

Loose Id



Praise for the writing of Essence

Tempting Reynaldo

Tempting Reynaldo is a delicious morsel. Lovers of vampire novels will find everything they love in *Tempting Reynaldo*: danger, excitement and love.

-- Melinda Barron, author of *Tales of the Magician 1: The Captive One* (Loose Id)

When Gwen Baxter finally manages to seduce darkly handsome Reynaldo Alcantara, their passionate lovemaking is all she ever dreamed. But Reynaldo has a terrible secret, one he fears will cost him Gwen's love. *Tempting Reynaldo* is a steamy tale of the night, perfect for lovers of vampire fiction

-- Kassie Burns, author of *Sexual Rx* (Loose Id)

Gwen had spent years trying to tempt Reynaldo into her bed. She didn't know everything about him, though... including his vamp ways. *Tempting Reynaldo* starts with hot temptation and ends in satisfaction, just the way a story should.

-- Treva Harte, author of *Stay* (Loose Id)

Reynaldo is sexy, Gwen is determined, and together they're one hot package. A true temptation.

-- Sage Grayson, author of *White Rage* (Changeling Press)

TEMPTING REYNALDO

Essence

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Tempting Reynaldo

Essence

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Chapter One

Gwen Baxter's exasperation knew no bounds. After too many attempts to capture Reynaldo Alcantara's attention and desire, none had panned out thus far. She was at her wit's end. To date they were still on friendly terms. He didn't allow for much else. She didn't know what else to try. What the hell did she have to do -- stalk in naked and perform cartwheels right under his nose? Maybe *that* would wake him up. Though she really doubted even that would work. The man had a stubborn streak a mile long.

For two long years now, Gwen's attempts seemed to be in vain. No matter what she tried, cooking, shared interests, skimpy clothes, nothing fazed the man. She had to find a way to get to him. Too many people said she was too stubborn for her own good, and this proved it. It would take much more than what seemed like disinterest on his part to make her go away.

"What are you planning now, Gwen?" Her best friend and her brother's girlfriend, Carolina Figueroa, inquired. Carolina's straight chestnut hair fanned her shoulders, touching Carolina's slim waist as she leaned forward over the table in Gwen's kitchen.

Carolina's brown eyes scanned the room. Gwen decided to shift gears for a moment and thought about her parents' sudden passing. She and her brother Greg were left with a

house completely paid for, and, since each was single, they were sharing the house and living expenses. Since neither one was married, it made sense that they share the house and the living expenses. Growing up, Gwen and Greg got along just fine. Their setup seemed ideal to both of them.

The four bedroom house in Orlando, Florida, offered all the amenities -- a state of the art kitchen, huge windows and a carefully mapped out floor plan. They each had their own bathroom and bedroom on opposite sides of the house, offering the privacy they needed.

They'd been maintaining this arrangement for four years now. It seemed to be working well. They gave each other the space they needed to cohabitate under the same roof. Greg worked nights, well really third shift, driving a truck full of coffins, while Gwen taught second grade at a nearby elementary school.

At twenty-four, Gwen had just begun to explore and feel free. Reaching a point in her life where she was finally done with college, she'd soon secured her first teaching position. Just having completed her first year of teaching two weeks earlier, she now was ready for some playtime. Hopefully, it would include the scrumptiously sexy Reynaldo. If only Reynaldo would cooperate and partake of her plans for him.

"I don't know." She forced her attention back to the subject at hand. Gwen's frown deepened as she tried to concentrate on what her next step would be.

She still hadn't gotten tired of the chase. The more Reynaldo ducked her, the more her resolve hardened. She stopped trying to understand why he wasn't responding to her obvious attempts for his attention.

The best excuse she could come up with was that Reynaldo and her brother were best friends. But she couldn't see what one had to do with the other. They were all adults. They had known each other now for five years. In the past two years, she'd developed a crush on him that had flourished into the hots.

Reynaldo's quiet, reserved demeanor remained the same throughout it all. She noticed that as of late, he wasn't hanging out at the house as much as he used to. Was he ducking her? Did that mean he didn't want to see her anymore? Was that the real reason for his recent absence?

"Why don't you just try the straight-up approach, girl?" Carolina advised. "Tell him how you feel?"

"What, say, 'Hey, you wanna be my sex object, my boy toy?' And send him running in the opposite direction?" Gwen sighed heavily. "You know him. He's too old school. He doesn't like aggressive women."

"I don't know, girl. What you gonna do, then?" Carolina shook her head, her wispy bangs shaking across her forehead as she crossed her arms under her abundant bosom. Her striped shirt snuggled up close to her breasts at her motion.

"Give me a few days, I'll think of something," Gwen muttered, holding a manicured finger between her teeth.

Before Carolina could respond, they heard the front door open and close with a crashing bang. A moment afterward, Gwen spotted her brother's head of curly, almost black hair, as he walked into the room and close behind she saw tall, hunky Reynaldo bringing up the rear. *She wished he would bring up her rear.* Her fingers itched to run each curve, each line of his tush. Gwen could imagine how his derriere would feel in her hands, the supple skin between her fingers then her fingers would go after the main prize. She needed help, and the sooner the better.

Reynaldo owned the trucking company and the manufacturing company where her brother worked. Periodically, he still joined his drivers and drove deliveries himself. Reynaldo and Greg wore their driving uniforms. They were both dusty and sweaty.

Gazing intently at Reynaldo, Gwen saw sweat shining on his skin. She watched a rivulet of the heated liquid roll down the side of his face. It made her want to lick it up. She

could already taste the salty liquid. The craving centered in her chest could drive her crazy if she allowed it to.

She gazed at Reynaldo. He stood about two inches over six feet. His inky black hair reached his shoulders and normally he held it back away from his face with an elastic piece. His olive complexion spoke of his Mediterranean ancestry. She felt those amber eyes were an attraction point. They invited her to engage in some naughty kissy face play and those eyes seduced with their intensity. He *just* had a way of looking at a woman that melted her panties and made her pussy twitch and convulse.

His bulging muscles strained against the shirt's material. Today he'd worn a blue short sleeve, button up shirt with denim shorts. She allowed her eyes to soak up the view of one sexy and seductive Reynaldo. Under that gleaming sweat was his golden complexion. His skin tone, a rich, polished bronze demanded her touch. Beckoned her to touch this muscular arms, his hairless chest and fan down to his flat six pack. That bronze color contrasted sharply with his amber eyes and dark, almost black hair.

Her mouth watered, as did her pussy. If only she could just sneak in a taste of him. For all she cared, it could be his neck, his chest, damn it, even his fingers. If she could get in a little lick, a quick flick of her tongue, just to see what he would do. To taste him first hand. She really *was* tempted, but alas they had an audience.

Gwen glanced up at the clock on the wall and saw it was barely two a.m. They must've called it a night. Greg had mentioned a few times that the Meet Your Maker staff was very busy making their deliveries, so it was surprising that they were home this early.

"You guys are home early," Gwen stated, looking at them both.

The two men gave each other a telling look before she heard her brother's flippant response.

"Yeah, for once at least," Greg spoke up. "My boss is a slave driver."

“And you get paid a pretty penny too,” Reynaldo countered, as he moved to the refrigerator to retrieve something cold to drink.

“Well, I haven’t fixed anything for you to eat, we just got home too,” Carolina announced, she stood up to move toward the refrigerator and then the stove. “You shoulda called to let me know you’d be home early.”

“That’s okay, babe, I’m off to take a shower first anyway.” Greg walked over to Carolina and grasped her hand. “Come on, you can scrub my back.”

“I gotta fix something to eat, Greg!” Carolina hedged, trying to dislodge her hand from his grasp, fighting to hide the smile creeping onto her lips.

“Go on, I’ll get it started.” Gwen smiled, as she smiled and stood up to move toward the refrigerator.

“Thanks, sis,” Greg called as they walked out of the kitchen.

At their departure, the tension in the room skyrocketed. Gwen kept telling herself she had to think quickly. She needed to think of something smart and sassy to say in order to capture his attention and have him stick around a bit longer.

“Those two are always getting busy.” She heard him speak in his low, gravelly voice and felt totally surprised.

So he did know she existed. “Like two little bunnies.”

“Yeah, he’s in love.” Reynaldo sipped out of the beer bottle, scanning her face. She could swear he memorized her features in that one glance. Involuntarily, she ran a hand over the curly, dark hair that she held back in a ponytail wondering if any of it was sticking out.

His close scrutiny did weird things to Gwen’s her insides. Her skin tingled, her nipples contracted so hard they became tight buds and her pussy convulsed. That wasn’t fair. She didn’t see him reacting that way.

“Must be nice.” Gwen couldn’t help the sarcastic comment, as she moved to the refrigerator to prepare a grilled chicken salad. “You gonna stay for dinner?”

“No, not really hungry for food right now,” Reynaldo answered, but he sat at the table, watching her with a hawk’s eye. His amber colored eyes scoped her every move.

An idea struck her. She was about to be very, very naughty. She snatched up salad fixings out of the refrigerator; lettuce, tomatoes, carrots and a huge, thick cucumber was the last item she pulled out. She returned to the table with the food and a bowl. With systematic dicing, she took care of the lettuce and tomatoes, then took a carrot and peeled it before she popped the tip into her mouth. She twirled it between her lips, then bit down.

She grabbed the cucumber, rubbed it with her fingers up and down a bit, then set it against her nose as if she were testing its freshness. A choked sound coming from behind her, Gwen heard him sputter what he’d been drinking and coughed profusely.

With what she hoped was the look of innocence, she approached him and patted him on his back. After a minute he seemed okay.

“You sure about not wanting food?” She innocently inquired.

“I’m one hundred percent sure about food,” he countered, looking directly into her eyes. Then his gaze fell to her mouth. At that moment she knew her performance had affected him. He obviously knew it had been intentional.

An electric thrill raced up and down her spine at the way he kept looking at her. So this was how it felt to have his undivided attention. Sensual, sizzling dings of energy raced throughout her body. She could feel the telltale moisture between her legs and her nipples pebbling just from him looking at her that way. She was one huge throbbing mass of flesh.

She’d take his bait. “So what are you hungry for?”

In one swift movement, Reynaldo set the bottle on the table, stood up, and locked her in his embrace. He paused, so close to her heated body that not even a coin would have passed between them. The big man framed her face between his two hands, his thumb rubbing her left cheek just where it held a faint scar.

Gwen realized she was holding her breath when she became woozy. Or was that because she had him where she wanted him? *Or does he have you where he wants you?* He moved closer, his crotch aligning against her heated mound. Unable to resist, she rubbed her lower body against his, feeling his readiness. One of them moaned, but she couldn't tell which of the two, because he'd clamped his mouth over hers and his tongue sought entry.

Finally, Gwen sighed heavily, breathing in a great gasp of air before her tongue snaked out to meet his. Their hands touched one another. Gwen rubbed his back, feeling those tight, powerful muscles over his biceps. She felt his hands descend to her neck, her shoulders, and then one snuck up her shirt to settle over her breast.

"Just right, I knew you'd fit perfectly in my hand," Reynaldo whispered against her lips before returning his attention to her straining nipple. His fingers crept under her bra to capture and tweak her bare breast.

She molded her lips and her body to his, seeking closer contact. She really couldn't believe she was standing there in his arms, kissing him. It felt so surreal, and she was ready to take full advantage of this change of pace for Reynaldo.

Gwen knew her brother and Carolina would be a while upstairs. She didn't need to worry about them walking in on them right now.

Gwen let her hands travel down to stop over his rounded butt. She massaged and kneaded the taut flesh covered by denim. Ah, to have him stripped, bare naked, would be a dream come true. But she'd take one step at a time and the one he'd taken was going in the right direction. She allowed one hand to move to the front of his zipper and cupped his erect cock. Did she dare lower the zipper and get a good feel, flesh to flesh? Hell, why not? She'd waited this long.

