



Cora Zane



Midnight Moon Café

Heart Spell

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Heart Spell

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Heart Spell

By Cora Zane

Chapter One

Presley flipped the sign on the door of her gift shop to “closed” then stepped out onto the street to lock up for the evening. The late day sunlight gleamed gold but lacked any warmth, and she shivered as a chill wind gusted up the busy street.

She fit her key into the lock and turned it until the deadbolt answered with a loud click. After dropping her keys back into her purse, she glanced one last time at the Halloween candle sculptures she’d arranged in the lighted window display an hour or so before.

Amid the orange, tinsel-strewn display stood three elegantly detailed black cats with glittery-green gemstone eyes and sleek, arched backs—some of the finest candle work she’d turned out in months.

A small smile tugging at her mouth, she left the shop and walked down Main Street, huddling deep into her leather blazer as traffic rushed the intersections in stops and starts, stirring up gales of cold wind.

She crossed with the light and took a deep breath, slipping her purse higher on her shoulder as she hopped up on the opposite curb and made her way toward home.

The hot-oil smell of funnel cake and corn dogs frying hit her the minute she rounded the corner. Shady, tree-lined Park Street had been closed off to traffic for Arborville’s annual *Halloween along the Avenue* celebration. Booths lined both sides of the street, and hay bales had been arranged curbside for sitting on and to house the massive pumpkin displays set up every few feet.

Presley turned right and followed the foot traffic, cutting across the street when the crowds grew too thick. The amplified echo of someone speaking into a microphone drew her attention to her right, and as she continued up the block toward Comfrey Street, she noticed that a costume contest was going on in the pocket park between the barber shop and the Trinity Church.

Her gaze lingered on the announcer and the makeshift stage until a small swarm of kids in costumes came squealing up the sidewalk. She quickly stepped aside and

watched them pour in to the park swinging pumpkin-shaped candy pails: a witch, Frankenstein, and a red devil.

Amused, she thought about sticking around, but someone stopped near her with a steaming tray of chili-cheese nachos and her stomach growled. She hadn't eaten anything since breakfast, and knew if she didn't get home soon, she'd give into the temptation of carnival food.

Thinking about the left over chicken strips and potato salad she'd put in the fridge, she picked up the pace, following the block down to the intersection and rounding the corner onto Comfrey Street.

The thought of good food reminded her of home, and a wave of nostalgia swept through her. Normally she spent Halloween in North Haversham with her mother and stepfather, and at least a dozen other relatives that brought way too much good food with them. But business had been slow this year, and her best friend of five years had moved upstate to take a better paying job. She just didn't feel up to the socializing.

She'd been restless lately, a little bummed out. Instead of the usual routine, she planned to stay home, light a few candles and do a bit of chanting. Maybe take a rosewater bath then sit down with a cup of tea and her computer to play *Mutant Street Wars* in her bunny slippers.

She passed her neighbor's house, and at the edge of the driveway, she cut across the front lawn, passing beneath the tall oak that was nearly bald from shedding its leaves—leaves that shuffled and crunched beneath her boots.

She jaunted up the front steps, and stopped on the porch, pausing long enough to find the cord to switch on the stand-up plastic pumpkin she'd set by the door for decoration. Afterward, she turned her attention to the bundle of mail hung on the hooks of her letterbox.

The post lady had secured what looked to be a stack of post card advertisements and store circulars in a large rubber band, and at the core of the folded over bundle it was a small 4x6 shipping box with a large green "perishable" label on it. Someone had also marked the box with several red ink stamps that marked the contents "fragile".

"Ooh, goody," she said to no one, and slipped the box out for better inspection. She didn't recognize the return address right away, but candle supply companies often sent her samplers, sometimes candles themselves, and sometimes scented wax chips or wicks to test out in her shop.

Once in the house, she flipped on the lights and tossed the mail in the basket on the side table. Glad to be home, she dropped her purse in the chair, kicked off her boots and slipped out of her jacket, leaving everything where it landed.

She'd turned to pick up the package when Scooter padded into the room, greeting her on sight with a string of staccato meows. The gray tabby leapt up onto the arm of the couch and flexed his toes on a well-worn spot. Presley mimicked his meows for a second, then picked him up and snuggled him.

