

The 13<sup>th</sup> Witch

Beyond Blonde

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## Chapter 1

Two acts he had performed had allowed the vampyre a brief respite from the hunger. One was an act of violence. One was an act of kindness. Kassie was the catalytic force that had driven the vampyre to commit both of those acts. This temporary magickal reprieve from the hunger he had been granted had not turned him into a mortal human. Drake had absolutely no desire to become a human again. He would have ripped the wings that helped earn him this reprieve off Fanny Mae's back, and shoved them up her faerie ass had it done that. The reprieve had merely rendered him completely free from the hunger for 24 hours. Drake had been using that reprieve to make love to Kassie as she had never been made love to before. His original plan had been to bring her so much pleasure she would scream his true name thrice in the throes of passion. Her doing that would have given him her soul. But as he had made love to her, and experienced more pleasure than he ever had before, he had modified his original plan. He began to understand that he must truly give her as much time as she needed before he turned her. Once, long long ago, a High Priestess who had loved him too much had given him the gift of immortality knowing he was not worthy of it. In a fit of uncontrollable rage because he had thought the gift had turned out not to be all she had said, Drake had killed that High Priestess. In an effort to destroy her completely he had ripped out her heart and eaten it, then torn her head from her body and tossed it into the ocean. But he had not completely destroyed her. A small part of her had survived and lived on through many reincarnations. Kassie was the living reincarnation of the small part of that High Priestess.

Kassie was his salvation. The second chance he had begged and prayed for so many times over the centuries. He had not been worthy of the love, or the gift of immortality that High Priestess had given him when

she had bestowed both gifts upon him. But he had evolved, and over time had become more than worthy of the gift of immortality. Now he would have to prove himself worthy of the love Kassie could give him. He had no qualms about having to prove himself worthy of her love, and intended to do, or not do, whatever it took to prove himself worthy of that love. Although Kassie was his salvation, she was much much more than that. Like him, she was not the same creature that had broken the laws of magick and given him her love and the gift of immortality when he was not worthy of it. Kassie would test him thoroughly before she gave her heart to him completely and allowed him to turn her. Drake knew he would pass those tests with flying colors. He would pass them not because she was his salvation, but because he truly loved and needed her. He needed her so much that the thought of losing her was the only thing that he feared. He did not fear losing her love to another lover. He knew that would only happen if he betrayed her. Her safety is what concerned him most at that moment. Since he would not turn her until she was truly ready, he was going to have to do whatever it took to insure her safety until she became an immortal.

Drake feared nothing that walked, crawled, swam, flew or slithered. There was not another vampyre walking planet earth whose powers were anywhere near as great as his. This was partly because he had not given his full powers to any other vampyre he created for many eons. And partly because even when he had been young and inexperienced and had passed on what was then all his powers, no creature he ever gave the gift of eternal life to evolved beyond the point he was when he created said creature. He on the other hand was in perpetual evolution. He was a Dark God who would ruthlessly destroy any of his children that endangered the species or his own existence. As long as his children followed his commandment, did nothing to draw unnecessary attention to their species, and left him the hell alone, he left them alone. Occasionally he crossed paths with one or more of his kind. Though he did not care to mingle with his bloodthirsty children since his blood and power always tempted them beyond good sense. Something which always resulted in the untimely

demise of one or more of them. Over the last few hundred centuries he had become as much a thing of mystery and legend to his own kind, as his species was to mortals. That was about to change though.

Drake looked down at the witch he held so tenderly in his arms and said, "Tis time you and I spoke of many things, perhaps not of cabbages, but most certainly of Kings. And my beloved witch, of Queens." He paused for a moment, kissed her forehead then said, "Kassie, I will wait as long as necessary to turn you. But there are some things I cannot and/or will not wait for. Putting you completely under my protection is one of those things. I cannot wait for that because you are in too much danger. The news of you, and of you and I, is already spreading through the blood-sucker community like a wind swept brush fire."

Kassie sighed and said, "I was afraid of that."

Drake leaned over and kissed her forehead again gently then said quietly, "The only way to handle this now is to meet it head on Kassie. Which is why even as we speak Ingrid is busy arranging the details of your coronation as Queen of the vampyres."

"Well that is one coronation that is going to be long time coming because I'm not about to let you turn me into a vampyre any time soon."

Drake simply grinned and replied, "Oh no my beloved witch, I intend for you to begin your rightful reign just as you are right now."

Kassie gasped and said, "You can't crown a mortal, even one who is a true witch, Queen of the vampyres."

Drake just grinned and replied, "If you were just any mortal, or true witch, I would agree with you Kassie. But you aren't just any mortal, or true witch. You my dear, for better or worse, are the true Queen of the vampyres. You know it, I know it, and soon my dear, they will know it."

Kassie's eyes widened and she replied, "Then you know everything?"

Drake simply smiled at her and replied, "Yes my love, I know everything. I know you are the reincarnation of the High Priestess who long long ago bestowed the gift of immortality upon me." He paused for a moment as a shadow of past pain crossed his face then said quietly, "Thanks to my own utter fucking stupidity, your coronation as their rightful Queen has been LONG overdue. However, all that is about to change. All that I once took from you, I shall return to you. And much much more. In time, you will be even more powerful than you were when as that High Priestess, you gave me the gift of immortality."

Kassie sighed and said, "I did not call you seeking power."

Drake smiled lovingly down at her and replied, "I know that my beloved. I know what you were seeking when you called me. The irony is, you have found what you were seeking, but do not yet believe that." He paused again, leaned over and kissed her forehead then said with a wry smile, "However, all things considered, I fully understand why you don't trust me worth a flying fuck. The good news is, though I don't have many of them, patience can be one of my virtues." He paused again, then continued with a grin. "But, I'm not going to be patient about you assuming your rightful position my reluctant Queen. On the next full moon, you begin your reign my love. Or rather, we begin ours."

Kassie's amber eyes opened in utter amazement as she said, "The next full moon!"

Drake grinned and said, "Yes my beloved witch, the next full moon. No sense in giving that bloodsucking bunch we are going to be ruling together an even break, or time to plan."

Kassie gazed into his eyes, peeked into his mind and saw that argument would be futile. He had made up his mind concerning the coronation issue, and that was that. Being the wise little creature she was Kassie simply accepted the inevitable. Kassie could think of many reasons to delay her coronation. Those reasons would mean nothing to Drake. Instead

she looked up at him and said, "How long have you been planning this coronation gig for me?"

"My beloved witch, I have been planning this coronation gig as you call it for a VERY long time. The Black Thrones were carved in Egypt while the first of the great pyramids was being built."

"The Black Thrones really exist then?" Kassie had heard of the legendary Black Thrones that were said to have been made by the King of the vampyres ages ago. Anyone who sat in them who was not the true King and Queen of the vampyres were instantly reduced to ashes. Or so the legends said.

The vampyre's mouth split into a wide wicked smile and he replied, "Oh yes my love, The Black Thrones really do exist. And the legends surrounding them are very true. In order to keep unworthy wanna be kings and queens from frying their stupid fucking selves, I keep them in a safe place now."

Kassie pondered that for a moment then said, "You've lost a couple of other damned eternal brides that way."

Drake snorted and replied, "No, I've lost several of those silly bitches that way." Then he frowned at Kassie and said, "And kindly do not use the term "other damned eternal brides" in that context again. You, are not another one of those damned eternal bitches. You, are my beloved witch, my true Queen. Those other perpetual bitches were not anywhere near in your league baby."

Kassie simply sniffed haughtily and replied, "Bet you said that to all of them as well."

Drake glared at her and replied, "No, I did NOT say that to any of those fucking perpetual bitches. I'll admit I've made a few bad mistakes over the course of time. But I NEVER fucking mistook any of those

bitches for you. Do not insult me by insinuating I could have ever been that much of a dumb ass."

Kassie met his cold hard gaze and replied, "I don't know, there was a time, you were an undead shoo in for the "All Time Dumb Ass Award".

Drake dropped his eyes for a moment and replied quietly, "Okay, you got me on that one." Then he looked into her eyes again. "But I swear Kassie, I am going to make up for that one terrible moment of utter dumb ass stupidity."

Kassie shook her head and replied, "Shit! You really are on a mission to right all your past wrongs."

Drake simply grinned evilly and replied, "No darling, my only mission is to set right one past wrong. I could care less about the others. But I am going to set that one terrible wrong right my beloved witch. You can make book on that. Your coronation is just the beginning of me doing that. Though once the coronation is over and I've made my point, you and I will have to go to ground so to speak while you learn to fully use the powers I am giving you through my blood. The powers you already had are becoming much greater as well. I want you harnessing and using all your powers now to their fullest extent."

Kassie sighed and replied, "What about what I want?"

Drake leaned over and kissed her tenderly on the forehead then replied quietly, "I will give you everything that you want. I would say riches and power beyond your wildest dreams, but you do not dream of such things my beloved witch. However, you have dreamed of me, and knew when you called me into your circle of life you were calling forth your destiny. Now the time has come for you to fulfill that destiny." Drake paused for a moment, snapped his fingers and grinned as the eternal doobie appeared in them. He winked at Kassie, tilted his head up, and blew two heart shaped smoke rings that intertwined with each other, then



formed a perfect circle as they drifted away. He stuck the doobie in Kassie's mouth then said with a wide wicked grin, "The moral of that little smoke story is we have come full circle my beloved witch. And all things considered, it is only fitting in many ways that you begin your reign as Queen of the vampyres as you are now."

Kassie gave a wry smile and replied, "Well Ingrid better be putting together one hell of a Royal Guard darlin', or I'm going to wind up toast at my own coronation."

Drake chuckled darkly, then replied, "Oh believe me dear, you will have one hell of a Royal Guard. In fact, my old pal Beezie himself will be Captain of that one hell of a Royal Guard."

Kassie choked on the smoke she had just inhaled. She studied his face for a moment then said, "By Odin's eye patch, you aren't joking."

Drake simply grinned that elegantly evil grin of his and replied, "Nope, I'm not joking my dear."

Kassie did inhale as she pondered her fate with a protective Royal Guard with Beezie as Captain. Finally she exhaled and said, "Will the others all be vampyres?"

Drake grinned at his beloved Queen, and replied, "No my dear. The Royal Guard will include a few vampyres. But there will also be a variety of other types as well. Including a couple of werewolves." His grin widened even more as Kassie's eyes widened, and he said with a dark dark chuckle, "I'm an equal opportunity employer my dear."

"But what werewolves would work for you? Much less want or be allowed to be part of your Royal Guard?"

"Kassie my beloved, there are more than you realize who do work for me, and a couple I trust enough to be a part of your Royal Guard. And please remember, it is not my Royal Guard. It is yours. Their function is

not to protect me. I have no need of their protection. Could in fact destroy the entire Royal Guard and kick Beezie's ass so fucking hard he would wind up Yahweh's nose without even whirling around thrice. What's more, each and every member of that Royal Guard of yours, including my old pal Beezie, knows I will do just that if they allow anyone or anything to even so much as ruffle one hair on your head. In fact, their orders are to kill me without hesitation should I even look wrong at you. And any order you give them, supersedes any order of mine."

Kassie blinked in surprise, inhaled, thought about it for a moment, then exhaled as she nodded her head said, "Of course. Their orders would have to be that to absolutely insure my safety. They can't kill you. But you are making book on them being able to kill anyone or anything trying to impersonate you that might try to harm me."

Drake actually beamed at her for a moment before he leaned over and kissed her forehead. As he raised his head back up he said, "Oh my beloved Queen, how I adore that wonderfully quick mind of yours. There is in fact only one flaw in your logic. I am not making book on them being able to kill anyone or anything trying to impersonate me. I am making book though on my being able to get to the impostor and take care of it if they don't do it quickly enough." Drake paused for a moment and grinned evilly again, then said with that dark chuckle of his that sent chills down the Captain Of The Guard's spine, "And that bunch know if I have to take care of it, I'm not going to be a merry King on account of that's their fucking job."

Kassie inhaled again and pondered that. As she exhaled she said, "How the fuck did you ever get Beezie to agree to this?"

Drake leaned back against the headboard of the bed and grinned like an evil monkey as he tucked Kassie more comfortably in his arms. He snapped his fingers once, and Black Crowes began to echo through the room. "Don't inhale yet my darling, you'll choke. It was sort of his idea. See, we were having one of our poker games. We were, mmmm, discuss-

ing The Black Thrones. Beezie made the remark that when I found my true Queen she would need a loyal Royal Guard. I told him that was a grand idea, and promptly appointed him Captain Of The Queen's Guard when he lost that hand." He paused then said with a grin, "You can inhale now."

Kassie inhaled and pondered that. After she had exhaled, "And Beezie just jumped for joy at you doing that?"

Drake grinned that evil little grin of his and said, "Oh he bitched and whined at first. But after a little friendly persuasion on my part, he came around to my way of thinking. Besides, he owes me a couple of favors."

Kassie shuddered at the thought of what favors Beezie might owe Drake, and what could constitute friendly persuasion for Drake. As she snuggled against him she giggled and said, "I think I am the only Queen to ever have the Devil Himself as Captain of her Royal Guard."

Drake wrapped his arm more tightly around her and chuckled. "That you are my beloved true Queen. There has never been a Royal Guard like yours. There will be a variety of legendary creatures guarding you. And they will guard you with their lives because you are not just Queen of the vampyres. You are the living embodiment of the magick that created some of them. The only true witch left."

Kassie quietly replied, "I'm not the only true witch left. But the magick is deeply buried within them. I can help bring it out in some, then teach them how bring it out in others. Who will in turn teach others."

Drake looked at Kassie with love and awe. Upon her slender shoulders rested the fate of true witches. Kassie caught that thought and said quietly, "I pray that is not true for if I fail, that magick will be lost forever."

Drake leaned over and kissed her forehead gently. He raised his head slightly and as he gazed into her eyes said, "You will not fail my beloved witch. I promise you that."

"Then I need to remain a mostly mortal true witch for now. I must teach some before I become a vampyre because I do not know if I will be able to do that once I have become one."

Drake looked down into her eyes and said, "Then you will remain as you are until you have taught others my beloved witch. Though I feel very strongly once the transformation is complete and you have adjusted to it, you will still be able to find, and bring forth the gift in other true witches. You will still be a true witch my beloved. You will not lose ANY of your powers or gifts."

Kassie smile up at him and replied, "I know you truly mean that, and will do all you can to see to it that I don't."

Drake smiled back down at her and said quietly, "Yes I will my beloved witch. But I will honor your wishes, and the magick. I swear to you that no matter what, I will not turn you completely until there are others who can continue teaching while you complete the transformation and become fully adjusted to it. But you must learn to harness and use all your new and old powers as quickly as possible. You already have many enemies due to your hanging out with that terminal bunch of misfits you call The Team. You are about to have a LOT more though. I want you to be able to protect yourself from those many enemies my love. Not because I fear I can't protect you. But because for your own happiness and peace of mind, you must be able to."

As Kassie gazed up at him it was her eyes that were filled with love and awe now. Drake was truly as dedicated to her cause as she was. And he understood her perfectly. "What powers of yours will I have in this form?"

"Kassie, I am passing on ALL my powers to you when you feed from me. Opening myself completely to you. Some will not be as strong as mine until you are fully transformed, but others will be if you harness and hone them. You will have the ability to shape shift at will as quickly as I do

once you harness that power even in this form. You will be able to move through time and space as I do. Though you will not be able to travel as far as I can until you are fully transformed. You will be able to read and manipulate mortal minds, and the minds of some other creatures as well. I believe you can hone that ability to its max in this form." Drake paused for a second and grinned. "You already are amazingly adept at manipulating mortal minds through your gift with words."

Kassie grinned back at him and replied, "Damn straight I am! It's my job as a writer to be able to do that. And baby, I'm damn good at my job." She paused for a second, then said quietly, "And what about that job? I cannot quit that job entirely, because it is more than a job."

Drake saw the fear and worry in her amber eyes, cupped her chin gently in his hand and said softly, "My beloved word witch, that is the last thing I want you to do. Do you really think I do not know how important writing is to you? Don't you realize I know that a part of you belongs to, and is the art? I want only happiness for you my love. And writing is part of what happiness is for you."

Kassie sighed softly and murmured, "It would be so easy to fall hopelessly in love with you right now."

Those words were the most wonderful words Drake had ever heard. They gladdened his stone cold heart and brightened his black as coal soul. He rolled them both over and when she was laying beneath him propped himself on his elbows and placed his hands on either side of her head. As he stroked her face and hair he said, "Oh Kassie, I already am hopelessly in love with you. You truly are everything to me. I need you so badly. In so many ways. I need your wit, your intelligence, your charm, your passion, and most of all, I need your love."

Kassie gazed back into his cobalt blue eyes thoughtfully for a moment then said softly, "I would have thought my trust was what you needed most."

The vampyre shook his handsome head and replied softly, "No Kassie, I forfeited the right to that long long ago. In time, I will earn your trust. But I know that may be a long time coming. As I said earlier though, patience, is one of the few fucking virtues I have."

Kassie reached up and gently stroked the side of his face and said with a soft smile that melted his stone cold heart, "Oh, I think you have more than just a few virtues."

Drake smiled down at her and replied, "If I do, it is only because they are the virtues that were within the heart of that High Priestess."

Kassie stroked the side of his chin again softly and said, "Then that is why you had to consume it."

What Kassie said was absolutely true. He had finally come to understand that long ago. It had been consuming her heart that had allowed him to perpetually evolve, and to finally be able to understand, then feel true love.

His ability to perpetually evolve is what had allowed him to survive for as long as he had. Though the gift he passed onto others held the potential for immortality, none but him had truly become immortal. He was eons older than any other vampyre. Even the best of the ones he had turned in the beginning had not survived. He had been born again into the world as a vampyre during the age of the hunters and gatherers. Although no longer Neanderthals, some of mankind was still living in caves when that High Priestess had bestowed the dark gift of immortality upon him. He had been watching his own and mankind's evolution ever since. And had duly noted that species who lacked the ability to evolve and adapt, often became extinct. As mankind evolved, more and more species were becoming extinct. He intended to see to it that his species did not become extinct.

His emotional evolution had progressed swiftly. He was already searching for his salvation when The Black Thrones had been carved. But the reincarnation of the High Priestess who had created him had eluded him for centuries. He had even given up hope ever finding it when he thought true witches had become extinct. Then he had opened a book of adult fantasy stories one night after feeding on the bookstore owner, and discovered Cassandra B. Badbh. He had not thought she was a true witch of course, but she had entranced him with her words. So much so he knew deep within his own dark heart that sooner or later he would break his vow never to turn another mortal. Though he did not believe her to be a true witch, Kassie did practice The Craft. When he had finally gone to her he had done so on a full moon intending to appear in guise of whatever ancient God she invoked. But instead of invoking forth some ancient Wiccan God she had read about, she had called his true name thrice. He knew then true witches were not completely extinct, and that Kassie was his destiny.

As the vampyre gazed into the beloved amber eyes of his destiny he said softly, "Kassie, you have just proven once again that you are my true Queen, and soul mate. You mean more to me than I can express in words. I cannot and will not lose you." He paused thoughtfully for a moment, then continued. "As much as I want to do nothing more than make love and talk with you while this reprieve lasts, there is one power I'm passing onto you I want you to harness right now."

Before he could continue Kassie said, "The ability to heal myself."

Drake nodded and replied, "Yes. That is an ability you must master and hone VERY quickly."

Kassie gazed at him and replied, "I tried when that other vampyre tore my throat out. But I could not close the wound."

Drake nodded and replied, "I know my love, I felt you trying." That's why I know you can quickly master that skill. In fact, once your body heals

itself of one wound without any help from me, it will automatically do its best to do so from then on." Drake bowed his head and whispered, "I should have insisted on that before."

Kassie stroked his head and softly replied, "But there is only one way to master that skill, and you were afraid of losing me by forcing me to master it then."

Drake raised his head, grabbed the hand that had stroked it and kissed it tenderly before he replied. "Exactly my love." He paused for a moment then said, "I will not spoil our 24 hours of pleasure with any pain, but once the reprieve is over, you must begin to master that power." Then he grinned and said, speaking of pleasure, I have some more of that for you right now. We are going to play a little game called spill the wine."

Kassie grinned back at him and replied, "And I bet it is a perverted little game isn't it?"

Drake grinned back at her and replied, "Of course. I am going to crank up War, and while Spill The Wine plays I'm going to spill wine on you, one drop at a time. Then lick it up. To make the game more interesting and pleasurable for us both, I'm going to bind you with red ribbons and blindfold you."

Kassie giggled that giggle of hers that he loved then said, "You are such a pervert."

The vampyre merely grinned as he began arranging her body and binding her with red ribbons.



## Chapter 2

When the vampyre was through Kassie lay spread-eagle upon the black satin bedspread. Red ribbons were artfully wound around her wrists and ankles. As he had lovingly wrapped those red ribbons around her wrists and ankles, he had explained to Kassie that these silken ties would bind her more firmly than chains ever could. Kassie, who had never underestimated his power, was not surprised when after he had wrapped the last red ribbon around her ankle, she found she could not move at all. Then he had blindfolded her with a red silk scarf.

The whose vampyre whose grinned down at the spread-eagled witch whose long legs he was kneeling between, raised his arm, snapped his fingers, and a goblet of red wine appeared in his hand. He looked at the wine, then looked down at the blindfolded witch spread eagled before him and said, "But before I begin to spill the wine, because this respite from the blood lust has not dulled my appreciation for the taste of your pleasure, I shall improve the flavor of the wine."

Kassie had known from the moment she had awakened from dreaming of him for the first time on the night of her 13th birthday, that one day she would meet the vampyre whose bed she now lay bound in. For 7 nights, she had seen the witches call him, and watched as he pleased those 12 witches during the great orgy that took place after the building of Stonehenge. From then on, Drake had been the only one she had ever dreamed of. In her dreams, she had watched him pleasure countless other women since. Had felt what they they felt. But had known even then things about her dream lover those women would never know. By the time she had fully come of age, she was more firmly bound to him through her dreams than any mortal man could ever bind her to him with rings of gold. Kassie had also known that although she had been reincarnated many times since he had spilled her blood so many centuries ago, it was only in this lifetime that she would once more meet him. Together, they would have one last chance to make something that might be called good by some from the bad medicine they had brewed together so many

centuries ago. She also understood that should any good come of all the bad medicine they had brewed together so long ago, one dark night it would not be wine he would be spilling upon her. She did not dwell on that which she could not change though. For now she would allow herself to fully enjoy this game of spill the wine that her vampyre lover was about to play with her.

Drake let go of the goblet of wine, which stayed suspended in mid air, lowered his arm, and slowly slid his finger into her. The pleasure Kassie felt as his finger slid back and forth inside her was exquisite. As her juices began to flow more freely she heard the voice of her immortal lover say to her, "Cum for me Kassie my beloved. Cum for me, so that I can spike this wine with your juices, and taste your pleasure in it as I lick it from your body." Kassie moaned once more with pleasure, and her warm wet walls began to quiver. As Drake felt them begin to quiver, he stroked her slightly harder, and very gently began to massage her G spot. Kassie gave a low moan of pleasure, the walls of her warm wet walls began to shudder in carnal delight, and Kassie's juices began to flow freely around the cold hard finger stroking her so delightfully.

As the spasms of her orgasm began to fade, Drake removed his finger from within her and placed it in the goblet of wine. He swirled his finger thrice in the wine, then removed from the goblet, and slid it back inside Kassie's warm wet Pandora's box. He worked his finger back and forth a few times inside her, withdrew it, more once placed it in the goblet, and thrice stirred the wine. After repeating that procedure once more, he began to spill the wine upon her. Before he did though, he snapped his fingers once. Drake grinned happily when he heard Kassie's pleased giggle as the opening bars of War's, Spill The Wine, began to softly echo throughout the room.

Drake scooted forward a little. Put his finger back into the wine glass, swirled it around, then withdrew it and held it a couple of inches over her right breast. A drop of warm red wine ran slowly slid down his finger, and landed on the tip of Kassie's nipple. Kassie gave a soft gasp

as the drop of wine landed. Because he had wanted her to thoroughly enjoy this little game of pleasure he had devised for them, he had immobilized Kassie's so that when that drop of wine hit her nipple her body did not flinch as it normally would have. The natural physical shudder that would have normally taken place when that drop of wine unexpectedly hit her nipple, became a psychic tremor of pleasure, that echoed throughout her body and mind.

Drake watched that drop of wine slowly run down her breast, then casually pushed the wine glass aside, leaned down, and very slowly licked the drop of wine from her breast. Kassie gave another gasp that turned into a moan as his tongue lapped at her nipple. He slowly and carefully licked the wine from her breast, then closed his mouth around her nipple, and tenderly tweaked it with his teeth. He let go of her nipple, and licked it with his cold tongue. Then closed his mouth around her nipple again and gave it one last loving tweak with his teeth, followed by a slow lick with his tongue. He raised his head, reached over, stuck his finger in the wine glass, and carefully placed another drop of wine, on Kassie's other nipple. As the drop of wine once more landed on her nipple, she giggled said, "Hey! Do you EVER fucking miss hitting a nipple dead on?"

Drake grinned at the nipple he had just landed yet another drop of wine unerringly on, and said, "Fuck no. I NEVER miss hitting a nipple. Though, I'm not sure the term "dead on" is really apt in my case." Then he bent his head, and began licking the spilled wine from her breast. Kassie giggled, then sighed softly with pleasure as his cold tongue licked the spilled wine from her breast. Then moaned, as his teeth tenderly tweaked her nipple.

Drake continued to amuse himself by carefully dropping wine on Kassie's breasts, then licking up the spilled wine until Kassie thought she would scream from the pleasure she was feeling. He would swirl his finger in the wine, then watch with rapt attention as the wine slid down his finger, and fell unerringly upon her erect nipple. As the drop of wine splashed down upon her nipple, he would smile with glee, then bend his head

down, and begin to slowly lick the spilled wine from her breast. After carefully licking her breast clean, and tenderly tweaking then licking her nipple a few times, Drake once more raised his head, and placed his finger in the goblet of wine. Then held that finger over Kassie's other breast.

Drake smiled wickedly, as he watched another drop of wine slide from his finger and onto Kassie's now super sensitive erect nipple. That wicked grin widened as he heard the gasp of pleasure she made when that drop of wine hit her erect nipple. When he bent his handsome smiling head down to her breast, and gently licked the spilled wine from it with the tip of his tongue, the mewling sounds of pleasure she made as his tongue lapped at her breast, and his teeth occasionally tenderly tweaked her nipple, pleased his ears greatly. He knew even without entering her mind, or sliding his finger inside her, that by now her warm wet Pandora's box was shivering with delight. He continued to spill the wine and lick it from her breasts until had her hips not been pinned to the bed by the force of his will, she would have been humping thin air in an effort to find some release from the pressure that was building inside of her. As he once more held his finger over her breast, he said, "Soon, you shall beg me to fuck you. If nothing else, with my cold bony finger. That, is going to give me a massive hard on when you do." Then he lowered his head, and licked the drop of wine that had slid from his finger onto her erect nipple.

Kassie sighed softly as his tongue lapped at her breast, then said, "Bastard! And you always seem to have a massive hard on."

Drake grinned, and as his mouth closed over her nipple, she heard his voice in her mind say with a villainous chuckle, "Of course I'm a bastard. Biggest bastard you'll ever come across in fact." As his teeth tenderly closed over her nipple, and his tongue flicked back and forth across it, the voice in her mind said softly, "But, you knew that, when you first called my true name thrice, and drew me into your circle of life." The moan of pleasure she made as he gently held her nipple in his teeth, and flicked his tongue back and forth across it, was music to his ears. Then the voice in her mind said, as he began to gently suck her nipple while his

tongue flicked back and forth across it, "And I only keep a massive hard on when I'm around you. Or reading that smut you write. Later, I may have you read me some of your smut, while you give me a hand job. That, would be a novel experience that I think I might really enjoy." As he released her nipple from his mouth, he said, "But right now, I'm going to finish spilling the wine, and licking you ALL over."

As Drake raised up and reached for the goblet of wine, Kassie giggled and said, "Fucking pervert! And I do not write smut. I write erotica with attitude."

Drake stuck his finger in the goblet of wine, swirled it around thrice, then removed it from the goblet and held it over her throat. As the drop of wine fell from his finger and landed in the hollow of her throat the voice in her mind said, "Of course I'm a fucking pervert." As he leaned forward and bent his head towards her throat, the voice in her mind cheerfully said, "And okay later on you can read me some of your erotica with attitude." As his cold tongue lapped the wine from the hollow of her throat, the voice in her mind continued to tell her in the same cheerful tone, "Though in all honesty, I'll have to admit that twisted terror of a muse you've got as a sidekick that helps you write that erotica, runs a close fucking second to me when it comes to being a pervert." Drake raised his head, reached for the goblet, and said aloud to Kassie, "I'm going to play connect the dots now. That twisted sidekick of yours will like this pleurably perverted little game for sure." Then he began to spill droplets of wine in the shape of a cross in the center of Kassie's chest.

When Kassie's realized what he was doing she giggled and said, "Oh that is so fucking perverse! You could have at least done a circle!"

Drake replied, "Not nearly as perverse as some of the things we'll do later, after I make some circles." Then he moved the goblet out of his way, bent his head, and began playing connect the dots with his tongue. Naturally, being the kind of pervert that he was, the horizontal line of the cross, ran across her breast. The vertical line ran from the center of her

throat, to just above her navel. He started connecting the dots with his tongue, starting at the bottom of the cross. The dots of wine disappeared as his tongue lapped it's way up Kassie's spread eagle body. But the tingle his cold tongue left as it made it way up her chest, remained after the dots disappeared. He slowly connected and made all the dots in the vertical line of the cross disappear. Then he moved his head to the left, closed his mouth over her left nipple, flicked with his tongue a few times, and began playing connect the dots for the horizontal line of the cross.

As he closed his mouth over her right nipple and began to flick his tongue over it, Kassie sighed with pleasure. Even after he had removed his mouth from her nipple, and began to spill drops of wine in a circle around her belly button, Kassie could feel the outline of that cross on her chest. After he completed a circle of dots, he carefully placed three drops of wine in her navel. Just before he began to play a widdershins game of connect the dots, he said to Kassie, "I'm going to lick the wine out of your belly button first from the outside in, then, later, from inside out. And I, can do that."

Kassie gave a giggling groan of pleasure because she knew for a fact he could do that. "Well you can lick me all you want like this. But when you get ready to fuck me, you unbind my legs, because as a proud pagan witch, I make it a rule NEVER, to fuck in the missionary position. The lowest I ever allow my legs to get while fucking, is around your back. I prefer to keep my heels at least locked behind your neck though, just on the general principle of it."

Drake's tongue had continued to connect and make the dots of wine around her navel disappear, but Kassie heard his voice in her mind cheerfully reply, "No sweat babe. In fact, if it will make you happy, just before I lick your belly button from the inside out, I'll bind them up so high and wide, you'll look like an upside down cheerleader. "

As he began lick the wine from her navel from the outside in, Kassie had replied in that breathless giggling voice that made his balls twitch, "Sounds like a plan to me!"

After he had licked the wine from her navel from the outside in, he scooted down and very carefully spread the petals of Kassie's Pandora's box until her love button was fully exposed. Kassie gave a giggling gasp of pleasure, as she realized what he was about to do. Kassie could still feel the gentle tingle of the cross and circle he had played connect the dots with on her chest and belly. Could feel a teasing tingle radiating from her belly button, that gently vibrated all the way down to her fully exposed love button. She could feel Drake's cold fingers holding the petals of her Pandora's box apart. When the drop of red wine finally slid from his finger and landed with a gentle splash, Kassie gasped, then moaned as waves tiny of intense pleasure washed over her love button, then throughout her entire body. Drake did not bend his head and lick that drop of wine from her though. Instead, he dipped his finger in the wine glass, and carefully placed another drop of wine upon her love button. Kassie knew as soon as that second drop of wine hit her clitoris, and the waves of pleasure from that drop of wine splashing down upon her washed over her, that he was going to spill one more drop of wine, before he licked up the wine he had spilled. The third drop of wine splashed down, before the waves of pleasure from the second one had fully subsided. Kassie's Pandora's box quivered in delight, and her love button throbbed with excitement, as she waited for the touch of his tongue.

Drake watched the drop of wine splash down, waited for three of Kassie's heart beats, then bent his head, and gave her fully exposed throbbing clitoris, a long slow loving lick. Kassie gasped, then groaned with pleasure as his cold tongue very slowly lapped at her clitoris. The tip of his tongue flicked her gently as it he came to the end of that slow lick. He paused for three more beats of her heart, then gave her love button another long slow lick. After the tip of Drake's tongue had gently flicked it

once, he closed his mouth over her clitoris, and sucked it gently, as the tip of his tongue flicked back and forth across it.

Had her hips not been pinned to the bed through the force of his will, she would have been bucking wildly against his face. As her hips fought unsuccessfully to thrust themselves upward, and Drake continued to suck her clitoris and flick it with the tip of his cold tongue, the force of the orgasm she was experiencing rocked her world, and nearly numbed her mind. Drake stopped sucking and licking her clitoris, then kissed it thrice very tenderly. His left hand released the petals of her Pandora's box, the tip of his tongue slid inside her, and the force that bound her legs and hips to his bed softened its hold on her. As his tongue slid more deeply into her, the force that had bound Kassie's legs to the bed, now raised those long slender wide spread legs as high and wide into the air as was possible without dislocating her hips, and bound them there. When he was through, Kassie did indeed resemble an upside down cheerleader. As her juices saturated his tongue Drake growled with pleasure. Through those juices he could savor the taste her soul. The sweet taste of that soul made him growl softly and press his face harder against her as his tongue probed deep inside her and a voice in her mind whispered, "Cum for me Kassie. Let me drink your juices, and taste that sweet lightest shade of gray soul my beloved witch." Kassie moaned again as her legs shuddered under the hands that were softly stroking them. Drake growled again as her juices flowed over his tongue and down his throat, and the soft as sin on silk seductive voice in her head moaned and said, "Oh fuck baby I have never tasted anything as wonderful as you. The taste of you is nirvana to me. It makes my omnipotent head spin."

Kassie's legs shuddered harder and she said with a moan, "This is not fair! You should NOT be able to say shit like that to me with your omnipotent tongue shoved inside me!"

The seductive voice inside her head simply chuckled evilly and said, "All's fair in love and war baby. And that is especially true with me. Now cum hard again for me my Queen. Drown me in the sweet fucking taste of



you. Let me savor this pure clean taste of you while the reprieve lasts." Kassie gasped then moaned with pleasure as her legs shuddered and her juices flowed down his throat. Drake gave a hissing growl of pleasure and thrust his tongue deeper inside her. His handsome omnipotent head was swimming with pleasure. He filled his mouth with the taste of her soul as she cried out.

The ties that bound her held her so firmly Kassie could only moan with pleasure as his tongue slid deep within her again. Her mind sighed with pleasure as his tongue slowly slid back and forth inside her. Drake's hands reached up and as his tongue continued to slide back and forth inside her and his fingers began to gently tweak her nipples. Every muscle in her body strained to press against his face, but the ties that bound her held her too firmly. She couldn't even squirm as his fingers tweaked her nipples and his tongue slowly slid back and forth inside her. She could feel her walls contracting around his tongue, drenching it as it probed and lapped. Heard that soft as sin on silk seductive voice begging her for more, telling her this was the sweetest taste in the world to him. Felt his fingers tweaking her nipples a little harder, then felt his face pressing against her harder and heard his growl as the darts of pleasure flowed down from her nipples and rippled along his tongue.

The sweet sounds of Kassie's moans echoed in the room and through Drake's black as coal soul as the taste of her filled his mouth. There truly was nothing sweeter to Drake than the taste of Kassie's lightest shade of gray soul he could savor through those juices. It was a rich wonderful taste that intoxicated his mind and seduced his black as coal soul. Free from any taste of a desire for immortality or power those juices were in some ways much more nourishing and vital to him than blood. He slid his tongue deeper inside her and growled with pleasure as her juices flowed more freely. He sucked and lapped the juices as they flowed, and let himself become drunk with the rich sweet taste of them. He tweaked her nipples as the palms of his hands caressed her breast and pressed his face against her harder as she cried out. The sweet taste of her flowed

into his mouth and he worked his tongue harder. He tweaked her nipples softly one more time, then began to caress her body with his hands. Letting his fingertips softly stroke her as he ran his hands up and down her body. His right hand slid softly down her belly and Kassie moaned deep in her throat as his thumb softly stroked her clit. He gave a growling moan as he drank those rich juices down and savored the untainted taste of them.

He wanted to savor the taste of her as long as he could but his cold hard cock was beginning ache with a desire to be buried within her. He stood it as long as he could, then with the taste of her pleasure dripping from his mouth he withdrew his tongue and raised himself to his knees and placed the tip of his cold hard dick inside her. Kassie gave a growling moan of pleasure as he slid slowly into her. He tilted his head back and allowed the taste of her pleasure to flow down his throat as he buried himself up to his balls in her. The feel of her warm wet Pandora's box pulsing along his dick made him groan with pleasure as he pressed against her.

Kassie felt his hands tighten around her ankles and moaned again as he pushed himself even deeper inside her. Could feel the tip of his cold hard cock pushing deep inside her as his balls pressed against her. Then she felt him take a slow backstroke. When only the tip of his cock was inside her he paused for 3 beats of her heart, then slowly pushed it back inside her until his balls were once more pressing against her. The feel of him sliding into her made her gasp with pleasure. Had she not been held by the ties that bound her she would have been bucking against him. The feel of him sliding back and forth inside her made her juices flow even more freely. She could feel them soaking his pubic hairs as he pressed against her on the down strokes. She could feel him throbbing inside her as he rocked back and forth. As she moaned again she felt him grip her ankles tighter and increase the speed of his stroke. She could physically feel and sense his excitement growing. Heard a low growl of pleasure from him as he buried himself deep inside her again.

Drake's head was tilted back, his cobalt eyes closed and his fangs bared wide as he rocked against her. He held himself in check for a moment, then because the reprieve meant he would not have to leave to avoid sinking his fangs in her after he climaxed he let himself go and began to rock against her harder and faster. She felt so incredibly good right now with her dainty ankles in his hands and his dick buried inside her. He felt that warm wet Pandora's box contracting even harder as he gave a snarling growl of pleasure and drove himself into her harder. Heard her pants and gasps of pleasure and ground himself against her. He loosened the ties that bound her slightly and snarled with pleasure as he felt her buck against him. Felt the ripple of excitement along her walls as she heard and felt his pleasure. Felt his dick throb and his balls tighten in response to that shudder of excitement. Kassie met his strokes and Drake tilted his head back further, bared his fangs wider and gave another long hissing growl of pleasure. As Kassie's cried out and her body began to shudder Drake's growl into turned a howl as he drove himself into her.

After the sound of his howls faded from the room Drake released the ties that bound Kassie completely. With a snap of his fingers the blindfold and red ribbons vanished. As Kassie lay there blinking he lowered her legs gently then winked at her and vanished. When he reappeared he was sitting beside her with his back against the headboard grinning like a Cheshire cat. He reached down and drew Kassie to him, and after he had her comfortably tucked under his arm snapped his fingers, stuck the eternal doobie between her lips and said, "Suck on this for a few moments my Queen, then I have something else I want to show you. It is not as pleasant as some of the things I will show you, but it is a necessary part of the security system that will help keep you safe."

Kassie took a long hit on the doobie, held her breath as long as she could without passing out and as she exhaled said, "Usually, they get me stoned before they fuck me, not after."

Drake chuckled and replied, "That's because the poor bastards aren't as good at fucking as I am."

Kassie laughed as she shook her head and replied, "And you are so modest."

As Kassie inhaled again Drake simply grinned and replied, "Remember baby, it ain't bragging if you can do it. I'll show you some more proof of that when we get back from the watchtower."

Kassie pondered that for a moment then exhaled again and said, "Works for me. But if I'm going to be strolling along the watchtower in broad daylight you better find me something to wear or the tourist are really going to get an eyeful."

Drake laughed and replied, "Well the tourists won't be arriving until later, but I'm sure you can find something to wear in that closet over there."

Kassie looked at him suspiciously for a moment then got out of bed and went over to the large walk in closet. When she opened it she saw the right side of the closet held a variety men's clothes and boots. The left side of the closet held a fashionable array of women's clothing and shoes that she had a feeling were all going to fit her perfectly. There were evening gowns, dresses, shirts, blouses, slacks, riding britches and a variety of comfortable looking jeans. She also noticed a few pieces of period clothing on both sides of the closet. She stepped back from the closet for a moment, turned to Drake and said, "What's with the period costumes? Are those for Samhain?"

Drake chuckled and replied, "Yes, and no. There will be times we will sally forth and go amongst the tourists. We will wear the period costumes to help lend to the atmosphere. Samhain is one of those times we will be doing that."

Kassie went back over to the bed and after she curled up beside Drake again said, "You dress up and mingle with the tourist on special occasions like Samhain?"

Drake chuckled darkly and replied, "I dress up and mingle with the tourist many evenings I'm here with them my dear." Drake paused then said with a wide grin, "Fortunately I've found if the Lord of the Manor is dashing enough, he can get by with donning a pair of riding britches, boots and red shirt on all but the most special of occasions. And by the way, this time of year we only have one tour per day that begins shortly before sunset. The tour includes dinner. The meals we serve are some of the finest dining there is anywhere in the world." Drake's grin turned wicked as he said, "I often make an appearance just before dinner is served and share some of the castle's special wine with them."

Suddenly Kassie stilled again as another vision danced through her head. She saw Drake standing in the doorway of a large dining room looking extremely dashing in tight black riding britches, hunter's boots and a blood red silk shirt with the first three buttons undone. She saw him walking into the dining room smiling and nodding at the tourists seated at three long dining tables. As he approached the center of the three tables a servant handed him a glass of red wine. After a quick curtsy she went back to helping another servant fill the wine glasses by each tourist. Kassie saw him smiling and raising his glass in a toast to the good health of his guests. As the vision continued she watched the eyes of Drake's guests become glazed. Drake walked over to the first table and after he sat his wine glass down leaned over and gently sank his fangs into the neck of one of his guests. Suddenly the vision vanished. After blinking a couple of times Kassie looked up at Drake and said, "Is the wine drugged?"

Drake grinned and replied, "Not exactly. It is more like, enchanted. It temporarily spellbinds the minds of the tourists so they see and experience what I wish them to." Drake paused for a moment then said softly, "I do no harm to any of the guests I dine on Kassie. I take very little blood from them and they in turn enjoy a lovely tour of the castle, some of its grounds, and are fed a meal fit for a king. In fact the tourists dine on many of the same dishes ancient kings and queens did." Suddenly he grinned

and said, "Fact is I usually take a lot more of their money than their blood."

Kassie laughed as she shook her head then said, "You should be ashamed."

Drake simply laughed as he shook his head and replied, "Why? As I said, I do them no harm, and they get their money's worth my dear. The parts of the castle they have guided access to contain some of the finest and rarest antiques, books and artwork in the world."

Kassie had inhaled on the eternal doobie as he began to speak and now exhaled then said, "Though the terminally righteous would not agree, I cannot fault you for how you utilize the tourists. I suspect you probably give them more of their money's worth than many other tourist attractions do. And of course the antiques etc. provide a valid reason for having extremely tight security in and around the castle. I suspect you even enjoy mingling with them for reasons other than dining on them."

Drake's face broke into wide pleased smile and leaned over kissed Kassie soundly before he said, "You are such a wise little witch my beloved. Yes I do enjoy mingling with some of them for reasons beyond that of feeding. I enjoy talking with the scholars and historians as they tour the castle. Sometimes movie people come here now as well to do historical research for their films and I enjoy the company of some of them. You will also enjoying mingling and chatting with some of our guests my dear."

Kassie thought for a moment and then said, "Why do I get the idea that our guests are very carefully screened before they ever step foot in this castle?"

