

CHILLING ADVENTURES OF
SABRINA

Path of Night

BY **SARAH REES BRENNAN**

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For Beth, my friend from work, with many thanks for
inviting me into the witch's house

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GREENDALE

IF THE PRESENT WORLD GO ASTRAY, THE CAUSE IS IN YOU, IN YOU IT IS TO BE SOUGHT. —DANTE

I woke with daylight transformed to golden prisms through the diamond panes of my windows. I rolled over toward the velvety-black curled-up shape of my sleeping familiar, tucking a smile against my pillow. Through the tangle of dreams warm as bedsheets, a single cold thought intruded.

Something terrible has happened to your boyfriend.

My eyes slammed open. I sat up, spine broomstick-straight, hands closing into fists around my fat, ruffled pillow.

I was safe and warm in my bed this morning because of Nick. Lounging around drowsing felt like a betrayal of him.

I stared around at my wrought-iron headboard, my mirror with roses in the frame, the bedroom I'd had my whole life. Every

inch of my room was familiar, but every detail felt alien because there was no chance of Nick teleporting into any of the sunlit-gold corners, dark and handsome and shocking. I'd scolded Nick for doing that a hundred times. Now I'd give anything for him to appear again.

Salem yawned and stretched, kneading the star-patterned comforter with his claws.

"It's too early for intense angst, Sabrina."

He leaped off the bed and trotted away, nosing the bedroom door open and heading in search of food. The savory scent of Aunt Hilda's cooking filtered up the stairs and through the open door. With my luck, Aunt Hilda was making something featuring eyeballs.

I sighed, climbing out of bed. I knew I wasn't getting back to sleep. I pointed to myself and was instantly clad in a light sweater and short skirt, but I didn't twirl in front of the mirror the way I used to. I was only getting dressed because we always had company these days.

"My love, you're up early." Aunt Hilda glowed as I walked into the kitchen.

Her hair was a golden cloud from bending over her steaming pots, and she wore an apron bearing the legend SEXY WITCH. Her boyfriend, Dr. Cerberus, had given it to her. Her smile dimmed slightly when she saw my face.

Aunt Hilda liked having guests, since it meant more people to appreciate her cooking. And Aunt Hilda was the only Spellman whose love life was currently thriving. My cousin Ambrose's boyfriend had been killed by witch-hunters. Aunt Zelda's husband,

Father Blackwood, had fled the country after attempting to assassinate our entire coven. My boyfriend was trapped in hell.

No matter how screwed up my life was, I wanted Aunt Hilda to stay happy.

With an effort, I smiled back. "Morning."

She enfolded me in a hug. Aunt Hilda smelled like rosemary and mugwort, witch's herbs and childhood love. She stroked my hair. "Sit down and I'll whip you up some waffles in a jiffy."

I sat at the kitchen table, feeling soothed despite myself. It was nice to have time alone with my aunt.

Even as I had that thought, the kitchen door slid open. I sighed, then brightened.

In this house brimful of witches, there was a mortal.

Harvey, one of my three best friends in the whole world, walked into my kitchen carrying a teenage witch in his arms. Elspeth was wrapped in a blanket and had her hands clasped around his neck.

He smiled when he saw me. "Hey, 'Brina."

Only when I told myself sternly to force another smile did I realize I was already smiling at the sight of him. His green flannel shirt and brown hair were sleep-rumpled, and his always small, always sweet smile was drowsy.

"Hey. Didn't know you were here."

Harvey settled Elspeth into the rocking chair, tucking the blanket around her. "Elspeth didn't want to be alone, so I slept over. Miz Spellman said I could," he added, too embarrassed not to call her *Miss Spellman* even though Aunt Hilda had been insisting on *Hilda* for ten years. "Hope that's okay."