"How was your day, kitty-beast? Did you miss me?"

Scooter purred, rubbing his whiskers against her chin. Presley gave him a smooch on top the head then carried the cat and the package through the house to the kitchen where she set both on the countertop.

Scooter meowed his hungry song at her until she opened a pouch of kitty kibble into a dish for him, then she went to the fridge and took out the container of leftovers and popped them into the microwave.

While waiting for the timer, she left Scooter to his dinner, tucked the package under her arm and walked through the house, coiling her long, silvery blonde hair into a knot at her nape of her neck.

In the bathroom, she set the box on the counter and slithered out of her jeans and panties, then tugged off her top and bra and slipped into a cotton robe. She set her bathwater running, and lit the myriad of white lily candles around the bathtub with a wave of her hand.

The timer went off in the other room but she ignored it, leaving the chicken and potato salad to cool off in the microwave. She took a pair of cuticle scissors from her vanity table and sliced through the packing tape on top of the package. Inside, she dug through the shipping peanuts and found a small burgundy candle and an invoice. She spread out the invoice and read it.

“We welcome you to try our candle making supplies. For best scent results, please use sample prior to Hallowe’en.”

She inspected the mini pillar candle next, and saw right away it was handmade and of great quality. She held it up and turned it in the light. The color was remarkable. Someone had added a reflective shimmer to the wax, probably a finely ground gold glitter.

“Very nice....”

She sniffed it, and noticed the candle had a cherry-vanilla scent with a hint of currant—interesting. She sniffed again. *Exotic*. Her womb clenched. Unreal how a scent could do that!

She glanced at the bottom of the candle for a description seal, a label for the fragrance, and discovered there wasn’t one. It must be custom, but then again.... She couldn’t remember where she might’ve smelled that particular scent before, but it was remarkably familiar.

Mulling it over, she set the candle on a pillar tray, and once she’d turned off her bathwater, she fished around the bathroom drawer for the box of matches she kept there.

At last she took out a match and struck it against the box, orange fire flaring on the head of the matchstick. Presley laid it against the wick, and to her surprise, the flame flared high and threw off a shower of sparks like the hissing fuse of a firecracker.

Presley flinched back from it, but an unseen force seemed to lasso her and hold her in place. Her stomach lurched as her vision went suddenly dark and the sensation of being tugged through empty space surrounded her.

Chapter Two

Seconds later, Presley squeezed out of the dark tunnel into an open room lit by firelight. Disoriented, she staggered a little and grabbed onto the back of a leather chair.

Shocked by the suddenness of the shift, she glanced at the flagstone floors and marble fireplace, and instantly recognized where she'd landed—in the private study at Balfour Manor.

“Glad you could join me tonight, Presley.”

She turned toward the voice and there he was—the culprit, not that she was really so surprised.

“Kinkaid. I should have known.” She crossed her arms over her chest and frowned. “I can’t believe I fell for that—a transport spell. What are you, six?”

“Six with a couple of zeros,” he said while pouring brandy from a crystal decanter.

Still handsome, and just as infuriating as the last time she'd crossed paths with him, she decided. Only now he wasn't speaking to her from across a ceremonial circle. In fact, he looked like he'd just come in from a hard day at the office. His white shirt hung open over his black trousers, unbuttoned from top to tails, exposing tan skin peppered with dark hair, and rock hard abs that never failed to grab her attention.

He glanced at her as he took down a second snifter and poured. “You could at least pretend to be happy to see me, you know.”

“Should I? The last time I saw you, you wanted me to give up my house and my career.”

“I asked you no such thing. I asked you if there was anything you wanted to bring here from the house in New England—hardly a crime. It's only natural a wife moves in with her husband after the wedding. It's tradition.”

“Maybe—if we were still living in the dark ages.”

“Admit it.” He put the stopper back in the bottle and looked at her with a flat expression. “That last argument had nothing to do with me. It was all about you and your cold feet.”

Presley bristled, heat blooming in her face. “Well, that's a high handed conclusion, Mr. Scottish Laird.... Mr. Coven Council Know-it-all!”

