



C. H. Elton's *Marked By The Devil*, the second instalment in the *Micky the Demon* series, opens with a steady confidence that shows an author who knows the world they are building. The first chapter drops the reader straight into a corporate implosion that feels authentic and surprisingly intimate. The prose is clean and approachable, the kind of writing that draws you in without calling attention to itself.

The novel begins with Sally, a capable and grounded executive, walking into a boardroom and immediately sensing that something is off. Her observation that “the atmosphere on that day, however, was so hostile I could almost touch it...” sets the tone with simple clarity. Anyone who has sat through a tense meeting will recognise the moment.

What follows is a careful unravelling of trust. Sally is a sympathetic centre of gravity. She is professional, respected, and blindsided by the quiet betrayal taking shape around her. Elton handles her internal voice with a refreshing directness. When she thinks, “What the fuck is going on, I was just so confused,” it reads as honest rather than dramatic, and it grounds the scene in real emotion.

As the story widens, the novel shifts from corporate tension into something far stranger. Elton blends the everyday realism of Sally's world with the creeping sense that unseen forces are shaping events. The supernatural elements do not arrive with spectacle. They build slowly, almost quietly, until the reader realises the ground has shifted beneath them. This gradual escalation gives the book a strong sense of momentum without sacrificing clarity.

The middle of the novel expands the cast and the stakes. Characters from the wider mythology step forward, and the story begins to explore the consequences of the events already set in motion. Elton keeps the focus on character rather than lore, which makes the supernatural developments feel much more than just decoration. Relationships deepen, alliances strain, and the emotions running through the story remain firmly tied to Sally's experience of being pulled into a world she never asked to enter.

By the final act, the novel has fully embraced its darker, more mythic side. The tension that simmered early on becomes something sharper and more urgent. Elton handles the shift with control, keeping the pacing tight and the character motivations clear. The climax delivers both action and emotional payoff without revealing every secret, leaving room for the series to grow.

For writers, there is plenty to appreciate in the way the book balances clarity with atmosphere, and in the way it moves between genres without losing its footing. For readers, it offers a story that begins in familiar territory and gradually opens into something far more expansive.

*Marked By The Devil* is a confident continuation of the series and a reminder that sometimes the most unsettling demons are the ones who look perfectly ordinary. It builds on the foundations of the first book while pushing the story into new territory, and it does so with a steady hand.

It feels like a grounded supernatural thriller that begins in the real world, slowly widens into something stranger, and keeps the emotional core tied to one character's lived experience.

That combination is distinctive, and whilst it is possible to draw comparisons in tone and structure to some other work, there is distinctive content here that sets it apart from those other titles.

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