She wouldn't normally behave this boldly, but desperate times called for desperate measures. Tonight, before he left this house, Reynaldo would know how badly she wanted him and what she was capable of doing to get his attention.

Gwen undid the button and with slow precision proceeded to unzip his jeans. The sound of the zipper rasping against the metal rings filled their ears. In no time her hand delved inside to find her prize. She felt his cock straining against his boxers, so she set it free. Gwen looked down to view the massive piece she held between her fingers. *Wow, this was the real thing!*

"You like?" Reynaldo's voice held a smile and his eyes were full of mischief and lust.

"Yes, very much," Gwen answered, fully mesmerized by the size and girth of his cock. Her fingers began to stroke it with slow, methodical strokes, almost in awe. She felt him spasm in response to her touch.

"I'm very happy you do." Reynaldo leaned back against the counter, allowing her extra room to move, to do what she wanted with him. He tipped his head back and bit his lip in response to her action.

"How does that feel?" Gwen fully knew that he was enjoying her manipulation.

During her stroking motions, his hips responded with their own gyration. She pressed her lips onto his lips again as she sped up the pace. Her tongue wrapped around his and she sucked on it, simulating the way she'd suck his cock.

Their hard, labored breathing rang all around the room. Gwen felt the pent up sexual tension straight to her toes. She wanted more, needed more. When she felt him begin to shiver, she knew he had to be near his release.

"You have to stop! I'm going to come all over your hand if you don't," Reynaldo whispered against her mouth.

"Go right ahead. I dare you," Gwen challenged him, continuing to stroke his cock as it began to quiver and shake.

"Shit, Gwen, do you know what you're doing?" Reynaldo pumped his hips as she stroked him faster and faster.

Soon enough she felt the warm liquid spill over onto her fingers and hand. The deeply gratifying sense that he'd lost control left her feeling empowered. She heard him hiss between his lips and moan in the back of his throat while he spent himself in her hand.

He pressed his forehead against hers. Gwen waited for his breathing to come back down to normal before attempting to move. Her body felt wired, full of electricity. Talk about needing a cold shower!

It took at least five minutes for either one to feel like they could speak. Incredulous at what had just happened, Gwen couldn't help the silly grin on her face. She wasn't even going to ask what had come over him, because she didn't want him to change his mind or begin to second guess his actions. She had plans to further this between them. She wanted more, much more, from Reynaldo.

"I owe you one." He tweaked her nipple to recapture her attention.

"So when will you pay up?" Gwen tested her newfound bravado, craving, interest, whatever it was that drew her to him. She thanked the gods or whoever shed this blessing over her for this turnaround in Reynaldo.

"Come with me to my house. I can take care of that tonight," Reynaldo shot back. His amber eyes shone with promise and a dare. A promise she really couldn't ignore. She needed to take this all the way.

Too much time passed where she lay panting, thinking of her desire for the handsome man before her. She would set loose her pent up frustrations if that was the last thing she'd do.

"Lead on, big guy." Gwen crossed her arms and tapped her sandaled foot against the white ceramic tile.

Without another word, Reynaldo grabbed her hand, just like her brother had done earlier to Carolina, and they walked the few paces through her living room and out the front door.

Oh, shit, it was on! Gwen's heart skipped a few beats, exhilaration dancing in her veins as she followed his lead out of the house.

Chapter Two

Reynaldo raced out of the house feeling possessed. Tonight, for some strange reason, he couldn't take anymore of Gwen's taunts. Reynaldo had fought it all this time and he couldn't any longer. He wanted just one taste. One taste of her would have to be enough. His wanting Gwen went beyond any yearning, anything he had ever craved, went beyond anything he'd desired ever before. He didn't recall wanting Larissa this way three hundred years before. All those years ago he knew he had loved her, and he'd believed he had until now.

Just this once, man, get her out of your system. The temptation took hold of his insides again. Helping her hop into his truck, he practically ran to the driver's side, got into his seat, and gunned the engine.

They were at his house in five minutes flat. He clicked the garage open, and as the door descended, his hands did the same over Gwen. He pulled her to him and reclaimed her mouth. His tongue ran over the seam of her lips and entered her mouth, seeking to tango with her tongue.

As if having a mind of their own, his hands settled over her breasts. He stripped off her shirt and unhooked her bra, exposing her upper body to his hungry gaze. He wanted to memorize how she looked, so in the future he could pull up this memory.

His lips encircled her left nipple and it responded by beading up under his tongue. She tangled her fingers through his glossy hair, pulling him closer to her body, clearly enjoying what he was doing to her, how he was making her feel.

His tongue licked and flicked over Gwen's breast as Reynaldo's hand traveled beneath the elastic band of her pants and quickly zeroed in on her jewel. The sweet moisture and quivering flesh welcomed his touch. His fingers were quickly coated with her wet juices, making him hard again, making him want to bury himself deep inside of her.

"Come on, let's get inside where I can see you fully naked," Reynaldo sighed against her skin.

They got out of the truck, and Gwen rounded the front of it as Reynaldo waited for her near the door that led inside the house. He handed her shirt to her. "Here, in case my housekeeper is still up."

In silence, Gwen took back her tank top and slipped it on without bothering with the bra. She knew Reynaldo had a live-in person, but she couldn't imagine why the older lady would be up this late in the night. It had to be at least two thirty in the morning; there was no reason for her to still be up and about. The woman should be in bed sound asleep, for crying out loud!

Gwen watched Reynaldo open the door and he lead the way into the house. The lights in the kitchen were off. Soft illumination from a living room lamp spread to the foyer as if welcoming them. He was happy the coast was clear; he wouldn't have to deal with explaining Gwen's presence to anyone.

They finally arrived at his bedroom. He didn't bother turning on the light since his night vision didn't require the extra light. All he wanted was to dispose of Gwen's clothes and have her naked on his bed. He didn't think Gwen would comment about the darkness in the room, it would lend some ambiance. He turned, shut the door quietly, and locked it for good measure.

When he turned around to face her, he found Gwen standing in her naked glory near his bed. She was swift as lightning and bold. He was beginning to like those traits in a woman. A huge smile plastered itself on his lips.

“You have too many clothes on, dude,” Gwen whispered, as she ran a hand between her breasts, down her flat belly, ending over her feminine folds.

God, the woman would drive him insane. Then a quiet, niggling thought entered his head. *What if once wasn't enough? What if he needed her more and more?* He knew she held the potential of becoming addictive to him. Right now his instinct was to throw her on the bed, spread her legs and taste her essence. He put distance between them because his gut told him with Gwen, he would not have a way back.

Pushing the disturbing thought aside, Reynaldo complied with Gwen's wishes and discarded his clothes.

“I need a shower.” Reynaldo remembered his sweaty and sticky body.

“Oh, no.” Gwen shook her head as she moved toward him, pausing right in front of him. She grabbed his hand and placed it over her breast. “You can shower later, I can't wait anymore.”

He exhaled, expelling a soft growl, his hand encircling her small waist to pull her to him. He kissed her then with such fervor and want, it left him breathless. He was practically panting like a puppy. One hand landed between her butt cheeks, seeking that nub and his finger began to tease it. In response, she shook her ass, but moved closer to him. The strength of the heat they were creating left Reynaldo jittery and jumpy at the intensity of it.

Reynaldo reached down and scooped her up. After a few paces, his legs brushed against his bed. Bending over, he let her down in a soft plop on the bed. He splayed her legs open and got a precise view of her pink button. Her juices made her cunt appear shiny and slick. His mouth watered while he viewed his prize.

He fell over her, kissing a trail upward from the arch of her feet, to her calves, to her smooth thighs, then focusing on her juicy nether lips. Her musky aroma called to him. Her scent enveloped him like a blanket on a cold night.

She'd trimmed her pubic hair down to almost nothing. She sported a narrow streak of hair over her mound and the view made him want to explore further. Her pale skin held a soft blush as if she had been outside gardening. He knew she felt the heat radiating through them. What lay between them was palpable, alive, almost reachable with his bare hands.

His fingers found her swollen button and pressed two fingers inside her wet passage, teasing it where a raw need to please overtook him. He replaced his fingers with his mouth and licked the sweet juices that flowed freely. Her legs wrapped around his torso and her fingers tweaked and pulled on her nipples. The moans served as an impulse to further his teasing.

He ran his tongue upward from the slit to her clit. His nips on her clit made her buck her hips, plastering her pussy straight into his mouth. He responded by sticking his tongue inside her slit, making her hips buck off the mattress.

"Ah, damn, Reynaldo," Gwen chanted, her head tossing back and forth.

He responded by inserting two fingers inside her and finger-fucking her wet passage. As he pushed his fingers in and out, he tweaked her nipples with his other hand. Soon enough, he felt her quivering and shaking. She let out a deep, searing moan as her release came. Her body shook, trembling and convulsing.

Reynaldo moved up over her body and wrapped her legs around his slim waist. With one hand he held his aching cock, positioning it at the opening of her pussy. He pushed in, trying to drive himself deep inside her, only to stop when he felt a barrier that didn't allow full entry. He tried again, but felt the barrier; it wasn't his imagination.

Holy shit, she was a virgin!

“What the fuck?” A huge frown covered his features. Reynaldo paused mid-movement, totally surprised at his discovery. He looked down at her with the question bright in his eyes.

Reynaldo stared down at Gwen, and she wouldn't return meet his searching gaze. Her silence told him that she knew he must have realized her condition, because she responded by grabbing his hips, pushing herself upward and making himself drive totally inside of her.

“There, it doesn't matter anymore. Now make it worth my while.” Gwen's eyes shone with challenge and something more. The lust there sent him over the edge. His cock was now surrounded by her tight, wet pussy and it felt damn good, too good to back out now.

He really couldn't stop, even if he wanted to. The feel of her virginal pussy wrapped tight around his cock was too much for him to ignore. He kissed her open-mouthed, tongue to tongue. His fingers found her nub again and began teasing it. In no time he felt her respond by moving her ass upward to meet him as he drove down, deep inside her pussy.

Reynald's pumping his cock in and out of Gwen's clinging pussy made them both moan out loud. He switched to lick her nipples, biting them lightly as he continued fucking her. Their heart rates matched as they thumped in unison. Their slick bodies shone with a thin layer of perspiration, making their gyrations slick, letting them move with freedom.

When he began to feel her pussy tighten around his cock, he knew she was getting close to exploding around his rigid dick. Hunkering down closer to her, Reynaldo picked up the rhythm. He fingered her clit and he felt her shiver, trembling in response to his touch.

Gwen squeaked out his name and quivered all around his cock, setting off Reynaldo's own release. His balls tightened and he shook and quaked through his muscular frame.

“Wow, can we do that again?” Gwen asked a few moments later, still shaking with the after effects of her orgasm.

Reynaldo couldn't help laughing out loud at Gwen's her reaction. For someone who just recently lost her virginity, she'd gotten the hang of making love in no time. She allowed herself to show how much she enjoyed it and didn't hide how she felt. Bashful didn't seem to

be a word in her vocabulary. She really was a breath of fresh air and she made him feel ten feet tall.

“One more time,” Reynaldo promised, his brows arching. “But then I have to get you home. I need to sleep.”

If his request seemed strange to Gwen, she didn’t show it. Best that way. The less said, the better off he was. She didn’t make him feel like he had to explain to her why he needed her out of the house before sun up. Things could get sticky if she began questioning him.

In the thousand years Reynaldo had lived, he could now manage had learned to expose himself to faint sunlight. So pre-dawn or sunset did not affect him, he just didn’t tolerate mid-day sun. The dawn and sunset hours were fine for him. One day, about one hundred years ago, he’d sat while the sun rose up in the sky and he realized how much he missed seeing the sun rise and set. When he noticed the rising sun hadn’t harmed him, he tested the setting sun hour and figured out he *could* sit out during both of those glorious events.

Jumping out of the bed, Reynaldo turned on the night lamp and the room was quickly bathed in soft, muted light. He paused when something on the bed caught his attention. He looked further down to a spot between her legs and saw the red spots on the bed. The fresh scent of blood made his nostrils flare. His mouth watered when he caught the scent of her virginal blood.

