshold and caught herself on the doorframe just in time. She took a deep breath, centering herself before entering Micah's lair. Wow, that would have been embarrassing.

She needn't have been worried. Micah was oblivious—as always—to anything but the spell pot in front of him. As she entered the room, straightening the hem of her sweater, he pinched some dry smelling demon herb from a bowl beside him and dropped it in the pot. Immediately, it increased boiling, slopping over onto the burner of the stove and making snapping and sizzling noises.

"Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble," he chanted, then threw a grin over his shoulder at her.

Ah, so he was aware that she'd entered the room. Unfortunately, where she was concerned, that's probably all he was conscious of.

She cleared her throat. "Guinea pig reporting for duty." She glanced around at the mess of the work room—dried plants and vials of liquid stood open everywhere on the tables lining edges of the room. Water ran in a trickle in the sink. She went over and turned it off, knowing Micah was too preoccupied to notice. "Uh, do I need to be worried today?" She finished, eyeing the steaming potion.

He turned to her, pushing a hand through his bushy, unkempt brown hair. He was so gorgeous that every time she looked at him, her heart did a little flip in her chest. She knew she wasn't the only woman in the coven who felt that way, but Micah never seemed to notice. He had no idea he was so attractive and that only made him even more attractive.

He glanced at the pot. "I'm trying a batch of plants I got from Eudae last week. I'm working out a new spell to help Jack and Mira keep Eva's air magick under control while she's little."

Eva was an air witch of exceptional ability, like her mother. Normally witches didn't develop their powers until adolescence, but Eva was already using air to move objects around. Since she was still a toddler, this was of great concern to her parents who were having more than their share of sleepless nights controlling the little one's whims.

She dropped her purse on the floor near one of the cluttered work tables. "How will it do that?"

A look of sheer joy enveloped his face. This is what Micah loved most—research and development. Unfortunately, his passion for magickal R&D left little room in his life for anything else. "It acts like an alarm. Every time little Eva accesses her seat, Jack

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and Mira are notified. It gives them a head start on preventing or correcting any damage she might do."

It would be a goddess-send for Jack and Mira. Emily knew how exhausted they were.

She stepped up to the pot and gave it an experimental sniff. "But...doesn't this spell require an earth witch to charm Eva? Are you sure it's safe to charm a toddler?"

He put a hand on the small of her back and came to stand beside her. Emily went stiff at the unexpected thrill of having his hand on her and lost her breath for a moment. "Yes. I've been very careful with this one and have consulted often with scholar demons in Eudae about the ingredients. Having a permanent doorway open between the worlds and using Claire as an ambassador has totally exploded our ability to create earth charms." He couldn't keep the excitement from his voice. "It should be totally safe."

"So I need to take in this spell, make sure it works, and then charm Eva?"

"Eva, Jack, Mira and any other caregiver they name."

"Okay, I trust you. Sounds like a plan."

"It's almost ready. Just one more ingredient, we'll let it boil down and it's all yours." He reached for a plastic jar filled with crushed multi-hued petals of some sort.

She reached for it too. "Here, let me get it."

Their hands collided. She snatched hers away, flustered. "I'm sorry."

He grinned her at her and grabbed the jar. "No problem."

She swallowed hard, watching him add the final ingredient to a spell he'd never be able to use. It was hard to imagine what he'd gone through. She wasn't sure she'd be able to do it, losing his magick the way he had. She'd been in Gribben a couple times and the sensation of having her power eradicated, even for a short period of time, was nearly unbearable.

"Micah? Uhm, did it hurt? You know, when it happened."

A dark look flickered over his face, gone in a heartbeat. She regretted asking immediately after she'd done it, didn't even know why she had. She just wanted to know Micah better, every aspect of him.

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She took a step back and held up a hand. "Sorry. Forget I asked. That was rude—"  
" He grabbed her hand, arresting the breath it would take to finish her sentence.

"It's all right." He gave a warm smile. "Really. And, yeah, it hurt at first. But worse than the pain was the emptiness. The loss of my magick was like losing one of senses, but more than that. Like..." Taking a deep breath, he searched for the correct phrasing. "Like losing someone you love. I'm still grieving it and I'll never get over it. It will miss that part of myself every day of my life, but eventually you learn to cope and move on, sort of integrating the loss into it. That's what it's like."

