

Sealed Vows

Lia Connor

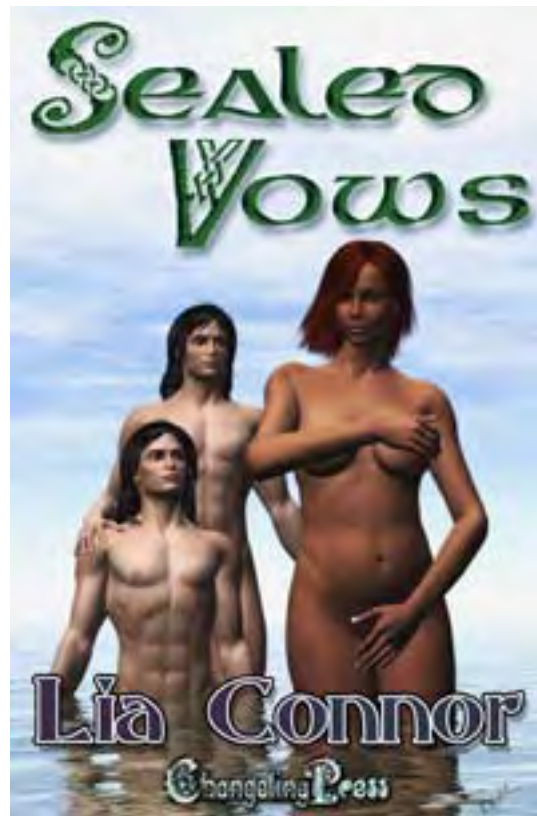
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Prologue

Erin had heard that sometimes, especially when you were in danger, or after something truly spectacular had happened, your life flashed in front of your eyes. You were supposed to see everything, from the instant you were born up until the scene that had you by the throat at the moment.

Here in the water, the cool and soothing salt seawater, she opted for the edited highlights. In particular, the best times that she had spent with her boys. There were so many to choose from, but as images flashed past her mind's eye, she snagged several and devoured them, almost reliving each moment as if it were happening all over again.

There had been the time Devon discovered feathers. Not that he hadn't known what they were before, but he hadn't known they could be used in bed to such great... advantage. Damon, wicked as ever, had joined in the fun. Erin remembered the whole scenario.

* * *

"Do you trust us?" Damon asked, twirling a long ostrich feather in his hand. He'd pulled it off a cheap pen bought at some tourist stand. Behind him, Devon ran his hand up and down the quills of a second feather, this one more like that of a peacock, all bright colors and a cerulean eye. "We won't hurt you, you know."

Erin laughed, both in anticipation and at the wicked gleam in Damon's eyes. She knew he wouldn't hurt her, sure, but he'd drive her to the peak until she was begging to climax, and he'd enjoy every second of it before plunging deep into her pussy, which would be soaking wet for him by then.

"What do you want me to do?" she asked, stretching out on the hotel bed in the room they'd rented. Teasing, her hands curled around the posts. "Do you want me completely at your mercy?"

Damon's eyes had flashed. "Don't move. Keep your hands there, locked on the bedposts."

Erin obeyed, a hint of mischief in the way she laughed. She did love playing with her boys. Besides which, the thought of being driven screaming to an orgasm had already been making her wet, filling their tiny room with the pungent scent of sex. She spread her legs wide, touching the tips of her toes to the far posts. "Like this?" she asked, knowing she looked like a wanton but not caring in the least. If it got her boys to her faster...

Devon swallowed hard, almost dropping his feather. "Damon," he said, voice shaking a little. "This game can wait. I have to taste her."

"Do you?" Damon had asked, turning on his twin with a wicked look. "Are you desperate for it?"

Devon nodded. He sat down on the bed, already starting to sneak between Erin's open legs, inching toward her moist pussy. "Let me eat her out. You do what you want with the feathers, but do it while I'm tasting this sweet cunt juice."

"And do I get a say in the matter?" Erin found the breath to tease, although the sound of what Devon was proposing almost stole the air from her lungs. She ached -- no, she *burned* -- to have his mouth on her. Her clit throbbed at the mere thought of Devon's agile tongue wrapped around it.

Damon stroked his feather, up and down, up and down, almost as if it were a cock and he were bringing himself off with his hand. His Irish accent was heavy and thick when he replied, "Aye. And I get to watch."

With a groan, soon matched by Erin's sharp cry, Devon plunged his face into her pussy, licking a broad stripe from vaginal entrance to the top, where he toyed with her engorged clit, wrapping his tongue around it and then flicking it in short lashes. "Ah, gods, you taste so good," he whispered. "Damon, she's better than ever."

"I get my turn after you," Damon barked. Then he grinned, savage and demanding. "But first, while you get your fill of that sweet cunt, I'm going to drive her crazy in my own way."

Erin almost screamed when the feather began tickling over her skin. Devon drove her wild with his tongue and then his fingers, plunging in and out of her pussy; Damon trailed the feather over her arms and legs, her stomach and breasts, lingering around her nipples. She begged him to stop and suck on her, to let her feel the warm, wet heat of his mouth as well, but he only laughed and kept on touching her.