“What? What’s wrong?” Gwen’s quizzical expression reached out to him.

“There’s blood on the bed.” Reynaldo’s stare must have made her feel uncomfortable because she sat up on her haunches to look down at the bed too.

Gwen shrugged nonchalantly. “That’ll come out in the wash.”

She sat back, leaning against the propped up pillows, apparently waiting on his next move. For all her show of bravado, he could sense her nervousness. They both had succumbed to the lust seeping between them and now she wondered where that would lead

them. He wondered about that too. This had to be it. They couldn't take it further, he told himself again.

He took great care with his words and actions. He couldn't allow her to believe this would lead to deeper entanglements. He just couldn't allow that to happen. Reynaldo would never allow his heart to be trampled on as it had been all those years ago.

"Come on, I will wash off some of it from between your legs." Reynaldo offered his hand.

Gwen accepted his outstretched hand and stood up. He led her into the white tiled bathroom. He paused to turn on the shower. The shower stall fit two people comfortably, and he led them both in it after he tested the temperature and found it to his liking.

In less than fifteen minutes, Reynaldo had taken a washcloth, lathered it up and washed her everywhere. The warm water soothed the inside of her thighs. He even got to areas that would require her to be a contortionist in order for her to reach. When he turned her around so he could get to her back, she moved against him, feeling her ass rub against his erect cock.

"I see you're ready again." Gwen smiled down at his protruding cock and returned to her teasing.

"I'm always ready, *querida*. Just try me," Reynaldo murmured near her ear as he returned the favor and continued to rub his stiff cock against her ass while seeking out her slick cunt with his fingers.

"That's why we're here, isn't it?" Gwen turned around to face him, wrapping her arms around his neck. "Come here."

Gwen pressed her lips against his and he welcomed her tongue as it slipped inside his mouth. He responded by pulling her tight against him and twining his tongue with hers.

He felt her nimble fingers wrap around his cock, and then begin to move with slow, precise jerks. Separating her hand from his cock, because he didn't want to come on her hand twice in one night, Reynaldo reached over, shut off the water and moved back to step out of the shower stall.

"Come, the other room offers a better place for play." Reynaldo pulled her along with him into the bedroom and shut off the bathroom light. He reached for a thick towel and wrapped it around her. He took another one, dried off his back, legs and arms, then tossed it on the floor.

In the room, he let go of her hand and went to the opposite side of the bed to the closet near the window. He pulled out carefully folded white sheets. When she saw that he had the sheets in hand, she proceeded to drag the soiled one off the bed. He threw the fitted sheet over the bed and she grabbed the other side, securing it on each corner on her side as he did his.

He took a good look at her stance, bent over as she was, admiring her raspberry-hued nipples swinging softly. He watched her fall onto the bed and roll over to his side. The mischievous look in her eyes said she knew he watched her and that spoke of trouble. Reynaldo knew he was in for it, just by that one look.

"What are you planning, *chiquita*?" Reynaldo dared to ask.

"Just returning the pleasure I received earlier." Gwen moved forward, reached for his shoulders and twisted him so his backside would be on the bed with just one little push, which she gave him.

Reynaldo fell back on the bed and waited to see what she had planned. The woman had been a virgin, but that didn't mean she wasn't willing to experiment and try new things. She wasn't shy by any sense of the word. Gwen had managed to surprise him at every turn.

Gwen climbed over him and began to place soft kisses up his legs and thighs, until she reached his protruding cock.

“And what are you going to do with that?” Reynaldo leaned on his elbows to watch the next step in her plan.

“Well, I can certainly pretend it’s a lollipop.” Gwen giggled as she licked his cock from the bottom to the top.

His eyes widened; her teasing sure got his attention. His hands clenched the sheets, the sparks of pleasure running rampant throughout his body. When she took him fully inside her mouth, Reynaldo almost bounced off the bed. Her tongue massaged him and her mouth tightened around his cock to give him the feel of tight suction.

She reached the tip, popped it out of her mouth and proceeded to lick him again, as if his cock were indeed a lollipop. Next she set her attention on his balls. Her sucking on each one nearly sent him over the edge.

Well, two could play that game. He shifted her body where she lay on top of him so her pussy sat mere inches from his mouth. He split her legs apart so he could see her pink jewel. The juices looked slick against her slit. Reynaldo pulled her back toward him, clamped over her opening and licked up to her clit.

In response, Gwen grasped his cock with one hand and suckled him from the tip, practically swallowing him whole. She was a quick learner, Reynaldo realized, as goose bumps danced over his skin.

He inserted two fingers inside her pussy and his mouth clamped over her clit and suckled there while he pushed inside of her. The little witch began to jerk him off, while at the same time sucking his dick like she was enjoying the best ice cream cone she’d ever had.

Now it had become about who would make the other come first.

Chapter Three

Gwen knew what he was trying to do. He wanted her to cry uncle and she wouldn't. Their game had taken an interesting turn, and this was exactly what she'd been looking for. She knew that making love to this charismatic man would be mind blowing and so far it had been that and more.

Setting her mind to the task at hand, Gwen began to circle the tip of his cock with her tongue, drawing some moans out of him. Suppressing the huge smile from her lips, Gwen continued her pursuit of victory.

"You liked that, huh?" Gwen dipped her head back toward his rigid cock, now slick and shiny with her saliva and a bit of his own juices.

In response to her question, she felt him insert another finger in her wet pussy. He then rubbed some of her own lubricant round and round her puckered flesh, while his teasing finger sought entry. He moved dead center on her anus, seeking to pass her sphincter.

The pressure there, added to his teasing her pussy with his tongue and fingers, was becoming too much for her to handle. She could feel the orgasm coming. She refocused on his cock. She wrapped her tongue around the tip again and jerked his cock with two fingers at a quicker pace.

Just when she thought she would lose it, her orgasm began to creep up over and around her, taking charge as stars seem to sparkle throughout her body. It crept up from her toes, to her thighs, crashed into her pussy and paused at her heart. His own body quivered and she felt him shiver right before he began moving against her lips with quick strokes. She held his ass clenched within her firm grip, and gazed up to watch him as his head leaned back exposing his corded neck.

She felt his juices flowing into her mouth. Gwen kept at him, sucking, licking and teasing him until she felt him relax. She let him ease his semi-erect cock away from her mouth. Gwen saw it shiny with her saliva and his own juices.

This episode went well beyond anything she dreamed of experiencing. They were both panting and shaking when their release came to an end.

The look Reynaldo gave her was priceless. His eyes widened in wonder as they stared into her own very pleased look. Full of pride, Gwen felt triumphant that she had made him come apart at the same moment her release took over her body. With slow precision she licked her lips, smacked them together as she recalled the tangy taste of his essence against her tongue.

"No winner, huh?" Gwen sat up over him and turned to face him.

"The way I see it, we both won." Reynaldo still sported a glazed look after his release.

"Yes, we sure did." Gwen leaned forward to place a soft kiss on his lips.

Reynaldo hugged her to him and she wrapped her legs around his waist. Apparently, he had one more thing to show her before their time came to an end. Sitting with her legs wide open, she gave him easy access, allowing him to insert his still hard cock inside of her.

"Damn, that's good," Reynaldo breathed against her mouth and flipped them over, allowing him to take command.

With slow precision, Reynaldo began to move, pushing his cock deep and then deeper, inside her canal. This time he made love to her in slow, deep reaching strokes. Gwen

cherished the sensations coursing through her body at his quiet display. She had just shared a soul searing exchange with this man and it hadn't been enough. Here she laid waiting for more, wanting more.

This was the Reynaldo she was used to -- slow, methodic and sure of his prowess. She shivered, hissing between her teeth when his cock hit the right spot. When their release came this time, they both shook and panted once it was over. Gwen knew this night would be forever engraved in her mind.

A few short minutes later, he sighed heavily, got up off the bed, and slipped on shorts and a sleeveless t-shirt.

"Come, let me take you back home." Reynaldo extended his hand to her. "I'm afraid I won't get any sleep if you stay there."

"Chicken, that's a challenge I'm presenting," Gwen shot back. "Can you handle a full day in bed with me?"

"Right now, my brain and body are too fuzzy to even think straight, let alone try to make that decision. Ask me again when I'm rested."

Gwen put on a smile, then followed his example and dressed with quick, brisk movements. Soon she sat in front of her house as Reynaldo shut off the engine and came around to the passenger side. She got out before he reached the door and he walked alongside her without saying another word.

At the door, he made her pause when he put a hand on her shoulder and turned her around to face him.

"Thank you." Reynaldo dipped his head toward hers, sealing their mouths together. His kiss left her breathless, as he'd done all night long.

"No -- thank *you*." Gwen patted his cheek, then walked into her house without looking back.

When she reached her bedroom, she leaned back against her door, still not believing the night she'd had. Never in a million years would she have believed Reynaldo's moment to yield to the constant teasing and taunting Gwen had begun so long ago had arrived. She still couldn't explain what drove him to do what they had done tonight, but whatever it was, she only prayed it would happen again. She hoped this living, breathing passion that lay between them would lead to something more, something tangible that could be explored and made to flourish to its full potential.

Slipping out of her clothes, she threw a long t-shirt over her head and fell on her bed, exhausted. Her body was sated and hummed with vitality. Reynaldo could easily become an addiction. All she could think about right now was getting away again and spending a few hours butt naked on a bed, with Reynaldo on top of her.

Snuggling deeper under her covers, Gwen could see them escaping again some other night and repeating today's encounter. The memory of his lips over hers, seeking entry, and his fingers trailing a path of liquid fire down to her pussy made her clamp her legs together as her clit began to throb all over again. She hoped Reynaldo's thoughts were on the same track as hers. Gwen fell asleep plotting her next get-together with Reynaldo, because she had a feeling that what just happened between them didn't happen with everyone. She had seen the results of too many people having sex just for the sake of lust and for the sheer pleasure of it. She also knew that there were people who shared a unique spiritual experience when they coupled with just the right person. Gwen believed she'd achieved that tonight.

That enlightening thought carried her straight into the sandman's arms.

* * * * *

Gwen arose the following morning a little sore between her legs, but feeling renewed and refreshed. Now she'd finally gotten somewhere with Reynaldo, and hoped they would be taking this further. Oh, to have him in her bed every night and share the important

moments, their lives would be an answer to her prayers. She would even let it become a habit, if he were interested.

Finally having a chance to touch, kiss and make love to Reynaldo had been what she had always imagined. His careful, precise manner turned her on so much, that her toes curled now just reliving their hours together.

Enough with her fantasizing. She needed to get on the ball. Saturday mornings were reserved for shopping and cleaning. Did she want to hang out close to home in case he showed up? She didn't want to make it that obvious that she was sitting around waiting for a man's call or visit. But she knew how Reynaldo thought. He could easily stick it in his head that their time together was a huge mistake.

She showered, dressed and scampered out of the house in no time. She noticed the quietness in the house, so that meant that Greg and Carolina were still sleeping, or they were out.

She'd made a number of stops, then noticed the time was near six o'clock. She needed to get groceries and head back home. Looking through her rear view mirror, she caught sight of a dark brown car that seemed to be everywhere she'd stopped so far, and here it was again.

Gwen drove down the road humming softly. She turned into the market's parking lot and saw the dark brown, non-descriptive sedan turn in the same direction too. She now realized the car had made each and every turn she had taken. Must be a coincidence, why would anyone want to follow her? But she would be careful considering all the loonies out in the streets nowadays. She could easily become a victim of a car-jacking. She pushed her thoughts aside and exited her car.

She headed for the supermarket and saw the sedan drive at a slow pace right near her. The tinted windows didn't let her see inside the car to identify the driver or passengers. She did feel their eyes on her back as she walked away. Chills raced up and down her spine after feeling the malevolent stares. Something wasn't right with the car dwellers; she could feel it.