"You seem to be doing well."

"I still have my work, my life. I still have all my family and friends. That's what's most important. And I have you to test my spells." He cast a disarming grin her way. "Considering that, life's pretty fucking good." He peered into the pot and sniffed. "A few more minutes and it will be ready."

She sniffed too and almost gagged. But almost all earth charms were that way, made from plants, herbs and other various ingredients found in nature. No eye of toad or lizard's tongue. Still, the brews concocted were pretty disgusting sometimes. Emily was great at storing charms. To help her with it, she had a tattoo of a rose vine snaking its way up her back and she'd also allowed her hair to grow long and thick. You didn't often find an earth without either tats or long hair, normally they had both—the better to store power.

Just then footsteps echoed down the corridor beyond the doorway and Adam came to a skidding halt at the threshold. "We've got trouble."

Micah turned. "Trouble? What trouble? We haven't had trouble since Rue carried Stefan's sorry ass to Eudae."

"That's just it," said Adam, out of breath. "Stefan's escaped."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Escaped." Micah stared at Adam for a moment. "But his magick's been deep sixed. It's not like he can hurt anyone." Once the words had left his mouth he realized how stupid they were. Stefan might not have his power anymore, but that didn't mean he was powerless. Not by a long shot. His jaw locked. "Okay, then let's find him."

Adam nodded. "That's why I'm here. Apart from Claire, you're the one witch most familiar with Eudae. The search party is you, me and Claire."

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Micah looked at Emily. "And Emily. That is, if she's willing to come."

She beamed. "I'd never turn down a chance to hunt down Stefan Faucheux."

"Good, because you're storing all my spells. You're like my walking power base."

Her smile faltered and some of the light left her eyes. He had a split second to wonder why before Adam was pulling them both out the room. He barely had time to turn off the stove. The alarm spell for Eva would have to wait.

Under terse orders from Thomas Monahan, the four of them had enough time to change into the proper clothing and gather supplies. As it turned out, Stefan had escaped the palace on Eudae and fled into the mountains. So hiking boots and clothing suited to a trek were in order. So were packs with bedrolls, food and water. Rue was of the opinion that the witches could track Stefan better than the Atrika. Something about *aeamon* sharing patterns of reasoning.

They arrived back to Thomas's office and he opened the portal. The shimmering hole that equalized the vibrational patterns between two realities allowed people to travel from here to there and back again.

"Is this portal safe from Stefan in Eudae?" Micah asked sharply. There was only one and it was certainly Stefan's primary target.

Thomas nodded. "It's being guarded closely on that side by Rue himself, along with a group of handpicked Ytrayi. Stefan's not getting through."

"He's already tried," added Claire. "Rue said he was wounded in the process, but got away. Now he's on foot, bleeding, and has headed into the mountains."

"What the hell is doing?" Micah muttered. "He sounds panicked. Stefan Faucheux doesn't panic."

"Best go find out," answered Thomas. "Every minutes we stand here talking is another minute Stefan gets farther away. Do you all have everything you need?" he looked pointedly at Micah and he knew he meant spell-wise.

Micah jerked his head at Emily, who hadn't stopped gazing at the inter-dimensional doorway. She'd probably never been this close to one. "She's my spelling surrogate and is carrying everything I would carry normally, including a tracking spell I only recently developed. As long as Rue has something of Stefan's, we can locate him. He's not getting far."

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Thomas nodded once. "Capture him alive and bring him back to Rue. It would be a pity to kill him and have him miss out on his punishment."

They were all in agreement there. As much as Micah had wanted him dead that fateful day when he, the Duskoff and the Atrika demons they'd allied with had invaded the Coven and started robbing witches of their magick, he knew well that a life lived as a magickless slave on Eudae was far more punishment than death. Maybe it would give Stefan a chance to learn some humility and come back in his next life as a more evolved human being.

Probably not, but Micah could hope.

Anyway, thinking about Stefan in Eudae currying the favor of Rue, the Cae of the Ytrayi daaeman breed, every day was a pleasant thing. Never failed to put a smile on his face.

Claire and Adam stepped through the doorway, were swallowed by the shimmering light and disappeared.

