



# Brush with Catastrophe

*Tara Lain*

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## **Brush with Catastrophe** Tara Lain

Sammy Raphael is a crappy witch, and on top of that, he can't seem to get a boyfriend. Where other supernaturals can bring down lightning and manifest wealth, Sammy can paint. Granted, the “prophetic” paintings he creates at night always come true, but they never predict anything important. Sammy feels like a total loser with a worthless ability.

One night he paints a gorgeous guy who turns out to be his secret crush, the human Ryder, but Ryder's changed so much he's almost unrecognizably beautiful. Then Sammy paints an angel who turns out to be a witch. But is that witch also a devil—a devil who can bring down Sammy's whole community and everyone he loves? And why the hell does Ryder keep changing? Aloysius, the black cat familiar, always backs a winner. So why is he backing Sammy?

## **Brush with Catastrophe Details**

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Author : Tara Lain

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# From Reader Review Brush with Catastrophe for online ebook

## Calila says

**\*A copy of this book was provided for free by the author in exchange for an honest review.\***

I honestly feel like this book was insulting my intelligence. Sammy was nearing TSTL. Ryder was mostly just.....there. So a renowned familiar suddenly attaches himself to you and starts hissing at the new guy you just met....maybe LISTEN TO THE CAT. I mean that's just a good rule in life. Animal hates someone? Think about why that is. Head Witch having trouble with a certain coven, new guy is from that coven....HMMM CONNECT A DOT. (This does get mentioned later, but it's a blink and you miss it line). Best friend/object of lust named ALVISH suddenly transforms and becomes ethereal.....CONSIDER THAT HE MAYBE ISN'T HUMAN. The villain mind controlled & raped a lot of people, and that's never addressed....his victims seem to shrug it off with no trauma. Bleh. This was just so not the book for me.

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## Lorraine Lesar says

Tara Lain certainly stirred up the cauldron with this little magical tale (the second book in her The Aloysius Tales Series and a re-release, so check that you haven't read it first time around).

She waved her writers wand and gave a very entertaining, magical story with a hint of mystery and a great big dollop of love, that kept things bubbling along nicely.

Sometimes in life, things happen and you realise that everything is not what it appears to be, people have secrets. And because they are secrets, they don't want them to come out.....

The character portrayal, as always, was expertly done but it was Aloysius who was the show-stopper (but got to say that the weirdly shaped penises, came a very close second, lol).

But the real beauty of this storyline for me, was the ease in which the words flowed and I was very happy to let them carry me along as Sammy finds his Soul Mate, Ryder (yes, I love you too Ryder) and choices have to be made and then what actions to take to remedy the situation?

Not that many humorous moments as I've come to expect from this author, but expertly executed from the first to the very last page and another winner from my Queen of Love Dreams.

Five averted catastrophe stars from me.

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## Pianka \*call me PIU\* says

**3.75 stars**

**'Brush with Catastrophe' is the second book in the 'Aloysius' series by Tara Lain. Besides the witches, this time another surprise supernatural being is introduced here which was quite nice and added to**

**the thrill of the whole ‘supernatural’ feel of the story.**

In this instalment, we get the story of Sammy and Alvish aka Ryder. Sammy has learned recently that he is a witch but whereas his other witchy friends have impressive witchy powers, he has none. The only power which he seems to possess is the ability to predict insignificant future happenings through his paintings. Besides his not too impressive powers, Sam is also severely disappointed in the lack of progress or development in his love life. He has been crushing on his friend, Alvish for years but the guy is straight and Sammy is totally out of luck.

But then a new European witch, Lucien Eshel joins Sam’s school. Lucien is beyond beautiful with his angelic face and ethereal beauty, turning heads wherever he goes. And then the most unexpected thing happens when Lucien shows romantic interests in Sam. Sammy is equally delighted and scared. Lucien is more than Sam could have ever hoped for in a boyfriend, but his lingering feelings for Ryder and a sense of foreboding keeps him from falling in Lucien’s spell completely.

Lucien is hiding a shocking secret. There is evil lurking behind his angelic face and Sam is his target. **Will Sammy be able to realize his true powers and save his community from Lucien? Will he be able to finally find love? Read to find out!!**

**The story was exciting and kept me hooked with the whole mystery behind Ryder and Lucien.** I knew that there was something major going on with both of them but it was not revealed completely until the supernaturally charged climax. The last fight sequence felt like the climax from the movie ‘The Sorcerer’s Apprentice’ with balls of energy being thrown around willy nilly.

I loved Sammy. He was a total sweetheart. He always thought himself as a useless witch but it turns out that he was the most powerful witch of all. His yearning for love lands him in trouble but he fights it off with the help of Ryder while also rising to the occasion spectacularly when his fellow witches needed him the most.

