

ESCAPE



**Demon
Ahoy!**

Cassandra Kane

Changeling Press

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When Kalandra, an Elemental, decides to look for her missing demon lover, she never expected to find him enjoying life on a desert island in the Caribbean. Kal doesn't want him back -- she wants answers. Like why he walked out on her five hundred years ago.

Sark's spent his time whittling driftwood and getting a great tan, but he knows things are about to change when Kal storms onto his island. But how can he tell her how he feels without destroying her illusions about the past?

Demon Ahoy

When the storm passed and the turbulent sea calmed to an easy swell, Kalandra emerged from below deck. Spending the night in an ancient sailing boat while it was tossed like a tennis ball in a match between the gods had almost been more than she could handle. She felt nauseous and jittery as she stepped out onto the scarred decking, expelling a sigh of relief at the blaze of bright Caribbean sun.

It had been an impulse to set out from Cat Island two days ago. She'd bought the boat from a fisherman who looked astonished that someone wanted to pay so much for so little. But Kal had always followed her instincts.

The boat rocked gently in the middle of the ocean. She could feel him out here, somewhere. She scanned the horizon, again and again, and had almost turned away before she spotted it -- a tiny dark speck in the northeast, hovering on the brink between sea and sky.

With a twist of her fingers, she summoned a gust of wind into the boat's drooping sails and gripped the mast as the craft sped across the waves toward the speck. As she neared, a shimmering curtain parted to reveal the small island, not more than a mile or so across, with a profusion of trees in the middle and a line of bowed palm trees along the sweep of beach.

In the middle of the white-hot sand stood a dark figure, waiting.

Kal's heart hammered in triumphant glee at the desperate anticipation she was determined to ignore. She let the boat sail twenty feet from the shore before she commanded the wind to die from her sails.

"Ahoy!" Kal called, putting on her sunglasses. "How about some help?"

Even from this distance she could make out every detail of Sark's expression, from his thick strong brows to the firm mouth. He hadn't changed, but then, demons

didn't. Only his hair had grown long and tumbled in a dark mass over his broad shoulders. He wore a pair of cut-off shorts that clung to his muscular thighs and highlighted every muscle of the amazing six-pack rising from the dark curls nestled at the low-slung waistband. Oh no, he hadn't changed at all.

His night-dark eyes watched her warily as the boat bobbed on the water. A slow smile spread over his face as he drawled, "You always were a tease, Kal." Then he crooked his finger in a 'come here' gesture and the boat jumped, cutting a swath across the waves toward him.

Kal clung to the mast as the boat slid into the sandy beach and came to rest, tilting, half in and half out of the water at Sark's feet. He offered his hand to help her out. Ignoring it, she jumped in a graceful arc over the side of the boat and landed delicately at his side. The look she gave him was deliberately challenging.

Sark raised an eyebrow. "I see. You're still mad."

"Whatever gave you that idea?" She looked down the long length of sandy beach. "I just wanted to make sure you were really here." She glanced back at him. "Alone."

Sark's lips quirked. "All alone, baby."

"Don't you baby me," she said coldly. "You and I are over. Were over," she corrected, "the minute you stepped out the door."

He had the audacity to look amused. "Don't tell me. You've just dropped in for tea and crumpets."

Kal considered throwing sand in his face, but the gesture seemed inadequately juvenile compared to the potent anger coursing through her veins. She'd like to stomp on him, kick him hard in the balls, divert a lightning bolt right through his devilish heart -- if he even had one. She seriously doubted he did.

Instead, she bit her lip and turned away, afraid she'd make a bigger fool of herself than she already had by coming to find him. "So why don't you show me where you've been hiding out for the last five hundred years?"

* * *

Sark said nothing, only gestured to the cluster of trees in the center of the island. She sashayed over the dunes ahead of him, leaving him with a familiar tightening in his groin as the blood rushed to his cock. Just a swing of those curvaceous hips and he was wild to throw her down on the sand and take her. If she'd let him.

The tone of her voice implied she hadn't said her piece yet. He wasn't sure whether she'd come to find him or to gloat over his predicament. It was highly likely she'd come to gloat, but he'd have to see her eyes to make sure and those black sunglasses were giving nothing away.

With a frustrated sigh, he followed her.

Kal gazed at the wooden hut nestled in the curving line of trees. He'd built an awning of woven palm leaves over the front door which shaded a large chair cushioned with dried seaweed and covered with sack-cloth. A half-carved piece of driftwood and a worn pen knife lay on the seat. To the right, a circle of stones ringed by cooking utensils hammered from bits of tin and carved driftwood made up the makeshift kitchen.

"Very nice." Her tone was cryptic.

"I'm glad you approve," he said dryly.

As if she'd been waiting for the right cue, Kal suddenly swung around to him with clenched fists. "There's nothing about you I approve of, Sark. Nothing. I don't know how you can stand there and be so bloody flippant after five hundred years."