After Devon had driven Erin to a shattering climax with his mouth, while she was still almost weeping with the aftershocks, Damon gently pushed his twin aside and laid his feather down, slipping his cock into her tight channel.

As he slid slowly in and out, he slanted his mouth over hers in a hungry, demanding kiss. Erin returned the kiss with fervor, knowing Damon liked it rough and hard. Their tongues slid slippery and fast across one another's, demanding more and still more, their lips almost fused together as one. She could feel Devon sneak behind her, kneeling on the pillows above her head. Erin tore away from the kiss to gasp for air, and then yelped in surprise as Damon withdrew, sat on his knees, and pulled her down against him. He entered her at the new angle, almost making her scream with how big he was and how full she felt.

Devon smiled down at her, his lips still shiny with her juices, and bent down to take her mouth in a kiss as well. Erin licked his mouth, tasting herself, something she had grown used to by now -- and liked. Short, nipping strokes, caressing his tongue with her own. Gentle; things were always much more gentle with Devon.

"Suck me?" he asked, lilting voice enough to make her wetter than she already was. She had to struggle to understand him through the haze of being fucked hard and fast by Damon, but she got what he was asking for, and God, was she happy to oblige. She opened her mouth like a baby bird begging for food -- the kind she loved best -- and Devon laughed with delight, stole one more quick kiss, and then maneuvered himself into position.

They came together, Damon fucking, and Erin sucking, tasting the muskiness of manhood and the pure oceanic taste of her boy, her Devon, the man who'd met her first on the beach and changed her entire life in an instant...

They collapsed by her side, naked and sweaty. Erin found a voice for the thought, the doubt that had been hiding in the back of her mind, pushed there and tamped down every time she worried. "What happens when we get your skins back? Will you swim off without me, go back to your own kind?"

"Never. We'll always be together. Nothing will ever come between us."

"But how?"

"We'll find a way..."

Their vows were sealed.

* * *

Erin smiled at the memory. She had so many memories. Like the time they'd discovered jelly and what it was like to ruin an entire set of hotel sheets by covering Erin in marmalade and licking it off, paying special attention to her breasts and her pussy.

And the time when they'd been out shopping, and, unable to wait, they'd dived into an alley behind some boxes where no one could see them. The three of them had a damned good time, Devon kissing her tenderly while he fucked her pussy, and Damon entering her carefully from behind.

God, but those had been good times. And as Erin drifted in a fog of near-sleep, she dreamed about all the wonderful fucks they'd shared, the three of them. She didn't worry about the future. It could take care of itself.

Things might be about to get bad, but she was more than up to the challenge... but first, she'd dream a little more...

Chapter One

"So what have you got there, then?"

War Dogs gritted his teeth. Bad enough he had a Gypsy who claimed he'd be able to track every move he made while out on this mission, but the damned Rom had sent along his helper to make sure things went smoothly. As if he'd ever failed to bring back his prize!

"It's a tranquilizer gun," he explained, very slowly, as if Derrick were a stupid child. "See them out there, all frolicking in the sea? Happy little fishies. Stupid cunts. They don't have a clue what's coming, and they won't if you just keep your damn mouth shut!"

"You're the one who's doin' all the talking." Derrick lounged against a stone pillar, fished in his pocket, retrieved a pack of cigarettes, tapped one out and struck a match to light it.

War Dogs felt a vein bulge in his temple. He snatched the cigarette out of Derrick's mouth and ground it underfoot. "What kind of damn fool are you?"

"One who was enjoying that, thanks very much!" Derrick protested, his hand going automatically to his pack to fetch another out.

War Dogs stopped him with a hand to the wrist. He squeezed tighter than strictly necessary, driving his point home. "Look, you fucking moron," he whispered angrily, "we don't want them to know we're here, right? So a glowing ember isn't really what we want, right? You smoking like the damned slacker you are could screw up the whole deal."

"So?" Derrick had the balls to ask, gesturing with an unlit smoke. "Can I indulge my habits or not?"

War Dogs snapped. "Not!" He grabbed the pack and tossed them away. The cigarettes made a slight scattering sound when they landed on the damp stone. "Rombere sent you along, and I don't like it, but since I'm stuck with you, fine. Just keep your mouth shut, follow me, and stay low. Do we have an understanding?"

"Well, not as such, you see." Derrick stuck both hands cheekily in his coat pockets. "Thing is, have you taken a close look at the three of them, out there in the water?" When War Dogs hesitated, Derrick gave a nod. "Go on, take out your binoculars and have a look. A really good look. At, oh, say, the girl."

War Dogs gave Derrick a sour look, but just in case the annoying middleman had a point, lifted his spyglasses and scanned the water. Two men, naked as usual, frolicking around the girl as if they were playing some kind of fucking kid's game. Flipping her hair up, splashing her, lifting her out of the water --

War Dog's mouth fell open. "Holy shit."

"Yeah, we thought she might pull that stunt," Derrick said, scratching the back of his head. "Well, when I say we, I mean Rombere."

"What the hell happened to her?" War Dogs whispered as he strained for a better look through his spyglasses. "Is she some kind of effing mermaid?"