Ryder and Sammy’s relationship transitions from friends to lovers quite late in the story but when it does, the sizzle factor just exploded. The smut here was intense and scorching and I totally loved it\*wink\*

I know that the author wanted to make the reveal about Ryder at the very end but Sammy not asking questions about Ryder’s rapidly changing appearance and his need to go back home soon did not feel plausible. Sammy knew Ryder was most likely not a human (I mean I am a mere human, but even I knew!!) but he still does not totally come out and ask him about the real reasons behind it, which kind of felt weird. So this was my one qualm about the whole book.

Killian and Blaine make frequent appearances here which were also very nice. Aloysius once again purred his way into my heart in this story. The powerful familiar was as temperamental as ever as he guides Sammy towards his true self and love.

**So overall, I did enjoy reading this supernatural friends-to- lovers story a lot. If you want a light supernatural romance with lots of passion and magic, then this is the book for you.**

**\*This review has been cross posted at GayBookReviews\***

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## **Lena Grey says**

Greatness doesn't always present itself with a shout; sometimes it appears with a whisper. Sammy Raphael's powers don't dazzle people like other witches he knows do, so Sammy feels unimportant in comparison, but, in truth, he's not. Sammy is a good, decent, kind person who has lots of friends who admire and love him simply for who he is. The measure of a good friend is that they have lots of friends of their own. Sammy has to learn to be a better friend to himself.

Sammy is such an endearing, selfless character. His down-to-earth attitude and humility are his trademarks. He's humble, but he's also strong, brave, and loving. He often puts himself first, ignoring his feelings rather than hurting someone else. Even though he's a bit shy, he's not socially inept; he's just super considerate. What Sammy wants more than anything is for his best friend Ryder to return his love, but their friendship is so important to him, that he'd rather have him as a friend than lose him altogether. Sammy may be considerate, but he's not someone to be taken advantage of, and, if he can help it, he won't let anyone else take advantages of anyone else either. Unlike Killian, from the first book in the series, who is beautiful, flashy, dramatic, and displays his magic literally with thunder and lightening, Sammy is quiet and unassuming. Because his gift is more subtle than some of the other witches', he may not seem as exciting; but it's dangerous to judge by what is only apparent on the outside.

Ryder is an interesting character, because from the start, he seems to be hiding something. It's hard to pinpoint exactly what that might be. Clues are presented at different intervals in the story, but even with those, I couldn't figure it out. It is quite poignant that he loves Sammy but can't tell him. Not only does he not want to lose Sammy's friendship, but Ryder doesn't want to drag him into the dilemma in his own life. If he can save Sammy pain, he's going to do it regardless of what he has to sacrifice personally. Eventually, in order to be in a better position to protect Sammy, Ryder is compelled to reveal his feelings. Sammy and Ryder are so perfect for each other, that it made my heart sing to see the two of them together. Their sexual encounters are hot, but they are also loving and very meaningful. I admired Ryder for following his heart rather than the path his family has chosen for him, but I was even more thrilled that it was Sammy, not Ryder, who makes that possible.

Although it's not fair to compare the first book with this one, I couldn't help but do so. Truthfully, it's a case of apples and oranges; Killian and Sammy are two completely different personalities. Both stories have their own unique charm, but, for me, this book shines even brighter than the first. That's because it presents us with an alternative hero. Sammy reminds us that everyone is special in their own way, and what might not seem like a big deal at the time, may be the biggest deal of all. I recommend this story to anyone with a romantic soul like mine, who believes that quiet strength is just as powerful as is overt strength. Thanks, Tara, for presenting us with such an inspiring story.

NOTE: This book was provided by Dreamspinner Press for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews.

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## **Jodi Ciorciari-marinich says**

This is the second book in The Aloysius Tales series. We learn more about Sammy who is half witch and half human. Sammy feels he isn't a very good witch because he doesn't have any real powers. He has good friends but feels lonely because he doesn't have a boyfriend. Ryder (Alvish) has been one of his

best friends since they started college together and Sammy has had a major crush on him since they met. The premise of this story was good but I felt Tara moved slow for me in the beginning of the story. Ryder came back from summer break and he looked totally different and I couldn't understand why. Sammy thought he was straight so he just lusted after him from afar. Then we meet Lucian, who is all suave and a witch who is visiting from a different country. You can tell from the beginning that something is fishy about him but Sammy falls for him anyway. Sammy doesn't want to be intimate with Lucian since he is still hung up on Ryder. Lucian tries something with Sammy and Ryder comes to take care of him. From that point on, Ryder can't hold off his attraction to Sammy any longer and they get together. Now I thought the chemistry between Ryder and Sammy was cute but I felt they moved really fast with the relationship. Ryder is hiding something from everyone and I couldn't wait to find out. You know isn't human but aren't sure why he is there and how he will help Sammy and the others. Now Aloysius the cat is back and I loved the way he becomes Sammy's and wouldn't let him go. He is helping Sammy in some way but we don't know why in the beginning. Aloysius likes Ryder but hates Lucian and as we find out, he knows why. As the story progresses we find out what Lucian is up to and how Ryder and Sammy foil that plan. Sammy finds out he is very special after all. The ending was cute to read how Ryder and Sammy get their HEA. I love all of Tara's writing but this one wasn't one of my favorites of hers.

