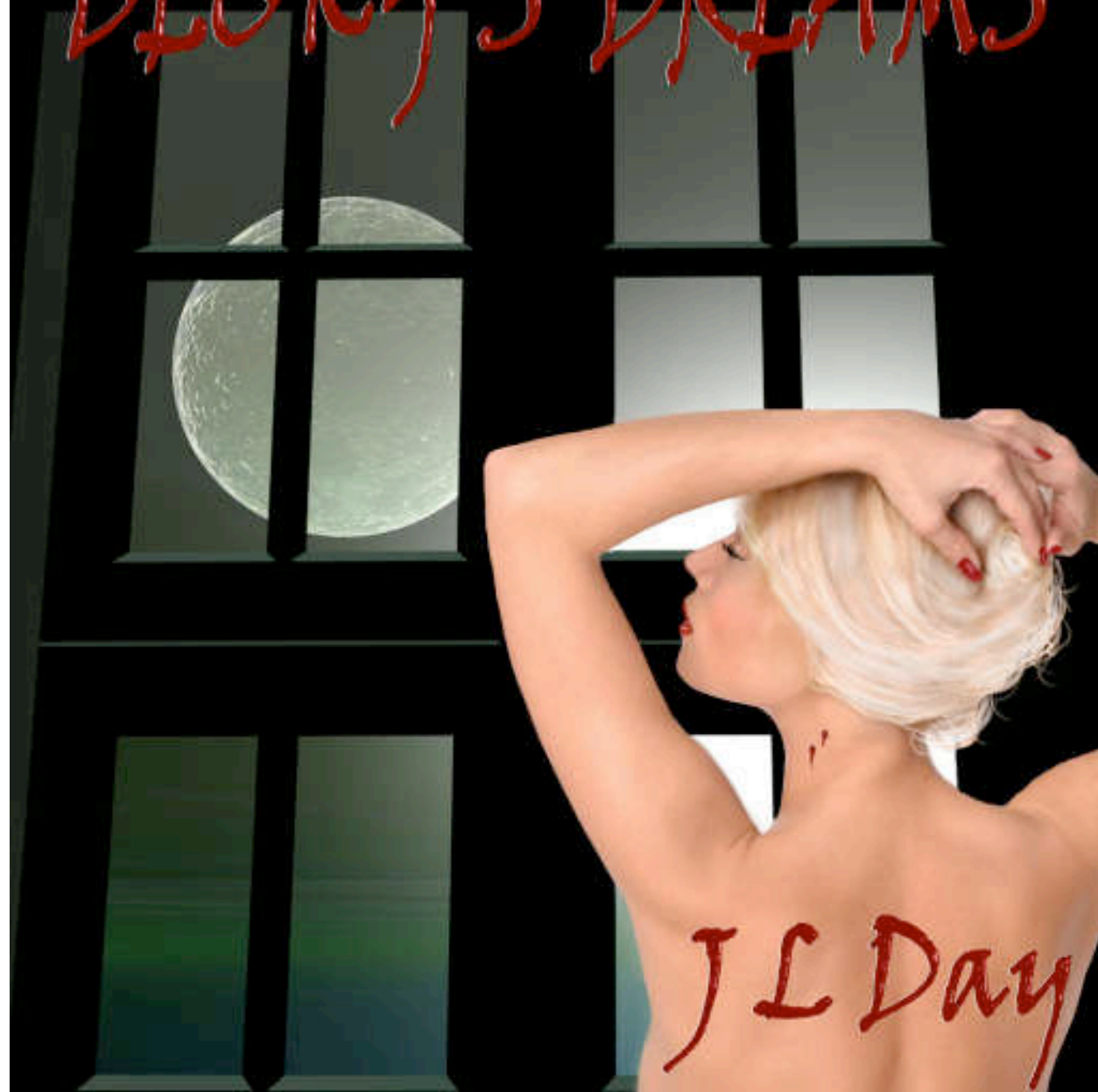


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BECKY'S DREAMS



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BECKY'S DREAMS

By

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BECKY'S DREAMS

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BECKY'S DREAMS

Becky sat up quickly in bed. She rubbed her sleepy eyes to clear them, her ears tuning to the silence of the night, straining to hear what awakened her.

There was nothing but stillness and absolute silence. Not even the tiniest chirp from a cricket.

The nightly ritual was all too familiar. Every night for the past week she had been startled awake, only to find peace and silence surrounding her. Always the same, time after time, night after night.

She slipped from bed as silent as she could, tiptoeing from the bedroom and down the hall to check on her son. He was lost in the carefree sleep of youth and innocence. Continuing down the hall, she stepped out of the house into the back yard. A warm and sultry summer night stirred with a slight southern breeze, and her flimsy T-shirt flapped in the wind. She tuned her ears again to the sound of the night, but was rewarded with no more to answer her questions than she found inside of the house.

The grass felt cool beneath her feet and the water in the pool made a gentle rippling sound in the breeze. It slowly dawned on her that not only was the night still and quiet, it was totally and completely dark. No security lights, no lights on the inside of nearby homes, nothing. The night was black, as if there were an eerie curtain blocking out the outside world.

