

* *Lady Aibell Press* *

SAY MY NAME



Cassandra Kane



www.LadyAibell.com

a division of Chippewa Publishing, LLC

Say My Name

by

Cassandra Kane

SAY MY NAME

A Lady Aibell Press/Chippewa Publishing Publication, June 2006

Chippewa Publishing LLC
PO Box 662
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729

Available Formats:
Adobe Acrobat Reader (PDF)

Other available formats:
Palm Doc (PDB), Rocket/REB1100 (RB), Pocket PC 1.0+ Compatible,
Franklin eBookMan (FUB), hiebook (KML), iSilo (PDB), Mobipocket (PRC),
OEBFF Format (IMP), Microsoft Reader (LIT), (HTML).

Say My Name Copyright © 2006 Cassandra Kane
Edited by Jana J. Hanson
Cover Art by Djinn
Proofed by Brandy Overton

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This book may not be reproduced in whole, or in part, by any means, without the written consent of the publisher.

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are products of the author's imagination, or are fictitiously used. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

WARNING: The contents of this book are intended for mature audiences 18 years of age and older only. Language, violence, and sexual situations may apply.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Say My Name

My second attacker in as many days turned his taxicab into the alley just before my street. The first assailant, two days ago, had caught me by surprise. He'd even gone as far as ripping off my skirt before I managed to knee him in the groin and put him permanently out of action. Now I was alert enough to recognise the signs: the red eyes staring at me through the rear-view mirror, the twitching hands on the steering wheel, and the clammy-looking skin on the back of the neck. I was prepared.

He parked the car beside a line of garbage bins behind a row of restaurants and the automatic locks clicked, locking me inside the cab. I ground out my cigarette in the ashtray and folded my hands over my fishnet tights and lace-up knee boots, waiting calmly.

The taxi driver stared at me through the rear-view mirror with eyes like the red-hot embers of burning coal. In the quiet moment before the attack, I carefully slid the flick-knife from my coat pocket into my palm. Suddenly, he turned and sprang at me like a cat, a high shriek emerging from his foam-filled mouth. His bared his teeth, eager for the kill and maddened, no doubt, by the sight of me—fresh meat—sitting quietly within two feet of him. Seemingly, I was such easy pickings.

With a quick flick of my knife, the shriek turned into a gurgle. I ducked from his falling weight, crouching back against the door as he fell onto the backseat. His hands grasped at his neck, trying to stem the bloody flow that seeped between his fingers. He twitched uncontrollably, legs jumping, as I cautiously peeked out into the alley. I didn't want anyone attracted by the blood sprayed across the taxicab's windows.

Satisfied we were alone, I turned back as he shuddered then lay still. Just to make sure he was dead, I leaned over and opened his shirt, plunged my knife into his chest cavity and carefully cut out his heart. I deposited it in his coat pocket. After all, there was no need to make extra work for the poor fool assigned to cleaning out the taxicab for its next owner.

I snatched up the driver's taxi ID, fished the key from the ignition and unlocked the doors. As I stepped out into the alley, a slanting beam from the full moon illuminated my side of the street. I noticed the huge, wet stain down the front of my clothes. Once again, a dead man's gushing jugular had ruined a perfectly good woollen coat.

Now I was really annoyed.

I'd been working my butt off six nights a week at Gino's nightclub, warding off drunken punters who kept asking me when it was my turn to dance while they leered at the naked blondes sliding their tits and ass along the pole on the stage.

"I only serve the drinks," I told them coldly. I didn't receive the enormous tips they stuffed into the dancer's skinny thongs and didn't think I had to humour them for nothing. It was midwinter, and though the cold wasn't something that bothered me, it would look odd if I didn't wear a coat in subzero temperatures. Thanks to Attacker Number Two, I'd have to spend my hard-earned, tip-less cash on my second overcoat this month.

I smoked another cigarette as I looked down at the driver's taxi ID and contemplated a plan of action. It was five in the morning. In another hour, dawn would struggle through the smog-laden city skyline. It was too late tonight, but tomorrow night, I'd take early leave from my shift and track down the owner of the taxicab company he'd been working for: Tether Heights Cab Service.