"Not exactly. More of a hybrid. See, a lot of the old tales are wrong. There's a certain way to change a woman so she's more than a human, not quite a seal, but has her own set of gifts and abilities, and she still keeps her figure." Derrick gave a low whistle as the selkies lifted the girl high. "And quite a figure she is, too, eh?"

"Only figures I care about are the ones with Euro marks on them," War Dogs growled quietly. "I don't know what she is, but she's worth a hell of a lot more than I've been offered."

"Are you going back on our deal, now?" Derrick shifted his weight slightly.

"Not all of it." War Dogs licked his lips. "You get the selkies for what I've already been paid, fine. But for the girl, the way she is now? There's a dozen research facilities around the world who'd love to get their hands on something like her. They'll pay a shitload more than you've offered."

"And how much would it take for you to get this girl for Rombere?" Derrick asked in the casual way of a man who was covering up his deadly seriousness. "We did have a bargain, now."

"Fuck you, and fuck your bargain. I'm not giving you the girl unless I get paid more. Maybe whatever the fuck amount I decide to ask for." War Dogs dropped his glasses and turned to loom over the small Irishman, or whatever the hell he was.

Derrick blinked, his eyes flashing white. From another pocket, he fished out a second pack of cigarettes, tapped one out, and lit it. "It seems to me we're at a stalemate," he said idly. "You have something I want, and I have something you want."

"I told you, no fucking smoking!"

"Piss off." Derrick took a deep drag, then exhaled. "They're not looking this way, and I'm behind a bleeding great pillar, in case you hadn't noticed. If you work with me, I could possibly swing you a deal."

War Dogs shifted his position, crossing both arms over his chest. "Deal? Such as?" The offer got his hopes up, but he kept his voice down. Had to be quiet, right?

Derrick grinned sharply. "Three thousand more for the woman, as she is. That'll put you up to eighteen thousand euros total, which is, as you say, a shitload. Especially for a man in your position."

"I could get four or five thousand from the research places," War Dogs bluffed. Inside, he salivated over the thought of so much money. With financial backing of that nature, he could go exclusive. Take only the hits he wanted to take. His name would circulate, too. The man who brought the selkies and their freak girl down. People would be knocking discreetly at his door day and night, wanting someone to be gotten rid of.

"You want me to make you a better deal?" Derrick's eyes narrowed. "Fine, then." He snapped his fingers, and a roll of bills appeared in his hand. War Dogs swore and slapped at his pocket, where the bulge had vanished.

"You little bastard!" War Dogs spat.

"My parents were both married, to each other, thanks. And I don't like your tone of voice." Derrick took another pull on his smoke. Wisps drifted out of his nose and

mouth as he spoke quietly. "You get the girl for the extra three, as I offered. Otherwise, you get dick."

"I could pound you into a greasy stain on the rock," War Dogs threatened in a hiss, raising one fist. He meant to bring it down in a heavy blow atop Derrick's head and take all the money the man had on him, but to his surprise, Derrick caught his hand and shoved it back, almost without effort.

"No, you couldn't." Derrick tossed his smoke down and stepped on it. "Think you're a big man, do you? Think you're tough? Plan on getting a better deal? Better think twice, War Dogs. We're the best you're going to get, and if you screw us, we screw you." His nose wrinkled. "Not literally, of course. I do have some standards."

War Dogs growled angrily but impotently, like a pit bull who'd been choke-chained. "You little asshole," he whispered, not without admiration. "I ought to whip you within an inch of your life. You've got balls, you know that?"

Derrick grinned. "A hell of a pair. Now, are you going to get the girl for us or not?"

War Dogs regarded him narrowly. "Fine," he said in the hushed voice they'd been using all along. "She's yours. Now shut up, and let me get into position."

"Why wait?"

"Do you want to go for a swim and a scuba dive? If I shoot them now, they sink. And I'm betting you want them alive, not dead. They have to be on land before I can get a decent shot."

"Oh, aye." Derrick nodded. "You go ahead and do your thing, then. Where shall I stand?"

"Stay right where you are." War Dogs found himself a decent vantage point, where he reckoned he'd be hidden from view from the sea, but still in aiming range of the beach. He grinned sharkishly. "I've got some selkies to catch, and some money to make."

Chapter Two

Devon stood watch over Erin, gazing in wonder at the way her soft brown hair floated in the water. He'd never touched anything like it in his entire life -- silky even when dry, and now, fanned out around her head, like a glossy sunburst. He had a mental vision of her rising out of the water, like the picture of Venus he'd once seen. Only, in his mind's eye, Erin wouldn't have her hands posed for modesty. She'd be showing off those glorious breasts and her magnificent pussy for his eyes to feast on.

He'd never picked up a brush in his life, but the sight of his mate lying half-in and half-out of the water, so magnificently nude and *changed* into something more wondrous than she had already been -- he ached to capture the way she looked, even if the canvas would be something he'd have to hide on land. Oils would never survive underwater, not in the salt and the tides.

But oh, how he wanted to freeze this moment forever.