Perhaps some of what he said was true, but not all. Besides, no way was she about to let him guilt her into changing her mind, or in giving up her shop. And she certainly wasn't going to let that thick accent make her weak in the knees again, either. Not this time.

A lock of hair fell free of her chignon and landed against her cheek. Flustered, she reached up to brush it back from her face and her hand jerked short. She looked down, and her mouth gaped at what she found. For a moment, all she could do was stare in shock at the slender gold chain binding her wrist. Then her anger piqued, and outrage flared through her.

“What is this?” She glared at Kinkaid. “Take this off right now!”

“You know I can’t do that, sweet. Gold spells are unbreakable, and that chain is made of genuine fairy flake. See for yourself.”

She did see. Each individual link in the chain glittered as though it had been dusted in shimmering powder. Thinking back to the candle, the gold flakes in the wax should have set off warning bells. But it hadn’t, and for that she could have kicked herself. She couldn’t say that to him though, because it would only add confirmation to his cause.

He’d tell her she’d grown too trusting, that she’d grown soft living among mortals. The old argument would begin again when the truth was she simply hadn’t been looking for a trap—and why should she?

Gold flake, that rat! So she’d been caught by a spell that had to run its course....

“Oh, I suppose you think you’re really clever.”

“If the shoe fits,” he drawled. “Perhaps it will ease your mind to know the magic should only last an hour, give or take, then the chain will turn into dust again.”

“Oh, well, there’s good news,” she blustered, and put her hands on her hips. “In the meantime, I suppose this is your idea of a hot date?”

“Not really,” he said, and then scanned her from head to toe as though he could see right through her cotton bathrobe. “Well, I guess it could be.”

She clutched at her lapels in self-defense. “I dare you to try it.”

He sighed. “Presley, my love, you should know by now I’m only teasing.” He brought her one of the snifters he’d poured and held it out until she took it, then he raised his own in a quick toast. “To us.”

He sipped his brandy and she frowned, watching him as he walked over to one of the leather sofas and sat down heavily. He beckoned her by patting the seat beside him, but she stayed right where she was.

“Why exactly did you drag me here, Kaid?”

“What better time is there? It’s the second anniversary of our marriage arrangement.”

“Is it?” she choked. She tabulated the date in her head like a run down of store figures. “Are you sure?”

“I’m positive. I received the official blessings from the council two years ago to the day. That same night, I tried to contact you, but you were with friends in New York City, going to—”

“—a candle convention.” She’d totally forgotten, but now that she thought about it, he was right. “And you just decided to bring me here so we could throw back a few cocktails and reminisce?”

“No need to be crass, sweet. I’ve tried calling you, but you never answer your phone.”

True, she avoided the phone. She left her cell purposely on voicemail, and almost never checked her answering machine. What was the point? Half the time it was her mother calling to ruffle her feathers, to ask her why she hadn’t settled down yet, and

when she planned start popping out grandchildren, as if that were some spontaneous thing she could control by the wave of a hand.

Rubbing her forehead in a bid for patience, she started to sip her drink, but stopped short and looked into the snifter, dubious. “What’s in this, anyway?”

“Cognac,” he said, and gestured toward the cantinas in on the sidebar.

“Cognac and nothing else? No potions or draughts?”

His brows lifted. “I see your opinion of me hasn’t changed.”

“A politician with magical ability—what’s not to trust?”

He let out a bark of laughter. “Touché.”

She took a small sip of brandy, watching him carefully over the rim. Hearing him laugh curled her insides, made her skin break out in goose bumps. Already that electric attraction seemed to be working on her, that unexplained magnetism, damn him. Kaid had always been too smooth for his own good—and for her sanity.

After that maddening initial chase he’d put her through, and remembering how in awe she’d been of him those first few blazing-hot weeks after they’d met, she felt incredibly self conscious standing in his presence now.

“You’re thinking hard,” he said.

“I was thinking about when we first met.”

A devilish smile curved his mouth, and Presley shivered as a ribbon of desire pooled low in her stomach.

He lifted a hand, and with a flick of his fingers, a long gold leash feeding off the chain around her wrist appeared in his grasp. He gave it a little tug, just hard enough to lift her wrist away from her side.