Someone was sending out these half-turned vampire novices with senses viciously blackened so they weren't able to recognise one of their own. I'd assumed the first had been interested in more carnal passions. Now I knew someone deliberately sent them both to get me. After all, no one reported any of the other girls at the club missing, and we all used the same cab service.

I reviewed my list of enemies but no names magically jumped out at me. True, I'd eliminated most of them long ago. And even if *she* knew where I was, why not her usual direct approach?

I dropped my cigarette into a grey puddle and yawned. I'd deal with this tomorrow. Now, a comfortable, padded coffin waited for me beneath the floorboards of my basement flat.

* * * *

Michelle, part-time bartender and one-time dancer before a prank involving a greased pole led to the end of her lucrative career, had agreed to cover the last half of my shift. She hobbled into Gino's at 11:45 p.m. and I met her in the dancers' dressing room precisely at midnight. We were alone. The girls who weren't working the audience were at the fried chicken place across the street. I found Michelle standing before the full-length mirror, adjusting her panties over the scar

of her hip replacement, and checking out the line of her six-inch red patent platform boots.

“Hey, girl,” she said when she saw me. She removed the cigarette drooping from her glossy black lips and smashed it into an overflowing ashtray. “You’re looking fine tonight.” She eyed my tight, hooked bodice that gave me a tiny waist but unfortunately made my boobs look like floating globes shimmering under the fluorescent lights.

“Michelle,” I said, nodding curtly by way of acknowledgement. I moved to the brightly lit mirrors to make sure the makeup around my black-rimmed eyes hadn’t smudged.

I felt Michelle move behind me, her hot breath on my neck, her groin pressed up against me. I let her kiss my neck until she started to pant.

“I hoped you would call, baby,” she murmured against my ear in her smoke-and-gin hoarsened voice. “I’ve been missin’ you.”

Michelle and I had had a little fling a while back. It had stopped when I’d playfully nipped her neck at a poignantly erotic moment and almost gagged on her foul-tasting blood. The medication for the pain in her hip didn’t agree with me. I’d dropped Michelle pretty damn quick after that.

But Michelle was the persistent type and she missed all the action now that she didn’t get to hang out with the girls in the club full-time. To her mind, I was playing the tease. Hell, I was far from that.

“It’s over, Michelle,” I said coolly, pushing her away her none too gently. She was becoming a bore. I couldn’t see her at work without being accosted in the dressing rooms or feeling her brush up against me as we worked together behind the bar.

“Oh, come on, baby,” she cooed, licking her lips as her eyes strayed to my full breasts. “We’ve got unfinished business and you know it.”

“I don’t think so.”

As I turned away, Michelle grabbed at me, trying to pull me back by the skirt. The sound of cloth ripping echoed through the empty dressing room. I whirled around to see her holding my skirt in her hand. I was now down to velvet underpants, suspender belt and fishnet stockings—the uniform for all the girls working at Gino’s.

I wondered if there was some cosmic conspiracy to ruin my clothes.

Michelle laughed. “Oops! You sure look sexy, baby. Come back here and let Mama fix your skirt.” She actually leered at me.

“Hand it back,” I said, holding out my hand as my patience reached its limit.

“Come and get it,” said Michelle in what she believed to be a frisky little voice. Damn that.

I stepped forward and punched her in the face. Although technically I had a

century and a half on her, she was older and had aged quickly since leaving the pole dancing game. I calculated she had gained at least forty pounds in the last six months. Forty extra pounds that now keeled over backwards into a dress stand full of feather boas and sequinned thongs.

I grabbed the skirt out of her hands as she went down then turned to the dressing table to look for the sewing kit.

After a while, Michelle came around. Groaning, she raised herself on her elbow and pulled off the furred bra draped over her face. I concentrated on my slipstitch.

Michelle stood and hobbled over to look at her face in the mirror.

“There’ll be a huge bruise on my face later on,” she said matter-of-factly, feeling along her jaw line.

“Don’t expect me to apologise,” I said, biting off a piece of thread. “You deserved it.”

“Apologise?” Michelle laughed, turning to me. “Baby, I want you to do it again!”

I turned to her in surprise, black thread between my teeth. She was looking at me with glittering eyes, her breasts heaving as if under the strain of a huge excitement.