Drake grinned and said, "Because my little wise one, they are. Tours must be booked at least 30 days in advance. Most are done via the internet."

Kassie inhaled and pondered that for a moment. A part of her winced at the screening methods she suspected Drake used, but another part of her understood his and now her safety depended upon those screening methods.

Drake watched her with a fond smile and after she had nodded he said, "Yes my dear it is a necessary evil. As are many things about me. Including what I am going to show you in a few moments." He paused, took the eternal doobie from her fingers, flicked it in the air and as it vanished rose and said, "Come, let's don some clothing then walk along the watch tower."

Kassie smiled as she took the hand he had extended to her and kissed him softly on the cheek after she rose from the bed. The dashing Lord of the Manor donned his usual black britches, boots and red silk shirt. The beautiful Lady of the Manor wiggled into a pair of tight black jeans, moccasins and a steel gray tailored shirt. Drake took her hand once they were dressed and led her towards the den. He placed his hand on a section of the paneled wall and it slid aside with a soft whisper. Drake flipped a switch on the other side of the doorway and they entered a well lit passage way that led to a winding staircase. As they entered the passageway Drake said, "Though you will be confronted with another necessary evil, the watchtowers will also give you another a place to sit outside when you wish. It will also offer you a stunning view of our estate my dear."

### Chapter 3

As Kassie looked out from the watchtower of the castle Drake said, "The heads you see impaled upon those stakes are quite real. And serve a very useful purpose. The tourists think they are fake of course. But the reality behind that little illusion is that those are the heads of some of my enemies. Now, with their mouths sewed firmly shut, and their eyelids removed, they sit upon those stakes and help guard this castle. Everything they see, I see. Everything they hear, I hear."

Kassie gazed upon the impaled heads and said, "I suppose replacing them with surveillance cameras is out of the question? " She gazed more closely at one of the heads and realized it was the head of the vampyre who had hours earlier had sank his fangs into her throat then said, "And you put his head here!"

"Absolutely out of the question my dear. They are far more reliable than surveillance cameras. Though a bit gruesome, they are the most effective means of surveillance there is. And you damned straight I put his head here."

Kassie sighed softly and replied, "I was afraid of that."

As Drake watched Kassie ponder his words he said, "Would you like a hit of the eternal doobie my dear."

Kassie gazed out at the heads impaled on the stakes and replied, "Yeah, I think I would." Drake grinned, snapped his fingers then stuck the eternal doobie that had appeared in them between Kassie's lips. She took a long hit of the doobie. After a moment she exhaled then said, "Well I guess I will have to live with those."

As Kassie inhaled again Drake grinned and replied, "Good girl. I knew you would be reasonable about this. I have several home bases. This castle is the most secure of those. I created, and have carefully cultivated the lore and legend surrounding this castle over many centuries, and



am fully utilizing that carefully cultivated lore and legend, along with the tourists who come here now."

Kassie exhaled then said, "You are the legend and lore."

Drake merely smiled and replied, "No, I am the reality behind that legend and lore."

Kassie nodded and replied, "Hide in plain sight."

Drake chuckled darkly and replied, "In a manner of speaking when it comes to the prey. However, I do not hide from my bloodthirsty children. Many know of this castle. The heads on those stakes gives mute testimony though as to what will happen to those who come uninvited to my castle." He paused for a moment then said quietly, "Kassie, I do not like wanton wasteful violence or unnecessary cruelty. But I do have enemies my dear. The majority of which are my own bloodthirsty children. As long as they leave me alone and obey the law though, I leave them alone."

Kassie exhaled and said, "What is the law?"

"Thou shalt not do anything to endanger the species."

Kassie grinned wryly and said, "So sayeth the King."

Drake grinned as he shook his head then replied, "No dear, so sayeth their Dark God."

Kassie laughed and replied, "Excuse me. So sayeth their Dark God."

As Drake listened to the sound of her laughter he smiled and fell even more deeply in love with Kassie. She brought a sense of joy and fun into his life that nothing else ever had. It was that sense of joy and fun that had attracted him to her as he had read her work. As he had done his homework on her and learned more about the woman behind the words he had found himself falling in love with that woman. The depth of his feeling for

what he then thought was a mere mortal woman that he had never even touched had amazed him. It was in fact that depth of feeling that caused him delay going to her until he could no longer stand not to. He had delayed that night as long as he could by doing his homework on her from afar, hoping he would discover some fatal flaw that would change his feelings for her. But he had discovered no fatal flaw. Instead he had found a woman that fascinated him as no other ever had. She filled his waking thoughts and haunted his dreams. Still thinking her a mere mortal he had finally gone to her. Telling himself that he was just going to add her to his list of gourmet meals. Knowing deep within his coal black heart the whole time he was lying to himself. But Kassie had turned out to be the salvation he had long thought lost to him for all eternity. And he had instantly understood why that destiny had eluded him for so long. He had not gone to Kassie because she was his salvation. Love had pulled him to her. Now he understood it was that love that was both their salvation.

Drake shook his head and with a wry grin, "But for all my power and intelligence, I'm dumb ass Dark God at times my love. I've searched for you for so very long. Damn near turned the world upside down a time or two in my hunt for you. Never knowing until now that as long as I was searching for you for the reason I was, I would never find you."

Kassie simply smiled softly and said, "Of course you could not find me then. You found that High Priestess and seduced her so long ago not because you loved her, but because you wanted the gift of immortality. Then you began to search for her again not because you truly loved her, but because you were seeking salvation and escape from the curse laid upon you for trying to destroy her."

Drake nodded and said with a wry grin, "Oh what a tangled web we weave, especially when it is ourselves, we are trying to deceive."

Kassie nodded her head and replied, "Those are the most tangled webs of all."

Drake smiled at her then said, "They once called your kind The Wise Ones, for a very good reason my beloved witch." Then he bent his head down and kissed her until she was breathless. As he wrapped his arms more tightly around her and held her close to him he gave another wry grin as he thought about how devious The Powers That Be had been in solving what had seemed like the perpetual paradox. They had tormented him for centuries dangling salvation in front of him, but always keeping it just out of his reach. Then, when he had given up all hope and decided they had taken it from him entirely, it had come to him in the guise of writer whose words would completely enchant him. Suddenly his wry grin turned into a smile of wicked delight. He bent his head, kissed the top of Kassie's head and said, "Hold tightly to me my beloved, I want to show you something else."

As Kassie clung to him they vanished from the watchtower. They reappeared in the library. Drake kissed the top of her head again, then as he loosened his hold and stepped back said, "You'll like this room my beloved word witch."

Drake stepped back, then to the side so she could see the room. They were standing in the center of room with seemingly endless rows of books. Near them was a black leather couch, and a coffee table with a sleek 17" silver PowerBook sitting on it. Drake took her hand and begin to lead her towards the couch, telling her as he did, "This is our private library off limits to all tourists. You will find the library very useful for doing research my beloved word witch. I have stocked it with everything I could think of that would be useful to you. And of course there is a section devoted entirely to your work." Kassie was momentarily rendered speechless by both the size of his library, and his words. His private library was much larger than some town libraries. Drake sat on the couch and pulled Kassie down onto his lap. When he had her comfortably arranged on his lap he said, "I converted several of the rooms next my bedroom into a private library long ago so I could read and work undisturbed. I think you will also find it a useful place to do both my love."

Kassie grinned back up at him and replied, "Oh I have no doubt I'll find it a very useful place to do both." She turned her head, pointed to the PowerBook and said, "Yours?"

Drake grinned and replied, "No. It is yours. It's a G4 my beloved. With an 80 Gig SuperDrive, and over 2 Gigs of Ram installed. The battery on this baby never needs recharging. The computer always runs totally cool, and the AirPort gets you instantly on the net when you boot up from anywhere in the world at speeds that will blow your little blonde mind." Drake paused, and his grin widened as he snapped his fingers. The PowerBook vanished from coffee table and reappeared in his hand. He handed it to Kassie and said, "Here, boot it up, type in your password, and take your new baby for a test drive."

Kassie laughed as she took the PowerBook and replied, "This kind of shameless bribery will get you nowhere."

Drake smiled and said, "I know. That's one of the many things I love about you."

Kassie sat the sleek silver PowerBook on her lap, raised the lid and pressed the power button. Then blinked in surprise when after a blazing fast boot up she was confronted with her familiar desktop."

Drake chuckled and said, "Welcome to your new PowerBook Kassie. Yes, everything, and I do mean everything that was on your other computers is on this one. I'm sorry about your other computers, but for security reasons they ceased to exist the moment you pressed the power button on this one. I know that is an unwelcome shock to you, but please believe me my love, it is for your safety that it was done. And you will love this new PowerBook. On my blood oath I promise you that. In fact, why you haven't already bought yourself a decent PowerBook puzzles me."

Kassie was quickly opening files to make sure everything from her other computer really was on this one and as her fingers flew across the keys said, "Because my other computer did what I needed it to."

Drake laughed and said, "Well so will this one, and whole lot more."

After establishing everything she needed really was on the Power-Book she looked at the dock, pointed to the fanged death's head icon with the cursor and said, "What's that?"

Drake grinned evilly and said, "Your security system. It is the same program I designed and use on my computers."

Kassie moved the cursor away from the fanged death's head icon and said, "I don't want to know." She wanted to hit him over the head with the new PowerBook for toasting her other computers, but she was quickly falling in love with this sleek beautiful machine.

Drake's grin widened and he said, "By the way, you should send Joseph an e-mail. You know, let him know you are okay. Tell him I said hello, and have fun tracing the e-mail."

Kassie looked up at his evil grinning face and said, "Only if you promise me doing so won't fry his computer, or harm him."

Drake's evil grinned widened and he said, "On my blood oath I swear it my love."

Kassie looked at him for a moment, then typed out a short e-mail to Joseph. As she clicked the send button she said, "You better keep your promise."

Drake chuckled and said, "I will my dear. Nothing will happen to his computer, or him."

Kassie looked at him and said, "And where does my e-mail trace back to?"

Drake grinned evilly and said, "This one will eventually trace back to his own computer."

Kassie looked down at the sleek silver PowerBook that seemed to mold itself to her lap and fingers, studied the fanged death's head icon for a moment, then looked up at Drake and said, "The hackers must love you."

Drake laughed and said, "Admit it my darling, you are already in love with that computer. I knew you would be the moment you used it. It is a dream machine my dear, worthy of the one who holds it in her lap. It has all the programs you enjoy using on it, as well as a host of other applications. Including the latest version of your favorite graphic program. If you click that library icon in the dock, you can type in the subject or name of a book and if we have it, the program will tell you exactly where the book or books are in this library. "

Suddenly Kassie grinned and said, "Yes you bastard, I love it."

Drake laughed as he settled her more comfortably in his lap and watched her fingers dance across the keyboard as she explored her new computer. The modified PowerBook in her lap that was replacing those obsolete machines she had been working on would be much handier for her to use, and help to keep her safe. It was computer nerd's wet dream. And a hacker's nightmare. The on button scanned the fingerprint of the person pressing it as it was pushed down. The computer would only boot up completely if the fingerprint matched that of Kassie or himself. The mail alert went off, and Drake grinned as she checked her e-mail. Then chuckled as he read Joseph's reply and said, "Tell him for a phenomenal fee I will install a slightly modified version of that program on his computer."

Kassie whipped out the reply then went back to playing with her graphics program. She laughed as her fingers flew and said, "It has so many more bells and whistles than my version, it will take forever to learn them all."

Drake grinned and said, "Nonsense you'll have them figured out in no time. And speaking of time, your lunch will soon be ready."

Kassie played with the new graphics program again for a few moments, then closed it out and shut the computer down. She leaned over and sat the Powerbook on the coffee table, then snuggled back into Drake's lap and smiled up at him as she said, "It is absolutely fantastic." She reached up, gently stroked his face and said, "Thank you."

Drake smiled at her, took her hand in his and after kissing the palm said, "You are more than welcome my love." He rose from the couch, gently set her on her feet, then smiled and said, "We'll walk through the library and I'll show you the entrance into our bedroom. Your lunch should be arriving there very soon." He smiled when she leaned down and grabbed the PowerBook before she took his hand. Drake led them through the seemingly endless rows of books, pointing out certain books he knew she would find interesting along the way. He was very pleased with the way Kassie had accepted the forced replacement of her old computer. Of course, even without the modifications any Mac owner would love the new PowerBook he had given her. However she was handling having him hack and toast her other computers with amazing grace. He had actually intended to give her the PowerBook on their third date. But in between having her reveal she had a part time gig moonlighting as a supernatural crime fighter, that her next assignment was to hunt down one of his bloodthirsty children with some extremely unsavory feeding habits, then completing that assignment, it had slipped his mind. At the end of the library he stopped before the paneled wall then placed his hand on the center panel and slid it aside.

They stepped through the opening and Kassie heard a soft whisper as it closed behind them. Drake's bedroom was actually a suite. The bedroom contained a fireplace with a comfortable couch in front of it, a king sized black lacquer four poster bed with a heavy red draped canopy, matching end tables and dresser, a huge walk in closet, a flat big screen television mounted on the wall opposite the end of their bed, a state of the art stereo system incased in an antique cabinet. There was also a bathroom that contained among other things, a sunken tub complete with a whirlpool. There was a dining area with a round table, four chairs and a small refrigerator, There was also a den with a desk and couch in it. The sleeping area also had access to a balcony that overlooked the western part of the estate. The dining area had a balcony that overlooked the east side of the estate. Kassie heard a soft knock, and Drake motioned her towards the dining area as he went to the door. She sat the PowerBook on the dresser as she went by it then went into the dining area and sat down at the table. Drake strode in moments later carrying a huge silver tray. As he sat it in front of her he pulled the cover off the tray and said, "A feast fit for my Queen."

Kassie had to agree the meal that sat before was that. On the tray was half a Cornish game hen marinated in Italian dressing then sprinkled with garlic salt and lemon pepper, cornbread stuffing, creamed peas with pearl onions, twice baked potato, freshly baked bread rolls and iced tea. As Kassie began to eat Drake leaned back in his chair and snapped his fingers once. A PowerBook similar to hers appeared in his lap. His was encased in black metal, and in the center of the apple was a pair of fangs. While Kassie consumed her feast he took care of a little business and sent Joseph an e-mail that included an address he could reply to Drake at.

Kassie was just finishing her meal when he closed the computer sitting on his lap and snapped his fingers again. The computer vanished and Drake grinned at her and said, "Are you ready to see a little more of our castle my Queen?"

Kassie grinned and replied, "But of course my King."



Drake laughed and said, "Then let's visit the stables next my love. I want to show you Wind Dancer's new home. I would like us to move him and Precious here as quickly as possible to ensure their safety. I could make arrangements for a private jet with facilities for Wind Dancer, and we could go pick them up tomorrow." Drake knew how much that horse and pet timberwolf meant to her, and would feel much better when they were here. He was very pleased when Kassie agreed to move them here tomorrow. Drake snapped his fingers, pressed a button on the cell phone that appeared in his hand and said, "Ingrid, please make arrangements for having Wind Dancer and Precious flown here tomorrow." He paused for a moment, said, "Thank you Ingrid." He pressed another button, tossed the phone in the air and snapped his fingers. As the phone vanished into thin air he rose from his chair and said to Kassie, "We can go pick them up tomorrow afternoon." He smiled, walked around and took her hand then said as he led her towards the bedroom door, "Now let me give you a tour of the stables. There is a hidden tunnel to them from this room, but we will take the normal route to them today and I'll show you around the tunnels later."

He opened the door and they walked out into a long hallway. At the end of the hall was a winding flight of stairs that led up to the floor they were on. Kassie did notice some surveillance cameras along the hallway and the stairs. As they descended the stairs she said, "Well I'm glad you have regular cameras and not heads keeping an eye on things inside."

Drake chuckled and said, "Well the cameras do a fairly good job in here. Though I do not rely completely on them."

As they came to the end of the stairs Kassie noticed a chain across them, and a large black man sitting in a chair at the bottom of the stairs. He rose from his chair, reached over and unhooked the chain as he heard Drake's reply and smiled at them both. He nodded once at Drake and said, "Good to see you Sir."

Drake smiled at the large black man who Kassie couldn't help but think reminded her quite a bit of the big black man that greeted people in the MIA movies at their headquarters and said, "It's good be home Bob." As they reached the end of the stairs Drake paused before Bob and said, "I would like you to meet your new Mistress." He turned his head towards Kassie for a moment then nodded towards Bob. "Kassie this Bob. He helps keep the tourists down here where they belong."

Kassie smiled at Bob and said, "It's a pleasure to meet you."

Bob smiled back at her and replied, "The pleasure is mine Mistress Kassie."

As Bob put the chain back across the bottom of the stairs they strolled into the foyer hand in hand. Drake made a left turn and said, "The quickest and easiest route to the stables from here is through the kitchen."

Drake opened a large wooden door and Kassie saw a huge kitchen bustling with activity. She noticed the appliances were all state of the art. A chef was standing over the stove stirring a large pot. Kassie let go of Drake's hand and walked over to the chef, smiled at him and said, "I would like to thank you for a most delicious lunch. Everything was sheer perfection."

The chef beamed at Kassie and replied, "You are most welcome Mistress Kassie. I am very glad you enjoyed it. I would like to thank you for the hours of enjoyment you have given me. I have become a big fan of yours since the Master introduced me to your work." Kassie blushed and smiled back at the chef as Drake took her hand and led her through the kitchen. As they made their way to the rear door of the kitchen the chef watched them with a beaming smile. It had gladdened his heart to see the way the Master had looked at Mistress Kassie.

They exited the kitchen and headed towards the stables. Drake was smiling and happily talking to Kassie as they walked along the path leading

to the stable. Inside the castle the servants were already chattering about Kassie and the Master. Many of them like Bob and the chef had worked for Drake for a long time, and were especially pleased to see him looking so happy. Some knew more than others about the Master, and therefore knew Kassie's safety was utmost on his mind at the moment. Some were here now for the specific purpose of keeping her safe. But every long term servant there who truly knew the Master, was now fiercely protective of Kassie. They would become even more protective of her over the next few weeks as they met and were charmed by her. Some could already feel the change she had brought to the castle in the few short hours she had been there. It was as if the deep dark pall of unhappiness that had always seemed to cling to the castle walls was already receding slightly. Bob and the chef, as well as a few others had seen the Master's face, and had been pleasantly shocked to see happiness in it.

As the castle continued to buzz with the news of its new Mistress, Drake and Kassie approached the stables. Kassie was delighted to see several other horses in some of the stalls. She turned to Drake with one of those smiles of hers that melted his stone cold heart and said, "He will be around other horses!"

Drake smiled down at her and replied, "Yes my love. We keep a few horses here. Most of them belong to some of the servants who like to ride. The servants pay a small reasonable fee boarding fee each month, and the horses are cared for as if they were my own."

As Kassie gazed up at Drake she suddenly saw a vision of him returning one night and hearing the muffled sobs of a child. Saw him standing over the child's bed. Then sitting on it with a sobbing child in his arms crying, "My pony going bye bye. Momma cannot pay. Cannot pay. Pony go bye bye. Why Mr.? Why is my pony going bye bye?"

Despite the many burdens he bore, the child rarely ever cried. Drake had admired his stoic quiet acceptance of his lot in life. Curiosity as to what had made him cry had brought him to his room that night. When he

discovered the reason for the flood of heartbroken tears his initial reaction had been anger. His anger was not directed at the child, but at the petty greed which had caused the flood of tears. That this child who so gracefully accepted his burdens should lose the pony that brought him so much happiness because of such petty greed angered Drake beyond all reason for a moment. Then she saw Drake stroking the child's head and saying, "No. You are mistaken little one. I promise you on my blood oath, your pony isn't going bye bye. Your pony is coming here tomorrow to live in my stables so he can be closer to you."

The child had looked at him with wonder and said, "Pony come here?"

Drake had dried the tears still in the eyes and on the face of the child with the handkerchief that had appeared in his hand and said, "Yes little one. Tomorrow your pony is coming here." A cold hard look came over Drake's face and he had said, "I am personally going to go pick your pony up." Then his face softened and he said, "Then I will bring your pony here to you. But you must stop crying now little one, and go to sleep so tomorrow can come." Drake had laid the boy back in bed and gently tucked the covers around him.

The vision vanished, and Kassie found herself once more gazing into the cobalt blue eyes of the vampyre who had comforted and mended a child's heart and world.

Drake had not sent Kassie that vision, and was in fact embarrassed when the look on her face had made him peek into her mind and see it with her. He looked rather sheepish as he said, "The child you saw is handicapped. He owns a horse that had been trained for him to ride. Even though I pay my servants a more than excellent wage the mother of the boy was having trouble paying the ridiculously high boarding stable fees they were charging her. She is a live-in servant. The pony brings the child great happiness." Drake shrugged his shoulders and said, "I saw no reason why the pony should not live here with the child. One of the other

servants has a son who did a few odd jobs around here for a little extra spending money. He offered to help care for the pony. Jimmy is now in charge of the stables. When I discovered other servants had horses and were having trouble paying the expensive boarding stable fees around here even on the more than excellent wage I pay them, I decided their horses should live here as well." Drake shook his handsome head and said angrily, "Only the rich can afford the damn outlandish fees these boarding stables around here charge. They do not want to do business with "common" people like my hard working servants." Drake paused then said more quietly, "Look Kassie, I may be worse than my old friend Beezie himself, but I am not petty. There was simply no sane reason why that child should lose his pony, and my other servants struggle to pay outlandish boarding fees when I had a fucking stable full of empty stalls. It was a simple act of logic."

Kassie simply smiled that smile of hers as she reached up and stroked the side of his face and said, "Of course dear. A simple act of logic. Now show me the pony and the other horses."

Drake grinned back at her and replied, "Well six of them are new arrivals that belong to some of your Royal Guard who will be accompanying you when you go riding. Those six will stay far enough away from you not to interfere with your ride, but close enough to protect you. Young Jimmy is busy rounding up extra help to care for their horses."

Kassie was to find out as time went on that Drake had committed many simple little acts of logic. He had never really given any of them a second thought after he had done them. There were never any strings attached to them. They were such small things to him. So easy to do. He did not realize the fierce loyalty some of those simple little acts of logic had instilled in those he had performed them for. Drake knew he had the best protection magick, money and fear could provide for Kassie. What he did not realize was no amount of magick, money or fear could have provided him with the loyalty his simple little acts of logic had. Woven into the shield that was around Kassie was a network of humans and other

creatures that would protect her with a fierceness that would surprise Drake. A network of humans and other creatures who because Drake had once performed some little act of logic without hesitation for them, would lay down their lives for Kassie without hesitation. The meekest among them would become a raging beast to protect her. Many of the humans woven into the shield protecting Kassie knew or suspected Drake was a vampyre, and that other vampyres were what posed the most danger to Mistress Kassie. They were using vampyre lore and legend in some ingenious ways to tighten the net of security around Kassie.

Kassie could feel the shield growing stronger with every passing moment as they strolled through the stables. She felt it in face of young Jimmy when he had come in to tell Drake extra help had been found and hired. She felt it when they had returned to the castle. She saw it now in the face of the chef as they went back through the kitchen. In a young boy washing dishes and in the face of Bob as he rose from his chair with a smile and unlatched the chain at the bottom of the stairs. She felt it again when Drake's laughter echoed up and down the winding staircase after she leaned over and whispered in Drake's ear that Bob reminded her of that guy in the MIB movies. As Bob heard the Master's laughter he smiled and felt the dark pall recede just a tiny bit more.

They continued strolling up the stairs hand in hand chatting about going and picking up Wind Dancer and Precious tomorrow afternoon. As soon as the door to their bedroom closed behind them Drake pulled her into his arms and kissed her until she was breathless. Kassie rested her head on his chest to regain her breath and snuggled against him. He wrapped his arms more tightly around her and held her close to him. For a moment, shadows of tenderness softened the harsh planes of the vampyre's pale handsome face as he held Kassie close to him. Those that knew him well, knew that the creature who held Kassie so gently in his cold hard embrace was the oldest and most powerful creature walking planet earth right then. He was also the most dangerous. He showed not the slightest drop of mercy to his enemies, and not even heaven could

help the prisoners he took. Even his old pal Beezie was sometimes awed by how cold blooded he could be. Yet for all that, he was also capable of performing random acts of kindness he called simple little acts of logic. But the truth was there was no real streak of human kindness in Drake. Though the rest of his species still did retain varying degrees of humanity, there was no longer anything truly human left in him. Over the last few thousand centuries he had become an aloof omnipotent best left to his own devices.

Kassie understood very well that what was holding her was not human. Understood on a more profound level than anyone else exactly what the creature who was holding her so tenderly truly was. He had haunted her dreams in this lifetime, and many others. Through her dreams she had watched it grow and evolve into what it now was. She had seen him in all its countless forms. Knew him in some ways better than he knew himself. And loved him with a passion that had once been her downfall. She still loved this creature who held her so tenderly, but she must not let that love be her downfall again. She had betrayed and gone against the laws of Magick for it once before when it had been a mere mortal and she a High Priestess. Her punishment for that had been long and brutal. She had done her penance though. Learned and grown from her long ago mistake. She would not make the same mistake twice. She could not help but love the creature holding her. That was part of the curse levied upon her long long ago. But she would not betray the Magick for him again.

Drake understood what was going on in Kassie's mind while he held her without reading it. Just as he had come to understand the Magick that was in Kassie's soul, and deeply buried in the souls of others like her depended on her staying true to that Magick. She had betrayed and gone against the laws of Magick once before for him, and paid dearly for it. He would not ask, nor allow her to do that again. When he had first discovered Kassie was a true witch he had thought her the only one left. Something sent especially for him to fulfill a long ago prophecy. Kassie was not

his private little gift though. She held the key that would unlock the Magick in the hearts and souls of others like her.

The onslaught of one God religions like Christianity had pushed aside The Ancient Ones and their Magick for many centuries now. He had come to believe that the last few true witches left on planet earth had gone up in smoke during The Burning Times. But in a final act of irony some of the New Age folk had begun to worship and bring life to The Ancient Ones again. He had mistaken Kassie for one of the New Age witches that were popping up across the world like magick mushrooms. He had fed from a few of those New Age witches, and though he found them very palatable, they left him with a terrible hunger and longing for the real thing. They were a bittersweet taste of something he had thought was now forever lost to him. He had stopped feeding on them because they did create such a longing in him for the real thing. At first he had delayed actually going to Kassie partly because he knew more than any other she would awaken that longing in him again.

He had finally gone to her because he could no longer stay away. That a mere piece of prey had enchanted him so was something he had not liked admitting to himself. He had had other mortal women of course. Had even been aroused by some of them while they were still mortal. But never had a mortal woman aroused him the way Ms Cassandra B. Badbh had. And she had done it without ever laying a hand on him. He had hated himself at times for wanting her so badly. Soundly kicked himself as he e-mailed her requesting an autographed photo. Berated himself for acting like a love struck mortal fool as he framed and placed the photo next to other ones he had found on her web page and printed out.

Suddenly he felt Kassie go completely still in his arms and he instinctively knew she was having another vision. He was surprised to see as he peeked into her mind that even though she had been no where near his, she was seeing a vision of the dresser by the bed as it had been moments before they had entered the castle together for the first time. As the vision vanished and Kassie relaxed in his arms Drake grinned down at her sheep-



ishly and said, "I made them vanish just before we entered the bedroom. I didn't want you to think I was a stalker or something."

Kassie gazed up at him first in surprise, then burst into laughter and said, "Oh heaven forbid that I might think you were a big bad stalker!" Drake laughed with her as he pulled her to him again then kissed her soundly. As Kassie tried to catch her breath he swept her up into his arms and strode towards the bed with her.

For the next few hours they would lose themselves in each other and experience pleasure and emotions they had never experienced with anyone else. And the ties of blood and love that bound them together would be stronger than ever.

## Chapter 4

As Kassie unhooked her toes from the bed rail Drake withdrew from her and vanished. As she lowered her legs he reappeared beside her reclining against the padded headboard. He draped an arm over Kassie's shoulder and pulled her up next to him then after getting her comfortably tucked under his arm said with a wide wicked grin, "You are an amazingly agile little witch."

As Kassie snuggled against him she laughed and replied, "Well you are awfully lithe yourself."

Drake chuckled and replied with a wink, "Incredibly so for my age." He snapped his fingers and handed Kassie the can of the real thing that had appeared in his hand. As she took a sip from the can he said, "The sun will soon be setting my love and I must leave you for a short time to feed. I will be back as soon as possible though. Because I will be ravenous I am going dine in house tonight only after I have taken the edge off my hunger elsewhere. Your dinner will be sent up at 8. There are plenty of your favorite beverages in the icebox." Drake paused then pointed to the phone on the dresser and said, "Should you want a snack before supper then simply pick up the phone, press the kitchen button and tell them what you want. For right now I would prefer you stay upstairs until I return. Feel free to enjoy the balconies my love or walk along the watchtower if you wish." Drake paused, grinned and snapped his fingers again and an ashtray with the eternal doobie appeared on the night stand by Kassie's side of the bed.

Before she could answer Drake took the can from her hand, sat it on his night stand then gathered her in his arms and kissed her until she was breathless. Kassie wrapped her arms around him and hugged him tightly. She knew he would leave just before the sun set so that she would not see the bloodlust return. She also knew he would feed first far away from here upon those whose souls were dark indeed. He would do this just in case the returning bloodlust proved too much for even him to control at first.

He buried his face in her hair for a moment, then gently loosened his embrace. Kassie knew it was time for him to leave and unwrapped her arms from around him.

Drake gazed down into the amber eyes of the witch he adored to distraction and said, "Yes, tis time I departed my beloved. But I will return as soon as possible, and should you need me, you need only call my name."

Kassie smiled softly at him and she stroked his cheek said, "I will see you soon then." Drake took her hand, kiss the palm of it then as he let it go vanished. Kassie looked at the empty space where he had been, and realized how much of a void his absence left in her life. She sighed softly, then leaned back against the headboard of the bed. She reached over and took the eternal doobie from the ashtray and inhaled deeply. Her life was never going to be the same again. She had finally met the creature who had haunted her dreams for so very long and found him to be so much more than those dreams.

She relaxed and pondered the changes in her life that were coming for several minutes, put the doobie back in the ashtray and after getting up from the bed padded towards the bathroom. She had noticed earlier that it was stocked with a large variety of scented candles, bubble baths, bath salts, oils, lotions and perfumes, including her favorites. After lighting a few vanilla scented candles and placing them around the tub she chose her favorite bubble bath and poured a small amount under the running water. Then she sprinkled a handful of bath salts into the water. She grabbed one of the extra large fluffy towels from the shelf and hung it on the rail by the steps leading into the tub. She padded back into the bedroom, got the can of the real thing, the ashtray and eternal doobie, then went back into the bathroom. She sat the can and ashtray on the edge of the tub then turned the water off. After she settled into the tub she picked up the doobie, inhaled deeply then set it back in the ashtray.

As she leaned back she exhaled, flipped the switch for the whirlpool and let the warm whirlpool take her away for a moment. Kassie knew that

though her life would now be filled with many pleasures and much happiness, it would also be filled with darkness and danger. Drake was who and what he really was, and she could accept that. She knew as much as he enjoyed the brief respite from the hunger he would not change or trade what he truly was for that pleasure. She could also accept that aspect of him. She just hoped that he could truly accept her for who and what she really was right now since she had no intention of changing that until she had finished some of the other tasks she was destined to complete in this lifetime. As Kassie relaxed and pondered her fate she noticed a bar of her favorite chamomile and sandalwood soap sitting in the soap dish on the right side of the tub. She picked up the loofah that lay beside the soap and dipped it into the water. Kassie smiled as she rubbed the wet loofah against the soap. Drake had done much to see to it that she would be as comfortable as possible here. As she rubbed her arm with the loofah she grinned and wiggled her toes in the whirlpool. Drake obviously knew that long hot bubble baths were one of the little pleasures in life she enjoyed to the fullest.

Just before she turned into a prune she stood up and walked up the steps of the tub. She reached over and grabbed the towel she had hung on the top of the rail by the steps and wrapped it around her. After she dried off she started the water draining from the tub then hung the towel on the rail to dry. She went walked over to the shelves where the towels and other bath accessories were and picked up a bottle of sandalwood scented lotion. After rubbing her body with the lotion she but the bottle back on the shelf, then reached for the body spray and lightly sprayed her body all over. She picked up the can of the real thing along with the ashtray and the eternal doobie and walked out of the bathroom. She sat the can and ashtray on the night stand then went to the closet and picked out a sexy purple robe that was hanging in it and put it on. On her way back the bed she grabbed her PowerBook and the remote to the stereo. Once she was comfortably propped up in the bed listening to some of her favorite music she booted up the computer. After replying to another e-mail from Joseph she went through the rest of her e-mail and after trashing all

the spam she replied to some fan mail and letters from friends. After hitting the send button on her last e-mail she opened up Appleworks and went to work on her newest story.

As usual she lost all track of time as she entered the world of words that was her domain, and was surprised when what seemed to her only moments later a soft knock on the door signaled her supper had arrived. She bid the servant enter as she placed the computer on the dresser and went towards the door. She met the servant halfway and thanked her as she took the tray from her. The servant beamed at Kassie and after a quick curtsey asked her to just leave the tray outside the room when she was finished with her dinner. After the servant left Kassie took the tray into the dining area and placed it on the table. When she lifted the large silver cover she saw a sumptuous dinner before her. There were thin slices of pork, ham, beef and lamb. Small bowls contained apple sauce and a choice of gravies, including brown peppercorn gravy. Arranged around the meat were sugar snap peas, mashed potatoes, baked yams and corn on the cob. Under another small cover were fresh baked bread rolls. Kassie grinned and shook her head ruefully knowing she could never do justice to such a meal.

As she began to eat her supper Drake was putting the bite on one of his dinner guests at the castle. He was glad he had left Kassie when he had, and that he had chosen to take the edge off that hunger with a few of the boys from the hood before he dined upon his dinner guests. Though he had been able to control it, the hunger had returned to him like a ravenous beast. Only the Dark God of the vampyres Himself could have controlled that beast. He had not felt hunger like for thousands of centuries. It was very close to the hunger he had felt when he had first become a vampyre. It raged through his body and mind demanding to be sated. Drake had planted himself in the middle of a bunch of boys from the hood as the sun had set. He was clad in tight black jeans, black biker boots and a red silk shirt. The boys from the hood had surrounded him grinning and thinking what an easy piece of prey he was. Then as the sun set the hun-

ger had come over him. It hit him so hard and fast he threw his head back and gave a snarling growl that chilled the blood and flash froze the boys from the hood. What had seemed like the easiest prey they had ever seen had just turned into their worst nightmare. Looming in the center of them was the Ultimate Predator. He stood there with his head thrown back and his long fangs bared wide in a snarling growl that was almost a howl of both pain and hunger. They watched frozen in terror like rabbits as he fought what they knew was a worst beast inside himself. Then he stepped forward and grabbed the first of what were his prey now. Any of those pieces of prey would have killed him without a moment's hesitation, yet he fought the beast within and flung the boy away with life still beating within in him. As he grabbed his next piece of prey he heard it scream, "El Diablo!"

Drake gave a dark chuckle that chilled the boy's spine and said, "No child. I'm something much much worse than my old pal Beezie, and he'll tell you so when you finally meet him. I'll be sure and be there when he throws your soul on the barbie." Then he snarled at the beast within and sank his fangs into the throat of his prey. And he showed his prey visions of places far worse than hell. After a few moments he tossed aside the boy who had mistaken him for his old pal Beezie and grabbed his next piece of prey. It screamed and held up a large silver crucifix it wore around its neck on a long chain. Drake chuckled again and took the cross from the thug's hand and yanked the chain until it broke. He grinned evilly at the boy and wadded the chain and cross up into a small ball in front of him, then popped it in his mouth and swallowed it. Then snarled again at the beast within and sank his fangs into what he now thought of as Cross Boy's throat. As he grabbed the next piece of prey it pulled a 357 Magnum out and shot him point blank in the chest. Drake didn't even flinch when the powerful slug hit him. He just grinned at the boy and stuck his finger in the barrel of the gun and said, "Now pull that fucking trigger again boy. Make my night." Gun Boy knew without a doubt that if he pulled the trigger again he was a dead man. He let go of the gun and Drake shook it off his finger as he sank his fangs into Gun Boy's neck. As he grabbed his

next piece of prey it bared its throat to him. Drake grinned at it and said, "Not even going to put up a fight, kid?"

The boy looked at him and with a rueful grin shook his head and said, "Hey man, sometimes you gotta do like the bitches, and just lay back and enjoy it" Drake roared with laughter for a moment and actually ruffled boy's hair before he sank his fangs into his throat. The next piece of prey pulled out a large knife and stabbed Drake in the heart with it. Drake simply shook his head, and said, "Tsk, Tsk it's supposed to a wooden stake. But those don't really work on me either, kid." He pulled the knife from his chest, licked it clean then as he took a step back, grinned at Knife Boy and said, "Ever played mumbly peg, kid?"

The boy's eyes widened and as he looked down said, "Yeah man, but this is concrete I'm standing on."

Drake merely grinned and replied, "I know." Then he gave a seemingly casual flick of his wrist . The knife buried itself up to the hilt right beside the boot of Knife Boy. Then Drake stepped forward again, grabbed Knife Boy, pulled him to him said, "Now be a smart little bitch like your friend, and just lay back and enjoy it." By the time he had gone through the 13 gang members who had surrounded him the beast was well under control. He finished his meal by reaching inside himself and removing the crucifix ball and the 357 slug. He placed those by the knife buried to it's hilt in concrete and vanished. The boys would later awaken and find the crucifix ball, slug and knife. One would exclaim as he examined the crucifix, "Damn! That motherfucker made a gum ball out your cross. The gum ball crucifix and slug would be kept as souvenirs of the night they had encountered something worse than El Diablo. No mortal hand would ever be able to remove the knife from the concrete it was embedded in.

Kassie was sitting the tray outside the door when Drake appeared behind her. As always Kassie knew he was there the moment he materialized, and smiled as she turned around and said, "Hi honey, you're home!" Then wrapped her arms around him and kissed him soundly. The vampyre

gave a low purring growl of pleasure as he wrapped his arms around the witch he adored to distraction and kissed her back until she was breathless. He pulled them back inside the room and after shutting the door with the toe of his boot pressed Kassie against the door and kissed her passionately again.

He tugged on the belt of the robe she wore and when it opened he ran his hands up and down her body. He moved his lips to her ear and whispered, "Oh my beloved witch you feel and smell so good. You make me drunk with desire." He groaned as she pressed herself against him and he felt her nails through the silk shirt. "Oh baby I am so fucking hungry for you. I need to taste you. Then you must drink from me." He knelt before her, spread her legs and thrust his tongue inside her. He purred with pleasure as her juices saturated his tongue and the taste of her lightest shade of gray soul soothed his. He desperately needed the pure sweet taste of her right then. He needed to clear his palate and his soul from the taste of lust for his powers that all of his prey felt the second they felt them. He let the taste of Kassie's pleasure wash away the taste of tainted blood, let himself become intoxicated with the taste of her. After Kassie's legs began to tremble and she was moaning with pleasure he withdrew his tongue and rose to his feet. He licked her juices from his lips and fangs then ran a nail across his chest and as the blood began to flow grasped the back of Kassie's head gently and pulled it towards his chest. He felt her resist for a moment and he softly growled, "Drink my beloved witch." He snapped the fingers of his left hand while his right hand pressed her mouth to his chest and sank his fangs into the side of her neck as Dolly Dagger began to echo throughout the room.

Kassie stopped resisting and as her lips touched the wound she tasted the blood, and she realized why she had to drink. Drake's powers were at an absolute peak right then and he was experiencing the ultimate adrenaline rush. He began rubbing against her body to the beat of the music and Jimi's sweet haunting voice bid to her, "Drink up baby." Kassie drank up and felt his powers flowing into her. She realized even though he had



done no harm to anyone he had fed from, he had glutted himself on the blood of many so that she could drink deeply from him right now. Drake made his blood flow freely and Kassie felt him passing on all that he could to you through that blood. She felt as if she were drowning pleasure and power. Finally Drake pulled his fangs from her neck the pulled her head back and closed the wound on his chest. As the blood on his chest vanished back into his body he bent his head and kissed her bloodstained lips passionately. Kassie wrapped her arms around him and dug her nails into his back as she pressed herself against him. She moaned as she felt his hardness pressing against her.

The opening notes of Guns N Roses, Anything Goes, began echoing in the room and Drake grinned as he pressed her against the wall. He moaned as Kassie's hands moved from his back and undid his black button fly jeans. Growled softly with pleasure as he felt her delicate touch upon him. She caressed and softly trailed her nails along his hard cock as her hand slowly slid up and down it. Drake slid one of his hands down her body and heard her moan deep in her throat as his finger slid inside her. He massaged her clit with his thumb and her G-spot with his finger, and felt her hand tighten around him as she stroked him. He moaned as her fingertips tickled his balls. He stroked her with thumb and forefinger until she whimpered and bucked against his hand.

As she stroked his cock and tickled his balls he moved his mouth from her lips and whispered in her ear, "You have the finest fucking pair of hands and most erotic touch I have ever had the pleasure of experiencing. I think I shall build a shrine to your hands."

Kassie giggled and as she slid her hand down him and tickled his balls before cupping them in the palm of her hand and replying "I've got skills."

Drake gave a lecherous grin and replied, "You certainly do my beloved Mistress of Seduction." As he thrust himself against the dainty hand stroking him he moaned, "I have wanted the feel of your hands on me from

the first night I discovered you between the pages and lines of your books."

As Kassie felt his finger thrusting deeper inside her she wrapped her hand a little more tightly around him and said, "Never judge a book by its cover." She heard Drake's purring growl of pleasure and agreement in her ear and felt him harden even more in her hand as he thrust against it. She could feel his excitement and it aroused her even more than the feel of his finger inside her. His other hand gently grasped the back of her head and he pulled her face to his and kissed her passionately as he stroked her G-spot with his finger and massaged her clit with his thumb. She wrapped her hand a little tighter around his cold hard shaft as she slid it down when he slid another finger inside her. She tickled his balls once more then slid her hand up and wrapped it around his shaft again. Drake groaned and sucked her tongue harder as he felt her hand sliding up him. As Kassie's juices drenched his fingers and her soft hand stroked him, Drake danced along the edge. Finally he unlocked his lips from hers and withdrew his finger from her. He took a half step back and grinned as he licked his fingers.

As Drake buttoned his jeans, Kassie tied the belt of the robe back in place. As they walked hand in hand back to the bed Drake grinned and said, "Did you enjoy your bath my dear? And you really do smell wonderful."

Kassie grinned back at him as she replied, "Yes I enjoyed my bath." She stopped for a moment, kissed him quickly on the cheek and said, "And thank you."

Drake grinned and replied, "You are most welcome. Is your writing going well my love? And is your PowerBook behaving?"

Kassie laughed and said, "The writing is going wonderfully and the PowerBook is behaving beautifully."

Drake smiled and said, "Good." He paused for a moment, pulled her into his arms and after he kissed her soundly said, "I love you." Drake did not wait for a reply but loosened his hold and stepped back from her slightly, then took her hand again and continued towards the bedroom. He sat down upon the couch in front of the fireplace, snapped his fingers once and as the fire started pulled Kassie down beside him. He took her hand in his, raised to his lips and kissed the palm of it then said quietly, "It is time you learned to heal yourself my love. You will actually be reactivating a power you once had in that other time and place. I felt you trying to reactivate it even as I healed your throat last night. I want you repeat what you did then on a much much smaller wound now." He tenderly kissed the tip of Kassie's finger then said, "Are you ready my beloved witch?"

Kassie nodded her head and he placed her index finger in his mouth, sucked on it for a moment then bit down gently with one fang. He removed her finger from his mouth after sucking a couple of drops of blood from it and looked at Kassie.

