



Basic Witch (Witches of Salem: Gemma Bradbury Mystery #1)

Harmony Hart , Nova Nelson

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Welcome to Salem, where paranormals of all kinds live in harmony. Mostly.

My name is Gemma Bradbury, and I've spent most of my life trying to be what everyone else expects me to be. The problem with living my life for other people is that I never figured out who I really am.

But then I stumbled—quite literally—into a new life in Salem, and everything changed. In less than an hour, I was tangled up in the suspicious death of an elderly shop owner, realized my cat can talk, and—here's the kicker—found out I'm a *witch*.

I also found out I was stuck in Salem.

Forever.

But when I secured a job and a place to live, and the Coven assigned me a magical tutor—the drop-dead gorgeous Professor Beauregard Bacchus—things started to look up.

All I have to do now is learn to navigate a new town full of witches, vampires and shifters, manage a magic shop, pass my first wand exam, and keep my growing affection for Professor Beau a secret.

Oh, and find the shop owner's *real* killer before the town's bumbling moose-shifter deputy tosses me in jail for murder.

Guess my life isn't so basic anymore.

Fans of witty cozy mysteries will love this magical tale featuring a reluctant female sleuth, an opinionated feline familiar and a touch of romance set in a quaint (and gossipy) supernatural village.

Note: This book contains lighthearted humor and recipes and is free of swearing, graphic violence, and sex.

Basic Witch (Witches of Salem: Gemma Bradbury Mystery #1) Details

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From Reader Review Basic Witch (Witches of Salem: Gemma Bradbury Mystery #1) for online ebook

Emily Pennington says

When Gemma Bradbury's aunt died, Gemma had been ready to quit her thankless corporate job. Although she didn't know a thing about running a magic shop, nor even that she had an aunt in Oregon, it seemed like fate had just opened a door for her. As her last customer left, she had turned to Gemma and suggested she wear the citrine pendant hanging at the back of the shop. Gemma locked up and tried to count the register, but her cat climbed in the drawer, meowing for dinner. With no other choice, she headed up to her apartment, first grabbing the pendant that Marnie had suggested.

Starting back up the stairs, Titus suddenly jumped onto her shoulder, claws digging in; she started to fall and grabbed at a bookcase which spun around and tossed her into a hidden room. Her foot caught on something and she fell face-first – but never struck the floor? Looking down, she saw she had fallen on a man's dead body! The bookcase slammed shut and she was thrown into darkness!

Gemma woke up to see a man's face looking at her, smiling that she was awake. A crowd of people were pushing into the room as well. The man had heard her scream and broke the door down. Her cat approached and started talking to her!!! Deputy Stu arrived to investigate the death of the old man on her floor, then immediately asked Gemma why she did it! Gilmer Gaylor, Assistant to the Mayor, stepped forward and said that Gemma had to accompany him to Town Council immediately. He ignored Deputy Stu's blustering. In one last attempt to escape this craziness, Gemma throws herself against the bookcase, pushing and pulling in the hope it will spin her back home – but it doesn't, and she takes Gilmer's arm to appear before the Council.

Gemma was assigned a job, replacing the deceased in the magic shop, and a place to live. Then Professor Bacchus was called in to teach her what she needed to know. Now all she has to do is learn how to use her magic, and find the real killer before Deputy Stu tosses her in a cell.

This was a fun, well-written cozy! The descriptions of events and the environment were nicely detailed to give the reader a perfect picture of everything that is going on. The story line was wonderful, especially as she lands right in the middle of a murder and meets the strange characters of her new world. I am delighted to read this series and look forward to the next exciting book! I voluntarily read a review copy of this book and my comments reflect my honest opinion.

Mary Getz says

ARC . BRAVO ! ? A GREAT CAPTIVATING ROMANCE

AN ABSOLUTELY WITCHY DELIGHTFUL ROMANCE by Harmony Hart, she writes a fast-paced thrilling hilarious strong compelling structure storyline and well developed characters in Gemma Bradbury and Beauregard Bacchus and supporting characters in Salem in a intriguing twisty exquisitely brilliant well written story . The story is drama rom-com adventure emotional roller coaster captivating sizzling chemistry strength of character mystery action suspense thrilling twist turns obstacles hurdles and captivating from start to finish ? ? . I love and recommend this book to everyone ? ? .

