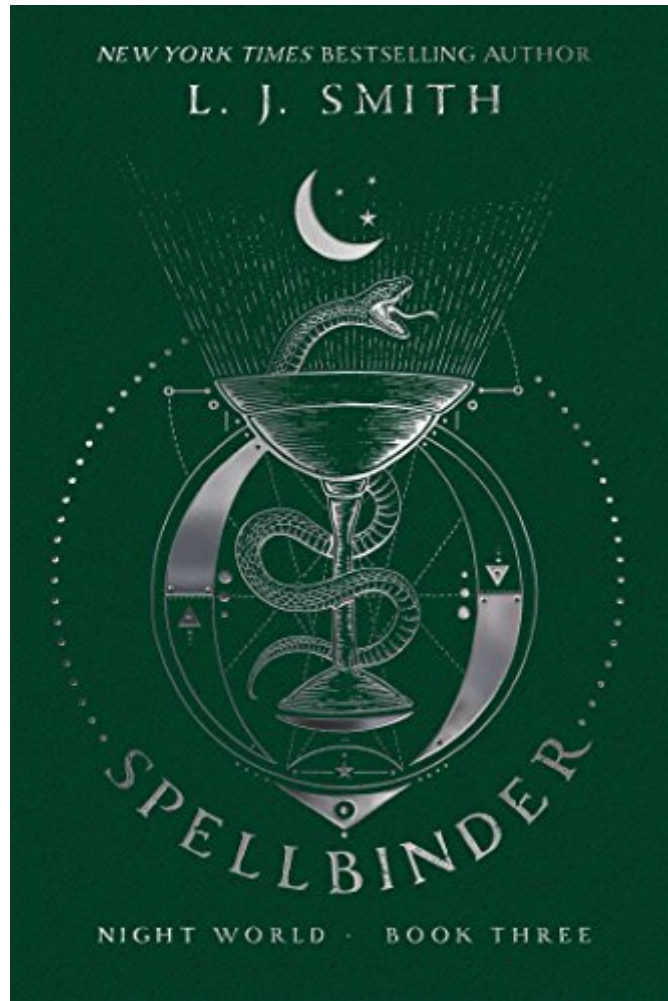




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Spellbinder (Night World Book 3)



Synopsis

The third book in L.J. Smith's beloved Night World series is now available as a special collector's edition! Her name is Blaise and she's irresistible to boys. Her dark, smoldering beauty is an invitation to jealousy and madness. And now she's ready for the kill. Eric Ross is the perfect catch, a star athlete who wants to be a vet. But her cousin Thea, is determined to protect this particular human boy from the girl who was born to destroy men. Blaise's black magic is powerful. The only way Thea can fight back is to use her own white magic, to bewitch Eric herself as a bluff. But soon Thea finds herself getting too close to Eric, feeling forbidden emotions, breaking Night World laws. Falling in love. As Halloween and the Night of the Witch draw closer, can Thea save Eric and herself from Blaise's vengeance?

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Customer Reviews

Like it.

I was very satisfied with this book. LJ Smith has yet to disappoint me and I have most of her books. I read this one in one day.

Night World #3: Spellbinder, by L. J. Smith "She knew the drill. Another year of living with them, of walking quietly through the halls knowing that she was different from everybody around her, even while she was carefully, expertly pretending to be the same (p. 4)." Thea and Blaise are cousins, raised as closely as if they were sisters. They're also both witches, members of the secret Night World. And they are high school students, starting at their fifth high school, having been expelled from four others - mostly because of Blaise. But this time, it's Thea who will jeopardize their future when she breaks the cardinal rules of the Night World; which are 1) Never let humans know about the Night World, and 2) Never fall in love with a human. On their first day of school, Thea meets Eric, and the two are like swans - they know they are destined for each other immediately. There's only one little problem - Eric's human. Thea tries to push Eric away for his safety, but the two are soulmates and nothing she tries will keep him from her. But will she give up everything for him? I read "Spellbinder" pretty quickly, in about 90 minutes, and I enjoyed every minute of it. Normally I don't care at all for romances, but mix in some supernatural elements, good writing, and interesting characters, and I'm hooked. I really liked Smith's portrayal of Thea - you start out thinking she's the quiet type, overshadowed by her vivacious cousin, but she develops believably into someone with backbone, someone caught between a rock and a hard place who doesn't know what way to turn, but tries to do the right thing, but sometimes doing it the wrong way. I also rather relished Smith's detail to the spells and especially the components. I had the feeling "Wow this is cool" when reading. The spells also allow for a nice twist at the end. "Spellbinder" is a great installment in the Night World series, and gives an in-depth look at the witches and their origin in Smith's created world. I for one definitely want to know more about the history of the Night World, and am looking forward to reading more. 4/5.