\*ARC provided by Dreamspinner Press in exchange for an honest review.

Reviewed by Jodi from Alpha Book Club

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## **Deeze says**

[ Jimmy did nothing about the ne

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## **Buffy Kennedy says**

I thought this one started out a little slower, but that's only because I tend to focus on the romance, and this story has a lot of buildup for the mystery and conflict. I really enjoyed getting to know Sammy more, as he was really barely introduced in the first book. We also do get to see a little more of Killian and Blaine (yay!). Everything just added to the anticipation of both the romance and the climactic showdown that you know is inevitable.

The neat thing about this book is that the mystery is written really well. Sure you get hints along the way, but not enough to give the secret away. Tara keeps you guessing right up until she actually reveals everything. I had my theories, but could never nail down anything with conviction, and I love a book that I can't predict every facet of right from the beginning!

There was a little less blatant magic throughout the book, because Sammy isn't able to do a lot of the same things other witches can, and Aloysius isn't shown as quite as powerful either, because of being attached to Sammy whose magic works differently. No worries though, there's still magic, it's just a lot more subtle for the most part, which is just another angle in the mystery!

The villain in this book is a lot darker than the first, and I mean a lot darker. He's powerful and cruel and while thankfully MOST of the badness happens off screen, enough is shown to have you holding your breath and on the edge of your seat hoping that it'll all be ok. Of course the flip side is that there are happy times

that make you sigh in contentment or even cheer.

An emotional thrill ride, *Brush with Catastrophe* is a nail biter that will have you up all night needing to know how it all turns out. In the end, you're left a little in awe of it all and you'll be clamoring for more!

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### **Diane says**

If you like stories about underdogs, you will enjoy this book, and if you read *Spell Cat*, you will want to read this so you can cheer for the characters!

Sammy doesn't think he's a very good witch because he cannot sense if someone is a witch and his powers seem to be prophetic paintings, but not exactly life altering prophecies, or at least so it seems.

The first one that jars him is a beautiful painting that seems to be of a college friend Ryder, who has changed drastically over the summer. Where Sammy had always had a crush on Ryder, he is a dream come true now, well, if it wasn't for the small detail of Ryder being straight!

Another painting of a different gorgeous man and in his next art class, Lucien is introduced.

And in all this, Aloysius decides he's going to be spending time with Sammy, which Killian just goes with because he knows Al will do whatever he wants (familiar or not, that is pure cat!), so Sammy has an unplanned house, class and pretty much everywhere he goes guest!

Lucien appears interested in Sammy, and while Sammy still pines for Ryder, anything beyond friendship seems impossible, besides the straight issue, he is also human and with how Sammy feels about his powers, he does not see how he could reveal he is a witch.

But is Ryder "merely" human? He suspects that Lucien may not be all that he claims to be and starts his own investigation, despite being told by phone, to not get involved, which leaves you with questions on who it is, although you kind of guess it's family.

A dramatic turn of events brings Ryder and Sammy in close quarters, where Ryder offers to stay and care for Sammy, and this does alter their relationship somewhat, but helps them with the challenges waiting for them.

I love this series, Tara is easily one of my favorite authors because the world she creates is so full, with the characters, background, and how the characters overlap their storylines. While *Spell Cat* had two lead characters who were quite confident in themselves, this one goes to the other side of having two leads (Sammy and Ryder) who are uncertain about their place in their world. They are tested individually and together and work through it with care of other people being their motivation for their actions. Sammy makes an interesting discovery about the potential in his powers and the caution he will have to take with it going forward, and they discover that his talent could help Ryder with the choice he must make as well.

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### **Heller says**

2.5

There were a few disturbing dubcon issues with this one for me. Ryder and Sammy were sweet though and I

liked them when they did get together. Again Aloysius for the win.

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### **AliciaJ says**

This was fun and sweet, with some magic tossed in the mix. Loved it.

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### **Lily says**

As previously mentioned by Vio, this story had quite a few endearing elements (especially Aloysius), some interesting plot devices, but lacked the general attractive chemistry of its prequel. The protagonists' transition from friends to lovers felt a bit forced, so the romance did not appeal to me. It was still a pleasant book, just not among the best I've read from the author.