“Baby,” she breathed. “If I’d known what you were into, we could have had much more fun. You’re strong, but you don’t know how to hit me without leaving any marks. I could teach you about that. Give you a few pointers.”

I was almost horrified. Sure, I knew some people got off on violence—I was a vampire, wasn’t I? But a simple sock on the jaw? If that rebuff hadn’t penetrated Michelle’s thick hide then it was going to be nigh impossible to get her off my case.

I heard the dancers’ voices as they left the chicken joint across the street and remembered my plans for the evening. There were much more lethal pursuers to put a stop to, but maybe as an encore...

“I guess you’ve got me figured out,” I told Michelle, putting on my most demure expression. “I have a couple of errands to run, but why don’t we meet up later to talk?”

Michelle’s heavily jowled faced brightened. “You mean it?” Her eagerness would have been pathetic under different circumstances.

I smiled coyly as my mind raced ahead to various possible scenarios. “You’re right, Michelle. If I’d known we were both into the same thing, it might have been different.”

At that, Michelle lunged at me. I felt her lips sliding across the tops of my breasts before she brought her full, wet mouth to mine. I almost gagged at the pungent fumes of alcohol from her heated breath.

Suddenly the room filled with dancers back from their dinner. I pulled away quickly, but they'd seen our passionate embrace. A couple of the girls wolf whistled, and another threatened to throw a bucket of cold water over "you female tomcats."

"I gotta go," I said, ignoring the good-natured ribbing as I began to put on my skirt.

"But I'll meet you later, right?" Michelle demanded, grinning around at the girls as though she'd won a prize.

I nodded. "My place. Come along after your shift."

I left through the back door amid a volley of catcalls and heard Michelle say, "Shut up you jealous bitches," before I closed the door behind me.

For the second night in a row, I stood in an alley amid garbage cans and contemplated murder.

* * * *

Tether Heights Cab Service was nothing more than a crooked little doorway nestled between a fast-food joint and an insurance office. It was Friday night and a group of young drunks were trying to convince a taxi driver to drop them in opposing points of the city for a ridiculously low sum. One of the youngsters, a tall and fair-haired boy not more than eighteen, almost choked on his burger when he saw me cross the street toward them. He couldn't help but compare my tall, top-heavy curves in my tarty Goth gear to that of his rather chubby girlfriend with her pimpled skin and cheap suit.

"Je-sus! Look at that," he said to his mates, and they all turned to look at me. The girls immediately flared their nostrils in instinctive protectiveness of their men. Good instincts, though misguided, as I wasn't interested in the men. But they were definitely interested in me.

"Evening, boys," I said, and pulled out a cigarette. "Anyone got a light?"

As four pairs of hands scrambled to be the first to find a lighter, I surveyed the taxi company's offices. The front door was open and I could see a couple of the drivers sitting around inside the waiting room. It was rare to see any of them in the office this late at night, as the surrounding clubs would normally have created a queue of customers.

"What are you guys doing here tonight?" I asked, directing myself to the first guy who'd spotted me, the one who'd also been lucky enough to light my cigarette.

"We were going to try to get into the Crowbar but it's closed," he said. I angled myself so that my new coat, a black sheepskin with white fur collar, gapped open across my chest. His blue eyes seemed to pop out of his head as he stared at my breasts in a very Michelle-like manner. Eagerly, his friends jostled to get a better

view and the girls craned their necks.

Ignoring the others, I leaned over to caress the side of his face and flicked his cheek, drawing blood. His girlfriend gasped as if I'd grabbed his privates in public. The boy stared into my eyes. I fed him a silent message as I savoured the wafting scent of his blood. Tasty.

"Let's go," the boy said suddenly and threw his half-eaten burger into the gutter. "We'll find a taxi somewhere else." He turned and grabbed his girlfriend's hand, dragging her away as she stared back at me in fascinated horror. I blew her a kiss. She flushed and turned away, squawking at him in outraged excitement. The rest of the gang reluctantly followed.

I noticed that the man who'd been haggling with them, a young Pakistani, was staring me up and down like I was the whore of Babylon.

"Your boss in?" I asked, blowing a cloud of cigarette smoke at him.

"Boss not here today," he said, defiantly. "You need a ride?"

