

The book cover features a woman with long, dark hair and light-colored eyes in the foreground, looking slightly to the side. Behind her is a large, semi-transparent image of a man's face with light-colored eyes, looking directly forward. The background is a gradient of dark blue and purple. The author's name is at the top left, and the title is at the bottom center, both in a stylized orange font.

Isabella
Jordan

Waiting
For You

WAITING FOR YOU

...Colleen turned the knob of the door and pushed it open. All she had to do was back into the room and close the door. That's all she had to do.

She took a step back and then another. Standing just inside the doorway of her room, she watched for his reaction. But he only waited silently, unmoving. The hunger in his eyes was unmistakable.

Well, if he was so bound and determined to have her, why did he just stand there?

"I can't enter unless you invite me in," Sean explained as if in answer to her thought.

It's now or never. Make the call.

"Come in," Colleen whispered...

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WAITING FOR YOU

BY

ISABELLA JORDAN

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WAITING FOR YOU
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For Jim...

CHAPTER 1

Colleen O'Leary squinted and slowed her car as she passed another street sign. Elyria Avenue. She'd passed that sign three damned times! Where was Harding Avenue? Her new supervisor's birthday party began an hour ago and she had no idea how to get there. Missing the party was a hell of a way to make an impression on Regina Starr who Colleen had yet to meet. The woman had been her boss for less than a week and already Colleen was screwing up.

Well, hell.

The familiar gas station sign—she'd passed it three times, too—was a big fluorescent beacon in the night. Pulling into the gas station parking lot, she sighed in frustration while Bono's soulful tenor sang in the background about streets with no names.

Well, they *did* have names. The wrong damned names!

Blowing a strand of hair off her forehead, Colleen shook her head. She hated having to ask for directions. But she had no choice and no

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one to blame but herself for the fact she was lost. How hard would it have been to pull up a map on the internet? No, she'd just asked Ned the gardener at the last minute on her way out of her apartment building and had only half listened to what he'd said. And now—

Muttering curses at herself, she parked right in front of the brightly lit store and shut off the engine.

Movements in the shadowy area next to the building caught her eye. Two figures struggled in the dark, one much larger than the other. A woman's black high-heeled shoe skimmed across the pavement into the light and Colleen's heart began to race. What was going on there?

As quietly as she could, she scrambled out of her car, leaving the door ajar. Tiptoeing along the short sidewalk at the front of the building, Colleen crept through the shadows until she reached the edge. Peering around the corner, she saw an enormous man with a woman in his clutches, shaking her.

"Let me go, you bastard!" the woman hissed at him.

The woman, on one high-heel now, struggled to get away from him, though it couldn't have been easy in the tight straight skirt of her business suit. Colleen heard the tearing of fabric as he clutched the back of her jacket and hauled her toward him.

Shit! She had to do *something*.

Colleen flew back to the gas station and raced through the dirty glass door. Her heart pounded as her eyes scanned the small dirty storefront. No one was there!

"Hello!" she shouted.

"I'm in the crapper!" a muffled male voice called from through a door just behind the counter, labeled crudely in black marker CRAPPER.

Colleen flew back out the door and into her car, looking for anything she could use as a weapon. Wildly she fumbled about the car finding an empty soda bottle, the gift bag for her new boss, a paper

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covered straw. There was an old can of de-icer in the floor at the passenger side. *That might work.* Snatching it up, she jumped back out and headed up the sidewalk, her stride fast and determined.

The man's hands were locked around the woman's throat now and he had her on her knees with her back to Colleen. She tried to get a look at the man, but his face was concealed by the shadows.

The choking sounds coming from the woman spurred Colleen into action.

It's now or never...

With her finger in place on the button of the de-icer can she marched forward and sprayed the man in the face, just as he noticed her approach. The woman was released immediately as he jumped to his feet and attempted to block her chemical attack with his forearm. Colleen turned to see the woman, her long red hair fanning out behind her as she hobbled away as fast as she could on one heel. It was a damned good idea.

Colleen made it all of three feet when the man grabbed her by the hair and pulled her hard against him, her scalp going up in flames of pain in his powerful grip.

"What did you spray me with?" a deep male voice demanded close to her ear. Was that an Irish accent he had?

"De-icer," Colleen bit out. And then remembering she still had the can in her hand, she swung it back towards him as hard as she could. He didn't release her, but the sounds of the metal hitting his face and his surprised grunt were momentarily satisfying.

Colleen strained to see his face in the dark with her peripheral vision as he held there, wiping at his eyes with the sleeve of his jacket. She'd never been so afraid or pissed off in her entire life. The guy had *her* now and unless she caught a break... But at the same time her pride flared at being held there like a dog he'd picked up. *Bastard!*

"You've upset my plans," his accented voice was low, the

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pronunciation of his words precise.

“Let me go!” Colleen spat.

He released her then and she sure as hell wasn’t going to wait for him to change his mind. Colleen tried to speed away. This time he caught her about the waist. Like a cat with a mouse in his large paws, he turned her to face him.

If the devil ever decided on a human form, Colleen was certain he’d choose to look just like the man who held her in the shadows...tall, powerful and handsome with a bold nose, a firm sensual mouth and pale-colored eyes. *He* was pale as far as that was concerned. But the fact that he was remarkably fair took nothing away from the magnificent male specimen she stood gawking at.

Get a grip! The guy could be a serial killer!

Just as Colleen remembered to struggle, she watched his expression change from one of mild interest to...recognition? His eyes rounded in surprise as he stared at her and it stopped Colleen cold. Did she know him from somewhere? She was pretty sure she’d remember someone as striking as he if she’d seen him before.

Something about him was so familiar...

His lips moved, but she couldn’t hear what he said for the rushing roar of blood in her ears.

“What?” Colleen whispered.

He pulled her closer, his lips inches from hers. Colleen could smell so many scents on him—the scent of a woman’s perfume, the scent of man. Underlying it all was the smell of something dark, sweet, and appealing. The eyes that searched her face were filled with so much emotion she paused.

“Eileen?” he asked.

Only the desperation in his voice kept Colleen from spitting out the sarcastic reply that immediately came to mind. He was looking for something in her eyes, his grip tightened about her waist. Colleen had

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no choice but to plant her hands on the hard wall of his chest to maintain a distance between them. For all she knew he meant to throttle her as he had the red-haired woman.

Or kiss her.

Either way he's crazy.

"My God, it *is* you," he whispered, lifting a hand to gently catch her jaw.

Colleen shrugged out of his touch and he let her. Her heart was racing and she didn't think that fear was the lone cause of that. The guy thought he *knew* her. This was the same guy she'd watched choke another woman. Well, she didn't want to stick around to find out what happened next even if the guy was sexy as hell. Taking one step backwards, then another, she inched away from him.

"Don't be afraid." His voice was gentle as he moved toward her. "I swear to you that I'd destroy myself before I would ever let any harm come to you."

Destroy himself? What the hell was that supposed to mean?

"That's nice but... a little hard to believe considering you had no trouble strangling that other woman." Colleen swallowed hard, took another step back.

"Eileen, you don't understand—"

"You've got me mixed up with someone else," she cut him off. "That's not my name. I've got to go."

Colleen turned on her heel and sprinted for her car. Just as she reached for the handle of the driver's side door, the door slammed closed and the locks of the car clicked. Her stomach sank as she tried the door handle anyway and discovered she was locked out of her car with her keys still inside.

"Don't be afraid," his voice was a low whisper in her ear.

Colleen jumped in fright to find him standing so close to her. *It was impossible!* He couldn't have moved so quickly. There'd been no

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footsteps, no movement.

Her eyes locked with his, gray eyes reflecting the harsh light of the store behind her. Holding up a hand before her face like a priest giving a blessing he said, “Sleep and forget.”

And Colleen’s world went black.