Carol says

Gemma inherited a New Age shop from her aunt and found that in order to make the shop a success, she had to learn a bit more about spells and potions as most of her customers were Wiccans and many of them not only came to her for ingredients, they also expected expert advice as to how and what to use in their spells and potions. As she did not really believe in any of that, Google was her best friend and helped her appear knowledgeable and credible in front of her customers. That was of course until she tripped and fell against the bookshelf on the back wall of the shop, which in turn spun round and deposited her in the shop of, and onto the dead body of Mortimer Moncrief, owner of the magic shop in Magickal Salem. And there was no going back.

Nice start to a new series about the witches of Salem. I enjoyed this book and getting to know the characters in the new magical realm. Will certainly be looking out for more from Harmony Hart in the future. Received an ARC and this is my honest opinion.

Munira Vahed says

Another amazing series!

Wow I am absolutely loving this genre of paranormal cozy mysteries.

This book was about a young woman called Gemma who inherits a magic shop after her long lost grandma dies.

Things take a mysterious turn when she literally stumbles into the magical town of Salem.

This town reminded me of Spellbound which is very much like Salem wherein a paranormal person can enter it but cannot leave it due to a curse placed on it.

As she tumbles into it via a hidden bookshelf, she falls onto a dead body.

Once she is introduced to the Council where the Coven Headquarters are, she is assigned a tutor to teach her everything witchcraft. Professor Beau is a seriously attractive.

Once she realises that she may become a suspect in the murder, she decides to investigate herself and find the real culprit.

I loved most of the characters in the story and am looking forward to reading more and seeing how life for Gemma develops in this special town.

MaryBeth Smetana says

I absolutely love the recipes given this story!! Major perk to adding this book to my collection. The paranormal and romances combined are fantastic little treats for my long days. Gemma is goofy girl with no footing in life but I'm hoping with her accident she understands and accepts who she is in life. Knowing your stuck in one spot changes things a bit but Gemma is very much a "Go with the flow" kinda person. I would've loved to learn more about the characters in this story but maybe I just need to keep reading the series to find out more and receive more recipes. Give this a try. If you don't like it, it was a short but sweet story. If you do like it, follow this author and get all the books she releases.

Toni says

Thrill, chills and humour galour!! Gemma has never felt like she fit into any type of slot in her life. Then out of nowhere she learns she inherited a shop from an aunt she didn't even know she had. It's Samhain and she's selling items from her Wiccan shop when her last customer suggests she wear a necklace hanging near the register. Gemma and her trusty cat, Titus, are going through the register to close out but her cat is anxious to eat. So as Gemma turns from the register she sees the necklace and puts it on and stumbles against a bookcase which opens and she falls into-----a dead man. From this point on poor Gemma is totally confused when she can't figure out where in the world she is, why she's being treated like the murderer and then to find lots of sexy good looking men to boot!! Then the most gorgeous man she's ever seen appears before her andlet's just say things get real interesting from this point on!
Fantastic story and great characters!!

I received a free copy of this book via Booksprout and am voluntarily leaving a review.

Leigh Smith says

A cozy murder mystery with a cute love story woven in. Wonderful writing!! I love how the author blended the two together! I can't wait to see what happens in the next book!!

Gabrielle Hashimoto says

Basic Witch is the first book in a fun new Witch cozy mystery series by Harmony Hart. Gemma Bradbury is preparing to open her new bookshop in Salem (Oregon) when she suddenly finds herself standing over a dead body in a very different Salem. Now she finds herself being accused of murder, unable to return to Salem, and suddenly finding out that magic actually exists, she's a witch, and her cat Titus is her familiar. I enjoyed this charming read with its fun and quirky characters, its diverse magical characters, and its interesting and entertaining take on a magical Salem. I enjoyed following along as Gemma navigated her magical education and learned to live in this very different version of Salem. With mystery, magic, romance, and humor, Basic Witch is the perfect read for people who enjoy a good, clean, easy to read cozy mystery and I'm looking forward to seeing where the author takes Gemma on both her magical journey and her new life in Salem.

I received a free copy of this book via Booksprout and am voluntarily leaving a review.

Bev says

Gemma Bradbury is transported to a different Salem at the end of a long day at work. She also is found lying on the body of a dead man. A man that was very important to 'this' Salem. Magickal Salem is where she finds out she too is a witch and can never leave this place. But she must learn how to be a witch. Here so many of the males are 'model hot', but Gemma needs to prove that she did not kill the shop owner that she

now must learn to run. Things are really different here, including that her cat and she can now talk to one another. I voluntarily reviewed a free copy of this book Booksprout. This is my honest opinion of it. I can't wait for the next installment!

Marsha Spohn says

Reviewed at Haunted Bookshelf

I had fun with this first story in the series. Gemma is magically dropped into a weird situation in an even stranger town... she's far, far from home now.