He knew they couldn't. War Dogs wouldn't be far behind them, the bastard. He never was. Every moment they spent caring for Erin was a moment in which they should have been waking her up and running. If not on the land, then in the sea.

The sea. Devon shook his head, and looked up at his twin, who held Erin's other side. The expression in his dark eyes was unreadable, or at least it would have been for someone who didn't know him as well as Devon did. He'd grown up interpreting his brother's moods, and he knew exactly what would be flashing about in Damon's mind.

"We should, you know," he said quietly, so as not to wake his exhausted Erin. "If the old women's stories are true, it's the perfect place to go hide."

Damon's jaw twitched. "And where would that be?"

The tone of his voice would have warned off anyone else, but Devon had shared too much with his twin to be balked. "Home, Damon. We should go home, or at least call for help. We could pass a message on to the rest of our kin."

"No," Damon said flatly, turning his face away. "I won't discuss it."

Devon felt a surge of indignation. "And just like that, the matter's closed? I don't think so, Damon. I've kept quiet about this from the beginning, but now that we have a chance, a real chance, we need to call on our brothers and sisters. Our father. Our cousins. All the selkies. We need an army to face War Dogs. Numbers that can overpower him and force him to give us back our skins."

"Give us back our skins, oh, yes," Damon said bitterly. "And forever live with the shame of being two who were stupid enough to have them stolen in the first place? Being known as the ones who had to come crying to the family for help when they got into a tight spot? I'd rather be one of the seals caught in a cull. At least they had the balls not to reveal themselves as humans. Sometimes I think --" He broke off.

"Sometimes you think what?" Devon demanded, his own temper, not easily roused, flaring. "Do you think it would be better if we hadn't shed our skins at all the night we met Erin? Do you wish we hadn't met her, hadn't gotten to know her, love her, fuck her?"

"Nay!" Damon snapped in return. "That's not it at all. Would you listen to me before you go off half-cocked?"

Devon gave his brother a glare. "You'd better not be thinking along those lines," he warned. "If you are, I'll have your nuts for a necklace. I'd give up anything to have Erin in my life -- our lives -- and I'd take anything by way of what it cost me, even to having this tattooed madman chasing after us."

"I'm not saying we'd be better off without her," Damon said softly. Too softly. He reached out to stroke Erin's floating hair, twining strands around his fingers. "She's my sea and stars, Devon. Having her in my life has made it infinitely better. When I had only you, I was content. But with her as our third, I'm happier than I've ever been, War Dogs be damned."

"Damn him, yes," Devon agreed. He brushed his hand along Erin's soft cheek, smiling despite himself at the way she gave a soft, breathy moan and turned slightly toward him in her sleep. "He has to pay, Damon. That's why we should call upon the family."

"And that's why we can't!" Damon snapped. "Do you want to be the one to face the Council of Mothers down and tell them we were stupid enough to get our skins stolen?"

"You don't think they know already?" Devon pointed out, exasperated. "We've been gone for well over a month when we were only supposed to have a night on the shore."

"And have any seals come looking for us since then?" Damon held up a hand. "I know, I know, we've mostly been on the land, where none of them could come in their natural form. But they could have changed into human shape and tracked us, if they'd really wanted to. No, Devon. I think they're leaving us to dig ourselves out of this mess alone. How's the saying go? We made our beds, and now we have to lie in them."

"You're wrong," Devon insisted. "They'd come if they knew we needed help. As for shame, if they already know we're in trouble, who cares about a little more embarrassment? To lose your skin is the biggest taboo in our society, yes. But once lost, what's the harm in asking for help to get it back?"

Damon's jaw tightened and Devon heard his teeth grinding. "I can't stop you," he said after a long minute, "but I won't help you, either. If you make the call, you do it on your own. I'm fighting with my two hands and nothing else."

Devon eyed his twin before nodding decisively, and gently scooping Erin into his arms. "So be it. We'll see if there's anyone out there to hear us, and if they come to our aid."

Damon's face went blank again as Devon pulled Erin out of his arms. "Don't drown her," he said flatly.

"Her gills are already opening. She'll be fine as long as I keep her moving. Don't worry." Impulsively, Devon reached out to pull Damon's face toward him, bumping

their foreheads together as they had done when they were still boys. "I'll take good care of her, you know."

"You'd damn well better," Damon replied, but softly, as if the touch had gentled him somewhat. "Bring her back to me safe and sound."

"That I will." Holding Erin in his arms like a baby, Devon slipped beneath the cool green surface of the water, thrilling again to the feeling of it closing above his head. Kicking off from the rocky bottom of the sea floor, he swam out into the deeps, noticing with a shiver there was no life to be seen save for the algae that gave the water its emerald color.

When he was far enough out, Devon emitted a barking sound, something that seemed all wrong coming from a human throat. He opened his mind to the telepathic link shared not only with his twin, but with all the selkies, knowing he was much too far away to transmit worth a damn but praying for the best.

Help us, he projected. Damon and I have lost our skins. A villain holds them. We have a mate now, and she has changed into something between our kind and the humans. We were fools to leave our skins on the beach to go and seek out adventures. We beg the Council's forgiveness and we ask for help. Help us, please. Help!