CHAPTER 2

Sean Farrell stared at the woman sleeping in the bed at the center of her dainty bedroom for a long time. The soft light of the lamp on the bedside table reflected off the black silky waves of her hair. Her skin was so white, the features of her face so gentle and perfect. Her lips were full and tender pink and he remembered all too well how sweet they tasted. The soft swell of her breasts beneath the silver blouse she wore trailed off to a tiny waist, slender hips and long, long legs encased in tight black slacks.

He'd never thought to see her again.

Eileen.

It had been two hundred years since Sean had lost her, his wild Irish girl. He'd wanted Eileen Mullins from the moment he first saw her in the village they were from, selling vegetables from her father's farm for money. The poor country girl with her bouncy black curls and torn dirty dress was a far cry from the sleek woman sprawled across the bed

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before him. But it *was* her. The fiery green eyes were exactly the same, her spirit...

Pain Sean thought long vanquished rose to the surface with frightening ease. Eileen's father had died the eve of her eighteenth birthday. Sean had planned to marry Eileen, to save the farm for her and make right in the Almighty's eyes what they did when they were alone. Sean could still remember the day Eileen had first given herself to him in her father's barn, the wildflowers he'd picked for her tucked recklessly in her hair. He could feel the tight buds of her nipples between his lips as if he'd tasted them yesterday. The memory of her tight little pussy closing around him as he drove inside her had him hard and ready now, making him long to join her on that bed and make love to her for days.

She'd loved him. Called him her Sean...

And then evil had taken her away from him in the form of a devious creature, Regan Sheehan he'd known her as, who preyed on the women of Eileen's bloodline. How damned ironic was it that the very night he finally caught the bitch, the one who'd murdered Eileen all those years before, he found Eileen too? His love born again in this century...

His hunger for the woman on the bed before him explained everything he'd done. When he'd lost her, he'd lost himself. Sean had sold himself to the darkness, stalked and begged the vampire who had become his maker for the chance to have his revenge against the monster who'd destroyed Eileen through immortality. For decades he tracked Regan Sheehan knowing that even if he succeeded, it was a hollow victory. After that, what did he have but an eternity to suffer the endless night alone as a vampire?

But Eileen had come back to him.

Colleen, he reminded himself. That was the name on her driver's license anyway.

There'd been no recognition at all in her eyes, but he'd cultivate the

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memories slowly over time. Sean relished the thought of helping Colleen to remember him, of creating new memories with her in bed and out. She was his forever now. He'd never let her go.

For the first time in centuries Sean knew happiness.

She *would* love him again, Sean vowed. No matter how long it took, no matter what he had to do, he'd have her heart again. He'd have her in his bed and every way imaginable. And this time they would enjoy the pleasures they'd only begun to explore when they were young and in love so many years ago in Ireland.

Oh, there was so much he longed to do with her. *To* her. His cock ached just thinking about it.

But tonight was a bad way to start, Sean decided as his gaze swept around her bedroom. In his defense, finding her again was the last thing he would ever have expected. It was bad luck that she had to find him trying to kill Regan Sheehan, whom he'd finally caught up with after so many years.

But being a vampire had its uses. Sean had used his dark gifts to wipe her mind clean of the incident at the gas station and put her into a deep sleep. He'd gently loaded Colleen into her car, found the driver's license in her purse for an address, and brought her home. She'd awoken in the morning wondering what the hell happened the evening before, safe in her bed, yet unsure.

And then they would begin again. Sean grinned in anticipation.

Rising from the chair by her bed, his gaze fastened on the desk in the cluttered corner of the room. The rest of her apartment was neat as a pin compared to that corner with its boxes of files, zip disks, and CDs nestled around a desk that held a computer and an assortment of cameras, scanners, printers. All of it state-of-the-art.

More than that were personal touches. A little pair of reading glasses rested atop a scanner and a box of tissues next to the printer. An empty glass sat before the monitor of her computer.

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She spends a lot of time here.

It would be so much easier for Sean to seduce her if she were a social butterfly, but Colleen was apparently an introvert in this life. A computer geek no less.

No matter. Seduce her he would. It was the quickest way to achieve his goals of reclaiming her for himself and keeping her safe from Regan Sheehan because there was one thing he was fairly certain of...

Colleen was the intended victim of Regan Sheehan. *Again.*

Sean had been tracking Regan for weeks now and he'd watched her behavior grow more and more erratic. She planned to claim her next victim soon, he just knew it. It took a predator to know one. The fact that Eileen—*Colleen*—just happened to be in the same area was too coincidental. It *had* to be Colleen she was hunting.

To protect Colleen Sean would need to know as much as he could about her. Pulling out the chair at her desk, he sat down and turned on her computer.

CHAPTER 3

Colleen slumped in her chair in the noisy nightclub of the conference hotel and shook her head at the melee all around her. Now she remembered why she'd sworn off computer conferences. *God Almighty*. There were guys in horned rimmed glasses and pocket protectors in their shirt pockets up for karaoke with flowerpots on their heads singing Devo's *Whip It*. Another group of nerdy computer experts crowded the tables closest to the stage cheering them with loud yells and whistles.

The salespeople haunted the back of the room as she did. They were younger men and women, mostly one to a table, wearing immaculate suits and talking on cell phones or pecking away at the keyboards of their laptops. The expressions they wore told Colleen they were tired or stressed. Or just plain bored.

Finished with their song, the nerds onstage pulled off their flowerpots and started doing the robot for their next song. It had been

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ten years since she'd heard the song *Mr. Roboto*. Their singing was so bad she hoped it was ten more years before she heard it again.

"May I join you?"

The seductive voice close to her ear gave her a start.

Colleen glanced up into the most beautiful, crystal clear gray eyes she'd ever seen. *And the rest of him is mighty fine too.* A tall, gorgeous man with thick blonde hair that just reached his collar, and shoulders wide as the bedroom door stood by the table waiting for her reply.

Well, don't just stare at him. Say something!

Colleen nodded. "Sure."

He smiled at her then. And Colleen thought he was gorgeous before? His smile was a flash of white that had her insides humming. His face was perfect, all hard angles that softened just enough when he smiled. Colleen squirmed in her seat as he pulled out the chair next to hers and sat down.

"So how did you get roped into this?" he asked.

Oh, an Irish accent. Colleen watched him place his elbows on the table before him and lean toward her. He smelled wonderful, light spicy cologne blended with the smell of man. A corner of his mouth lifted into a cocky half-smile, but his eyes were intent on her, his gaze moving over her hair and face. His close proximity had tingles of excitement racing through her body.

"Well?" he prompted, his smile widening at her hesitation.

Oh, shit. What was the question?

"My company sent an email this morning," she remembered, "telling me that they wanted me to come to this at the last minute. I have a new supervisor and from what I hear she is sending everyone to conferences or seminars for new ideas and to promote the company. It would have been nice to have a little more warning."

"From what you *hear* of your new supervisor?" his tone had a hint of teasing. "Don't you ever go in to work?"

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Colleen shook her head. “I telecommute. I haven’t even met my new supervisor yet.”

And that reminded her of the birthday party her company had held for her new boss the night before. Colleen had *planned* to go. She’d even gotten in the car intending to go and...well, she didn’t know what had happened then. She’d awakened at home in her bed, still dressed and found the birthday present meant for her new boss on her kitchen table. It didn’t make any sense and it had been on her mind ever since. For all she knew sending her to this conference was her new boss’ way of getting back at her for missing the party. She didn’t *mean* to miss it, had no idea what happened.

“What are you thinking about?” Her companion’s deep voice broke into her thoughts.

Colleen shook her head, not about discuss last night’s events with him. “Nothing.”

“Well, something caused you to lose your happy thoughts,” he pointed out.