She glared at him. “You said no spells!”

“No. I said there weren’t any draughts in your drink.” He made a face and tugged again at the gold leash. “Stop being so ornery and sit with me. It’s bad enough that I’ve missed you.”

She ignored the excited leap of her heart at those words, and walked across the room and sat beside him on the couch. He put his arm around her and hugged her shoulder.

“There, that wasn’t so bad?”

Close to him like this, she could feel his body heat, smell his enticing masculine scent—

“Your cologne—” Presley gaped at him when she recognized it. How could she have forgotten? She leaned over and sniffed his neck to make sure she hadn’t imagined it. “That vanilla-cherry currant smell— It *is* you. No wonder that candle smelled so familiar.”

He looked as surprised as she felt. “I braided one of my hairs into the wick to ensure you ended up here, but I assure you, I didn’t add any cologne.”

She stared at him thoughtfully, then sat back and laughed. “And you told me you’d quit smoking, little liar. Your scent was in the candle: cherry-vanilla pipe tobacco, and brandy. You didn’t have to add any cologne to the candle, your hair braided into the wick put your magical essence in there for you.”

He raked a hand through his hair, a roguish grin spreading across his face. "You would deny a six hundred year old man his pipe?"

She gave a snort, and took another drink of her brandy. Beside her, Kinkaid spoke a short command that reverberated around the room, and suddenly the furniture shifted.

Presley dug her fingers into the couch cushion to hold on, but it happened in an instant, the lounge tables vanished, the wing chairs moved. The couch they sat on revolved and sank to the floor, and when Presley looked down, the black cushions had remolded into a thick, white Flokati rug in front of the massive fireplace.

"There. Much more comfortable, don't you think?" Before she could protest, he propped himself on his elbow and stretched out beside her. "So, tell me, how is work? You're still making candles at your little shop?"

She gaped at him. "You mean you want to talk?"

"What did you think I was going to do? Chain you and fall on you like a rutting beast?"

"The idea crossed my mind, yes."

He set aside his drink. "Give me some credit, Presley. I've never touched you when you didn't want me too."

It was true, and she lowered her eyes, heat scorching her face that she'd even suggested otherwise. When she did, he slipped the snifter from her fingers and set it back behind him, off the rug.

"However much you like living in the mortal realm," he said with a sigh, "you belong here at Balfour with me. Of course I have all the time in the world to wait for you, and don't get me wrong, love, your happiness is very important to me, but I'm growing impatient."

"Oh, is *that* all..."

He lifted her hand and laid a soft kiss against her knuckles. "It's not easy living alone, you know? Thinking about someone you can't touch every day. It's damn maddening."

"You could have come to Arborville at any time if you wished to see me."

"Yes, I could have." Sly eyes regarded her. "And if I'd paid you such a visit, would it have made you accept tradition? Would you have agreed at last to complete the Heart Spell?"

At the mention of those two words she felt a frisson of panic race over her skin.

"Did my mother put you up to this?"

"Good gods, no. Esmeralda is the last person I'd call. Nothing against your mother, but she's too bent on grandchildren right now. She'd likely try to talk me into some hair-brained, romantic scheme. I much prefer the direct approach."

"And besides, it's not as if a transport spell hidden in a candle isn't hair-brained enough."

"Ah, but it worked, didn't it? Would you have come to me any other way if I'd asked?"

“Probably not,” she admitted softly, and then shook her head and frowned, that faint restlessness nagging her again. “I don’t know. Maybe I would have. The point is you could have asked.”

“Very well, I will ask you now. Presley, I love you and I want you near me. Will you please come to live with me in Balfour?”

Butterflies sprang to life in her stomach at the husky promise in his voice. *Oh, dear. This is not good. Not good at all!*

She hadn’t truly expected him to ask, or that he’d sound so sexy doing it. He waved his hand and the fire dimmed, throwing orange shadows around the room. All around them, the sparkle of sensual energy crackled in the air. It feathered over the fine hairs on her body, like the caress of static against her skin.

Candles lit in the candelabras all around them, and Kaid gave her a soft, romantic kiss, that made her heart flip.