Basic Witch introduces us to a magical town that is quite literally not on any map. The residents are pretty much all gorgeous (there are exceptions but most are at the very least cute) and all have paranormal abilities. You'll find everything from witches, jinn, shifters and any paranormal creature you can possibly think of quite at home in Salem. For the most part they all play nice in this locked off from the rest of the world town... for the most part. Someone wasn't so nice when they left a dead body for Gemma to stumble over upon arrival. Now she's a suspect, the newest person to leave the human world and come to Salem in a very long time... and her cat, Titus, can talk to her now. Talk about an eventful evening.

Basic Witch gives us a funny cozy mystery with a touch of a future romance. We'll meet the unique residents of this Salem, solve a murder along with Gemma and get a feel for this charming, interesting new world that Gemma has stumbled into which changed her circumstances forever. I loved Titus, and I've no doubt that you will as well. I had fun with this story, and will head over to Amazon to pick up the next available story later today. If you love Cozy Mysteries on the Paranormal side then check out Basic Witch and tickle your funny bone.

I own a Kindle edition of this story

Amanda says

Not bad

So I really enjoyed the pop culture references and that they were age appropriate for me. It is enjoyable to read a book about a 30ish something woman and relating to her on many levels, except being "basic." My biggest issues was the editing. It is easily fixed though, I was able to read the book and understand it just fine but another look through would do wonders for this and increase the ratings to much higher. I noticed quotations as the biggest flaw and paragraph spacing when each character was speaking. Fix those and an A+ cozy book.

Darcia Helle says

Here I am, in this uncomfortable position of having strong negative feelings about a book many readers have enjoyed. I don't like doing this, but, oh my, this book was a bit of a mess.

First, there is little character development. We jump right in with Emma, who narrates the story, but we don't learn much about her. I had no idea what motivated her, or how or why she got to be thirty-three years old without setting down roots in any one place. She also felt much younger than someone in her mid-thirties.

My major problem was something I rarely comment on: lack of editing. I have no issues with occasional typos, but this reads like a first draft. We have an abundance of missing words, extra words, and missing quotations. In one spot there is actually a note in brackets that states "[describe Bruce]", which the author clearly left for herself and then never went back to edit. And then we have a scene where one character walks away, then has two lines of dialogue within the group conversation while he isn't even there, and then makes his return. The whole thing is awkward and comes off as amateur.

The book itself is quite short. The story ends at the 71% point, and the rest is excerpts from other books.

Nancy says

This was my first book by Ms. Hart and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Basic Witch is a mix of Sabrina the Teenage Witch and Veronica Mars. When Gemma falls into an old bookcase she somehow ends up in a very different Salem - where magic and myth are real and she herself is a witch. Unfortunately she also finds a dead body. As Gemma tries to find the murderer she gets to know the people around her. Basic Witch is a quick read, a few hours, and I look forward to reading more books from this author. I read an arc of this book and left my honest review.

Mike says

I recently read an article entitled We Need to Start Taking Young Women's Love Stories Seriously, which gave me a lot to think about. I had that article in mind as I read this book.

Let's be clear upfront: this is not a book that intends to be taken seriously. It's fluff. It's cotton candy: bright pink (nothing wrong with that), sweet, insubstantial, and not intended to satiate. It's written quickly to be read quickly, and it needs a good proofread (which I doubt it will ever get), not least to sort out the horrible mess that the author has made with missing and misplaced quotation marks. It's full of cliches, down to and including the first-person narrator checking out her reflection, and getting the Power just when she needs it at a moment of crisis. Fortunate coincidences abound on every side. The heroine gets handed basically everything she wants, with little or no effort to earn it.

It is, in short, a wish-fulfilment fantasy - or perhaps we should say a witch-fulfilment fantasy.

And this, in itself, tells me a lot. More of that after this brief summary.

The heroine is a self-described "basic white girl". Her backstory is: Family all deceased, series of jobs she hates, series of failed relationships, lots of student debt. She is explicitly extremely ordinary and completely undistinguished.

As the story begins, she has fortunately inherited a New Age shop from a relative she didn't know she had, but is losing customers because she's not New Agey enough for their expectations.

By another stroke of luck or fate, she stumbles through a portal into a world where she's quite possibly the Chosen One, but definitely a powerful (if completely untrained) witch. This portal opens every seven years, very few people pass through, and there's no TV on the other side, but somehow slang and fashion are right up to the minute (in other words, there's no attempt at thinking through the extremely light worldbuilding).