Nothing but silence answered him, even though Devon floated in the deep green waters for several long minutes. He couldn't hear anything on the link, not even Damon. Perhaps it was the water, or perhaps everyone was turning a deaf ear to his cries. He couldn't tell.

Perhaps Damon had been right -- perhaps the selkies and the Council would turn them away. But perhaps not. He had to hold on to the hope that the Great Mothers would overlook their breaking the greatest taboo -- or, if not overlook, then forgive.

They were outgunned, but if the seals came to assist them... then, only then, they might have a shot. He had to try, for Erin's sake. He would do anything for his Erin, who kissed him so sweetly and fucked him like a dream. Who loved him, and Damon, with all of her huge, warm heart. Devon held her tight, cupping the creamy swell of one

breast, smiling when she rolled her head and let loose with a stream of exhaled air through her mouth, tiny bubbles drifting away.

Help us, please. We need your numbers in this fight, Devon transmitted, then closed the link from his end. He'd been down here long enough for his message to go through, and he didn't want to risk his lover. If someone had heard, then they had heard. If someone was coming to assist, they would soon be on their way.

Until then, he'd wait with Erin on the beach.

He'd take care of his lover and his brother as long as he was able.

* * *

"I'm gettin' impatient here," Derrick snapped, lighting yet another cigarette. "How much longer do I have to wait?"

War Dogs looked through the sight of his gun. "Not long," he gritted out, his loathing for the little man and his foul smokes growing by the second. "I thought we might have lost two of them but there they come now, back up to the surface. Dumb cunts don't have the sense to stay under." He adjusted his scope. "Just a few more minutes," he said. "Just hang on, and we'll get this all sorted out. You just watch and see."

Chapter Three

“Erin!”

Floating in the stillly quiet, Erin ignored the muffled shouting of voices above her head. Instead, she gazed around herself, amazed at how much she could see. The water had always been murky before, but now it shone clear as glass. No fish, which was a shame. She would have loved to see a shoal of angels zipping past -- or even a coral reef. Neither of those would be local, of course, but it would have been nice to see something on the fin.

Her stomach rumbled, reminding her of how long it had been since she'd last eaten. Erin eyed her belly with alarm. Had the thought of raw, swimming fish excited her appetite? What if the changes to her went beyond just the surface? Speaking of which, she needed to have some words with her boys...

...but her other appetites hadn't changed. Two pairs of naked legs stood bracketing her, with two cocks floating temptingly just within sucking range. Mischievously, Erin lunged forward and took one in her mouth, pressing her webbed fingers hard against her chosen twin's thighs. He shouted and bucked, nearly throwing her off, but Erin was not to be denied. She had what she wanted, and she planned to wring every drop of what she needed from the experience.

Hungry for the salty taste of flesh, she ran her tongue around the tip of her anonymous twin's cock, lapping in a small circle. The organ began to swell in her mouth, forcing her to back off a bit at a time as it grew. She hung on determinedly, though, refusing to let go of her treat. Not needing to breathe through her nose and mouth was turning out to be wonderful, and she didn't intend on surfacing anytime soon.

Her twin relaxed his hold on Erin's shoulders, moving from a tight grip into a loose massage. Erin grinned around her mouthful of cock. *That's more like it*, she thought. *Come to me, now*.

With all the time she wanted to take, Erin began a leisurely exploration of this twin's penis. Long and straight save for just a little bend to the left -- that would be Damon -- his was all a cock could ever dream of being. At least seven inches, and thick as a slender woman's wrist. Or was that the water?

Erin blinked at it, then, impulsively, ran her mouth along the hard length, biting kisses as she'd seen fish go after food. The sound of a moan from above told her she'd gotten the move right, and Damon was properly grateful.

Erin moved her webbed fingers from the twin's thighs and surrounded the base of his cock with one, cradling his balls with the other. Underwater, they seemed to float, just as she did. Damnation! Maybe it would take more practice, but she couldn't seem to hold her place in the water unless she had both feet braced on the sandy bottom.

Or could she...

The twins were standing side by side. Erin continued to fondle Damon's balls with one hand while floating over to find Devon's cock with her mouth. She heard another moan, and almost laughed around her mouthful of dick. No one who'd ever had sex this good could blame her for wanting more and still more.

Her boys seemed to agree with her. Devon began thrusting gently in and out of her mouth as Damon pushed impatiently into her hand. She felt them both expand and lengthen, hungry for more of her touch. Which was all fine and great, sure, but Erin was beginning to feel the need for a little good old sexual healing herself. She gave Devon's cock a love nip, careful not to hurt him but reminding him that, hey, she was there and she had needs too. She just wasn't quite sure how to satisfy them with all three underwater...

As if sensing her dilemma, Erin felt Damon reach down and seize her legs, holding them by the ankle, then run his hands up and down her calves. She all but purred, streams of bubbles escaping her mouth and bathing the cock of her chosen

recipient, Devon. When he shouted again, she giggled, then formed a tight seal around her mouthful of flesh and began to suck with all her might. Hands playing, cheeks hollowing, she worked the man for all she was worth, enjoying every single second. Who would have guessed that she, practically all but a virgin before arriving in Ireland, would have become a Mistress at the art of sucking cock?