She felt safer once she entered the store. Half an hour later, when she exited, the car was nowhere to be found. Expelling a huge sigh of relief, she moved to her car and rapidly deposited her purchases in the backseat.

When she arrived at the house, she saw Reynaldo's truck parked in the driveway. Yippee! Her heart revved up into high gear. Maybe he'd come to continue where they'd left off earlier that morning.

Humming softly, Gwen walked into the kitchen carrying two bags of groceries. She heard voices coming from the living room and the strong tone pulled her toward the other room.

"What are you going to do about this?" She heard her brother say. "I'll get my gun."

"Stop, Greg," Reynaldo advised "You're not thinking straight."

"Well, let's go to the authorities, then," her brother suggested.

Go to the authorities for what? They were two adults and didn't need anyone's permission to be together. Where did her brother get off making demands on Reynaldo regarding her?

Gwen marched into the room, ready to give her brother a piece of her mind.

"What is going on here?" Gwen set her hands on her hips.

Both startled men turned to face her with guilty expressions plastered on their faces. She could tell they were discussing something important, and whatever it was, they didn't want an audience.

"What are you guys talking about so loudly?" Gwen demanded, still waiting for one of them to respond.

Reynaldo moved toward Gwen as Greg left the house without saying a word. They heard his car rev and the crunch of the tires against the ground as he peeled away.

“What’s going on?” Gwen asked again as she stared into Reynaldo’s eyes. She couldn’t read anything in them. Their male egos seemed to want to leave what ever it was between them, but she wasn’t about to let him ignore her question.

“Nothing is going on.” Reynaldo pulled her along and sat on the sofa. “But we do need to talk.”

This didn’t feel like he was ready to say he wanted them to continue their newly formed relationship. This felt like a let-down. “What? Why? You trying to let me down? Is that why you’re here?”

Gwen couldn’t help the tone in her voice. After experiencing such an incredible night, she couldn’t believe he was choosing to call it quits before they even got started. Why hadn’t she expected this from him? He had hedged and stood away from her, and now he was afraid to explore what they experienced. It had to be that. He was afraid to let himself take it further.

“It’s not like that. Don’t make it seem like we swore eternal love to each other.” Reynaldo used his cool, calm demeanor everyone knew him for. “We had a good time and let’s just leave it at that for now.”

Gwen’s head throbbed with explosive heat ready to smoke out through her ears. The gall of the man, to come in and try to lessen the meaning of their night together. His words left a sour taste in her mouth. As if what they shared was an every day occurrence between two people and now he wanted to brush it aside. In her heart, she damn well knew he had never felt what he did with any other woman. Now she had to get him to admit to that.

“Oh, so now you’re going to tell me that you’ve had the same experience with other women? That your body reacts like that to any other woman you’re with?” Gwen challenged him, not letting him tear his gaze from her fiery one.

Reynaldo at least blushed in response to her statement. Yes! He couldn't deny that what she was saying was the truth. Their encounter held something special. The power of it spoke volumes.

"That's not what I meant, so don't twist my words around, Gwen." Reynaldo's exasperation came through loud and clear as he ran a hand over his hair and mussed it up, making him look extremely sexy. Shoot, sexier, if possible.

"That's what I heard you say." Gwen shook her head as she began to pace the area.

"Look ..." Reynaldo didn't get a chance to get the rest of his statement out, because two masked men came crashing through the front door while two others dressed in a similar manner, barged in from the kitchen area where they must have entered via the garage door.

None of the intruders spoke. Two targeted Gwen, grabbing her from behind. One covered her mouth by stuffing a piece of cloth in it and the other helped him scoop her up. They began to move toward the front door, where they had entered.

"Hold it right there, guy." One of the goons that came in through the kitchen held Reynaldo fast. His gun was pointed straight at Gwen's lover.

"Who are you? What do you want here?" Reynaldo asked in a low, calm voice.

"That doesn't matter," the other man stated loud and clear. "We have a message for you. Give up your claim at Meet Your Maker and she'll be returned safe and sound."

The masked man signaled to the others and in silence they carted Gwen out into a waiting truck sitting just outside the door.

Gwen fell like a sack of potatoes in the back of the truck, wondering what the hell was going on. Who were these people? And why did they want Reynaldo to give up his company?

They didn't give her the chance to speak because they covered her nose and mouth with another cloth with some sweet smelling liquid that knocked her out cold.

Chapter Four

Reynaldo paced the room, huffing like a caged tiger. They'd taken Gwen, and over what? All of this commotion because someone wanted to put him out of business? Only one person came to mind -- Jason Cartwright, the competition's owner.

He recalled how several months before, Cartwright had shown up in his office, presenting his proposal for a buyout. The white-haired, older man really wanted a claim on Reynaldo's company. Reynaldo had stopped to listen, fully knowing he wasn't about to sell, no matter what the man had to say. Cartwright had continued with his spiel while Reynaldo watched the other man's beady green eyes as they went over the paperwork he had brought with him.

"Here I have, my friend, a proposal you just won't be able to refuse." Cartwright's sugary voice had grated on his nerves. The man placed a manila folder on top of Reynaldo's desk and waited for him to open it.

Reynaldo simply sat back, trying to keep himself from jumping over his desk to snatch the little weasel's head off his shoulders. He knew Cartwright was behind all the sabotages suddenly involving his trucks and merchandise.

“I’m not interested,” Reynaldo had responded in a low, raspy voice, his patience wearing very thin and quickly reaching its end. “Now, take your proposal and get the hell out of my office!”

The older man had the gall to huff as he stood up, snatched the folder off Reynaldo’s desk and turned to walk out. “You’ll regret this. You *will* sell me the company.”

That had occurred three months ago. Reynaldo still dealt with sabotages on his equipment and on the merchandise, but thus far it wasn’t anything he couldn’t control. He guessed now he would have to get downright mean and do some ass kicking. He had reserved some time to not behave rashly. But now the time for him to retaliate was here. With these types of people, gentle understanding or trying to rationalize didn’t go over well.

He still held their scent and it would be easy to track back to where they were holding Gwen. Thankfully, he managed to leave the house before Greg returned to witness the ordeal. All of it happened too fast with very little commotion, and relief flooded him at not having to worry about Greg too.

Reynaldo jumped into his truck and sniffed his way toward where they’d dragged Gwen. His body shook and trembled with the pent-up fury he was trying to control. He hoped they knew better than to touch a hair on Gwen’s head. They had no clue what he was capable of should something happen to her while in their hands. He didn’t recall when he’d ever been this angry.

Pulling up a block away from where he knew they held Gwen, Reynaldo decided to walk the rest of the way, knowing it would make it easier to surprise the enemy. The two men guarding Gwen sat at a table playing cards, paying no real attention to their surroundings and the possibility of someone breaking in.

Their surroundings looked like a pig sty, with plates of food littering the floor and furniture, cans of beer strewn all over the place, and ashtrays full of cigarette butts. The house reeked of their days-old food and their unwashed bodies.

Reynaldo reached the door in a flash, busting it in and startling the two idiots. Overcoming them was child's play. A twist of each man's neck, and then both lay on the floor in a heap.

Reynaldo entered the other room and found Gwen, who was fast asleep. He noted her hands were tied behind her back. Her legs were tied together, too. Reynaldo quickly undid the ties and hefted her in his arms.

They were back at her house in no time. Reynaldo worried that she still was out cold. He placed her down on the long sofa and went in search of her brother. He had to be home!

Knocking on Greg's bedroom door, Reynaldo's frustration began to cloud his mind. Now Jason Cartwright had moved over a line that shouldn't have been crossed. Reynaldo needed to take care of Cartwright before he really hurt someone Reynaldo cared about.

Greg came to the door, a towel wrapped over his hips, water streaming down from his dark hair trailing to his neck and shoulders.

"What's up, man?" Greg opened the door wide to let Reynaldo into the bedroom.

"Cartwright is at it again and this time he's gone too far." Reynaldo paced the area in Greg's room. The way he would deal with Cartwright and his goons wouldn't be very nice. He still wasn't ready to let Greg and Gwen know the truth about himself.

"Stop pacing and tell me what happened." Greg spoke in a strong, halting voice that captured Reynaldo's attention.

"They kidnapped your sister to try to force me to sell the company!" Reynaldo paused, looking the other man straight in the eye.

"Why would they grab Gwen? She has nothing to do with the company." Greg's confusion was obvious, but Reynaldo ignored the question.

"They must've followed us here, seen your sister and figured her to be a prime target." Reynaldo hoped the explanation sounded plausible. He wasn't ready to share the information about them having seen her come out of his house early the morning before.

“Yeah, had to be,” Greg agreed. Then his eyes widened in horror. “God, what about Carolina?”

“Where is she? We have to secure her, too.” Reynaldo knew he needed to secure all their safety until he resolved this issue with Cartwright.

“She went to the store, Gwen forgot to get some things on the shopping list.” Greg responded, as he pulled on shorts and a sleeveless t-shirt. He slipped on his tennis shoes and grabbed his car keys. “I’ll go look for her.”

“You do that, I’ll stay with Gwen,” Reynaldo offered. “When you get back, I’ll go resolve this thing with Cartwright.”

“Okay, I’ll be back as soon as I find Carolina.” Greg waved a hand as he walked out of the house.

Reynaldo went back to the living room to check on Gwen. She moaned, and reached for her head. He joined her at the sofa, trying to check her head. Then he felt her shoulders and continued a path down her body just to make sure nothing was broken.

“Hey, you trying to cop a feel?” Gwen looked up at him, trying to stick a stern look on her face.

Her reaction to his manhandling let him know that she indeed felt better. Relief flooded his every cell at her. “I’m just making sure they didn’t hurt you, *querida*, I was worried.”

“Oh, how sweet, guilt made you come after them?” Gwen swung her legs over the side of sofa and sat up. “Never fear, I’m fine, now go on, be on your way.”

Reynaldo moved back, surprised at her attack. Maybe whatever they drugged her with had messed with her head. She did seem a little giddy, off center. But hey, wasn’t she always that way?

“Look, I understand this must be hard on you, frightening. But I’m here to help. I can’t leave until your brother gets back with Carolina.”

She stood up and came over to where he stood, stopping just a few short paces from him, her sweet scent wrapping around him. “Don’t worry about me. I’m fine here by myself. Now go!”

Gwen poked him in the arm a few times, as if trying to get him to understand how serious she was about wanting him to leave. But he couldn’t and wouldn’t trust that Cartwright would not send others tonight to finish what the men earlier began.

“What if more guys show up? You want to be here alone to face them?” Reynaldo challenged, he felt her fear. Maybe some of it was due to what happened, but another side of her fear had to do with their earlier conversation.

He just wasn’t ready to share the truth about him and why he couldn’t continue with their liaison. As fantastic as it was, he wouldn’t risk his heart to see if she were his mate. In the thousand years he had existed, he’d learned that the woman who would grow attached to him was either his real mate or his slave, once she got a taste of his blood. Then the one he’d offered eternal life to, had turned him down flat. That had destroyed him. After her refusal of his offer, he never again made the offer to any other.

Then too were the many times that women he’d formed a relationship with because he’d felt strongly about them had turned out to become his slave. The taste of his blood became a drug to them, and too many times they ended up dying horrible deaths because they couldn’t deal with their addiction to him.

He didn’t want that happening to Gwen. Whenever he thought about her, a special feeling burst inside of him, telling him he felt much more for her than just lust. But experience showed him that even if he felt that way, it didn’t mean that the lady in question was the one meant for him.

The other side of him felt shame at behaving like a coward. Yet he wouldn’t and couldn’t make the same mistake twice of trusting a human woman.

Gwen sat back down on the sofa and held her head between her hands, and mumbled, "Just go, I'll be fine."

"I won't go until I know you're safe, Gwen." Reynaldo sat next to her and when she gazed up into her eyes, he knew he'd made a mistake to sit so near her. Tears pooled in her eyes and her bottom lip trembled. She'd been trying to hide the fact that she really wanted to cry. That tore him apart.