Everyone (with one significant exception) wants to be nice to her. Just for showing up, she's set up with a profitable business, a place to live (which she gets to redecorate), a new wardrobe, magic high heels that don't hurt or cause her to trip, a magic handbag that isn't heavy no matter what she puts in it, a makeover, and a new instant best friend (a fairy princess who, despite her outgoing nature, doesn't appear to have any existing friends to complicate matters); she's also surrounded by a plethora of hot single men. Also, her cat can talk to her now, and will live as long as she does. I have to admit I'd like that one myself.

See what I mean about wish fulfillment?

There's one complication: when she stumbled through the portal, she fell over a dead body, and she's a suspect in the murder. But only one person seriously suspects her. Sure, he's the local cop, but everyone knows he's an idiot, and they don't take much notice of him. It does, however, mean that she wants to clear her name by finding the actual murderer, something the cop is probably not capable of doing.

I thought about flagging some of what follows with spoiler tags, but to be honest, if anything in this book surprises you you probably aren't old enough to be reading it.

Any serious attempt to solve the mystery takes a back seat for a long time to being heaped with various kinds of gifts, which the heroine "deserves" after "all she's been through". When we do at last return to the mystery-solving in earnest, the heroine comes up with a plan which, while not exactly bad, is as transparent as a well-washed window, and is intended to get her suspect (the only person who hasn't been nice to her) out of the way so that she can search for clues. "It will be as easy as pie!" she says, then, "Spoiler alert: It was not as easy as pie."

Well, actually, spoiler alert, it was. Sure, her initial attempt to search the premises was thwarted, but she then (in a strong echo of how she came through the portal in the first place) discovers by pure luck an alternative way in, which also explains how the crime was committed, and she's able to find clear evidence almost immediately. Plus the suspect, who's crazy but not a complete idiot, has seen through the well-washed window and comes back and confesses. So as far as a mystery plot goes, it's more of a gesture in the direction of one than it is actually one.

As a wish-fulfillment fantasy, though, it's remarkably comprehensive, and that's what I found interesting.

Leaving aside the magical parts, apparently the dreams of a 30-something basic white girl include being given a lot of nice stuff that make her life comfortable and enjoyable, but which she doesn't really have to work for (because she deserves it); having a fun friend to go out with and lots of attractive men to talk about with said friend; and... here's the significant bit... having a man around who she's sexually attracted to, but who will stay with her, protect her, provide emotional support for her, sleep in the same bed with his arm around her, and *will not push her to have sex* (because it's against his principles). This is in distinct contrast with a male wish-fulfillment fantasy I started to read a while back; it just assumed that the attractive woman would naturally have sex with the hero. That's only one of the reasons I didn't finish it. There is a man in this book who thinks that way; he's literally a wolf (at least part of the time), and is depicted as a disgusting creeper. I'd say "Men, take note," but any men who are reading a review of a book like this have probably already figured that one out.

I'm in two minds about the whole lack of effort and struggle for the main character. On the one hand, by most rules of writing, this is bad writing and should be boring, but then, most rules of writing are laid down by men. Is it a bug, or - given that this is, after all, a wish-fulfillment fantasy - a feature? What tips me in the direction of "feature" is the thought that many people in general, and women in particular, are experiencing life in the United States at the moment as an unavailing and never-ending struggle, so *the very lack of struggle is part of the wish-fulfillment fantasy*.

I'm still marking it down to three stars, mind you. It's so utterly expected, so full of cliches, so clearly dashed off quickly to serve a market - in short, so *basic* - that, in my mind, it doesn't earn four stars, even though it's enjoyable enough for what it is. But it doesn't need to be a great book to give a degree of insight into the concerns of its target audience, and that is what I mostly gained from it.

Kristy says

Loved this book i recieved and arc copy of this book which means i got the unedited version and i still loved it my honest review only complaint it wasn't longer but its a cozy so thats okay but now im hooked on this series. Even if i dont get to review again i would definately buy these books. Okay now for the info on this really good book (Basic Witch) Gemma Bradbury inherits a Magic Shop in Salem Oregon and she doesn't know anything about magic then after closing up one night at her shop she and her cat Titus fall into a bookcase that sends them to the 2.0 version of Salem were she has the misfortune of landing on one Mortimer Montcrief recently deceased i mean like real recent. And from there it only gets stranger and more funny with finding out she's really a witch being accused of murder by the Moose Deputy Manchester becoming the proprietor of a real shop with real magic and all the super hot hunky eligible paranormal bachelor's wanting to date her not to mention her super hunky proffesor Beauregard Bacchus can she stay out of jail and make a life for herself in this quirkey little town its not every day you meet death himself (Ted) and get to start over. Read the book its really good.