Thinking there must have been a power outage, she peered around into the gloom of the pitch-black night, feeling alone and vulnerable. Fright won out in the battle of emotions echoing in her mind and a quick spin turned her around to nervously walk back toward the house. As the security of the back door loomed closer, a calm overcame her, creating the desire to stay outside and enjoy the night. It overpowered the other thoughts tormenting her worried mind. Where seconds before she had felt insecure and wished for the sanctity of the house, now all was peaceful and her only wish was to dwell awhile longer in the serenity of the unusual night. Mystical and magical, she heard her name floating upon the breeze in a drawn out and hoarse whisper.

“Beccckkkyyyyy.” Mind reeling, her thoughts raced to rationalize between imagination and reality.

An odd realization crept into her mind making the hair on her neck stand up. *That whisper was not being spoken out loud.* It seemed more like an echo in her mind. It also sounded familiar. Where had she heard it before? There was something unsettling about it, some quality that she couldn't quite grasp, and it unnerved her.

Oddly though, the voice comforted her and made her feel as if she were wrapped in a blanket of absolute safety. Becky gave into a sudden uncontrollable urge and removed her

T-shirt, letting it slide from her hand onto the ground. She stood nude and exposed to the world, the gentle caress of the breeze coursing over her body. Air blew seductively over her breasts and she felt her nipples perk up, tightening slowly to stand erect and firm. There was an uncanny sexual intensity in the air and the breeze awakened desires deep within her tummy.

Feeling mesmerized by unseen forces, she sensed a mystical power floating upon the night air. She found herself enjoying the security of the darkness engulfing her. She faced into the breeze, her hair whipping softly about her face. Wisps of bangs floated over her eyes and tendrils stuck to the corners of her mouth. The breeze caressed her tummy and tickled between her thighs. Her nipples stood firm and pierced into the night. An echo of unknown feelings stirred deep within her femininity.

“Beccckkkyyyyy,” the low whispering voice called again. She did not even bother to look around; she knew that no one was there. The voice spoke to her mind, not her ears. Feeling slightly ludicrous and insane, she whispered softly in to the night.

“Are you what has been pulling me from my sleep?”

“Yeeeeees,” came the answer, again in the long, drawn out whisper. “It is I, little one,” the same low and throaty voice continued aloud, half rumble and half sigh.

An odd feeling washed over her. She was completely naked, alone and vulnerable in dark shadows, yet she felt safer than imaginable. Whatever it was, whomever it may have been, she knew that she was safe and protected not only from them but *by* them.

“Where are you?” she asked into the night.

“I am in the beyond, little one. I can not come to you, unless you ask.”

Her mind grappled with what she heard and silently she wondered if the unseen voice was trustworthy.

“You may trust me.”

“But, I didn't *say* anything,” she murmured, her voice trembling.

"One need not speak for me to hear, little one."

With weakened knees and trembling body, her mind raced to find answers to questions rattling around inside her head. Her breasts heaved, rising and falling in rapid succession as she gasped for breath and tried to compose herself. She forced herself to inhale deeply and calm down. She slowed her breathing, telling herself to think this through.

Though she was terrified, there was an overwhelming sense of the familiar about the man, the creature, or whatever he may be. Her common sense told her to fear; yet her instincts told her she was in no danger. Perhaps it was because she had been having the dreams so often, she felt she knew, at least in some small way, the manner of the creature speaking to her from the darkness.

"Come to me that I may see you and know to whom I speak," she requested of the unseen voice in the night, her voice trembling with panic mixed with excitement.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhh, yes, little dove," echoed the answer.

In the corner of the yard near the edge of the fence, a mist materialized. An outline slowly took shape and began to loom silhouetted against the darkened sky. Her breathing stopped for a moment as she took in the sheer enormity of the mystical man. He slowly strode closer, as the muscles in her belly tightened and a wild pulse pounded in her throat.

Looming before her, he was both magnificent and fearsome. He was very tall and broad shouldered. His size was awe-inspiring. In the shadows of darkness, she could tell very little about how he looked, only that he had ominous yellow eyes that seemed to see right through her. "Calm yourself, Becky. It is I, and you have nothing to fear." His real voice split the silence of the night.

Turning his palm up, he extended his arm to her. His eyes told her to take it and obediently, she did so. He led her to a dark corner near the house then released her hand. He faced her and said, "Come into the light that I might better see you." Just as she was about to ask what light he was referring to, he snapped his wrist and fire leapt from his fingers, igniting a small pile of sticks that appeared from nowhere. The night now danced with soft firelight and stepping nearer, she complied with his request, but in doing so got a better look at him as well.

As her eyes slowly drank him in, she could not help but feel a thrill of excitement shiver through her naked body. She could not see *him* that well. But, she could see the burning light of admiration smoldering in his eyes. She could tell by his breathing and the intent look on his face, he was not only admiring her naked body, he was worshiping it.

"My, my, my," rumbled his powerful voice. "You are quite the sight to behold. I am breathless."

An odd sort of warmth spread through her as a tremor in *his* voice signaled his appreciation for the beauty and grace he found before him.

He stepped closer to her and she felt as if her heart would stop. A reassuring smile spread over his face and he made a slight bow of his head. She understood that he was telling her not to fear him.

Now that he was closer, the dancing flames illuminated his features. She was startled to realize that his eyes were not yellow but clear. Somewhere between gray and blue, though they really had no color at all. When he stepped from the fire and immersed himself once again into the night, they returned to their yellow glow of incandescence. His eyes were one of the most intriguing things about him; it was as if they reacted and changed at his whim.

His skin was light and unblemished, not dark and tan as she had somehow had imagined. His hair was long and dark, like a shimmering black veil that hung from his head and nearly enshrouded his face.