He stepped up to Emily. "Ready?"

She tore her gaze away from the doorway. "Born ready."

He stared at her for a moment longer, taking in her beauty as he did every time he looked at her. Her eyes were pale blue and set in a pale, heart-shaped face and framed with long, thick dark hair that curled just a little. She had the body of a dancer—trim, strong, long and lithe. Her bearing and demeanor wasn't that of a dancer, however. Emily was on the clumsy side and a geek just like him. An adventurous geek, that was—just like him. Not afraid to try new things, eager for unique experience.

He took her hand. "It will be a little bumpy going in. Expect extreme nausea."

"Oh, fun." She looked back at the doorway, steeling herself.

They stepped through.

They both stumbled and fell to their knees. Emily clutched his hand like he could keep her from drowning. Bracing himself on his other palm, he hung his head and muscled his way through the queasiness, while Emily did the same beside him. No matter how many times he traveled through, it never improved. Having the vibrational pattern of your molecular structure speeded up wasn't all fun and games.

When he could do it without losing his morning Wheaties all over the pretty marble floor, he raised his head to find Rue and a group of tall, muscular Ytrayi

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warriors standing around him. Claire and Adam had also recovered and were also standing there, watching them.

Adam leaned down and offered his hand Micah. He took it, pulling himself up and then helping Emily to her feet. "Okay?" he murmured near her ear.

She nodded. "That was a wild ride." Then she immediately began looking around with a look of interest on her face. "Wow."

"Welcome to Eudae, Emily," said Rue. He inclined his head. "And welcome back to you, Micah."

"Thanks." Micah spotted a piece of clothing in Rue's hand. "Was that Stefan's?"

"Yes." Rue handed it over and Micah immediately placed it in Emily's hands. All she had to do was hold it for a few moments while concentrating on it and invoking the tracking charm she carried and they'd be off.

"You said he's wounded?" asked Claire.

Rue nodded. "He made a crazy attempt to access this doorway to get back to Earth and was wounded by my men. He's got a bad blast to his upper shoulder and his thigh. He's probably traveling slowly and won't be too difficult to catch. I called you because he is ultimately your charge and I understand you don't want him dead. If I sent any of my men, he'd toast within a matter of hours."

Crazy? Toast? Micah's eyebrows rose. Rue's English had improved a lot since the permanent doorway had been established and Claire had been coming for regular visits. He was evening using some slang once in a while.

"What will you do with him once we bring him back?" Claire asked.

Rue smiled wolfishly. "Ensure he never again escapes. He's proving quite the perfect slave. His tea is delicious, seeped for just the perfect number of minutes."

Micah had to shake away the image of an uber tall, uber strong warrior demon drinking tea. "Sounds good to me." He clapped his hands together and rubbed them. "Let's get going."

They headed out of the palace, traveling down slick marble hallways and past alien men dressed either in battle gear or heavy cloaks. Eventually, they made their way out of the tall building and onto the street, where daaeman males and females traveled mostly on foot. Not far away the jagged, beautiful buildings would give way to grassy prairies deceptively like those of Earth. Eventually those prairies would melt into rocky

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foothills and the rise of a mountain range. The area was not much different than what was found on Earth, apart from an alien critter or two and crops of foreign plant life.

Micah had not forgotten to grab a compartmentalized container to gather plants. Good thing the FDA wouldn't be checking his pack when he returned to the coven.

They reached the foothills by nightfall, with Emily leading the way. They didn't know how far ahead of them Stefan was, but they assumed not very far since he was pretty badly injured. Micah had his doubts as to whether or not the former head warlock still lived. Injuries like the ones he'd sustained were no joke. And maybe that was Stefan's goal. Death.

Micah remembered the two times they'd managed to trap Stefan in Gribben. The first time, courtesy of Isabelle, had been for a prolonged period of time and had made Stefan suicidal. That's why taking his magick had been such a good punishment for him.

Even though Stefan might be a monster, Micah wasn't and the thought of Stefan—even after all he'd done—dying alone and miserable on some alien rock gave him a pang.

But just one pang and it was pretty short lived.