He tried to still the twitching muscle in his clenched jaw. There was so much to say, but Angry Kal was not the Kal he wanted to say it to. Right now all he wanted to do was thrust his hands in the golden hair tumbling over her smooth shoulders and silky breasts, pull her to him, and ravage those ripe, luscious lips. The scent of her -- wild and tangy like the wind -- was driving him insane.

But she was an Elemental and he knew this tempest was far from over. Just as he couldn't help but goad her until she unleashed the storm.

He shrugged. "What do you want from me, Kal? If you wanted answers you could have made an effort to find me sooner."

Kal's mouth hung open in amazement. "You walk out on me with no explanation and that's all you have to say for yourself after five hundred years? You selfish son of a bitch."

A carved wooden bowl sitting on the stones circling the kitchen fire flew through the air aimed straight for his head. Sark ducked, but it clipped him on the ear as it hurtled past and smashed into splinters against the trunk of the palm tree behind him.

Sark fingered the blood dripping from the cut to his ear. "This is why I left, Kal," he said quietly. "Last time it was a goddamned boulder."

Kal's lip trembled. "As if that's ever stopped you from coming back before!"

She was right, that wasn't the reason he hadn't come back. He wanted to tell her, dammit, but she wasn't giving him a chance. And he still rode the unexpected wave of joy at the knowledge that she hadn't come to gloat. No one needing an explanation as much as she did could have had any part of it. He should have known.

Instinct and the memory of previous passions had him grabbing her by the shoulders. "Shut up," he growled, and dragged her mouth to his.

She resisted at first, stiff and close-mouthed, unwilling to bend. Then came that triumphant moment of surrender when she went soft in his arms, her mouth parting on a moan to accept his probing tongue. She wound her arms around his shoulders to press her lush curves against him.

Sark felt the dizzying rush of desire like a punch to the stomach. His hands lowered to cup and squeeze her buttocks, crushing her hips against his throbbing cock. He heard his breathing, ragged and uncontrolled, as his mouth devoured hers then angled down to taste the softness of her neck. It had been so long since he'd had her like this. He brushed the straps of her bikini top from her shoulders and found the crest of her breast with his tongue. Taking one firm pink nipple between his teeth, he nipped until she arched her back and cried out in pleasure.

Sark hoisted her up and pushed her back against the palm tree as she wrapped her legs around his waist. Tearing the sarong from her hips, his long fingers burrowed and found the warmth between her thighs. His thumb roughly rubbed her swollen clit.

His touch was enough to send her over the edge, and she cried out in pleasure, convulsing around his fingers.

"Sark," she whispered, looking down as his mouth continued to plunder her breasts. She reached down between them, unzipped his shorts and pulled out his cock, holding the heat of it in her hands. She'd missed it, missed him, even if he was the very devil to live with.

Sark groaned and with a hard thrust was balls-deep inside her. He murmured into her neck as he began to move, slowly and steadily, into her wet core. And in a moment, all too quickly, he felt the pleasure explode. Buried inside her, he reveled in the spasm of pleasure shivering over his body.

But as he withdrew, giving Kal a long, hard kiss, he felt the change in her, the softness stiffening to anger. And she was still wearing the goddamned sunglasses. He raised his hand to take them off but she pushed him away, scooped up her sarong, and stalked off.

He gave an impatient growl. "What's the matter?"

"You think a fuck solves everything?" She tied the sarong around her chest, exposing the long length of her legs. "Well, it doesn't. I want some answers."

He wasn't done with her by half. His cock, as he eased it back into his shorts, was still at half-mast and crying out for another round. But it could wait. It had waited long enough already.

Sark observed her. "Why didn't I come back? Is that what you want to know?"

She nodded, quick and abrupt, and he knew then she'd been too scared to ask. Too scared to have all her illusions destroyed. And now he wanted to destroy them because they'd held him trapped here -- in this godforsaken strip of sand in the middle of the ocean -- until she found him.

For five hundred years he'd wondered if she ever would.

"Where are we, Kal?" he asked quietly.

"I don't know. Middle of nowhere." She lifted her shoulders impatiently. "What's that got to do with it?"

"It's got everything to do with it." He took a step toward her. "I'm not here to get a tan, whatever you might think." At her wary look, he smiled grimly. "I'm on an island, Kal. Surrounded by water."

He waited and watched as comprehension slowly dawned. She lifted a hand to her mouth to cover the shocked O it had formed. "No," she whispered. "They wouldn't do that."

"I'm a demon." His voice was harsher than he'd expected it to be, more bitter than he wanted to be. "You're an Elemental. You and I weren't supposed to be together. They thought we'd get over it, but we stuck. So they decided I had to go."

"They wouldn't do that. They wouldn't hurt me like that." She shook her head. "Five hundred years wondering where you were. They wouldn't let me suffer that long."

"Demons can't cross water, Kal. They knew I'd never get back to you." His fists clenched. "So here's where they put me."

"It's not true."

"Did you think I didn't love you, Kal?" He couldn't help the goading tone in his voice. "Was that easier to believe?"