As if he knew what sort of ride I was after.

"I need to see the person in charge," I said coolly. "Are you in charge?"

He looked argumentative, but wisely decided to shake his head and go inside, signalling for me to follow him.

"Abdul," he shouted as he went into a back room where a man in a red fez was smoking a cigar and speaking to one of his drivers on the radio.

The fez-wearing man looked up at me, lost control of his vocal cords, and let his voice trail off. He abruptly handed the cigar and radio microphone to the young Pakistani and stood up hurriedly to greet me.

"Can I help you, madam?" he said in a charming Middle Eastern accent, staring at my cleavage. "You need a car?"

"I need some information," I said.

"Of course, of course. Come into the interview room," he said, pointing to another doorway. He didn't seem too surprised that a strange, tatted-up woman was asking for information, and there was no way this man was a vampire. If he tried anything, I would be more than ready for him.

The back room was a cramped little office with a couple of second-hand metal filing cabinets, a small desk, and two old wooden chairs. I sat on one and crossed my legs, letting the skirt drop away from my thigh. Abdul sat behind the desk and ogled me in fascination, obviously not as ardent a Muslim as his younger colleague. He waited politely for me to begin.

"I hear you've lost several of your taxi drivers in the last few days," I started.

He eyed me curiously. "Where did you—" He coughed, changed tack. "Yes, terrible business. Not men I knew very well. Not *family*, you know, but terrible for business."

"Indeed." He didn't seem too upset by the unexplained murder of two of his

colleagues. The placidity in his tone and complacency at their deaths intrigued me.

“The thing is,” I purred, carefully smoothing out my glossy stockings, resting my hands on my knees, “I killed them. Now I just want to know who sent them.”

“Yes, well the police were here and—” He stopped and gaped at me.

“You—er—you *killed* them?”

In an instant the flick-knife was in the palm of my hand, blade unsheathed, the stainless steel glinting in the low wattage of the single light bulb overhead. He drew back, nervously touching his fez, steadying it on his balding head. I picked at my nails with the blade, smiled at him, then carefully snapped the blade shut and returned it to its new home inside my lace-up boots.

“Yes, I killed them,” I said, sighing. “They ruined two perfectly good coats. This was the only suitable coat I found in the shop today. I loathe sheepskin, can’t stand the smell, so I’m feeling very put out. Forgive me if I’m a little direct with you.”

“Ha. Ha, ha. Ha. Ha, ha.” His fat worm-like fingers pulled out a wrinkled handkerchief from his crumpled suit and wiped it across his sweat-dotted forehead. “You joke with me. I like that.”

I laughed pleasantly. “You’d like to think so, wouldn’t you? Actually, I’m deadly serious. Deadly.”

He stared again at my cleavage, swiping nervously at the back of his neck with the handkerchief. He smiled nervously. “You’re too pretty to—”

“Now listen here,” I said softly, interrupting him before he began his sexist spiel. “I’ve asked you politely. If I don’t get an answer by the count of three, I’m afraid I’m going to have to shut you down.”

“Shut me down?” He was still staring, a puzzled look on his face. “I have a license. There is no way you can—”

At that moment, the Pakistani boy opened the door. I grabbed him by the throat and pulled him into the room as though he were a hay-stuffed scarecrow. He grabbed at the hand wrapped around his throat, eyes bulging. His feet kicked frantically as I lifted him half a foot from the floor. Then I showed him my fangs and hissed.

“Put him down! Put him down!” Abdul screamed in a surprisingly good London accent. “He’s my nephew, my only heir. My wife’ll kill me if anything ’appens to him!”

I lowered the boy gently to the floor and let him go. “One,” I said as the boy scrambled out of the room, slamming the door behind him. “Two.” As a prompt, I flashed my fangs at Abdul again. “Thr—”

“OK, OK.” Abdul was working his grimy handkerchief around his neck again as he pulled out a black notebook from the desk drawer. “I don’t know what the person’s name was—they paid cash so I don’t ask questions—but ’ere’s the

address.” He scribbled on the back of his business card and handed it to me.

“Who spoke to you? Man or woman?”

He shrugged. “Don’t know. One of me drivers took the call. At the moment, they’re me best client. I’ve made more in the last month than in the previous six, so I don’t ask no questions.”