Kassie studied her bleeding finger for a second, closed her eyes and gathered the power. Then she opened her eyes and as she continued to study her finger concentrated those powers. After a few seconds she felt a tingling sensation in her finger and felt the small wound close. She nodded once at Drake and he wiped the drop of blood from her finger. He smiled as he saw no mark from his fang upon her finger. Though the wound had been tiny and not the least bit life threatening he was pleased at how quickly she had closed it. But she needed to be able to act even faster than she had, so he placed her finger in his mouth again and once more bit gently down upon it. He was very pleased to find the wound already closed even as he licked a drop of blood from it. After taking her finger and kissing the tip of it he said, "Very good my love. Though the wounds were tiny you healed them very quickly. Now heal this my beloved." He ran his fang down her finger quickly. Kassie winced slightly as his fang ran down her finger. Then concentrated and quickly closed the small cut. Drake wiped the blood from her finger and nodded as he licked

it from his. He gently kissed her finger then leaned over and kissed her lips soundly. After he had settled back comfortably on the couch with Kassie tucked under his arm he said, "You are harnessing that power wonderfully quickly my love. Though those wounds were small, what you did to heal them is the same as if they had been life threatening wounds."

Kassie studied her finger for a moment then said with a wry grin, "Oh gee I can't wait until we practice the life threatening ones."

Drake gave a sad smile and replied, "I know it is not a pleasant thing to practice Kassie, but I do want you to be able to heal yourself of serious wounds. Unless you are willing to stay within these rooms when I am not by your side, you must learn to do this. And the truth is, I do not want you that dependent on me. I want you to learn to use all your powers as quickly as possible so that you may move freely about this castle and later outside of it. I did not bring you here to make you a prisoner of my love. I brought you here because I am the prisoner of the love I feel for you. Kassie, you are my heart. You are my soul mate. I know how very trite that sounds, and how overused those terms are, but in our case, it is so very true." Drake paused as a moment of past pain shadowed both their faces. The vampyre bowed his head and said quietly, "Especially that you are my heart."

Kassie reached up, gently stroked his head and said, "What's past is past. And it was the only way. You were like the Tinman in The Wizard of Oz."

Drake shook his head and replied, "Oh I had a heart Kassie. But it was stone cold and black as midnight on a moonless night even then. Immortality and power is all that heart lusted for."

Kassie asked softly, "And what does it lust for now?"

The vampyre raised his head and as he looked deeply into her amber eyes said, "It lusts for you. Because of the heart of another, it also loves you now for all the right reasons. And will for all eternity."

Kassie sighed softly and replied, "Unless you've been cursed as I have, love doesn't seem to last even one mortal lifetime, much less for all eternity."

Drake kissed her forehead gently and replied, "I am going to see to it that curse becomes a cure for what ails you. I know how I once betrayed you. And I know you have been betrayed over and over again in each of your lifetimes because of that curse. But I also know that what I now feel for you will stand the test of time." He paused, settled them more comfortably on the couch then said, "Kassie I am not some foolish mortal man who would betray that love for some stupid fleeting sexual thrill. I have experienced every fucking sexual thrill there is. None of them can compare to what I have experienced with you since you called me back into your circle of life." He paused again then looked down at her and said, "I want it all." He watched her face then asked, "How many fucking times have you heard that Kassie? How many stupid fucking men have said that to you?"

Kassie bowed her head as she sighed softly again and answered, "Too many."

Drake put his fingers under her chin and tilted it up. He looked into her eyes and said, "Well guess what Kassie? Sexually speaking I have had it all. Now all I want is you. I don't want a threesome, or foursome, or any other fucking number some. I do not have any overwhelming desire to watch you with another woman. If you have a hidden bi side I haven't discovered, let me know and I'll fucking shape shift into female form for you."

Kassie couldn't help but grin as she replied, "No, I don't have any hidden bi side. I've tried the woman on woman thing, and the threesome thing. They are not my thing."

Drake grinned and replied, "Good. They are not my thing either. You, are my only thing." His grin quickly faded though when he said, "And I sure as shit don't want to watch some other man fuck you. In fact, I'll kill any son of a bitch that touches you."

Kassie giggled and replied, "You vampyre types are so jealous."

Drake grinned that elegant evil grin of his and replied, "No as rule bloodsuckers really aren't. But us Dark God types are jealous as hell."

Kassie laughed then replied, "Well I don't share or play well with others either."

Drake nodded and replied, "I have been counting on that my beloved. I had a feeling that despite some of what you have written, you are actually past that seeking the ultimate sexual thrill stage of life. I figure you tried it all in your impetuous youth, but think that you have learned and grown enough to understand where the ultimate sexual thrill truly comes from."

Kassie smiled sadly and replied, "I was never seeking the ultimate sexual thrill. In each and every lifetime I have always understood where the ultimate sexual thrill really comes from. If I was seeking anything in this lifetime or any other, it was someone who could make feel me what you did in my dreams, or who could make me forget those dreams."

Drake stroked Kassie's hair and said, "I will make all those and a thousand more dreams come true for you my beloved witch. All your dreams will become a reality. Even those you have not yet dreamed." He tilted her head up gently with his other hand then leaned his head down and kissed her tenderly. The hand that had been gently tilting her chin slowly slid down her throat. His hand slid beneath the robe and caressed her breast for moment. His kiss growing more urgent as his fingers tweaked her nipple, and he felt her body arch towards his. He let his hunger for her grow sliding his hand down her body and massaging her clit

softly as his mouth slid along her cheek. As his tongue flicked the outside of her ear he slid his finger inside her. As he lightly tickled the inside of her ear and gently blew in it, he felt her warm wet walls quivering around his finger. He chuckled evilly in her ear as he gently blew in it again and molested it with his tongue. He felt her walls quivering harder. Her growling moan of pleasure as she thrust against his finger made his balls ache. He wanted nothing more than to thrust himself deep inside her and relieve that ache. But he would not do that yet. They would have a million moments of pleasure such as this throughout eternity. And what he was about to do would see to that. He slowly withdrew his finger from her pussy and his tongue from her ear. As he leaned back he grinned and brought his finger to mouth and sucked it.

Kassie squirmed and as she grinned at him said, "Pervert!"

Drake sucked his finger once more then said, "And your point my dear?" As Kassie laughed he gathered her in his arms and said, "Hold tight my darling." As Kassie wrapped her arms around him they vanished from the couch. They reappeared outside a dark underground cavern. Drake sat Kassie gently on her feet then gazed down at her and said, "It is said an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure my beloved witch. I want you to fully learn to use your powers to heal yourself. However what I am about to teach you will help you protect yourself from harm."

Kassie gazed back into his cobalt eyes and said, "You want me to start learning to shapeshift. In fact, you are about to give me a crash course in that art."

Drake nodded once and replied, "Yes my beloved wise one. You are about to get an accelerated crash course in the art of shapeshifting. All the power you need to master that art is flowing through your veins right now. Before long you will be able to shapeshift into any form you choose. Before the night is over you will be able to change into a bat in the blink of an eye."

Kassie wrinkled her nose and said, "Does it have to be a bat? Is there like some cosmic rule that says it has to be a bat?"

Drake chuckled and kissed the tip of her nose. "No there is no cosmic rule that it has to be a bat. But they are easier to learn to shapeshift into than a bird. Apes are actually the easiest to become because humans and apes are already so closely related. Much more so than many humans care to acknowledge. However apes can't fly. Bats on the other hand are wam blooded nocturnal creatures who can fly."

Suddenly Kassie saw a vision that she knew was coming directly from Drake. In this vision she was once more in the arms of the other vampyre who had nearly killed her. But in this vision he did not sink his fangs into her throat because as he lowered those fangs she became a bat. As she flew from him in the form of a bat she saw Drake appearing beside the other vampyre. As the vision faded she found herself once more staring into Drake's cobalt eyes. Kassie knew he had made up his mind on this issue and the vision was his way of showing her why he would brook no arguments concerning this issue. She grinned wryly and said, "Okay a bat it will be."

Drake nodded once and said, "Then hold tight once more, and let us begin my love." As she layed her head against his chest and held him tightly they vanished. They reappeared deep within the cavern. Though most of the bats were gone there were a few still hanging from ceiling of the cave. Drake whispered softly, "Open your mind to me Kassie."

Kassie took a deep breath and opened her mind completely to him. And felt him gently drawing her into his mind. Then she felt him reaching out and entering the mind of one the bats hanging above them. The mind they had entered seemed so foreign, her first instinct was to withdraw from it in horror. But she heard Drakes soft soothing voice whispering in her mind and overcame her initial revulsion. She felt Drake's mind controlling the bat now. Heard his soft voice saying, "Time to learn to spread your wings." Felt the bat's wings slowly open and spread themselves. Felt and



began to understand how those wings really worked. After a few seconds she began to flex those wings slightly. She spread them wide and felt the bat's feet release its hold on the ceiling. She panicked for a moment as the bat plummeted head first towards the floor then felt the muscles in the wings she had spread wide contract. The bat's headlong fall towards the floor became an upward swoop towards the center of the cavern. Instinct had taken over and the bat was heading towards the opening in the ceiling as it had done countless times before. Kassie relaxed and let herself feel the wings at work. She could still feel Drake's presence observing and keeping watch over her as the bat swept through opening in the ceiling and soared into the night sky. Kassie tilted one wing and the bat changed direction. She flapped both wings and the bat rose higher and faster into the night sky. An hour later the bat flew back into the cave. As it clung to the ceiling once more Drake smiled down at Kassie and said, "Very good." Then he wrapped her in his arms and whispered, "Hold tight my beloved witch."

As Kassie clung to him they vanished from the cave. They reappeared in the bedroom of the castle. Drake sat back down upon the couch and pulled Kassie down onto his lap. When he had her settled comfortably in his lap he snapped his fingers, then placed the eternal doobie that had appeared in them between Kassie's lips. Kassie had done better than he had expected already. But the most difficult part was still to come. A few hits of the eternal doobie would make what she would do next a little easier. As she inhaled he said, "Now that you have experienced being a bat with your mind, it will be easier for you assume that form. Do not fight the change at all once you start to feel it occur and the change will be instantaneous. I will be with you the first time at least. But I want you to be able to morph on your own as soon as possible."

Kassie understood why they had come back here and why he had stuck the eternal doobie in her mouth. Experiencing being a bat with her mind was a piece of cake compared to actually becoming a bat. Kassie exhaled and asked, "Will I think like a bat?"

Drake grinned as she inhaled again and said, "Yes. And no. The brain functions of a bat that allow it to fly etc. will be in operation, but you will control those functions. Just as you controlled those functions in that bat a few moments ago." He kissed her forehead gently for a moment then continued, "I know you are a TLC and Discovery channel freak, and know about DNA etc."

Kassie nodded her head and said, "Yeah we have the makings of every creature on earth in us. And we even share the exact same protein strand with some of them."

Drake chuckled and said, "That's a very apt way to get to where I was going. Yes, you have the makings of every creature on earth in you. But now also have the ability to take those makings and become the form of any creature you choose. I chose a bat for your first becoming because of practical reasons. Once you master morphing into a bat, you can start practicing on morphing into other creatures." Drake paused, grinned wickedly and said, "You can literally go ape if you want."

Kassie giggled and said, "Oh I knew that was coming."

Drake's balls tightened slightly at the sound of that giggle and he replied, "Careful my beloved word witch, don't make me think about doing that. You know I would much rather us be cuming than doing what we are about to. But your safety may soon depend on what you are about to learn tonight." Drake wanted Kassie right then with a hunger that was harder to control than the blood lust that rose with that hunger. Kassie evoked a sexual hunger in him that no other ever had. She made him weak at the knees with wanting at times. Crazy with desire at others. She could make him harder with a wanton grin, than a bevy of beauties could with everything they had. He desired her with every atom of his omnipotent being. Craved her in some ways far more than he craved blood. Blood merely substained him. Kassie intoxicated his black as coal soul. As Kassie inhaled again he snapped his fingers once more and settled her more comfortably in his lap as Blackberry began to echo through the

room. Rocking them gently to the beat of the music, thinking he would have her straddle his lap later and fuck him to this tune. As he reached out and scanned her mind he grinned happily to see her mind was running along the same track as his. After she exhaled he kissed her forehead, took the doobie from her lips and stuck in it his mouth. He sucked on it then took it from his lips and suspended it in midair beside them. He grinned evilly as he took Kassie's face between his hands. He bowed his head, placed his mouth over hers and exhaled. He felt her body relax and her mind open as that shotgun blast hit her. He gently entered her mind and helped her focus and use the power they were raising on the lesson later she must now learn. He raised his head and took his hands from her face, but kept his connection to her mind.

Kassie exhaled, giggled and winked at Drake. Then she closed both eyes and said, "It's all about being the bat." The air began to shimmer around her and the Dark God of vampyres was stunned speechless when she suddenly morphed into a small gray fruit bat and flew from his lap. Drake recovered in an instant and she heard his soft seductive voice in her mind as he morphed into a black vampire bat and flew up towards her. The windows near the couch blew open and the two bats flew from the room. The gray bat weaved and bobbed and managed to stay just out of reach of the black bat as they flew along the watchtower and in between the heads that guarded the castle. After a few moments the bats flew back through the open windows and landed on the bed. The air shimmered slightly around the gray bat for a moment, then the bat vanished and Kassie appeared.

As Kassie appeared the vampire bat vanished and Drake appeared beside her. He pulled her to him and kissed her with a fierce passion. She had once more exceeded all his expectations. Even though he first prepared her by taking her mind into the mind and body of a bat, he had still not expected her to be able do much more than assume the form of a bat for a few seconds, or possibly moments the first time she shapeshifted into the form of one. But his beloved witch had shapeshifted almost ef-

fortlessly into the form of a bat and immediately spread her wings and taken flight. And she had flown with remarkable skill on her maiden flight. He pulled the warm body that had moments ago been the form of a bat closer to him and moaned as her skin pressed against his. Kassie kissed him back urgently and wrapped her arms tightly around him. He growled with pleasure as he felt her nails digging into his skin. He ran one hand down her belly and growled softly again as she moaned and arched towards his hand. He slid his finger into her and felt her warm wet walls contract around it as he stroked her G-spot. Her juices flowed even more freely and those warm wet walls contracted harder around his finger as his thumb began to massage her clit. She was sucking his tongue greedily and moaning deep in her throat as she pressed herself against him and rocked against his hand. He slid another finger inside her and felt her nails digging harder into his skin as she rocked against his hand. He unlocked his lips from hers and kissed his way down to her left nipple. As his tongue licked that nipple his other hand found its way to her right breast and began softly it caressing it.

The soft sound of her panting as she bucked against his hand made him growl softly again. The sound of that panting was like a double edge sword. It made his dick throb. And aroused the predator within him. He had heard it countless times as he had fed from his prey, and more than a few times in ancient days when he had lain with other true witches. Until Kassie he had never had it excite the sexual beast within him so much. Usually it aroused the predator in him far more because he knew that in the end, it wasn't him they were panting for. But the soft urgent sound of her panting made him so hard his omnipotent balls ached. He cold hard cock twitched with each little gasp of pleasure that got mingled in with those soft panting sounds as he licked and sucked one nipple and caressed the other with his fingers. He moved his mouth down her body, running his tongue slowly down the center of her stomach, and growled softly again as her moan of pleasure mingled with those soft pants. The sounds she made as his mouth closed over her clit were sweet music to his ears. As were those she made when he finally thrust his tongue inside

her. The taste of her made him moan as he lapped at the inside of her warm wet walls. Her fine long legs were draped over his broad shoulders and she was bucking against his face as he hungrily lapped at those warm wet walls. Kassie was hotter and wetter than she had ever been from the adrenalin rush morphing had given her. Thoughtful pervert that he was, he had tried to direct as much of that rush towards the sexual as he could. It was why he aroused them both as he had before she had morphed. And as she had playfully evaded him and honed her skills on her maiden flight, that play had also served to sexually arouse her.

He savored the taste and sound of her as long as he could stand it, then the ache in his balls and throbbing in his omnipotent cock were too much he withdrew his head from between her thighs and moved up the bed, rolled onto his back and pulled her on top of him. He snapped his fingers once and as Blackberry began to once more echo throughout the room slid her down onto his throbbing cock and growled, "Don't miss a beat baby."

Kassie threw her head back as she picked up the beat and haughtily replied, "Like I ever miss a fucking beat!" She picked up and stayed right with the beat as she rode him. Her nails digging into his chest as she bounced up and down on him. Drake screaming along at times with the music as she rode him. His hands clutching her waist and driving her even harder down onto him. Kassie made that connection she sometimes made with music and Drake screamed louder as he felt that connection pulsing through his dick. And Kassie rode him even harder. Kassie was digging her nails in hard and bouncing on him in perfect rhythm with the music, driving him even wilder. Drake tried to take control of the sexual beast she was unleashing but found she had taken control of that beast and was driving it absolutely crazy. She stared down into his face, and the look in her amber eyes only made it wilder. Those amber orbs knew exactly what the beast she was unleashing wanted and needed. She grinned wickedly into the eyes of that beast and raked her nails down his chest. She threw her head back and growled as she ground herself onto

him and raked her nails down his chest again. The sound of that growl combined with the feel her nails digging into his chest and his dick driving into her caused him to howl her name as he thrust himself up into her. He howled it again as she reached behind herself, gently squeezed his balls with one hand and dragged the other down his chest again. And howled it a third time as she ground herself into him and whispered his true name once.

## Chapter 5

As the sound of his third howl died out he pulled Kassie down onto him and wrapped his arms tightly around her. As Kassie stretched her legs out between his he wrapped his legs around them. And fought the beast within as he held her warm body against his. He tenderly stroked the back of her head and whispered her name as the beast within howled for blood. He wrapped himself tightly around her and told her how much he loved her. Then suddenly rolled them over and propped himself up on his elbows. He gently brushed her hair back from her face and as he gazed into her eyes said, "You are magnificent my love. You far exceeded my wildest expectations tonight."

Kassie grinned at him then replied, "I take it you mean my morphing skills?"

Drake grinned back down at her and replied, "Of course I mean your morphing skills."

Kassie saw the slight grimace behind his cheerful grin and knew he was fighting the bloodlust. He was trying to control and mask its presence. But she could see it lurking within the depths of his cobalt blue eyes. That beast who had once controlled him. And savagely tried to destroy the one who had created it. As she gazed up at him and watched him fighting that beast she realized the time had come for her to fully acknowledge and face that beast. She stroked the side of his face gently with one hand and said, "Don't vanish from me this time. Take me with you."

Drake's coal black soul soared when he heard those words. He grabbed her hand and pressed it his lips. He kissed her palm gently then gazed into her eyes and said, "Are you sure my beloved?"

Kassie met his gaze, nodded her head and replied, "Yes I'm very sure."

Drake gazed into her eyes for a moment then leaned down and kissed her until she was breathless. Then whispered in her ear, "Hold tight my love." Kassie wrapped her arms tightly around him and they vanished from the bedroom.

Drake owned several adult clubs that catered to BDSM and gothic customers. The clubs were profitable and provided him with an easy source of willing prey. The one he had chosen was a perfect place to feed with his true Queen for the first time. In the blink of an eye they appeared in a dark quiet corner of the club. Their naked figures seemed to shimmer for a moment, then suddenly Drake was leaning against the wall dressed in skin tight black leather pants, hand tooled snakeskin boots and a red silk shirt. Around his neck was a choker chain with a crystal witch on a broom dangling from it. His arms were around Kassie and she was dressed in a tight black leather mini dress, flesh toned silk thigh highs and spun gold heels. Around her neck was a diamond and ruby studded choker. In the center of the choker were a pair of ivory fangs. Her earrings were black onyx bats with ruby eyes.

Kassie looked at him, then blinked as she saw the choker chain. She grinned at him as she reached up and took the crystal witch in her fingers, then giggled as she gave it a slight tug. Drake grinned back down at her and winked. She smiled back at him, and because she saw and felt the raging of the beast, and his efforts to control it, she stroked his cheek lightly then stepped out of his arms. Drake grabbed her hand and kissed the palm of it, then with her hand still in his, he bared his fangs and walked towards the large stage in the center of the room. There were several couples on stage engaged in a variety of lewd and lascivious acts. The throng of people dancing around the stage were also engaged in a wide variety of sexual misconduct. As they made their way through the crowd a tall brunette placed herself in front of Drake and offered her throat to him. Drake grinned at Kassie and winked at her as he sank his fangs into the brunette's throat. As Kassie watched him sucking on the neck of the brunette she saw other people start to surround Drake. They watched him



feed on the brunette and Kassie could see several of them pressing themselves closer against Drake. The brunette's eyes gazed with pleasure and she moaned as he withdrew his fangs from her and sank them into the wrist that had been offered to him by a redhead.

As he sated the bloodlust on the throats and wrists being offered to him he could feel his hunger for Kassie growing stronger. He pulled her against him with one arm as he lifted a wrist being offered to him and sank his fangs into it. He gazed into Kassie's eyes and caressed her ass as he sucked on the pale wrist. Kassie could see and feel his hunger for her growing and began to respond to it. He moaned as he sucked his prey harder and she pressed herself against him and dug her nails into his back. He withdrew his fangs from the pale wrist then turned his head and sank them into the black throat offering itself to him. As he sucked on his prey's throat he took his other hand and it ran down the front of Kassie's dress. Kassie moaned softly and dug her nails into him hard as he slid his finger inside her. He slid his finger back and forth inside her until it was drenched. He withdrew his fangs from the black throat they had been sunk in and his finger from Kassie. He stared into Kassie's eyes as he sucked and licked his finger clean then turned his head again and sank his fangs into the throat of another willing piece of prey. As he sucked on his prey he slid his finger back inside Kassie.

Kassie had seen the hunger for her in his eyes before he turned his head, could feel it in the hardness pressing against her. She moaned and spread her legs a little wider as he slid another finger inside her. Felt him harden even more as he heard that moan and felt her response. She dug her nails into his back and bit his shoulder as his fingers plunged back and forth inside her.

Drake growled as he felt Kassie's teeth and nails and withdrew his fangs from the throat of his prey. He shoved his fingers back and forth a few more times and watched Kassie's face as she ground onto them. Finally he withdrew his fingers and put them to his mouth. He gazed steadily into Kassie's eyes as he licked and sucked them clean. He grabbed the

wrist a piece of prey offered him and continued to gaze into Kassie's eyes as he sank his fangs into it.

Kassie gazed back into his eyes and saw the beast they had unleashed. It grinned and sucked on a pale wrist and caressed her ass with its other hand. Pressed his hard omnipotent cock against her and pulled her harder into him. She grinned back at the beast as she slid one of her hands down between them. Drake growled and sucked the pale wrist harder as her hand slid down between them. She felt his cock jump as she began to rub the bulge in his leather pants.

Drake withdrew his fangs from the wrist of his prey then grabbed the back of Kassie's head, tilting it back as he leaned down and kissed her hard. He sucked her tongue and arched his back as her hand caressed and rubbed him. Closed his cold cobalt blue eyes and luxuriated in the feel of her tongue in his mouth and her hand rubbing his cock through the thin leather pants. He kissed her hard and long, releasing her tongue only after she was completely breathless. Then turned his head and sank his fangs into a piece of prey. His hand pulled Kassie's head to his chest and held there, caressing the back of her head as she continued to rub him. His other hand caressed her ass then slid under the dress. He heard her moan and felt her hand rubbing him harder as his finger slid inside her. When she moved her head and lightly tweaked his nipple through the red silk shirt with her teeth he growled and sucked his piece of prey harder. When she gently bit it, his cock jumped as he withdrew his fangs from the neck of his prey. With its blood still dripping from his fangs he tilted his head back and gave a snarling growl of pleasure as her hand rubbed him faster and her teeth closed on his nipple a little harder.

More than ever before Kassie was seeing the true nature of Drake's beast. She bit his nipple a little harder as she rubbed his crotch and Drake's cock jumped and hardened even more as he threw his head back and gave another low rumbling snarling growl pleasure. And a soft southern voice in his mind drawled, "Yeah, you like a little pain sometimes don't you baby?"

As she moved her head and closed her teeth around his other nipple he groaned and replied out loud, "Fuck yeah! A little pain makes it real." And gave another fang bared snarling growl of pleasure as she bit his nipple a little harder and rubbed his cock a little faster. A piece of prey was moaning as she reached up and pressed its wrist to his mouth. Drake gave the moaning piece of prey the hard bite of reality it wanted and sucked greedily from its wrist. After drinking deeply he withdrew his fangs from his prey's wrist and gently pushed it away. He licked the blood from his lips and fangs as he grabbed the back of Kassie's head again. After intertwining his fingers in her hair he pulled her head back then leaned down and kissed her hard. When she was breathless he withdrew his finger from her pussy and unlocked his lips from hers. As she caught her breath he sucked his finger and grinned at her.

Kassie grinned back at him as she rubbed his crotch and gently tugged on the crystal witch with her other hand. She could feel the leather stretching as his cock grew harder under her hand. She rubbed it a couple more times as she tugged on the crystal witch, then reached up with both hands and pulled his head down to hers. She leaned up and pressed herself against him as she kissed him hard.

Drake grabbed her buttocks and pulled her into him as she began to suck his tongue. As his prey pressed around them he ground himself against his beloved witch to the beat of the heavy metal music echoing through the room. When she finally let go of his tongue he simply grinned and continued to grind against her to the beat of the music. Kassie grinned back at him and picked up the beat as well. Drake suddenly raised his head and looked at the prey pressing against them. As he stared at them they bowed their heads and began to move back from them. When he had cleared some space around them he grinned down at Kassie and really began to rock it down to the beat of the music. He ran his hands up and down her back, sometimes grabbing her ass and yanking it into him hard as his body moved to the beat of the music. His body moved with cool precision grace to the beat of the music. He was every-

thing dark, dangerous, and evil in that heavy metal music he was keeping such perfect time to. Kassie grinned at him as he rocked it down and picked up the beat of the music as well. Her body moved with pure perfect animal grace to the beat of the music. She was everything hot and sensual in that hard rocking music. They were both lost in each other and the beat of the music now. Dancing like fire and ice together to the hard heavy beat of it. Raising the sexual tension in the room even further and feeding from it as they danced.

As the Dark God of Immortality and his true Queen rocked it down to the beat of the music a buzz had begun among the staff working the club. Though there were some mortals among that staff it was mostly composed of vampyres, werewolves and a few other mystical creatures. There were also other vampyres in the room who were privileged friends of Drake that often visited the club to mingle and feed together. They had all seen Drake in the club many times before. Once or twice with another female vampyre who had crossed his path and struck his fancy for a few hours or nights. But it was plain to see the true witch dancing with him was no passing fancy to him. Rumors had already begun to circulate among the vampyres of a true witch who he had killed another vampyre over. As one of the vampyres who was visiting the club watched the reality of that rumor rocking it down, he knew his Master and old friend had finally found the one he had searched so long for. He made his way through the crowd and stood slightly in front of the throng of people around them as he watched them dance. Soon the other vampyres in the room did the same thing. As the last notes of that song rang out he and the other vampyre took another step forward. Drake looked at his old friend and nodded. He smiled as he turned Kassie in his arms then took a step backwards and stood beside her.

As Kassie looked at him the vampyre in front of her bowed his head and dropped to one knee before her. As she looked at him she realized that although her upcoming coronation would mark the beginning of her official rule as Queen of the vampyres, this moment marked the true be-

ginning of her reign. The vampyre raised his head, and Kassie smiled as she looked into his eyes. Vampyre and witch gazed steadily into each others eyes for a moment, then the vampyre bowed his head and said, "My Queen." The older vampyres who had the closest blood ties to Drake bowed their heads and knelt before Kassie. The younger vampyres hesitated and stared at Kassie. She met their gaze steadily. After a moment she locked gazes with a young blond vampyre who stood defiantly before her. She felt Drake shift beside her, and placed her hand lightly on the front of his leg as she continued to gaze into the young vampyre's icy blue eyes. The brash young vampyre continued to test her mettle for a few more moments. When she continued to meet his gaze with regal disdain he finally nodded his head once then bowed it as he knelt before them. Drake grinned as he leaned over and whispered in her ear, "Keep it up baby, they are dropping like ten pins."

A few other vampyres knelt before them and Kassie locked gazes with a tall redheaded female vampyre who still stood glaring at her. As she continued to stare into the cold green eyes of the redheaded vampyre a soft southern voice in Drake's mind said, "Is this one of your damn eternal brides?"

Drake chuckled as looked down proudly at Kassie, then leaned over and whispered, "Hell no. I've never touched that creature." Kassie's gaze never wavered from that of the redheaded vampyre as Drake whispered in her ear. Nor did it when he raised his grinning head and patted her ass. The vampyres who were kneeling snuck glances at their Queen and the red headed vampyre. Many of them grinned with glee to see them testing each other's mettle. A couple, including the first vampyre to kneel before her looked up at Drake for a moment and grinned at him as Kassie and the redheaded vampyre continued to stare at each other.

Like many of her kind the young red headed bloodsucker dreamed of seducing Drake and becoming Queen of the vampyres. She had watched them earlier and seen an end to that dream in the way Drake had looked at and touched Kassie. As she stared back into the cold green

eyes of the redheaded vampyre something in the core of Kassie's soul fully awakened for a moment. A spark of that High Priestess whose magick and blood had created Drake's species burned within Kassie's amber orbs. It could be heard in Kassie's soft southern drawl as she said, "You can kneel right now princess, or forever break all blood ties with your King."

The redheaded vampyre glared at Kassie for a moment, then looked up at Drake and hissed, "Our blood ties cannot be broken by a mortal!"

Drake looked at redheaded vampyre and replied in a voice as cold as an arctic wind, "They will be broken right here and now if you do not do as she says."

The redheaded vampyre hesitated for a moment longer, but as she gazed into his eyes, she knew further defiance would only result in all blood ties to him being broken. Finally she bowed her head and knelt before them. The few remaining vampyres who were still standing quickly knelt before them as well. The line had been very clearly drawn now. And no vampyre in that room chose to cross it at that moment.

After the last vampyre bowed his head and knelt before them Drake nodded his head once and said, "Let there be no doubt amongst those of you on bended knee tonight that the one who stands beside me is your true Queen. Those who refuse to acknowledge this fact will find themselves very unwelcome in my world. All blood ties will be broken with them, and I will destroy on sight anyone who is foolish enough to try and bring harm to her." Drake paused then grinned and said, "Now that we've got that settled, arise and let us feast and make merry while the sun does not shine."

The vampyres quickly arose to their feet as Drake snapped his fingers and heavy metal music began to echo through the room again. He nodded at the vampyre to have first knelt before them then took Kassie by the hand and led her towards some tables at the back of the room. As they made their way to the tables the crowd bowed their heads and parted

before them. Drake pulled a chair out at a large table at the very back of the room and after Kassie was seated, sat down in a chair next to her. He arranged a chair in front of him and propped one foot on it as he leaned back and draped an arm over Kassie's shoulder. A waitress appeared at their table and Drake said, "I'll have the usual." He paused then turned to head to Kassie and grinned at her as he said, "Bring her a nice thick pina colada with a glass straw."

The waitress grinned and nodded her head then quickly left. Kassie grinned as she looked up at Drake and said, "You are such a fucking pervert."

Drake merely grinned back at her and replied, "And your point?"

Kassie laughed as she shook her head then blinked as the waitress returned with the leash of a blonde submissive in one hand and a pina colada in the other. The waitress grinned at them as she handed Drake the leash and sat the drink on the table. The blonde submissive knelt beside Drake's chair and bowed her head. Kassie picked up her drink, grinned then put the straw in her mouth and sucked on it.

Drake's grin widened as he watched the thick liquid traveling through the glass straw. As he watched her sucking on the straw he said, "We will soon have company at this table. But I before we do I want to tell you how proud I am of you. How happy you have made me. I know you did not expect this when you asked me to bring you with me tonight."

Kassie took her mouth from the straw and replied, "Well yeah I thought we were going to lay low until the coronation."

Drake just grinned at her and said, "We are laying low my dear."

Kassie laughed and said, "If this is your idea of laying low I would hate to see you being conspicuous."

Drake chuckled and replied, "Well perhaps I am a little guilty of wanting there to be no mistake about my feelings for you." He paused then said sans smile in a cold clear voice, "Besides, I want it clearly understood before your coronation what will happen to those who oppose your rightful reign." He grinned again as he said, "Coming here tonight allowed me to accomplish both."

Kassie nodded, then said, "And I'm coming along much faster than you thought."

As she bent her head and wrapped her grinning lips around the straw he grinned at her and replied, "And yes, you are coming along much faster than I had expected." As Kassie grinned and continued to suck on the straw Drake raised his head and nodded at the vampyre who was making his way towards them. The vampyre approaching the table was the first one to have stepped forward and kneel before them earlier. As Kassie removed her mouth from the straw Drake took his other boot clad foot and kicked one of the other chairs in front of him towards the vampyre approaching them. As the other vampyre sat down Drake leaned back and said, "Meet Thaddeus my dear. He is an old and trusted friend."

Kassie smiled across the table at the other and said, "It is a pleasure to meet you."

Thaddeus grinned back at her and replied, "The pleasure is mutual ."

Drake grinned as he nodded towards the waitress making her way over to the table and pointed to Thaddeus and Kassie. The waitress returned the nod, then turned and made her way back towards the bar. When she returned she had the leash of a brunette submissive in one hand and another pina colada in her other. She grinned as she handed the leash to Thaddeus then sat the full drink down beside the half empty one. After she left Thaddeus grinned at Drake and said, "The service around this place has always been first rate." Then he tapped the brunette sub-



missive on the head once. And winked at Kassie as he sank his fangs into her wrist.

Kassie grinned as she winked back at him and replied, "It gets even better when the boss is in house."

As Kassie put her mouth around the straw and began to suck on it Thaddeus withdrew his fangs from the wrist they had been buried in and grinned as he licked them clean and said, "That it does."

Drake chuckled as he sank his fangs into the wrist of his prey. It was good to sit here and enjoy a drink with his old friend Thaddeus with Kassie beside him. He withdrew his fangs from the wrist of his prey and as he licked them clean looked at Kassie then nodded towards Thaddeus and said, "When I first met him Thaddeus was a great warrior doomed to give his life in noble battle for a queen that was unworthy of such a fine sacrifice. I rescued him. And he is now happily enjoying his fate worse than death."

Thaddeus laughed and nodded in agreement then grinned at Kassie and said, "Tis true. I had pledged my fealty to an unworthy treacherous bitch who had seduced my King and finally betrayed the both of us." He pointed to Drake and said, "But he blessed me with the gift of immortality and promised me a queen worthy of my allegiance to her." His fang bared grin widened as he looked at Kassie and continued, "And now I sit here before you lass, and in keeping with the promise I made, pledge my fealty to you for all eternity."

Suddenly Kassie's grin widened and she said, "You are a member of the Royal Guard!"

Thaddeus nodded his head then grinned at Drake and said, "She's a clever girl."

Drake grinned back at his old friend and said, "That she is." Then he looked up and nodded at another vampyre approaching their table with a

submissive's leash in his hand. As the tall black vampyre neared the table Drake grinned and said, "Shaka my old friend, it is good to see you."

The tall black vampyre grinned held up the leash of the submissive and replied as he pulled out the chair next to Thaddeus, "I brought my own drink. And it is even better to see you here tonight with our Queen." He bowed his head briefly to Kassie then grinned at her as he sat down.

Kassie batted her eyes at the tall black vampyre and said with a grin, "Let me guess, you are another member of the Royal Guard, who was once a great Zulu warrior and king." Then she put her mouth around the glass straw and sucked up the last of her drink with a loud slurping sound.

Thaddeus pulled his fangs from his drink and as he grinned at Drake said, "By Thor's hammer she is a clever girl."

Drake grinned back at Thaddeus and replied, "Aye lad she is. And she can suck a golf ball through a garden hose." Kassie choked on the pina colada she was slurping and Drake grinned as he reached over and patted her on the back.

Shaka grinned and said, "Then she truly is a most worthy Queen."

Kassie moved the empty glass aside and as she reached for the full one said, "What kind of perverted kingdom judges the worthiness of its queen by criteria such as this?"

Drake grinned and replied, "One with a very happy king my dear."

As Shaka watched Drake lean back and take a sip from the wrist of his prey he realized that this was the first time he had ever seen him truly happy. He shifted his gaze and studied the one who had brought Drake that happiness. She met his gaze steadily and grinned around the straw she was sucking on. After a moment he grinned back then looked at Drake and nodded his head once as he said, "She'll give you an eternity of endless pleasure. And make you crazier than you already are."

Drake withdrew his fangs from his drink, licked them clean then nodded his head and grinned as he said, "I know."

Shaka laughed then looked over at Thaddeus and said, "He's got it bad old friend."

Thaddeus nodded his head as he grinned at Shaka and replied, "The poor bastard surely does."

As he watched Thaddeus and Shaka and laughed with them Drake was again struck by how much he was enjoying himself. He had come to this place many times in the past, even sat at this table and drank with these two old friends. But he had never enjoyed this place or their company as much as he was enjoying it now. The reason for that was of course because before, the one he had created this world for was not by his side. All of his vast world had been created to enjoy with the one who was his destiny. Many other vampyres enjoyed this dark camelot he had created. Yet until tonight he had derived little real pleasure and no true joy from the kingdom he had created.

Thaddeus and Shaka had been watching Drake, both in tune with his thoughts at that moment. Thaddeus nodded his head once then grinned said, "You need to take the lass out for another twirl around the dance floor."

Shaka grinned as he nodded his head and said, "He's right. You need to quit hiding our Royal Highness and let the peons get another look at her."

Then both of them looked at Kassie with wide fang bared grins as Thaddeus said, "You dance your heart out with him lass and give the peons a good show."

As Kassie took her mouth from around the straw and grinned at them Shaka grinned even wider and as he nodded his head enthusiastically

cally said, "Yeah you really shake that royal booty, and we'll cover it for you while you do."

As Drake started laughing Kassie licked her lips then drawled, "It surely does warm the cockles of my still beating little heart to know how keen you pair are on covering my royal booty."

Shaka grinned and replied, "Not nearly as much as it warms the cockles of our cold unbeating hearts covering it."

Drake laughed as he stood up and took Kassie's hand. As she took his hand and rose to her feet he grinned wickedly and said, "Come my beloved witch, we are going to dance a jig to a certain tune and raise the Captain of your Royal Guard."

Kassie grinned back at him and replied, "Works for me."

As they made their way to the dance floor Thaddeus and Shaka rose from their chairs and followed them. As they both watched her leather clad royal booty Shaka grinned said, "Our Royal Highness has one of the finest asses I have ever seen."

Thaddeus grinned and replied, "Yes she does. And I know how much that hurt you to have to say that about a whitebread ass."

Shaka grinned and replied, "Yeah it did. But like the man said earlier, a little pain makes it real." As they watched them a space cleared around Drake and Kassie on the dance floor. Drake grinned as he winked at Kassie, then took his boot heel and rapped the floor thrice with it. As the opening notes of Sympathy For The Devil echoed through the room it went dark for a moment and something simmered in the center of the dance floor. As the lights came slowly back on a tall handsome figure dressed in black stepped from the shadows. The handsome grinning figure nodded once to Drake, then picked up the beat of the music and began to sing along to it as he held his left hand out and danced towards

Kassie. She grinned back at him as she picked up the beat and rocked it down with the Captain of her Royal Guard.

Thaddeus and Shaka grinned in delighted awe as they watched their Royal Highness pick up the beat of the music and start shaking her royal booty to it with the Captain of her Royal Guard. Thaddeus said, "By Thor's mighty hammer there is fucking Queen worthy of the Royal Guard he has assembled for her.

Shaka nodded his head and replied, "She outshines any that we have or will ever see. She is more than either of us ever hoped for. More I think than even he ever dreamed of."

Drake grinned as he watched Kassie and the Captain of her Royal Guard rocking it down. His old pal Beezie was having a hell of a good time introducing himself as the Captain of her Royal Guard in this manner. To the mortal patrons this night would be another grand show that they would leave there thinking was put on for their entertainment. The reality behind that illusion was that Drake was making damn sure his for real dark fairy tale came to a happily ever after ending. Drake's dark wicked grin widened as the last notes of the song faded out and his pal took Kassie's hand, kissed it then grinned at her and said, "It is going to be a true pleasure serving as the Captain of your Royal Guard my dear."

Kassie grinned back at him and replied, "I'm sure that will be a mutual pleasure."

Drake grinned at them both, took Kassie's from Beezie's and said, "And I'll be around to make damn sure it doesn't get too much of a mutual pleasure." He paused for a moment as he smiled at Beezie then as he placed his hand on his shoulder for a moment said, "It's good to see you my old friend."

Beezie smiled and nodded once as he replied, "It is good to be here."

Drake suddenly grinned, then as he took his hand from Beezie's shoulder said, "Now get your sorry ass over there with Shaka and Thaddeus because this next dance is mine."

Beezie looked over his shoulder then grinned at Kassie and said, "Do you think these pants make my ass look sorry?"

Kassie laughed and replied, "No, I can honestly say the pants, don't make your ass look sorry."

As he strolled over to Shaka and Thaddeus they grinned at him and moved a little further apart. After he stepped between them Shaka looked over at him and said, "Nice to see the Captain of the Royal Guard could make it."

The Captain of the Royal Guard grinned and replied, "I wouldn't miss it for the world."

As the three Royal Guardsmen grinned and folded their arms across their chest, Drake gave Kassie a wide wicked grin then snapped his fingers once. As the first notes of Dolly Dagger began to echo through the room Kassie grinned back at him as they picked up the beat. As they watched, Drake rocked it down to the beat of the music with Kassie. The Captain of the Royal Guard grinned and said, "That bloodsucking bastard is having way too much fun."

The two warriors knew their long peaceful nights of boredom were coming to an end and nodded their heads together happily as they watched the Royal Couple rocking it down. Both Thaddeus and Shaka were so powerful that under normal circumstances no other vampyre in the room would have seriously considered taking either of them on. They would certainly not have considered taking them both on. But these weren't normal circumstances. And they knew their Queen would offer too much of a temptation to some. At that particular moment she was in no real danger. No vampyre in that room was stupid enough to make a

rash unplanned move right then. They knew that when the first move did come, it would probably do so after much planning and if at all possible at a time when Drake was not close by Kassie. They were there tonight as window dressing. And on the off chance one or more of the vampyres in that room were completely stupid. Their orders had been to remove any vampyres that stupid from the gene pool.

As the Royal Guardsmen grinned and watched, Drake opened his shirt, drew his nail across his chest, and drew Kassie's head to the jagged edge as Jimi's sweet haunting voice bid her to, "Drink up baby."

Beezie's evil grin widened as he said, "Fuck me running, that's got to be giving you bloodsuckers a hard on."

As Thaddeus and Shaka nodded their heads and reached down to adjust the bulges in their pants Thaddeus glanced down at Beezie and said, "Us bloodsuckers aren't the only ones getting a big fucking woody here you cloven footed sorry ass bastard."

Beezie just grinned as he reached down and adjusted the bulge in pants and replied, "Well Her Royal Highness is enough to give the devil himself a hard on."

Shaka nodded his head as he grinned and replied, "Yeah that's one of the reason's she is our Royal Highness."

Thaddeus nodded in agreement and said, "Aye and he says she can suck a golf through a garden hose."

Beezie laughed as he said, "We would expect nothing less from Her Royal Highness." Beezie peered at the Royal Couple a little closer and said, "Fuck me and run backwards, is she giving him a hand job while she's drinking his blood from a jagged edge?"

Shaka and Thaddeus peered more closely at the Royal Couple then Thaddeus replied, "They usually do run backwards after they've fucked

your sorry cloven footed ass. And by Pan's flute I do believe the wench is!"

As they watched their Queen with respectful lecherous grins Shaka said, "Damn! Still a mere mortal, yet she can keep her wits about her enough while feeding to give a hand job." Shaka laughed as he shook his head in disbelief and said, "Who's going to protect us from her when she becomes a vampyre."

