



Love & Sorcery: My Unconventional Autobiography: Naughty Version

Benjamin Boxer

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A dragon and a phoenix use their magical skills and enduring relationship to gird them through countless episodic adventures in the hypersexual fantasy novel Love and Sorcery.

Benjamin Boxer's erotic fantasy novel *Love and Sorcery* places the ill-fated love affair of a dragon and phoenix alongside a grim account of personal struggles and family disputes on Kauai.

Zachary is a powerful dragon who falls in love with his high school classmate, Hermione, who's a phoenix. This frowned-upon relationship opens the doors to unending violence as they both struggle to mature and protect one another from fantastical monsters. When Hermione faces rapists, Zachary becomes her protector, breaking rules and trespassing into forbidden territories to save her. In turn, Hermione comforts Zachary, humors his rebelliousness, and satisfies his sexual fantasies. Their magical skills and enduring relationship gird them through countless episodic adventures in which titans, werebears, and other creatures descend on their small kingdom.

Numerous narrative threads clutter and overwhelm the basic elements of this story, though. Zachary intuitively feels that he is descended from an ancient lineage; this becomes the subject of an expansive backstory. However, it is never clear what the implications of being related to such a family are.

Other characters are introduced without positive identification, and individuals oscillate between being friends and strangers or sisters and lovers. Monsters appear, attack, and are never described or named again. Competitions between Hermione and her friends are introduced in countless graphic sex scenes, yet these conflicts arise and disappear without lasting impact. Hermione leaves Zachary and then returns to him within the space of a single paragraph. Such unexplained shifts make for a plot that is vague and elusive. Digressive lists on what to eat and how to exercise in order to enlarge a penis, get bigger breasts, or seduce a stepsibling further impede the book's cohesion.

Underlying the narrative is autobiographical commentary that highlights bullying, family betrayal, and psychological torture in the Hawaiian community. The text often draws links between its fantasy tale and these elements, yet specifics are elusive in the latter portions, which function more as fuzzy diatribes that repeat verbatim throughout without need.

The prose is chaotic and often indecipherable. Long conversations between multiple characters are written as dense paragraphs without quotation marks, line breaks, or dialogue tags, muddling their details. Misspelled words, inconsistently spelled words, and punctuation errors further impede it. Indeed, the book is at its most grounded during its sex scenes when gendered language and elaborate descriptions make the characters easier to distinguish. However, these scenes are rife with violence and romanticize rape and incest, making them off-putting too. Vicious attacks are described in pornographic detail, titillating Zachary and other men in the book. Women are referred to as "whores" and "sluts," subjected to sexual whims, and are never given space to acknowledge the brutal attacks they endure.

An erotic fantasy novel punctuated by sexual how-to guides, *Love and Sorcery* follows the adventures and sexual exploits of a dragon and a phoenix.

WILLEM MARX (September 15, 2024)

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