“It’s okay,” Colleen waved it away. Besides, she had something else to deal with just now—the handsome stranger sitting next to her. Colleen had seen very few men in her entire life that looked *that* good. And he was sitting with *her*. Okay, so she didn’t get out much. But damn, it was exciting. Especially considering the fact that she hadn’t been in any sort of relationship—or had sex—in almost a year. Idly she wondered how big a piece he was packing.

Okay, it’s been way too long since you got laid, Colleen.

“Why are *you* here?” Colleen steered the conversation away from herself, away from dirty thoughts.

“I work for a home security systems company,” he explained. “Computer-human interaction plays an important part in my business. Seemed a worthwhile conference to attend.”

“Has it been worthwhile?” Colleen didn’t think so. As far as the

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conference was concerned anyway.

"It's definitely getting better." His smile widened as he held out his hand. "I'm Sean Farrell."

"Colleen O'Leary." She took his hand expecting him to shake it. Instead he turned her wrist so he could kiss the back of her hand in an old-fashioned way. The warm press of his lips to her skin sent pleasurable waves coursing through her body and her nipples beaded hard.

"So what do you want from me, handsome?" Colleen decided to cut to the chase. Was he hitting on her? Trying to sell her something?

Sean's gray eyes darkened, looked stormy. He didn't release her hand but captured it between his two larger ones. "I want *you*."

Well, hell, isn't that the direct approach? A hundred reactions raced through her head as she stared mutely at him, trying to recover.

"If you are going to ask questions, be prepared for the answers." Sean's voice was low. His eyes searched hers, his expression stilled and serious. He wasn't playing with her. Sean still held her hand between his; the pad of one of his thumbs delicately traced a line back and forth across the sensitive flesh of her wrist. She felt his touch all over her body and the flesh between her thighs began to soften and warm.

What if he's a psycho?

But her body wasn't buying that. She wasn't pulling her hand away, was she? Was it the fact that she hadn't had sex for a long time that had her gawking at him like a schoolgirl? Or was it the fact that he looked better than any man she could conjure in her wildest sexual fantasies?

"Does that line usually work?" Colleen finally spoke, her words meant to back him off. But to her frustration her voice was shaky and he appeared unmoved.

"Line? No." Sean's gaze never wavered. "Once you know me better you'll know I never speak lightly."

Colleen's heart beat wildly and she swallowed hard. Sean's eyes

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darted to the movement of her throat and quickly back. *This guy could be a rapist, a killer.* But honestly she knew her heart was racing as much from excitement as it was from fear. The most sinfully handsome man she'd ever met had just told her in a very direct way that he wanted her. *My, my, my...*

"And who says that I *will* get to know you better?" Colleen had to ask.

"I do."

His fingers pushed under the sleeve of her blouse, began smoothing over the skin of her inner forearm. Colleen's breath caught at her body's reaction, at the craving that built in her pussy from just that simple touch. What she wouldn't have given to be able to slide her hand into her panties, stroke herself... Or better yet to feel his fingers slide into her folds.

There was a confidence in Sean's smile, like the handsome devil could read her mind or something. His knee brushed hers under the table and she jumped. How good it would have felt to capture that powerful leg between hers, to rub herself against...

Colleen, what's gotten into you?

Colleen shook her head to clear it. She was drowning in his eyes and all caught up in a lust like nothing she'd ever experienced. She had to stop this now if she was going to. Yanking her arm away from him, she jumped up from the chair.

"Look, I don't do this sort of thing." Maybe she wanted to, but she didn't. Colleen tore her gaze away from his as she grabbed her jacket from the back of the chair, snatched up her briefcase from the floor.

"Good," he said simply.

That got her attention. Stopping in her tracks she met his gaze squarely. "What?"

"I'm glad you don't *do* this sort of thing." His hand reached for her, but she stepped back to avoid his touch. If he touched her again, she

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was afraid she might drag him back to her room and jump his bones. The effect he had on her was *that* strong. "I don't want you to know another man's touch. I am going to be the last lover you'll ever have, Colleen."

Colleen sped away from the table at that. The wet cotton of her panties rubbed against her as she walked quickly down the hallway towards the elevator. Nervous excitement still coursed through her as she stepped out of the crowded elevator on the fourth floor and she couldn't get his words out her head.

I am going to be the last lover you'll ever have, Colleen.

He might have been suggesting that he would kill her. The only other thing it could have meant is that he planned to be with her for her the rest of her life and...

That's ridiculous! No, not going to analyze this. Put it out of your head.

Colleen's hand shook as she fished the card to her hotel room out of her jacket pocket, making her struggle to fit into the slot of her hotel room. She cried out when a larger hand closed over hers and steadied it so the card could slide into the slot.

Now she *was* afraid as she slowly turned around to face Sean, who towered over her and pinned her to the spot with those stormy gray eyes. If he'd sped up there to catch her before she'd entered her room, it didn't show. He was perfectly calm, perfectly composed as his eyes searched hers. *Hell, he's not even breathing hard.*

"What do you want?" Colleen's voice was a hoarse whisper.

"I think we've already covered that." Sean made no move to touch her, stood almost *too* still in the hallway gazing down at her.

"Do you mean to hurt me?" Colleen looked up and down the hallway, hoping someone else would happen by. But surely there were people in the rooms on her floor. "I'll scream."

"I would never hurt you, Colleen," his expression softened just a

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little. “And I won’t allow anyone else to. *Ever*. I promise you that.”

Colleen’s mind was spinning even as her body resumed its ache. Every nerve ending in her body was electrified and the craving in her hot, wet center grew. God help her, she wanted him, this stranger who showed up out of nowhere. But the things he said... It was insane. He didn’t know her. How could he say—

“And I *want* you to scream,” Sean’s seductive voice broke into her thoughts. “But I want you to scream in pleasure for me. I want you to scream with my cock inside you, bringing you unimaginable pleasure again and again for as long as you can take it.”

Colleen released the breath she hadn’t realized she’d been holding. His coat was open enough for her to see the sizeable bulge encased in the denim of his jeans and her pussy ached. Her body needed him inside her, instinctively knowing that a night with him would be unlike anything she’d ever known in her thirty-one years.

But she couldn’t just fuck a stranger! Could she? Not that anyone would know, but still...

Her hand fumbled behind her for the doorknob to her room and found it.

What’s it going to be, Colleen?

Colleen took a deep breath before saying, “I can’t.”

Again, he seemed unmoved. “Why?” he asked, his voice a seductive purr. “Are you married? Are you seeing someone, Colleen?”

I love the way he says my name with that accent.

Her voice sounded small. “No.”

“Then you can do anything you wish,” Sean continued. “You can cry out for help or walk into your room alone. I won’t stop you.”

Yes, she could and *should* do one or both of those things.

“Or you can give in to what your body wants.” Gently he lifted a lock of hair from her shoulder, rubbing the strands between his fingers and thumb. “I will fulfill every desire you’ve ever had, Colleen. I

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promise you won't regret it."

I'll just bet I wouldn't.

Colleen turned the knob of the door and pushed it open. All she had to do was back into the room and close the door. That's all she had to do.

She took a step back and then another. Standing just inside the doorway of her room, she watched for his reaction. But he only waited silently, unmoving. The hunger in his eyes was unmistakable.

Well, if he was so bound and determined to have her, why did he just stand there?

"I can't enter unless you invite me in," Sean explained as if in answer to her thought.

It's now or never. Make the call.

"Come in," Colleen whispered.

CHAPTER 4

Sean struggled for control as he closed the door behind them and locked it. His hunger for the taste of her blood, the need to have his cock inside her *now* were damned near overwhelming. It had been easy to tell her that he'd allow her to call for help or walk into her hotel room alone, but he wasn't at all sure he would have allowed her to had she not invited him in.

But she *had* invited him in. Sean knew triumph as he watched her set her briefcase on the table by the window and drape her jacket across it with her little hands trembling. While Sean could feel her fear of him, he could also smell the delicate aroma of her excitement. Desire had control of her at the moment and he meant to keep it that way. Especially considering what she would learn this night.