Not with the huge bonuses on offer, I thought. Big enough to salvage his conscience at having sold the lives of his own colleagues.

I tucked the card into my bra and gave him a smile, sheathing my fangs. “This’ll have to do then.”

As I turned to leave, an idea struck me. I paused with my hand on the doorknob. “Just one more thing.”

* * * *

The shortest distance between two points is a straight line. So I flew. In seven minutes, I was standing outside the house, a large mansion at the end of a circular gravel drive with mullioned windows covered in blackout material.

I could smell the faint scent of crushed lavender and gasoline. Immediately, I knew who had summoned me.

I walked straight up to the front door and was not surprised when it sprang open.

“Lucius,” I said, nodding at the sleek, blond vampire standing in the doorway. “Is she waiting for me?”

Lucius and I had been taken together, back when he had been my betrothed. As a youth, Lucius had been tall, slim, and gorgeously pretty. Now the prettiness had turned to something tougher, something manlier. Oddly, I felt a familiar quiver of attraction, but I quashed it because I knew him. He’d always held onto the apron strings of a strong woman. They’d been my apron strings once. Before we’d fallen in love with *her*.

Lucius nodded unhappily. From the beginning, I’d been her favourite. I still was. She wouldn’t have gone to so much trouble to get me here otherwise.

Lucius and I never had much to say to each other, and despite the passing of a century since I’d last laid eyes on him, tonight was no different. He simply nodded toward the staircase in the dimness behind him as he let me in.

I walked determinedly up the stairs into the shadows of the house. Her presence was almost palpable, and I sensed it toward the back of the house. At the top of the stairs, I followed the corridor on the right to the closed door at the end. I opened the door and breathed in the intoxicating scent of lavender and gasoline.

“Is that you?”

Her voice came at me through the shroud of darkness. Husky, golden, warm,

sensual. I couldn't hold back a little shiver of remembered pleasure, a kind of déjà vu.

"Yes, it's me," I said.

* * * *

She came for me on my wedding day, almost two centuries ago. I remember standing before the mirror in my gown of silk and lace brought especially from Paris on my father's trading ships. His fleet would have doubled upon my marriage to Lucius. Lucius and I had always known our fate and we hadn't minded. We were young, beautiful, and though our parents arranged our marriage and was a matter of complete indifference to either of us, we both felt we were suited. I believed he would have been an easy husband, and I would not have been a jealous wife.

On that day, I sat on my bed in my wedding gown, which fell over my shoulders to reveal the perfect globes of my breasts, hovering as though suspended in space between the stiff edges of the plunging, beaded neckline. My dark hair was swept up in an elaborate style dotted with pearls. My olive skin—inherited from a long-forgotten Portuguese grandmother—glowed with good health. Objectively, I understood that I was extremely beautiful and that it was due in great part to the inordinate amount of wealth that now clothed my body.

I was completely alone. The bridesmaids had left to take the first carriage to the church. I waited for the moment that my father would arrive to take me down to the bridal carriage. I wondered with dread of what his last whispered words to me might be.

I don't know what drew her to me. I recall thinking I had seen her somewhere—a ball, the opera, on the street. She seemed so familiar. I felt as though I had been waiting for her for a long time.

She called to me as I sat on the bed. I turned and saw her standing on my balcony—the balcony that perched at least ten feet from the ground. She parted the billowing drapes and stepped into my room at my unspoken invitation. She was young, not much older than me, dressed as a wedding guest might be. I remember thinking she might have been my twin sister.

"Who are you?" I asked, unafraid.

"I'm your destiny," she whispered, and came to me. Did I offer her my neck or did she take it? It hardly matters now. But I went with her then—or she took me.

I never saw my family again. I heard my mother died suddenly soon after, and my father married again, a girl straight from convent school who bore him half a dozen children. I made it my business to return every few years to make sure none made it past their fifth birthday. Some say the new wife committed suicide; others

mention a consumptive disease. Not long after, Father had himself another, younger wife. He died of a heart attack before he could partake of the pleasures of the marriage bed with his fifteen-year-old bride. I watched him die.