"Should we make camp here?" he asked the group, dropping his pack in the middle of a semi circle of boulders. It was a warm night and it wouldn't be a hardship to sleep under the stars. A good fire would keep away any of the native Eudaen wildlife. Some of those alien creatures weren't ones you wanted to tangle with.

"Sounds good to me," Claire answered, dropping her pack to the ground and rotating her shoulders as though they were stiff.

It wasn't long before they had a fire going and had spread their bed rolls out on the sandy ground. They ate dinner and shared conversation until Claire and Adam curled up together on their bedroll on the opposite side of the camp, leaving Micah and Emily alone.

"The stars are more beautiful here than on Earth," Emily said, gazing up into velvet black heavens sprinkled with glittering star dust. "And my magick feels different here, lighter, easier to handle." Her gaze darted to his and she put a hand to her mouth. "That was a dumb thing to say."

"Don't worry about it. I'm not that sensitive about losing my power. I remember what it feels like here. Kinda like going from a shift transmission to an automatic." He glanced up at the sky. "In an odd way, we belong here. Half of our souls, anyway. Hey,

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want to come over here? I'll show you what I know about alien astronomy. It's not a lot, though, I warn you."

She smiled and scooted up next to him, warming his left side. Her hiking boots settled into the sand and she sighed, leaning back on her palms. He glanced at her, taking in her profile as she gazed up into the sky. Emily was a beautiful woman. He'd always thought so, even before she'd become his assistant. She probably had a million admirers at the coven, though she never talked about having a boyfriend or going on dates.

He pointed up into the sky and murmured near her ear, trying to stay quiet for the sake of Claire and Adam who'd gone into the still and silent world of sleep just across from them. "That's the warrior constellation there. You see how the stars form a pattern of a man holding a sword over his head." He used his finger to trace the outline.

"Oh, yeah, I see it. How fitting."

"Yes. And over there is the wizard constellation. See the pointed hat and the beard?"

She pointed to the left of the wizard. "And over there, is that a rabbit?"

"You have a good eye."

"My father used to have a telescope on the deck in our back yard. On nights like this, when it was warm and clear, we'd sit out there for hours drinking lemonade and star gazing. He's taught me so much about the world I never would have known."

"Is he an earth witch too?"

"Yes, and my mom. They're retired now and have moved to Florida."

"You sound happy when you talk about them."

She glanced at him. "Well, they were great parents. I guess that's kinda boring, huh? It's not very interesting that I grew up in a stable home with no drama. I don't have any personal baggage to speak of from my childhood."

"Hey, you and me both. We're probably the only two people in the world. Pretty amazing we should hook up, huh?"

"Hook up?" She studied his profile and smiled playfully. "Is that what we're doing?" There was a note of flirtatiousness in her voice that hadn't been there a moment ago.

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He looked at her and realized her face was only inches from his. She wore an expression that he'd never seen before—lips parted a little and her eyes were heavy lidded. Gods, she was...delectable. He studied her face for a long moment, taking in every luscious inch of her. She almost looked as if wanted to be kissed. Could that be?

Her eyes opened and she backed away. "Oh, god, I can't believe I just—"

He caught her upper arm before she could completely flee. "What's wrong?"

"It's just that you're here and I'm here. I felt so relaxed. I just forgot my head that's all. I—"

Before he knew he'd even done it, he'd stopped her words with his mouth. She stilled and then melted against him. For whatever strange reason under this strange sky, kissing Emily was natural and as right as anything he'd ever done in his life. Her arms came around him and he slanted his mouth across hers to get a deeper taste of her. Her lips were warm and willing, parting for him so he could ease his tongue inside and brush it against hers.

She tasted like warm sunshine on a cold, cloudy day and suddenly Micah wondered why he'd never done this before. Why hadn't he been doing this every day of his whole life with this woman in his arms?

He broke the kiss, but still held her. She looked as surprised as he probably did. "Wow," she murmured.

"Yeah, wow."

"I never thought you noticed me."

He raised an eyebrow. Not notice her? How could a man—any man—not notice her? He'd just never thought she'd be interested in him.

"Let me show you exactly how much I've noticed you," he murmured, then kissed her again, using the pressure of his mouth to push her back onto the sandy ground.

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"We'll have to split up," Emily said, staring at a spot where the path they were following through a steep foresty incline had veered off in two different directions. They'd started out early that morning and Emily had picked up Stefan's trail again with no problem. At least, until they'd reached this point.