Thaddeus laughed at he pointed to Drake and replied, "You better hope he can." Then he paused and said in a more serious tone, "She's true witch lad. Her kind can do that. And more. You are so young lad that you never saw or met a true witch. We thought them as extinct as the dinosaurs. But he's found one lad. And if there is one, somewhere there are more."

Drake tilted his head and moaned as Kassie's hand continued to rub him through his leather pants while she sucked at the wound. He could feel the effect what she was doing was having on the other vampyres. Knew that amongst the older ones in the room there was now no doubt that she was a true witch. He felt their shock and envy. And there was dark part of him that was aroused by that envy. His cold hard omnipotent cock hardened even more under Kassie's skillful caresses. He heard her moan and felt her hand rubbing his cock faster and her mouth sucking the jagged edge harder. He reached down, slid his finger up in her and felt her warm wet pussy convulsing against it. He slid another finger inside her. As he felt her pressing down them he jammed them into her hard as he pressed her mouth against the jagged wound. As Jimi bid him to, "Get it on.", he felt her juices squirting over his fingers, then he threw his head and howled.

His primal howl of pure lust and power echoed throughout the room and through mind and soul of every vampyre in it. In it they heard and felt a lust and passion none of them had ever felt. And they felt his power. Their Dark God had never been much of one for unnecessary ostentatious



displays of power. But tonight he was clearly marking his territory and letting his power to keep it his be clearly felt. Even Beezie could feel that lust, passion, and power. His handsome face split into an even wider grin as he gave a low whistle then said, "Mary Mother of God, that little bitch must be good."

As the two warriors grinned and nodded their heads Thaddeus said, "Watch your fucking mouth you sorry ass cloven footed bastard, that's our Royal Highness you are speaking of. And she is obviously the fucking best he ever had, or is ever going to get, or we wouldn't be standing here right now."

Beezie grinned as he looked over his shoulder and said, "I don't care what Her Royal Highness says, I'm not wearing these pants again." Then he looked at Thaddeus as he grinned and said, "Point taken."

Still laughing Shaka turned his head away from Beezie, stared into the eyes of a little black headed submissive on a leash that was standing nearby, then nodded his head once. The girl came over to him and as she handed him her leash he said, "His Royal Fucking Highness is going to be thirsty as hell after that." As Thaddeus nodded, Shaka began to lead the submissive towards Kassie and Drake. The sounds of his howls were beginning to die out and he could see him pulling Kassie's head back from the jagged edge. As he neared them Drake withdrew his fingers from her then put them to his mouth. He was happily sucking them as Shaka held the leash out. As he shook his head and grinned Shaka said, "You are an evil rotten bastard."

Drake just grinned around the fingers he was sucking then after he pulled them out of his mouth said, "And your point?" He glanced once into the eyes of his prey, then sank his fangs into the wrist that it offered up to him. After he began to drink deeply from his prey other vampyres began to turn and sink their fangs into the willing wrists and throats that were being offered to them. Drake glanced into the eyes of a nearby piece of prey and withdrew his fangs from the one he had been sucking on as it

began walking towards them. Shaka grinned at him then turned and walked towards another nearby piece of prey. Drake gazed down at Kassie as she licked the last of his blood from her lips. As he watched the mind numbing glaze of pleasure clearing from her eyes he grinned at her and winked as he sank his fangs into the wrist of his prey.

## Chapter 6

Drake sipped from the wrists and throats of a few more pieces of prey, then began to make his way back over to their table. Beezie, Thaddeus and Shaka were not far behind them. After holding Kassie's chair out for her he sat down in his and propped his boot up on the chair in front of him. As he leaned back and draped his arm over Kassie's shoulder Beezie came around the table and pulled out the chair on the other side of Kassie and grinned as he sat down in it. Thaddeus and Shaka grinned back at Beezie as they sat back down. Drake grinned at the waitress as she approached the table then said, "Bring fresh drinks for us." He pointed his thumb towards Beezie and said, "And bring that sorry ass bastard his usual."

As the waitress left to fetch their drinks Drake leaned back in his chair and grinned like an evil fanged monkey. Kassie looked up at him and laughed as she shook her head and said, "You are so fucking enjoying this."

Drake just grinned wider and replied, "I most certainly am." Then he looked down at and her and said, "And I hope you are as well my dear."

Kassie smiled back up at him and replied, "Yes I'm having a wonderful time."

As the waitress returned with their drinks Drake nodded his head once, and replied, "Good."

After everyone had their drinks Beezie raised his glass and said, "I propose a toast to our Queen."

Drake smiled down at Kassie and said quietly, "No. Let us toast the Magick which has brought us all here this night."

Thaddeus quickly nodded his head as he raised his prey's wrist and said, "Aye! To the Magick."

Shaka, who was truly feeling that Magick for the first time nodded his head and as he raised his glass said, "To the Magick."

Beezie grinned and nodded his head as he said, "To the Magick."

And as Kassie raised her glass and quietly said, "To the Magick.", they all felt more than touch of that Magick in the air around them. And within them. After they had toasted the Magick Kassie was content to sit quietly and sip her drink as Drake bantered with his friends and sipped from the wrist of his.

Drake had brought her to this particular place for several reasons. One reason being every wrist and throat that he drank from was a willing victim. The BDSM and gothic people paid good money to come here to experience exactly what they were experiencing. And they were certainly getting their money's worth that night. The room was alive with sexual energy. Mortals and vampyres alike were feeding on that sexual energy. And the one controlling all that energy sat with one boot heel propped on the chair in front of him grinning wickedly as he leaned back and watched the room. His Queen was handling herself better than he could have ever hoped for. Suddenly his grin widened and he said, "I propose we now take up Beezie's earlier proposal and drink a toast to our Queen. Who has truly shown her royal bloodlines this night."

Beezie raised his glass as he grinned and said, "To Her Royal Salacious Highness. Who showed off a lot more than her bloodlines tonight."

Shaka and Thaddeus raised the wrist of their prey and said, "To Her Royal Salacious Highness."

As they toasted her Kassie grinned as said, "I thought that was suppose to be Her Royal Serene Highness."

Beezie grinned and replied, "Not in this little corner of Camelot dear. And most certainly not in your case. Though I must admit, you do have a certain serene grace under pressure."

Thaddeus nodded his head and said, "Aye she most certainly does. But you're right, tis not her serenity that endears her most to her loyal subjects."

Shaka nodded and grinned as he said, "Yeah, it is some of her other assets, that endears her to us."

Kassie sipped on her drink then with a serene smile said, "Ya'll are a bunch of sorry perverts."

Her subjects sitting at the table nodded their heads enthusiastically and Thaddeus said, "Thank you lass. We take that as a great compliment coming from you."

Kassie smiled serenely and said, "I resemble that remark."

As they all laughed Beezie said, "You most certainly do."

As Shaka and Thaddeus watched Drake laughing and smiling down at Her Salacious Royal Highness, they knew their unholy father had finally found the one thing that could truly make this dark kingdom of his a paradise for him and many others. Thaddeus understood more profoundly than Shaka the real gift their Queen brought to this dark kingdom. Suddenly he grinned at Drake and said, "By Pan's flute I never thought I would be feeling what I am right now again."

Drake nodded and replied, "I had given up hope of ever feeling it again as well old friend." Then he grinned and nodded his head in Shaka's direction as he said, "And many like our young friend here, has never felt it before."

Thaddeus nodded and replied, "Aye. But those here tonight have felt it now. And soon others will as well. Many will welcome its return. Others though will fear it and try to destroy it. Others will wish to control it."

Drake nodded and replied with a grin, "And it is our job to see that doesn't happen."

Beezie nodded his head enthusiastically and said, "Damn straight it is."

Shaka grinned as he nodded his head just as enthusiastically and replied, "Yeah man, we got to do a real good job of covering that royal booty."

Drake laughed, then took Kassie's hand as he stood up and said, "Well get back on the clock boys, I'm about to have her shake that royal booty again."

As he led her to the dance floor the Royal Guard grinned as they followed them, and kept a close eye on the royal booty. As they stepped onto the dance floor Drake snapped his fingers once and Welcome to the Jungle began to echo through the room. Kassie grinned as she picked up the beat of the music and began to shake her royal booty to it. The king of that dark jungle gave a wide fang bared grin then threw his head and howled in perfect two part harmony to it as he picked up the beat of the music. The Royal Guards folded their arms across their chests and watched with perverted glee as Drake and Kassie rocked it down.

Drake was singing along with the music, welcoming Kassie to his dark jungle with it. Telling her what she would find in their jungle. He started out living like an animal in his dark jungle. Now he was the disease they all wanted in his jungle. And nobody took anything from him, or he would surely watch them bleed. He held her close for a moment, never wanting to come down from this high he was on. Then throwing his head back and screaming along with the music as he pulled Kassie to him and ground against her to the beat of the music.

Kassie rocked along with him to the beat of the music then slid down his body until she was on her knees before him. She pressed her mouth

against the bulging seam of his leather pants for a few beats, then with a wicked grin reached up and grabbed the witch dangling from the choker chain around his neck and pulled herself to her feet with it. She reached down and rubbed the bulge in his leather pants with her other hand as she rose to her feet. And grinned with a perverted glee of her own as she felt it growing larger and harder as she tugged on the witch dangling from the choker chain. Drake tilted his head back and gave low rumbling purr of pleasure as she stroked the bulge in his pants and yanked his chain. That low rumbling purr changed to a growl as her teeth closed around his left nipple.

As the Royal Guard stood watching Beezie reached down and adjusted the bulge in his pants as he said, "Christ on a burning crutch, that little bitch has his number."

Thaddeus adjusted the bulge in his pants and said, "I told you before, watch your fucking mouth you sorry ass cloven footed bastard, that's our Royal Highness you are speaking of. And she's got all our numbers."

Shaka nodded in agreement as he adjusted the bulge in his pants and said, "Yeah man, there isn't a soft dick or a dry pussy in this fucking place right now."

Beezie and Thaddeus grinned with perverted glee as they nodded their heads in agreement. As the last note of that song rang out Drake grinned and danced them closer to the Royal Guards. When he was next to them he grinned and said, "You boys can go off the clock again in a minute and have a little fun while I show Kassie my private office here." Then grinned wider as he snapped his fingers and Anything Goes echoed through the room. The lights dimmed for a few seconds and when they came back on, Drake and Kassie had vanished.

When they reappeared they were in Drake's private office. He shoved her against the wall with his body and growled, "Spread your legs.", as he pushed her dress up. As Kassie spread her legs he reached

down and slid a finger inside her. Kassie panted and moaned as she spread her legs wider and pressed herself down on his finger. He felt her warm wet walls contracting against his finger as he stroked the right spot with it. Heard her moan of pleasure as he slid another finger deep inside her and growled with pleasure himself as she started moving up and down on his fingers. Drake's other hand reached around and drew the zipper at the back of Kassie's dress down and he said, "Pull your dress off. but leave the hose and heels on." As Kassie reached down and grabbed the hem of the leather dress that was bunched up around her waist then raised her arms and pulled the dress off over her head, Drake withdrew his finger and after sucking it, pulled his shirt off.

As she tossed it to the floor he reached down and took his boots off. He knew what the sight of a man taking his boots off did to Kassie, and he grinned at her as she watched him pulling them off. After he had his boots and socks off he reached down and unzipped his leather pants and slid them down over his thighs then stepped out of them as they dropped around his ankles. He knelt down on one knee and took her left nipple in his mouth and began to gently suck and lick it. His other hand cupped her right breast as his fingers tweaked that nipple. He slid a finger inside her as he worked her nipples over. Licking and nibbling on her left nipple as he sucked it, tweaking her other nipple between his fingers as he slid another finger deep inside her. He loved the feel of her nipple hardening in his mouth as her warm wet walls contracted around his fingers. Gave a low rumbling growl of pleasure that vibrated around the nipple he was sucking as she pressed herself down on his fingers and he felt the wetness dripping from the warm walls contracting around those fingers. Kassie panted harder and moaned as he added another finger and drove them deep inside her, wiggling them as sucked her nipple. As she moaned and moved up and down on his fingers the soft seductive voice in her said, "That's right baby, fuck my fingers and get that pussy all nice and juicy for me."



Kassie panted as she moved up and down on his fingers then grinned as she said, "You know, you are going to so pay for this later."

Drake removed his mouth from her nipple and grinned up at her as he replied, "Yes I know. And you know I am so looking forward to that." Then he grinned evilly as he removed his fingers from her, then stood up and said, "Raise your arms above your head." He sucked his fingers as she grinned back at him and raised her arms. Once her arms were above her head he reached over with one hand and while he continued to suck his fingers slipped one of the cuffs around her wrist that were attached to a hook above her head. He took his fingers out of his mouth as he slipped her other hand into the other cuff and closed it. Then he knelt down, spread her legs wider and slipped her ankles into cuffs that were attached to the floor. He stood back up, stepped back and grinned as he said, "You look absolutely beautiful like that."

Kassie grinned back at him at replied, "I'm sure I do you perverted bastard."

Drake grinned evilly and replied, "But I think you would look even better in tri clamps."

Kassie grinned back at him and said, "Oh baby, you are such a wonderfully perverted bastard."

Drake grinned as he snapped his fingers and replied, "Thank you dear. I take that as a great compliment coming from you." As he attached one clamp to Kassie's left breast he said, "And I have a keen fashion sense when it cums to accessories." As the sound of Kassie's giggles filled his ears he grinned wider and attached another clamp to her right nipple. His dick twitched at the sound of her soft panting moan as he knelt and attached the third clip to her clit. He slid his fingers back inside her and grinned as he gently tugged on the chains. Kassie gave a gasping moan of pleasure and he felt her warm wet walls drenching his fingers. He shoved them deeper inside her and as he wiggled them, thrust them back

and forth and gently tugged on the chains again. Feeling his dick harden even more as she panted faster and ground herself onto his fingers. He grinned up at her and said, "I am going to make you so fucking wet, cum is dripping from you. I'm going to make you scream with pleasure." He shoved another finger up inside her and as he thrust all his fingers in deeper grinned wider and said, "Then I'm going to make you get on your hands and knees on the bed, with your ass right on the edge of the bed, and stand there behind you and fuck my beautiful little bitch like a big dog."

Kassie grinned down at him as she ground herself onto his fingers and replied, "Sounds like a plan to me."

Drake grinned back at her and replied, "I thought you would like that plan." He tugged on the chains gently again and drove his fingers up and down harder and faster. Kassie started panting faster and humped his fingers more enthusiastically. He could feel her wonderful warm wet pussy muscles gripping his fingers tighter and rippling along them as her juices soaked them and began to seep out from around his fingers. He grinned up at her as he thrust his fingers in deeper and said, "Have I told you lately you have the most amazing pussy muscles?"

Kassie grinned down at him and replied, "Not in the last hour or so that I can remember." Then she panted harder and moaned as she clenched those amazing rippling pussy muscles of hers more tightly around his fingers. Drake tugged the chains lightly again and she gave a growling little moan of pleasure as she felt the pinch and pull of the clamps on her nipples and clit. Panting as she said, "Oh fuck baby that feels so good."

Drake growled softly again and thrust his fingers up into her harder and faster, tugging at the chains again. Kassie humped his fingers harder and bit her lower lip as she gave a whimpering moan of pleasure. Drake's low rumbling growling purr of pleasure filled the room as he tugged the chains again a little harder. He grinned up at Kassie as he took the bottom chain

in his teeth and tugged on it while he stroked himself and thrust his fingers into her deeper. Kassie just grinned back down at him as she panted and rocked harder and faster on his fingers. He was purring and growling around the chain between his teeth as he tugged on it. The feel of Kassie's warm wet pussy convulsing around his fingers as she bounced up and down on them made him stroke himself faster. He tugged the chains with teeth again and growled as she panted and ground down on her fingers harder. Her juices were dripping from around the fingers he was thrusting back and forth inside her. He tugged the chains once more then let go of them with his teeth. He stopped stroking himself long enough to remove the clit clamp then after he had wrapped his mouth around her hot swollen clit and began sucking, he went back to stroking himself. Kassie screamed with pleasure and ground herself onto his fingers when he sucked her clit hard and flicked his tongue back and forth across it as he did. He moaned around her clit as he felt the juices spurting from her. He gave her clit one last hard suck then let go of it as he removed his fingers from her pussy.

He stood up and grinned around the fingers he was sucking as he stroked himself a couple more times. When he had sucked his fingers clean he withdrew them from his mouth and reached up and unfastened the cuffs around Kassie's wrist, then knelt down and released her ankles. He stood stroking himself and grinning as Kassie walked over to the bed and climbed up into it. Gripping himself a little tighter and stroking faster as she got on her hands and knees at the foot of the bed. She wiggled her ass as she looked over her shoulder and winked at him. Drake grinned wider and walked over to her. When he was standing behind her she lowered her head, arched her back and raised her ass high. Drake chuckled as she wiggled it again, then rubbed her wet pussy with his cock. He slapped her ass lightly as he slid the head of his cock into her dripping wet pussy. Groaning with pleasure as he felt it vibrating and wrapping around the head of his cock. He slid it in a little further and lightly slapped her ass again.

Kassie panted and gave a purring moan of pleasure as she felt the sting of his hand and his cock sliding deeper into her. When he suddenly thrust himself into her all the way and lightly slapped her ass again she gasped and growled as she pushed back against him. She could feel his balls pressing against her and then his hands grabbing her waist. She heard him growl as he clutched her waist and pulled her back harder against him. Partly because it was true, and partly because she knew it would drive him crazy, as she pushed herself hard against him she panted, "Oh damn baby, your cock feels so fucking hard and good buried inside me." She panted hard for a couple of strokes then grinned as she said, "Fuck me harder baby. Fuck your little bitch like you really mean it."

Drake growled as he had to grit his fangs to control himself, then said, "You fucking evil little bitch."

Kassie just giggled and replied, "Thank you. Coming from you that's quite a compliment." She moaned as he pulled his cock back until just the head was inside her pussy then in a perfect panting little voice said, "Now ram that home baby, and fuck your little bitch like a big dog. And don't forget to tug the chains still attached to my nipples."

Drake gritted his fangs again as Kassie wiggled her ass on the tip of his cock. As he slapped her ass and rammed it home he growled and said, "You fucking evil rotten little bitch. You must practice that voice for hours." He slapped her ass again as he said, "And don't tell me it cums naturally."

Kassie grinned evilly and in a soft southern almost childlike voice inquired, "Will you spank my hot little ass again if I do?"

Drake groaned as he gritted her fangs, then slapped her ass hard as he growled and replied, "Oh you fucking evil rotten perverted little bitch. I bet when you add, "daddy" to that, some of those filthy fucking old perverts get so hard they hurt."

Kassie giggled, wiggled her ass as she shoved herself back against him and replied, "Darlin, some of those young filthy fucking young perverts get so hard they hurt when I add daddy to it." She paused, moved forward a little, then grunted as she rammed herself backwards. As she heard Drake growl she grinned and panted, "Now fuck me harder baby. You can even spank my hot little ass if it makes your dick happy."

Drake gritted his fangs, then grinned as he brought his hand down hard on Kassie's now slightly red little ass and replied, "It is going to make my omnipotent dick extremely happy to give you the fucking and spanking you deserve."

Kassie just grinned and replied, "Promises, promises.", then began to pant and wiggle her ass as she rocked back and forth on his cock. Kassie could hear his excitement in the tone of his growl as she did, and the sound of his teeth clicking and gritting together as he clung to his legendary cool.

Though the blood that was pounding in his omnipotent undead cock was cold as it flowed through it, the pleasure he was feeling still caused the veins on his cock to swell and throb as he fucked Kassie. She wiggled and pushed that beautifully rounded ass of hers into him. He felt those wonderfully talented pussy muscles of her rippling along his cock as they contracted around it. He grabbed her waist again with both hands and pulled her into him harder. He tilted his head back and closed his eyes for a moment to savor the sound and feel of her. Listening to the soft fast panting growling sounds she was making. Feeling the warmth and wetness of her pussy around his cock, and her tiny waist in his hands. Then he opened his eyes and grinned as he looked down and watched his cock sliding in and out of dripping wet pussy. Taking his hands and spreading her cheeks wide to improve the view. Gazing at her glistening juices on his cock and wanting to taste them for a moment. He slid his cock out her then dropped to one knee and rammed his tongue inside her, growling and moaning with pleasure as her juices saturated his tongue. He spread her cheeks wider and pressed his mouth hard against her,

sucking hard as he licked and gulped those sweet warm juices. Drinking them down and as always, becoming intoxicated with the pure sweet taste of them.

Kassie closed her eyes and moaned with pleasure as his tongue licked at her pulsing wet walls. Panting and pushing against him as he spread her cheeks wider and started to suck her pussy. She felt and heard him drinking deeply and pushed against his face harder. Then felt his tongue withdraw from her pussy and move upwards. As his tongue teased her ass he slid his fingers back inside her pussy. As she began to hump his fingers he pushed his tongue inside her ass. She whimpered and panted harder as he worked his fingers and tongue.

Drake grinned as he felt her quivering around his fingers and tongue. He wiggled his fingers and rubbed her G-spot as he began to slide his tongue back and forth. That made her quiver even harder around his fingers and tongue as she humped them faster. He worked his tongue back and forth faster and felt her pushing against it as her pussy shuddered and drenched his fingers. He slipped his soaking wet fingers out her pussy and slid one of the into her ass as he withdrew his tongue and rose to his knees. Kassie moaned as she pressed against his finger and the tip of his cock as he took his other hand and guided it into her dripping wet pussy. He held just the tip in her for a moment as his finger slid back and forth inside her ass and felt her pussy quivering hard around the tip of his cock. When she groaned and pressed back against him he growled and thrust his cock into her until his balls were pressed against her pussy. She growled and pressed herself back against him harder. Driving his cock and finger deeper into her. Drake answered that growl with one of his own and began to rock back and forth. Gritting his fangs for a moment as Kassie picked up his beat and met him stroke for stroke. After a few strokes he tilted his back and groaned, "Oh fuck baby it feels so damn good."

Kassie grunted as she bounced back against him then grinned and panted, "It would feel even better with another finger I bet."

Drake growled as his cock twitched inside her and replied as he slid another finger in, "Oh you are so right my perverted little witch."

Kassie grinned and pantingly replied, "Of course I'm right. Now fuck my pussy and ass really hard baby."

Drake groaned as his cock shuddered inside her and as he began to fuck her hard growled, "Oh you evil little bitch."

Kassie just grinned as she panted, "Oh damn baby that feels so fucking good when your cock shudders inside me like that." As she thrust herself backwards and wiggled her ass she felt it shudder again and grinned she heard his low throated purring growl of pleasure. She panted even harder as she began to rock back and forth faster. Driving herself onto his cock and fingers as she fucked them. Contracting her muscles tighter around his cock and fingers as she felt herself getting closer to the edge.

Drake tilted his back and gritted his fangs he felt her muscles rippling along his cock and fingers. As he felt her juices squirting and drenching his cock his whole body began to shudder. He howled her name as he drove himself into her. When Kassie growled and shoved herself back against him hard, then did that mix master movement with her hips and ass she had perfected so well, he howled it again as he grabbed her ass cheeks with both hands and yanked her back against him. Howling again when she pressed herself against him and wiggled all over his dick as she drenched it in her juices. As the sound of his howls began to fade he withdrew from her, then knelt down again to drank deeply from the juices seeping from her. Savoring the taste of those juices as she whimpered and pressed herself against his mouth. He pressed his mouth hard against her, tilting it slightly and pressing his fangs into her soft flesh. Moaning and growling as he drank her juices and blood. The pure sweet taste of her juices gave him a second orgasm of the mind that made his omnipotent knees weak for a moment. He finally withdrew his tongue and fangs from within her and rose to his feet. He reached down as soon as he was on

his feet, turned Kassie over then picked her up and clasped her against him. Holding her tightly against him as his cold body trembled with emotions he thought he would never feel. He felt a love for her so fierce and strong he would destroy worlds if necessary to protect her. His beloved witch brought him so many gifts. Gifts no other could ever bring him. Partly because she was the living reincarnation of that High Priestess who had once granted him the gift of immortality because she loved him so passionately. But also because she was the creature she now was. He had fallen in love with that creature even before he had known she was his destiny. Fallen so hard and hopelessly in love with her, he had gone to her knowing sooner or later he would break the vow he had made to himself if he did. Suddenly he murmured in her ear, "Do you know my love, I was already so hopelessly in love with you the night I came to you, I feared I would turn you then and there? I kidded myself that I was just going to feed from you. But I knew that was bullshit Kassie. Oh fuck baby I wanted you so bad even then it made me crazy at times."

Kassie sighed and melted against the cold hard body of her immortal lover. She did not speak but rested her head against his chest and wrapped her arms tightly around him. She loved him partly because that was the curse levied upon her for betraying the Magick as that High Priestess. But she was coming to love him more and more now because of what he had become since then. Not as the Dark God of his species who could destroy worlds if he chose, but as the omnipotent creature who performed random acts kindness he called simple acts of logic and reason. She loved the dark sexy creature who had danced with her to tonight and rocked her world. Finally she looked up at him and as she reached up and stroked the side of his face said, "I'm getting terribly crazy about you."

Drake's dark soul soured when he heard her words and looked into her amber eyes. The tiny spark of light she had earlier ignited in his soul glowed a little more brightly and grew the tiniest bit larger. He turned his head slightly and pressed his mouth against her palm for a moment then



reached down and as he took her face gently in both his hands said, "Kassie, I swear on my blood oath, I will love you for all eternity. I will not say as I do now, because my love for you grows stronger with each passing moment. I will also never betray you or the Magick. This too I swear on my blood oath."

Kassie gazed deeply into his cobalt blue eyes then finally reached up and pulled his head down as she stood on her tiptoes. She kissed him hard as she pressed against him. Wanting nothing more at that moment than to never leave his embrace. He wrapped his arms around her, moaning softly as he kissed her back and picked her up. She clung to him for a moment as he sucked her tongue and held her tightly against his body.

As Drake held her the air around them and that around the clothes laying strewn on the floor began to shimmer. As it did the lights in the main room dimmed for a moment. The air in the center of the dance floor seem to shimmer in the darkness. Mortals and vampyres stepped back from it and when the lights came back on, Drake and Kassie stood dressed as they had been earlier, still in each other's embrace. The Royal Guards appeared close by them as they continued to kiss. They folded their arms as they grinned and watched them. Beezie looked over his left shoulder at Thaddeus and said, "Ain't love grand!"

Thaddeus grinned back at him as he nodded his head replied, "Aye lad, that it is."

The grin Drake had on his face when he finally raised his head and said, "You damn straight it is.", was a testament to just how grand it was for him. He winked at the Royal Guards as he gently sat Kassie on her feet, then glanced at a piece of prey standing nearby them. She walked over to them with a glazed look of happiness on her face and offered her throat to Drake. He kept one arm around Kassie as he turned slightly and sank his fangs into its pale throat. After he sated the blood lust from the willing throats and wrists of his prey, Drake grinned at Kassie and picked up the beat of the music. Grinning as he watched her lithe leather clad

form begin moving and grooving to the beat of the music. She was pure raw sexual energy as she danced. Her sleek slender body moving in perfect harmony with the beat of the hard rocking music. To know that this incredible creature rocking his world was his and his alone filled with him with happiness and perverted glee. He finally had found the one who would become his Dark Goddess. She was everything he had ever hoped and dreamed of. And so much more. Wild, exciting, passionate, intelligent, worldly, mature, cynical, loving, hard as nails, soft as sin on silk, his angel, his devil, his one true soul mate. She was the heart and soul of so many of the songs he liked. Her presence in his life was allowing him to feel that music on a level he never had before.

Watching her dance invoked a lust he had never felt with anyone else. It aroused not only a lust for her, but a lust for the closest thing to life he was ever going to get. It wasn't that she was arousing human lust in him, she was arousing the lust of the true nature of his beast. He was an omnipotent, the most powerful one walking planet earth right then. He had become a magnificent mystical legend. The one his species called their Unholy Father. The one mortals dreamed of. The one many other creatures had nightmares about. He was a walking paradox, known by some for acts of simple logic they called kindness. Known also by some of them and many others, for his swift and ruthless acts of violence when provoked. He turned a charming smile on a wench that would captivate her soul, while he ripped out the heart of her mortal lover. Older than Methuselah, wiser than Solomon, he was a law unto himself. He needed only one thing to make his existence complete. And that was that this creature he was dancing with, would come to love him as he much as he loved her. He wanted to seduce and intoxicate her soul as she had his. Suddenly his grin widened as he thought of a way to touch the heart and soul of this witch he adored to distraction. He snapped his fingers once, then as Black Crowes, Thorn In My Pride began to echo through the room pulled her close to and whispered shhhhhh in her ear and mind. He wrapped his arms around her and lost himself in the feel of his body next to hers and the beat of the music. Singing softly to her as he danced with her. His

seductive voice whispering them through her mind. Moving his body against hers as he serenaded her. He continued holding her close as he rocked them to the rhythm of the music and sang to her soul. He was spilling all his secrets into her with his blood. Freely giving her all the powers that were his. Whispering to her though of things that could be. Things that would be. When she melted against him and looked up at him with the warmth of love in her amber eyes, then softly stroked the side of his face as he sang to her, his dark soul soared again. Little by little he was romancing a stony heart that had been too often broken, seducing a soul that had become fearful of being touched, especially by him. She used her own and his sexuality to avoid being too deeply touched. He was now forcing her to go beyond just the lust and passion they felt for each other. Pushing her deeper into the heart of the matter.

As the last notes of the song faded from the room Drake nodded at the Royal Guards and let them know they were off the clock. The lights dimmed, and as the blackness shimmered for a moment, Drake and Kas-sie vanished.

## Chapter 7

She had always been bound to him by a thread of love that would not be broken. When he had ripped her heart out in that other time and place he had consumed nearly all of it. As she lay sleeping now in his cold embrace she dreamed of that other time and place. She saw one small piece of her heart fall from his lips. She saw him consuming the rest. Watched in her dream as he tore off her head then strode from the altar her body lay upon and tossed the head into the ocean. She saw him leaving. Another had also witnessed his bloody act of murder though. A young woman with a sickly baby cradled in her arms. For three nights the woman had dreamed of coming to this altar. She had seen the murder of the High Priestess each time. And in her dream she had seen herself going to the altar and picking up the small piece of the High Priestess' heart and then feeding it to her child. So the woman had followed her dream. And as Kassie watched now in her dream, she saw the woman placing that small piece of her heart into the mouth of the child. The baby's heart had stopped beating for a moment when her soul had mingled with the child's. When that heart had started beating once more, a new creature had been reborn. That creature would continue to be reborn again and again throughout many reincarnations. It would suffer agony and betrayal in many forms throughout its numerous lifetimes. And would forever dream of and love the one who had first betrayed her.

She stirred slightly in Drake's arms, then as she felt him wrap his cold embrace around her more tightly, and heard his soft seductive voice soothing her, she relaxed and slumbered more peacefully. The vampyre whose arms she lay nestled in knew that his love came to him with many nightmares and inner demons. Though she had suffered much at the hands of others in her many lifetimes, he knew he was the one ultimately responsible for those nightmares and inner demons. Kassie had argued that point many times with him. She held herself at least half to blame for all that happened because she had broken the laws of Magick and bestowed the gift of immortality upon him when he had not been worthy of

gift of love she had given him. He considered the punishment dished out to her for that act of love excessive.

When she awoke a couple of hours later Drake was stroking her hair gently and smiling down at her as he told her he loved her. She smiled back as she reached up and softly touched his cheek. He reached over and placed his hand on hers, turned his head and kissed her palm, then leaned over and softly kissed her lips, caressing the side of her face while they kissed. As they kissed the soft seductive voice in her mind whispered tender words of love. As had become their habit, they did not rise immediately, but spent some time talking and cuddling with each other first. Because neither of them needed a lot of sleep they usually woke a few hours before sunset. Once they were up Kassie would dress and head to the barn for an afternoon ride. While she rode, Drake would be on the computer or the phone taking care of business matters. When she came back from riding she would spend some time working on her writing and answering email. They often sat together on the couch in the library, each one busily keyboarding away on their laptops. Kassie lost in her world of words and Drake lost in whatever computer program he was currently working on. He had numerous computers and laptops here at the castle he now called home. He worked on both Apple and Windows run computers. Kassie had discovered he had developed programs for both under various alias. A few had been done under company names and had considerably increased his already vast fortune. Others were cracks to major programs, including some of his own, that he happily distributed for free via the warez sites.

Shortly before the evening tour group was due to arrive, they would make mad passionate love. Later, while Drake greeted then dined on the tour group, Kassie would bath then eat her dinner. Occasionally she would go with Drake to greet the tour group, and after he had dined on them she would eat her dinner with them. The Lord of the Manor also sat and talked with his guests on these nights. Though as his guests often remarked, he never ate with them. He would however offer a toast before

dinner and sometimes sip from a golden goblet as he chatted with his dinner guests. Kassie and Drake were an articulate host and hostess who often spellbound their dinner guests with amazing anecdotes and entertaining stories. She was discovering that some of the tour groups contained at least one avid reader of hers. Drake had even joked with her about now being an added attraction to his tourist attraction. After the first time she had been recognized she discussed using her new shapeshifting abilities to alter her appearance when dining with the dinner guests. Drake had quickly dismissed that idea and told her as long as she remained mostly mortal and basically herself to the human world, then her bunch may as well get used to her being with him, just as his bunch was going to have to get used to him being with her. Kassie had realized from the look on his handsome face the tone of his voice he was not going to tolerate any arguments concerning this matter. Wise woman that she was, she understood why he felt as he did concerning that matter.

Though they were supposedly keeping a low profile, the truth was both their worlds were buzzing with the news of each other. They had gone to several corners of Drake's vast kingdom in the past three weeks and the news of her had spread rapidly throughout that dark kingdom. Drake had made no bones concerning his feelings towards her when they had made those appearances. When she had commented on his openness concerning those feelings he had simply smiled that cold elegantly evil smile of his and said, "What are my bloodthirsty children going to do, tell me I'm senile and call me a pussy for saying I love you? " The grin turned even more cold and hard as he said, "They know better than to even think that in my presence darling." Because Kassie had seen and sensed the fear he could provoke in his bloodthirsty children should any of them raise his ire, she had simply grinned wryly and replied, "Point taken."

As they lay cuddling in bed Kassie thought about the book signing gig they had attended the night before. It had been their first public appearance together in her world. The news she was playing hostess and apparently now living with the mysterious owner of a certain castle that

was also a popular tourist attraction for vampyre lovers, goth people and even historians had spread rapidly along the world wide web that many of her fans surfed and played on. She had signed books for a couple of the fans who had recently dined with them at the castle.

When they had first discussed this book signing gig she told Drake that he would be as much a focus of the cameras that would be there as she would be. Drake had merely grinned down at her, kissed her the tip of her nose and said, "Yes I know my dear. But I'm not afraid of the cameras stealing my soul." Most of the pictures taken of Drake had turned out slightly blurry. But a couple of shots taken at that book signing were in perfect in focus. One was a shot of Drake standing behind Kassie as she sat at the table signing one her books. Drake's handsome head was bent slightly. One pale hand was softly cupping and caressing her shoulder. The look on his face as he gazed down at her clearly showed his love for her. Another shot taken a few seconds later showed Drake looking at the camera lense. The hand that had been softly caressing her shoulder now held it in a gentle, but very proprietary manner. The eyes that had seemed warmed by a touch of love seconds ago, were now as cold and hard as the iceberg that sank the Titanic. Though he had retracted his fangs, the smile on his face was still the one that sent chills down Beezie's spine. When Kassie's publicity agent saw the pictures she would nearly cream in her panties.

Though she fed nightly from her immortal lover now, Kassie had developed no aversion to the sun. She in fact still enjoyed spending an hour or so in the morning or afternoon in one of the lounge chairs on the balconies outside their rooms. When she had found herself still wanting to sit outside in the sun and realized her skin was still tanning normally she had expressed her surprise at this turn of events to Drake. He had merely smiled softly and said, "You were once the daughter of a great Sun God my beloved. I doubt you will ever be a completely nocturnal creature." In a simple white sleeveless sheath dress belted at the waist with a golden chord she had looked more like a Sun Goddess than the Dark Queen that

she would soon become. But there was no doubt the pale man dressed in black pants and red silk shirt standing behind her was a Dark Prince indeed. Though Drake had been very charming to her fans at the book signing, one fan had summed them up best when he had remarked see them together was like seeing Cinderella hook up with the Prince of Darkness instead of Prince Charming.

Kassie snuggled deeper into the cold embrace of her immortal lover as he wrapped his arms more tightly around her and covered her face in kisses, softly murmuring words of love as he did. She closed her eyes and enjoyed the feel of his cool kisses upon her face. And tried to quieten the snide sceptical little voice in her head that sometimes replied to his words of love. She knew Drake could hear that snide sceptical little voice as well. She had even found herself softly laughing at times as he replied to that snide little voice. Though you would never make a saint of him, Drake showed the patience of one when it came to that snide little voice in her head that so often replied to his declarations of adoration. When she remarked on how good he was at putting up with a lover who had such a snide sceptical little voice in her head, he simply smiled one of those cold smiles of his then kissed the tip her nose and said, "That snide sceptical little voice is actually a refreshing change of pace from some of the voices I've listened to in the heads of others my dear. It just has doubts of my love for you. At least it isn't encouraging you to serve my head and heart on a silver platter to your current lover." As she looked back into the cobalt blue eyes of the Dark God who held her so tenderly she was filled with many emotions. She knew he more than sensed and deeply understood the emotions in her. She more than felt and deeply understood his emotions for her. A part of her knew he truly loved her. He had shown her that love in a thousand ways both big and small. He had opened himself up to her completely. He put his complete trust in her, and allowed her full access to his heart, mind and soul. But still that cynical little voice in her head continued to remind her of what always happened when she placed her trust in love.



Her reluctance now to join him on the darker side immortality did not just stem from a lack of faith in love though. She knew that she had certain things she must do while she was still mostly mortal. Tasks that she must complete in this lifetime as a mostly mortal witch. When these tasks were completed then she could join him on that darker side immortality. The truth of his love for her lay in the fact that he was willing to allow her whatever time it took to complete these tasks. Her coronation as Queen of the vampyres that would soon take place was his way of telling her and others that her importance to him did not depend upon her joining him on that darker side of immortality. He was allowing her to finish out as much of this lifetime as she chose to. Even permitting her to continue to shine in the small spotlight of notoriety she had created for herself as a writer. She was beginning to realize that the Royal Guard he had assembled for her would help make that possible. She knew that Drake had passed on his ability to withstand daylight to Thaddeus and Shaka so that they could perform their duties as Royal Guardsmen in daylight. She had seen certain members of her Royal Guard mingling with the crowd at the book signing. Beezie had even strolled up to the table with a wide grin on his handsome face and asked her to sign a copy of the book he had just purchased. Thaddeus and Shaka had also come to her table with wide wicked sans fang grins on their faces. As did the one true bitch member of her Royal Guard, Silvana.

Suddenly Drake rolled away from her and said with a grin, "Okay my beloved it is time for your afternoon ride."

Kassie had laughed, rolled on top of him and said, "Not until one last kiss before I go."

Drake had kissed her until until she was breathless then swatted her ass and said, "Now off with you to spend some time Wind Dancer and Precious."

Kassie had smiled as she had gotten up and dressed for her ride. She was glad Drake encouraged, even insisted upon the daily rides. She

needed the time spent with Wind Dancer and Precious as much as they needed the time spent with her. Though the four horsemen who accompanied her on her ride that afternoon were a constant reminder of how much her life had changed, and the danger she perpetually lived in now, the rides did give her a way to relieve some of the stress this new life brought with it. Intrigue, jealousy, and deceit were rampant in Drake's dark kingdom. Drake himself could not be harmed by anything in or out of his dark kingdom. But Kassie could. She had come to realize that if Drake could be said to fear anything, losing her was it. That fear manifested itself in a deadly determination to see to it that no harm came to her. There was no other creature be it mortal or not that was as well protected as she was. Though she could spend solitary time in their rooms upstairs, the moment she descended those stairs without Drake beside her the protective net he had cast around her tightened. There were moments when her free spirited soul rebelled and strained against that net. But she had learned rebellions would be ruthlessly put down by her otherwise adoring and tender immortal lover.

That otherwise adoring and tender immortal lover could also be ruthless when it came to seeing to it she mastered and honed all the powers she could that he was passing onto her as quickly as possible. She had now mastered the ability to shape shift into a bat and many other creatures in an instant. She could also heal herself of very life threatening wounds in an instant now as well. Her physical strength had increased greatly as well and Drake insisted that she learn to use that new strength. Though he fiercely protected her, he wanted her a force to be reckoned with. They had spent many hours mastering and honing a variety of the powers he was passing onto her. She knew they would spend many more hours doing that as well. She did her best though to quell her exhausted anger during the more gruelling sessions because she knew it was Drake's desire to see to it she could protect herself that drove him so relentlessly at times.

Kassie understood that she would now be dealing with incredibly powerful forces who meant her nothing but harm. But as a member of The Team she had already dealt with some pretty powerful forces who had meant her harm. And she sometimes resented the overprotective streak that her immortal showed towards her. She kept the anger and resentment she sometimes felt under control though by reminding herself that Drake's sometimes overprotective streak stemmed from his deep rooted fear of losing her. Having finally found her, and discovered in her someone who loved him just for himself and not for the dark gift of immortality and power he could give her, Drake wasn't about to let go of her or allow anything to happen to her. She understood he valued the gift of unconditional love she brought to him far more than any mortal man ever would. That he did value that gift as much as he did was one of the many things that made her love him all the more. She had given the gift of unconditional love to many throughout her various lifetimes. Had even once given it and the dark gift of immortality to him as a High Priestess. In that lifetime he had put more value upon the dark gift of immortality than he had upon the gift of unconditional love she had given him.

The High Priestess who had given him the dark gift of immortality had been destined to be the one to lead a coven of 12 other hybrid offspring of the Gods and Goddesses who still walked the earth occasionally in those ancient times. Drake had caused that plan to go tragically awry though. But the ancient Gods and Goddesses did not take kindly to having anyone throw a monkey wrench in their best laid plans and both of them had been ruthlessly punished for what they had done. They were now being given a chance to set that plan back in motion. Somewhere on this earth walked the offspring of those original 12 hybrid children of Gods and Goddesses. It was Kassie's destiny to find and bring together the descendents of those ancient Gods and Goddesses.

Drake, who was now an Omnipotent himself, considered it his job to make sure Kassie fulfilled her destiny. In his infinite wisdom Drake had decided the best way to help Kassie fulfill that destiny was to have her

take her rightful place as Queen of the vampyres as quickly as possible. Though it was a large leap to Kassie, to Drake it was merely one small skip on a long and rocky road. Along with bringing together the descendents of those ancient Gods and Goddess, it was also Kassie's destiny to become an Omnipotent. Drake was going to make sure she would be his Dark Goddess when she became an immortal Omnipotent. Kassie knew and understood this. She knew her world would never again be the same so she may as well let Drake plunge her into what would now be her new world and get used to it.

As it always did, her late afternoon ride had allowed her to relax and relieve some of the stress dealing with her new world caused. She often marveled at the understanding Drake, who never seemed the least bit stressed over anything, showed her. Besides insisting upon the late afternoon rides, he also provided other ways for her to have as many stress free and fun moments as she could. Even taking her to one his amusement parks one night. Kassie was a sucker for amusement parks and he knew it. He had indulged her love of amusement parks to the fullest that night. Taking her on every ride in the park at least once. Grinning with glee as they necked like teenagers on many of those rides, and then he had won her the largest stuffed animal there. What had amazed her at times that night had been Drake's enjoyment. She watched in amused awe as he had gotten into the spirit of her love for amusement parks and wound up having as much fun as she did. He had taken her to several interesting and romantic places. And had promised to take her to many more. He enjoyed getting her relaxed and happy, then shamelessly wooing her. He did everything his vast calculating mind could think of to win her heart. When he was at his most romantic and charming, even Kassie found it impossible to resist being swept off her feet by him.