She took me away on my wedding day and we shared a glorious night together. When I woke in the morning, Lucius was there. She had seduced him, as I had been seduced. He was completely in love with her, as was I, and we lived with her for a very long time. In the end, it was as if Lucius and I had been married after all, as if he too had been part of my destiny.

When we parted, it was only because I wished it so.

* * * *

This was what she mentioned first.

“A long time ago, you left me,” her voice came from the darkness. “And I’ve waited for you to return.”

I said nothing.

“No pity, no feeling from you, I see. You weren’t always so.” Her voice was sad and mournful.

“I’m what you made me.” Tough, uncompromising. Yet the voice worked on me, softened me—made my nipples stand erect in remembrance.

“Come closer. Let me see you.”

I stepped into the circle of candlelight. Her voice came from the far side of the room, behind the drawn canopies of a large four-poster bed. I couldn’t see her in the shrouded darkness.

Why was she hiding?

“You look well, but I’m disappointed in the cheap clothes. Not what I expected from you. You used to have such exquisite taste.”

“Tastes change,” I said. Peering through the darkness, I could make out a form against the pillows, a face wrapped in a veil. It disconcerted me. She had never been one to hide.

“Indeed, change happens, even to us Immortal Ones.” Her voice was a sigh, a whisper of regret.

“You seem different,” I said. I took a step forward, then another. “You never took such an indirect route to finding me before.”

“Finding you?” The voice became raspy now, losing the melancholy sweetness. “I was told you came to find *me*.”

Immediately, I turned and found Lucius standing in the doorway, his face dark, eyes glowing fiercely. In his hand, he gripped a small blade, sharp and at the ready.

“Lucius?” came her voice, questioning.

“She would not come otherwise,” he said sullenly. “I had to draw her out.”

The hackles on my neck began to rise. “Draw me out for what exactly?”

“She needs you,” Lucius whispered, taking a step toward me.

“Why does she need me? Is it her dying wish?” I said with loaded sarcasm, backing slowly toward the four-poster bed as my hand inched toward the blade I’d tucked into the back of my skirt. I was not ready to believe his latest ruse. Over the centuries, Lucius had become a practiced deceiver.

He stopped, his face losing its toughness, regret flowing visibly over his features. “Yes. It’s her dying wish.”

My hand paused over the handle of my blade. Lucius’ stricken look, the angry gaze borne of jealousy, which I had endured for so many years, told me he was telling the truth.

“She’s *dying*?” I repeated stupidly. “How can she be dying? She’s a vampire. We’re vampires. *We don’t die.*”

A soft laugh came from the darkness of the bed. “Oh, fool that you are. So Lucius tricked you here. Not very flattering, but nevertheless, he’s right. It is my dying wish to see you once more.”

I went to her bed and drew back the canopy. But the bed was empty. The drapes parted on the other side. She stood there, face veiled, watching me.

“What’s wrong?” I whispered.

My concern proved to be the weakness she sought, the opportunity for her to breach my defences. I felt her mind probing mine, digging deep, touching me in places long left untouched. My nipples hardened and my breath became shallow at her irresistible siren call.

“Don’t. Don’t,” I gasped. I could barely talk as pleasurable sensation flowed through me at the internal stroking.

I felt Lucius come up behind me, his muscled body curving into mine. He drew off my coat and threw it to the floor, his hands returning to caress my bare shoulders. I could feel the hardness of his cock against my ass. Oh, it was so familiar. Whatever else he might be, Lucius had always been a wonderful lover. The sudden wetness between my legs was a testimony to that memory.

“You brought me here for this?” I asked, panting as Lucius’ fingers nimbly began to unhook the back of my corset.

She watched, her mind still stroking deep inside mine, holding me immobile.

My corset came free and with it my breasts. Lucius’ arms came around me, cupping their fullness in his strong hands. His thumbs stroked the nipples in a gentle circular motion ‘till they leapt to painful hardness. I moaned in pleasure as I let my head drop back against his shoulder, neck exposed.

His blond head came down, his lips and tongue stroking the flesh of my neck, his teeth rasping across my throat. His hands kneaded my breasts more roughly and he took the long, dark nipples between his fingers, squeezing them hard. I felt the

liquid gush between my thighs as the sensation shot straight to my groin.