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"He's trying to trick us," said Claire, peering down one of the new paths and then the other. "He probably knows we're using a tracking spell so he's trying to foil us the only way he knows how."

"You mean he went up one way for a while, then doubled back and took the other way?" asked Adam.

"That's what I suspect," Emily answered. "I can feel him in both directions and have no idea which of these paths will be the correct one to take to Stefan." Her mouth tightened for a moment. "The problem is that if we split up, you two won't have the tracking spell."

"So we'll track him the old fashioned way," Adam answered, pointing at a broken branch at one of the mouths of the paths. "Stefan's leaving physical evidence of his passage. We'll just have to look for it."

"Okay," said Claire, "so how about you and Micah take the right hand path. Adam and I will take the left hand."

"Sounds good."

"Just remember that even though Stefan is wounded and magickless, that doesn't mean he's not dangerous."

"You don't have to tell me that twice," Micah answered. They headed their separate ways.

Emily led the way up their path, a thing Micah didn't mind at all because of the spectacular view. The night before they'd kissed long into the morning hours, hands exploring over each other's clothes, unwilling to let things go any farther because they hadn't been alone. It had been hot, like he'd been a teenager back in his parent's basement. He was revved up like a teenager too. He could still smell her skin, feel the softness of her hair in his hands. He wanted her and he wasn't going to be a nice guy about it.

They walked until the evening. By late afternoon, it was clear they'd taken the correct path. It was also clear that Stefan was slowing down, getting tired and sloppy. The footprints they could see were getting heavier and he was dragging his feet. He more frequently rested by trees, using the branches for support and breaking them.

He and Emily walked until the light grew too dim to see the path. Then they found a more or less even place to camp and made a fire.

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"He's very close," said Emily, poking the embers of the fire with a stick. "We'll find him early tomorrow morning for certain." She paused. "I can't believe he's still alive."

"He's a tough bastard. Like a cockroach, Stefan can survive just about anything. But I don't want to talk about him."

She looked up from the fire at the change in his voice. "What do you want to talk about?"

"You, me and the fact we're alone right now. I want to talk about all the different ways I want to touch you."

\* \* \* \* \*

Emily's mouth went dry at Micah's words and the look on his face. The stick she held stilled in the fire and burst ablaze, flames licking toward her fingers. "Oh, crap!" she tossed it into the evening dew-moistened grass.

How was that for a mood killer?

Except apparently it wasn't. He was there beside her in a heartbeat. He turned her toward him, cupping her face in his. His lips came down on hers and she forgot all about Stefan, the fire and anything else that didn't have to do with Micah and his hands, lips, and body.

"I noticed you," he murmured against her lips. "Oh, honey, I have always noticed you." He nipped her lower lip, dragging it through his teeth. Her knees went weak and he eased her down on his bed roll, his warm body covering hers.

His hand found the hem of her shirt and pushed beneath it, finding and covering the mound of her breast over her bra. "I'm glad we're alone tonight," she whispered, maneuvering her hands down so she could unbutton his hiking pants.

"Uh, huh. Let's make the most of it."

Slowly, savoring every inch of revealed skin, they undressed each other. Soon their nude bodies were flush against each other's in the warm evening air. Hands sliding, lips brushing over warm, smooth flesh. Micah pinned her wrists to either side of her, parted her thighs with his knee and sank deep within her.

She gasped at the sensation of him filling her and then let out a moan of pure pleasure. She'd fantasized about this moment so many nights when she'd been laying alone in bed. His mouth covered hers as he moved inside her.

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"I think I like this," he murmured against her throat as he took her slow and long on the warm ground. "I think, maybe, I could get used to this."

"Me too," she whispered and kissed his shoulder.

Her body was filled with pleasure and her heart filled up with him. Her hands roamed his back and shoulders as she met his thrusts with long rolls of her hips. They fit together perfectly, finding a rhythm that drove them both to bliss under the stars. It wasn't long until she saw stars of a different kind and gasped his name as she came.

Then they lay curled together under the night sky, arms and legs intertwined. A shot of white arrested her gaze for a moment. "I just saw a shooting star in an alien sky. I don't think this night could get any more perfect," she murmured, cuddling closer to him.