Which was really just as well, because there were times when he was not at his most romantic and charming she had found herself hard pressed to resist kicking him in his Omnipotent shins at the very least. He could be so awesomely arrogant at times she wanted to swat him. But then he

would simply look at her, grin that cool elegantly evil grin of his and say, "Remember my beloved, it ain't bragging if you can do it." When she thought about all that he could do, she realized that he was actually being modest at his most arrogant moments. She had seen the pale cold faces of old and powerful members of his own species blanch with fear when Drake turned that cold hard warning smile of his upon them.

Drake ruled his dark kingdom with what could best be described as a velvet covered mace approach. His bloodsucking children knew how painful even being lightly tapped with that velvet covered mace could be. When Kassie had once commented on how ruthlessly he ruled his dark kingdom at times Drake had merely grinned that wide wicked grin of his, winked at her and said, "It keeps the level of intrigue, deception and drama down to a minimum dear." Kassie couldn't help but think that if the level of intrigue, deception and drama was at a minimum, she would hate to see it maxed out. Literally putting a dozen knives in his back wouldn't have done Drake the slightest bit of harm. But many of his bloodthirsty children wanted to drive a stake through his heart in order to try and gain his powers. Because he was passing all the powers he could onto her through his blood, some of his bloodthirsty children now saw her as a dangerous object of desire. Kassie didn't need to use her new ability to read minds to be aware of the jealousy a few of his damned eternal brides felt for her. Their best efforts of seduction had failed to gain them the powers Drake was so freely passing onto her.

She was also very aware that many of his bloodthirsty children considered her upcoming coronation blasphemy. Drake had made it clear to her and to others though that he considered her coronation a clear cut case of cosmic justice. When one of his bloodthirsty children had asked him how he could even dare consider crowning a mortal woman Queen of the vampyres Drake had simply looked at him in a way that had nearly flash frozen the already cold blood of his bloodthirsty child and said coldly, "Because she has more right to that title as she is right now, than you will ever have. In another time and place she gave me the dark gift of immor-

tality that I in turn passed on to others. Ultimately resulting in the creation of your ungrateful bloodsucking ass. You will either show her the respect she deserves as your rightful Queen, or I will personally pop your head on the end of a pole so that your eyes and ears can help guard and keep her safe for all eternity." Drake's penchant for popping the heads of those who unduly irritated him onto the tops of poles was well known among his kind. Besides using the poles at the castle he now called home base, he had included some in the decor of a couple of his goth clubs, and some of the "fake" heads in his amusement park haunted houses and houses of horror were frighteningly realistic for a very good reason. Knowing his words were no idle threat did wonders to keep most of his bloodthirsty children reasonably in line.

Kassie didn't need a crystal ball though to tell her that nothing was going to keep some of his bloodthirsty children in line forever. She also knew she would be the catalyst that would drive some of them to step over the line. Some of them wanted to bury their fangs in her still mortal throat and take what powers they could as they sucked her dry. Others wanted to seduce her into betraying Drake so they could wind up with both their powers. Those were biding their time until Drake turned her completely because they knew that her powers would increase even more once that happened. She had wryly remarked to Drake just the other night that when she really thought about it that she felt like a cosmic top shelf Kewpie doll, and the duck you had to shoot to get the top shelf prize. Drake had laughed that cold dark laugh of his and told her that was probably the most apt description of what she was that he would ever hear. Then he had smiled that devastating smile of his, kissed the tip of her nose, and called her his beloved Mistress of word play. She had melted considerably when he had done that. But even so, that hardcore cynical little voice in her head remarked that it was certain sure when he kissed the Blarney Stone it French kissed him back and sucked his tongue. She had tried to muffle that cynical little voice but Drake had heard it in her mind. He had merely grinned at her though, then leaned

over and after licking and blowing in her ear whispered, "Only when I whisper sweet nothings to it first my dear."

When she returned from her afternoon ride he looked up from his laptop and smiled at her as she walked into the library. The smile that she put upon his handsome face had been noticed and talked about by several who knew him well. It gave mute testimony to the happiness she brought to him. Even with his fangs showing it was still as close to a human smile of simple happiness as anyone had ever seen upon his face. Kassie returned that simple smile of happiness as she crossed the room. Drake placed his laptop on the coffee table and rose to his feet as Kassie walked up to him. The moment she was within reach he grabbed her and gently pulled her to him. Holding her tightly as he kissed her and whispered, "I missed you."

Kassie returned his embrace and his kiss and replied, "I was only gone a couple of hours."

Drake held her even tighter and as he nibbled her earlobe whispered, "Yes my love, but every second away from you is an eternity for me."

Kassie squirmed as he nibbled her ear and whispered in it. She dug nails into his back in a way that made him moan softly and press against her. Then she nipped his shoulder lightly and replied, "No wonder the Blarney Stone French kisses you back and sucks your tongue when you whisper sweet nothings to it."

Drake chuckled into her ear, nipped the lobe again lightly then said, "Yes, but I mean them when I am whispering them in your ear my beloved."

Kassie took half a step backwards, looked up at him and said with a smile that contained more than a dash of cynicism, "Yeah of course you do. Your dick is hard right now. You guys always mean those sweet nothings when your dicks are hard."

Drake merely chuckled as he looked down into her eyes and said, "First of all, I'm not one of those guys. Secondly, I keep a perpetual hard on around you so no matter what you think, I always mean them." Then he pulled her close to him again as he leaned his handsome head down and kissed her until she was breathless.

Kassie's head spun and her heart raced faster as he moved his mouth and began molesting her ear. His hands were roaming up and down her back, sometimes drifting to her buttocks and softly caressing them as he molested her ear and whispered more sweet nothings in it. As his tongue licked her ear and his hands caressed her, she heard the sweet nothings and actually felt her knees go weak for a moment. As she clung to him to stay upright she panted and said, "Oh you are such a wicked evil bastard. You love making my knees go weak so I have to cling to you."

Drake chuckled into her ear and replied, "Well that too. On the other hand, I'm easy to please, and won't be upset if your knees become so weak you fall before me on them."

Kassie giggled and squirmed as he held her tightly and flicked his tongue into her ear then she replied, "Fat chance!"

Drake chuckled in her ear again and replied, "Hope springs eternal for me my love."

Kassie laughed and replied, "Everything springs eternal for you."

Drake ran one hand up the middle of her back then her neck. He gave a dark chuckle as he ran his fingers into her hair and tilted her head back. As he looked down into her eyes he said, "That's because I am the reigning fucking Dark God of immortality my love." Then the Dark God of immortality bent his handsome head and kissed her until she was breathless. As Kassie wrapped her arms around him and clung to her immortal lover she felt a desire for him that nearly overwhelmed her. She had loved him for so very long. He had haunted her dreams throughout her



many lifetimes. Held a piece of her heart that she could give to no one else. In each and every lifetime she had fought what she felt for him and refused to call him back into her circle of life. But in this lifetime she had finally grown terminally tired of never finding the love she sought and knew that the only way she would ever be free was call him into her circle of life and see if he could love her the way she had once loved him. She would like to believe that all the wonderful words of love he had spoken to her were true. But she also knew that even if he meant those words when he said them, things changed. She had fallen hard for some in this and other lifetimes who had professed their undying love to her. Only to have them suddenly decide they were confused or wrong about what they claimed to have once felt for her. Kassie had long since lost patience with those who were perpetually confused or wrong about their feelings for her.

Kassie knew love when she felt it. Had any of the others been less confused or more lasting in their love for her they could have broken the ties that had kept her bound to the creature who now held her in his cold embrace. But their words had not proven to be golden. Only time would tell if the words of eternal love the creature who now held her in his cold embrace had spoken to her were golden. Because she had fallen so deeply in love with him in the short time they had been together she prayed to all the Gods and Goddesses she believed in that his words would prove golden. But even as she prayed to them she wept at times because of how futile she felt those prayers were. A part of her had been so damaged by all the false words of love she had heard that she honestly doubted now if she would ever again have the ability to completely trust in love again. So she had taken one last chance on this thing called love and called him back into her circle of life in the hopes that his love for her would be strong and true. If so, then she could heal from the damage that had been done to her. If not, then she knew that she would be forever free of love. If he broke her heart again it would be so completely shattered that it would never love again. And a small dark part of her that was tired of the pain love had already caused her welcomed the thought of that. Kassie had tried so many times to harden her heart completely and be-

come as cold and cruel as those who had played games of the heart with her. But because she had once broken the laws of Magick due to love, she had been cursed to feel the utmost passion and love herself, but never have it returned in full. She would inspire passion, lust, and what some even claimed was love in others. But she could never quite manage to inspire that illusive thing called true love in anyone that she felt it for. She had decided that if she could not come full circle and inspire true love in the creature who had been the cause of her curse, then she would be only too glad if she were to never feel that emotion again. Loving too much had been her downfall once before. She did not intend to be guilty of that again. And falling too hard for Drake would be so easy to do. He was everything she had ever dreamed of, and so much more.

## Chapter 8

As he watched her twirl before him, the deep purple Josephine style gown with an overlay of silver lace flowed gracefully over her slender body. If he hadn't been hypnotized by the way her ass moved as she took a few hip swaying steps away from him, he would have also noticed how gracefully the small train trailed behind her as she walked. The arms of the dress were the same rich purple as the dress, then belled with the silver lace trim from elbow to hand. The neckline had a high collar with silver lace trim as well. An intricate silver and green beaded band studded with rubies adorned her fair head right now. Later that evening a crown would adorn her head. Her hair was partially swept up with long tendrils hanging down the sides and back.

As he looked at his little Queen, his smile was filled love and pride. She had brought him more happiness in one cycle of the moon than he had ever experienced. She made him smile so often Beezie had even kidded him about it being a wonder his mouth wasn't sore. She bemused him, bedazzled him, bewildered him, and completely enchanted him. She was a quirky little madcap Queen who was bringing the touch of Magick that had always been needed to his dark kingdom. He did not yearn for an angel on his shoulder. Would have slapped one off had it tried to land there. But, ruling his dark kingdom for all eternity with her by his side would be the closest thing to heaven he would ever find. His was not the kingdom of heaven, but Kassie was proving herself his true Queen. In the midst of a crowd of cold hearted bloodsuckers, she could sometimes be so icy calm it made even him shiver a time or two watching her. Shaka had watched one night as she sat coolly sipping her drink after verbally bitch slapping one of Drake's damned eternal brides, and called her as cold and lethal as the iceberg that sank the Titanic. Thaddeus had smiled and called her the most worthy of all Queens. Beezie had grinned and called her the Queen Bitch.

As she twirled again then walked towards him he smiled at her and held his arms open. She walked into his cold embrace and smiled that

smile of hers that always melted his cold hard heart, and made him feel as close to warm and fuzzy as he ever got. He wrapped his arms tightly around her and kissed her until she was breathless, then placed his mouth next to her ear and whispered, "You are not just Queen of my world; you are my world. You are also everything bright and beautiful in it."

Kassie had smiled that slightly cynical smile of hers that always broke his stone cold heart to see and replied, "You keep this up, I shall give you a broom."

Drake never let her perpetual cynicism discourage him and simply laughed then assumed a look of mock indignation and said in haughty voice, "I do believe I just might be adept enough in the art of seduction to sweep you off your dainty feet without the aid of a broom. Thank you very much." Before she could reply he pulled her to him and kissed her until she was breathless again, then said, "Hold tight my love. We are off to your coronation." As Kassie held him close they vanished from the bedroom.

They reappeared at another of Drake's many estates. Although the deed to this castle had been recently transferred over to Kassie. In its own quiet way, Kassie's castle was one of the most mystical magickal places in the universe. The vast grounds surrounding the estate had many gardens and greenhouses that contained every magickal herb and flower which could be grown upon planet earth. There were also several orchards, ponds, streams, meadows, and small forests. Faeries, pixies, elves, gnomes and many other magickal creatures roamed freely through and called the vast ground surrounding the castle home. Even unicorns pranced within the gardens and glens surrounding Kassie's castle.

There were four rooms on the top floor of the castles facing true north, south, east and west that he had transformed into what he thought of as the element rooms. The color and decor of each room reflected the element it represented. The rooms were filled with fine art and rare artifacts honoring the elements they represented. The once dark and gloomy tow-

ers had been transformed into light airy conservatories that contained a wide variety of indoor plants as well as artwork that celebrated nature in all aspects and seasons. In the center of the top floor was a pale lavender room trimmed in soft yellow that he thought of as Kassie's loft. Since it was surrounded by other rooms and could not be brightened with windows, he had installed softly tinted skylights in the ceiling. There were sliding shutters she could close across the skylights with a touch of a button. In place of regular windows on the walls, he had installed stained glass windows which had soft lights built behind them. Each of the four walls in the lavender loft contained at least one or more of the stained glass back lit windows, so the room softly glowed in a variety of pale hues when one turned the switch on that lit the bulbs concealed behind the stained glass. He thought of the lavender loft as Kassie's sanctuary. The lavender loft was where she could go and recharge her batteries and soothe her soul when necessary. Although it sat in the center of the top floor, the sound-proof walls and doors made it a quiet peaceful place. Once this night was over and she was officially crowned Queen of the vampyres she would need such a place because though her duties would be few and light for the most part, Drake knew that the hatred that would be aimed at her by some would wear upon her lightest shade of gray soul.

Within a clearing in one of the small forests sat a replica of Stonehenge. This replica however depicted Stonehenge as it had looked shortly after its third completion. Within the five trilithons that formed a horseshoe shape set The Black Thrones. Drake and Kassie had materialized in the midst of the Royal Guard as they stood at attention on the main avenue leading up to the circle of stones. He kissed Kassie once long and hard, then as he stepped beside her and placed his arm around the back of her waist, nodded at Beezie. Beezie nodded back then turned and started the procession towards the Black Thrones. Kassie lifted the front of her skirts and with that bold grin he loved said, "I best lift my skirts and tread carefully so I don't trip and fall upon the path to my destiny." Drake gave a delighted chuckle as he placed his hand on her elbow, and they began to walk the path to her destiny. He was glad his little Queen could

still grin so boldly and keep her sense of humor intact right now. She would need that boldness of heart and quirky sense of humor to deal with the not so glamorous side of her destiny. As he looked at the vampyres gathered within the circle of stones he knew they were playing to mixed reviews at this coronation. Some of his bloodthirsty children present tonight, as well as some not present, had already accepted Kassie as their true Queen, and because they had been touched by it, some of those had already come to value and cherish the Magick she brought to their kingdom. Unfortunately, some of those present tonight, as well as others not present, would never accept her as their true Queen, nor be touched by that Magick. As they entered the circle of stones Kassie smiled graciously at the vampyres standing within in it. And Drake suppressed a chuckle as a soft drawling voice in his head said, "Why do I get a sudden urge to hum Stuck In The Middle With You?"

As he took a firmer grip on her elbow and they entered the five trilithons, a voice in Kassie's mind chuckled and said, "Because you are stuck in the middle with me." They came to a stop just in front of The Black Thrones. Drake's hand slid down her arm, and he gently took her hand in his. He held her hand to his lips and kissed the palm of it once, then looked at the vampyres gathered around them. Then he lifted up her hand said, "I present to you this night, your true Queen. Though not one of our species yet, she has more claim to this title right now as she is, than any of the blood ever will. Without what she once was, none of you, nor I, would now be what we are."

He paused for a moment and in that pause Kassie took the initiative. As she gently disengaged her hand from his and sat down a soft southern voice in his mind said, "I think it would be best if you finish your speech with me sitting upon the throne you are telling them is rightfully mine."

He watched with pleasure and pride as she sat down and adjusted her coronation gown. He smiled at his Queen, then with a wide wicked grin sat down as well upon his throne. He leaned back in the throne and as he looked out upon his bloodthirsty children he said, "And wise little

Queen that she is, she has cut through much of the bullshit just now, and in her own quiet way has just shown you that my words about her are golden. Now listen closely and pay heed to these other words of mine, which are also golden. Those of you present here tonight have long enjoyed this kingdom I have created. I suggest if you wish to continue to enjoy our kingdom, you accept her for what she is, which is your rightful Queen." Drake paused for a few seconds, stared coldly out at his blood-thirsty children and said in a voice that would have frosted a beer mug, "Exile, will be the least of your worries if you do not."

The assembled crowd of bloodsuckers looked at the cold hard face of their Unholy Father and knew that any open act of treason against their new Queen would instantly result in a fate worse than death. Most of the assembled bloodsuckers were content to accept this still mortal witch as their rightful Queen. It changed nothing in their lives. And several welcomed the Magick that Kassie brought into their world. But, though they kept their thoughts carefully veiled, some considered Drake's crowning of Kassie as their rightful Queen a betrayal of the blood gift. But, no thought could be truly hidden from their Dark God. Looking out over his blood-thirsty children Drake let his gaze rest upon them for a moment then said, "Hear me well those of you who think I have betrayed the blood gift. If it were not for what lies at the core of this woman who sits beside me right now, none of us, including myself, would have that blood gift. The Magick that you are so scornful of, is the very Magick that helped create me, and in turn every one of you. Some of you hold yourself above that Magick. Do not consider yourself a part of the very realm that helped create you. But, you will either take your rightful place in that realm, or I will send you to another one, that you will be silently screaming in for the rest of eternity."

Drake paused for a moment to let his words sink in, then softened his expression as he turned to Kassie and said with a smile, "Now the time has come to crown your lovely head my dear." He paused again for one

beat of Kassie's heart, then said with a grin, "With a little help from some friends."

As he spoke those words faeries began to appear above them. Startled vampyres blinked as a thousand faeries appeared and danced above them. They fluttered and flittered and filled the air with silver and gold faerie dust. As faerie dust tends to do, it vanished as it touched vampyres, other creatures, and objects. Those vampyres who welcomed the silver and gold Magick falling upon them gently found themselves glowing for a brief second as the dust seemed to vanish into them. Those who would not welcome that Magick saw the dust simply vanish the moment it touched them and not leave them with any gentle glow. The stones themselves seem to absorb the dust and began to subtly glow.

Four of those thousand faeries that filled the air carried a golden crown heavily encrusted with blood red rubies and white diamonds. Kassie smiled at her old friend Fanny Mae as she removed the beaded head band, then the three other faeries lowered the crown onto her head. The sight of a thousand faeries and feel of their dust were astonishing enough to the assembled crowd of bloodsuckers. As was seeing the crown placed upon their new Queen's head by three of them. But, when the little faerie with the most beautiful set of wings of them all fluttered over and covered their Dark Lord's cheek in faerie kisses, even the oldest of the vampyres thought now they had seen everything. But that was before the sound of a flute begin to fill the night air, and the cloven footed Pan pranced into the circle of stones. As Fanny Mae fluttered off to join the other faeries Drake rose from his Black Throne and turned to Kassie. He held out his hand, as Kassie smiled and rose from her Black Throne he said, "Come my Queen let's dance again to Pan's flute so that those gathered tonight can see how blessed by the very Magick that helped create them our union truly is."

Though all gathered there that night had seen their Dark Lord dance frequently before, none had ever seen him dance as he did that night. To the tune of Pan's flute, he danced and whirled Kassie within the circle of



stones. The silver tips on his black booted feet flashed and sometimes seemed to spark as he danced to the tune of Pan's pagan flute. Kassie's dainty high heeled clad feet kept perfect time with his dancing boots, as her gown whirled and fluttered about them. Never had the dancing Dark Lord of the vampyres looked so dashingly handsome. Never had the witch in his arms who was now a Queen looked so beguilingly beautiful. The flame of passion and love that burned within them for each other could be clearly seen as they danced to the tune of Pan's flute. Just when the assembled crowd of bloodsuckers thought now they really had seen it all, two snow white unicorns pranced into the circle of stones. Drake and Kassie danced over to them. Drake gave Kassie a passionate kiss, then picked her up and set her upon one of the unicorns. Kassie had to hitch her gown up in a rather unlady like way as Drake set her astride the unicorn and as she did Beezie turned to Thadeus and said with a wide wicked grin, "They're right, nothing beats a great pair of legs." Drake laughed as he nimbly leaped astride his unicorn then the two golden horned creatures whirled and pranced out of the circle of stones. Surrounded by the Royal Guard, a thousand faeries and the cloven foot Pan, they made their way to Kassie's castle with a motley crew of vampyres tagging along behind them.

There had been a time long ago when his species had freely mingled with mystical magickal creatures like faeries, elves, pixies and unicorns. But, as time had passed he had seen his species setting itself apart from that community of mystical magickal creatures. His species as a whole had lost its connection to the Magick which had truly created it. Kassie would reconnect them though to that Magick. Some would relish that reconnection. Others though would resist it. Those of his species who were too wrapped up in and enamored of the concept that vampyres were so evil they were a breed apart, would have to stop clinging to that view, or risk a fate far worse than death. To some, the sight of their Dark Lord upon the back of a snow white unicorn was blasphemy. As were the thousand faeries and that flute playing cloven footed Pan. Some were not the least bit happy about the evening's turn of events. However, they put great

value on what passed for a life for them, and thus were very careful of their thoughts as the procession made its way towards the castle where the Coronation would continue.

When the procession did reach the castle Drake lept from the back of his unicorn, then lifted his beloved little Queen from the back of hers. The unicorns whirled and pranced back into the forest surrounding the castle grounds. Pan gave Drake a nod and wink, Kassie a slap on her royal booty, then pranced back into the forest. Fanny Mae planted faerie kisses on Drake and Kassie again, then she and the other faeries fluttered back into the forest as well. The Royal Guard then escorted Drake and Kassie into the castle. When they were comfortably seated in the heavily padded purple and gold thrones that Kassie had called, almost tackily ornate, and the members of the Royal Guard were properly in their positions, the Captain of the Guard invited the guests who were assembled outside the castle to enter. As the vampyres accepted the invitation to the enter the castle, Beezie led them through the open doors into the Grand Ballroom. Once the guests were comfortably assembled before the royal pair, Drake looked out upon them for several moments. As he gazed out upon them, he caught and locked gazes for a brief instant with some of the guests. Some of them winced and felt a cold chill running down their undead spines as he locked gazes with them. After a few moments Drake leaned against the heavily padded back of his throne and said, "I know some were surprised at the other guests who attended the earlier festivities outside the castle. I would suggest you get used to seeing such guests in around this castle because I have gone to great lengths to invite and welcome them here. The forest surrounding this castle is home to a wide variety of creatures, both natural and magickal. Indeed, it is one of the few places where unicorns still live. I have gone to great lengths over many centuries to insure that this castle is surrounded by as much of the Magick that was responsible for my creation, and in turn yours, as possible."

Drake paused for a moment, smiled at Kassie as he turned towards her, then reached over and took the hand that was resting on the arm of

her throne in his. He nodded towards her once, then turned his head back towards the vampyres assembled in front of him and said, "This woman that sits beside me is destined to be an intricate part of the preservation and evolution of that Magick. It is my wish to see that Magick preserved and able to evolve. And that we as a species take our rightful place again within the realm of Magick that helped create us. I bid those of you here tonight to celebrate the return of that Magick with me."

The coronation, and the great ball that was held afterward it would be talked about for centuries afterwards by those who attended them. And become legend to those who heard the tales about it. Drake had not had the great ball room decorated in darkness and blood to celebrate Kassie's coronation. Tapestry spun of golden cloth with embroidered pictures of many mystical magickal creatures hung from the walls of the room. The chandeliers bathed the room in a soft light that was like a full moon on a clear summer night. And the stars painted upon the ceiling seemed to twinkle and glow like real stars do as the vampyres danced beneath them. The Magick was all around them. The room they danced in saturated with it. The castle itself emitted it. Drake had carefully planned the castle to do that. The meticulously laid out grounds surrounding the castle vibrated with it. Drake had declared the castle and grounds surrounding it a no feeding zone; and he, along with many of his bloodthirsty children, were noticing that their hunger was minimal and easily kept in check while they danced within the confines of The Magick surrounding them.

He watched with pleased satisfaction as giggling faeries sometimes fluttered into the room. He saw smiles of true pleasure and sometimes a touch of wonder on the faces of many of his bloodthirsty children as the giggling faeries fluttered among them. As they flittered and fluttered among them, the faeries sprinkled some with a touch of golden faerie dust. Drake was very pleased to see that those giggling faeries touched each member of the Royal Guard with their golden dust as they fluttered about. He could not help but chuckle as Fanny Mae paused and planted a faerie kiss on the cheek of The Captain of that Royal Guard. Beezie's

handsome face was a mixture of shocked wonder and sheepishness at his own simple pride and pleasure at that light as air kiss. Fanny Mae had said with a giggle that somehow was heard throughout the room, "I always wanted to kiss the devil. But not on the ass." Many within the room roared with laughter. Beezie laughed hardest of all. When the elves arrived and began to play upon their fiddles, Beezie was among the first to dance a merry jig to the tune of their fiddles. And oh what a figure that handsome devil cut as he danced that merry jig to the tune of those fiddles. Drake found it difficult for a moment to keep his jealousy under check when Beezie took Kassie by the hand and danced one jig with her. But, he knew that dance was Beezie's way of showing all assembled there that night that he too felt The Magick that was all around them. Beezie was insuring they all knew there would be true hell to pay for anyone who tried to bring harm to the Mistress of that Magick.

Kassie glowed from The Magick surrounding her, as well as from that within her. It almost hurt Drake to gaze upon her at times because she looked so beautiful that night. And it nearly shattered his stone cold heart at times to see the look in her eyes at times as she would suddenly remember another magickal time and place, and the pain and sorrow he had brought to her then. He wanted to wipe that pain and sorrow from her soul so completely, her beautiful amber eyes would never again be clouded by the memory of it. That shadow of past pain in her amber eyes made him want to scream and go to his knees before her in front of all assembled and beg her forgiveness. If doing that would erase the past pain from her eyes he would have gladly dropped to his knees at her coronation. But, he knew it would take more than a grand dramatic gesture to forever clear that shadow from her eyes. It would take time and much patience to do that. So he merely bided his time and stroked her mind with softly whispered words of love as they danced. Eventually, he would completely erase that look of past pain from her beloved amber eyes. He had to because he knew that no matter what, he would love this woman he now held in arms for the rest of eternity. And not because of any past curse levied upon him. But, because the mortal woman she had become in this

lifetime had completely won his cold hard heart before he had ever touched her in this lifetime.

She was the only one who made him smile the way she did. The one only one who melted his heart of stone. The only one who lightened his black as coal soul with her smile and touch. The only one who completely captivated his mind and often sent his senses reeling with her kisses and caresses. No other one moved him as she did. No other made him feel the emotions she made him feel. She completely filled the dark void that had become his existence with happiness, laughter, love, and so many other things he never thought he would have. She freely gave him all these things. And asked nothing but his love in return. She did not ask that his love be gift wrapped in power and bound with the dark bow of immortality. Her only demand upon was that of fidelity. And he considered that more a blessing than a demand. She worried he could not meet what she considered a ruthless demand. He was ruthless when it came to ensuring her safety and happiness because he knew he would never want anyone else in his cold embrace but her. She worried some bloodsucking floozie might turn his head. Knowing what he did about those jealous bloodsucking floozies who worried her, but who couldn't have turned his head if they stood on theirs with their naked legs spread wide, he worried about keeping her adorable head safely intact upon her lovely neck and slender shoulders.

Tonight's coronation of his beloved little Queen would have ramifications she did not yet fully understand. Drake's refusal to break his ties with the ancient Pagan Magick which had created him had become a bone of contention between him and some of his bloodthirsty children for quite some time now. And now he had presented them with a Queen who would greatly strengthen those ties to that ancient Magick. He knew how disenchanting some were with having Kassie for their Queen. They refused to admit that they were a part of the Magick that created faeries, elves, unicorns and other mystical creatures. This faction of his bloodthirsty children saw themselves as something separated from other species. Some-

thing created from pure evil. It was not evil though that had created the creature who was now their unholy Father. Blood, Magick and love had created that creature. Evolution had refined that creature into more than that foolish mortal man he had once been could have ever dreamed of becoming and made him the Dark God that he now was. Formerly, he had shown a great deal of leniency with his bloodthirsty brood. But things had recently changed. The line would be most clearly drawn now that he had his beloved little Queen beside him. Their dark Camelot would be filled with the ancient Magick that helped create him. Kassie's coronation was simply a taste of things to come. His rule with his beloved little Queen would be the direct opposite of what some of his bloodthirsty children wanted. Their rule together would be an endless age of golden Magick.

Some of his thoroughly modern younger bloodthirsty children worshipped the blood of immortality itself as the base of their power. But, they had been created by other vampyres, who had been created by other vampyres and so on and so forth. Only Drake himself had not been created from the blood of another vampyre. What had created him was Magick combined with the blood of a High Priestess who had loved him more than she should have. Over time, he had learned to appreciate the power of that ancient Magick and the true value of that love. Though he had refused to admit it to himself at first, Drake had fallen deeply in love with Kassie even before he had ever held her in his cold embrace and realized she was his destiny. He had denied that love at first, then fought it. But, it had been a losing battle. He thought he had done the unthinkable and fallen in love with a mortal woman. He thought going to her would cost him any chance of meeting his true destiny if there were even a slim chance of that left. He thought he was breaking the laws of Magick again by going to her whereas he had unknowingly done what those laws required. He had been nothing but a mere mortal when the High Priestess who loved him too much had broken the laws of Magick and created him.

As he danced with his beloved little Queen and whirled her in his arms in the midst of his bloodthirsty children, he remembered the battle

that had raged within him over Kassie when he still thought her a mere mortal. He had been promised a true witch as his destiny. He wanted to love only that true witch. Yet, he had allowed his stone cold heart to be won by what he thought was nothing more than a mere mortal that he hadn't even held in his cold embrace yet. He had paced the library in his dark castle with a thesaurus in hand and called himself every form of moron he could find when he first realized the depth of his feelings for her. Then he had tossed the thesaurus aside and angrily stalked over to the section of the library that held all her work. He yanked a book from the shelf intending to fling it and the rest of her books to the floor and reduce them to a pile of ashes. Then he had glanced down at the book in his hand. His gaze locked onto the photo of Kassie on the back cover of the book. His hold upon the book softened as he bowed his head in defeat and softly cursed himself for what he knew he would eventually do. Then he stretched out on the couch in the library and read the book in his hand.

As he remembered that night he looked down at the word witch who had so enchanted him and felt his black as coal soul smile. He pulled her close to him as they danced and closed his cobalt eyes for a moment as a wave of feelings overwhelmed him. She had been able to evoke all those feelings in him even when he thought her nothing more than a very enchanting but still merely mortal word witch. He had postponed going to her until he had achieved some degree of control over the many emotions she evoked in him. Then he had gone to her, then watched and listened in stunned amazement as she called his true name thrice. Now the only emotion he really had to control was his desire to sink his fangs deeply within her soft skin and bring her over to the darker side of immortality with him. Well that and the lustful passion she evoked in him at times. Oddly enough it was getting easier to control the desire to sink his fangs deeply in her than it sometimes was to control the urge to sink his now perpetually hard cock into her. Even now as they danced together among his bloodthirsty children he ached with lust for her as he felt her body pressed against his. He pulled her even tighter against his body and with

an evil grin whispered against her shell-like ear, "You make my balls ache my beloved Queen."

Kassie had looked up at him then replied with a charming grin, "Oh baby that was such a really sweet nothing." She reached up with one hand, and as she pulled his head down her grin turned wantonly wicked. After blowing once in his ear and making his spine shiver with the feel of her hot breath in his ear she panted, "And you already know you make my panties, when you let me wear them now, damp."

The feel of her hot breath combined with her softly drawled words, nearly snapped the chains of his self control. He clutched her more tightly and whispered, "Oh you wicked little witch. I should turn you over my knee and spank you for that."

Kassie had merely giggled and whispered back, "Ooh that would make you so hard you would hurt."

Drake had growled softly then bent his handsome head down and kissed her until she was breathless. As they kissed the soft seductive voice in her mind moaned, "Oh fuck baby, I am already that." He was so hard, and hurting with desire for her it was getting difficult to stand, much less dance with her. His kiss became more intense and the voice in her mind moaned, "I need you, now!" Before she could reply they vanished from the midst of his bloodthirsty children. Kassie already had her hand down his silk trousers when they reappeared on the daybed in her lavender loft. Drake ran his hand up her gown and slid two fingers into her warm wetness. He was so hard, her soft touch as she stroked him was a form of exquisite torture.

Kassie moaned as his fingers slid deeply inside her and pressed herself down onto those fingers as they stroked her G-spot. She couldn't stop herself from humping his fingers as they continued to wiggle and stroke inside her. She thought she might pass out for a second with pure pleasure when his thumb began to gently massage her clit. The feel of his



fingers deep inside her and his cock twitching and lunging against her hand caused her to tear her mouth from his and bite his shoulder as a toe tingling orgasm washed over her.

Drake normally prided himself on having a slow hand and taking his sweet time with Kassie. But tonight his need for her was overwhelming. The Magick around and between them in the room was keeping his blood-lust at bay. What was consuming right then was a need to bury his cold hard omnipotent cock in her warm wet velvet walls. He removed his fingers from inside those warm wet walls, then after sucking them for a moment, pushed Kassie's gown up, raised her thigh high stocking clad legs and draped them over his broad shoulders. He gave a low deep throated growl of pleasure as he plunged inside her. The feel of those warm wet velvet walls rippling along his hard cock made him dizzy as he buried himself up to his balls inside her.

Kassie moaned with pleasure at the feel of him sliding inside her. And whimpered with lust at the sound his growl. She watched as he paused for a moment, tilted his head back, and closed his eyes. The sight of him took her breath away and caused her to bite her lower lip as another toe tingling orgasm engulfed her. Then he tilted his handsome head down, opened his cold cobalt blue orbs and gazed down into her eyes. Kassie's nails dug into his buttocks. She cried his true name out once as he began to slowly rock her world.

As he lost himself within her amber eyes and heard the sound of her calling his true name once, he smiled and called her his beloved Queen. With each slow stroke that he took he whispered an endearment to her. When he had first sunk deeply within her, the pleasure had been so intense he feared he might howl with the first stroke he took. The pleasure had not become any less intense, but his self control had strengthened as he had gazed into her beloved amber eyes. He had seen the looks of lust she provoked in so many others. Just as she had seen the looks of lust, he provoked in so many other as well. He wanted her to know beyond a shadow of a doubt though that he lusted only for her. And he needed to

know that she lusted only for him. As he continued his slow strokes, he saw what he needed to in her amber eyes. And knew that she also saw what she needed to see reflected in his cold cobalt eyes.

Drake knew that they both needed moments such as this. Moments when they could gaze into each other's eyes as they experienced the passion they had only for each other. They existed now in a world filled with many dark lusts. Both were sexually lusted after by many others. It came with the territory for both of them. Kassie evoked lust in others just as easily as he did. But, only in each other, could they experience the kind of lust they provoked in others. And only with Kassie could he experience true love. He cherished the true love she gave him. But, he also set great value on the love he felt for her. He knew full well he would never love anyone else the way he did Kassie. He had no intention of losing the one thing that could evoke this kind of love in him. The dark truth was he could mind program Kassie or anyone else to worship him above all others. What he couldn't do, was mind program himself to love anyone. He had fallen in love with Kassie against his own will. First, he struggled against the emotions she evoked in him. Then finally he bowed his head in defeat and accepted those emotions. Having to admit that he had fallen in love with what he thought at the time was a mere mortal woman like Kassie, had been hard to do. After all, he was the Dark God of the vampyres whose stone cold heart had been immune to the best seductresses of the ages. Yet, long before he went to her, Kassie had captured that stone cold heart.

He paused his slow stroking for a moment and savored the tight rippling warmth of her velvet walls wrapping around his cold hard omnipotent cock. He continued to gaze steadily into her eyes. He began to speak softly to her. "I fell in love with you when I thought you a mere mortal woman. Fell so hard that although I thought I was breaking a vow I had made to myself and the Powers That Be, I came to you that night. I went to you knowing full well that once I did, I would never give you up. The truth is even if you had not been who and what you really are, you would

still be my Queen. I want you to understand that." Then he had leaned down and kissed her until she was breathless as he began to once more rock their world.

Kassie clung to him and dug her long nails into his the skin of his buttocks as he rocked their world now at a much faster and harder pace. The sound of his low moaning growl as he drove himself to sent a shiver of pleasure down her spine that caused her to gasp and dig her nails in even harder as she arched upwards. Drake growled again in a way that made her quiver from the top of her head to the tips of her toes and kept up the relentless hard and fast pace. Kassie could feel him getting closer to the edge. She could feel his hard cock throbbing and twitching inside her. She saw the look on his face as he closed his eyes and bared his fangs. What she could feel and see caused her to cross that edge so hard she was shaking and quivering as she clung to him. She was so close to fainting from pure pleasure she couldn't have called his true name again if she had wanted to.

As Kassie began to shake and make incoherent little gasps of pleasure that made his mind reel, Drake's growl began to have more a hint of a howl in it. The feel of her warm wet walls convulsing around him was making him dizzy with pleasure. That she could reduce him to a state of pleasurable dizziness like this was one reason he would never let her go. The feel of her nails digging into his buttocks was driving him crazy in a way only she could drive him crazy. It was the feel of her frantically wiggling toes against the back of his head though that finally brought him over the edge. There was just something about the feel of her little toes frantically wiggling in ecstasy against the back of his head that drove him wild. He growled and clung to control as long as he could, then finally pressed his handsome head back against those wiggling toes, and howled. When the echo of his howl had died away Kassie slowly lowered her legs until they were wrapped around his lower back. Drake leaned over and kissed her tenderly. Kassie clung to him and returned his tender kiss. As she did,

he stroked her mind with softly whispered words of love that echoed through her soul.

As he had thought it might, the Magick that had been within these castle walls tonight had given him another brief reprieve from the hunger that usually followed moments of lust. He took advantage of that brief reprieve to cuddle with Kassie for a few precious moments before they had to return their guests. As he held her close he whispered, "I have been granted another brief reprieve from the hunger my beloved Queen. I intend to take full advantage of it again if I can before the hunger returns, but in a few moments we must return to that motley crew downstairs."

Kassie looked up at him as she cuddled into his cold embrace and said, "Yeah it is best we keep an eye on that bunch."

Drake simply chuckled and replied, "Oh it's not about keeping an eye on them my beloved. They are well watched even if we aren't there, and they know that. I want them watching us dear. I want them to watch closely and fully understand my feelings for you so that they comprehend on a very profound level what I will do to anyone making any kind of vain attempt to dethrone your royal ass." Drake scooted up on the day bed, pulled Kassie up to him and tucked her under his arm then as he snapped his fingers said with a grin, "But we have time to relax for a few moments before we go back downstairs."

Kassie grinned back at him, took the eternal doobie from his fingers then snuggled against him and inhaled deeply. She closed her eyes and relaxed against him as she held her breath for a moment, then after she exhaled said, "They will view those feelings as a weakness my heart."

A fleeting shadow of softness crossed the cold hard planes of Drake's face as he smiled down at her and said, "You called me your heart."

Kassie smiled back up at him and replied, "You are that. In more ways than some of those downstairs will ever comprehend."

Her reply made his soul smile. He leaned over and kissed the top of her head then snapped his fingers and handed her a familiar red and white can. "That is so very true my beloved. And as to some perceiving my love for you as a weakness, let them think what they will. I know it is now my greatest strength."

After Kassie had taken a few more tokes of the eternal doobie and few sips of the real thing, they returned to motley crew of guests downstairs. They reappeared on the platform their thrones were on. Kassie turned to go to her throne after giving Drake a kiss, but he grabbed her and as he sat down pulled on her onto his lap. Kassie remarked she wasn't sure if this was a proper seating arrangement for a Queen at her coronation. Drake merely chuckled and replied, "It's the best seat in the house for you." Some of the guests noted that although the Queen was now in the safest seat in the house for her, the Royal Guard had swiftly resumed their places around the King and Queen. The protective barrier around Kassie was an incredibly strong one. What many did not realize was how lethal the woman behind that protective barrier was becoming. Drake had been relentless about Kassie learning to master all her powers as quickly as she could. She was not yet all that she would eventually become, but she was a long way from being the cream puff Queen some thought her to be. Drake and Kassie were content though to let some think that of her. Both knew how effective the element of surprise could be.

As Drake gazed over the shoulder of his beloved little Queen and watched the festivities taking place in her honor, he was pleased to see that many were truly enjoying the celebration. He was aware some had wandered through the grounds surrounding the castle and enjoyed the Magick they discovered on their moonlight stroll. Some toured the grounds and did not enjoy the Magick they discovered. Some wanted to see the Magick weaken and die completely, then be replaced by what they

perceived to be the true source of their powers. Coming face to face with the Magick in such abundance and strength disturbed and angered them. Seeing the Queen perched upon his lap, and the insolent look of power upon their King's face as he gazed out at them angered them even more. They had wanted a dark gothic blood Queen. A couple of them had tried their best to become that Queen. Even if she were a paranormal cosmic crime fighting anti heroine, Kassie was no goody two shoes. But stacked next to that bunch, she had the soul of an angel. They had wanted a dark and vicious Queen of the damned. He had given them a golden and gracious Queen of eternal life. And now they were holding court at her coronation with her safely perched on his lap. Surrounded by a Royal Guard the likes of which no world had ever seen. Protected by a barrier of pure Magick they dared not even think about breaching. Guarded not just by their dark unholy Father, but also protected by members of every mystical species that still existed, including the Devil Himself.

Truth be told, their unholy Father was reveling in the quiet mayhem they were causing at that moment. All that some had mocked about the Magick, was having the last laugh on them now. Those who had deemed so many of those creatures all around them tonight as useless and of no concern to them, were realizing their mistake. They also knew that from this night forth, they would be watched most carefully by those creatures. Any thought or act of treason would be instantly reported back to Drake. If necessary, there were creatures, including other vampyres, who could easily deliver their heads and hearts on a platter to the King and Queen. There were werewolves, changelings and all manner of shape shifters present as guests or members of the Royal Guard. A reminder to all present that vampyres were just another of the many species who possessed the ability to physically morph. Other creatures there reminded all present that vampyres were not the only creatures who could teleport themselves through time and space. The thousand faeries that fluttered among them that night, were just a small brigade of a much larger faerie army. Faeries could make themselves invisible and teleport with extreme efficiency. That meant that countless little sometimes invisible eyes and ears would be

watching and listening. What some were just beginning to realize, was that they had been watched and carefully listened to for a very long time now.

Drake was using this night to draw the line and make it crystal clear that anyone on the wrong side of that line better tread carefully, or they would most surely wind up meeting a fate worse than death. The Magick helping to protect Kassie went far beyond what some of those present that night had ever imagined. He was driving a stake of truth through the dark hearts of some concerning the origins of their own powers. Openly flaunting the power of that Magick and his ability to use it to his and Kassie's best advantage. But, the show wasn't over yet. Drake gave a wide wicked grin over Kassie's shoulder and a mental command that fully captured his audience's attention. Part of the Royal guard moved the crowd back slightly and cleared a space in front of the King and Queen. Then one by one various members of the Royal Guard stepped in front of the King and Queen and displayed some of the abilities that helped protect them. None had ever seen such a fine display of shape shifting, teleporting, spell casting, fireball juggling and other Magickal abilities that signaled the end of Kassie's coronation celebration. Though the Magickal spectacle was extremely entertaining, it was also a very effective display of the strength of the protective barrier surrounding Kassie.