"This is crazy," she said, eyeing him warily from where she stood by the bed.

God, he'd forgotten how beautiful she was. Sean closed the distance

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between them to take her in his arms and he wanted to howl with joy at being able to hold her again. It took every ounce of restraint he had not to crush her against him, but crush her he could. She was mortal, his Colleen, as he had not been for a very long time. It was a fact Sean couldn't allow himself to forget because it would be so easy for him to hurt her if he were the least bit careless.

"What is crazy about it, Colleen?" Sean bent low to brush his lips to the white flesh of her throat. Fresh blood rushed through her veins, her heartbeat a relentless staccato in his ears. "I want you and I mean to have you."

Her emerald green eyes flashed up at him, filled with desire and hesitation. Anything but desire would soon be eradicated, he promised himself. Sean didn't give a damn who feared him, and most creatures that walked the earth had reason to fear him, but not his love.

"You want me, too, or you wouldn't have invited me to your bed." Sean worked the buttons of her blouse, captured her lips for a kiss. *Ah, God, it was her.* Her sweet taste was manna to his senses after so many years. He deepened the kiss, coaxing her lips apart. Colleen's slight form trembled in his arms, but she returned his kiss, allowed him to pull off her blouse and her bra and wrapped her arms around his neck, her hands sliding up into his hair. Sean closed his eyes, reveling in her exquisite touch.

Sean cupped her ass in his hands and lifted her easily from the floor. He lowered her onto the bed, snatching off the dark slacks she wore before she even knew what happened. His coat and shirt were tossed away with the same preternatural speed. He grinned at the disorientation in her eyes. His movements had been too fast for her mortal eyes. He lowered his body onto her, spread her beneath him.

Sean took one of her nipples greedily into his mouth as he slid a hand down her belly and into her panties. Her pussy was hot and ready, slick with her need for him. Oh yes, he'd fulfill her needs and desires

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just as he'd promised. Colleen clung to him in her passion, her desire for him was intoxicating. The night stretched out before them and Sean planned to be inside of her for most of it. He wanted to feel her wrapped around his cock, see how much she could take, how many times she could take it.

Colleen squirmed beneath him, her long supple legs wrapping about his thighs as he slid first one finger and then another into her wet passage.

"Do you like that, Colleen?" Sean loved the way her head tossed back and forth on the bed, insane from his touch. "Or do you want more? Would you like my mouth on you?"

"Yes!" Her little hands clutched at his shoulders, his hair.

Sean slid down her body, remembering too well how much she loved his mouth between her legs. Her thighs parted like water under his hands, making it easy for him to rip off her panties and dive for her with his mouth. The smell of her intimate treasure had him burning, heightening his lust tenfold. His lips and tongue worked into the sable curls at the top of her thighs, finding the slick inner flesh weeping for his touch. Colleen went wild above him, grabbing his hair, thrusting herself at his mouth. Sean gave her all she wanted, teasing the hard little nub of her clit with his tongue, tasting the walls of her passage with quick, stiff thrusts. Sean kept at her relentlessly until she climaxed, her nectar sweet on his tongue as she rode his mouth in abandon.

Sean couldn't wait any longer. He'd removed the last of his clothing while the last of the tremors shook her. Lowering his body onto hers, Sean entered her with a single, smooth thrust, loving the way her flesh stretched and gave to make room until she'd taken every inch of him. Colleen wrapped herself around him, pulled his head down for a kiss and he took her lips greedily while his cock began a steady determined rhythm within her. Her pussy was so tight around him,

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clinging to him with each thrust. It was hell to have to restrain himself, to not be able to ride her with abandon, but he managed. His Colleen was fragile, no match for his strength at all. But she felt so damned good as he pulled out of her and slid back in.

“Harder,” Colleen gasped into his mouth. “I want it harder!”

Knowing she was close to coming, Sean increased the power of his thrusts as much as he dared. It didn’t take much. Colleen cried out, her nails digging into his back as he drove on, her body quivering sweetly around him as she found her release.

But Sean wasn’t ready yet to give into release himself. He took possession of her again, teasing her with slow, steady thrusts until her belly tightened and the tension in her limbs returned. Sean started pumping her harder, faster to bring her to climax again.

“Shall I stop now, Colleen?” Sean whispered in her ear before dipping his head to kiss the sweet flesh of her neck, the pulsing of the warm vein beneath the skin beckoning him as he continued to move his cock in and out of her.

“No, please!”

“Then come again for me.” Sean licked that vein, he couldn’t help it. “Cover me with your honey again.”

And oh, she did. Sean took her cries into his mouth as she tightened around him, her hands desperate on his back. He pushed into her faster, heightening her climax as he allowed himself release. Sean felt as if he’d exploded as he pumped his seed into her, bursting into thousands of tiny microscopic pieces. It was so damned good, beyond anything he’d ever experienced or remembered.

Collapsing onto the bed beside her, Sean stretched out on his back, pulling her against him. He’d be ready to go again any time, but he had to admit he enjoyed the way Colleen snuggled against him, her head resting on his chest. Her hair was a glossy black river flowing over his shoulder and arm. All around them was the smell of sex, her secret

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smell. Sean closed his eyes, overjoyed that she was his, in his arms.

Colleen surprised him out of his contented lull by jerking her head up from his chest, her eyes round with fear as they locked with his.

"I can't h-hear your heart," her breath was coming fast.

Sean knew he shouldn't be eyeing the full white globes of her breasts just then, but for a moment he couldn't help it, their movement was so enticing.

"Did you hear me?" she persisted, pressing her hands to his chest now, and he met her gaze. "I can't feel your heart beating."

Well, they were going to have to talk about it sooner or later.

"My heart stopped beating a long time ago, Colleen," Sean said calmly.

Colleen's face turned white, her beautiful green eyes filled with fear. Sean could almost feel the adrenaline rushing through her body and she looked ready to flee at any second. Not that it would do her a lot of good. No way in hell he was letting her go anywhere without him. Ever.

"Let's talk," he said.

CHAPTER 5

Colleen stared at Sean, her heart hammering in her chest. The sexiest man she'd ever seen had just given her the fuck of her life. Her insides were still pulsing and her legs felt so wobbly she would have been amazed if they could hold her up. But she should have listened to her gut that something was wrong with the whole situation, should have known there was something wrong with *him*.

And she'd just had unprotected sex with him. Shit!

"We don't have to talk." Colleen edged away from him on the bed. "You don't have to tell me anything. We've had our fun and I think you should go now."

She made it to the edge of the bed and he made no move to stop her. So far, so good. Still it was unnerving the way he lay there staring at her, not moving, not blinking.

Colleen snatched her clothes up from the floor.

"I'm going to go to the lobby for a soda," Colleen tried to sound

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calm, but she failed miserably. “When I get back I expect you to be gone.”

But she could put her clothes on later. All she really needed at the moment in her panic was her coat. It was long enough to cover her until she could get to a restroom to get dressed anyway. Clutching her clothes to her breasts, she backed away towards the door. Just a few more steps and she’d have her coat...

Colleen spun around to snatch the coat from the peg by the hotel door, began to frantically pull it on.

“Neither one of us is leaving, Colleen,” his voice was a silken purr in her ear.

Colleen jumped and screamed to find him standing behind her at the door. *No way!* But there he stood in all his naked glory, his erection hard and ready as he forced her back a step.

Sean had no heartbeat and he could disappear and reappear whenever he wished. And they were both naked and he was stalking her, backing her in the direction of the bed. Roughly he grabbed the clothes and coat from her hands and hurled them to the floor.

“Who are you?” she whispered, her hands rising to cover her breasts. “*What* are you?”

Colleen had never been so afraid or turned on in her life. Her gaze dropped to his erection and she swallowed hard, her thighs still trembling from his loving. She’d give almost anything for him to take her again, to have him driving inside her just like he had moments ago.