Looking up at him, she again felt the shock of his enormous size. *He must stand nearly seven feet tall!* His long and elegant limbs sprouted from an athletic and well-toned body. Her eyes trailed down his legs, noting the size of his feet. Big feet, she noticed and then a blush spread over her face from the thoughts that danced through her mind.

The light of the fire faded into darkness. Again, she stood before the looming shape outlined so magnificently against the sky. With his hands on her shoulders, she gazed thoughtfully into the yellow orbs that peered intently down at her.

"Who are you?" she asked in a quivering voice.

"All in good time, sweet Becky," came his throaty reply.

He leaned toward her and lowered his face closer. Shock overwhelmed her as she realized that if kissing her was his intent, she would not stop him. Instead, she anticipated his lips with eagerness. A feeling of disappointment washed over her as he passed her lips and leaned lower. The disappointment slipped away as his lips pressed softly against the side of her throat.

He lightly kissed her neck, lips parting to suckle the tender flesh and stroke it with his talented tongue. His arms wrapped firmly around her waist and he pulled her tightly against his powerful body. Though she willingly accepted his advances, she felt trapped. She was helpless, but eager. Frightened, yet curious. He kissed down her neck and nuzzled gingerly. His lips on her shoulder, he bit ever so gently at the collarbone.

His lips moved back up her throat, and she felt a shiver course through his body. She felt him tremble, the heat of his breath flowing down her chest, making her nipples strain against him. His hands reached down to cup her ass and he pulled her firmly up to him as she was carried away with a feeling of peaceful relaxation. Somehow, this magical being was intoxicating and anesthetizing her.

His lips parted and deep in her soul she knew what was coming next. She was not sure if she was victim or prey—perhaps just an object of his desire—she simply did not care.

First, she heard a slight popping sound then a piercing sensation, but oddly, no pain whatsoever. *The popping sound was his teeth tearing through my throat*, she realized in an oddly comforted mind. She felt a small trickle of blood dribbling down her throat as he suckled tenderly.

She felt the beat of her heart and then another sensation. It was his heartbeat echoing hers. The beats mixed and became one. A wave of euphoria overtook her. A soul-wrenching orgasm shuddered through her body as he slowly and gently lowered her to the ground.

Lying on her back, seeing the night slowly fade into a gray mist, she mumbled a question: “Am I going to die?”

His teeth slipped from her throat and a sad sigh escaped from her chest. He gazed lovingly into her eyes and caressed the sides of her face as he spoke in a soft whisper.

“No, little one, you will not die.”

He kissed her forehead and each one of her cheeks. Then he was gone, leaving her to lie there, aching and yearning for him.

She awakened the next morning in her own bed, sleepy and spent, but none the worse for wear. She felt as if half of her was missing. *Strange how you can miss someone you just met*. Her mind turned to him, eagerly awaiting his return. She knew he would return.

* * * *

The office was fast-paced and hectic. Becky worked with vigor, though it was exhausting, more so mentally than physically. Yet, she felt oddly energized and alive. People at the office even commented on it, saying she must have caught her second wind and was whizzing around the office like a teenager.

She even *felt* like a teenager. Her body did not feel the stress this time of year usually piled on. Her mind was acute and detail-oriented to a degree long lost. Answers to questions came before they were asked. She second-guessed what each person needed and her mind whirled with startling clarity.

She did not question this newfound rejuvenation. She did not waste a precious moment with idle thoughts or curiosity as to its origin. She knew from whence the gift came. In some dark corner of her mind, she knew full well that her unearthly visitor from a few nights ago had granted her some small piece of his power, a tiny speck of the smoldering fire that illuminated his night eyes.

"It was him," she muttered to herself. "He gave me this." Silently making a wish, she said, *I only hope it lasts*.

She glanced around the room and took in the spectacle of day-to-day office life and felt more like an observer than a participant. Everything around her seemed to be in slow motion. Sounds were startlingly loud.

When deep in thought and more or less hypnotized by the rhythm of life, a gentle and hushed voice whispered to the recesses of her mind.

"Beccckkkyyy."

Startled, she looked quickly around the room, but there was nothing out of the ordinary.

"Shhhhhhhh," whispered the voice again. "Do not be frightened. It is I."

Surveying the room, her eyes found no glimpse of what they sought; her newfound friend was not there. She struggled with the thought of calling him friend, part of her thinking she should refer to him as Master. There was no one even vaguely resembling the figure that had loomed in the haze outside of her home.

Deciding to be brave and being very cautious not to make a sound with her lips, she forced her mind to utter; "Greetings, Master."

Holding her breath, she waited nervously and prayed her answer was the correct one. Finally, at long last, the reply echoed in the silence of her mind.

"Well done, little one. Your salutation pleases me."

She had been standing, looking around the room and watching the activity around her. Feeling a bit queasy and possibly even faint, she sank slowly into her chair and felt secure in the sanctity of her desk.

Becky forced herself to breathe, struggling to calm and center her mind. She waited impatiently for his voice to speak again, each tick of the clock seeming to take days. Nothing, not a single sound, came to her mind.

A sinking feeling deep in the tummy made her feel nauseous. Trying to stand, Becky discovered her knees were wobbly and she decided to wait another minute before getting out of her chair. She began to feel her composure coming back to her then stood slowly like a colt on newborn legs, and walked quickly to the restroom. The restroom felt like a sanctuary. Peaceful solitude washed slowly over her. She reached for the door and the lock clicked into place with a metallic *clink*. Alone, she slowly began gathering her thoughts.