“This has always been enough,” she said softly as I groaned in pleasure. “Don’t tell me you haven’t missed it.”

I had missed it, more than I wanted to admit. Lucius’ hands now stroked down over my flat belly and rested on the single button holding my skirt. The skirt fell away, joining coat and corset on the floor beside the bed. His long fingers returned to burrow beneath my velvet panties, and for a moment, his hand cupped my shaved mons before a finger delved into the slick wetness between my legs. I cried out in pleasure as his wet finger rubbed along the swollen ridge of my clit. My hips involuntarily arched as thumb replaced finger.

“Don’t let her come yet,” I heard her voice in the darkness.

Immediately he withdrew his hands. He removed my garter belt instead, and then slid my panties down over my hips. I stepped out of them and stood naked except for fishnet stockings and stiletto boots. My head dropped forward, dazed, sensing him behind me removing his clothing.

His naked legs eased between mine, his knees forcing me to spread mine apart, and then his hands were on my buttocks, sliding down between my thighs to gently fondle my wet, open slit. Suddenly, his cock was like a hard, thick battering ram against my opening, and in one experienced thrust, he was deep inside me. He groaned as he began to move within me, hard and deep, touching all the nerve endings that had lain dormant and untouched for so many years, sending me spiralling into pleasure as my hips moved rhythmically to meet his eager thrusts.

“Don’t let her come yet,” again came her voice in the darkness, realising I was close.

He withdrew his cock and set me on my knees on the bed. They barely had time to sink into the hard mattress before Lucius climbed up on the bed behind me to take my hips again. He spread my butt cheeks to position my glistening vagina over the swollen tip of his cock. I sank onto his throbbing flesh, sighing as he filled me. I leaned back against his chest and his hands once again gripped my jutting breasts, squeezing my aching nipples as I rocked back against him.

Suddenly, her mind abandoned its sensual stroking of mine. It felt as though she had slapped me back to reality. I stopped moving, my breathing shallow and sharp, painfully aware of Lucius’ grip on my breasts and the steady, hard pounding of his cock inside me as pleasure began to ebb away.

I looked at her for the first time, mentally pleading for her return. I hadn’t noticed, but she had removed her clothing and stood naked on the other side of the bed, the dark veil still shrouding her face. Her breasts were as full as mine; the nipples were pink and erect as she rubbed them gently with her long, slim fingers. She smoothed her hands down over her stomach, over her tiny waist and to her slim hips, as if reminding me of her perfect proportions and how often my lips and

tongue had strayed along the same path in the past.

I remembered, and I longed for her. Longed for her with the same hunger that had gripped me in a flaming fever of passion from the first moment her teeth sank into my rosy throat on my wedding day, and through all the other nights, when besotted by love and lust, I had willingly done her bidding.

She climbed on the bed and knelt in front of me. Lucius' vigorous thrusts stopped although he remained inside me. He panted hoarsely as his hands fell away from my breasts. From the throbbing of his shaft, I knew he had been close to orgasm, but as usual, he'd subordinated his desire to hers.

This thought suddenly transfixed me. It was the original thought that had led to me leaving our trio, a feeling I had been unable to repress. Even though my desire for her was unabated, I had been determined then, as I was now, that my will would be my own.

This was something she could neither understand nor forgive.

"Why am I here?" I whispered as her face came close to mine. I could see only the faintest outline of her face through the heavy lace veil.

"Jasmine." Her voice was a warm caress. "I've missed you, Jasmine. Say you've missed me. Say you love me. Say my name."

Say her name. It was the prelude to a demand for a declaration of love and of obedience. To love and to obey.

I eased myself off Lucius and removed his hands from my waist. I knelt before her. Like sisters, we were eye-to-eye and breast-to-breast. I leaned in, brushed my lips over her shoulder, and slowly up toward her ear.

I whispered, "What are you hiding...Cleopatra?" Grasping the edge of the material, I quickly ripped the veil away.

She screamed and tried to cover her face, but it was too late. I had seen the disfigurement along the left side of her jaw and on her cheek, the leprous puckering of flesh as though something had been gnawing at her.

Cleo flung herself on the bed, sobbing. Lucius flung me to one side, his cock now limp, and scrambled to console her as he had always done.

