



The Dawsons

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The Dawsons introduces the world of Magika and its volatile inhabitants in a spellbinding tale of forbidden love.

A new generation of star-crossed lovers emerges on the planet of Magika, where witches rule and demons lurk. The futures of two feuding families, one royal and one vagrant, intertwine in Lydia and Santina Casablanca's *The Dawsons*, a dark romance full of supernatural scandal and seduction.

Twin princesses Rose and Rosa are known for their poise and impeccable manners, but when orphaned bad-boy brothers Derrick and Francesco Dawson enter their lives, sparks fly and passions ignite. Forbidden to be together by a vengeful king, hunted by a mysterious demon, and plagued by tragedy, their love is both a blessing and a curse.

Set in a world populated entirely by witches, Magika seems to parallel Earth geographically; specifically, the setting mirrors Sicily from around 1949 to 1968. The princesses travel by royal carriage and live in a palace, but attend public high school and frequent local diners. Combined with the modern slang, dialogue, and social interactions, Magika has a unique, timeless quality that will appeal to fans of both historical and contemporary genres.

Taking the stereotypical bad boy to a new level, Derrick pushes the limits of the antihero with his temper, vices, callous words, and actions. A troubled youth with a tragic past, his angst and over-the-top misbehaving may captivate teens and young adults able to embrace his mantra, "love is pain," while overlooking the frequent physical and verbal abuse of his younger siblings.

His opposite in many ways, Rose completes the bad boy/good girl trope, torn by her inexplicable attraction to Derrick. Francesco and Rosa, on the other hand, are much more complex characters, and the twists and turns never stop as their relationship unfolds.

Some unlikely developments and inconsistencies occur, particularly within the given time frame, such as sixteen-year-old Derrick calling eleven-year-old Rose "sexy." The dichotomy of the teens being completely independent and engaging in adult actions, yet unable to obtain food or even a blanket for the bed, is largely unbelievable, but appropriate as a source of the angst and teenage melodrama that remain prevalent throughout.

The fantasy elements are a bit undefined and secondary to the relationship turmoil, as evidenced by the sporadic use of spells and innate magic. Unanswered questions and cliffhangers abound, including the role and motivation of the deadly demon, as well as the fates of the brothers and their princesses. A "To Be Continued..." opens the door for more exploration and, hopefully, fuller disclosure in the next installment.

A paranormal young adult romance with a touch of magic and a torrent of secrets and passion, *The Dawsons* introduces the world of Magika and its volatile inhabitants in a spellbinding tale of forbidden love.

PALLAS GATES MCCORQUODALE (July 21, 2017)

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