She stood in front of the sink and ran lukewarm water over her hands, splashing it delicately onto her face. Staring into the mirror, she noticed little beads of water running along her chin, dripping down her throat, and she lost herself in the reflection.

"Such a beautiful face," the invasive whisper once again crept its way into her mind. "Stand very still, little dove," the voice rumbled. She froze like a stone

statue, allowing only her eyes to move. Heart racing, she felt magically transfixed, terrified of what was coming but euphoric with blissful anticipation at the same time. Believing she was slipping away from reality, she considered that perhaps the surreal moment she was now experiencing might possibly be something from a dream and surely could not be real.

Completely alone in the restroom, the mirror right in front of her verified there was no one else in the room. Somehow—*Oh GOD, how*—she felt warm breath on the side of her neck. She peered closely into the mirror and in total amazement realized that she could see the strands of hair near her throat flicker as the breath flowed across her neck. Terror, joy, fear, ecstasy, reckless abandon and nightmarish anxiety all collided, a jumble of chaotic emotions wreaking havoc in her mind.

Oh, GOD, she screamed inwardly. *I can feel his hands on my hips!*

Another glance into the mirror once again reaffirmed her thoughts. Subtle impressions of hands made dents in the fabric of her blouse. The breath flowed a little firmer and a gentle laugh echoed from his mind to hers.

“Shhhh, you are safe. I can not harm you anymore than I can harm myself.” His raspy voice calmed and soothed her.

His hot breath moved over her neck. She felt the heat and dampness of it flowing down her blouse, tickling the curves of her breasts as it drifted down the cleavage and fluttered over her tummy. The heat, along with the excitement, made her entire body feel warm, and an indescribable, cozy feeling overtook her. She felt the rest of her body awaken as a familiar dampness between moist thighs reminded her she was a woman.

Invisible hands strengthened their grip on her voluptuous hips. She felt a kiss from warm and wet lips pressing softly into the delicate side of her throat. Mesmerized and entranced, she watched her reflection in the mirror. She could see the imprint his sensuous lips left on her skin.

His unseen hands slipped around her hips and slid up under the bottom of her blouse. Gentle strokes on her smooth tummy awakened fires in her womanly core that made it difficult to breathe. Time came to a complete stop; there was only herself, the mirror and his magical hands.

Breathless with anticipation, she watched, hypnotized as the clear outline of hands stretched through her blouse. The imprints crept higher and then mercifully, they cupped her anxious breasts, caressing them through the lacy bra. In the mirror, it looked like a small animal had wiggled up her blouse and was trying to get out. The sight was almost comical, but the intensity of the moment drove away any desire to laugh. She could scarcely take in enough breath to keep from feeling lightheaded; expending precious air on laughter was out of the question. The

outline was so clear she could even see fingers as they closed over the nipples straining against the confining bra, tugging gently on each one.

Serious heat and moisture percolated in the clean-shaven mound softly nestled between her thighs. Tiny droplets of moisture trickled along swollen lips and her panties soon felt moist. A tightening of her tummy made her aware of her state of arousal and her entire body shivered with delight.

His hands descended slowly down her torso, and his lips closed against the softness of her throat. Down came the magical hands. They traced along her curvaceous form and followed the lines of her hips, working down her thighs. They ran along the waistline of her skirt then lifted it slowly. Watching in the mirror, all she saw was her skirt rising magically into the air. Then at long last his hands slid up her thighs, along the outer sides of her hips. The mouth that suckled her throat opened and teeth raked gently over her delicate skin.

Ohhhh GOD, her mind once again cried out. Yeeeeesssssss!

She waited in delirium for the slight prick as his teeth popped through the skin, a sharp but short-lived pain. Ecstasy washed over her and flooded away all conscience thought or awareness.

Fingers crept and crawled slower and slower towards heaven, she felt the suction as he closed his mouth to bring her the bite she longed for and craved so desperately. She felt his teeth drag over her sensitive skin and pull back. She tensed knowing that next would come his angelic bite. Bracing herself, she felt a flood of moisture cascade down her thighs as a spectacular orgasm racked her body.

Closer, closer, here it comes.

His teeth pressed into her.

Tap, tap, tap, a knock echoed on the door.

"Becky, are you all right in there?" A worried voice violently disrupted the moment.

She looked into the mirror, but there was nothing, not even the outline of hands. Her skirt had floated back down to her knees.

"Yes, I am okay," she said with a disappointed feeling washing over her. She smiled softly and gazed at her flushed face in the mirror. Leaning slightly forward, she blew a kiss and walked to exit the door.

* * * *

Lying in her hotel room alone and bored, Becky draped herself across the bed to take a nap. Away for some work-related training, she enjoyed the quiet solitude and time for herself. Even with the peace and tranquility of not being subject to the constant beck and call of endless streams of people, she could not quite seem to

relax enough to take the luxurious nap she had been yearning for. She was having trouble identifying the cause for the restlessness and then it dawned on her—she could feel *him* coming for her.

There were a couple of very important parts in that last thought that bothered her. Things so subtle as to be ignored by many, her subconscious seemed inclined to enlighten her. First was the very fact that she could somehow sense him coming for her, moving closer and closer as he made his way. Second is that she could feel him coming at all.