But what the hell was going on? Because there was something not right about him.

“Colleen,” his deep voice was the only sound in the dark room as her gaze locked with his. “Remember that I promised I would never hurt you? I meant that. Don’t be afraid of me.”

“*What are you?*” Colleen demanded as he clutched her upper arms in hands. The sheer strength of him made her quiver. So much leashed

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power in his muscular body. “How can you just move around like that? You scared the shit out of me!”

Sean smiled, such a beautiful self-assured smile. “Don’t fear me. I’ll tell you everything.”

He pushed her back down on the bed, hauling her up the mattress until her feet no longer hung off the edge. His weight settled over hers, his knees wedging between hers and pushing her legs apart. The hot shaft of his cock twitched against her inner thigh.

And she wanted that cock inside her again. Badly.

“Colleen, look at me.”

She gazed up into his eyes and the intensity in them nearly took her breath away.

“I was once mortal like you, an ordinary man,” Sean spoke slowly. “But that mortal life is long gone from this body.”

“Mortal?” Colleen’s mind scrambled. Was he crazy then? Was that it? Was he going to tell her he was an alien or something? “You mean human?”

“Yes.” Sean’s cock moved up to tease the outer lips of her pussy. “I mean human. I haven’t been human for a very long time.”

Colleen shook her head. *Great! He’s a nut job.*

“No, I’m a vampire.”

“What?”

Colleen watched in stunned silence as his eyes glowed silver, pure silver light in the darkness above her. There was just enough light from the window by the bed for her to see the white flash of his teeth as he bared them. While she watched, his incisors grew, long and sharp.

Oh, shit!

Collaring her wrists in his hands, Sean held her to the bed while she struggled.

A vampire! Vampires weren’t supposed to be real! They were characters in movies, in books by drunk and demented Irishmen. They

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weren't supposed to be walking around in society, materializing around people. In their beds...

Sean's cock slid into her folds, poised at her aching opening. Incredible as scared as she was of the man—vampire—who pinned her to the bed that she still had any thoughts of having sex with him again.

Oh, but she did. God help her, she did.

"Vampires aren't real," she said, more for herself than him. *But how did you explain the glowing? The fangs? The fact that he could materialize wherever he wanted to?* But as Colleen watched, his eyes stopped glowing, his fangs retracted. *How else could you explain it?* "Oh, my God."

Sean dipped his head to brush her lips with a tender kiss. "I would never hurt you, Colleen."

"You're going to drink my blood then?" It wasn't lost on her just how corny that question sounded.

"I need to taste your blood, yes." His voice was low, rough with desire. "But for selfish reasons. I'd never feed on you. You're too precious to me."

Colleen frowned at him. "You don't even know me."

Sean's cock slid into her at that moment, a slow push until he filled her completely and Colleen gasped. *He feels so good.* He began a slow, luxurious rhythm within her and she was more than ready and willing, vampire or not. Wrapping her legs around his waist, she tried to hurry him, to urge him to go faster. His grip on her wrists tightened as he pushed her thighs wider apart, deepening his penetration.

Colleen moaned, the pleasure unreal. Whatever the hell he was, she loved the way his cock stuffed her, the way he totally dominated her.

"I'll give you what you want," he whispered, teasing her lower lip with his own as he slid in and out of her pussy with a maddeningly slow cadence. "If you'll give me what I want."

When his lips slid down to tease her nipple, Colleen gasped,

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pushing herself up into his mouth, lost in the incredible pleasure of his lovemaking. She'd give him anything if he'd just keep fucking her this way. Anything...

"But what do you want? I've already given you—"

Sean cut her off. His lips reclaimed hers in a slow, enticing kiss. When he finally lifted his head, she managed to ask, "My blood?"

His thrusts grew in strength and she raised her hips to meet each one, never wanting his loving to end. She was so close to release, so close...

"Your trust," Sean said finally, gazing deeply into her eyes as he released her wrists. Colleen wrapped her arms around his neck, pulled his mouth down to hers for another kiss, another taste of him. His pace within her quickened, bringing her so close to release. Colleen held onto to him, bracing for the climax, wanting it. But just as she was about to have it he slowed and she cried out in frustration.

"Patience, my love," he whispered, his lips burning a trail across her cheek to her neck. "First I would have your promise."

His lips teased her neck while his cock teased her with its slow drag and push. Colleen froze, her heart hammered in her chest. Sean was poised at her jugular. *Oh, God.*

"Promise me your trust, Colleen," Sean whispered against her skin. "All I want is to taste you."

But he was going to bite her neck with those sharp teeth. Colleen didn't like needles and she was sure she wouldn't like him biting her.

But she really wanted to come again and she just knew he'd withhold that treat from her until she relented. *Damn him!*

"Just a taste?" Colleen was hesitant.

His cock thrust powerfully inside her and again. *That's it. I want that. Make it hard.*

"Just a taste," he whispered.

When his delicious movements inside her slowed again, she cried

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out in frustration.

“Okay!” she promised, frustrated.

Sean chuckled against her throat, a deep rich sound.

Colleen winced as she felt him nick her throat with his teeth.

Sean’s body began to thrust harder into hers, faster. *Yes, that’s it.* His cock was so good, stuffed her completely. Colleen came almost immediately after that, her arms and legs wrapped around the hard, muscular length of his body as she cried out in pleasure. It really didn’t hurt so bad when his fangs slid into her neck and after... His hands cupped her ass, angling her so that he could penetrate her from just the right angle. He withdrew only slightly before pushing back into her. He did that several times, teasing and exciting her until she felt ready to explode. Sean made her come again and again, while Colleen thrashed wildly beneath him, a slave to the passion he’d ignited in her.

She didn’t know how much time had passed when he finally lifted his head from her throat, threw it back as he allowed himself release, his arms tightening around her until it almost hurt.

Colleen felt lightheaded when Sean collapsed on top of her. From the power of his loving? From blood loss? Who knew? And she didn’t give a good damn in that moment with his delicious weight on her and the soothing feeling of his hands in her hair.

But as exhausted as she was, she couldn’t shut off her mind.

“Sean?”

“Hmm?”

“You’re really a vampire.”

“I really am.”

“What did you mean when you said you would be the last lover I ever had?” Colleen wanted to know. “If you don’t mean to kill me... What did you mean by that?”

Sean rolled off of her, much to her disappointment, but pulled her body against his so that he spooned up behind her. The feeling of his

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hard thighs behind her quivering ones was nice. *Very nice.*

“I meant just what I said, Colleen.” His voice just behind her ear made her shiver. “No other man will ever touch you. You’re mine. You’ve always been mine.”

Sean’s hand slid down from her waist to capture her hand, his fingers interlacing with hers.

“But how do you know me?” Colleen knew she’d never seen him before tonight. “How have I always been yours?”

“Sleep now, my love,” was all he said. “You need your rest now.”

“You promised to tell me everything,” Colleen reminded him.

“I will.” Sean pressed a kiss into her hair. “Sleep now.”

And even though she’d just had the most amazing sex of her entire life twice *and* learned that her lover was a vampire of all damned things, she drifted off to sleep.

CHAPTER 6

Colleen shot up in bed in fear, soaked with sweat, her heart pounding. Sleep still clouded her mind so when her eyes adjusted to the darkness and she didn't find the comforting familiarity of her bedroom, her panic escalated. Someone had been stalking her in her nightmare, a woman with long red hair whose face transformed... *Oh, how horrible it had been.* Though Colleen had awakened from the dream before the woman managed to catch her, she instinctively knew the woman meant her harm.

Sean sat up in bed next to her, cradled her in his arms and Colleen curled into him. He'd been in her dream too. At least he'd tried to help her.

"What did you dream about?" Sean's voice was gentle.