For two years, since she'd started his chase, he'd known it would lead to this. Her being hurt at his refusal. "I'm so sorry, please don't cry."

"Why shouldn't I, Reynaldo? People usually cry when they're hurt." Gwen's voice quivered. Then she snapped her lips shut.

He muttered something under his breath before grabbing her up in his arms and pasting his lips over hers, and kissing her senseless. He made her shift her body where she straddled his lap. Reynaldo ran his hands down to Gwen's ass, pressing her body as close and tight to his as he could. He ground his throbbing cock into her crotch. One hand led its way back up to circle a nipple, then focus on her aureole. Unmercifully, he tweaked it and rubbed it, as if trying to emit a response out of her.

"Hmm ..." Gwen moaned into his mouth.

"Can we go to your bedroom?" Reynaldo almost pleaded. He couldn't help himself. He now found himself to be the one craving her. Before, his conquests were the ones stalking him, crazed by their cravings. Reynaldo had now gotten a taste of what they went through.

She didn't utter a word, just she moved off his lap and led him toward her room. Once the door was shut behind them, Reynaldo practically ripped off the pink top and pink cotton shorts she wore. When he had her standing before him totally nude, he sat back on the bed and pulled her close to him.

Encircling her slim waist with his hands, he pressed his face against her smooth belly and felt it quiver in response. Reynaldo sniffed deeply against her skin.

Reynaldo enjoyed her flowery scent. She smelled like a rose, as if she'd bathed in a tub full of rose petals. He rubbed his nose back and forth against her skin, the smooth, velvety texture felt luxuriously decadent against his cheek. He couldn't resist placing soft kisses around the area and pulling her across his lap.

Reynaldo let his mouth trail kisses down her torso, pausing over one tight, rigid nipple just waiting for his attention. With a quick flick of his tongue, it budded even further and he blew over it, making her hiss between her lips.

Gwen pulled his shirt and tossed it behind her shoulder. As he was occupied with her breasts, she undid his belt and jean button. She tugged his jeans signaling for him to lift his hips up and he helped her with one hand to pull them down all the way. She looked down and saw he'd removed his shoes too.

"Quit teasing, give me more." She jerked him against her chest and wiggled her crotch over his extended cock.

Her movements made him twitch, allowing him to adjust himself, giving him better room to move against her slick entry. Reynaldo held both breasts in his hands and pushed them together while his tongue teased the pair, eliciting Gwen's deep throated moan. He felt her begin to gyrate against his lap. She kept moving forward, trying to get his cock inside of her. He'd had enough. Wrapping his arms behind her back, he flipped her onto her back, where her legs split open, letting him settle rather nicely between them.

It didn't take much of an effort or much hip action to get inside of her. Once he secured her legs over his shoulders, placing his cock near her slick, wet opening, one thrust was what he needed.

Flames seemed to engulf him at every level. His heated body demanded release, while his feverish brain seemed to have gone haywire with the uncontrollable need to have her and keep her. His resolve kept crumbling, much to his chagrin.

Reynaldo continued his movement, deepening each thrust as he pulled out practically all the way, to then plunge in to the hilt. Her body responded by squeezing tighter and tighter around him as she sought release.

His fingers found her swollen bud and stroked it, making her clamp around him even tighter, harder, until he almost lost his control. That action nearly pushed him over the edge, so much so that he paused so he could squelch down the urge to come. Their sweat slick bodies spun toward each other, where she pressed her heaving breasts against his muscular chest. Purposely, he slowed his pace, letting himself cool off a bit. He wanted to make it last as long as he could.

He kept fingering her clit, all the while paying close attention to her nipples. He saw her belly quiver, letting him know that she was close to letting go. He could hear the blood rushing in her veins. He felt the heat emanating off her skin, driving him to distraction. He kept receiving visions of her warm, sweet blood and their intermingling, once they shared blood.

Did he dare take that risk? No, not yet, too soon to brave testing whether she'd react like the others. He would die if anything happened to her because of his greed.

He refocused on the task at hand by inserting two fingers inside her wet cunt. As he began to push his fingers, in and out, in and out, she responded by shifting her hips and making the same motion.

"Yes, dammit, that's it." She grabbed his arm, "Make me come."

"Oh, I'll make you come plenty and not just one time," Reynaldo whispered against her mouth, continuing his penetrating movements.

When he latched onto her peaked nipples, she nearly jumped off the bed. One hand clasped around his head, pulling him closer to her, making his head thrash back and forth to get the action he knew she wanted.

Two seconds later his hand was covered with an onslaught of her juices, and tremors were making her pussy walls convulse around his fingers.

Reynaldo extracted his fingers, while she still shook and trembled with her release. When her pussy tightened around his taut flesh, he almost disgraced himself right then and there. Hiking her legs around his waist, he sought to get closer, as close as he could get deep inside of her walls.

“That’s it, fill me, make me feel you deep inside, to my core.” Gwen parted her legs as wide as she could, accepting him there. He sought, wanted more of her. She shifted her hips, pushing further, driving him nuts with her every move.

Her short, quick moves drew tremors from his body. He couldn’t help it, he pepped up the pace banging into her with such force that he felt every time his balls hit against her ass. With each thrust, her pussy tightened, squeezing him more and more. The chills crept up his spine, he couldn’t take it anymore.

“Shit, I’m gonna come.” Reynaldo buried his face in her neck. The sound and smell of her blood coursing through her jugular really presented too much of a temptation for him. He had to have one quick taste. He wanted just one taste to receive some of her essence. Reynaldo wanted to feel, taste Gwen, firsthand.

He nipped just a teensy bit just as he began to sputter inside her pussy and she responded by reaching her own orgasm, squeezing the life out of his cock.

“Oh my God!” Gwen was shaking, trembling through her release.

“Come for me, bella.” Reynaldo followed her, the stars shining, waves of tension discharged.

When they both recuperated, Gwen ran a hand over the spot where Reynaldo nipped her neck. She felt the area, but when she looked at her fingers, he knew there wouldn’t be any blood.

“Did you bite me?” Gwen looked from her fingers back to him.

Chapter Five

Gwen asked the question, but she knew he had. She wasn't that far gone to think she'd imagined it. She recalled the sharp prickling sensation when they both reached orgasm. Now what the hell was that about?

But she checked her neck, and didn't have blood, nor did she feel a wound. What the hell had happened, she didn't know. Moving off her bed, she made a beeline for the bathroom to take a look in the mirror. Gazing in every direction, she really didn't see anything identifying a wound. Maybe it had been her imagination after all? Or was it the excitement of the moment?

When she returned to the bedroom, Reynaldo was up and standing in the middle of the room in his naked glory. Her gaze ran up and down his body, taking in each and every muscle, curve and symmetry of his tall frame. The man really was great eye candy and she enjoyed every minute of her gazing.

As he turned toward her direction, a smile tipped his lips, letting her know that he knew she'd been ogling him. His chest puffed out, peacock that he'd become.

"You are so amazingly vain." Gwen chuckled, walked over to where he stood and smacked him dead on the ass. "Get in the shower before my brother and Carolina get back."

“Why don’t you join me?” He wiggled his eyebrows.

“We don’t have time for that,” Gwen chided as she scooped up the bed linen, threw it on the floor and fetched clean ones. “But I’ll take you up on that at a later time. Promise, I won’t forget.”

“I’ll remind you,” he said as he stalked into the bathroom.

He dashed into the shower and soon was back out smelling crisp and clean. Gwen waited for him in the living room as he showered. She still remembered her question to him and it still nagged somewhere in the back of her mind.

She watched him as he entered the living room. He’d donned a clean button-down shirt and jeans Gwen borrowed from Greg’s closet. His hair was still damp and he looked too sexy for any woman’s sake. Enough of that, she needed to stay on course. Too much was going on, and she wanted answers.

“Come, sit next to me for a bit.” Gwen patted the empty space next to her. She waited for him to comply before continuing her thought-out speech.

“I have several questions flowing in my head ... First, why was I kidnapped by these men?”

He looked her straight in the eye, and he must have found something there that wouldn’t allow him to lie to her. “Their boss wants to shut me down.”

“And what do I have to do with it? I don’t even know this bozo.” Gwen’s brow furrowed, but she didn’t move her gaze away from his.

“The only thing I can think of is that they saw us leaving my house the other night,” he muttered, running a hand over his glossy hair. “This is what I was trying to avoid. This is why I didn’t want any involvement with anyone. Least of all you.”

“Don’t give me that self-righteous bullshit, Reynaldo Alcantara,” Gwen shot back. She wanted clarity, not bogus answers. God, they were back to his denying them the opportunity to investigate what they had here.

"It's the truth. I knew they were hitting us, sabotaging our trucks, but I hadn't expected a personal attack."

"Well, what are we doing about it?" Gwen folded her arms over her chest, waiting for his response.

"We? *We* do nothing, I will handle this. I will take care of this, Gwen, I promise."

"Yeah, how are you gonna do that by yourself?" Gwen stood up to begin some pacing and release her pent up anxiety.

"Gwen, relax, I can handle this." Reynaldo clearly refused to continue to listen to her. Apparently he'd worked it all inside his head.

Gwen recognized his stubborn mode. She knew him well enough to realize that when he reacted this way, there was no point in arguing. It was a lost cause. Before they could get into it further, she heard the front door knob being twisted.

Greg and Carolina sauntered in, Greg's fiery expression saying something was definitely wrong. Reynaldo spoke up first. "What happened?"

"I drove by the company and the trucks have been vandalized."

"Shit, let me get out there." Reynaldo moved up off the sofa, heading for the door, only to stop when he found them all following him. "Where are you guys going?"

In unison, they all answered, "With you!"

Reynaldo paused, looked at each of them, and must've guessed they weren't ready to hear no. In no time, they were all sitting in Reynaldo's pickup truck, quietly rendering their support. Gwen sat up front with Reynaldo, while Greg and Carolina fell in behind them.

When they arrived at the company, Gwen saw a number of emotions cross Reynaldo's features. She saw him go from devastated, to sad, to raging anger. That last one was downright scary. She almost felt sorry for the poor sap that had started this. But deep inside, Gwen experienced the same emotions. Reynaldo, Greg and the rest of the crew were working their asses off getting this company to work.

Gwen patted his shoulder. "We can fix this."

Reynaldo remained silent, just stepping out of the truck and moving toward the damaged vehicles. Glass had been splattered all over the place. The front lights to each truck were busted. Some trucks had even been opened and the cords from the batteries were hanging out. They remained a few steps behind him, waiting for his first move. When he turned around to face them, they all gasped at the fury shining bright in his eyes.

"Greg, take the ladies home and stay with them until you hear from me," Reynaldo spoke in a low, moderated tone that brooked no argument.

They all complied by getting back into Reynaldo's truck and Greg drove away. Only Gwen looked back, wondering what Reynaldo's next move would be. There had been something dark and looming, something dangerous, in his gaze. Fear crept a path down her spine, and it wasn't for her. She was afraid for him and his safety after seeing the devastation of his property.

"Greg, what's he gonna do?" Gwen asked what was obviously on all their minds. She waited until her brother parked the truck on the driveway for his answer.

"Not sure, Gwen." Greg steered the truck into the driveway and shut off the engine. "You guys go in and lock the doors. Don't open for anyone."

"Where are you going now?"

"To make sure Reynaldo doesn't do something stupid," Greg called to them as he started the engine.

"Please be careful." Both Carolina and Gwen spoke at once.

They watched him as he backed out before Gwen walked toward the door. She inserted the key, letting them in. She flopped down on the sofa, while Carolina sat opposite her.

"Carolina, I'm scared," Gwen whispered, rubbing her hands over her arms.

"I know what you're feeling," Carolina assured her. "I feel the same. What the hell was that about? You saw Reynaldo's face."

“Yes, frightening. In the years I’ve known him I’ve never seen him that angry,” Gwen confided. “He almost looked like he was ready to kill.”

