

Sanctuary of the Shadow: The Elemental Emergence Series

Aurora Ascher

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In Aurora Ascher's erotic fantasy novel *Sanctuary of the Shadow*, a girl fights for the right to live life as her authentic self.

A Water Elemental with the ability to see the future and the sole survivor of the genocide against her people, Harrow hides in plain sight as a circus fortune teller. When the circus manager, Salizar, brings a new attraction to the circus—a deadly wraith caught in a cage—Harrow's world is upended. Attracted to Raith—a beast of a man with fire in his eyes and no memory beyond a few days ago—Harrow helps him to escape, urged on by her Water magic. She believes they are somehow connected.

What begins as a desire to help another living creature evolves into a passionate love affair between two beings with Fire and Water magic, unspooling the dense weave of the Elemental Queens' lies. Their wars destroyed Harrow's people, and their tools of death were the wraiths. When Harrow realizes that her new love is the same force that killed her people, decisions await.

Harrow and Raith's dynamic sparks from their first meeting. The sexual tension between them is palpable, and their unapologetic yielding to their desire for one another is exhilarating. Their relationship is that of equals—though the clash between Raith's naïve, deadpan reasoning about killing and Harrow's explanations of why killing is wrong is humorous in its defiance of reason and logic. When they're forced toward traditional roles, it detracts from the balance of their relationship.

With twists and revelations that come at the right times, helped along by dreams and sensuality, *Sanctuary of the Shadow* is a passionate fantasy novel in which a girl finds her equal in her opposite.

ERIKA HARLITZ KERN (January / February 2024)

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