"A woman who was trying to kill me," Colleen explained, her voice scratchy from sleep. "She had long red hair and a horrible face. She started out pretty, but her face changed, like it aged very fast. God, it

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seemed so real.”

Sean’s hands smoothed her hair, caressed her back. “She can’t hurt you, Colleen. I’m here.”

Colleen smiled against his chest, liking the way he comforted her. “I know. It was just a dream.”

“What else do you remember about the dream?” he asked, reaching behind her to snap on the lamp of the bedside table.

“Why do you want to know?” It took a moment for Colleen’s eyes to adjust to the light. Her gaze immediately found Sean and her heart quickened. He was impossibly gorgeous with his rumpled blonde hair, the smooth, hairless planes of his chest all powerful muscles.

Sean pulled her back into his arms, gazing down into her eyes. “Tell me.”

Dreams fell away so fast after one awakened, but Colleen remembered a few things. “We were in the country, on a farm. One reason I thought she’d catch me is that I was wearing this ridiculous long dress, old-fashioned you know. And I remember she trapped me in an old barn. You were outside the doors, but you couldn’t get in and then her face changed and looked so gross.”

Sean’s face was a mask of implacable calm, but she could sense emotion just beneath the surface. Why was he taking her dream so seriously?

“Then I woke up,” Colleen explained. “Just in time.”

Sean’s arms tightened around her and he lifted a hand to her face, his fingertips lightly tracing the line of her jaw. “Colleen, I’ve something to tell you and it may be hard for you to accept at first.”

Colleen snorted. “And you telling me that you are a vampire *wasn’t*?” She was still processing that one. “By all means, tell me.”

Sean’s gray eyes searched hers. “That wasn’t a dream, Colleen, but a memory of something that actually happened a long time ago.”

There’d been a quality about the beginning of the dream that *had*

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seemed very real, like it might have happened. But then the woman had cornered her in the barn and she transformed into something hideous.

No, monsters didn't exist. That part of the dream was just like all of the other nonsensical episodes in her head at night that she sometimes remembered.

But vampires exist.

No way that scene in her dream really happened. *No way!*

"But it did," Sean said aloud. And it wasn't the first time he'd responded aloud to her thoughts.

Turning on Sean, Colleen caught him off guard and shoved him away from her. Or, closer to the truth, he *let* her.

"You can read my mind, can't you?" Colleen snapped.

At least he had the decency to look a little guilty. "Yes."

"Well, stop it! My thoughts are none of your business!"

Sean propped a pillow against the headboard behind him and leaned back against it, making himself comfortable. Was this all a game to him? *Damn him!*

"I can't avoid it really," Sean explained. "When I was first made, all the voices in the heads of others were deafening, drove me mad. Now, they are quiet, whispers in my mind, but I still hear them whether I want to or not."

"Well, ignore mine because they are *none* of your business," Colleen wanted him to know.

"I'll remember that," Sean assured her, a corner of his mouth lifting into half-grin.

"And my reality has been stretched as far as it is going to stretch, okay?" Colleen looked him in the eye, thinking that the reality wasn't the only thing that had been stretched to its limits as she hopped off the bed, sore in places she couldn't name. She hated to pace, but he'd driven her to it. Back and forth she paced by the bed and she didn't even give a damn that she was naked. What was the point of getting

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dressed? He'd seen everything she had and he could probably see through her clothes anyway.

"Last night I headed out for a birthday party for my new boss," Colleen began, "which I apparently never made it to because I woke up *in* my house, *in* my clothes with her birthday present on the kitchen table. *Then* I get an email from work sending me to BoringCon 2004 at the last minute, but that got a lot more interesting when *you* showed up, didn't it? I just jumped in bed with you—which I never do by the way. And guess what? You're a *vampire* of all damned things. And then I have a dream—"

"Colleen, it's okay," Sean whispered as his arms closed around her, making her jump in fright. Her gaze shot to the bed where he'd just been reclining and found it empty—foolish she knew since there he was holding her to his chest and soothing her like a frightened child.

Screw that!

"Stop doing that!" Colleen pushed away from him.

"I'm sorry," Sean's tone was calm. "I know you're upset."

"Damn right I'm upset." Tears stung the back of her eyes. "How do you expect me to feel? You're a vampire for God's sake!"

When he took a step towards her, she held up a hand to ward him off, and let the tears come. Colleen was afraid; she was pissed off. She wanted him to stay the hell away from her; she wanted him to hold her.

"Colleen, you dreamed of something that happened over two hundred years ago in Ireland. You lived with your father on a farm and I was in love with you."

She swiped angrily at her tears with the back of her hand as he approached, but she let him walk up behind her and wrap his arms around her. At least he didn't just *appear* behind her.

"Two hundred years ago?" Colleen couldn't keep the skepticism from her voice.

"Yes." Sean kissed the top of her head. "Your father died when you

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were just eighteen years old. Liam was his name and he was a good man. There was no truer man to his word than Liam Mullins.”

The name meant nothing to Colleen. It didn’t even sound familiar.

“I planned to marry you if you’d have me,” he went on, his voice full of emotion. “I had no money for a ring, but I picked some of your favorite flowers—the purple ones that grew in the field by the river at the edge of your farm.”

Colleen hooked her hands around his arms, hanging on. For what, she didn’t know yet. His words were sweet, but sparked no memory. Purple was her favorite color, that was about it.

“Regan Sheehan had once been a midwife in the village,” Sean continued. “But when the babes she birthed started to die, the people ran her out of town, accused her of being a witch. Your father never believed what everyone said about her and I guess I always thought she had set her cap for him. I had no idea it was you she was after.”

Still, nothing rang a bell. But she was curious.

“Regan Sheehan, huh? And she was after *me*?”

“The woman with the red hair from your dream... She murdered you.”

Colleen felt a shudder go through his body as his arms tightened about her. “It happened so damned fast. I wanted to tear down the door to that barn, to tear her limb from limb. But when I finally broke in there...”

When his voice faltered, she turned in his arms to face him. The raw emotion on his handsome face moved her to pity as he continued.

“She’s a monster,” he explained. “She steals the bodies of women within her bloodline. *Your* bloodline.”

Colleen frowned. “Steals bodies?”

Sean’s eyes glowed briefly as they locked with hers, his hands catching her upper arms so quickly she flinched. But his grip didn’t hurt. Somehow she knew he’d never hurt her.

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"I've followed her for decades now. Whatever she is, she can't inhabit the same body for more than fifteen, twenty years. That or it is youth she's after. When her current body starts to age, she discards it for a younger one."

Colleen's heart raced in her chest. "She stole *my* body? Is that what you are saying? In a former life she stole my body?"

Maybe he was crazy after all.

"Yes, she did." A muscle in Sean's jaw twitched as he spoke, gripped by the memory he shared with her. "She stood there in your body, smiling at me. And I didn't understand what happened at the time. I didn't know that the rotting shell she left laying on the ground was the body she'd left behind. But I *knew* that it wasn't *you*, your soul, gazing out at me through those beautiful green eyes."

Colleen was sure of one thing. He believed everything he told her. The conviction in his eyes and voice spoke volumes. She felt her disbelief start to crack. Could there be any truth to what he'd said?

"But you're *here* now. You came back to me." Sean pulled her into his arms, his mouth covering hers in a kiss of such desire that it nearly swept her mind clean of the wild story he'd just told her. And she surrendered to him, clung to him as his tongue explored her mouth and his hands slid down her body, his fingers sliding between her legs.

No, she had to get a hold of herself. To get a handle on what he was saying. *He thinks I am his lover reincarnated!*

But it was hard to think with his fingers teasing the outer lips of her cunt, sliding on the wetness he found there. He growled low in her ear.

"I need you now." His tongue traced the sensitive shell of her ear.

"Wait a minute!" Colleen wanted to ask more. But he was already moving them toward the bed. He swept her up in his arms and gently lowered her on the rumpled comforter before coming at her, eyes aglow. His cock jutted out proud and ready.