Above came more shots of white. "How about a full blown asteroid shower," Micah answered, kissing her temple. "Looks like we're in for a show."

She turned in his arms and kissed him until he made a hungry growling sound in the back of his throat and slid his leg between her thighs. "Why do I think we might miss it?"

\* \* \* \* \*

As Emily said they would, they found Stefan not late into the next morning.

"Stefan, Stefan, Stefan, where do you think you're going?" Micah drawled, strolling up to him. He was at the edge of a cliff, shoe tip just over the edge. Micah had the impression he'd been there for a while—contemplating things. Every move Stefan made sent rocks and debris rolling down the jagged side. His hair was a ratted mess. His clothing was ripped just about everywhere and he was caked with dirt and blood.

Stefan let out a string of curse words in French, before spitting in Micah's direction, "I was just about to hurl myself over this cliff. But as usual, you are here to spoil my fun."

"Bullshit." Micah walked up to him. "If you were going to jump, you would have done it already."

Stefan held out a hand. "Don't come any closer, or I'll jump, I swear. "

"I care, why?"

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"You care because you tracked me here. I don't know why you care, but you do."

Micah halted about five feet from him. "I care only because I want you to pay, Stefan. As much I would love to watch you take a stroll over this cliff, you'd be getting off too easy for your crimes. I want your ass back under Rue's thumb. I want you to suffer."

"You don't know what it's like. It's hell inside my soul without my magick."

Emily touched Micah's upper arm as though to give him support. He covered her hand with his.

Micah's eyebrows rose into his hairline. "I don't know what it's like? Did you just say...?" He fought the urge to kick him over the edge. That hardly seemed sporting considering Stefan's condition, but it was tempting. "You fucking *took my magick* with your fucking blue ball of death, Stefan. I do know what it's like. But if I can fucking well suck it up and get on with my life, so can you."

"No." He inched closer to the edge. "I can't."

Micah rolled his eyes. He could not believe he was standing here, pleading with Stefan Faucheux not to commit suicide. This was beyond bizarre. He should be encouraging him to jump. He whirled around, pulling a hand through his hair in frustration.

*Fuck, fuck, fuck!*

Casting a meaningful look at Emily, she shook her head. He was too close to the edge to use earth magick if he tried to jump. There wouldn't be enough to find a countermeasure as he fell.

Micah hated every molecule in the other man's body for putting him in this situation. "Life without magick is not the end. There's still a lot to live for." Micah glanced at Emily, realizing suddenly that maybe he had even more now to live for than he'd had two days ago.

"You're not a slave to Ytrayi demon," Stefan snarled over his shoulder.

Yeah, okay, he had a pretty good point. "I didn't steal the magick of hundreds of Coven witches, you *fucking bastard*." His voice shook with a rare uncontrolled burst of fury.

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Emily stepped forward, past Micah. "Stefan, give me your hand. You know you don't want to do this or you'd have already done it. Come on, just take my hand and call it quits, okay?"

Stefan hesitated, teetering toward the edge of the cliff. For one heart stopping moment, Micah thought he would leap. Instead, he reached back and caught Emily's hand.

Thank gods.

Then several things happened all at once. Stefan's foot slipped and he started to fall. Emily grabbed onto him and there was a scuffle, with Emily trying to pull Stefan back from the edge and Stefan trying not to go over. Emily's foot came too close to the cliff face and she went over.

*Went over.*

Micah flew to the edge, pushing Stefan back and making him fall backward onto the ground. He couldn't see her. "Emily!" he yelled, her name coming out in a horse cry of anguish he hadn't known was in him.

"Micah."

The word came quick and quiet. He searched lower and found Emily clinging to the rock face, her feet caught on a tiny ledge. Her eyes were squeezed shut and she clung on with all her might, her fingers white and bloodless.

A wave of total relief washed over him so powerful it made him light-headed for a moment. "Emily! Use your magick!"

She said nothing, only clung to the rock with her eyes shut. She was too shocked and frightened to use her power. A wave of helplessness went through him that made him want to pitch Stefan over the edge again.