"You're lying!" she shouted, then whirled and ran.

Sark watched her run inside the hut and slam the door. He heard her muffled sobbing. Rubbing the back of his neck wearily, he walked over to his chair and looked at the half-carved piece of driftwood lying on the seat. He picked it up, then sat down and began to whittle.

* * *

Kal, her head bowed against the door, cried with hard and painful sobs until she felt she could barely breathe. She wept for herself, for Sark, and for all the time they'd lost. But not for a moment did she doubt that what he'd said was true.

The Elementals had said he didn't love her. He'd found someone else, they'd said, and was too much of a coward to tell her. He was a demon and therefore not to be

trusted. Hadn't they told her that from the start? And he'd gone and proved them right. He hadn't loved her.

But she'd needed to hear him say it, couldn't forget him until he did. They'd called her a fool when she'd set out to find him. There had been obstacles all along, not the least of which the storm last night that had pounded at the little sailing boat as though it meant to smash it to the bottom of the sea. An unholy, angry storm. But she'd ridden it out. She'd found him.

Still, she wasn't sure that he'd ever loved her. He would never say. Even if their bodies yearned for each other, lust wasn't love.

She took a deep shuddering breath and straightened, wiping at the tears with a corner of her sarong. She turned to look about the little room for some water to wash her face. She saw a wooden jug on a table by the big double bed, poured the water out into her scooped palm and wiped it over her face.

Setting the jug down, she noticed a small carved statue beside it. It was the figure of a woman, tall and slender, her long hair streaming as though caught in the wind. She picked it up, looking at it closely. The tiny features carved into it matched her own exactly.

The surprise came like a jolt of pleasure. She put the figurine down, and noticed another on the shelf. It was a flat piece of square wood, carved into a mask. A replica of her own face.

Slowly, Kal turned to look about the room. Every corner, she noted, was filled with small wood carvings made of driftwood, and every one a representation of herself, exact to the most minute detail.

There were hundreds of them.

* * *

Sark looked up from his whittling when the door to his hut opened. He watched warily as Kal emerged, standing in the threshold holding a carving in her hand. He rose to his feet. She stood still, watching him, and showed him the figurine.

Sark came closer, took the figurine from her outstretched hand and looked it over. "I think I've gotten rather good at it after five hundred years," he said gruffly.

"They're all of me," she said in a small voice.

Embarrassed, Sark nodded. Then, hesitantly, he reached out and eased off her sunglasses.

Her eyes were luminous, as wide as the sea and as wild as the wind. Gazing at him with absolute love, just as he remembered them. Just as he'd portrayed in every carving he'd ever made.

"I'm sorry," she whispered.

He held a finger to her mouth. "There's nothing to be sorry about. You're here now."

Then he swept Kal up into his arms and carried her into the hut. Gently, he laid her on the seaweed mattress.

Unlike their previous lustful coupling, this time Sark caressed her body with a slow thoroughness that had all her nerve-ends tingling with excruciating awareness. His mouth followed the trail left by his hands, coming to rest on the nub at her hot center. She squirmed as his tongue flicked at her clit, circling and playing with the hard little nub until she thought she would die of pleasure.

"Please, please, Sark," she gasped as another wave of pleasure fell short of the ultimate crest. She caught his head between her hands, pulled at his hair in desperation.

He laughed in delight, rolled over onto his back and caught her up by the hips so she was positioned over his stiff cock. The tip of the head rubbed against her tauntingly as she struggled to loosen herself from his grip and impale herself on him. He grinned and nuzzled at her breasts, lazily licking at one long, stiff nipple.

Her eyes gleaming, Kal ran her fingers over the top of his head and found the two small horns buried in the mass of curling hair. She rubbed her fingers over the rounded tips, gloried in hearing his moan of pleasure. His hold on her hips loosened, enough so that she sank with a sigh over his shaft. She rode him until they came

together, and shuddered against each other, holding on tight. And held on tight as they slipped into sleep.

In the morning, Kal woke to find Sark gone. She stretched, felt herself ache with a pleasurable soreness. She wandered outside and saw him sitting on the beach next to her boat. She sat next to him on the sand and snuggled into the crook of his shoulder. He wrapped an arm around her.

She noticed the boat had a large splintered hole in its tilted side. "Did you do that?" she asked, idly tracing her finger over his chest.

"Uh huh." He leaned back into the sand, taking her down with him.

"Why?"

"So no matter how much we argue, you'll be sure I can never run away again." He kissed the top of her head.

She smiled.

Cassandra Kane

Cassandra Kane grew up in Australia and now resides in the UK. A voracious reader, she's been devouring science fiction and romances simultaneously since she was a teenager, and even penned a few in her spare time. She was never happier than when she discovered she could marry the two genres and still get away with placing her characters in all sorts of wild and erotic situations. Despite reveling in her God-like qualities on the page, in real life she cunningly manages to appear perfectly normal. To get in touch you can email her at cassandra@cassandrakane.com or visit her website at www.cassandrakane.com for news on her latest books.