"But—"

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Sean's kiss cut her off. He poured so much passion, so much fire into that kiss. More kisses for her shoulders, her breasts, as his hips and legs insinuated themselves between her thighs. Colleen was beyond speech and thought when she felt his cock slide past her outer lips, slide so easily into her waiting passage that was already a little sore from his loving.

Colleen wrapped herself around him, wanting his fierce possession and getting her fill as he teased and tormented her. His hand slid between their bodies to tease her swollen clit as his generous staff slid in and out of her at a determined pace. Colleen reveled in the way he filled her, stretched her. Her slick inner walls gripped his cock greedily with each thrust that sent waves of ecstasy coursing through her body.

Grasping her hips in his hands, he thrust every hard inch of his cock into her over and over. He brought her to orgasm several times, teasing her lips with his own, teasing her shoulder with his tongue which was something she'd always loved. His stamina was incredible and he kept at her until her thighs quivered around his, her body shaking from exhaustion.

And extreme satisfaction.

"Sean?" Colleen rested her head on his chest, draped her body over his. "You didn't finish the story. You didn't tell how you found out for sure that woman wasn't..."

Colleen stopped herself from saying *me*. She had little choice but to believe his story about being vampire. But she wasn't sure she was ready to believe that she was his reincarnated lover.

"I stalked her relentlessly, but she managed to evade me. She disappeared that night, left your father's farm to rot. What did she care? She'd gotten what she wanted. But she'd taken you away from me and I could never get past that."

"You're over two hundred years old then? Is that what you are saying?" Colleen finally made the connection as she pulled her head up

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to gaze into his eyes. “You said that you’ve followed this Sheehan person for decades. Did you—”

“Yes,” Sean cut her off. “I sold myself to the darkness, found a vampire willing to take on a fledgling, just to destroy Regan Sheehan for taking from me the only thing I ever wanted. *You*.”

Colleen’s heart squeezed at his words, at the endearments meant for the woman he believed her to be. The emotion in his eyes and his voice almost made her wish it *was* her that his words were meant for. To have a man love her so much...

“You *are* her,” Sean replied to her thoughts. “And you came back to me. You don’t remember now, but one day you will. I’m willing to wait. I have all the time in the world.”

But Colleen didn’t. She was just a human and humans didn’t live forever.

“It is your choice,” Sean deliberately answered her thoughts again. “I won’t force you to join me in this life, but you can if you choose. And I can wish for that, try to convince you.” His hand grabbed hers, pulled it down to the hard, hot column of his cock, ready, to her amazement, to go again. His smile was decidedly wicked. “I rather like the thought of convincing you of how good an eternity with me could be.”

Me? A vampire? Colleen didn’t even want to think about that now. She was so far beyond her experience tonight that she wouldn’t even go there. But she couldn’t stop herself from grinning. Okay, so she would have no trouble with the convincing part.

Colleen rose above him, straddling him, though where she got the strength after the night she’d had so far she couldn’t say. Stroking his length in her hands, she watched his eyes flutter closed in pleasure at her touch. Colleen couldn’t get enough of him, craved him between her legs. She impaled herself on him, filling herself with him and grinding her hips until the slow steady friction of their movements hit all the

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right spots within her.

Planting her hands on his chest, she moved on him at a pace all her own and he clutched her hips in his hands, urging her on. Sean was beautiful lying there beneath her, his cock buried inside her and she wanted to pleasure him, to ride him until he came hard.

But before she knew it, he'd taken control away from her, driving up into her center while her body milked him. Sean lifted his head to capture her nipples with his lips, the delicate teasing of his tongue driving her insane as he controlled the thrusting within her, pushing her to exquisite heights of ecstasy. Her hands were wild in his hair, on his back as he tormented her. Colleen held on as long as she could, he was *that* good, but finally her orgasm burst through her and he prolonged it with firm thrusts in just the right spot. Her pussy pulsed around him as she cried out his name over and over.

Sean rolled her onto her back, not done with her yet, continuing to drive into her like a vampire possessed. Colleen wouldn't have thought it possible to come again, but the friction of their bodies against her clit, the incredible feeling of being filled by him again and again proved quickly to be more than she could bear. When he climaxed, she went with him, hanging onto him as they rode out the storm of their passion.

CHAPTER 7

The phone ringing on the bedside table startled Colleen awake. She'd shot up in the bed and pressed the phone receiver to her ear before she ever realized it.

"Hello?" Colleen answered with her heart racing in her chest.

"Ms. O'Leary? This is the front desk. There is a Ms. Regina Starr here to see you," a cheerful voice announced.

Her new boss was there? *Well, hell!*

"Please tell her that I'll be down in just a few moments," Colleen replied.

The first rays of the sun filtered in through the windows, shafts of light falling across Sean's sleeping form next to her in the bed and she panicked. Couldn't the sunlight kill a vampire?

"Sean!" Colleen nudged him, hard. "Sean, wake up! It's morning! Sean, wake up, please!"

Blinking like a sleepy owl, he opened his eyes, smiled at her.

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“Sean, the *sunlight!*” Colleen said meaningfully, jerking her thumb in the direction of the window.

Sean threw back his head and laughed. *Damn him!*

“You’ve seen too many movies, love.” Sean leaned in to steal a kiss from her lips. “I struggled with the sunlight when I was reborn a vampire, but after so many years... I’m not as strong in the day, but I can get around just fine. I don’t sleep in a coffin or anything.”

Well, that would certainly help matters if she continued to see him. But there were so many other things to talk about, think about. How would anything work out between them? Would he want to make her a vampire? Would she have to become one herself to stay with him?

And she *did* want to see him again, she realized. She’d be crazy not to. A man who could love her as he did with that much stamina? Who *looked* like him?

Oh yeah.

Of course they’d have to talk about this idea of his that she was his reincarnated lover from two hundred years ago. How could she hope to compete with a woman long gone? She wanted him to see her for who she was, desire *her*.

Yes, she definitely wanted his desire.

But first things first. Her boss was waiting downstairs. Easing her sore body from the bed, Colleen headed for the shower. She could feel Sean’s gaze on her as she walked away from the bed.

* * *

Sean had been strangely subdued when she’d gotten dressed and told him she was heading downstairs to finally meet her boss, but said nothing. Of course he’d kissed her senseless before she could make it out the door and as much as she would have liked to finish what he’d started in bed, she couldn’t. But he’d let her go and hadn’t asked or insisted to go with her. Perhaps not a bad thing considering the effect he had on her.

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The lady at the front desk smiled at Colleen when she asked for Regina Starr and led her to a small meeting room. Colleen walked in and closed the door behind her. A woman sat alone in the room with her back to the door. But it was her long red, curly hair that had Colleen's heart hammering in her chest. A very familiar shade of red.

It was a dream. That's not a monster. That's just your new boss. Calm down!

But Colleen was shaking when the woman rose from her chair and turned to face her, a smile on her pretty face. The woman looked like she might be in her late thirties and she had bright blue eyes. But her smile didn't seem to reach her eyes. No, the woman's eyes rounded in surprise as they raked over Colleen from head to toe. Colleen knew in an instant the woman thought she recognized her just as Sean said he did.

Oh, shit.

"Ms. Starr?" Colleen tried to smile, play it off. Maybe it was just her imagination working overtime. "I'm Colleen O'Leary. Nice to meet you finally."

Regina Starr seemed to recovery quickly, held out a hand to Colleen. "Yes, I am glad to finally meet you, too."

Colleen was about to take the hand offered her when Sean's low, menacing voice stopped her. "Don't touch her."

Watching the woman's face, Colleen waited. Was this woman really her boss? Was Sean telling her the truth or was he completely insane? Either way she stood there, terrified. Either way she had reason to be afraid. At the very least of losing her job.

An annoyed smirk formed on Regina Starr's face. "This is getting old. Don't you have anything better to do?"