In the pit of her stomach, she felt him closing in long before she had the slightest sound to validate the feeling. The third thing that troubled her is that the inner voice quite clearly said coming *for her* and not coming *to her*. Something so simple as replacing *to* with *for*, yet it made an entirely different change to the context of the thought.

A unique and heady feeling built to a crescendo in her mind. She realized that the emotion so completely overtaking her was a mixture of horror and pure, unadulterated wantonness. Sensing his nearness, her breath sped to a pant, her tongue flicked along anxious lips, her breasts heaved as if she has just finished a marathon. A plethora of emotions swarmed through her mind and ignited a fire throughout her body.

He was close enough that she could hear his boots as he stalked down the concrete hallway, a hollow and echoing click as each heel impacted the floor. She knew he was making so much noise in an effort to torture and to entice her mind to wander. Closer and closer he came. Finally, there was an incredibly soft and gentle tapping at the door.

As she walked to the door, her mind wrestled with what might come next. She knew she should run, that locking the door and calling the police was the only logical thing to do. But that was not what she wanted to do.

As the door swung open, she instinctually lowered her head, staring down at the floor. From somewhere deep within her soul, she heard a voice saying meekly, "Please come inside, Master."

She stepped back and away from the door, feeling him as he swept past her into the room. The door slowly swung shut and the locks clicked into place with a *thunk*.

Startled, she realized neither one of them had touched the door or taken the action of closing it. It miraculously shut, of its own volition, but her heart knew whose powers closed the door. Tears welled in her eyes. Her body trembled and the fire in her already nervous tummy roared into an eternal flame.

Her eyes lifted to stare into his. He raised his hand, palm out to her and she came to the realization that she was completely paralyzed. Somehow, with the gesture of raising his arm, he had cast a spell or hypnotized her in some mystical

way. He walked to her—tantalizingly slow—and placed a hand upon her heaving chest, pushing her onto the bed. She fell onto her back, eyes staring at the ceiling and felt his knees sink into the mattress beside her.

She observed for the first time that his index finger had transformed into what could only be described as a talon. It slid along the bottom of her jaw and scraped at the edge of her chin. Then it flicked downward and the buttons of her blouse were gone. With the same nonchalant movement, he separated her bra in the middle. It slowly slithered off of her breasts and fell limply to each side. His hands slid under her shoulders and he lifted her up, drawing her to his chest as the other hand pulled the remnants of clothing from her shuddering body.

A quick flick of the sharp talon and her blue jeans were button-less. A *tug* and the zipper gave way. The jeans made a sort of vibration as the talon sliced through the cotton threads. A whisk of his hand and her panties joined the pile of shredded material that once was clothing.

Straining to raise her head to look at him, she felt his gaze seep into her soul as his burning eyes locked onto hers. There was an almost rhythmic pulse as his eyes throbbed with color. Not color as most people have in their eyes. A smoldering fire lay in his eyes; a pitch black darkness that sucked her in. Two large orbs of darkness became one and then all was black as reality first blurred and then fell completely away.

She saw him purse his lips and blow, as if to whistle at a pretty girl. As he did so, the lights popped out one by one. *Pop, pop, pop*. When the last bit of illumination disappeared in concert with the final popping sound, she realized her eyes had already adjusted and could see everything around her in perfect detail. He had vanished into thin air, not a trace of him to be seen.

She lay there for a while, occasionally trying to move, but unable to because his grip on her had not loosened in the least. At long last, she heard his boots again. This time, there was the scrape and unmistakable dragging sounds accompanying the hollow click of his boot heels. The door swung open and she saw his shadow in the door. He stepped into the room and she saw what was making the dragging sounds outside. The door slammed shut behind him. A whimpering young woman struggled at his side, his hand entwined in her long flowing hair as he dragged her by it.

Becky wondered what he had in mind. Part of her logically thought this was some act of perversion and he was bringing a third party into the night's frolic in classic ménage à trois. Even as she thought it, she felt her eyes drawn to his and watched as he bent to place the shivering girl on the bed beside her.

Breathless, she watched as his head lowered to the quivering girl's throat. She stifled a scream as she heard his needle-like teeth pop into tender flesh. She saw it all in slow motion—how the girl's legs stiffened and jerked; how her body

convulsed. She watched in amazement as the terrified girl calmed and melted into him.

Becky noticed he had stopped. He was watching her intently, his eyes seeming to bore into her very soul. There was dampness between her thighs and a confusing chaos of emotions boiling in her head. An odd mixture of abject horror and extreme sexual intensity raged for supremacy in her mind. She had no thoughts for the circumstances, no guilt and no sense of responsibility to her child. She knew she should not be having the thoughts she was experiencing. She was aware that she should have been considering the effects this adventure would have on her family; on her child. But, her mind was focused with absolute tunnel vision on the drama unfolding before her and on the unmentionable emotions wracking her mind. The sensations melded into one and what had felt like a smoldering coal blossomed into a raging inferno. She vaguely recognized the feeling. It was hunger, but it was more than that—much more. It was an insatiable yearning for nourishment; an unquenchable thirst so powerful as to consume her mind.

She watched in awe as he drew her closer and then offered the young girl's throat like the tantric spoils of war. "Drink, little one," rumbled his voice, echoing inside of her head.