“It’s time to fulfill the Heart Spell, Presley,” he murmured against her mouth. “I have already given you my heart, and I have waited for your response long enough.” He pulled back and looked into her eyes. “I call on you to either accept tradition or deny me entirely.”

Presley licked her lips. She only had to speak the words and they would be bound together, heart to heart, soul to soul. Man and wife in this life, and in the next.

“Your answer, Presley....”

Her gaze flicked to that tempting mouth hovering so close to her own, and she sighed. “You’re a serious danger to my sanity.”

“Am I?”

His voice had taken on a husky timber, and she cursed him in her mind. It wasn’t fair that she should find him so irresistible. But then, for the Heart Spell to work there had to be an underlying attraction, one strong enough to bind. Never mind the fact it had to be strong enough for the Coven Council to even recognize it.

After all, what good would the ritual do if there was no passion to hold the bond in place?

“Presley, speak now or—”

“Oh, fine,” she relented, ignoring her own excitement at the thought of joining with him. “You know I always intended to do it, and don’t pretend otherwise.”

A devilish smile curved his lips, a split second before he leaned down to kiss her. She promptly stopped him with her finger.

“Just one more thing, Kaid.... If we’re to do this now, tonight, I would like a few concessions from you first.”

Dark eyes glittering, he pulled her closer. “Name them.”

“I will not give up my *mortal carousing*, as you like to call it, and I’m keeping my candle workshop—including the house in Arborville. If I live here with you, I’ll need it to keep up appearances.”

He responded by nipping lightly at her lower lip. “And?”

“And Scooter goes where I go.”

“The cat?” he murmured. “But of course.”

He nibbled at her chin and moved lower to kiss her throat. Brow furrowed, she closed her eyes as desire swirled through her, the feel of his hot hands on her bare body beneath the bathroom nothing short of intoxicating.

“Anything else?” he asked.

“Yes, actually, I— Oh....” Her mind drew a total blank. Kaid had drawn her robe open, and even now his fingers stroked over her breasts, her rib cage, and down the flat plain of her belly to her moist apex.

Gods, but he excited her to distraction.

He stroked her with his fingers while kissing the tip of one breast, his tongue swirling around the peak before he withdrew and blew gently across her wet nipple. She sighed, shivering as chills broke out across her skin.

“You know, I really can’t think with you doing that,” Presley confessed.

“No?” he asked, and repeated the sensual process with her other breast. Presley drew in a deep breath and arched in response, tangling her fingers in his hair.

“Since you’re being so wickedly unfair right now,” she groaned as his fingers flicked against her just the way she liked, “you’ll just have to promise we negotiate the rest later.”

Laughing low in his chest, Kinkaid teased a slow kiss from her then pulled back and stripped off his shirt. “Agreed.”

Chapter 3

Kaid tossed his shirt aside, and Presley reached for him, welcoming him as he eased down next to her. He parted her robe, sliding it off one shoulder, prompting her to touch him in kind. She smoothed a hand over his bare shoulder and along his arm, following his attentive caresses with her own.

Her exploration continuing south, she stroked his muscular chest, her fingertips streaking over his flat nipples and down his taut torso. Presley's riveted gaze caressed his body, a trill of excitement racing through her when she saw the way his abdominal muscles twitched in response to her touch.

"Planning to tease me, are you?"

That smoky voice wrapped around her heart and squeezed. She nipped his chin, planted a row of kisses down his neck. "Not in the least."

His erection bulged against his trousers, and she ran her hand down to rub and knead his length through the fabric of his pants. Kaid drew in a deep breath, his nostrils flaring, his eyes slipping shut for a moment as she massaged him.

His heaviness allured her, too tempting to ignore. When she unzipped him and drew him out, gripping his hard length into her fist, she heard his sharp intake of breath. Taking her time, she slid her hand along his velvet skin, working his sensitive flesh from shaft to tip.

She hadn't touched him in at least a year, and no other man had ever inspired her to risk her heart or her body for a few moments of pleasure. Touching Kaid now awakened a low, throbbing pressure between her thighs. Oh, how she'd missed him, missed this....

She wanted to possess him, to make him wild for her, as hungry and desperate for her as she was for him.