She almost choked when she felt Damon's hands grow quickly eager, and then, with a shock, his face nuzzled into her pussy, tongue flickering out at her clit. The feel of his hot mouth in the cool water was unbelievably good, startling in its warmth and enough to drive any woman out of her mind.

She tried her hardest to concentrate on Devon, but it was almost impossible with Damon eating her out like a starving man's last meal, licking her from one end of her slit to the other, curling and twining his tongue around her clit and thrumming it into the beginnings of a climax the likes of which she hadn't felt in, oh, hours. Too long, in her opinion.

She shook as the orgasm took her over, claiming every nerve ending in her body in an electric spasm that made her muscles tingle and her mouth seal tightly around Devon's cock. Erin managed not to bite him, but through the shocks of her coming, she sucked even harder, and then increased the pressure as she began to come down, lazy and boneless, wanting to share the joy.

Devon's thighs began to shake. Erin gave his balls a last squeeze, kicked a little to encourage more stroking of her own legs -- the gliding of hands over the new, soft fur felt heavenly -- and drew back, tracing her tongue along the thick, ropy vein on the underside of the organ she held in her mouth. With her mouth on the bulbous head only, she probed her tongue into the slit, then blew hard as she could, bathing the cock in bubbles and humming sounds.

Above her, Devon roared loud enough to carry almost perfectly underwater, and began to come. Erin quickly surrounded his cock with her mouth, capturing each spurt of salty semen as it spurted out, rolling the pearls on the soft surface of her tongue, amazed at how fresh and sharp it tasted. Everything was different now, it seemed.

Erin stayed in place, petting Devon's legs until he ceased shaking. Her own pussy was flooded with juices, wanting some more attention, but she needed some explanations first. Maybe. If she could wait long enough for them to actually talk, instead of making love. Make love, or fuck; Erin figured she was fine with either.

She couldn't hide beneath the cool green surface any longer. With a sigh through her newly-formed gill slits and a flicker of pleasure that she could still breathe underwater, Erin gently kicked free of Damon and swam up into Devon's arms, capturing his mouth in a kiss before he could open it to speak.

He'd had words on his lips, she could tell, but they strangled off in a groan as he tasted himself on Erin's mouth. She sucked his lower lip between her own, bit the upper one, then delicately probed inside with her tongue. Velvety soft, he played with her, dancing and twisting together, mimicking what she knew he ached to do, wanting to fill her cunt with his cock.

Erin felt her gill slits close, and suddenly she needed to breathe in air. Breaking away reluctantly, she gazed up at the twin she'd chosen for her amorous wake-up call. "Devon," she crooned. She reached up to stroke his wet hair with one hand, noticing how the webs became translucent, like soap bubbles, out of the water. "This is amazing."

His dark eyes were intense as ever. "You don't mind?"

"Mind? Of course I mind. Apparently I'm not completely human anymore. If I weren't still floating on some kind of endorphin high, I'd be looking for frying pans to bash your skulls in with." Erin caressed Devon's cheek. "Count yourself lucky I'm still floating. This is like the best afterglow ever."

He caught her hands in his as Damon came around to hug her from behind. "I'd hoped things would go gently with you," he said, his accent so heavy and thick with Gaelic flavor that she had to strain to understand him. "I'd no idea what would happen, no' in truth, but this is far better than I'd hoped. You're still our Erin."

Erin closed her eyes. "What had you thought I'd be?"

"We didn't know," Devon murmured into her shoulder.

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"We hoped it could be avoided," Damon rumbled, pushing his head forward onto her other shoulder. Erin brought her hands up to cradle both of their scalps, lightly stroking the hard skulls underneath. She felt strong, mightier than any mortal woman should be. It would be so easy to cause them damage.

Was this what they felt, when making love with her?

Erin kept quiet, petting her lovers for a long moment. "I'm angry," she said at last, quietly. "You knew something would happen, and you didn't warn me. But I forgive you because it was done out of love. And you tried to prevent it. I know you did."

"Aye," Devon said, muffled. "We gave you everything your body seemed to crave. Salt, water, sex. We hoped you'd find your satisfaction with us and not be forced into this changeover."

"Changeover. I've heard that word before." Erin drew back, gently nudging the twins to stand and look at her. "Tell me what it means."

Damon shook his head. "If I could, I would. There are old legends, those that are passed down by storytellers. In times past, when there were lusty maidens eager for a selkie lover, there are tales which tell of how the women desired their men enough to follow them into the sea. They changed -- became more than woman, but less than seal."

"And there are other stories," Devon chimed in. "Ones about selkies who lost their skins, and the women they adored." He exchanged a glance with Damon. "It would be easier to show her."

Damon nodded grimly. "Will you, or shall I?"

"I'll do the deed." Before Erin could question them, Devon took her hand in both of his own. "Back underneath. I'm going with you."

She shook her head. "You'll drown!"

Devon pressed a kiss to her knuckles. "Trust in me, Erin."