She lowered her mouth to cover the gaping wound in the girl's delicate neck. Without the slightest revulsion, she began to suckle the blood as it streamed from punctured veins. As she lapped eagerly at the bloody feast, her mind recalled suckling her baby at her breast and she felt her nipples tighten. It was the same sensation, the same peace. It was an eerie semblance to a suckling child and the bond between mother and infant. The bond was different, the emotion unique, but the underlying chemistry felt vaguely the same.

After a moment, she realized she could feel the heartbeat of her conquest. She felt it drumming in her temples, throbbing in her femininity. She felt very nearly as if her hungry mouth would inhale the girl's soul. Watching the girl's body grow limp, she sensed the life slipping from her prize, like the girl was sliding out of a cloak and stepping toward freedom and release. There was none of the sadness one would expect, none of the guilt or stomach wrenching horror at what she had just done. It was as if she had done the girl an incredible honor, or perhaps as if she had given her a great gift.

As the life ebbed from the girl's body, Becky sensed the soul pass through her as it re-entered the universe. This was an awakening. She realized that there is no death. There is only a continuation of life. A soul merely takes a step from one world into another; the mixing of day into night.

She kissed the girl's cooling forehead, thanking her for the gift, then turned her eyes to meet her Master's. She saw the obvious pleasure in his eyes, but behind the twinkle of happiness, she saw a roaring furnace of desire building towards release.

Again feeling paralyzed by some magical spell, she watched as he leaned toward her face. Thinking he was about to kiss her, *or possibly rip out her throat*, she could not help but feel slightly nervous as his lips reached for her soft skin. She felt the stroke of his tongue and the plumpness of his lips pressing into her and realized he was cleaning the blood from her.

"Mmmmmm, a fine vintage, was she not?" she heard his voice echo in the recesses of her mind.

His lips traveled downward to her chest and covered each breast, smothering them in affectionate kisses. His tongue trailed along and slithered to and fro intermittently between kisses. He circled the erect and swollen nipples, kissing and sucking the soft underbelly of each breast. His tongue danced upward and spiraled teasingly around each nipple, first one and then the other. He moved back and forth, sensuously smothering each breast in attention as he lavished affection upon her. His hands reached down, parting her willing thighs as he suckled her breasts and his knowing fingers danced erratically over her skin. Dancing and hopping from location to location, his fingers somehow deepened her enchantment.

Lifting his face from Becky's breasts, he began kissing down the middle of her tummy, slowly and sensually. His tongue glided over her clean-shaven pubic mound, and he lifted his eyes to meet hers.

"Maybe later, little one," he murmured softly and then moved back down to lie beside her.

A low moan escaped her, the anticipation and sexual excitement that had built within her body cried out for release, but she knew it must wait for later. He seemed to have other plans.

Taking her by the hand, he gently pulled her to a standing position and guided her across the room. They stepped out onto the balcony and before she realized what was happening, he pulled her with him. For a brief moment, the night air rushed by her face and caused a lump of terror to rise in her throat. They were falling.

The dropping sensation lasted for but a brief moment then they begin to soar as if on magic wings. Holding hands, they glided across the night sky and the lights of the city dim below. Somehow, she knew if he were to let go of her hand she would plummet to a gruesome death. Air rushed over her nude body; she felt as light as a feather as they continued their ascent into the night.

The wind coursed over them and its caress on her bare skin reminded her of skinny-dipping on a warm summer night. It flowed over her body, tickling and soothing every nook and cranny, as well as the more delightfully exposed portions of her anatomy. Climbing closer and closer to the moon, she experienced exhilaration impossible to describe. They flew higher and higher, until finally her lungs felt as if they would implode, then they begin a gradual descent to the

waiting earth. Ever so slowly, the lights began to glow brighter, the city came back to life and the world became animated again.

* * * *

Once more, Becky awoke in confusion. Her stomach heaved and cramped. She rushed into the restroom to vomit and torrents of what could only be blood gushed from her mouth. Kneeling in front of the toilet, she wiped her mouth with the back of her hand, staring at the smear of near black blood.

Once the cramping ceased, she rose to her feet and staggered to the sink to wash her face and gargle. Looking into the mirror, she found herself re-living the previous night and wondered how much was real and what might have been nightmarish dreams.

Mom, a voice called out to her from somewhere deep in her subconscious.

This voice was not mysterious or awe inspiring; it was the sweet and angelic voice of her son. His voice rang in her head, echoing in her ears. The voice of her son brought reality sharply into focus and she felt turmoil, chaotic emotions battling for supremacy in her heart.

As she brushed her teeth, images of her son flashed through her mind. She could not help but wonder why he was on her mind. She traveled to schools and seminars often enough and was not usually plagued with homesickness. Yet, there he was, in her every thought.

She gazed into the mirror, a quizzical face staring back at her and she felt haunted by something she could not quite seem to grasp. Then it dawned on her. Last night's adventures—where were they taking her? Where was this wonderful and exciting new Master leading her?

As she replayed the night's activities, she felt no shame or remorse. It was oddly beautiful, the taking of the girl's life. In reality, she herself had not punctured the delicate throat nor had she stolen the girl away. She relived the euphoric moment when the girl's soul slipped free from her body, the pure glow of happiness in the youth's eyes and the whispered thanks as her soul left this life and entered the next.