Presley kissed her way down his body, and with her hand on his hip, she took him into her mouth. He melted against her, encouraging her to sample whatever she desired. Alternately sucking and swirling her tongue around his crown, she closed her eyes, the masculine taste of him exciting and familiar.

"Ah, love," he rasped. And when she slid her mouth fully over his shaft, gripping him with her lips while flicking her tongue against his cock, he laid his hand against her jaw and hissed. "Presley, oh.... No more. I'll come too soon."

He pulled free of her, cupping himself, holding back.

Wicked glee burned inside her, a slow smile curving her lips as she focused on that sexy expression of hard-fought restraint. Kaid recovered, his mouth quirking when he noticed how she watched him, and in retaliation he quickly pushed her back down onto the plush rug.

"Like to fight dirty, do you?" he growled against her ear.

He found her lips with his own, and she opened to him, welcoming the teasing thrust of his tongue.

A second later, she gasped into his mouth when he found her slick pussy and slid his fingers inside, gathering moisture before withdrawing to swirl his thumb over her clitoris.

"I fantasize about you opening yourself to me, just like this."

"You do?" She found the idea highly arousing.

"More often than I probably should," he admitted, then looked down her body. "When did you get the belly ring?"

"On my birthday...." She could barely think, much less elaborate. He traced his thumb over the piercing again, this time flicking the ruby dangle. She shivered, her nipples hardening, her pussy clenching around the questing fingers of his other hand.

"Mm, tight," he commented softly, then leaning over her, his eyes hazy with lust. His gaze locked with hers as he found sensitive places to alternately kiss or nip with his teeth on his way down her body.

He reached her navel and briefly tapped his tongue against the ruby gemstone before taking his ministrations lower, to her inner thighs. His teeth grazed over the sensitive flesh there until she squirmed, beckoning him to end this delicious torture. Calloused hands created a sensual abrasion against her smooth thighs even as he leaned toward her and blew against her heated center, his cool breath sending a heady chill racing over her body.

Presley dropped her head back and moaned, muscles quivering when finally he lowered his mouth to her and began a sensual kiss right where she needed it most. His tongue flicked and darted while his fingers penetrated, rubbed, and stroked in a perfectly maddening rhythm that held her right on the edge.

At last his lips closed over her, giving her what she needed, what she wanted. He sucked her with slow, firm pressure until she bucked up from the floor with a cry on her lips. "Oh, Kaid.... Oh, so good.... Your mouth...."

Uncontrollable sensation sparked high and hot, shooting her over the edge. She unraveled into liquid pleasure, her thoughts shattering into stars that pulsed behind her closed eyelids. A heartthrob beat in her ears as she moaned in helpless abandon, shuddering and writhing like a serpent goddess beneath him.

Hands clenched in his hair, she held him to her, riding out the last of her pleasure against his greedy mouth.

"Gods, Presley," he gasped when finally she pulled away, unable to take any more. He let her go, and she lay there spent, gasping and bereft, her heart thundering so hard it was a miracle it didn't burst.

For a moment she thought Kaid intended to leave her, but he'd only been repositioning himself, rising over her.

She reached for him, and he entered her with a bold thrust, sinking himself inside her all the way to the hilt. For a moment he held himself there, his head bent over her, his arms shaking. She contracted her muscles around him, entranced by the way his hard length filled her, stretched her, the head of his cock throbbing against her womb.

She wrapped her long legs around him, smoothing her hands over the taut muscles in his back as he began to fuck her, the lazy pace building a hunger in her that only moments ago she'd thought sated.

A current of power hummed in the air and prickled over her skin, a sizzling energy that strengthened as his thrusts quickened into a steady, blood-pounding rhythm.

Kaid didn't try to hide the expressive proof of his pleasure; everything he felt while making love to her flashed on his face. The passion Presley saw there sent her heart winging high, and in response, the candles burned brighter in the room, the dim pyre he'd built in the fireplace had become a roaring blaze.

Fire, her element, responded to her heat—the thunder of lust in her blood.

"Presley, ah.... Presley," he moaned, and when she looked at him, she could see his aura shimmering around him, a strong violet-silver.