“I know, I saw that, too.” Carolina’s gaze seemed focused far away, as if she were recalling the events.

“I can’t believe that these people believed that they were going to get away with this plot of there’s.” Gwen shook her head, not quite understanding how they put together this scatter brained plot.

“I know, Greg explained some of what was going on.” Carolina stood up. “You want something to drink?”

“Yeah, sure, might as well.” Gwen followed the other woman into the kitchen. “We need to kill some time until they get back.”

“Yes.” Carolina went straight for the refrigerator, extracting a pitcher of lemonade and the ice tray. “So what did you do last night?”

Gwen’s face heightened in color and she couldn’t speak.

“Hey, are you hiding something from me?” Gwen sudden quietness and flushed cheeks gave her away. “Do tell, what happened?”

“When you and Greg went upstairs to shower, Reynaldo kissed me,” Gwen whispered, as if in awe.

“He what!” Carolina scooted over to the table, set down the pitcher and ice and rushed to get two glasses. When she sat back down, she poured some lemonade and waited for Gwen’s response. “Come on, spill the beans.”

“He kissed me.” Gwen’s lips held a silly grin that she just couldn’t help. “He initiated a flirty conversation as well as the contact.”

“Wow, what did you do? How did you react?” Carolina’s eyes widened, full of expectation.

"I did my usual teasing, you know me." Gwen laughed. "Pulled out the salad fixings that included carrots and the cucumbers, and I wasn't very nice about my teasing."

"Oh my God, you're so crazy." Carolina sat back, laughing so hard tears streamed down her cheeks.

"You had to see his reaction when he saw me pawing the cucumber and sniffing it," Gwen confided. "Then he went bananas when I stuck a piece of carrot between my lips and twirled it around a few times."

"I can imagine, you got him all hot and bothered." Carolina clapped in admiration.

"That's not all." Gwen's heart raced, recalling all they had done. "He took me back to his house and we did the do. We actually ended up on his bed."

"And you kept this quiet all day?" Carolina screeched, her eyes wide like saucers.

"You weren't around!" Gwen laughed, shaking her head.

"So what happens now? You guys together?" Carolina sure didn't know the meaning of being subtle.

"Don't know, I know he came in here earlier to let me off." Gwen chewed on her lower lip. "Then all hell broke loose and we didn't get the chance to finish talking."

"Why? I don't understand." Carolina's eyes opened wider. Some serious confusion shone there.

"That makes two of us." Gwen shook her head, sharing in the confusion with her friend.

Gwen let their conversation go for now, but Reynaldo still had a lot of explaining to do. They were adults; she could take his not wanting her. *Yeah, after she kicked, screamed and cursed for a few hours, days or months.* Who was she kidding, Reynaldo not being interested would be one of the biggest letdowns in her life. She'd invested too much time and energy in lassoing Reynaldo and she couldn't fathom not having him, especially now that she knew he *did* indeed like her.

The way the man took to her told her that there was more than just like in his heart. When it came down to it, Gwen admitted to herself that she was in love with the man and something told her he felt as strongly. No one made love to another person with such passionate abandon and just called it lust. She knew better.

She'd put them in the back burner until this situation with his company was resolved. Then she'd be all over him like white on rice.

* * * * *

Reynaldo trailed them with ease. He'd gone back to the yard where his trucks, now smashed, were parked and picked up the culprits' scents. There were three men involved. By the scents he'd picked up, Jason Cartwright was nowhere to be found. But he knew Cartwright was behind this latest assault.

Reynaldo stopped his truck across the street from a two-story house. The lights were only lit on the lower level. His vision and hearing said the three men were the only occupants. He could hear their conversation.

"Man, that shit was fun," came a cackling voice. The man sounded young, a little sloshed, the words coming out in a slur.

"Yeah, I hope the boss has more assignments like this one." Reynaldo heard another man speak. This one had a high-pitched nasally voice that grated on Reynaldo's nerves.

"Shit, between hitting those trucks on the road and now tonight's job, we'll have all the beer and fixins' we want." Reynaldo saw the speaker was a big, burly dude. He felt the other man's mean-spirited, mean-tempered aura radiating from his being.

Taking care of these guys would be easy. He had no qualms about disposing of these degenerates. Then he'd settle up with Cartwright. Reynaldo thus far allowed a lot to pass by without retaliating. Now they would have him in their face.

Reynaldo flashed over toward the door and bashed it in, startling the three men. They each sprang off their chairs and reached for their weapons. It was too late. Reynaldo clenched one man's neck, watching him turn red, then purple. The man sputtered, seeking air while flinging his arms at Reynaldo. He held the other two men in his mesmerizing spell, making them sit back down on the chairs they'd occupied earlier.

Reynaldo figured now was as good time as any to feed. Twisting the man's head to the side so he'd have access to the neck, Reynaldo felt his incisor coming through. The rush of blood running through the other man's body called to Reynaldo. He hadn't fed in two weeks, and now he realized how hungry he really was. Reynaldo's head fell over the other man's neck, and he felt the rush as he pierced the neck and got a taste of the metallic liquid.

Once he was done, he snapped the man's neck with a quick twist of his hand. He let the slimeball fall in a heap at his feet. Reynaldo turned his predatory eyes on the other two. As he advanced to the shorter of the two, he mentally heard the shorter man whimper.

Reynaldo's smile wasn't a pleasant one. Their earlier cockiness disappeared, to be replaced by terror. He wanted to see them now, with their flippant, nonchalant attitudes. They were all going to pay. Every last one of them.

Reynaldo finished the next two, ready to go track down Cartwright. He would have to go back to the office to get the man's address. He'd run a background check on Cartwright and all the details were in the file. He knew the man to be a dirty player, but he was crossing the line now.

Reynaldo drove back to the office and sat in the lot, gazing at his destroyed property, resetting the anger churning inside, deep in his belly. Those responsible would pay and pay dearly for this.

Reynaldo stepped out of the truck and walked toward the building that housed the office. Switching the light on, he went straight for the secret file area. That's where he kept files that did not involve the company directly like invoices, orders and supplies.

Flipping through the small amount of files, he found Cartwright's. In a quick view, he memorized the address, turned to head back out, shut off the light, and slammed the door behind him.

Not half an hour later Reynaldo found himself in front of a gated mansion. Cartwright lived in a two-story, gargantuan house. There were only a few lights left on at the lower level and one at the upper level. He figured the upper level light was where Cartwright's bedroom would be found.

Swooping over the fence, Reynaldo heard dogs prancing in his direction. They spotted him and came running toward him, growling, teeth bared, ready to attack. They took one good look at him, then halted dead in their tracks and whimpered.

Two guards were checking out the perimeter after hearing the dogs bark. One spotted Reynaldo and signaled his partner with his hand to speed up his step.

"Hey, you, stop!" The first guard yelled.

Reynaldo kept moving toward them, sure precise movements leading him straight to the guards. When they were within arm's length, Reynaldo grabbed both by the neck and banged their heads together. They fell in a heap, one atop the other.

Looking over the bodies, he knew he would reach the house without further interruption. He circled the area, checking out the bottom floor. When he neared the window, he caught sight of Cartwright sitting behind a desk, talking with someone.

Shock waves ran through him when he realized the person he was speaking to was Greg. What the hell was he doing here when he'd told him to stay with the women?

Flashing inside the house, Reynaldo stood near the window.

"What the hell is going on here?" He fairly shouted, startling both men when they realized he was standing behind them.

Both men turned toward him and all hell broke loose. That's when he realized Greg held a gun in his hand. Reynaldo watched Cartwright reach into the drawer and whipped

out his own pistol. The discharge rang so loud in the room that the echo remained behind for several minutes.

Reynaldo watched Greg fall face down on the floor. Cartwright moved to try to exit the room, but didn't manage it. Reynaldo caught him by the scruff of his neck.

"Where do you think you're going?" He snarled in the older man's face. "We have a lot of talking to do."

"Get your hands off me." His blue eyes flashed with nervousness. He twitched around, trying to dislodge Reynaldo's hold. "My guards will be here in a minute. They'll deal with you."

Smiling wickedly, Reynaldo pressed his face up close to the other man's before saying, "They're not coming, I fixed that."

Cartwright must've realized what Reynaldo meant about his guards because he whipped the gun out from behind and aimed to shoot. At that precise moment Greg shoved Reynaldo aside and he jumped in front of the fired gun, catching the bullet square in his chest.

Chapter Six

Horried beyond words, Reynaldo watched his best friend fall to the floor as if in slow motion. When he heard the thud of Greg's body hitting the floor, Reynaldo snapped out of his slow motion view of the events before him. Greg was seriously hurt. Feeling beyond anger and despair, Reynaldo snatched the man's head off his neck.

He scooted over to where Greg laid, blood pouring out of his chest. The life was seeping out of him with slow measure. He couldn't allow Greg to die. It would be his fault. Grabbing Greg's hand, Reynaldo tried to capture his attention. Reynaldo patted his cheek a few times, trying to get Greg to open his eyes.

"Greg, can you hear me?" He needed the younger man's attention.

"Yes ... what happened?" He spoke so low Reynaldo that lowered his ear closer to Greg's mouth.

"Cartwright shot you."

"I'm dying, right?" Greg asked what he already knew. He heaved a cough and blood splattered out of his mouth.

"Yes, my friend." Reynaldo's heart ached. He really didn't have any choice but to ask him. "But I can save you. I have a way."

“What? How can that be?” Greg opened his eyes, eyes that were beginning to glaze over.

Reynaldo let his incisors descend.

“I’m a vampire, Greg.” Reynaldo showed him his extended teeth. “I can make you one, too. You’ll live for all eternity.”

Greg’s eyes widened, shocked at Reynaldo’s revelation. His eyes fluttered shut again. He’d lost too much blood. Life was seeping out of him too fast.

“This is crazy.” Greg coughed, more blood and spittle came out of his mouth. “Did you just say you’re a vampire?”

“Yes, and if you allow me, I can make you one too and you won’t die,” Reynaldo promised, waiting to hear word from Greg that he agreed.

He could see the jumble of thoughts running across Greg’s head. The debate going on inside his head could only lead to one solution. Greg shifted to his side, giving Reynaldo a better angle to his neck.

That’s what Reynaldo needed. Greg’s clear assurance that he accepted Reynaldo’s gift. Not much later, Greg sat before the fire, covered from head to toe in a quilt, yet he couldn’t stop shivering.

“I feel like shit, man,” Greg grumbled, digging deeper inside the quilts.

“It’ll get better,” Reynaldo promised. “You’re gonna have to feed.”

“What! Naw, man, I won’t do that.” Greg shook his head in denial. “There has to be another way for sustenance.”

“I’m one thousand years old.” Reynaldo sat on a high backed leather chair near him. “Haven’t found any other way, if you do, let me know.”

“How am I gonna do that? My stomach is ready to heave just at the thought.” Greg definitely turned green around the gills.

Reynaldo knew all about the newbie vampires. Time would get them to change their minds. He knew better and wouldn't allow Greg to go too long without or he'd become ravenous.

"I mostly feed off the bad guys," Reynaldo explained. "These feedings at least have a purpose. I rid the world of some rather nasty, mean individuals."

Greg laid back, mulling over Reynaldo's words and it must've clicked in his head because suddenly a huge smile crossed his lips. His eyes shone bright with anticipation, that Reynaldo couldn't hold the chuckle.

"We get to do some serious clean up?"

"Yes, we certainly can." Reynaldo shook his head. Just a minute ago the man acted squeamish, but now he looked ready to get up and lead a crusade.

"Cool, I'm in." Greg sat up. He was smart enough to sit up slow, and careful, waiting to see how he would feel.

"I take it you're feeling better?" Reynaldo stood up, outstretched his hand and helped Greg up on his feet.

"Yes, much, we need to get home." Greg dusted off his jeans. Gazing down at himself, he realized his shirt was ripped and bloodied. "I'm gonna need a new shirt. Can't freak the girls out and I would if I walked in looking like this."