When she had seen the gorgeous soul floating upwards to the brilliant white light miraculously appearing in the night sky, all she remembered feeling was joy and celebration. She knew the Master had not taken life from someone with a desire to live, but instead had assisted an unhappy soul in gaining its freedom. She knew the death had been merciful and liberating. She recalled her surprise at discovering that life was so fragile, so beautiful and that there was no real death. Passing away meant just that—passing from one life into the next. No terror, nothing to fear, just moving from one point into another.

What was it that bothered her?

Mom, the voice again pleaded in her mind.

Then it came to her. To live the life of her beloved Master would mean abandoning her child. She knew what her Master was and what it meant. He was a vampire, an immortal, and to devote herself to him would mean leaving her child. The mere thought of this brought pangs of remorse. In her heart, she knew she could never abandon her child.

But, what about him, his feelings, his pain? Does it even matter? Would he even let me leave? Her mind played through countless scenarios as she gathered her thoughts.

She saw him; her imagination holding a perfect picture of his face. There was something sad and forlorn about him. Though he never mentioned it, she knew his was a lonely soul and that eternity had taken its toll. Part of the smoldering blackness of his eyes was a haunting, empty loneliness. It lay there, unheeded by most. Yet, it was there and she could see it.

"Master, come to me if you can," she spoke aloud, her voice sounding hollow in the empty room.

His voice startled her, he replied so quickly and so very closely.

"Yes, little one."

Her shocked eyes looked up, seeing him standing in the corner immersed in the shadows of the dimly lit hotel room. His warm smile filled her with joy, her body feeling as if it might float happily into the air. So many gifts this man had given her. There was so much more to discover, places to go, things to experience and unspoken promises yet to be fulfilled.

"Master, where is this going, this thing between us? What is it exactly that you offer me? What sacrifices must I make? What changes? Do I have choices? Am I already past the point of no return?"

She could see the pain in his eyes, as he realized she had been thinking about the consequences of a life by his side. She knew he could see into her very soul, and that he could see the image of her son so firmly emblazoned there.

"There are no changes, no choices to make, little one. I will not take you away from your son." His voice sounded sad and weary. "I offer you the joy of friendship. The bliss of ecstasy unleashed and the freedom to escape from your world now and then. That is all. I will not and would not take you away from a son that needs you more than I. Never would I dream of hurting you or your son.

"I brought you the girl last night because I wished for you to see with your own eyes, experience through your soul that what I do isn't always so horrible or murderous. There can be a beauty to it. Not all lives need to be lived. Some are more horrendous in living than dying. I did not wish you to think of me as a monster.

"I will not lie to you. There are times when it is not so glorious, nor so honorable. Not all souls are so happy to leave. But, for the most part, I try to feed on melancholy souls wishing for the chance to leave this life.

"Mine is a lonely life. I have lived through countless years and have watched generation after generation of friends, loved ones, and acquaintances pass from this life into the next. My life is an endless cycle and often it seems I am just reliving the same night.

"Hunger gnaws mercilessly at the hollow pit of my stomach. Ravenous and wild, it churns inside of me with cataclysmic fervor. It is more than mere hunger, more than wanton desire. The need to feed on not only sustenance but on the very essence of life causes within my tormented soul an upheaval beyond human comprehension. Raging like an inferno, inside of my pain-wracked body a storm engulfs me.

"Every hotel I hide in, be it an inn from the old days or a cheap motel beside an asphalt highway, they are all the same. Only the food the humans eat and the clothing they wear changes. The night itself is as repetitive as one of the television shows I watch when boredom overcomes me. It is always the same.

"I can hear the heartbeat of the man in the next room. It thumps not unlike a distant wind-up alarm clock. I am surrounded by smells and sounds that sicken yet tantalize me. Sweat and body odor permeate the air. Try as I might, I can't seem to shut out the loud and boisterous bumping and crashing in the rooms around me. A crew of workers from some oilfield company blowing off steam or teenagers having a wild and reckless party, their noise invades my mind and disrupts my thoughts. Now and then, a beer bottle falls and crashes against the ground outside of my room. Prostitutes climb the stairs to the jeering catcalls of men lost in the moment and oblivious to those around them.

"I can feel the raw and chaotic energy being pumped into the night by testosterone-driven parties. I feel their excitement, the animal desire and their reckless abandon. The energy they emit combines with my own and the furnace within me rages even hotter. I smell fear from the shifty-eyed salesman cowering in the room next to me. I smell the stale cigarettes and whiskey of the man passed out in alcoholic stupor in the room on the other side of me. I stand in my doorway and try to breathe in the night air and allow my mind time to settle and as I do so, a young girl walks by and smiles at me in a somewhat brazen manner.

"She glances up at me, eyes bleary, dim and blurred. 'Wan some cumpny darlin?' She could almost be the same girl, one century to the next. Her voice is raspy and rattles. I can't help but wonder if she is aware of the cancer slowly devouring her throat and lungs. I don't speak to her, but look at her in a way that causes her to avert her eyes and shuffle quickly away. Not for long, though. Soon another girl just like her will make the same proposition.

"I re-live this endless cycle time and time again. Though it is tempting, I won't feed on any of these imbeciles I speak of. Their alcohol-laden blood gives me a headache the next morning and the drugs that flow through them so freely make my mind swirl and loose control. Loosing control for one gifted with my powers is not a good thing. It isn't good for me and it certainly isn't good for the humans that I shelter myself amongst.