## Chapter 9

Drake and Kassie spent as much time as possible at Mystic Acres after her coronation. Although they usually dozed until after midday, Kassie spent late afternoons and evenings strolling through the gardens surrounding the castle. Her immortal lover wanted her to know every square inch of this domain and often accompanied her on those strolls. When he did not accompany her, even if she did not recognize them in their altered forms that blended into the landscape, there were always at least three members of the Royal Guard discreetly near her. As well as a multitude of other creatures quietly watching over her. Drake was proud of the way Kassie was graciously handling the protective barrier around her. He knew having it constantly in place sometimes chafed her independent spirit and at times aggravated her reclusive nature. Those guarding her so well also understood how constraining that barrier must feel at times and did their best to give her as much heavily guarded privacy and freedom as possible when she strolled the grounds.

Drake had encouraged her to practice her shape shifting and teleporting skills on all her strolls. She found blueprints and maps of the castle and the surrounding grounds in the library and had studied them carefully. She sometimes led him and the others protecting her a merry chase around those vast grounds as she honed those skills to perfection. As maddening as those chases could be sometimes, Drake took great pride in her ability to lead them on such merry chases. She would vanish in less than the blink of an eye and reappear throughout the grounds as various creatures. And she had taught the Royal Guard a lesson or two in the art of blending into the natural scenery as some innocent looking little creature. She often flitted around the grounds as a butterfly, honey bee, dragonfly, sparrow or hummingbird. He had chuckled with pride when one member of the Royal Guard had grumbled they needed butterfly nets, and bug spray to deal with her. Drake did not begrudge Kassie her light hearted fun as she tested her teleporting and shape shifting skill, as well as the abilities and detection skills of those protecting her. He knew she understood the seriousness behind these games.

She had quickly learned appearing in the midst of a large group of creatures and blending in as one of them made detecting her more difficult. She had made a point after that to know where the favorite garden spots were for certain creatures. She had an uncanny ability to appear in the midsts of certain creatures without alarming them and quickly blend in with them. Because of his blood ties to her Drake never lost track of her for more than a second no matter what she did. But, if she could keep herself hidden for a few seconds or even a moment or two from her own protectors, then if necessary, she could keep herself hidden from enemies at least as long. Buying Drake the time he needed to be by her side. Drake had no doubt in his ability to protect her once he was by her side. Partly because of his powers. And partly because he knew that together, their powers were even stronger. The Royal Guard knew of many of her powers. But, they did not know all of them. Anymore than they knew all his. Drake watched with dark glee as Kassie's powers steadily grew and evolved at an astounding speed.

Kassie also enjoyed spending time in the towers. Drake accompanied her when she took a trip to one of the towers shortly after her coronation. He had felt his dark soul smile as he had watched her discovering the various herbs hung to dry in the tower they were in. Along with the various herbs, there were now dark spice bottles that were carefully labeled with the names of the herbs hanging to dry. All the herbs in this and the other towers were gathered the night of her coronation. When all the herbs were well dried and ground, they would be carefully bottled and blessed, then put away in the hidden shelves in the lavender loft that had been built for them. She would have ample herbs to use in any ritual or spell she wished to perform. In the wintertime, the sunny heated towers would act as greenhouses that would allow her to grow small quantities of a wide variety of herbs.

In other hidden shelves in the lavender loft there were a variety of candles, crystals, tarot cards and other magickal tools. A crystal ball sat on a small table that was draped in purple velvet. There were couches

and comfortable chairs scattered throughout the room. An arched doorway led into a small library that was filled with books. In the center of the library, there was a desk with a brand-new iMac on it. Within the castle walls and the grounds surrounding the castle, Drake truly had provided her with everything Magickal she could ever need or want. The powers he was giving her through his blood were stronger than any Magick surrounding her right now. But, these things he had surrounded her with helped her to adapt to those powers and use them more effectively. Kassie fully appreciated all he was giving her. She was doing her best to take full advantage of his gift of Mystic Acres. He had brought her here two nights before her coronation and given her a brief tour of the castle and the surrounding grounds. Then he had presented her with the deed to the castle and surrounding grounds. He gave her a dark sardonic smile when he handed her the parchment paper and had softly said, "Tis signed in my own blood. And deeded to you for all eternity."

Kassie had not bothered looking at the parchment paper. She knew it would be exactly as he said. She was coming to appreciate the true value of that parchment paper more and more with each hour that passed within the boundaries of the priceless gift that he had given her. He encouraged her to make any changes in castle decor and current landscaping that she wished to. Kassie could see no room for improvement though, and did not wish to change anything. Every time she strolled through grounds surrounding the perfectly laid out castle, she was newly amazed at Drake's careful planning. The beauty of the gardens near the castle took her breath away at times. When she had complimented him on that beauty he had merely grinned at her and replied, "I can't take credit for that beauty my love. I put the faeries, pixies, and elves that live here on the grounds in charge of landscaping."

Kassie had laughed at his grinning reply then nodded her head and said, "You would do that."

Drake had merely kissed her then replied, "And why not? The wee folk make excellent landscapers and enjoy doing it. They're happy, I'm

happy, and the landscaping looks great. It's all about efficiently delegating responsibility dear." Kassie was more than happy with the status quo concerning the landscaping and quite content to enjoy the beauty and Magick around her. Drake had insisted that she practice her long distance teleportation skills by learning to come and go freely between this place and the castle he called his home base. By the end of the first week, she was easily going to and from the two castles. By the end of the second week, the boundaries of time and space ceased to exist between the two castles for Kassie. Once that happened, Drake urged her to make Mystic Acres her home base.

She left Wind Dancer at Drake's castle, but had him help her move Precious here. Between them, they had held him, and all three had arrived safely at their destination. Precious had been badly disorientated at first, but had quickly recovered his wits and settled comfortably in his new home. He discovered the unicorns his second day in his new home. When he first came upon them, he had frozen in place and simply stared at them. The unicorns saw him, whirled, and took flight. He did not give chase. He did stealthy track them into another one of their favorite meadows. He found a hill that gave him a good vantage point and spent some time watching the golden horned beasts. He became fascinated by the unicorns and in a very short time became their guardian. At first, the unicorns were extremely leery of their self appointed guardian. In time, their fear of him was replaced with trust. Unicorns are very playful creatures, and often indulged in prancing games of tag or hide and go seek. As trust replaced fear, they allowed Precious to join in the unicorn games. When Drake was taking a stroll with Kassie one evening and saw them playing tag in one of the meadows, he shook his head as he laughed and said, "Trust you to have a wolf that dances with unicorns."

Kassie had smiled that smile of hers that always melted his stone cold heart and after gently kissing his cheek had replied, "And trust you to have the unicorns for him to dance with."

Drake was thoroughly enjoying seeing Kassie's powers flourish and grow from the Magick surrounding her at Mystic Acres. Though he still used his main tourist attraction castle as home base, and Mystic Acres was now deeded to Kassie for all eternity, Drake had begun to think of Mystic Acres more and more as their home. It had been created to be the home to the 13th witch that was his destiny. Finished long before Kassie was born into this lifetime, it was still hers because he had made sure it would be everything that a true witch could need or want. He had hoped when he had created it that would somehow help draw his destiny to him.

Before Kassie, coming here had always been painful to him because it was but a beautiful bittersweet reminder of what he didn't have. Now he found himself happier at Mystic Acres than anywhere else. He felt a strange contentment here with Kassie that he had never experienced before. He was able to experience pleasure in the smallest and simplest of things here with her. Through Kassie's eyes he saw the true beauty of things like flowers and butterflies. And felt deep within his soul the Magick all around him. He enjoyed all that he saw and felt here with her. Wanted nothing more than to spend the rest of eternity strolling through the grounds and doing a thousand other things here with her. And though many of his bloodthirsty children would be appalled what was happening to her here in this place he had created to honor her and the Magick that created him, he was pleased to see the blood gift he was giving her was reacting in a different way than he had ever seen it react upon mortal or true witch before. From the very beginning she had shown more control over the darker side of that gift than he had ever seen. But here in what was her element, she was gaining even more control. He had even begun to suspect that daily feedings weren't really necessary to keep her powers at full strength. He continued to insist on those daily infusions of his blood though just to be certain that she would always have any powers she might need to protect herself.

He was pleased that she understood the importance of those powers in order to protect herself from the danger being with him brought to her.

Though Drake was not thrilled with the fact she was also happily honing those powers to use as a supernatural crime fighter. The only true bone of contention between them was the fact she refused to completely end her supernatural crime fighter career. She had assured Drake she had gone into semi-retirement from working with The Team; but would assist them should she feel it necessary. She knew he would never allow her to go on any mission, no matter how necessary she might deem it, without his full protection.

All she did was smile and tell him he made a dashing hero when he tried to explain his distaste for crime fighting, which flattered, as much as irritated him. Something of which she was perfectly aware, and shamelessly used against him. Though she was technically in semi-retirement now, she kept up with what was going on and was not adverse to picking his brain at times to help that bunch of terminal misfits she called The Team solve a case. Drake figured it was better to answer her questions and offer what help he could, then have her decide The Team needed her personal assistance. Unfortunately, the case she was currently picking his brain about was shaping up to be one that might bring her out of semi-retirement.

Drake was doing everything he could to keep Kassie safe in the very dangerous world she lived in now, and the thought of her coming out of semi-retirement and going on a mission irritated him. As she snuggled up against him on one of the sofas in the lavender loft, she hit the end call button on her cell phone and told him the latest development in that case. Drake listened to her then frowned and said, "Yes they will need someone whose powers are as strong as Waldo's. And I already know where this is going. But I don't see why that someone has to be you. They are bound to have somebody else whose powers are as strong as his. In fact, I would wager Joseph's are. And I know Mikey's are."

Kassie looked at Drake and said, "Well I don't know about Mikey because none of us really know what the hell Mikey is exactly."

Drake merely smiled and replied, "I know what Mikey is, and I know from what you have told me about Waldo what he is, Mikey can easily handle him."

Kassie raised one eyebrow, then said, "And what is exactly is Mikey?"

Drake grinned, kissed the tip of her nose and replied, "Keep working on your powers dear and you'll know as well."

Kassie gave him a mildly irritated look then said, "Oh you are insufferable at times. However, the problem isn't that there aren't others that could handle Waldo. The problem is finding him, so somebody can get close enough to handle him. He isn't a true shape shifter, but his powers as a wizard do allow him to alter his form considerably. He also stays on the move constantly. We are always one step behind him." Kassie paused for a moment, then sighed and said, "Picking up the trail of dead bodies he leaves behind him."

Drake gave an exasperated sigh and pulled Kassie close to him. He could care less how many dead bodies Waldo was leaving behind him. But, he knew that each of those deaths weighed upon Kassie's soul. This was something that should not be happening. Normally someone getting the daily infusions of his blood Kassie had been getting would have no empathy or sympathy for anyone else. His beloved little Queen was not changing in some of the ways mortals, or true witches usually changed after exposure to the blood gift. And though it would trouble some of his bloodthirsty children to know those changes were not occurring, Drake accepted this unexpected turn of events in as positive a manner as possible. He was glad in many ways to see her personality staying intact as it was. He gently kissed the top her head and said, "Let me think about it and see what I can do about finding Waldo. I will do my best to find him for you because I know if I don't, you are going wind up acting as a form of live bait. Though you've been careful not to irritate my jealous bone while picking my brain over this case, I have figured out Waldo has a bit of

an obsession with you. I also know you will shamelessly use that obsession to try to lure him close enough to you so that you and your other Team members can take of him."

Kassie gave a frustrated sigh as well as she snuggled under the arm of her immortal lover. "Yes, if it would help end the trail of dead bodies Waldo is leaving behind. However his obsession with me isn't sexual dear. Waldo is way too gay to be obsessed with me that way. He's obsessed with taking my powers, not my pussy. But I would try to use the obsession he does have for my powers to trap him."

Drake looked into the amber eyes of the witch he loved to distraction and said, 'Well I also have an obsession with you my dear. One that centers on you fulfilling your destiny and happily spending the rest of eternity with me. I will be enjoying that fine pussy of yours as much as possible because I'm not the least bit gay. Though I understand your desire to stop Waldo, you need to remember you do have an important destiny that must be fulfilled.'" He paused and bowed his handsome head for a second as a look of pain crossed it, then said, "I nearly destroyed you and that destiny long ago." He raised his head then looked into her eyes once more, "Now that we both have been given another chance, I do not intend to let Waldo, or any thing else harm you, or interfere with that destiny. Yes partly because I do you love you so very much I cannot stand the thought of ever being without you. But also because I want to see you fulfill your destiny so that you can help the Magick survive and evolve as it should."

Kassie reached up and softly stroked the side of Drake's face and replied, "I know my love. But helping to stop Waldo may turn out to be a part of that destiny. Waldo is choosing his victims carefully now, and is growing stronger with each kill he makes. He is also beginning to openly flaunt those powers my dear. He cannot be allowed to continue to do that because it endangers all things Magickal. Including vampyres my love. You know full well humanity as a whole is a long way from being ready to peacefully coexist with most Magickal creatures, especially vampyres. The survival of your species, as well as many others depends upon their



existence remaining a secret. You have to realize that what you call supernatural crime fighting, is about a lot more than fighting crime. It is about fighting against those whose crimes endanger all things supernatural."

Drake became very thoughtful for a moment then said, "I will have to admit I had not looked at it that way before. But, I am beginning to see the domino effect that Waldo's kind has upon all things Magickal. I am also beginning to better understand the necessity in stopping them. We have to find Waldo first though in order to stop him. To do that, we need some sort of connection with him that we can track him through. That connection may come from the very powers he is so carefully collecting and honing."

Kassie nodded her head and replied, "Yes we have been trying to establish such a connection but it is very hard because Waldo does not allow any kind of connection that he could be tracked through with even his most faithful followers. He keeps in touch with them via the internet and phone, and surprise personal visits. We have tried tracking him via the net and phone. He has countless internet providers, none of which are in his real name. He is also an expert at pirating internet and phone access. When he is not pirating phone time, he uses disposable cell phones that are purchased under one of his many aliases, or by his followers. As soon as he is finished with the call he has made, he tosses the phone, often out of a moving vehicle. He then abandons the vehicle he was driving, which is usually stolen anyway, and switches to another one." Kassie paused for a moment and a look of pain and anger crossed her face. "Since he often makes at least first contact with some of his victims online we tried trapping him that way once. Waldo did not turn up for the meeting that had been arranged between him and the undercover agent. The agent and her family were brutally murdered 2 days later by him. We tried one more time to trap him that way, with the same results."

Drake kissed the top of Kassie's head then said, "If we can't track him through any of those methods. We have to find a way to connect with him through the Magick that is your greatest asset."

Kassie sighed and said, "I've tried so hard to do that. I've used my own necromancer skills on his victims to try and connect with him enough to track him. But he drains his victims so thoroughly he leaves nothing, and certainly no trace of himself for me to connect with. We have the best CSI unit in the world, but unfortunately he is an expert at cleaning up evidence. So far all we've managed to collect from his crime scenes is a small amount of his blood from where the knife he was using to stab one victim slipped, and he cut himself with it. The only reason we have that is because when he drew his hand back to stab the victim again after he cut himself, the blood splatter from that cut wound up on the top of some red curtains and the curtain rod. Lucky for us he didn't see it when he cleaned up afterwards."

Drake snapped his fingers once then handed Kassie the eternal doobie and said, "Toke on this while I think about that my love. If you have his blood, then you have a way to track him."

Kassie took the eternal doobie and before she inhaled said, "We've thought about that, and tried it, but none of us can connect with him through that small amount of blood. And since he isn't a vampyre I don't think it is possible for another vampyre to, even one as powerful as you."

As Kassie inhaled Drake smiled and said, "No dear I cannot connect with him through his blood, but I might can provide you with a way that you can use that small amount of blood to connect with him enough to track him."

Kassie toked quietly on the doobie while Drake sat in silent thought. Kassie sincerely hoped her immortal lover might know of some means to use that small amount of blood to help her connect with Waldo enough to track him. After a few moments Drake said, "I think a bloodstone would do it."

Kassie's amber eyes blinked once in surprise. "A bloodstone?"

Drake smiled and replied, "Yes my dear, but not the usual variety of bloodstone. I am talking about a very special type of bloodstone. A couple of drops of Waldo's blood should change the type of bloodstone I'm talking about. Once the stone has absorbed the blood and changed, I believe you will be able to use it to find Waldo."

Kassie exhaled and said, "I have heard legends about Magickal bloodstones, but never saw a real one. I know one legend says the stone pulses when it is near the person whose blood has touched the stone."

Drake nodded his handsome head and replied, "Yes, the heart of the stone does pulse when it is near the one whose blood has activated the stone. Which will be a help to us in catching Waldo." Drake paused for a moment and smiled as he read the thoughts in Kassie's mind. "Yes dear, I know we have to find him, to get near him. But bloodstones have another power that will help us do that. That power can only be used by those who have the true gift of divination." He leaned down and kissed the top of Kassie's head and said. "Which you do of course."

Kassie looked up at her immortal lover and inquired, "And what power would it be that I can use?"

Drake smiled and replied, "Well dear, handy little things that they are, when someone with the gift of divination places one over the special maps I have, it will briefly glow when directly over the longitude and latitude coordinates of the person whose blood activated the stone is at."

Excited hope began to shine in Kassie's amber eyes as she exclaimed, "Then for the first time, we have a real chance of finding him! I just hope the blood sample we have will activate the stone. We freeze dried part of the sample and can rehydrate it to use on the bloodstone. Do you think blood that old that has been freeze dried and then rehydrated will activate the stone?"

Drake thought for a moment then nodded his head and replied, "I am hoping that it will activate the bloodstone. What additional chemicals did you have to add to the blood to protect it from damage during the freezing process?"

Kassie grinned and replied, "We have perfected a method of freeze drying blood that requires a minimum of protective chemicals, and the chemical we do use is natural based, and can be easily washed from the blood cells once they are rehydrated."

Drake raised one eyebrow and said, "I'm surprised your CSI people perfected such a method for preserving blood."

"Well darling unlike normal CSI labs we do not just use blood samples, especially those from the perpetrators for DNA analysis and matching. We often try to use it to connect with and track the perpetrator through. Unfortunately we have not had a lot of success with doing that, especially in Waldo's case." Kassie paused, leaned up and kissed the lips of her immortal lover once then as she looked in his eyes said, "I know how rare and valuable the bloodstones you have must be. Thank you for allowing us to use one of them to track Waldo with."

Drake smiled and replied, "You are most welcome my love. I suggest you contact your bunch and have them get started on preparing the blood. As soon as the blood is rehydrated and ready to apply to the stone, you and I will take the blood to where the bloodstones and special maps are kept. We will apply the blood to the stone there. Once the stone has absorbed it and changed we can use it and the maps to locate Waldo. Since he moves around the way he does, we need to be able to get to him as quickly as possible once we have locked onto his location through the bloodstone. Something that will be very easy for you and I to do."

Kassie nodded her head in agreement and said, "Well Joseph and Mikey can arrive as quickly as we can once we have locked onto his location and given them the coordinates."

Drake nodded once and said, "If they can do that, then I am more than willing to let them take care of the actual termination."

Kassie kissed his cheek, then reached down and grabbed the cell phone clipped to her jeans, then hit the speed dial feature on it. As the call connected she grinned and said, "Boss, I have some very good news! Drake is going to supply us with something that will allow us to locate Waldo. We will need to rehydrate that sample of his blood that the lab has." Kassie paused then laughed and said, "No, he's not going to drink it. Those legends concerning the existence of Magickal bloodstones are true. And according to Drake, those bloodstones possess qualities that will allow us to locate Waldo once his blood has been applied to one. Drake has a Magickal bloodstone, as well as some kind of special maps he is willing to use to locate Waldo."

The Boss listened carefully to Kassie's words, then after a few seconds of thought replied, "Well I can't truthfully say I am thrilled to have that bloodsucking lover of yours "helping" us again. But considering the fact I was about to call you and let you know Waldo's kill rate has just increased again, I'm not going to turn down his help on this one."

Kassie sighed and said, "Single or multiple kill?"

"Single, and perhaps one of your kind Kassie."

Kassie's face paled, and she replied, "A witch? Are you sure?"

"As sure as I can be. We'll know more perhaps after the autopsy. I am going to transfer you to the lab in a moment so they can get started on preparing that blood sample of Waldo's, and hope to hell Drake is right about this bloodstone being the means to find him."

Before Kassie could reply, Drake reached over and took the phone from her hand. "This is Drake, I wish for Kassie and I to examine that body before any autopsy is performed. Would you be so kind as to tell me when the body is scheduled to arrive?"

The Boss had no problem with Kassie and Drake examining the body, and replied, "Be here 6 hours from now, and the body should be arriving very shortly after that."

Drake replied, "Thank you, Doug. I will put Kassie back on the phone now"

Once Kassie was back on the phone The Boss asked, "You didn't even know my name, until now. Nobody here does. Do I want to know how he knows my name?"

Kassie replied, "Probably not. File that one under one of those little mysteries in life best left unsolved."

The Boss thought about it for a moment, then said, "I think you are right. Let's just hope that all knowing arrogant bastard can help us solve the mystery of where Waldo is? Meanwhile, I'll put you through to the lab so you can get them to work on the sample to use on that bloodstone of Drake's." Before Kassie could reply The Boss hit a button on his phone and transferred her call to the lab.

After she finished speaking to the lab technician, she hit the end call button on her cell phone. She clipped the phone back to her jeans then looked at her immortal lover and said, "The sample of Waldo's blood will be ready by the time the body of his latest victim arrives at the lab. And I assume you have a reason for wanting us to examine the body when it arrives at Headquarters?"

Drake nodded and replied, "Excellent. We can take it and apply it to the bloodstone after we have examined the body. And Yes I want to know if that was a garden variety new age witch, or if it was one you could have awakened the powers of a true witch in."

Kassie raised an eyebrow in surprise and said, "You think we will be able to tell that?"

Drake nodded again and replied, "Yes I do. If it was one you could have awakened the powers of a true witch in, then it is imperative we find Waldo and terminate him before he does any more damage to your future coven. And if it was one that you could have awakened the powers of a true witch in, then I will personally be handling the termination of Waldo."

Kassie inhaled on the eternal doobie and thought about that for a moment, then exhaled and said, "Okay, I agree if it was someone I could have awakened the powers of a true witch in, you will handle the termination. But, Joseph and Mikey should also be there. Not because I think you can't handle Waldo. But Joseph and Mikey have both worked as long and hard on this case as I have. Plus, they both knew the two agents of ours Waldo murdered."

Drake thought about what Kassie had said for a moment, then nodded his head once and replied, "As long as they don't get in my way, I have no problem with that."

Kassie looked up at her immortal lover and replied, "They have better sense than that."

Drake leaned down and kissed the tip of Kassie's upturned nose then smiled and said, "I know they do. As do you." Drake paused, then took the eternal doobie from Kassie's fingers and drew the smoke from it into his mouth. He flicked the eternal doobie in the air, snapped his fingers once. As the eternal doobie vanished he leaned down and gave Kassie a shotgun kiss that left her breathless and dizzy. As she was recovering her wits and breath Drake took her hand and stood up, pulling her up from the couch, then into his arms. "Let's go see the unicorns and spend some time in the gardens."

Kassie smiled up at Drake and replied, "Yes that is a wonderful idea. And you are wonderful for being wise enough to know that is exactly what I need right now."

Drake grinned and just before they vanished from the lavender loft said, "We wise all knowing types are like that."



## Chapter 10

Joseph and Mikey had tried to tell him what Drake was like, but it wasn't until he walked into his office that The Boss truly understood just how powerful and dangerous a creature he was. Drake's cobalt blue orbs were the coldest and most intelligent pair of eyes he had ever seen. They were eyes that knew all the secrets of the person they gazed upon. And for a fleeting moment, he had the strangest feeling he had gazed into those eyes once before, and given up all his secrets to them. The Boss felt his blood run cold for a moment as Drake grinned, and his head tilted ever so slightly in the briefest of nods. He was so taken aback by that arrogant grin and barely perceptible nod, it took him a moment before he took the pale cold hand offered to him. Though he could feel the incredible strength in the pale hand that closed around his, Drake's grip had a restrained quality to it that truly made him feel the power of the creature who was shaking his hand, and grinning at him. Drake let go of his hand, and as The Boss lowered himself back in his chair, Drake and Kassie sat down on the couch in front of his desk.

Kassie looked more beautiful than ever as she sat smiling at him. But there was a quality to that smile, and the look in her eyes, that was a strong reflection of the creature sitting beside her. He could tell Kassie was not yet a vampyre, but could also tell she was no longer merely mortal. He sensed the powers she had always held had been strengthened a hundredfold. He also sensed many new powers now coursed through her.

As Drake casually draped his arm over Kassie's shoulders The Boss looked at him said, "I want to thank you for your assistance, on this case, as well as that other case that involved one of your kind, and for the computer programs you so graciously sent us."

Drake smiled and nodded his head briefly then said, "You are more than welcome for my assistance, and for the computer programs. Kassie made me see what your bunch do in a different light than I had previously.

I am now more than glad to offer any assistance, that I can on certain cases." Drake paused for a few seconds, and as the smile left his face said, "If Waldo's latest victim was one who Kassie could have awakened the powers of a true witch in, then rest assured Doug, you will be getting my full assistance on this case."

The Boss took one look at the expression on Drake's face and understood exactly what Drake was telling him. Oddly enough it did not rattle him as much as he would have thought it might to have Drake so subtly, but firmly tell him that if he thought it necessary, jurisdiction in this case would go to him. If it would stop the trail of bodies Waldo was leaving behind, The Boss was more than willing to concede jurisdiction to Drake. He nodded his head in return and replied, "If you feel it necessary, I would be more than glad to you have your full assistance on this case." He paused for a second, then grinned and said, "Though I have a feeling requesting you bring me Waldo's head on a platter would be useless."

Drake gave a dark chuckle and replied, "If my full assistance is required on this case then I'm afraid Waldo's head, and heart, are mine for the taking. I will be more than glad to hand over the rest of his body to you though."

The Boss gave a good natured dark grin and replied, "That's good enough for me. What is most important to me is that Waldo is stopped."

Drake gave another brief nod and said, "One way or the other, Waldo will be stopped. Even if his latest victim is not someone Kassie could have awakened the powers of a true witch in, what Waldo is up to is bad for the Magick. And anything that is bad for the Magick, is also bad for Kassie, as well my species and many others. Though many of my kind have ceased to honor that Magick, I am currently doing all I can to see to it that Magick is rightfully honored once again among my species, as well as others who have forgotten they are an end product of that Magick."

Before The Boss could reply, the phone on his desk rang. He picked up the receiver, listened, then said, "We are on our way to the morgue." He then hung the phone up and as he once more pushed his chair away from the desk and rose from it said to Drake, "The body of Waldo's latest victim has just arrived. I know you are anxious to examine her, so let's head to the morgue."

Drake nodded as he removed his arm from around Kassie's shoulder. They both stood up and followed The Boss to the private elevator located at the back of his office. The elevator quickly descended to the basement where the morgue was located. As they entered the morgue a large black man looked up from the tray he was carefully arranging surgical tools on.

Drake was glad to see the body of Waldo's latest victim was still enclosed in the body bag she had arrived in. He gave the man who had been arranging the surgical tools what passed for a pleasant polite smile for him as Kassie introduced them. After the introductions had been made Drake turned his attention back to the body on the table. He positioned himself in front of Kassie as he gently unzipped the body bag to reveal the face of Waldo's latest victim. He studied the face within the black bag for a moment, then gently laid his hand on the cold forehead of Waldo's latest victim. Though his touch upon that cold forehead was gentle, the expression that crossed his cold pale features was terrible to behold.

Although Waldo's vicious method of necromancy left his victims seemingly empty of information for any other necromancer, Drake was not any other necromancer. Waldo's skills in that art were nothing compared to the Dark Lord of the undead. And now that Kassie's Magick had touched him, finding out what he needed to from the body of Waldo's latest victim was easier than he had thought it would be. What he gleaned from that body though would make it go very hard on Waldo. During her final pain racked moments, her powers as a true witch had tried to stir from their slumber. Waldo had sensed those powers and tried to strip them from her. But the powers that could not protect the dying woman,

would not allow themselves to be stripped from her. They had slipped through his grasp and buried themselves deep within her soul. Waldo could take certain things from the dead and dying, but he could not take their soul. Because she would have been a true witch had Kassie been allowed to gently awaken those powers, they now resided safely within a soul waiting to be reborn. It might be a long time before the soul healed enough to reincarnate into someone who those powers could be awakened, but time was on their side, as much Drake's and Kassie's now. If Kassie herself did not one day fully awaken those powers, one of her future followers would.

Waldo would pay dearly though for causing this painful death to one of Kassie's kind. Because he had sensed those powers within his victim as he killed her, and would now be hunting more like his latest victim, Drake would see to it that debt was paid in full as quickly as possible. Having discovered what he needed from Waldo's latest victim Drake gently stroked the forehead of the dead woman and in a soft soothing voice spoke aloud to her wounded soul. "Your soul will heal in time. Once that healing has taken place you will be reborn and allowed to fulfill your destiny as a true witch. Rest now sweet Magickal one, so that healing can take place. Know that I will avenge your death, and insure that the one who did this to you will meet a fate far worse than the cruel death he caused you."

Drake removed his hand from the forehead of Waldo's latest victim then turned to The Boss and said, "Doug, how long before that blood sample is ready?"

The Boss replied, "It should be ready by now."

"Then let's go get it. The sooner I can apply it to the special bloodstone, the quicker I will be able to find Waldo. I would like to keep my promise to his latest victim, as quickly as possible." He gently turned Kassie away from the body, put his arm around her waist and began walking away from the body that lay on the table.

The Boss was as anxious as Drake was when it came to finding Waldo and after nodding his head briefly in goodbye to Earnest, he turned and headed towards the door they had entered through. Kassie resisted for a brief moment. Drake had obviously found out all he needed to know concerning Waldo's latest victim, and was now concentrating only on finding him. But because the special bloodstone he had was their best hope of finding Waldo as quickly as possible, she relaxed and walked with him towards the door.

The lab was only a couple of doors down from the morgue and they were all pleased to find the blood sample ready when they arrived. Tabitha, the lab tech who had prepared the blood sample, informed them she had prepared nearly all of the sample they had for Kassie. She went to hand Kassie the small vial that was roughly one third filled and was rather taken aback when Drake reached out and intercepted the vial. As he took the vial from her hand Drake thanked her and gave Tabitha a cold charming smile that made her panties damp, even as it chilled her blood. Then he reached into his breast pocket and removed a white handkerchief from it. He carefully wrapped the vial before putting the vial in the pocket he had pulled the handkerchief from. Drake gave Tabitha another cold charming smile and said, "Thank you again for your excellent work in rehydrating the blood so quickly. With the help of a special trinket I have, that blood will allow us to track Waldo. I know you would love to visit with Kassie, but the quicker we apply the blood to the stone, the quicker we can see to it that Waldo causes no more harm to anyone. Please convey my thanks and appreciation to Earnest for allowing me to examine the body of Waldo's latest unfortunate victim, and my apologies for our abrupt departure." Drake paused for a few seconds and something vaguely resembling the slightest touch of warmth softened his icy cold smile as he said, "I would also like to wish you and Ernest much happiness and joy. He is a good man."

Tabitha was completely taken aback for a moment by Drake's words. Nobody knew that she and Ernest had been seeing each other at

more than just their workplace. They had fallen in love during the time they spent together away from Headquarters. Ernest had proposed to her three nights ago, and she had joyfully accepted. She immediately understood that Drake had picked up her thoughts concerning wanting to tell Kassie the good news. Though she had felt slightly invaded for a moment, she also understood it was thinking about Kassie that had caused Drake to pick those thoughts up. She studied Drake for a moment, and in that moment of thoughtful study also understood that a great love and sense of protectiveness towards Kassie caused him to pick up any thoughts others in close proximity to him had concerning her. When she remembered the way Drake's handsome face had softened slightly when he had glanced at Kassie as he had spoken her name, and recalled how Kassie had smiled at him, she could not become angry at Drake for doing what she sensed came very naturally to him. She smiled at Drake then said, "You and Kassie are both very welcome concerning the blood sample. I hope that it works and allows your little, trinket, to find Waldo and put a stop to his murderous ways. It is obvious you care for Kassie a great deal, and just as obvious from the way her smile now reaches to her eyes, that you bring her much happiness. I thank you, and know that Ernest will too concerning your best wishes for us. Ernest and I both wish you and Kassie much happiness as well."

Drake nodded his head then smiled and said, "Kassie brings me more happiness than you can ever imagine. I do all that I can to insure I bring her just as much. Perhaps after Waldo has been taken care of, we can all have dinner together. I know Kassie would enjoy that." Drake's cool charming smile turned to a mischievous grin as he said, "It would give you two girls a chance to catch up on what has been going on in each other's lives, and discuss Ernest and I."

Though she had heard the rumors running rampant about Drake, and upon meeting him had concluded there was much dark truth in those rumors, she could not help but like his style. She returned his grin and re-

plied, "Kassie and I would both enjoy that. I'm sure we can find something for you and Ernest to do while we discuss your attributes."

Drake laughed and replied, "As long as it isn't the dinner dishes." He paused for a moment and looked down at Kassie then said, "Now bid your friend Tabitha a fond farewell dear, and let's get going so we can take care of Waldo as quickly as possible."

Kassie returned Drake's smile then walked over to Tabitha and hugged her, then said, "I am going to hold Drake to that dinner idea. I am very happy for you and Ernest. Please tell him that for me."

Tabitha hugged her friend back then replied, "I will hold you and him to that dinner date. Thank you both for your kind wishes, and you know Ernest and I wish only the best for you."

Kassie gave her friend another quick hug, then walked back over to Drake. He smiled as he slipped his arm around the back of her waist and turned them both towards the door. He turned his head as they neared the door and gave Tabitha another cool charming smile, then as he turned back towards the door leaned down for a moment and kissed the top of Kassie's head.

The Boss bid Tabatha goodbye as well, then walked out into the hall behind them. Drake strode towards the elevator and pushed the button on the wall next to it. As they waited for the elevator Drake turned to The Boss and said, "Kassie and I will be taking our leave now so that we can get this sample to the bloodstone as fast as possible. Kassie or I will be getting in touch with you as soon as I have taken care of Waldo."

The Boss blinked in surprise then replied, "I guess that will have to work."

Drake nodded his head once as the elevator doors opened. The Boss stepped in and waited for them to join him, but Drake simply grinned at him and said, "We don't need the elevator to get where we are going." Before he could reply Drake stepped back a little, and as the elevator doors closed he and Kassie vanished. The Boss had been told of Drake's habit of vanishing, and was not that surprised to see Kassie had developed the same habit. Though seeing them simply vanish as the doors closed, had caused him to blink before he pushed the button that would send the elevator to where he was headed.

Their destination was Drake's main castle. Once there Drake took Kassie to a carefully concealed room that lay beneath the dungeon. Within that secret room were several large tables. Maps of various countries, states and provinces hung upon the walls of the room. Large filing cabinets beneath the tables and scattered through out the room held still more maps that contained cities and towns. Drake went to the back of the room and removed one a world map from the wall. He laid the world map on one of the tables, then walked over to open a safe that had been concealed within the wall behind the world map. From the safe he took out a metal box. He opened metal box and withdrew a small black velvet bag from it. After loosening the white ribbon that held the bag shut, he carefully shook out the bloodstone into the palm of his left hand. He laid the velvet bag on the table that had the world map on it.

The Bloodstone was cut in the shape of a small narrow scepter. It was three inches long, one end was pointed, the other end flat. At top of the stone near the flat head, was a narrow band of gold. Attached to the band was a gold chain. In the center of the scepter shaped stone was a small indentation that formed a tiny bowl. Drake carefully placed the carved scepter on the velvet bag so that the tiny bowl indentation was on top. He arranged the velvet bag carefully around the stone so that it would stay in place, then reached into his pocket and took out the small vial that contained Waldo's blood. Kassie watched as Drake removed the lid from the vial, and carefully poured a drop of the blood from the vial into the



bowl shaped indentation. As he carefully replaced the lid on the vial Kassie asked, "You are only going to use one drop of the blood?"

Drake looked at her and replied, "For now my dear. It will take the stone about an hour to absorb that one drop. By putting the blood in one drop at a time we can reduce the amount of evaporation that will occur, as well as test the stone after this drop has been applied to it."

Kassie studied the stone for a moment then looked at Drake and replied, "Excellent thinking on your part my love." Then she smiled that smile of hers that always melted her immortal lover's heart of stone and said, "But then again, you are a most excellent thinker."

Drake slipped his arm around the back of her waist as he smiled at her and replied, "As are you my beloved little Queen. That is one of the many things about you that I adore. And speaking of excellent thinking, I know that even with all that is on your mind concerning Waldo, you have also been thinking of that latest chapter in your current story. Let's retire to the library and you can work on that while the stone absorbs that drop of blood."

Kassie smiled at Drake and replied, "You have been reading my mind again. And yes that's a very good idea. I would like to at least make a few notes concerning some ideas I have for that chapter, and a new character I am thinking of introducing."

Kassie and Drake vanished from the hidden room where the Bloodstone and maps were, and reappeared in the library. After they were both comfortably settled on the couch with their laptops resting on their knees, Kassie retrieved the latest copy of the chapter from her iDisk and began working on it. Drake was busy taking care of some business via a secure messenger program, email, cell phone, as well as working on the latest program he was developing. Kassie added the name of the new character to the database in the writer's program she used and began working on a description of the character as well as margin notes in the body of her

work concerning that character's role in the story. While they worked on their separate projects, the Bloodstone in the hidden room gradually absorbed the drop of blood. Originally the Bloodstone had been a solid dark green, so dark in color it almost appeared black. As it slowly absorbed the drop of blood, the stone began to change to a slightly lighter shade of green, and four tiny flecks of red began to appear in it.

Kassie was putting the finishing touches on the paragraph that introduced her latest character when the stone absorbed the last of the drop of blood that had been put on it. The tiny flecks of red seemed to shimmer and move for a moment, then become dull and still. Kassie and Drake both sensed that the stone had fully absorbed the drop of blood placed on it. They glanced at each other, exchanged thoughts briefly, then leaned over and placed their laptops on the table in front of the couch. They vanished in unison, then reappeared the same way in front of the table the Bloodstone was on. He looked at the Bloodstone then turned to Kassie and said, "You will need to wear the stone for 24 hours before we test it on the first map. Do you wish to test it as it is now, or add another drop of blood?"

Kassie thought for a moment then said, "I want to test it after it has two more drops of blood in it."

Drake nodded his head, pleased with her decision then added another drop of blood to the stone. Once the blood was added and the vial safely resealed they returned to the private library. They did not pick their laptops up immediately, but instead relaxed with each other on the couch. Drake snapped his fingers once and the fire blazed to life in the fireplace. Kassie smiled as the fire sprang to life, then leaned over and took a scented oil candle and a book of matches from a drawer under the front of the coffee table. She lit the candle, put the book of matches back in the drawer and closed it. Kassie could have snapped her fingers and had the candle appear and the light itself, but she enjoyed putting the scented oil candle out and striking the match to it. Drake understood the act of putting the candle in the holder and lighting it the old fashioned way was as

much an act of Magick to her as snapping her fingers was. As she leaned back and snuggled under his arm, he smiled and kissed the top of her head. Oh how he loved this woman who given all the powers she now had, still found real Magick in simple acts like setting a candle out and striking a match to it. The nights and days he had spent with her over the past few weeks had done nothing but strengthen his resolve to spend the rest of eternity with her.

As he felt her relax against him and inhale the aroma of the vanilla and rose scented candle he stroked her arm softly and said, "Ernest and Tabitha are going to make a fine couple. His skills at extracting the secrets of the dead will steadily increase. She will be able to help him cope with what extracting some of those secrets will do to his mind and soul. And dinner with them occasionally will do us all good."

Kassie snuggled closer to her immortal lover and said, "Just so long as you don't have them for your dinner. I must say Tabitha getting together with Ernest surprised me given the fact she is usually drawn to geeks."

Drake laughed and replied, "I already had them for dessert one evening. And despite his linebacker appearance, Ernest is smarter than any geek she could find." Drake shifted a little and tucked Kassie more comfortably under his arm then said softly, "He is also an incurable romantic and loves her with every breath he takes."

Kassie looked up at Drake and exclaimed, "You fed on them?"

Drake kissed the tip of Kassie's nose and said, "Of course I took a few sips from them. Stop looking so aghast at that thought. You know I like interesting people, and I'll have to say, The Team does have some interesting people on it. It's not like I did them any harm."

Kassie thought about it for a moment then replied, "I guess you are right. It just creeps me out a little still to have you dining on my friends."

Drake laughed and pulled her closer to him. He understood how she felt, but also knew that feeling would soon pass. She knew he fed from them because they were interesting people, and because it was a way to better get to know her through those interesting friends of hers. They spent some time discussing Ernest and Tabitha, as well as some of the unions taking place between some of his bloodthirsty children. Drake was very pleased with some of those unions, but had reservations about a couple of others. Kassie knew that he kept a much closer eye on any unions between his bloodthirsty children now because he felt certain unions were either bad for the ones involved, or were unions that would feed the rebellious streak in one or both of the parties concerned.

\* \* \*

As they sat discussing those unions, the stone in the hidden room below them slowly absorbed the second drop of blood. The four tiny flecks of red once more shimmered and shook as the last of that drop of blood was absorbed into the stone. And in a place far away from where the stone rested, Waldo felt a momentary quiver of unease go through him. He had sensed earlier that a very powerful being had touched the body of the woman he had recently killed and tried to strip of all her powers. He knew damn well it was not the hand of God that had touched that bitch. Anger had washed over him as he felt that being touch and lay to rest the soul of that dead bitch who had refused to give up all her powers to him. Powers he had not dreamed existed in her. As he asked himself and the cosmos what had touched her, a small voice of reason whispered, "You don't want to know."

Drake added the third drop of blood to the stone, and Waldo scowled as he felt a slight unexplained chill run down his spine. He stopped what he was doing, and tried to focus on the cause of that sudden chill. None of the ones looking for him had any viable means of tracking him down. They could tell where he had been from the corpses of his victims. But they could never know where he currently was. Then he thought of the being he had felt earlier. If a being that powerful was now hunting him,

then it must have to do with the powers he felt but could not take from that last bitch he had killed. Had Suzanne actually been some kind of pet to that being? Surely something as dark and powerful as the creature he had felt, could not have been that fond of that pathetic little bitch? Waldo felt it must have something to do with the powers he had sensed but could not steal from Suzanne. And he wanted those powers. He had failed to take them from Suzanne, but if she had them buried deep within her, then there must be others who did as well. He knew sensing and getting as close to those powers as he had this time, would make it easier for him to detect them next time. Waldo shook off the slight uneasy feeling he still had, and went back to planning that next time. Instinct told him what he was planning would anger that being he had sensed earlier, and cause it to try harder to zero in on him. But he still felt safe despite the chills and lingering sense of unease. He knew that being had not been able to glean enough from the carcass of that bitch to track him with. He would be very careful to make sure his next victim could not lead that being to him.

\* \* \*

Waldo was making plans to find another person the powers of a true witch were dormant within, as Kassie and Drake were greeting a group of tourists at Drake's main castle. Within that group was a young woman whom Kassie had been strangely drawn to. Drake has noticed that Kassie seemed to feel an instant kinship with the young woman, and suspected she might have the powers of a true witch within her. His careful screening methods of tourists allowed in the castle had told him Kathleen Maddigan was a vibrant 27 year old librarian, who was also a fairly talented writer. She shared Kassie's great love of words and books, and was a big fan of Kassie's work. Katy was also interested in all things paranormal, and was a solitary practitioner of The Craft. Though her job as a librarian didn't pay a great deal, she had a small trust fund set up by her parents which allowed her to live a quiet comfortable lifestyle. Once a year she treated herself to a trip to a place that she thought might inspire her writing, and/or increase her understanding of The Craft. Drake was glad that he had

remembered her from screening some months ago, and recently arranged to have Katy seated near Kassie at tonight's dinner.