Stefan came down on his stomach on the other side of him. "Emily, you're okay right now, but, *merde*, you're going to slip at any moment. I know you do not want to die, yes? So unfurl a tendril of your power and use it to give you a boost. We'll grab you."

Micah looked over at Stefan with total amazement on his face. Then he returned his attention to Emily, who still wasn't responding. Her foot slipped a little and she let out a small shriek. Rubble cascaded down the cliff face. "Emily!"

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Adrenaline surged through Micah's body with an unpleasant jolt. *Damn it!* If he had his magick, he could help her. "Emily, please. I just found you and I'm falling in love with you. Please, honey, I don't want to lose you. Do like Stefan says."

She moved her head a little, opened her eyes a crack. "I love you, Micah! I have for a long time."

He gave a short laugh. "Then get your ass up here. I need you in my life."

She accessed her power and threaded out a little to manipulate the earth she clung to. Reorganizing the dirt and rock, she created foot and hand holds that she used to inch her way up the rock face toward them. When she was close enough to grab, she reached up and Micah caught her by the wrist, pulling her up to safety.

They lay in a tangle on the ground, Micah kissing her face and the top of her head, wherever he could lay his lips. He'd meant everything he'd said and he still had more to say, but it would wait until they were home, safe, and didn't have Stefan staring at them with his lip curled in disdain.

"Can you walk?" Micah asked Stefan, reluctantly untangling himself from Emily's embrace and standing.

"*Oui*, I can walk back to my life of servitude and toil."

"Great. I don't want to have to carry your ass."

Emily stood and brushed the dirt off her shirt and face. She was scraped up, but it was nothing serious. "You should have thought about that before you allied with the most vicious demon breed that exists and tried to eradicate all the magick of the Coven witches."

"Yes," Stefan replied with a wry twist to his lips. "I see the light and now regret my actions."

Micah shook his head. For a moment when Emily had been hanging off the edge of the cliff, he'd thought he'd seen a glimmer of hope in Stefan. Apparently, he'd been mistaken. "Come on, let's get going."

They met up with Claire and Adam halfway back down the mountain. "I can't believe we went to all this trouble for this piece of garbage," said Adam, falling into step behind Stefan. Stefan pretended like he didn't hear anything.

"This is one piece of garbage it pays to keep our eyes on," said Claire. "You can forget about escaping again, Stefan. Rue doesn't make the same mistake twice."

## MITCH'S MAGICK

"We'll see about that," Stefan threw over his shoulder and then continued his slow, painful trudge back to the palace.

\* \* \* \* \*

They made it back to the Coven that evening after successfully handing an injured Stefan back to his keepers.

"I trust you found the escapee," Thomas said once they'd recovered from the trip through the doorway.

*And found more than Stefan,* Micah thought with a glance at Emily right before he recounted the story to the head of the Coven.

Once that was done, he walked with Emily to the foot of the stairs. He lived on one of the upper floors and she had rooms on the ground floor. She kissed him on the cheek, said good night and started to walk away. He grabbed her by the hand and spun her backward into his arms.

He kissed her temple. "Where do you think you're going?"

She laughed. "It's late and we're both tired. I figured you probably wanted to get some sleep."

"Only if it's sleep beside you...*after* we've tired ourselves out a little more."

She turned in his arms, melted against him with a sigh and almost touched her lips to his as she spoke. "I have no problem with that."

He smiled against her mouth. "I think I just found my lost magick."

**THE END**

ANYA BAST

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Anya Bast writes erotic fantasy & paranormal romance. Primarily, she writes happily-ever-afters with lots of steamy sex. After all, happily-ever-afters with lots of sex are the very best kind.

She lives in the country with her husband of ten years. They share their lives with eight cats and one perplexed dog. A native of one of the colder states, she loves to ice skate and watch hockey. She has fascination for crows, ravens and birds of prey, (especially owls). She enjoys the study of Eastern philosophy, Celtic myth, dreaming, and shamanism and incorporates what she learns into her paranormal stories.

Anya got her start writing fantasy romance. Since writing a little hotter seemed to come naturally to her, she had no trouble making the move to erotic romance. She loves writing books that are heavy on plot, emotion and character development, and also have spicy, no-holds-barred sex scenes. Exploring the elements of dark sexual fantasy in her writing is what Anya does best.

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