"What is this?" I said, backing off the bed. "What's wrong with you?"

Through Cleo's sobs, Lucius' grey face turned to me. "We don't know what it is. No one can tell us. But it's spreading. Slowly, but it's spreading."

"It doesn't mean she's dying," I said, feeling numb.

"Doesn't it, you stupid girl!" Cleopatra screamed at me, rising suddenly in all her fury. Her eyes glowed in her disfigured face, and I felt the impact of her anger as a physical blow across the face. I staggered back.

She relented. "What do you know of death?" she cried miserably. "You're barely a baby, and this..." She touched her cheek with trembling fingers. "This could well be your reward after a long un-death." With a wail, Cleo threw herself

down amongst the pillows.

While Cleo sobbed quietly and Lucius soothed her, I began to dress. I felt vulnerable and exposed. I put on my stockings and garter belt as I puzzled out the disconcerting implications.

“Hold on a minute,” I said as I finished hooking on my corset. “Are you saying she’s dying of old age?”

Cleopatra shrieked and clapped her hands over her ears, her sobs escalating.

“Lucius?”

He looked at me and shrugged.

“So what was the sex about?”

Lucius hesitated, looking slightly sheepish. “We thought we’d try a remedy.” He sighed as though exhausted. “Cleo thought vampire cum might have rejuvenating qualities. Like her ass’s milk when she was mortal.”

“What?” I stared at him.

“We’ve fucked practically every vampire in Europe,” he said, clearly tired now. “I know you don’t want anything to do with us, but Cleo thought maybe—maybe you were the one who could help. As you were so adamant about not wanting anything to do with us, she thought you might be the one. She’s always saying it’s the one you least expect.”

“Oh, for Pete’s sake!” I started laughing. “That’s the stupidest theory I ever heard.”

Lucius looked at me reproachfully and turned back to comfort Cleo. She shrugged him off, however, and rose on her elbow to look at me.

“We could try it,” she pleaded, sniffing.

I shook my head emphatically as I shrugged into my coat. “Sorry, sister. This trio is definitely over.”

* * * *

Outside on the driveway, I lit up a cigarette and smiled. It felt as though a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. I laughed, remembering Cleo’s pleading look, Lucius’ embarrassment. I had been hiding from them for how many years? I couldn’t believe their stupidity—and my own.

A pair of headlights appeared at the end of the driveway, and a taxicab pulled up in front of me, tires crunching on the gravel. I leaned into the backseat window and smiled.

“Come on out, lover boy,” I said, opening the door.

The young boy from the gang at Tether Heights came out, his fresh young face looking at me with complete and utter worship. I guess I could understand Cleo’s attraction to utter domination. For me, however, it would always be a one-night

kind of thing. Eventually, you had to find your equal.

I knocked on the front window of the taxi and waited as it rolled down. Abdul, his eyes glowing hot with vicious hunger, snorted at me as he propped the sliding fez on his head. Dispassionately, I glanced at the gashes I'd made on his neck.

"You all set? Know what to do?" I asked him.

"Pick up your dancer friend Michelle at club and—"

"Yeah, I don't need to know the rest, buddy. Have a good night." I slapped the top of the cab and watched it speed away in the dark.

"You hungry?" I asked my youthful companion, looking at the pulsing vein at his throat. My stomach rumbled.

He nodded and grinned as I slid my arm around his narrow shoulders.

"Maybe we could fit in a bit of dancing first," I said as we strolled down the driveway into London. "After all, life's too short."

THE END

About the Author

Cassandra Kane

Cassandra Kane grew up in Australia and has lived in the UK for over 10 years. Her writing career began when she received a much-coveted plastic typewriter for her thirteenth birthday, irritating her brothers with her endless nighttime typing. Cassandra graduated to a computer and now works as a freelance copywriter. When not writing, Cassandra can be found trying to get a life or convincing her landlady to let her have a cat.

Our authors love to hear from their readers!

You can write to Cassandra here:

Cassandra Kane
c/o Chippewa Publishing LLC
PO Box 662
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin 54729



Lady Aibell Press

<http://www.ladyaibell.com>

a division of Chippewa Publishing LLC

Catching Your Dreams of Fiction!

<http://www.chippewapublishing.com>