After the guests had been seated, Drake poured the ambrosia that would help enchant those at his table, and gave Katy a charming smile that took her breath away, and made her blush. Katy was already half under his spell when she raised the glass of ambrosia to her lips and sipped from it. As she sipped from the glass, she became enchanted along with the rest of the guests that sat enjoying their drinks and listening to their handsome host's soft seductive voice. When the ambrosia had worked its spell of enchantment on his dinner guests, Drake walked over and stood behind Katy's chair. He placed his hands upon her shoulders, then bent his head down and drank from her. As her blood began to travel through his fangs he knew why Kassie had been drawn to this young woman. Deep within her were the powers of a true witch. Those powers lay dormant and undiscovered right now, but he knew that Kassie could help her to fully awaken them. He took a larger drink from Katy than he normally took from his dinner guests. He did not drink enough of her blood to do her the slightest bit of harm, but wanted to drink deeply enough from her so that he would know her well. The sumptuous dinner Katy would eat while at his table would help her recover from the small amount of blood she had lost to her host so Drake felt no guilt in taking that little bit extra from her. He had not really needed to feed at all right then, but went ahead and sipped from a couple more of the more interesting diners at his table before returning to Kassie's side. As he sat back down beside Kassie he looked at her and said quietly, "You sensed something within Katy that drew you to her. I know now what that something is."

Kassie looked deep into the eyes of her immortal lover and replied, "She has the powers of a true witch deep within her, doesn't she?"

Drake smiled at his little Queen and said, "Yes she does my love. And it will not be hard to cultivate her friendship and help her awaken those powers because she already has a bad case of heroine worship for you. Make a point to be extra nice to her, exchange email addresses with

her so you can connect with her that way. I believe she is going to be the first of your coven my dear." Kassie nodded her head, and as a servant quietly slipped in and replaced the guests glasses with ones containing normal wine. As the spell of enchantment wore off their dinner guests, Kassie smiled at her immortal lover before turning her attention to one dinner guest in particular.

Even if she was just part of a tour group, Katy was beside herself with happiness to be dining with Kassie and her handsome lover. She admired Kassie a great deal, and dreamed of one day being as good a writer as she was. That Kassie was actually taking time to talk to her and treat her with the gentle kindness she was, left her feeling as if she was walking on air. Drake also treated her with extreme charm and grace. She knew she would always remember this night as one of the most wonderful evenings of her life. When she had shyly admitted that Drake's hunch about her longing to be a writer was correct, Kassie had told her she would like to see some of her work sometime, and even exchanged email addresses with her. As she began to eat the delicious dinner that was being served to her, Katy found herself slightly giddy from the wine, and the happiness she was experiencing.

Drake was very proud of his little Queen as she graciously interacted with the guests at his table. Despite his habit of dining on them, Drake still thought of those seated at his table as honored guests. He was constantly amazed at the way Kassie could charm those guests without the use of Magick. He had come to realize that even though she was not consciously using Magick to charm them, it was the Magick within her that held people around her spellbound. He knew that some of the scholars who had recently sat at his table had first looked upon Kassie as nothing more than erotic eye candy. But he had smiled several times when some of those highly educated men had found themselves just as spellbound by her wit, grace and intelligence, as they were by her beauty and sexuality. Drake could control the mind of any human he crossed paths with nothing more than a glance into their eyes. Kassie could have now as well. Yet,

she still chose to use the same methods she always had to seduce the minds of those around her. What never ceased to amaze him was how effective those methods were. When Kassie flashed that thousand kilowatt beaming smile of hers, the majority of people's lips could not help but curve in return. Seeing how people did or did not react to that smile, was a glimpse into their souls.

When dinner was over and they bid their guests goodbye, Drake made a point of kissing Katy's hand and telling her how honored he was to have had her as one of his dinner guests. Katy had been both excited and chilled by the touch of his cool lips upon the back of her hand. When he had raised his handsome head and spoke to her, she had been mesmerized by his cobalt blue eyes and soft seductive voice. What she saw in those icy orbs of his would be something she would spend many hours contemplating. She had caught a brief glimpse of so many things. She couldn't wait to sit down and write about her experiences here, and of the things she had seen in the eyes of the handsome man who had kissed her hand. She also wanted to try and find a way to capture the essence of what he and Kassie were as a couple. Either of them alone would have been fascinating subjects to write of. Together though, they were everything fairy tales and myths were made of. Darkness and light blending together into a warm passionate glow.

After bidding their dinner guest goodbye Drake and Kassie returned the hidden room the Bloodstone was in. Drake studied the stone carefully for a moment then picked it up and put the chain it hung from around Kassie's neck. He gently kissed the back of Kassie's neck then said, "We shall let the stone grace your lovely neck for the next 24 hours, then use it to find Waldo."

Kassie turned and wrapped her arms around her immortal lover. As Drake's arms went around her, she rested her head against his chest for a moment, then looked up at him and said, "I hope it leads us to him. I have a bad feeling suddenly that it is very important that we find him as quickly as possible."



Drake wrapped his arms tighter around her and said, "I am sure it will my love." He kissed the top of her forehead then pulled her even closer. He knew that though the stone was going to help them find Waldo, it was in some ways a dark albatross around her neck. He suspected her sense of foreboding came from the fact that Waldo was no doubt already plotting how to find another person with the powers of a true witch dormant within. Kassie was sensing Waldo's dark lust for those powers. Having once lusted for the gift of immortality much the same way Waldo now lusted for the powers he had sensed in Suzanne, Drake understood that dark lust on a very profound level. But things change, and the only thing he truly lusted for now was Kassie. And his lust for her was in some ways, as dark as his lust for power had once been. She was his only true obsession now. He knew losing her would make everything else, including the survival of his species, meaningless to him. He sometimes wondered if Kassie knew what the dark side of his love really meant.

Kassie caught that last thought and looked up him. She smiled at him and in a soft loving voice said, "Yes my dear, I do know what the dark side of that love is. But, I also know that no matter how dark it might be at times, the light of reason will prevail."

Drake smiled at his beloved little witch and said, "You are quite right my love. The light of reason always will prevail. I know what it is that I want. Understand how it must be between us, for me, and you, to be truly happy." Drake leaned down and kissed her lips then whispered, "Now I want you to return to Mystic Acres my love. I think it would be a better place for you to be right now. The powers within you that will allow you to use the stone to track him, can be best strengthened there. I have a couple of errands to tend to, then I'll be there with you."

Kassie returned the cold kiss of her immortal lover then said, "That's a wonderful idea."

Drake held her close and said, "You know your safety and happiness is what is truly important to me now." Then he stepped back from her and

vanished. Kassie vanished a second later. As she was relaxing in the lavender loft, Drake was putting Katy under his full protection.

## Chapter 11

Waldo was researching Suzanne's life thoroughly, hoping to find a connection with someone else who might have the same powers he had sensed in her, when another sudden chill ran up his spine. His fingers paused on the keyboard of the computer he was using, and Waldo tried to lock onto what had caused that sudden chill. When he did get a sense of what had caused that chill, he pushed the chair back from the desk he was at and exclaimed, "You fucking bitch! How dare you think you can touch me!" He sat staring at the computer screen, and felt another chill run up his spine. In that chill he sensed Kassie once again, but he also sensed that other dark powerful presence. How could that do good bitch possibly be connected with that dark ominous being? Whatever that being was, he knew it must be evil personified to be as powerful as it was. Was that do good bitch trying to track it as well? Or was it tracking her? He could understand Kassie and The Team trying to track that being he had felt. But could not understand why it would have any interest in her. Did Kassie had powers like Suzanne? Is that why that being might be interested in her? He almost hoped that was the case because that would mean whatever he had sensed would no doubt take care of that little bitch once and for all. He would have preferred to kill her and strip her of those powers if she possessed them, but knew that would be far too risky for him to try given the protection The Team and her new lover gave her. He would leave her to that being he had felt. He hoped it made the last moments of her life as painful as possible when it found her. Meanwhile, he would find an easier victim to deal with who might have the same powers Suzanne had. There was one name that kept popping up in connection to her that he felt might be what he was looking for. He would soon pay Kathleen Maddigan a visit, and discover if she had those powers.

Waldo had hacked into Suzanne's computer and email accounts shortly after he had picked her up in chat room. Since Suzanne and Kathleen had often emailed each other, obtaining her email address and ip numbers were a piece of cake. He hacked into her email account and discovered that she had booked a tour which included a trip to some castle

reportedly owned by a mysterious man some said was a vampyre. The next paragraph he read from the email he had extracted from her sent mail file stunned him. She was writing about how excited she was to find out her favorite author, Cassandra B. Badbh, was now living with the mysterious owner of the castle. Suddenly he remembered the latest publicity photos of Kassie he had seen. They showed her at a book signing with a tall dark haired man standing behind her. Like many who had seen those two photos, he had been struck by two faces the camera had caught of the man standing behind her. Waldo went to Kassie's site and pulled the photos back up. As he sat studying the man standing behind her, especially the second photo of him, what seemed like an insane thought crossed his mind. Could the man in the photo be that dark powerful being he had sensed? If so, why on earth had he hooked up with that do good bitch? If he sought her powers, why hadn't he taken them then, disposed of the silly bitch? Why was he looking at her as he was in that one photo? How could such a handsome powerful creature possibly be in love with that word slut? And was Kathleen's going to their castle merely a coincidence? He would keep a close eye on Kathleen's email and see if he could glean anything from there.

\* \* \*

Waldo wasn't the only one gathering information on Kathleen. Drake was also gathering information on her from a variety of sources, including the computer. Drake had put his best computer crew to work gathering information on her from the net. When one of them discovered that Katy's email account had just been hacked by someone else, she called Drake immediately. Drake told Mary Ann to send him copies of her email, and track the other hacker down ASAP. He and Kassie had been strolling through one of the gardens near the castle when Mary Ann had called. He knew he would have copies of Katy's email, and perhaps the whereabouts of the hacker by the time they finished their stroll. It had disturbed Kassie on two levels when she found out what Mary Ann's call had been about. She wasn't happy about Drake invading Katy's privacy as he had. She

was even less happy to know that some other hacker was also doing that. She knew it would be useless to fuss at Drake for doing what he was. He would simply smile that wise loving smile of his he used only on her, and quietly tell her that what he was doing was necessary to keep Katy fully protected. As they strolled back hand in hand towards the castle Kassie said, "You know I'm not thrilled over what you are doing. But given the fact she is one who has the powers of a true witch dormant within her, I understand your desire to see her fully protected."

Drake squeezed Kassie's hand and replied, "I know how you feel concerning some of the ways I am gathering more information on her, but it is a necessary evil my dear. And since someone else is also gathering information on her the way they are, it is important we know this, and discover who it is." Kassie was too wise to try and argue with the logic of that, so simply nodded as they continued their moonlit stroll. Drake was curious to find out who else was gathering information on Katy, but he also knew that right now Kassie needed the sense of peace that strolling through the gardens gave her. As they started up the path leading to the entrance of the castle, he even made her stop and smell some of the roses that lined either side of path. When they were comfortably settled on the couch in the small cozy den adjacent to their bedroom, Drake snapped his fingers once, then reached over and picked up the laptop that had appeared on the coffee table in front of them. As Kassie sipped the cup of herbal tea she had prepared for herself before coming to the den, Drake began to read Katy's email. Suddenly Drake said, "Katy was friends with the young woman we visited in the morgue. Though she does not know yet her friend is now laying in that morgue."

Kassie's eyes widened in surprise, and she replied, "That is a hell of a coincidence!" Then looked thoughtful as she took another sip of her tea. After swallowing the small sip of tea she said, "Though it makes an odd kind of sense. If a coincidence occurred that caused them to meet, then it is natural they would find themselves drawn to each other. I have a feeling that we will find this kind of thing occurring rather frequently as we search

for and find others like Suzanne and Katy. I began to sense a sort of hap-hazard gathering of others like myself several months before I thrice called your true name."

It was Drake's turn to look thoughtful as Kassie returned to sipping her tea. As she sat her empty mug on the table, Drake's email alert went off again. He scowled as he read the email then said, "Well whoever is hacking her email is very crafty. Even after making it through all the firewalls, Mary Ann could only come up with a post office box number for the address of the account holder of that IP number. What's more, according to the information she has gathered on the person whose name is on the account, Katy is being hacked by an 80 year old woman in Pasadena. Somehow I can't see a little old lady from Pasadena hacking Katy's email account. I must assume we are dealing with an expert hacker, who also dabbles in stolen card numbers, which unfortunately many hackers do."

Kassie snapped her fingers once, then leaned back and inhaled from the eternal doobie that had appeared between her fingers after she had snapped them. Drake placed the laptop on the table in front of them, put his arm around her and pulled her close to him. After a moment Kassie exhaled and said, "I wonder what the odds are that Waldo is the other hacker gathering information on Katy?"

Drake looked very thoughtful for a moment as he pondered Kassie's remark, then said, "Given what you have told me about Waldo, I am afraid the odds may be quite good that he is the other hacker gathering information on her. We have already assumed Waldo would be looking for others like Suzanne."

Kassie looked into the cobalt eyes of her immortal lover for a moment. "Then it is good that you put the wheels in motion before you came here, to see that Katy is kept safe."

Drake nodded and replied, "She is now under my full protection. Or as much as she can be given the circumstances. I have arranged to have

some of my special crew as close to her as possible at all times. In fact as we speak, a few of the doppelgängers from my crew are quietly replacing some of the people in her tour group. Those doppelgängers will be placed on either side of her hotel room for the rest of the tour. I am even going to borrow some members of your Royal Guard for right now. The bus driver is going to come down with appears to be a bad case of the flu. He will recover from that in a week or so. Beezie will replace him for the duration of the tour."

Kassie's eyes shot up in surprise as she choked on her toke and exclaimed, "Beezie is going to be driving the tour bus?"

Drake grinned and patted her on the back. "Yes dear, Beezie is going to be driving Katy's tour bus. Strangely enough, he is quite taken with the idea of being a tour bus driver. Thaddeus and Shaka are in charge of security at the hotels Katy's group will be staying in for the rest of the tour. The sights and attractions they stop at during the rest of the tour will also have members of my special crew in and around them. I am also making arrangements to insure her safety when she gets home from the tour. She mentioned at dinner the house next to hers is empty and for sale at the moment. By the time she gets home, she will have some of my special crew members as neighbors."

"And just what is going to happen to the people those doppelgängers are quietly replacing?"

Drake laughed then bent down and kissed Kassie's lips before he replied, "They will come to no harm whatsoever my love. They will be well looked after and entertained, then returned home in a few days with wonderful implanted memories of the rest of the tour. They will even have some splendid photographs to show their friends when they get back home."

Kassie laughed and replied, "As long as they come to no harm." She paused for a moment, leaned up and kissed his cold cheek then said, "Thank you for doing so much to protect Katy."

"No thanks are needed my love. When it became clear to me a few centuries ago that true witches had seemingly vanished from the world, I swore a blood oath to do everything I could to protect them should they ever return. You and Katy are the first of what I hope will one day be many. Katy must be protected so that in time you can help her awaken, and learn to use her powers. I have no intention of allowing Waldo, or anyone else to do her any harm."

Kassie nodded and replied, "I am glad you have your crew protecting her. I'll feel a lot better though when Waldo no longer poses any kind of threat to Katy, or anyone else. You were careful to keep me away from his latest victim, but I have already seen and felt what he does to his victims. That's why I have no problem with the termination orders on him. Waldo is a cold blooded vicious killer, who is beyond any kind of rehabilitation. The sooner we are able to carry out those orders, the better."

Drake reached over and touched the Bloodstone hanging from Kassie's neck, then said, "It won't be long now before we can use this to find him, then carry out those orders."

\* \* \*

As Drake's fingers closed around the Bloodstone, Waldo shivered and nearly dropped the drink he was raising to his lips. The plump woman in the seat next to him gave him a sideways look that clearly showed she thought he might have already had one drink too many, then went back to reading her book. Waldo scowled as the shiver subsided, leaving only a vague uneasy feeling of doom in its wake. Waldo took a sip from his drink then leaned back in his seat and tried to dismiss the icy chill that had gripped his spine, and the uneasy feeling of impending doom that still lingered. He pushed the uneasy feeling aside, and concentrated on his



plans for Katy. Normally Waldo did not physically go near his prey until he was ready to move in for the kill. He spent weeks, often months talking to and seducing them online before he even thought about moving in for the kill. Those weeks, and sometimes months, were spent carefully planning their abduction and slow painful death. Fear played an important role in stripping his victims of the information and power he wanted from them. The more terrified they were during their last moments, the easier it was to strip them of the information and powers he wanted. During the time spent talking to them online, he made a point to discover what his intended victim feared the most. He used that fear against them when he did move in for the kill.

Waldo's lust for the powers he had sensed and felt for that brief moment in Suzanne was causing him to change his normal method of operation. He did not want to spend weeks or months setting up Katy for the kill, only to find her empty of the powers he lusted for when he did move in for the kill. He hoped if he could get physically close to her, he would be able to sense if what he was searching for was within her. If he sensed it was, then he would gladly spend as much time as it took to set her up for the kill. Finding out that she had visited the tourist attraction castle that Kassie was currently living in with her new lover had given him a moment's pause concerning his plans for Katy. He knew that it meant there was the possibility that Katy was under the protection of The Team, as well as the mysterious owner of that castle. If that mysterious owner was the creature that he had sensed, Waldo knew he must be very careful indeed. He knew that for all his gifts and powers, he was no match for that creature he had sensed, at least not right now. The thought of Katy being under the protection of that creature he had sensed was almost enough to make him pick an easier target. But if Katy held the same powers within her that Suzanne had, and was somehow of vital interest to that creature, then stripping Katy of those powers might tell him more about that creature.

He would have to be extremely careful how he went about getting close enough to Katy to determine if she did possess the same powers Suzanne had. Fortunately one of the stops on the tour Katy was taking afforded him a perfect opportunity to do just that. He smirked as he thought about just how perfect an opportunity it was going to be. He knew Katy would not be able to resist having her fortune told by the Gypsy fortune teller that worked at that tourist trap. One of her friends that had previously taken the tour had emailed Katy all about the wonderful fortune teller. Even describing her in some detail. How fortunate it was that said Gypsy fortune teller was one of faithful followers. He had known the moment he had finished studying the itinerary for Katy's tour he would be paying that faithful follower a surprise visit, and temporarily taking over the role of fortune teller. Waldo was an apt cross dresser who had assumed the persona of a female many times before, both as a means to keep his true identity hidden, and simply because sometimes, he enjoyed playing the role of a woman to the hilt. Assuming the role of a female fortune teller would be no problem for him. Playing the part of that fortune teller would give him the perfect opportunity to try to discover if Katy possessed the same powers Suzanne had. Something told him that she did possess those powers, but he wanted to be sure she did before he began the process that would end in her death.

Waldo was always meticulous when stalking a victim. His attention to the smallest detail is partly what had allowed him to operate as long as he had without being caught. Due to her possible connection with Kassie, and perhaps Kassie's mysterious new lover, he was being even more meticulous than usual in Katy's case. He very much wanted to make this initial close contact with Katy, but he certainly did not want that close contact to result in Kassie, or her mysterious new lover connecting him with Katy in any way, shape or form. The fact that Drake Stone had often been seen in daylight, and actually had his picture taken at book signing of Kassie's that had been held in broad daylight, seemed to point to him not being a real vampyre. But, Waldo had heard tales and rumors of ancient vampyres who could move about freely during the daytime. And if would

be just like that bitch to actually hook up with a real vampyre who was a day walker. Waldo knew exactly what he faced when dealing with Kassie and The Team, and knew that as long as he remained as cautious and meticulous he could thwart their best efforts to capture him. This new lover of Kassie's was a wild card though. Despite Waldo's best efforts to glean information on Drake Stone, he still remained as much of a mystery to Waldo, as he did to the rest of the world.

Fortunately, finding out everything he needed to know about Katy was a much easier proposition. Soon she would not be able to make a move that he didn't know about. He would soon send her an innocent looking email that appeared to come from someone on her contact list. Once opened by her, it would give him total access and control of her computer. If she possessed the powers he sought, he would also send her cell phone a lovely little worm virus that would turn it into a listening device he could control from any other phone capable of sending a text message from. He would plant a few hidden cameras in her home as well. By the time he was ready to move in for the kill, Katy would have no secrets from him. He would know her most secret desire, and her worst fear. He would use her most secret desire to seduce and bind her to him. Then use her worst fear to strip her of all her powers. Waldo was glad the tray his drink rested on hid just how excited his plans for Katy made him. In his own darkly perverted way, Waldo enjoyed the weeks and months leading up to the kill almost as much as the kill itself. The methodical taking over of his victim's life aroused him in a way sex never could.

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As Waldo sat sipping his drink high in the sky, Drake was taking a relaxing evening stroll with Kassie after implementing some plans that would insure Katy's safety both during, and long after the tour she was on ended. The house next to Katy's was being bought by two of his crew, who would appear to be a pair of happy newly weds. Katy's laptop, home computer and the computer she used at the library were now completely hacker proof. The program he had installed on those computers would

not only protect her from hackers, it would alert him should anyone attempt to hack any of her computers, in any way shape or form. Her cell phone was about to be replaced with an exact look alike hacker proof R.A.T. Spy Phone. Just as with the new programs now protecting her computer, the combination spyware and anti virus software imbedded in the phone was a program he had designed himself. As with all his anti virus programs, it could become quite aggressive towards any other program trying to breach the security of the phone it was protecting. Any hacker trying to breach the security of Katy's computers or cell phone would wind up with the security of his or her computer and or Master Phone badly breached by a program that could become terminally aggressive.

Drake's hard handsome face softened ever so slightly as he drank in the sight of Kassie brushing one of the unicorns. Though they accepted Drake's touch, and the stallion had even allowed him to ride upon his back the night of her coronation, Kassie's touch was the only one they seemed to truly enjoy. He could understand that perfectly since it was only her touch that he loved to feel. He had seen all the wonders of the world, and few on some other worlds, but those wonders were nothing to him compared to the sight and sound of Kassie laughing and brushing the flowing mane of one of the unicorn mares. Kassie needed this relaxing and care-free time right now. Soon, she would have to gather her powers and use the Bloodstone to track Waldo with. Once she began to use the stone to track him, Drake knew she would not rest until she had found him, and the termination orders issued on him were carried out.

She finished brushing out the unicorn's mane, stuck the handle of the curry comb into her back pocket, then gave the unicorn's withers one last scratch. Kassie's step was light, her face aglow with happiness as she turned from the unicorn she had been brushing, then made her way back over to him. He walked towards her, and smiled as they came together. He gathered her in his cold strong arms, and closed his eyes for a moment as he savored the feel of her next to him. Her touch was soft and loving as

she ran her hands up and down his broad back. The feel of her hands softly caressing the muscles of his back caused him to tighten his own arms around her. A soft sound somewhere between a sigh of happiness, and moan of pleasure escaped his lips as her body pressed against his. For a moment he found himself almost overwhelmed by the feelings of passionate hunger and fierce love that coursed through him as he held her.

Kassie's slender arms tightened around Drake. Feelings of love, passion and a need so strong it frightened her at times filled her head and heart, until she felt as if she were drowning in those emotions. For a moment she gave into those feelings, letting her nails dig into his back as she pulled his body closer to her. Drake responded by running one hand up her back and neck, his fingers entangled themselves in her hair, and he pulled her head back, and gazed into her eyes. The look in those cobalt blue eyes of his was that of a creature who knew he had the power to take her any way he chose. That creature gave a soft hissing snarl, then his lips descended on hers. His kiss started out fierce and hard. Fired by passion, fueled by need, it was a kiss that seared her soul. Then the fingers that had been clenched in hair loosened their hold. The hand that pulled her head back became gentle and loving. The lips that had been pressing so demandingly against hers softened. What had begun as a demand, ended in a plea. An admission that he could never bring himself to take her in any way that she did not wish to be taken. The creature that looked into her eyes as that kiss ended was one who knew that if she so chose, she could break him, shatter that stone cold heart of his into a million pieces. Kassie returned his look with one that reflected her love for him. She reached up and softly brushed the back of her fingers along his cheek.

That loving look and soft touch melted Drake's stone cold heart, and filled him with a warmth that only she could ignite. In its own way, that look and touch seared his soul as severely as his kiss had hers. He took her hand in his and turned it over, then softly kissed the palm of it. Then he gathered her in his arms and held her close to him as he whispered, "Please stay with me forever my love, because without you, my world is

only darkness and despair." He buried his face in her hair, not really expecting an answer. A part of him fearing the answer would be no.

Kassie wrapped her arms back around him, tilted her head back and looked up into his eyes and answered his plea, "I will stay with you for as long as you love me as you do right now."

Drake's mouth curved in a smile as he replied, "Then forever is how long you will stay with me. My love for you will never change or fade. Nor will I ever betray the love you give to me." He tightened his arms around her again, buried his face in her hair once more, and reveled in the feel of her against him. She felt so damn right in his arms. After a few moments he kissed the top of her head then stepped back from her. He reached and took her hand, and as they continued their evening stroll he said, "As much as I would love to fling you to the ground and ravish your incredible body, I can't right now."

Kassie paused for a moment and asked, "Why can't you?" Then she grinned and said, "I'm all for being ravished right now."

Drake laughed and replied, "Goddess bless you for being all for that. But, it really isn't that I can't, but that you shouldn't." Drake paused, and rather sheepish look crossed his face for a brief second. "You see dear, although you don't have to be a virgin for the Bloodstone to work for you, it is best if we refrain from carnal pleasures until Waldo is taken care of."

Kassie's amber eyes widened for a moment as her hand closed around the stone dangling beneath her throat, then she exclaimed, "You didn't tell me about when you hung this around my neck!"

Drake simply grinned as he slipped his arm around Kassie's back. "And would you have forbidden me to put it there, and refused to use it to track Waldo?"

Kassie shook her head and said, "Of course not! But you could have warned me first!" Then she laughed and leaned into him slightly as they

approached the entrance to the replica of Stonehenge they had held the beginning of her coronation in. Drake had suggested they visit the unicorns, then their private Stonehenge replica. As if they had known Drake's plan, the unicorns were close by the Henge. Kassie felt the power of the Henge as they entered it. She paused when they reached the center of the Henge. She closed her eyes, and allowed that power to flow through her. She could feel the stone that hung around her neck vibrate ever so slightly as the power from the Henge stones flowed through her. As Kassie stood there with eyes closed she concentrated on the Bloodstone, and visualized herself using it to successfully track down Waldo.

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As Kassie stood visualizing using the stone to track down him down, another cold hard chill went down Waldo's spine. He flashed on Kassie having something to do with that cold hard chill, and his hand clenched around the seatbelt he was buckling as he thought of what he would like to do to that bitch. The plump woman next to him gave him another sideways glance, then smiled and said, "Takeoffs and landings can be the scariest part of flying." Waldo had an urge to backhand the plump woman, then regained control of himself, and after giving her a charming boyish smile said, "Yes it can be." As the plane descended, Waldo shook off the cold hard chill that had momentarily gripped his spine, and turned his thoughts back to his plans for Katy. He was glad the old biddy next to him was rummaging in her purse for her luggage claim, and didn't see the hard on the thought of what he was going to do to Katy gave him. Because of her ties to Kassie, her death would be as painful and terrifying as he could make it. And as she was dying he would strip her of her life force, as well as any and all powers she might have. Then he would find others like her, and when he had stolen enough of their powers, he would use them to destroy Kassie, and if necessary, her new lover. Though even the mere thought of battling him gave Waldo another cold hard chill of fear. And that chill of fear enraged Waldo because normally he feared nothing. Whatever her new lover was though, he had to have a weakness, some-

thing Waldo could exploit and use against him. Waldo would find out what that weakness was, and use it to destroy him, just as he had done with countless others. Then he, The Wondrous Waldo would strip Kassie's lover of all his powers, and use them to become all that he wanted to be.

As instructed, the fortune teller was there waiting for him when he debarked from the plane, and entered the terminal. Waldo had no luggage other than his laptop and a small carry on case, so they went straight to Esmeralda's car. Esmeralda had been one of his faithful followers for a long time. "Rescued" by him when she was barely a teenager who was being regularly abused by the men her drunken mother brought home. As with so many of his victims and followers Waldo had found her online. Back in the days when so many chat sites were filled with people of all ages and walks of life who thought they had found a way to escape from the cruelties their real worlds were filled with. What so many had not realized was that wonderful cyber land they had escaped into contained predators who had learned to use their desire to escape their bleak realities as a means to ensnare them.

Waldo had already briefed Esmeralda as to why he was there, and she knew better than to ask her Master to provide anymore information than he already had when he had told her he would be paying her a visit, and taking her place during the afternoon tour she usually worked. She knew Waldo well enough to know that he was probably taking her place to set up one of his marks, or recruit a new follower. Either way, Esmeralda had decided the less she knew concerning the matter, the better off she was.

The drive to her apartment didn't take long, and as soon as they had arrived Waldo began working on transforming himself into Esmeralda. She was a bit uneasy that Waldo had decided to assume her identity rather than simply take her place in his, or some other form. But, he had insisted that it was necessary. Waldo had her sit beside him as he applied a latex of her face over his. She watched with awed unease as he grinned while he also applied her make up over that mask. By the time he was finished applying the make up, then the wig she always wore while playing her role



of gypsy fortune teller for the tourists she had to admit that those who knew her well would be hard pressed to distinguish his new face from hers. Though she was several inches shorter than Waldo, the fact she always wore high heels when in her gypsy role, and that Waldo would be seated in a dark tent would help make that difference in height less noticeable. As he applied a final bit of eyeliner he said, "I will arrive just before the tour bus does, and slip into your tent as quickly as quietly as possible. The fact that you have to park so far from your tent makes the possibility of running into someone who knows you greater, but should that happen the fact I am arriving so close to when the tourists are will account for why I am hurried and not wanting to indulge in idle chatter with them. I do not wish to use my ability to cloud their mind unless I have to, so will do my best to insure I avoid contact with those you know."

As Waldo stood up from the dressing table and went over to her closet Esmeralda replied, "Well I usually don't arrive until shortly before the tourists myself, and have never been much for fraternizing with the other people who entertain and look after the tourists."

As Waldo selected one of the velvet ankle length dresses Esmeralda used for playing her role as a gypsy fortune teller he said, "Good, that will make things easier for me." He laid the dress on the bed, reached in the closet and grabbed a shawl, then tossed it on the bed. Waldo opened the small carry on he had brought and extracted a pair of low heels, falsies, and a bra. As he tossed those on top of the dress he said, "I won't need the hip and butt padding I brought since this dress has some of that built in." As Waldo started unbuttoning his shirt Esmeralda walked out of the bedroom and went to the wet bar in the living room. She had watched Waldo disguise himself several times in the past, twice as a woman. But to see him transform himself into a replica of herself, gave Esmeralda a mild case of the creeps. She was glad she was on her second drink when Waldo came out of the bedroom grinning from ear to ear and asked in a voice that sounded eerily like hers, "So dear, how do I look? Or should I say, How do you look?"

Esmeralda took a quick swallow from her drink, then replied, "I'm not sure my own mother wouldn't know you weren't me. And I gotta tell you, that's kind of creepy to see."

Waldo just laughed and said, "Your mother stayed so drunk and stoned on prozac, she wouldn't know her own face in the mirror half the time."

Esmeralda winced at the cruel memory of her mother Waldo had evoked with his words, then after taking another swallow of her drink replied, "Well I'm glad this is a short term gig you are doing as me, or I might wind up just like her."

Waldo saw the wince of pain cross Esmeralda's face, and was secretly pleased by it. But because she sometimes proved useful, and he wanted her happy and obedient, he walked over to her and after softly touching her cheek said, "I'm sorry dear. My thoughtless words caused you pain I did not intend to. And I know how strange seeing me like this must be for you. Fortunately, it will be a very short gig my precious beauty."

Waldo's words of contrition soothed Esmeralda, and she stepped into the embrace he had offered after those words. She knew how thoughtless he could be at times, but also knew he was always contrite afterwards. She allowed herself to relax as he rubbed his hands up and down her back, and closed her eyes so that she did not have to see the replica of her own placing soft kisses on her forehead and cheeks. When he stepped back from her she opened her eyes for a moment, then had to look down and reach for the glass to handle being in the arms of what appeared to be herself.

Waldo sensed her feelings, and backed away from her then said, "I know this little charade is upsetting you dear. Since it is nearly time for the tourists to arrive, I'm going to go and do what I have to. I'll make sure I give everyone that comes to have their fortune told an excellent reading. As soon as that bus load of tourists leave I will return here, and remove this disguise. I would like to spend some time with you this evening, but

alas, I will need you to take me to the airport for my return flight when I do get back here, and out of this disguise that makes you so uneasy. Perhaps soon, we can spend a few days together. When that happens, I will make up the distress I have caused you darling."

Esmeralda gave him a small little wan smile and said, "That would be lovely. I'm sorry about being creeped out by your latest disguise baby. But it is just too weird seeing you as me."

Waldo gave her cheek another soft stroke, then replied "I know dear, but it is a necessary evil I'm afraid since the mark was told all about you, and is looking forward to having a reading done by you. The upside to all this is that at least you know you are getting glowing word of mouth, referrals from some of the tourists you have read for."

Esmeralda didn't even want to know how Waldo knew his mark had received a referral from one of the tourists she had given a reading for. Waldo gave her a quick kiss on the cheek, then picked up her car keys from the counter and left her apartment. As the door closed behind him she took one last sip of her drink, then rinsed the glass out and went into the living room. As she turned on the television, she promised herself she would never wind up like her mother.

As Waldo drove to the Renaissance Fair that he would use to make first physical contact with Katy he was smiling with glee at the thought of all the pain he would soon cause her. Waldo loved causing people pain, and feeding upon that pain. That brief moment of pain he had caused Esmeralda had been a nice little snack for him. Of course, he had to pretend he had not meant to cause her pain, and act contrite for having done so. But he never let the insincere apologies he often had to make to keep his marks or faithful followers where he wanted them, interfere with his enjoyment of their pain. In some ways, pretending to be contrite for causing them pain was as good as causing the pain itself because it proved to him how truly stupid and inferior to him those people were when they believed his insincere apologies. Though he often categorized people as marks,

victims and faithful followers, in essence they were really all the same because even his faithful followers were marks who became victims when they were of no further use to him.

As Waldo pulled into the fairgrounds he spotted a parking spot that would allow him to get to the tent with a minimum of contact with the other vendors who might know Esmeralda. He hurried towards the tent, nodding to a couple of other vendors who waved as he made his way towards it. The tour bus containing Katy was just pulling in as he slipped inside the tent. Waldo set the small case down he had taken out of the trunk of the car that contained Esmeralda's tarot cards and other props. She had been there earlier that morning and already set up the tables and chairs that would be used during the readings. Within a few minutes Waldo had the tent ready for his first customer. He knew that Katy would eventually make her way to this tent before she left and amused himself by wow-ing the other tourists and locals with what they considered amazing readings. Esmeralda's reputation as a tarot reader would improve rather than suffer from his brief impersonation of her.

As Waldo was giving a reading to one of the other people on Katy's tour Beezie was keeping an eye on Katy. He had been having a blast playing the part of tour bus driver. And the passengers on the bus were quite taken with their handsome new driver, who seemed to know all kinds of odd and entertaining things about each stop they made. That he seemed rather taken by the lovely young Katy seemed logical to the rest of the people on that bus tour. Katy's charm and grace had endeared her to all her fellow passengers, and a couple of the young men on that tour had a slight crush on her. That one of the young men was also now one of the doppelgängers made it a little easier to get someone close to Katy during the stops. Another of the doppelgängers was an older woman who shared Katy's hotel rooms. Katy had told Irene about the fortune teller who had given a friend of hers an amazing reading the year before when he had taken the same tour, and invited Irene to come with her and have a reading

done as well. Irene had agreed and so when Kevin exited the tent, Katy and Irene entered together.

Waldo smiled at Katy and then Irene as they entered the tent, though the false smile nearly slipped when he saw the older woman with her. Waldo had been hoping to have Katy all to himself as he did her reading. He could ask the older woman to leave while he read for Katy. Unfortunately the email that told Katy all about Esmeralda, had also mentioned that the sender and a friend had both been together when Esmeralda had done the reading. Waldo was afraid asking the older woman to leave might make Katy wonder why he had done that. He wanted her as relaxed as possible so that he stood a better chance of discovering if she had the powers he was seeking. He decided the best way to handle this would be do the older woman's reading first, and hope she would leave once her reading was done.

Irene's double sensed something was not quite right with the fortune teller the moment they entered the tent. After studying her carefully for a moment the doppelgänger came to the conclusion that Esmeralda was actually a man in drag. The doppelgänger had not been told that the fortune teller was a female impersonator, and wasn't sure if something was very wrong, or if their intelligence simply had not picked up that piece of information. The doppelgänger would ask Beezie about that when they returned to the bus. In the meantime the doppelgänger would stay close to Katy and watch the fortune teller carefully. She sensed the fortune teller wished to do her reading first, and was only too glad to oblige. Giving what appeared to be a nervous laugh Irene's double sat down in the seat across from Esmeralda and said as she smiled at Katy, "Age before beauty my dear." Katy was very agreeable with Irene getting her reading done first, and after laughing sat down in one of the extra chairs in the tent. Katy would enjoy watching Irene's reading, and seeing how good the fortune teller was before getting her own done.

After having her hold the cards for a moment and concentrate on what she wanted answered, the fortune teller shuffled the cards thrice, then laid

them out on the table in a cross pattern. The doppelgänger had sensed that no matter what the fortune teller's gender truly was, the person in front of her had a true gift with the cards. She had been very careful to focus her mind on a question concerning the health of relative she knew the real Irene might ask about while she had handled the cards. Because Irene's doppelgänger was as adept at the tarot as any fortune teller, she could see that the cards had answered that question. But mixed within that answer was also the answer to the reader's true gender. And perhaps to the question of where a certain wizard was. The doppelgänger didn't panic or give away anything as she realized what the cards were saying. But the reader's face, even beneath the mask and makeup showed a flash of surprise as he looked at the cards and understood what they were saying. When he looked up at the doppelgänger though his face was again composed and seemingly friendly.

The second the doppelgänger had realized the fortune teller might be a man in drag, she had taken advantage of the psychic connection she had with her fellow doppelgängers to alert them something might be up and to let Beezie know. While Fred was alerting Beezie, Ed was already on his way over the fortune teller's tent. Irene's doppelgänger relayed a psychic message for Ed to wait outside unless summoned in. By the time the fortune teller had laid the cards out, Beezie and the other doppelgänger were on their way to the tent. By the time the fortune teller began the reading, both the other doppelgängers and Beezie were just outside the tent. Enough information had been psychically relayed through the doppelgängers so that Beezie knew no matter what was in the tent in the guise of a female fortune teller, it did have some true psychic abilities, so they all masked their own abilities, as well the presence of those outside the tent. Beezie grinned for a moment, nodded his head at the two doppelgängers outside the tent to let them know he was on the job, then with a wink, vanished for a split second, then reappeared near the feet of the doppelgängers as a small salamander. The little salamander looked up at the doppelgängers, winked, then scurried into the tent.

As Waldo read for Irene, he desperately tried to reach into her psyche and discover who and what she really was. Irene's psyche was impossible to breach though. That told him whomever and whatever she was, she was no ordinary elderly lady enjoying a bus tour. Waldo was afraid if he tried much harder to breach her psychic defenses she might find out more about him than he wanted her to know. He broke off his efforts to read more than the cards, and concentrated his powers being Esmeralda. He gave Irene the answer to her relative's health, and even though he knew what else the cards had answered, used the other meanings of them and his own creativity to put a different spin upon what those cards were really saying. Irene seemed to accept the reading as accurate. But, a part of Waldo sensed she knew exactly what the cards were really saying. What he did not sense or see was the small salamander that scurried into the tent and sat watching him intently. The small salamander watched the fortune teller intently for a few minutes then scurried back outside the tent, and vanished completely. As Beezie vanished, a "Closed" sign appeared on the entrance of Esmeralda's tent.

## Chapter 12

Drake was editing a recently finished chapter for Kassie while she began work on the next one when he suddenly nodded, then sat up and said, "Beezie is here." The words no more out of his mouth than Beezie appeared in front of the couch they were sitting on. As he leaned against the side of the fireplace he grinned at Drake and said, "I thought it best to report this latest development in person. We have found Waldo. In the guise of a fortune named Esmeralda. He is at this very moment finishing giving a tarot reading to one of the doppelgängers we have watching over Katy. Then he will be giving Katy a reading. The doppelgänger will of course stay close to her as Waldo gives Katy her reading. And should anything untoward happen, Irene's doppelgänger will notify me."

Kassie jumped up from the couch and exclaimed, "Where is he? We need to get there before he harms Katy, or we lose him!"

Beezie grinned at Kassie and said, "Relax Kassie. No harm will come to Katy, and we won't lose Waldo. Besides one doppelgänger inside the tent, and two outside of it, there are also a couple of little flies on the wall in that tent that are my agents. If we all rush in as ourselves right now and take Waldo down, it is going to give the fair Katy an unnecessary fright, not to mention perhaps cause a big scene in a very public place. I think it best if we let him finish Katy's reading, then quietly take him inside the tent."

Drake reached up and pulled Kassie back down beside him, then nodded at Beezie and said, "Good thinking on your part my old friend. The last thing I want is a major battle with Waldo where he currently is." He paused for a moment then looked at Kassie and said, "I know exactly where he is, and what fortune teller he is impersonating. He has either done something to the real Esmeralda, or she is one of his followers, and is allowing him to impersonate her right now." He paused again for a moment, snapped his fingers, and when his cell phone appeared in his hand dialed a number on it, then spoke to the person who answered the phone



he had dialed. "This is Drake. I want the home address of the fortune teller named Esmeralda at the Renaissance Fair Katy is currently at. I need the information ASAP." Drake paused for a moment, then grinned and said, "Thanks, I knew I could count on you." Then with another grin he disconnected the call, snapped his fingers, and once more his cell phone vanished. He leaned over and kissed the top of Kassie's head then said, "Being the meticulous creature that I am, I had the people I knew Katy would be coming in contact with on the rest of tour thoroughly checked out as soon as I had her complete itinerary. Should Waldo manage to escape and shake Beezie's agents, we now have Esmeralda's address, which he will probably return to when he leaves the fairgrounds. If not, then we also have the bloodstone, and can still track him through that if necessary."

Beezie made a disgusted snorting sound and said, "If Waldo escapes that tent and shakes my agents, said agents are going to wish they had never been born. As are some doppelgängers. Besides, now that I have seen Waldo, even in drag, I know who he really is, and have an ace up my sleeve that will guarantee he does not escape me"

Kassie gave a little sigh and said, "Well he has escaped from The Team, as well as many others countless times. He isn't a true shape shifter, but as you saw today Beezie, he a master of disguises. He can't really teleport but is a Master Magician who is very adept at creating distractions that allow him to seemingly vanish into thin air when necessary. Yes, we still have the Bloodstone, but because we had to use such a small amount of reconstituted blood, we don't know if it will work."

Beezie grinned at Kassie and replied, "Don't worry that pretty head of yours Kassie. Truth is, you aren't going to need that bloodstone, even if it does work." Then he turned to Drake, winked and said, "Well time for me to get back on the clock. As soon as he has finished Katy's reading and she is safely away from him, I'll will deliver Waldo to you." Before Drake could answer, Beezie vanished.

Beezie reappeared in a vacant stall in the men's room at the fairgrounds, then quickly made his way back to Esmeralda's tent. He joined the doppelgängers loitering by the side of the tent and listened to the drone of Waldo's voice coming from inside the tent as he waited for him to finish Katy's readings. As he heard Waldo winding up the reading he walked to the front of the tent and was opening the flap as Waldo reached for it to escort Irene and Katy out. Katy did a little double take as she saw their bus driver, then smiled and said, "Are you going to have a reading done?"