"Aside from killing you?" The controlled rage in Sean's voice forced a chill down Colleen's back. "No."

Regina's laughter was high and melodious. "You haven't managed

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to harm a hair on my head for over two hundred years. What makes you think you'll be able to do it now?"

"I beg to differ," Sean countered. "I was about to do quite a bit of harm to that stolen head the night before last at the gas station."

The gas station! Oh, my God! Colleen remembered now. She'd stopped at the gas station to get directions to the birthday party. A man had been choking a woman in the shadows next to the building. She could see Sean's face in her mind. *It had been him!* Colleen had not gotten a look at the woman, but she remembered her red hair trailing out behind her as she ran away.

"Perhaps." Regina's eyes turned to her, started to glow yellow. "I guess I should thank little Colleen for her help that night."

The de-icer. She'd sprayed Sean with it to free Regina. *Damn it!*

Her nightmare was realized as the woman's face shriveled and grayed until into a monstrous mask with enormous yellow fangs and black wizened skin. Colleen screamed and spun around to head for Sean. She'd made it two steps when she a long thick tentacle grabbed her, wrapped twice around her shaking form as it pulled her back towards Regina or whatever it was.

Sean's face was a study in rage as he stood watching them. "Let her go."

His voice was *too* calm and Colleen was terrified.

"She's mine," Regina hissed from behind her in voice that went from high and melodic to demonic possession. A long dark forked tongue shot out into Colleen's field of vision before licking the side of her face like a dog. "She's my bloodline."

"You're wrong," Sean's voice was barely above a whisper.

His gray eyes met Colleen's and her heart thundered in her chest at the determination in them. He was getting ready to *do* something. *Oh, shit!*

"She's *mine!*" Sean's voice thundered through the room and in a

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flash he shot through the air in the direction of Regina.

Colleen was hurled through the air like a rag doll and struck the wall with a force that jarred her bones. All hell broke loose around her, the sound like a dump truck crashing through the room, and she pulled herself up from the floor, bruised and hurting, to see them battling on the ceiling.

On the ceiling! Sean fought a creature that looked like an ancient dragon with tentacles, both of them defying gravity as they battled to the death. The creature lashed her tentacles out at Sean, their sound like the cracking of whips. One lash split the denim of his jeans at his thigh, striping his flesh. But the long line of blood disappeared in an instant, the wound completely healed.

The lady from the front desk of the hotel rushed in with wide eyes and quickly rushed back out as Sean grabbed the creature by one of its wings and slung it against the wall opposite of Colleen. Its body collapsed like a bat's, but in an instant it was on its feet and heading straight for her, snarling and hissing.

Sean fell to the floor, landing perfectly on his feet in front of Colleen on the table at the center of the room. She could feel the power, the rage emanating from his body as she backed against the wall.

"Now, Regan, you die."

Sean flew at the creature, his motion so quick Colleen hardly knew what had happened until she saw him beating the monster with powerful blows into the floor. Another tentacle whipped across his chest, slicing his shirt and skin open, but he seemed not to notice as he repeatedly drove his fists into the creature like a man possessed. When the monster started screaming, Colleen covered her ears, unable to bear the sound. Those cries became more frantic, more shrill as Sean locked his powerful arms around the creature's head and with furious strength ripped it from the creature's body.

Sean's head shot up at the sound of the police sirens outside.

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“Colleen! Are you all right?”

Colleen nodded, still trying to catch her breath from what she’d seen. She didn’t immediately notice that Sean had appeared beside her, pulling her into the safety of his arms. No, she was too busy watching the body of the creature bubble and melt, sliding down the wall like black oil.

“You’re sure you’re all right?” Sean cupped her face and forced her to look at him.

“Yes,” Colleen swallowed hard, her eyes gazing up into his.

“I have to leave now,” he explained gently. “This room will be crawling with police officers in just a couple of minutes. Can you imagine the field day the forensic scientists will have with that? Or would have with *me* for that matter?”

Colleen’s gaze darted to the messy remains of the creature back to him.

“I want you to be with me, Colleen.” Sean’s lips brushed hers in a kiss of infinite tenderness. “I don’t care if you never remember the other life we shared. I just want to share *this* life with you. If you’ll have me. I’ll always keep you safe. I’ll satisfy every need and desire you’ll ever have, you know I can.”

His strong hand, stained with the creature’s blood, lifted to her cheek. His eyes were dark with desire as they searched hers.

“I don’t ever want to live without you again,” Sean whispered. “Will you have me?”

Colleen’s heart squeezed in her chest at the raw emotion in his eyes.

Sean had told her he was a vampire and he was. He’d told her he would keep her safe and he had, saving her from the creature who’d stalked her, that he claimed had killed her in another life. Could it have been true? Hadn’t Regina Starr looked at her as if she knew her before she’d turned monstrous? Hadn’t she made reference to the fact that Sean had been following her for two hundred years, bent on destroying

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her?

And if all that were true, could she *really* be his love born again?

The sound of footsteps racing up the hall drew their attention to the closed door.

It's now or never. Make the call.

“Yes,” Colleen whispered. “I want to be with you.”

EPILOGUE

Dublin was alive with sounds and people and Sean smiled as Colleen pulled him into a pub called The Vaults. It was like stepping back in time for him with its charming brick archways and shining wooden floors. She made her way through the throng of people around the bar to another room, following the sound of a lovely ballad and he followed her. When they reached the room where people crowded around the Irish folk band performing there, Colleen smiled brightly.

And Sean turned hard as a stone. Her smile always did that to him.

It'd been months since their first night together and that terrible morning with Regan Sheehan, but his Colleen had proven to be remarkably resilient and open-minded. They'd managed to avoid police questioning about the incident long enough to collect her belongings and get out of town. They'd rented a house in the states for a while, but Ireland called to him, so they'd moved there in the last month.

It was his home. *Their* home.

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He knew Colleen doubted his story that they'd loved each other before, claimed she had no memories of it. From what he could tell from the flashes he read in her mind what she said was true. But he wouldn't give up hope that one day she'd remember.

She was with him *now*, wasn't she? Sean kept her in his bed as much as possible and when they weren't there, she was content to travel Ireland with him, to listen to his stories and explanations of his world, the vampires. What he knew of it anyway.

Colleen still worked at her computer now and again, but to Sean's amusement, her time at the damnable contraption grew shorter and shorter. He wanted her busy mind on him, her hands on him.

He turned harder. It was time to go.

Sean wrapped an arm about her waist and whispered in her ear. "I want to be inside you now."

Colleen grinned at him impishly and shook her head as the band began another ballad.

"Not until I hear this song. It's my favorite," she explained.

So it was. Sean stared at her in amazement. It had been *Eileen's* favorite song.

Colleen began to sing along with the band, the ballad of a simple girl and the boy who loved her. She knew all the words, her singing voice high and beautiful. Sean remembered her singing on her father's farm just that way so many years ago.

"When did you learn to speak in Gaelic?" Sean asked her meaningfully.

She froze where she stood, her lovely face paling and her eyes rounding in surprise.

"I don't know," she whispered.

Sean pulled her into her arms in the middle of the crowded room and took her mouth in a passionate kiss. Overjoyed at that promising glimmer of hope, he led her from the room. The night was just

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beginning and he wanted to be inside of her.

His love...

ISABELLA JORDAN

Isabella Jordan is the author of several published short stories and articles. By day Isabella is an instructor at a university in her native Virginia. By night she writes erotic tales and fantasies—and eats chocolate! In her spare time she enjoys life. While Isabella enjoys spending quiet time with her family and reading, she also enjoys bungee jumping, hiking, walking in the rain, rock 'n' roll and volunteering at her local women's shelter.

Isabella would love to hear from readers. Please visit her web site at www.isabellajordan.com or write to her at isa@isabellajordan.com.

* * *

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