"Go check out the old man's room upstairs and I'll call the house to let them know we're okay." Reynaldo moved toward the desk where the cordless phone sat on its cradle.

Reynaldo mentioning that he would call him must have reminded Greg about his new situation.

"What am I going to tell them? They'll notice something different in me," Greg worried, his frown creasing his brow and his eyes holding a pensive stare.

"Just sit Gwen down and explain." He knew it was much harder than said, that's why he'd not shared his secret with them throughout the years they'd known each other.

“Oh, yea, I’ll try.” Greg shifted on his heels. “Gwen, the guy you’ve had a crush on is a vampire and he saved my life by making me one too.”

Reynaldo paused for a moment after hearing Greg’s words. So he had taken notice of his sister’s behavior too? Would he be angry if he knew the extent of his relationship with Gwen? He wasn’t going to find out now. They could discuss this later.

“So you knew about that too?” Reynaldo asked as calmly as he could.

“Man, a blind man could see how she feels about you.” Greg laughed.

Reynaldo blushed, turned crimson all over his face. He was sweet on Gwen, but too afraid to take the risk.

“There are just things I can’t allow,” Reynaldo confided. “Now, go get a clean shirt so we can get the hell out of here.”

Greg listened to Reynaldo’s advice and exited the room. Reynaldo placed the call to the house and explained all was well and they’d be back shortly. Reynaldo really didn’t want to get into what happened. Gwen’s reaction was his main concern. A scene of her screaming and running like a banshee kept floating in his head.

When Greg got back, they both exited the house and entered the truck. As they sped off the property, Reynaldo worried more and more about Gwen and what she would say.

Reynaldo pulled the truck onto the driveway, cut the engine and leaned back against the seat. He’d lived a little over a thousand years, and admittedly he’d never been this afraid of losing someone. He really cared about these people and didn’t want their friendship to end because of who and what he was. Most of all, he wanted Gwen to understand. He now realized he craved her acceptance like he never had before with any other human.

Get with it, man! No sense in waiting for the inevitable. He knew humans too well by now. They either accepted or they didn’t. It didn’t seem to matter that he, on countless occasions, had demonstrated his true heart and what a friend he really was.

Reynaldo stepped out of the truck first. Gesturing to Greg with his hand, he walked toward the door. Before he could say anything to Greg, the door slammed against the wall and both women stood at the threshold.

“What happened?” Gwen screeched out, as if she had been holding her breath in all this time.

“We took care of it,” Greg answered as he walked inside the house.

“How? What happened with those goons?” Gwen asked again.

“They were handled and won’t be bothering anyone again.” Greg stopped before his sister. “Sit down. We need to talk.”

Gwen sat without saying another word. Carolina sat beside her, and she too remained silent.

Reynaldo watched them both very closely. They at least listened to Greg’s request. When Greg looked toward him, Reynaldo shrugged his shoulders and gave him the way to start his speech. A speech he was sure he’d been running through his head on the truck ride to the house.

Reynaldo sat on the chair closest to the door so he could take his exit should the need arise. He sat very quietly, watching what Greg would do. The roiling inside his belly made him want to gag. He glanced secretly toward Gwen and found her leaning forward, elbows on her knees, waiting to listen to her brother.

When they remained silent for too long, Gwen spoke up. “So what did you want to say?”

“When I left here, I went straight to Jason Cartwright’s house thinking Reynaldo would be there.” Greg paced the area in front of them. “He wasn’t there though, so I sat to have a talk with the guy.”

“Okay, what happened?” Gwen’s patience was wearing thin, Reynaldo could see.

“Well, he thought I was crazy, making unsubstantiated accusations,” Greg fumed, still pacing. “Then Reynaldo busted into the place.”

Gwen shifted her eyes toward Reynaldo. A new light entered her eyes, warming Reynaldo’s insides at the vibe he was receiving from Gwen.

“Hey, he saved me too.” Gwen smiled, sitting back against the chair, gazing at Reynaldo.

When she looked at him like that, it made him feel ten feet tall and capable of anything. Would that look change to horror when Greg told her the truth? Would she ask him to leave and never come back?

Reynaldo remained quiet and just let Greg continue.

“Yes, Reynaldo saved all our hides,” Greg stuttered and looked toward Reynaldo.

“Okay, so what’s the big thing you have to tell us?” Gwen pushed, ready to get the conversation over it seemed.

“Okay ...” Greg sat down next to her, held her hand in his. “During the struggle, Cartwright shot me.”

“What!” Both Carolina and Gwen shouted.

Greg held up his hand, “Let me finish. He struggled against Reynaldo and pulled out a gun and when it went off, I jumped in and caught the bullet.”

“Oh my God, Greg.” Gwen eyes shone with unshed tears. Her lower lip trembled as she tried to keep in control. “But where were you hurt?”

“In the chest.” Greg undid his shirt. “See?”

They all stared at his chest, still sporting the scar. Carolina walked over to him and examined it with careful, soft fingers.

“God, it looks painful.” Carolina’s voice broke as if she were ready to cry.

"Yeah, it was." Greg hugged her to him. "But Reynaldo made it better. I was dying; he kept me alive. He let me live."

Both women looked at Reynaldo, curiosity and confusion clouding their faces.

Gwen was the one who spoke up. "What do you mean? To my recollection Reynaldo isn't a doctor."

"He's better than that, sis." Greg paused to look over Reynaldo's way before he continued. "He's a vampire."

Gwen and Carolina looked over at him, then at each other and burst out laughing. They flopped on the longer sofa, and giggled until tears were pouring down their cheeks.

"Of all the stories, Greg." Gwen hiccupped between giggles. "You guys concocted this story."

"Gwen, it's true!" Greg said with a dead serious expression on his face. "Why would I want to make something like that up?"

"I don't know, but it isn't funny either." Gwen stopped laughing and stood up off the sofa. "I'm done here. You guys are clowns, and here we were worried about your safety."

"Gwen, you saw his wound." Reynaldo stopped her when he spoke up. "How do you explain that?"

Gwen paused, bewildered and totally baffled by their explanation. He knew her brain was trying to piece things together and couldn't quite come up with the right answers.

"I don't know, but there has to be a logical rationalization to this all," Gwen reasoned. She stood rooted to the spot waiting for more details from Reynaldo.

"Greg didn't make up a story; it's true what he just explained." Reynaldo looked her directly in the eye, forcing himself not to flinch once it all sank into her head. "I am a vampire and Greg has become one now too."

Gwen just stared at him, as if not quite comprehending his meaning. They watched her shake her head a few times, then moved toward where Greg was standing. She opened up his

shirt, stared at the red, fleshy wound and knew the wound was a mortal one. She realized at that second that her brother should be dead.

“What did you do, Greg? How could you do this?” Gwen sputtered out from between stiff lips.

“What do you mean? Was I supposed to just let go and die?” Greg demanded, his hands on his hips.

“After receiving that wound, you should’ve been dead.” Gwen paced the room. “Why allow him to play God?”

“I guess because he was put in a situation where he could save my life and I was offered that,” Greg explained slowly, as if he were speaking to someone that needed clarification.

“I am so out of here.” Gwen ran toward her room and slammed the door shut.

The other three occupants just watched her leave the room, with no one moving to stop her. Everyone knew she needed time to think and settle things in her head. Reynaldo sat back down, thinking he at least wasn’t kicked out and she hadn’t looked at him with a horrified expression.

“Let her cool off.” Greg sat too, running a hand over his head. “She’ll come around.”

“She’s just scared.” Carolina hugged Greg to her. “I was, too, so I feel where she’s coming from.”

“I know, babe.” Greg kissed her softly on the forehead, and hugged her to him. He held her for a moment then turned to Reynaldo. “If you want to go home, go ahead, we’ll be okay.”

“You sure?” Reynaldo queried, not sure that he wanted to leave just yet. He needed to speak with Gwen. He needed to see she was okay with all this news.

“Yeah, she’ll come around,” Greg promised. “Night, man.”

Reynaldo stood up to walk to the door. He still didn't have a good feeling over this, but what choice did he have at the moment. He bid them a good night and headed home, storing a lot of internal turmoil. More turmoil than he'd arrived with.

He waved as he backed the truck out of the driveway, feeling as if his heart had shattered in a thousand pieces, like a glass falling on concrete.

Chapter Seven

Gwen couldn't believe her brother and Reynaldo. To spring this on her like that and expect her to just understand seemed so ludicrous she laughed every time she thought about it.

Their conversation had taken place over two weeks before. That same night she chose to pack a bag and hole up in a hotel. She needed time to think, square away in her head what it all meant. That she didn't want her brother dead went without saying. But, shit, *a freakin'* vampire! That was too much.

Now she knew. The last time she and Reynaldo made love, he *had* indeed bitten her. Did that mean she would turn into a vampire now too? All types of freaky images kept running through her mind. She tried to rationalize it all and make peace with it at the same time.

Now did it mean they could lose all rational thought and massacre her or Carolina? Would they turn on them one day when they needed blood? Did she have to fear them?

Greg is still your brother and he loves you. That thought kept running through her head, giving her some sense of peace. The major issue to her was why hadn't Reynaldo confided the truth to her? She knew he'd bitten her that night. At the time she figured it was

a love bite, but now she knew better and the distrust sat there like a huge, pendulum swinging back and forth every time she thought about it.

She knew running away wasn't the answer. The questions running around in her head weren't going to be answered if she continued to hide. She needed to sit with Greg and explain how she felt. She, above all else, was very worried about him. What did this new change mean to him? Did he have to sleep in a coffin? Did he have to stay indoors? How would he survive?

She stood up, opened the closet door and retrieved her duffel bag. She might as well get packed and ready to go home and face the music. She looked at her wristwatch and saw it was half past six in the evening. The sun would be going down soon.

As she perused the room to make sure she packed all her belongings, she heard a soft knock on her door. She opened it without looking through the peephole and surprise hit her in the belly. Reynaldo stood on the opposite side of the door.

Gwen's eyes hungrily followed every detail of his tall frame. Her eyes focused from the very top of his head and ran down to his loafer covered feet. He'd dressed in a light blue polo shirt and a pair of khaki slacks. When she looked into his eyes she saw something there that surprised her.

The man was nervous. His feet fidgeted.

"I can't come in unless you ask me to," she heard him say in a low gravelly voice.

She gestured with her hand for him to proceed into the room. She watched him as he entered the room, his shoulders slumped and his head down, walking like a man going to stand before a firing squad.

"Why are you here?" Gwen queried, wanting to hear his answer desperately. She wanted to hear him say that he'd realized how much they belonged together. But Gwen knew it couldn't be. He was a vampire, for crying out loud!

“We need to talk, Gwen,” he said with a heavy sigh. He plunged his fingers in his hair, messing up the sleek look he’d had. Then his hands returned to his pockets.

“Why?” Gwen crossed her arms over her chest, still waiting to hear the truth from his lips.

“Your brother misses you, Carolina is missing you,” Reynaldo answered, looking her straight in the eye.

He didn’t say he missed her. She now understood a little about him. He’d been rejected so many times that he didn’t allow himself to get too close for fear of it. She felt his need. He wanted to say that he missed her too, but fear didn’t allow him to follow through with the words.

“I was just on my way back.” She sighed heavily, then plopped down on the bed. “No sense in hiding.”

“Good to know.” He stood near the door, as if afraid to venture inside of the rest of the room.

Truth be known, with his presence there, the room did seem to have reduced in size. Even knowing what she knew about him, she still felt drawn to him. Her body at this very moment churned with heat and desire. She kept getting flashes of his body over hers. Kept remembering how he felt inside of her. Her lips still recalled his kisses and passion.

“I’ll be along in a moment.” Gwen didn’t look at him, she didn’t want him to read in her eyes how she still felt.

“Do you need a ride back?”

“That’s okay, I’ll call a taxicab.” Gwen made a move toward the bathroom, just because she needed to put more space between them. “Excuse me a moment.”