Erin stared into Devon's eyes, searching them for any traces of humor, and found only earnest sobriety. Slowly, she nodded, and, with her hand twined in his, sank below the water.

His face hovered into view across from hers. Erin tried a smile, hoping he could see her just as clearly as she saw him. Her heart still ached when she looked at her twins. They were such beautiful men, and no matter what passed between them, they held her heart and always would. With her free hand, Erin reached out to touch Devon's cheek, brushing her knuckles across the line of his jaw.

Devon grinned. He seemed amused by something. Erin tilted her head, trying to understand. *Breathe*, she saw his lips shape, at the same time as she heard the words through her new mental link. Hearing Devon's voice inside her head startled her, but she obeyed, opening her gills and drawing in the oxygen-rich water.

Devon closed his eyes. An expression of bliss passed over his face. Then, opening his mouth, he expelled a stream of bubbles, the last of his breath escaping. Erin would have panicked, except for the command in her head. *Breathe again, Erin.*

Half-tempted to drag Devon back up to the surface, Erin obeyed. Devon's grin became broader, and he blew out another stream of bubbles. *Touching you, we can breathe underwater. I feel the air in my lungs.*

Erin's eyes widened. *How? How does that work?*

Devon lifted her hands to his lips again for another kiss. *How does anything happen? Magic, beautiful one.* Erin felt a disturbance behind her that must have been Damon sinking down to join them. Freeing one hand, she reached out for her other partner. This time, when their palms met, she felt a small tingle, like a charge of electricity.

And Damon, the grouchy twin, the walking storm cloud, beamed.

Erin broke into laughter, the sounds rolling through the water sweetly and clearly as a bell. Still glowing with happiness, Damon swam closer and closed his mouth over hers. Water passed between their lips, and their tongues swam like fish as they mated together.

I want more, Erin said to both. Need more. Will this last forever?

I don't know, Devon and Damon said at the same time. Should we enjoy the magic while it lasts?

Oh, yes. Between her men, Erin pulled them closer, turning her rounded bottom toward Damon and presenting her plump, pouting pussy to Devon. Take me, she commanded. I want you, the both of you.

And the twins, good lovers that they were, had no objection to obeying. Cocks already growing hard, they twined themselves in a knot around Erin, locking them in the soothing, healing water. Hands ran down her new seal-like pelt, caressing and petting, promising that she looked beautiful as ever. Erin's lips met Devon and Damon's lips as, always maintaining contact with her skin, the three writhed and spun around one another.

Erin moaned aloud as Devon slid into her hot, wet cunt and Damon breached her from the back, knowing just the slightest membrane separated the two cocks. She was as hungry to have both of them inside her as ever, desperate for the feeling of absolute fullness as they slid in and out, finding a rhythm that left her empty and wanting, then full and euphoric, then changing their pace so that she was filled from the front and then from behind, see-sawing her back and forth in wave after wave of ecstasy. She rode their cocks, the cool green water surrounding them on either side and making the voyage sweet as any ever taken on the high seas.

The boys' hands weren't idle, either. As they pushed in and out of her, both sets of hands kneaded at her breasts and cupped the curves of her ass, stroking and petting, groping and caressing, driving her on and driving her insane. Caught between them, with no place else on Earth she'd rather be, Erin rode from wave to wave of pure euphoria.

She knew there would have to be questions, and answers beyond *magic* and *enjoying this while it lasts* and *tales from old stories*. But for them, she could wait. She had two men to please, not to mention two men who were going to please her, and she meant to work this party with all her might.

She was Erin, and she was loved. Whatever else she might be, Erin could cling to that. And, sandwiched between her twins, fucking and being fucked, Erin felt the truth down to the bottom of her soul.

Come what may, she had her boys. What more did she need?

Chapter Four

How deep can we go? Erin asked, playfully swirling around in a slow circle. *How far out?*

As far and as deep as you want, Devon answered, placing his hand palm to palm with hers. *Just don't let go of either of us, and we can swim for hours.*

I still can't believe I don't need air. Look at me! No one should be able to do this without scuba gear or at least a snorkel.

She heard a muted snort of laughter from Damon, along with a mental image of how she'd look decked out in diver's garb in her current state. She slapped at him, losing contact for a second. At the panicked look on his face, she quickly restored their contact.

One problem. How can we stick so close together without running the risk of someone drowning? It's not a problem with me, but I won't risk either of you.

Mmm, she heard, feeling a series of small kisses trail up her neck as Damon mind-spoke to her. *I can think of several ways we can all stick together. Tell me, Erin, have you ever wondered what it would be like to have sex in zero gravity?*

Visions of floating naked around a space station flashed into Erin's mind. She laughed again, delighted at the way the noise turned into sonic ripples of sound below the water.

Damon's suggestion, though, didn't sound half bad. Now that she understood more about what she was, she felt inclined to test out all her abilities. She knew fellatio was a given, but what about all the other things they could do -- to each other?