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### **Vio says**

I was so eager to start reading Brush with Catastrophe as soon as I saw it pop up on my updates. I must be slow or just determined because it wasn't till the half way mark that I realized something was missing. It wasn't as catchy, quirky or magical, that crazy appeal that Spell Cat had was sadly missing, not even close to being as entertaining. Sammy and Ryder didn't stir up much interest and the plot was not as exciting as I expected. Aloysius was as adorable as ever and that eased my disappointment a little bit, sequels can be a curse for the reader and the author!

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### **Amber says**

Full review available at: <https://optimummblog.wordpress.com/20...>

Brush with Catastrophe by Tara Lain is part of the Aloysius Tales series and it was absolutely amazing. I have become a huge fan of Tara Lain, and the way she writes has a way of keeping me energized, focused, invested, and guessing on how the storyline is going to go and then being proved completely wrong as she throws in a twist that I didn't see coming.

Brush with Catastrophe had so much emotion and passion, and I love when the main characters are allowed to cry. So many books are still going with the age old saying that it isn't manly to cry and I love that Sammy and Ryder are secure enough in their masculinity to show how they are truly feeling at all times. Sammy is a great character and has some very realistic insecurities. He is a witch, but he feels that the power that he has received is pretty worthless. He would rather be able to call down lightning and manifest wealth. However, he is a prophetic painter, and although what he paints always comes true, he hasn't painted anything that's very important. He has also been in love with his straight, human best friend Ryder. And of course, humans aren't allowed to know about the paranormal world let alone date one.

But Ryder isn't what he seems. Come to find out, he isn't straight or human and he is on a quest of his own. He has also been forbidden to have a relationship or interfere with the people around him. He is there only as



an observer before having to go home. He has also been in love with his best friend Sammy for a while. However, he hasn't been able to physically act on his feelings until his body has entered into adulthood. Ryder is there to put Sammy back together after his relationship with Lucien goes bad. And although it was sad that Sammy had to go through what he did with Lucien, I did like that it was the catalyst that was needed to get Ryder to confess his feelings to Sammy.

Brush with Catastrophe has everything that I look for in a book. It had friends that will do anything for you, a lover turned villain (Lucien), a straight best friend (Ryder) that isn't as straight as you thought and suddenly isn't as unavailable as you thought when he confesses that he's wanted you just as much, a glorious battle between good and evil, and some very, very steamy passion-filled scenes.

I recommend Brush with Catastrophe to everybody who likes a little magic with their happily ever after. I can't wait to read my next Tara Lain book and get swept away on my next adventure.

\*\*\*The ARC was provided by Dreamspinner Press. My review is an honest opinion of the book\*\*\*

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### **Vicktor Alexander says**

I was surprised to find out about the wonder that is Sammy and even more surprised by the wonder that is Alvish, but this made for a wonderful read. Tara so perfectly wove a delightful story that had me on the edge of my... well, my bed, because that's where I was reading it. I was on tenterhooks through the whole thing. Growling at characters, gasping, laughing, fanning myself with certain scenes and up until the end I still had no idea how it was going to end (and usually I'm pretty good with that). A delightful, delightful read. I would recommend it to anyone.

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### **Francesca the Fierce (Under the Covers Book Blog) says**

**3.5**

#### **This review was posted at Under the Covers**

A little bit less humor than I come to expect from Tara Lain, but I guess that might just be the tone this series is written in. Having not read the previous book, I really can't put my finger on how this series should be.

What I can tell you is that this story was entertaining, with just a touch of magic and a bit of mystery. Sammy is a witch, albeit not a very powerful one. He's been in love with his straight best friend Alvish for years. When he comes back from summer break a grown, changed man, going by the new name Ryder, and although Sammy swoons, might be time for him to realize that their love will never happen. Cue in the perfectly timed entrance of Lucien, a very powerful witch from Europe who just happens to be model-worthy gorgeous, gay and apparently attracted to Sammy.

But things aren't always what they seem, and that rings true with pretty much everyone in this book. Everyone is guarding secrets. And it's not until a major shake up in the witch community that truths come

out.

There's plenty of time in this book when Sammy and Ryder aren't actually together, even though Ryder is always lurking and trying to be a friend. So the connection wasn't as strong for me. But maybe that could be because of missing parts from the first book. Once they are together, they do work well. I was rooting for Sammy to get his HEA and that he got.

But here's my tiny mini rant... Lucien made my skin crawl most of the time, but when he pulls out the cobra shaped penis, I was about to run for the hills. And while we are on the subject of weirdly shaped phallus, after I got over Lucien's, turns out Ryder isn't normal either! As Sammy said... the week of the weirdly shaped penises!

Loved the friendships in the book and the support they all give each other. And I loved Aloysius....  
Errrrrrrrr. I need to get me one of those!

\*Review copy provided by publisher

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