In the air above them, right in her line of vision, the rough, phantom shape of a heart crackled in the air the same color as his aura—an undeniable projection of his true feelings for her, and a reminder of the binding spell that until now she'd been too selfish to complete.

Nothing could have prepared her for the surge of love she felt for him in that moment. She slid her hands over his back aware of her chakras opening, awakening. An erotic lightness bubbled up inside her.

Had Kaid not held her down with his body weight, Presley was sure she would have levitated. Power skittered through her bloodstream, strengthening, reaching.

Her aura rippled in answer to his, a bright, sizzling magenta. Shaking with lust, teetering on the edge of another orgasm, she looked up and saw her heart sign appear in the air.

She shuddered as sweat beaded on her body; the room seemed so suddenly hot. *She* was hot, burning up, her passion nearly uncontrollable.

"Kinkaid," she rasped out, and kissed his ear. "I give you my heart, now and always. I will belong to you, and you, to me. With these words, I bind you; I bind you, heart to heart, soul to soul, in life and in death."

As soon as the words were out of her mouth, she gasped as pure erotic sensation beamed through her body. The climax poured through her like pure sunshine; it sparkled in her veins, throbbed in her womb as the tension peaked, at last erupting into an intense orgasm that shattered all around her.

When the sensation at last spiraled down, she opened her eyes a fraction, and for a brief moment she saw the pulsating heart symbols fused one inside the other, the joined aura projection showering sparks of light like tiny rainbows.

Kaid thrust into her one last time and came with a hoarse shout. His cock jerked inside her, and the warmth of his seed slicked her insides. She held him to her, laced her legs around his as he eased down onto his elbows.

After a moment, he rolled onto his side, pulling her with him, and they lay there together, spent, their foreheads touching, his hand stroking her hip as he continued to tremble.

"Presley. *Wife*," he whispered, then kissed her forehead, the tip of her nose. He brushed his fingers against her cheek and took a deep breath. "Finally, I have you."

"You've always had me, Kaid."

"Truthfully?"

"I loved you at first sight," she admitted. "I only held off on the Heart Spell because you expected me to make all the sacrifices. But see?" she teased. "You came around."

"That I did," he drawled. "Of course, at your request, the final negotiations are still open for discussion."

He squeezed her backside and Presley couldn't help it; she laughed. Joy flowed through her as pure and potent as any magic spell. Presley laid her hand on Kaid's chest and listened to his heart beating, which had to be the most wonderful sound in the world. When the grandfather clock across the room chimed the hour, she hardly noticed it, but before her eyes, the gold chain around her wrist turned to shimmering dust.

It scattered across her breasts and caught in Kaid's sprinkling of chest hair. She sat up a little and stared at it, remembering what he'd told her earlier.

"Is it really midnight?" she asked, frowning. "It doesn't feel like I've been here that long."

"Time zones, sweetheart."

"Ah, right. That's going to take some getting used to."

"I'm sure you'll manage." Kaid teased, and rolled onto his back, tugging her down on top of him.

Presley giggled. She wasn't about to tell him so, but she had no doubt in her mind that he was absolutely right.



About the author:

Cora Zane has always held a fascination for the unknown, the dark things felt rather than seen, strange occurrences that fall into the realm of the paranormal, and the creatures that stalk the night.

In 2005, when she announced to her family that she had written a story about werewolves, they were shocked to discover it was a romance—and an erotic one at that. Three years later and with a string of novellas and short stories under her belt, they've finally accepted her naughty imagination, and her belief that lost souls need love too.

Cora lives in rural North Louisiana with her husband, two children, and a grumpy old watch dog. She loves hearing from her readers, and can be reached through her website at www.corazane.com as well as various other places around the net.

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Cora Zane Booklist:

Available Through Cobblestone Press

Crossing Borders

Bonding Experience

Dominant Territory

Wicked Temptation

Available Through Freya's Bower

At the Edge of Twilight

(Available as part of *In the Gloaming: An Anthology of Faerie Stories*)

Available Through Wild Child Publishing

The Ghost Train

A Trick of Light

(Both stories available as part of *Weirdly Volume 2: Eldritch*)

Free Downloads Available Through the Midnight Moon Café

Under A Midnight Moon

Heart on Fire

Heart Spell