"There is an odd stewardship, a sort of responsibility between an immortal such as I and the humans he dwells among. It sounds cruel and unjust, but in many ways they are a crop to be tended and cared for. Yes, crops are harvested, but great care must be taken not to destroy the seed upon which my survival depends in the long run. To put it in human terms, a hunter can't go out into the woods and murder every deer in the forest. He must exercise control and cultivate certain ones, leaving the breeding population to grow and prosper. A prosperous herd is well worth the extra care and restraint that goes in being a good steward. It also insures your own survival and maximizes the benefits you reap.

"Stewardship. That is the reason I cannot simply give in to every urge I have and pillage everything around me. It is what keeps me from going out and causing mayhem and destruction, much as the idea appeals to me. I must be honest, though. It is more than just self-control and restraint. The sickness that runs rampant in the people I find myself surrounded by turns my stomach. Just as a human would shy away from rancid meat or soured milk, I avoid feeding on the dregs of human society as much as possible. A pity, in all actuality. Were I to feed more on the lower life forms and forgotten souls, I might provide a better service to the *crop*. I do tend the herd and cull undesirables, but that is another matter. I perform that service for the good of all, for the welfare of my crop, and largely because they simply piss me off.

"Nothing tastes sweeter in my throat than the torrential gush of blood pouring from the ragged gash ripped into the neck of a pedophile or a rapist. I am not particularly fond of most humans, but there are those among them that are not even worthy of being referred to as a person. They are subhuman. Even their blood is tainted. I don't drink it, but spit it back upon the ground after draining it from them. There is no sweetness in their blood. Rather it is the sweetness of righting a wrong, avenging the innocent and stopping the horror from happening again. That sweetness is intoxicating and I indulge in it, time to time.

"For the most part, I am much like any other hunter. I seek the perfect prey. I seek the perfect setting. I am after not only fulfillment, but am also mindful of my immediate and long term welfare. When I feed, I must admit I prefer to dine on the fine and delicate bouquet of a woman. Men will do and I suppose I take that route most of the time, but for a truly *tasty* treat, I hunt the streets in search of a woman. There is food and then there are delicacies. Drinking the blood from some

dockworker or truck driver will keep me alive and most times I am satisfied with them, but there are times, oh, there are times when I crave something a bit more exotic.

"Sometimes, it is the joy of toying with my meal that pleases me more than the sustenance itself. Sometimes it is the rarity of it."

Becky looked at him and could see the pain and anguish in his eyes as he recounted the days of his life.

It is always the same, he said

"Throughout the centuries only the clothing and surroundings changed, never the people.

"I walk through life alone, as I have for ages. Mortals think that immortality would be divine, but I assure you it is not always such a thing to be envied. The saying sounds foolish, but it is hauntingly true—forever is a long time.

"It is a long time to be alone, to stand on the fringes of the living and watch without truly being able to become a participant and to watch unobserved as life passes you by. It's a long time to stand outside a window, looking in."

* * * *

What a sad and lonely life, Becky thought to herself.

She gazed up at her Master. Though he had promised not to take her away from her son, she will forever feel that he had claimed her as his own and that she—in some strange way—belonged to him. Her arms ached to wrap around him, to pull him to her. She longed to give him comfort. She was sad to know he would awaken in the same world tomorrow as he went to sleep in today and that it would go on that way for him, every day a repeat of the one before.

As she considered her own life—seemingly mundane and boring before—she considered herself blessed. Immortality may be okay in a dream world, but the reality of it is not so glorious as one assumes. Thinking of watching her son grow into a man, of seeing and participating in his life and even the scary prospects of growing old, she realized wasn't such a horrible prospect. Life really wasn't all that bad.

"Will you just leave without ever seeing me again?" she asked her Master. "Have the past weeks been frolic and nothing more?"

"No, little one," he answered in a hoarse and emotional whisper. "I will be here. I will watch as you and your son age. I will watch the joy of your life as an outsider peeking in through a window, until such a time as you wish me to go away. When you no longer desire to have me having lurking around, you have but to ask it and I will vanish into your memories.

“I will be here as your friend and your confidant until such time as you no longer need me and trust me. There will be a time when you no longer have room for me in your life. For you to truly live your life, you will need to pursue things in which I can not be a part of, dreams that I would only be a stumbling block for. When such a time comes, I will leave, taking nothing but joyous memories with me.”

With those words, he vanished into thin air. She knew the pain had been too much for him to bear, but she also knew she would see him again someday.

She found tears welling in her eyes and spilling down each cheek. The sheer sadness of what he said overwhelmed her. The image of him going on his way, shoulders hunched against the torments of immortality, was almost too much to bear. She could not help but imagine countless years without love and without being a part of anything, always being an outsider.

I will love you, Master, forever and always. As long as I breathe, I will give what I can of myself to you. I will live my life, cherish my son and watch him grow. Then someday, who knows? Maybe, just maybe, I will join my Master and walk beside you. Maybe I can illuminate the shadows that engulf you and bring you joy and happiness and most of all, love.

THE END

About The Author

J. L. Day

J.L. Day is the pen name of Jeff Day. A lifelong inveterate reader, books presented the allure of places untraveled, people not yet met, and adventures only dreamed of. His professional work in computers opened the call to writing, sparking his odyssey as a writer. Happy to have found a way to share his soul, he spends countless hours at the keyboard creating gifts of himself to present to his readers.

Jeff was raised in rural west Texas near Abilene. Loving the region and its rich heritage, he resides there still. Visit Jeff online at www.jlday.net or www.myspace.com/masterbodie

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