Beezie gave Katy his most charming grin and replied, "I most certainly am. I'm hoping there is something in my future concerning a beautiful woman I've recently met."

Katy blushed most becomingly as she ducked her head and exited the tent. The false face of Esmeralda blanched beneath the makeup as Beezie's grin turned upon it. Irene exited the tent behind Katy and hurried her off under the pretense of needing to use the Ladies Room. Katy did not hear Beezie's dark laughing voice saying, "Hello Donny. Or should I say Waldo? Or should I say Esmeralda? You are indeed a man of many faces. But the soul has no face, and it's time to pay the Devil his due." The ace card that Beezie spoke to Kassie about was the fact that Waldo, whose real name was Donny Graham, had long ago sold his soul to Beezie via one of his minions when Donny was just a teenager. Donny had managed to drop off the radar so to speak, but Beezie hadn't been concerned when he learned of that because he knew that sooner or later, the Devil always collects what is due to him. But, Beezie owed his old poker pal an even bigger debt. One that could never be truly be repaid.

As Donny, aka Waldo, aka Esmeralda, backed away from him Beezie grinned a truly wicked grin, reached out and grabbed his shoulder and said, "Come Donny, I have a friend who wants to meet you." Before Waldo could even blink once, they both vanished from the tent. As Drake sat making a notation in red on the chapter he was editing, they reappeared in front of the couch he and Kassie were sitting on. Kassie looked

up in stunned surprise as they materialized in front of them and exclaimed, "That's Waldo?"

Beezie grinned and replied, "Yes, and no. Actually, this is Donny Graham. Donny, once sold his soul to a minion of mine. I was in no hurry to collect what was owed to me, and didn't realize dear Donny had become Waldo. People mistakenly think I keep track of every soul owed to me, which is ludicrous because once the contract is signed, all I really have to do is wait for them to die, and what is owed to me, comes to me. Donny, or Waldo as he is now known, has been busily trying to cheat me out of what is rightfully mine by prolonging his sorry ass existence indefinitely."

Drake gave a cold dark chuckle that sent a chill down Waldo's spine, then said, "Well if you insist my old friend, I will send you his soul when I get through with him. What's left of it anyway."

Beezie gave an even darker chuckle and replied, "Nah, I've seen what's left of them when you get through. It wouldn't be worth having. Besides, hell would look like paradise to him by the time you get through. And what fun is that for me?" Beezie paused for a moment, looked at the watch on his wrist then grinned and said, "I hate to rush off, but I've got a tour bus schedule to keep you know. Would love to stay and watch the fun, but can't keep those nice tourists waiting!" Then with a wink and another grin, he was gone.

As Waldo stood there trying to gather his wits Drake grinned and said to Kassie, "Beezie is having WAY too much fun driving that damn tour bus." At that moment Waldo suddenly reached into the long sleeve of his dress, pulled out a small double barrel derringer and shot Drake. Then turned the gun on Kassie. Before he could pull the trigger though Kassie vanished from in front of his eyes. She reappeared behind him wielding a large cast iron skillet. After raising the skillet above her head, she brought it down on Waldo's head with a resounding thud. As Waldo dropped to the floor unconscious Drake put his hand up to his mouth, belched once slightly, then

spat a small piece of mangled silver metal into his hand, and mumbled, "Damn I hate burping bullets." Then he looked at Kassie standing over Waldo's unconscious form and with one eyebrow raised said, "A skillet?"

Kassie shrugged her pale shoulders and said, "Well it worked didn't it?" Then she reached down and picked up the little derringer that had fallen out of Waldo's hand as he fell to the floor.

Drake laughed and said, "Point taken my dear. It did work." Then he rose from the couch, walked to the coffee table and stood beside Kassie. Both remained looking down at Waldo's unconscious form for a moment. Then Drake leaned over and rolled Waldo onto his back. Waldo groaned as he was rolled onto his back, and after a moment opened his eyes. As he stared up at Drake, the vampyre gave a wide fang bared grin, dropped the piece of mangled silver metal on Waldo's cheek, and said, "Silver bullets are for werewolves Waldo. I am many things, none of them good, but I am not a werewolf. Perhaps you have a wooden stake tucked up one of those sleeves you would like to try driving through my heart?"

Waldo gazed up at the fanged creature grinning down at him, and came to the conclusion that even if he had a wooden stake up his sleeve, trying to drive it through that creature's heart would be useless. Drake then leaned over, grabbed Waldo by the neckline of his dress, and yanked him to his feet. Waldo let out a cry of pain and clutched his head. Drake gave a cheerful grin, then shook Waldo a little. Waldo screamed in pain as he clutched his head, and exclaimed, "You bloodsucking bastard!"

Drake grinned again and replied, "What an unkind thing to call me. Even if it is true." Then he began to drag Waldo towards the wall next to the fireplace. Drake tapped thrice on a brick above the fireplace, pressed it, then tapped twice more. A portion of the wall next to the fireplace swung inward, revealing a winding staircase. Drake looked over at Kassie, winked, then said, "You are welcome to come with us my dear. Though I know you don't like dungeons, and what I'm about to do to Waldo in that dungeon, may upset your delicate constitution."

Kassie thought about it for a moment, then replied, "My constitution is hardly delicate, but I don't think I want to see what you are going to do to Waldo in the dungeon. And does this mean there is going to be another head on a stake?"

As Drake started dragging Waldo towards the winding staircase he grinned and replied, "Yes dear, that is exactly what it means." Waldo didn't need a crystal ball or deck of tarot cards to know they were discussing his head being put on a stake, and began to struggle wildly. Drake reached up and cuffed the side of Waldo's aching head and as Waldo shrieked in pain said, "Stop struggling you little sleaze ball, or I'll drag you by your feet all the way down that staircase."

Kassie nodded at Waldo and said, "He means it Waldo. I suggest you go quietly to your doom, unless you just want to be dragged down that staircase feet first." Waldo decided damned if he was going quietly to his doom, reached into his other sleeve and pulled out a small wooden stake, then with a wild scream, drove it through Drake's heart. Drake let out a cry of mortal agony, and clutched his chest with his free hand. Then he grinned, pulled the wooden stake out, and said to Waldo, "Silly rabbit, tricks like that are for kids. But I know the perfect place to put this stake when we get down in the dungeon." He slipped the stake into his shirt pocket, cuffed Waldo's head again, then shoved him to the floor. He began whistling a cheerful tune as he picked up Waldo's feet and began dragging him down the winding staircase. Kassie shook her head sadly as she heard the thump thump noise Waldo's head was making as they descended the winding staircase, and muttered, "He should have gone quietly to his doom."

After tapping the brick above the fireplace four times, and watching the doorway close, Kassie went back over to the couch and sat down on it. She snapped her fingers once, then hit the speed dial button on the cell phone that appeared in her hand. After a few seconds she said, "Well Boss, you can take Waldo's name off the most wanted list now." She listened for a few seconds then replied, "Drake is taking him down to the

dungeon even as we speak. And before you ask, I really don't think either of us wants to know what he going to do to him when he gets him to the dungeon. File that under the 'There are some things best left unknown' category. He did mention he knew the perfect place to put the stake Waldo drove through his heart." Kassie listened again for a few seconds then replied, "Yes I meant Waldo drove it through Drake's heart. No, Drake isn't the least bit injured." Kassie paused for a few seconds, then said, "Yes, but in Drake's case there are certain rules that have to be followed when preparing the stake for it to do any harm to him. And to be perfectly honest, as powerful and Omnipotent as he's become, I'm not sure even if a person followed all the rules, it would do him any harm at this point." Kassie listened again for a few minutes, then said, "I'll call or send you an email when Drake returns from the dungeon, but trust me, Waldo is no longer going to present a threat to anyone. As to how we found him, well let's just say with a little help from an old friend of Drake's. Now I have to get back to work on this story, I have a publisher breathing down my neck for it." After ending the call Kassie laid the cell phone on the coffee table, picked up her laptop, and went back to work on her story.

As Kassie went to work on her story, Drake was going to work on Waldo. The vampyre was still whistling a cheerful tune as he began to slowly turn the crank of the rack Waldo was tied to. Just before Waldo's bones began to pop from their sockets Drake stopped turning the crank, then looked down at Waldo and said, "Remember how you loved to cause your victims immeasurable pain Waldo?" As Waldo tried to scream around the ball gag in his mouth Drake continued, "Well I can't say I really enjoy this, but before I pop your head on a stake, I do want you to feel the kind of immeasurable pain you caused your victims. I want you to feel it physically, first. Then I want you to feel it down to your very soul. We'll get around to the deep down soul searing kind of pain, just before I pop your head on a stake. And by the way Waldo, Katy has the powers of a true witch. Just like her friend did, and just like Kassie does. Kassie could have gently awakened those powers in Katy's friend, and taught her to use them. And one day soon, she will awaken those powers in Katy and teach

her how to use them. Perhaps I shall turn your head on the stake it will be on, so that you can see it happen. But right now Waldo, I want you to feel the same kind of pain that Katy's friend felt, and that you have caused so many others."

As Drake turned the cranks on the rack a couple of more notches, Waldo bit down on the ball in absolute agony. Waldo could feel nothing but searing pain in every fiber of his being. His mind was trying frantically to shut down and turn the pain off. And as he lay there with the Dark Lord of the vampyres gazing down at him, he knew what his victims had felt when had caused them so much pain. The cobalt blue eyes of the vampyre, were just as merciless as his own eyes had once been. Though Drake's were not backlit by the same spark of perverse joy his had once been. Then the vampyre said in a soft voice as cold as ice, "Do you remember Waldo, how you liked to watch for hours as your victims screamed in agony? Well I do not care to hear your pathetic screams, but you will remain in this kind of utter agony, for the rest of eternity." Then Drake stared hard into the windows of Waldo's soul. Waldo felt a searing agony in his soul that caused him to nearly bite the ball gag in half. As his mind and soul screamed in silent agony, Drake's soft voice said, "The last head I popped on a stake was one of my own kind, so I did not have to perform the distasteful ritual I am going to have to with you. However, the bad taste you will leave in my mouth will be worth it, because I did promise your last victim I would avenge her painful death at your hands."

Drake leaned over Waldo's pain racked form, then with a grimace, sank his fangs into Waldo's throat. The vampyre's face crinkled in disgust at what was running through his fangs, but he kept those fangs firmly sank in Waldo's throat. When Waldo's heart stopped beating, he removed his fangs from his throat, then yanked the ball gag out of the his mouth. Then the Dark Lord of the undead held up one of his own wrists, ran a nail along the vein in it, then held that bleeding wrist over Waldo's open mouth. When Waldo's eyelids began to twitch Drake stopped the flow of blood. He opened one of Waldo's eyes, gazed into it for a moment, then nodded

to himself. After closing Waldo's eye, he vanished from the dungeon. Kassie was still working on her newest chapter when he reappeared in the living room by the fireplace. Kassie paused her typing, looked up at him and asked, "Is it over?"

Drake shook his head once and said, "Well my beloved, it's never really going to be over now for Waldo. But, I need to let him set for a bit before I complete the ritual." Then he grinned and said, "While he is setting, I need to get rid of the bad taste he left in my mouth. And I know the perfect way to do that. So be a dear, save what you are working on, and get your ass in bed."

Kassie grinned back at him, hit the save button, sat the laptop on the coffee table, then vanished. Drake grinned as looked into the bedroom and saw her reappear sans clothes in their bed. As he strode towards the bedroom he took his shirt off and tossed it on the floor. When he reached the bed, he placed one hand on the bedpost and steadied himself while he reached down and pulled his right boot off. Then he winked at Kassie, changed hands, and removed his other boot. Once he had removed his socks and pants, he joined Kassie in the bed. Kassie put her arms around him and went to kiss him, but Drake pulled back and shook his head, then said softly, "No my beloved witch, I do not want to kiss you until all traces of Waldo have been washed from my mouth."

Kassie looked a bit taken aback and said, "Well go gargle with some mouthwash or something."

Drake laughed, then said with an evil grin, "No dear I have something better than mouthwash right here." With that said, he slid down between Kassie's legs and plunged his tongue in her. Her moan of pleasure as his tongue slid deep inside her was music to his ears. And the sweet taste of her was just what he needed to wash the taste of Waldo from his mouth and soul. He closed his eyes, and let her juices saturate his tongue. Then moaned with pleasure himself as they flowed more freely and ran down his throat. He had tasted those who were even worse than Waldo, but noth-



ing tasted as sweet to him as his beloved witch. His hands moved up her body, and when they reached her breasts he gently tweaked her nipples to make the juices flow even more freely. He drank from her until the taste of Waldo was washed from his mouth, then moved up her body, and sank his fangs into her throat. After taking a small drink, he retracted his fangs, then kissed her soundly. As he rolled off her he said, "As much as I would like to plunge something else into you until you screamed with pleasure, I have a ritual to complete. I'll be back to finish what I started with you, when Waldo's head is on a stake." Then he vanished.

As Kassie was sitting up in the bed, Drake reappeared by the rack in the dungeon. He studied Waldo carefully for a few moments, opening one of his eyes and peering into it again, and placing his hand on Waldo's forehead to feel how cool the skin was to the touch. He was having to hurry this ritual along to be finished in time for the midnight tour, but was still satisfied the end result would be what he wanted. Waldo's wig had fallen off as as Drake dragged him feet first down the staircase, but his Esmeralda mask was still in place. Drake grabbed the edge of the latex mask and peeled it from Waldo's face. Small pieces of padding he had used to fill out his cheeks and change the shape of his still clung to his skin. Drake picked those off, snapped his fingers, and cleaned Waldo's face up with the wet washcloth that had appeared in his hand. Once his face was clean, Drake snapped his fingers again, and the washcloth vanished. Then he gave Waldo a cheerful grin and said, "This next part is going to be messy, so we will move you to a special room I have for that." Having said that, he reached down and pushed a small button under the rack. A section of the floor containing the rack began to slowly descend. The section of the floor came to rest in a small tiled room with a large drain in the center of the floor under the rack.

With a snap of his fingers, Drake produced a scalpel. He used the scalpel first to remove Waldo's eyelids, and was satisfied with the way his mouth clenched down on the ball gag as he cut them away. After Waldo's eyelids were removed, he placed the scalpel on the table snapped his fin-

gers again, and produced a pair pliers from thin air. He laid those on the table, and with another snap of fingers produced a metal device to hold Waldo's mouth open. He jerked the ball gag out, shoved the metal device in, and as Waldo began to scream, grabbed his tongue with the pliers with one hand, and used the scalpel with the other to remove Waldo's tongue. Blood began to gush from Waldo's now silent mouth, and Drake once more ran a nail along his wrist and let his blood flow into and mix with the blood gushing from the base of what was left of Waldo's tongue. Within a few seconds the blood stopped flowing from that wound. Once more he snapped his fingers, then used the towel that appeared in his hand to soak up some of the blood that had filled Waldo's mouth. He tossed the bloody towel into the air when he was done, and it vanished with a snap of his fingers. Then he reached into his shirt pocket and produced a small vial of green liquid. He opened the vial, then poured the liquid into Waldo's mouth. After he emptied the liquid from the vial into Waldo's mouth he removed the metal device keeping it open, snapped his fingers again, and began to sew Waldo's lips shut with the needle and thread that had appeared in his hand.

After he had Waldo's lip sewn shut Drake looked down at him and said, "Now for the really messy part. This is where I remove your head, so I can pop it on a stake. Normally, if you cut off a vampyre's head, even it will die. But, did you know cockroaches can live for weeks without a head? Isn't that fascinating? It took me many years of trial and error to perfect the technique I now use to make the heads of my enemies into guardians of my grounds. You are neither vampyre or cockroach of course, but even after I remove your head from your body, your brain will live on for as long as I do. Which will be for all eternity if I have any say in the matter. Your perpetually open eyes will be among many others that watch over my castle. I see everything they see, and hear everything they hear." Drake reached under the rack and unsheathed a sword that rested in specially built bracket under it. As he held it up he said, "This Waldo is the Balisarda Sword. Crafted by the sorceress Falerina for Rogero, it will cut through even the most heavily enchanted substance. Any sword would

remove your head of course, but I have found that for some strange reason, this sword works best for finalizing this ritual. We need your neck stretched just a wee bit more though before I make the final cut so to speak."

Drake took his free hand and gave the crank on the rack another slight turn. For a second he thought Waldo was going to bust a stitch trying to scream as the rack stretched his neck and bones. He heard a couple of popping sounds as some bones separated from their sockets. When he was satisfied Waldo's neck was stretched just right, he put both hands on the sword, and as he raised it chanted some words in a long forgotten language. Then as he began chanting more words, he brought the sword down in one lightning swift movement. He had been careful of how he brought the sword down because he did not want to cleave completely through the rack, which the sword would have easily done. He raised the sword back up, and as he watched the blood dripping from it, continued the ancient chant. Once the chant was complete he let go of the sword with one hand, snapped his fingers, then carefully cleaned the sword off with the cloth that appeared in his hand. Once the sword was clean the cloth vanished, and he replaced the sword in its sheath beneath the rack. He unbuckled the strap that had been holding Waldo's head, grabbed the head by its hair, then vanished from the room.

After he finished popping Waldo's head on a stake, Drake returned to the room below the dungeon to dispose of the rest of the body. As he was burying Waldo's remains in a very deep hole in the dark woods surrounding his estate, the rack and room were being thoroughly washed and rinsed by the high powered water jets installed in that room. Once the wash and rinse cycle was finished high powered blowers came on to dry the rack. When the blowers finished their job the section of the floor containing the rack rose and returned to the dungeon. After disposing of Waldo's remains, Drake returned to his and Kassie's living quarters and sat back down next to her on the couch. Kassie finished the sentence she

was writing, saved her work, closed the laptop, then looked over at Drake and asked. "Is it finished?"

Drake nodded his head once, then grinned and said, "Why don't you give Doug another call and tell him Waldo is taken care of now."

Kassie raised one eyebrow, started to say something about his use of the term again, then decided it would be a moot point. Instead, she reached over, picked up the cell phone and hit The Boss's speed dial button. When he answered she said, "Drake is here with me now, and said to give you a call and let you know Waldo is taken care of." After a brief pause she laughed and said, "I'll convey your thanks." She turned her head towards Drake and said, "The Boss says to tell you he truly appreciates your help in this matter."

Drake grinned back at Kassie, took the phone from her hand and said, "Hello Doug. I appreciate the sentiment, but since taking care of Waldo helps insure Kassie's safety, no thanks are necessary." Drake paused, then gave a dark chuckle and said, "I won't say taking care of Waldo was a pleasure, but it was a necessary evil. Now if you will excuse me, Kassie and I need to get ready for our dinner guests." Drake listened for a moment then chuckled and said, "Well yes, but I feed them really well, and do them no harm at all." Having said that, Drake hit the end call button, then handed the phone back to Kassie. "We need to get ready for our dinner guests my dear. A couple of them are big fans of yours that are really looking forward to having dinner with you." Then he grinned and said, "I must say, having you here with me for these dinner parties is helping to increase the revenue this castle makes. Not to mention your fans are some very tasty people."

Kassie shook her head ruefully as she leaned over and placed the laptop on the coffee table, then said, "Sometimes, I almost feel guilty for luring them into your lair."

As rose from the couch Drake simply chuckled and replied, "Why feel guilty? Your fans love being lured to my lair because they long to be bitten by a real vampyre. I'm simply giving them a nice tour of the castle, a really excellent dinner, and what they long for."

Kassie leaned over, kissed him softly, then said, "I know. And since you do them no harm, I guess there is nothing to feel guilty about." Then she turned and went into the bedroom to change into an appropriate dinner gown. Drake watched her for a moment with a lecherous grin, then rose from the couch, and followed her into the bedroom.

## Chapter 13

As Kassie opened the closet door to choose a gown for the dinner party, he walked up behind her and put his arms around her. Then whispered against her ear, "We have some time before dinner my love, and I need you, so very badly right now."

Kassie turned around and looked into the eyes of her immortal lover, and saw the need blazing deep within them. She wrapped her arms around him, and let him see and feel the need she also had for him. When he brought his lips down upon hers in a searing, almost brutal kiss, she responded by digging her nails into his back and returning that kiss with equal passion. His hands moved down her back, cupping her buttocks, then lifted her up. She clung to him, digging her nails into his back even harder as she raised her legs and wrapped them around him. He sucked her tongue into his mouth as he carried her to the bed. When the back of his knees were against the bed he removed his mouth from hers and pulled her shirt up over her head. He tossed the shirt to the floor, then reached behind her and unfastened her bra. Kassie began unbuttoning his shirt as he tossed her bra over his shoulder. As her nails brushed his bare skin, Drake closed his eyes and leaned his head back. When the last button was unfastened she raised her hands to his shoulders, then pushed his shirt down his arms. Once the shirt had slid off his arms and onto the bed, he raised his hands to her breasts and gently cupped them. As his fingers began to softly tweak her nipples, he leaned forward and began to kiss her again. Kassie wrapped her arms around him and let her hands roam up and down his broad back.

Drake shivered and moaned against her lips as her nails trailed down his bare skin. Her softest touch sparked a fire in him that completely consumed him at times. She was in his blood, under his skin, engraved in his heart and eternally on his mind. He removed his hands from her breast and began unbuttoning her jeans. His mouth moved to her ear, and he whispered, "I need you so. I need to feel myself inside you right now. And I need you by my side for the rest of eternity." As he pushed her jeans

down he moved his head back, looked into her eyes and said, "I need you in a way no mortal man will ever need you. I will love you, for all eternity. And I will never let you go."

As Kassie began unbuttoning his black silk pants she looked into his eyes, then took a deep breath and replied, "I need you too. I will love you, for as long as you love, and are true to me." As she pushed his pants down she gave a little grin and said, "But sometimes, you sound a lot like a stalker."

Drake's dark soul had brightened a little when Kassie had taken that deep breath and admitted her need for him. He knew how hard it was for her to say those words. Even her carefully phrased words of love had not dulled that brightness because he knew he would always love and be true to her. He wrapped his arms around her, slid his hands down to her firm buttocks and lifted her again. As Kassie wrapped her legs around him and he sat down on the bed he gave a dark chuckle and replied, "Baby, get a clue, you are in the arms of your eternal stalker. Now be a good girl, slide those warm wet velvet walls of your around my Omnipotent cock, and fuck me like you really mean it."

As she slid down on him Kassie gave a throaty little laugh and replied, "My aren't we bossy!" Then she moaned with pleasure as he slid deep inside her and whispered breathlessly, "Damn baby, you are so damn hard. And feel so good inside me."

The feel of her sliding down onto him, combined with her breathless whisper made him even harder, and caused a moan of pleasure to escape his lips. He wrapped his arms around her tightly and for a few moments just gently rocked back and forth. His need for her was so strong right then he knew lasting any length of time would test even his willpower. But, because he wanted to feel her pleasure as much as his own, he gathered that great willpower of his and loosened his hold on her. "Lean back a little baby." He whispered. When she did he looked into her amber eyes as he cupped her breast in his hands and began to gently tweak her nipples.

She bit her lower lip, but kept her gaze locked on his as her body responded to him. He could feel her warm wet velvet walls gently rippling along him as he lovingly rolled her nipples between his fingers. He gave a throaty growl of pleasure when she moaned softly and pressed down harder against him. "Lean back a little more my love. I want to watch your face as I suck on your nipples."

Kassie leaned back a little more, closed her eyes and moaned as Drake's mouth closed over one nipple. She could feel little tingles of pleasure traveling from her nipples all the way down to her vulva. She felt Drake's hard shaft twitch from the ripples he was causing in her pussy as he gently worked one nipple between his teeth, and the other between his finger. Then felt it jerk as she moaned softly and soaked his shaft with her juices. When he switched his mouth to her other nipple she began to gently rock her butt back and forth. The slight movement, combined with his mouth and fingers on her nipples felt so good she bit her lower lip again and gave a low throaty growl of pure pleasure. When Drake began to move under her, and gently closed his teeth around her nipple Kassie gasped, and softly cried his true name once. He gave a deep throated growl, and thrust up hard under her. She shuddered with pleasure, and pressed down against him as hard as she could. As they began to rock harder and faster together Drake removed his hands and mouth from her nipples. He wrapped his arms around her, pulled her close to him. Kassie wrapped her arms tightly around him, and rocked harder against him.

As she dug her nails into his back, Drake growled with pleasure, scooted farther back on the bed, let himself fall backwards, then rolled over on top of her. Kassie kept her arms and legs wrapped around him, and quickly picked up the hard and fast beat he was now rocking their world to. Drake slipped his arms from underneath Kassie's back, braced himself on his elbows, and rocked harder against her. He placed his mouth on hers and kissed her fiercely. Kassie's head began to swim from the feelings he was arousing in her. She could feel herself going to that place that only his touch could take her to. It was a place where passion



and love where all that she felt. A place where all she wanted to do was lose herself in him. That passionate place also terrified her because long ago, in another time and place, she had gone there in the arms of a mortal man who had wanted her only for the gift of eternal life she could give him. Time had come full circle, and now it was she who was being offered the gift of eternal life.

Drake knew the feelings and fears that were raging within her. It would be so easy to take total control of her mind and forcibly lay all her fears to rest. So terribly easy to remove his mouth from hers and plunge his fangs into her throat, and really begin the process that would make her his for all eternity. To do that though would betray both the trust Kassie had given him, and The Magick. Because he had vowed never to betray either again, he did not plunge his fangs into her throat like a part of him longed to do. Instead, he paused his rocking motion for a moment, removed his lips from hers, lifted his head and gazed into her eyes, then said softly, "I'm not the man, or vampyre I once was Kassie. No more than you are the same High Priestess who gave that foolish man the gift of love you did. I cannot change what I did in the past my love. But I can, and will spend the rest of eternity happily atoning for what I did by loving, protecting, and being true to you. I will not ask you to trust me completely right now. I understand I have to earn that trust over time. But Kassie, will you love me, just a little right now?"

The witch who had once been a High Priestess gazed into the cobalt orbs of the creature she had given the gift of immortality to so long ago, and said very softly, "I do love you. More than just a little right now."

A rare feeling of total happiness swept over him when he heard her words, and deep within his dark soul a tiny warm bright spark softly glowed just a little brighter. He gazed down into her beloved amber eyes and said softly, "Your love means everything to me. I will never, ever betray that love Kassie." Then he bent his handsome head again and captured her lips with his. As he kissed her he began to rock against her to a slow and steady beat. Kassie picked of that slow steady rhythm of love,

and gently drew his tongue into her mouth. He moaned as the tip of her tongue stroked the underside of his, then gave a deep low throated growl as Kassie sucked his tongue deep into her mouth, and quickened the beat of their rhythm of love.

The sound of that deep throated growl of pleasure caused Kassie to suck his tongue even harder, and thrust up hard against him. Somehow saying those words to him had released something deep within her. Her passion for him rose hot and vibrant to the surface. She raised her legs higher, wrapped them more tightly around him, and dug her nails hard into his back. She pushed aside all doubts and fears, and allowed the passion she felt for him sweep her away to that place only he could take her to. No one else could take her breath away with his kisses the way he did. No one else felt as good as he did inside her. No one else could make her heart leap the way he could. As she felt her inner walls contracting hard against his shaft in an orgasm that numbed her mind, she removed her mouth from his and whispered, "I love you, Drake Stone."

Drake growled again and shuddered as he plunged deep inside her. One dark night she might cry out his true name thrice in ecstasy. But what she was saying right now was that she loved him for who and what he had become. As Drake recaptured her lips and drew her tongue inside his mouth he realized that as long as she loved him for who and what he had become, a part of him really didn't give a bat's bony butt if she ever thrice cried out that ancient name. That named belonged to mortal man who had been too stupid to realize the true value of love. For the most part, the beast that mortal man had become after receiving the gift of immortality had been tamed. Except for how he dealt with his enemies, Drake Stone was a very civilized creature.

As he sucked Kassie's tongue inside his mouth, and drove himself harder and deeper inside her, the creature who was for the most part, very civilized, gave a deep throated growl that had just a hint of a howl in it. His beloved amber eyed witch did bring out another type of beast in him at times like this. One that enjoyed the feel of her nails digging so hard into

his back as he buried himself up to his balls in her warm wet velvet walls. It was a beast that also enjoyed the muted mewling sounds of pleasure coming from deep within her throat as he sucked her tongue and took her breath away. When she shuddered with pleasure, and her nails broke the skin on his back, Drake released her tongue, tilted his head back and gave a growl that had a very definite hint of a howl in it.

The look on his face, and that growl with a very definite hint of a howl in it incited the beast in Kassie. Her amber eyes had a glint of something very wild within them as she dug her nails in even harder, and rocked hard against her immortal lover. Watching his face as he fought to control his passion further incited her. She raked her nails down his back as she moved her hands down it, then grabbed his buttock and jerked them towards her. Drake bared his fangs in a grimace of pure pleasure, mixed with a little pain, and shuddered in a way that made Kassie's eyes gleam wickedly. She dug her nails into the firm flesh of his buttocks, and jerked him deeper into her again. Had he been a mortal man, Drake would have been panting and gasping for air. Instead, he was making a deep throated growling, almost howling sound as he bared his long fangs and threw his head back. Seeing him like that caused Kassie to give a deep throated growl of her own that further raised the hackles of the beast between her legs.

When he heard Kassie's growl, Drake tilted his head downward and gazed into the amber eyes of the witch he loved to distraction. What he saw in those amber eyes would have taken his breath away had he been a mortal man. His heart didn't skip a beat, but as he looked down into Kassie's eyes, his dark soul shuddered with pleasure. After taking one look at what was in her eyes he threw his his back again and gritted his fangs as he continued to take long hard strokes. Then he heard her ask, in a sultry growly voice that had a hint of a laughter in it, "Why are you staring at the ceiling my love? Are you contemplating asking for God's help right now?"

Drake couldn't help but pause and laugh as he looked back down at her and said, "No you amber eyed little vixen. I'm not contemplating doing

that. I am trying to make this moment of sublime pleasure last as long as possible. It's a little easier to do that if I don't look down and see your beautiful face, and what is in those amber eyes of yours right now."

Kassie grinned up at him and replied, "Well don't prolong it too long, remember, we have dinner guests arriving any moment."

As he threw his head back again and gazed up at the ceiling he took another long hard stroke that buried him up to his balls in her and replied, "They can wait. If nothing else, we'll arrive just in time for dessert."

Kassie dug her nails into his buttocks harder, jerked him into her deeper and gasped, "Tsk, tsk my love it would be rather rude to do that." Then she let one hand travel down his buttocks.

As Drake felt that one hand traveling downward he gritted his fangs harder and said, "Keep your dainty hand off my balls, you evil little wench. I don't care how rude you think it is, I'm going to enjoy this as long as possible."

Kassie moved her hand back up his buttock, dug her nails in again and once more jerked him hard against her, then gave a growling gasp of pleasure as the tip of his shaft met her womb.

Drake felt her inner walls contracting hard around his shaft and her juices soaking it as she climaxed again. The feel of her juices made him hungry to taste them. In one fast movement he pushed himself off of her. He glanced down at her surprised amber eyes, then grinned and scooted backwards. Before she could ask him what he was doing, he lowered his head and plunged his tongue into her. As she moaned with pleasure, he slid his hands under her buttocks and lifted them slightly. A low growl of pleasure escaped his throat as the taste of her saturated his tongue. He pressed his lips against her Pandora's box and sucked her sweet juices into his mouth. The taste of them filled his mouth and made his head spin.

He tilted her buttocks up a little more, and let the tips of his fangs barely pierce the soft skin his lips were pressed against. Blood mingled with her juices and the combined taste was so very sweet he felt his Omnipotent cock jerk hard between his legs. He almost gave in to the feeling of ecstasy, but he wanted that feeling prolonged just a little more. He also wanted his shaft buried deep within the walls his tongue was currently licking when he finally allowed himself to climax. He filled his mouth with her blood and juices, then raised head and scooted back up. He raised Kassie's legs high, locked her ankles around his neck, and plunged his shaft deep inside her.

The Dark Lord of the vampyres tilted his head and growled with pleasure as he felt the toes of the witch he loved to distraction wiggling against the back of his head. He picked up the beat hard and fast once more. He held the taste of her in his mouth as he took twelve long hard strokes. On the thirteenth stroke he swallowed that sweet taste, then opened his mouth, bared his fangs, and howled.

Kassie's mind and body shuddered as she felt his shaft jerking inside her, and heard his howl. The orgasm she had with him was so intense that for a moment she felt as if her mind was melting down completely. Suddenly she could feel him pushing his way inside her mind, thrusting his feelings and thoughts in it as hard as he was thrusting his hard shaft inside her body. For a second her mind tried to resist that hard invasion. Resistance was futile though, and soon her mind was overwhelmed by his passion for her. She knew he could have easily taken control of her mind and made her feel anything he wanted to right then. But what he was doing was taking control long enough to make Kassie understand how he felt about her, and what she did to his mind and body. As his howl died out he withdrew from her mind. He stayed inside her warm walls though. Kassie watched his face as he fought the hunger that was already beginning to overwhelm him. His face was still upturned towards the ceiling, his eyes closed, and fangs gritted as he battled the hunger. Kassie caressed his buttocks softly and said, "Look at me."

Drake heard her words over the roar of the hunger building within him, and looked down at her. He met her gaze, and for a brief moment the hunger building within him was overwhelmed by the love he saw reflected in her amber eyes. There was no fear, or judgement in her steady gaze. Only love and acceptance shone from those beautiful amber orbs of hers. Her hands moved up his buttocks and along his back, then pulled his upper body down towards her. Drake tried to resist because he did not want his fangs anywhere near her throat at that moment. The arms that pulled him towards her though were surprisingly strong, and before he knew it, his body was against hers. Kassie's arms wrapped tightly around him and held him close to her. Drake kept his head raised and as he looked into her eyes whispered, "You are holding a very dangerous beast right now my love. A beast that as much as he loves you, cannot control the hunger much longer."

Kassie wrapped her arms more tightly around the beast and whispered, "I know what I am holding in my arms. I also know whose blood the beasts craves most right now." Then she smiled into the eyes of the beast, moved one hand to the back of his head, bared her throat to him and pulled his down. He resisted at first. The hunger so strong inside him he feared if he sank his fangs into her throat he would not remove them until it was too late. The witch entangled her fingers in his hair and jerked his head down.

Drake gave a deep throated growl and sank his fangs deep into her throat. His mind was spinning as much from what she had done, as from the exquisite taste of her blood flowing through his fangs. He drank long and deep, then with a groan, jerked his head back, gazed into her eyes and said, "Let me go my love. Unless you intend to take my hand and cross over to the dark side of immortality with me this night." Kassie simply smiled at him, and Drake's eyes grew wide as he saw the small fangs that smiled uncovered.

Before her astonished immortal lover could say anything else Kassie replied, "Perhaps my love, I am already there." Then before he could re-

cover from the shock of what he was seeing and hearing, Kassie pulled his head down and sank her small fangs into his throat. She took a deep drink from the throat of the beast, and heard him moan with pleasure as his blood flowed into her small fangs. After a moment she removed her fangs from his throat, licked her lips, then as she gazed into his startled eyes laughed and said, "For all your great wisdom my love, you failed to realize that I began that journey the moment I called you back into my circle of life."

Drake blinked once then said, "But you are not a true vampyre! Even if you did just grow fangs and willfully bite me!"

Kassie reached up and softly stroked the side of his face and said, "I will never be a true vampyre dear. Not in the sense you mean. You have always assumed that your powers could turn me into one. But, the truth is my love, even if you bled me dry, then filled me with your blood, what would be created would not be the true vampyre you think. Yours is the only blood I will ever crave. As long as you love me and walk this earth though, so shall I. This is the covenant I have chosen to make because if there ever comes a time that your love for me dies, or you no longer walk this earth, then I do not wish my feet to tread upon it for all eternity."

Drake grabbed Kassie's hand and kissed the palm of it, then replied, "My love for you will never die." Drake paused for a moment, looked into her eyes and said, "You've known this all along. And somehow managed to hide it from me."

Kassie returned his gaze and replied, "Yes I have known it all along. I had to hide it from you until I knew how you would react."

Drake studied her thoughtfully for a moment, then said, "Fair enough. I can understand you feeling the need to do that."

Kassie smiled and said, "I am glad you understand my love. Now I think we better get ready for dinner before the hunger begins to over-

whelm you. The small bite I took tonight will only take the edge off for a very short period of time."

Drake's eyebrows rose in surprise. "Your bite tonight is why I am suddenly not so overwhelmed with the hunger?"

Kassie nodded her head. "Yes dear. When I drew your blood into my fangs tonight, I drew some of the hunger from you. Food, and later when you are well sated, a small amount of your blood will sate the hunger I now feel. But, the blood lust will soon return full force in you."

Drake furrowed his brows for a moment, then suddenly grinned and said, "My beloved and ever surprising little witch, you have some explaining to do. But, that can wait until after we have both sated our particular appetites." He rolled off her, grabbed her hand, and pulled her off the bed with him as he rose from it. As they walked toward the closet he chuckled and said, "Eternity with you is never going to be boring darling."

The amber eyed witch simply smiled, then leaned up and gave her Dark Lord of the vampyres a soft kiss on the cheek, then replied, "I'll do my very best not to bore you to death dear."

When they reached the closet Drake let go of her hand, then lightly smacked her bare ass and said with a chuckle, "You are wicked little witch darling. Now get that bare ass dressed, and let's go to dinner."

Kassie chose a simple yet elegant white sheath dress, a wide gold belt and a pair of high heeled burnished gold sandals. From the lingerie shelf she chose white lace bra and panties and flesh toned thigh highs.

Drake watched her slipping the bra and panties on as he put on a pair of black silk pants. Watching her slip into them gave him such a hard on, he had to be careful zipping his pants. He was buttoning his blood red silk shirt as she slipped the dress over her head, then placed the belt around her slender waist. She took the thigh highs and heels over to a chair sitting near the closet. After sitting down she slid the thigh highs on over



shapely legs, then slid her dainty feet into the sandals. She turned the chair towards the make up table it was seated in front of. She gave her face a light dusting of mineral powder, touched her cheeks with blush, applied eyeshadow and liner. After painting her lips a pretty pink she ran a brush through her hair. Drake grinned as she rose from the chair and walked towards him. "My dear, you look simply stunning."

Kassie placed her hand on the arm he held out when she reached him, and replied, "Well thank you darling. As always, you look elegantly handsome."

The dinner guests had just begun dessert when their host and hostess approached the dining room. An awed silence descended upon the room as Kassie and Drake walked into the room. The sight of the slender golden haired woman in white resting her hand on the arm of the tall dark haired man clad in red and black caused all eyes to widen, and a couple of mouths to drop open in amazement. Drake had to suppress a dark chuckle, and Kassie a delighted giggle as one of the young men sitting at the table nearly dropped his dessert fork and thought to himself, "My God, it's like seeing Malibu Barbie hook up with Dracula."

By the time Drake's soft seductive voice, and Kassie's velvety southern drawl had bid them welcome, the guests were well on their way to being delightfully enchanted. Shortly after drinking the toast proposed by Drake to the castle's original owner, they were totally mesmerized. As Drake took a sip from one of the guests, Kassie sat down in her chair, then removed the silver cover keeping her dinner warm. She was ready for her dessert as Drake took his last sip from the guest seated to on her right. Drake sat down beside her as she picked up her dessert fork. He grinned, leaned over and kissed her quickly, then sat back up and snapped his fingers thrice. By the third snap the guests were eating their desserts. In between bites they enjoyed lively conversation led by Drake and Kassie. When dessert was finished Drake and Kassie bid their guests farewell, and retired to their room.

Once they were comfortably seated on the couch in front of the fireplace Drake put his arm around Kassie and said, "Now tell me my beloved little witch, just exactly what is it you are right now? And why can't I ever turn you into a vampyre? I have turned other true witches into one of my kind with no problem."

Kassie leaned against him and replied, "I'll answer that last question first. Those other true witches weren't the one who broke the laws of Magick creating you dear. As to exactly what am I right now? Well I am as much of a vampyre as I'm ever going to be. I possess all the powers you do. And as long as you walk this earth, I will continue to possess them. The main difference between what you are, and what I am, is that you must have human blood to survive, but I can't drink any blood but yours."

Drake studied Kassie thoughtfully for a moment, then said, "Can't? Or won't?"

Kassie knew exactly what he meant, and answered, "Can't, my love. You can never turn me into the independent Queen of the vampyres you want to because that is part of my penance for creating you in that other time and place." Kassie paused and looked at Drake for a moment, then continued. "And perhaps it is as much a part of your penance as well. The goal of that High Priestess who created you was never immortality. That however, was the only goal of the mortal man that High Priestess broke the laws of Magick for. What you must come to understand and accept is that the penance can never be done in full for either of us because that penance is as long lasting as the gift of immortality."

Drake thought about that for a moment, then gave a disgruntled sigh and said, "Well that sucks worse than I do."

Kassie laughed and replied, "Only from your current point of view my dear." Then said more seriously, "I understand and have no problem with accepting it. I hope in time, you will come to fully understand and accept it as well."

Drake snapped his fingers, stuck the eternal doobie that had appeared in them between Kassie's lips and said, "Oh I understand and accept it. I just don't like it."

Kassie inhaled from the eternal doobie, removed it from her lips, then after exhaling said, "That's because you are an spoiled Omnipotent brat who has been used to getting your way for a very long time now."

Drake gave a haughty sniff and said, "I resemble that remark."

Kassie laughed and replied, "You certainly do darling."

As Kassie took another toke from the doobie Drake suddenly remembered something and said, "You mentioned earlier that food and my blood would relieve you of the hunger you felt from taking the edge off my post coitus blood lust. You need to consume the second part of that equation while I am still fully sated from our dinner guests."

Kassie exhaled and replied, "That might be a good idea. The hunger I feel is not anywhere near as overwhelming as the blood lust is for you. But it is a nagging distraction I would be glad to be rid of right now."

Drake grinned rolled up his sleeve and said, "Let me see and feel your fangs baby."

Kassie rolled her amber eyes upward and replied, "You will enjoy this way too much." Then she grinned and extended her fangs.

Drake grinned wickedly as watched her bare her small fangs, then reached down with his other hand, adjusted the front of his silk pants and replied, "Of course I am!" As Kassie sank those small fangs into his wrist, he gave a soft moan of pleasure. The sight and feel of her feeding from his wrist was inciting a perverse pleasure in him. When she removed her fangs from his wrist he said, "Are you sure that was enough darling?"

Kassie grinned, licked her lips, retracted her fangs and said, "Yes you pervert, I'm sure that is enough."

Drake pouted and replied, "Drats. I was really enjoying that. And you could at least leave your fangs extended. They are so adorably cute and sexy."

Kassie rolled her amber eyes again, then laughed and extended her fangs once more.

Drake grinned happily, then leaned over and kissed her, giving each of her fangs a gentle lick as they kissed.

Kassie shivered with pleasure as his tongue caressed her fangs, then returned the favor, and gave both of his a slow lick. After their lips finally parted, she snuggled up under his arm and quietly toked on the doobie while Drake stared into the flames.

As he watched the flames dancing, Drake found that accepting what was, and wouldn't be, was surprisingly easy. As long as he had Kassie's love, he had everything that was truly important to him. It had taken him many centuries to understand that without love, immortality was a never ending curse. Kassie had lifted that curse from him though.

Kassie smiled as she picked up some of thoughts, then said softly, "No darling, you lifted the curse from yourself by loving me first in the form of what you thought was a mere mortal woman, then again by loving me for who and what I truly am."

Drake turned his head and gazed into the eyes of the witch he loved to distraction and replied, "No wonder your kind are called the Wise Ones." Then he gathered her up in his arms and set her upon his lap. As he wrapped his arms around her and held her close, he vowed never to forget the lesson of love he had learned.

As Kassie snuggled against him she prayed he would keep that vow and never betray her, or stop loving her.

Only time would tell if he would keep that vow.