"Spellbinder" (also published as "Enchantress") is the third book in L. J. Smith's 'Night World' series, concerning the secret world of supernatural creatures that live among normal human beings. Called the Night World, there are several rules imposed upon the witches, vampires, werewolves and shape shifters that inhabit this world, namely that they are to never tell a human being about their secret society, and never to fall in love with one of them. This is the first book in the series to deal with witches rather than vampires, and concerns the lives of two seventeen year old witch cousins

who made their first appearance in "Secret Vampire": Thea and Blaise Harman. The two girls are complete opposites; Thea is fair and quiet, whilst Blaise is black-haired and someone who enjoys playing with the human world for fun - making boys fall in love with her and then discarding them. After a series of expulsions from high schools around the country (the last one having resulted in the school burning down), the cousins are brought to live with their grandmother Edgith Harman - the Crone of All the Witches, a prestigious position within the Circles of Night World witches. In other words, the cousins are on thin ice. But Blaise doesn't trouble herself with things like this - she's always played her love games and doesn't plan on stopping now. Thea however, is desperate to live a quiet, peaceful life. But then she finds her soul mate: Eric Ross, a human. Their connection is powerful, but Thea knows that should they be discovered, it could result in executions for both of them, or in war among the factions of the Night World. When Blaise finds out about Thea's feelings, she decides the only way in which to act is to separate the two of them: by using her own charms to divert Eric's attention away from Thea... The blurb would have you believe that Blaise is an out-and-out villain, and the focus of the story is on the two girls fighting over Eric's affections. This however is not so - the main conflict in the story comes from Thea's attempts to protect Eric by summoning up a benevolent spirit. However, when the spell goes wrong, Thea finds that a murderous witch-ghost is on the loose, and perfectly capable of killing. As well as this there are numerous sub-plots, including Edgith's failing health, Blaise's exploits at her new high school, a few spells and meetings with other witches, Thea's various attempts to allure/dispel Eric's affections and an introduction to Eric's family and his radical-feminist little sister. All this equals a rather slipshod plot that slides all over the place. It's not that the story isn't interesting, but L. J. Smith doesn't seem quite sure on where it's going, or where the true conflict lies. Instead it comes across as a series of magical events and workings that don't quite have the urgency and suspense of other books in the series - especially the later ones. Furthermore, many of the plot points and characters in the book were rather familiar - Smith has been recycling her own work, most particularly "The Secret Circle" trilogy. Blaise and Thea are almost identical to Faye and Diana (and both sets were cousins!) whilst things like the vengeful spirit, the death of a school student and the forbidden love affair all have their counterpoints in this previous trilogy. As such, the story has a lack of originality (and the coupling of Thea and Eric doesn't come across as *that* genuine). But there are some nice touches throughout: we get another piece of the ever-growing history of the Night World (this time it's the story of Hellewise and Maya), some names of other characters that have either been in previous books or will pop up in later ones (such as Aradia, Ash, Quinn and Thierry) that make the book feel like a small part of a larger whole. Smith also makes good use of folklore and mythology, weaving

little bits of 'real' legends and practices into what the characters say and do - like the Cup of Lethe or the many allusions to Aphrodite. All in all, not a bad contribution to the 'Night World' series, though by no means the best: things only get really interesting when we hit book five: "The Chosen".

I always have a bit of trepidation approaching paranormal novels not vampire or were- based. They're often a bit inaccessible to me, especially those based on witches, loaded down with spells and difficult-to-follow lore. But as with the others of Smith's "Night World" I have read thus far, "Spellbinder" is much easier to approach than the norm, written for young inductees into the paranormal phenomenon. Good witch Thea and dubious cousin witch Blaise are alike and yet quite dissimilar -- Blaise is a virtual goddess of love, while Thea's lie more in the arts of caring for animals. The two have few disagreements in contrary to what one might expect, though they share the mantle of Blaise's ongoing penchant for trouble. Upon arrival at their new school and last chance, Thea's skills with animals are instantly tested, and resultingly she finds herself drawn to human boy Eric, a veterinarian to be (and one of the most compelling "Night World" heroes). Things would be hectic enough with Blaise's attempts to claim Eric for herself, but soon even Thea is working forbidden magics of her own, and eventually the full burden of responsibility for their actions comes to bear down on the witch-pair. While I very much (and surprisingly!) enjoyed this book, there are a few flaws. I found myself questioning a few subplots -- most notably Blaise's former pet and his appearance at the school seemed a bit embryonic and not thoroughly explained, and the book's resolutiooon, while surprising and fulfilling, still leaves one wondering if justice really has been served. All in all, fun, with good characters. 7.8/10

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