When she exited the bathroom, the hotel room stood empty. He’d gone and hadn’t even mentioned *them*. Realistically, she hadn’t shown him she was interested either. Gwen wasn’t sure how she was going to face this dilemma. It all seemed very strange to her. She

too felt disassociated from it all and she was if she could just ignore all this vampire, bloodsucking stuff.

Gwen called a taxi, when it arrived at the motel she was outside waiting with her duffel bag. She sat in the car, gave the driver the direction and began to practice in her head her speech. Every version thus far sucked. It really wasn't what she wanted to say.

All and all, she would simply say what her heart told her to say. The cab pulled up in front of the house. All seemed very quiet. The sky was beginning to darken, pink hues shadowing the clear sky. She grabbed her duffel bag and marched up the stairs to the door. Before she got the key into the lock, the door swung open and she found herself inside her brother's embrace.

"I'm so happy you're home." She heard his muffled words.

She took a step back and looked at him. She could see Carolina over his shoulder, worrying her lip.

"Hi, Carol." Gwen waved a half-assed wave.

"Hi, welcome back," Carolina called before leaving the room to Gwen and her brother.

He walked her into the living room and sat down near her.

"Are you okay?" Concern marred his features.

She looked him over and noticed a few differences. His skin had acquired a smooth texture that he certainly didn't have before becoming a vampire. His eyes were way brighter than before, too. Even his hair seemed to have a certain gloss, making the shine stand out. He looked good. Damn good!

"I'm fine." Gwen smiled, slowly, with caution. She knew they were nervous about what to expect from her. "Just wanted to say I'm sorry, and that I'm very happy that Reynaldo could help you when you needed him."

"Thanks, Sis." Greg brushed his lips against her forehead. "He is indeed a friend."

Gwen reserved her comments and feelings on that subject. It wouldn't do if they got into an argument right now. Reynaldo was still an issue she didn't want to go over right now. She didn't want to discuss him with anyone either. She needed to settle all of that by herself.

"I'm fine," Gwen promised as she sat on the sofa. "I freaked, mulled over all of this, but I'm okay now."

"Good to hear." Greg smiled, he held out his hand when he noticed Carolina standing nearby. "We're going out to dinner, you want to come along?"

Gwen shook her head. "No, I'd rather stay in tonight, I didn't sleep well at the hotel."

Greg and Carolina shook their heads as if understanding her and excused themselves. Gwen headed for her room; she needed a shower, badly. To be honest with herself, she really didn't want to be the third wheel between Greg and Carolina. She would much rather stay home and vegetate for a while.

A half-hour later, Gwen pulled off the towel she had wrapped around her head and her shoulder-length curls tumbled down. She brushed the wet curls, trying not to snag or break her hair. No pulling in the world would help her forget what was really on her mind, Reynaldo.

No matter how hard she tried, she kept thinking about Reynaldo. Common sense said that she should just move on, forget him and what they had shared. She knew their time together would be short.

Big question was, why didn't the fact that he was a vampire turn her off? Anyone else would be running for the hills, but she hadn't. *'Cause you love him!* Yes, love him she did and apparently love did conquer all.

All that didn't matter since as it seemed, he wanted no part of her. He'd only come by to the motel because of her brother. Damnit, she wanted him to look for her because of them!

Gwen went in search of something to eat. During these stressful episodes, eating gave her an outlet. She knew she shouldn't indulge, but fuck it, not like a man was looking her way. Reaching inside the refrigerator, she found ice cream and pound cake and decided to make herself pound cake ala mode with some chocolate topping. If she were going to indulge, she might as well go all the way and enjoy those extra calories.

Sitting down to her concoction, she heard the door buzzer sound. She set the spoon back down in her bowl so she could go answer it. Pissed her off, she just wanted to partake of her sinful dessert.

When she swung the door open, Gwen's mouth dropped to her chin. Standing there was Reynaldo. Looking into his sorrowful eyes, Gwen felt his desperation come clear across to her, touching, reaching for her heart.

"Reynaldo? What's wrong?" Gwen immediately thought of her brother. "Is something wrong with Greg?"

She really should still be angry at him, but the look in his eyes said he needed a friend right now. She motioned for him to enter.

Reynaldo walked into the house shaking his head. "No, this isn't about Greg."

Gwen followed close to his tail, anxiety coursing through her veins. Seeing Reynaldo in this condition was something new to her, he confused her. Never in the five years of their acquaintance had she seen him so distraught.

Her deep frown creased her forehead as she sat back on the couch waiting for his explanation. He startled her when he dropped down to his knee in front of her, to look at her at eye level.

"Reynaldo! What are you doing?"

"Let me speak before I lose my nerve," Reynaldo muttered. She could tell he was hating what he was about to do.

“Go ahead, my lips are sealed.” Gwen mimicked sealing her lips with a key and tossed it over her shoulder.

“Many years ago I met a woman. Her name was Larissa Fee,” Reynaldo spoke in his usual slow, modulated tone. “She didn’t know what I was when we first met.”

Gwen crossed her arms over her bosom, and wanted to pout. She really didn’t want to hear about his other lady loves, but she knew something important about his past was about to be revealed. She remained with her lips sealed, so as not to interrupt his speech.

“One day she was attacked by thieves and left for dead.” Reynaldo stood up and began to pace the room.

She watched him pause and come to sit right next to her and he took her hands in his. “When she finally regained consciousness and I knew she was in a losing battle with death, I offered her the same relief I offered Greg.”

Now Gwen had to speak. “So where is she?”

Gwen began to image all sorts of thoughts of Reynaldo having this other woman. She’d be tall and svelte, with long dark hair, extremely sexy and poised. Gwen’s insides turned and tightened with jealousy.

Reynaldo looked away and slowly shook his head. “She’s gone.”

“Gone? What do you mean?” Gwen queried, now confused more than ever because she believed he would be telling her that this Larissa was still around and that’s why he couldn’t carry on a relationship with her. The other woman held his heart and not she.

“She didn’t accept my offer,” Reynaldo responded in such a soft tone that she barely heard the words.

Gwen couldn’t believe it. She knew he had loved this woman. His every feature told her so. His heart was on his sleeve as he told her the story. So now what was she to do? Give him up totally and step aside for this other woman?

“You’ll be very happy, I suppose,” Gwen grudgingly responded. Why didn’t he just leave? Leave her alone. She wanted to sit and wallow in self pity for a bit.

Gwen saw the look he gave her. It pulled her back to focus her attention back to him. What did she say!?

“Didn’t you hear me?” Reynaldo howled, standing up like a sharp object had poked his ass.

“Yeah, you have a lady love.”

“No, Gwen, I don’t.” Reynaldo’s exasperation colored his words. “I said she didn’t accept my offer. She died.”

She died. The words vibrated in her head repeatedly. She hadn’t been paying attention.

“Oh, talk about miscommunication.” Gwen worried her lip between her front teeth. “So why are you saying this to me now?”

“Because what I feel for you is one hundred times stronger than what I felt for Larissa,” Reynaldo confessed, and it seemed to liberate him because he sighed deeply as if a load was off his shoulders.

“How so? I don’t understand then what the problem is.” Gwen fairly danced a jig after hearing his words.

He wanted her! He had practically confessed his love for her. *Calm down, girlie, this isn’t over yet.* The calm collected words registered straight away in her head.

“I’d like you to spend the rest of our lifetimes with me.” Reynaldo looked deep in her eyes.

“You mean, like crossing over to become one of you.” Gwen gulped so loudly he had to have heard it.

“Yes, I don’t want to risk the chance of losing you.” Reynaldo sat next to her again and captured her hands with his. “Gwen, I *do* love you. In fact, I don’t want to live without you.”

Excitement ran its course throughout her body. He loved her! She heard him say the words. But the catch, he wanted her to convert. She didn't know if she were ready for that just yet.

"Oh, Reynaldo, you don't know how long I've waited to hear those words come out of your mouth," Gwen chimed, bubbling with excitement. She leapt on his lap and proceeded to plant hot kisses all over his face, zeroing in on his mouth.

When he responded to her assault, they both become engrossed in their fog of desire. Gwen quickly disposed of his shirt and he followed suit with her own. She wore no bra underneath so they sat breast to chest with delicious hot sensations running between them.

Reynaldo pressed his nose to her skin, she felt him as he sniffed in her rose scented skin. She felt his tongue flicker in small circular motions near her neck, and then his head began to move south. In no time his lips locked over one of her peaked, tight breasts. His licking of her nipple caused shivers of throbbing heat to race down to her wet cunt.

Gwen shivered at the contact. She needed more. They really needed to go into her bedroom for some privacy. That way no one would interrupt them.

"Come, we need to go to my bedroom before we get carried away." Gwen grabbed him by the hand, making him stand up so he could follow her.

"I guess you're right." Reynaldo stood up and followed her close behind. He tweaked her ass. She was shaking it intentionally because she knew he was watching it closely as she walked.

Once inside the room, Reynaldo booted the door shut and watched her practically run toward her bed and shed her clothes all at the same time.

"Come on, come here." Gwen sat butt naked on her bed, patting the side for him to join her.

Reynaldo walked, stalked, his way toward her, never moving his eyes away from her. Stopping in front of the bed, he undid his fly, belt, and then the button. As he began to unzip with what seemed like slow deliberation on his part, Gwen butted in and finished the job.

Gwen drew his pants and under shorts over his hips and they puddled around his ankles. Gwen got the great idea of make him sit so she could straddle him and suck him within an inch of his life. After his confession, Gwen couldn't stem the excitement stirring inside of her.

She watched him lay back, his cock up and ready, like a flagpole waving at her. She moved forward and in one swoop held the tip inside her mouth. She circled her tongue over the tip and Gwen watched the goose bumps spring up all over his body.

She began an up and down movement with her mouth, squeezing, teasing with her tongue and fingers wrapped around his cock. Her manipulation drew hisses from between his lips, so she knew she was doing something right. When she picked up the speed, his legs began to tremble signaling to Gwen that he was reaching his orgasm.

She let go of his erection with a popping sound and climbed over his hips to impale herself over his slick cock.

She set her rhythm instantly. As she continued moving up and down over his cock, the pleasure grew and came to life with such an intensity that left her speechless. He drew her down close to him. She ended up supporting herself by placing both hands on each side of his pillow-cushioned head. She continued to ride him with wild abandon, paying no mind when he reached up to capture a tightly budded nipple in his mouth. She grew slicker in response to his teasing.

His teeth bit it lightly while his tongue teased, laved and stroked it. Feeling the sensations down to her core, she let her tempo pick up to grow faster as the pleasure built inside her, she was sure it was building inside him too. Reynaldo chose that moment to switch nipples so the other nipple wouldn't feel neglected and bit down hard enough to

capture her attention. That move brought out a moan from her and she responded by slamming down over his thick cock as waves and waves of pleasure crept over her.

She clasped and quivered around him. The pleasure that took control of her body shut off any other senses. She became blind and deaf to everything else around her. Her fuzzy brain registered the sounds when he gave a shout, calling her name and grabbing her hips to thrust deeply. That thrust and his reaction started the waves of pleasure over her body all over again. Shiny stars danced in front of her eyes as she felt him spill his seed inside her and her pussy trembled with release.

Gwen fell forward, landing on his chest with a thud and a heavy exhale. His thick, muscled arms closed around her. She snuggled into him and placed her lips over his with a gentle kiss. Gwen counted her blessings.

“I love you, Reynaldo,” Gwen sighed against his lips. “And I do want to spend the rest of eternity with you.”

She moved her neck, giving him the room to do his deed.

“*Gracias*, Gwen, I love you, too,” Reynaldo replied as he sank his incisors in her neck to make her his for all eternity.

 THE END 

Essence

Born and raised in NYC, I was raised by wolves in Central Park. Luckily, I found wonderful parents, or rather they found me and gave me a new life and home. I've been reading romances for too many years to count and discovered erotic romance two years ago.

I still love disco music and prefer to listen to that rather than the crap out there now.

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