No, she answered seductively, twining her arms with her twins. *Are you going to show me what it's like when we don't have to worry about bearing weight?*

Oh, you'll be bearing plenty, all right, Damon teased through the link. *Both of us.* His hands caressed, then cupped, then spanked her ass, the blow softened by the billow of water he displaced. *I've been wanting to get in here for ages.*

And don't you forget it. Erin pressed her lips to Devon's cheek, then to Damon's. Then, holding their hands, she swirled them in a circle. She came to a stop, posing as if she were an old pin-up girl, hands and arms covering her female attributes. Devon clung to one shoulder, and Damon rested his hand on her leg. *Well? It isn't good manners to keep a lady waiting.*

Far be it from us to deny a true gentlewoman. Devon laid his mouth on Erin's skin and sucked, raising a small red mark that both stung and felt wonderful at the same time. *I think I know how to take care of you. Damon?*

Oh, yes. Erin, turn so that you're between us.

Erin obeyed, arms still coyly poised over her breasts and pussy. She didn't know how much longer she could keep up the pose, though, as her nipples had risen to stiff points and her pussy throbbed, aching to be filled. Slyly, she slipped a finger in and began to tease herself, tickling up toward her clit.

Oh, no, you don't, Damon ordered, seizing Erin's arm and pulling her away from herself. *That's mine.*

How will you keep contact?

Damon grinned like a mad sea king. *I think you can figure it out.* Diving lower, he took hold of Erin's legs, while she felt Devon seize her back to hold her steady. With his hands on her thighs and his face within inches of her pussy, he blew a stream of water over the tingling folds of her labia. *Ready for me?*

Erin spread her legs shamelessly. *Always.*

Good girl. Damon brought his face closer and teased her with the lightest of licks up the seam of her cunt, sending pleased noises through the link. *You taste like heaven. Like the sea, and pure woman. Musky, sweet, and creamy. Are you wet for me?*

Come and find out, Erin answered brazenly. *Don't keep a lady waiting all day.*

Patience, patience. Damon gave her another long, teasing lick. *All good things come to those who wait, don't they?*

Fuck that -- and fuck me! Erin pressed her pelvis forward. *I want your tongue on me, Damon, and I want it right now.*

He chuckled and parted her folds, thrusting his tongue inside. Erin groaned with pleasure and relief as Devon caught her shoulders, keeping her from falling backwards. This, this was what she wanted.

Damon seemed to catch the drift of her thoughts. His clever tongue circled her plump clitoris, teasing the small button of flesh into a frenzy. Erin grabbed at his back, digging in with her fingertips. *More, she begged. Give me more.*

Damon obeyed, bringing up two fingers and thrusting them inside her. *Oh, so wet, he mind-spoke. You're drenched for me, Erin. You're always so ready, no matter what. Is there anything you can't do?*

Wait, Erin shot back. She thrust forward slowly, impaling herself deeper on Damon's fingers. *This isn't enough. You know what I want. Give it to me, Damon. Give it to me hard and fast and forever.*

I am yours, always. Damon laved the length of her inner folds with the seal-sleekness of his tongue, licking up her juices. Erin noticed, in a haze, that they had changed as she had. Like oil in the water, little bubbles of sexual arousal, they coated her walls and dripped from her channel. *Hot for me, are you?*

Hotter than you could know, Erin replied, feeling herself beginning to grow faint from the magic Damon worked with his long, flexible tongue.

You stretched so wide for us earlier. Took both me and Devon in at once. Now, you're tight as if you'd never been penetrated.

Erin arched and undulated. She could play this game. *You make me feel like a virgin. Are you going to be my first?*

I already am, Damon replied smugly. *Mine was the first tongue to taste your halfling pussy, and now I intend to make a meal out of you.*

And Devon? What does he get to do?

Three guesses, Devon purred, nestling close behind Erin. His cock, thick and full, nudged at the roundness of her rump, below her tail, probing at her hole. You realize you let us have you without condoms before?

I did? Was your seed what changed me into this -- oh, God, Damon!

Damon lifted his mouth from Erin's pussy. *I don't know.* His eyes flashed dark. *Do you regret being changed?*

How do I know if I'll ever be normal again? The thought put her libido on ice pretty damn fast. *What if I'm stuck this way forever? I'll be tied to the sea, just as you're tied to the land.*

We'll find a way around things, Erin. Damon gave her another tantalizing lick, twining his tongue around her clitoris and making her gasp, as if she could drag in air. Her gill slits fluttered instead, tickling her in the best possible way. *Now, let me please you. Let me in to love you.*

Love me? Erin floated stunned for a moment. *You really love me?* She twisted to face Devon. *Both of you?*

Since the moment we saw you on the beach, Damon responded without hesitation. *Hush, now. Let me do one of the things I do best.* He gave her clit another tug, and Erin forgot how to think entirely. Her world spiraled down to the magic Damon was working with his tongue and his fingers, fucking her like an expert. He knew her body down to the last detail, and he used every bit of that awareness to his advantage. Spreading her wide and suckling her in, he made her body sing.

When she climaxed around him, juices spurting out of her cunt to coat his face, she felt as if she could do anything -- swim for miles, spin in circles all the way to the bottom of the sea, jump in and out of the sea like a dolphin.

Sated, she hung between Devon and Damon, her body quivering with aftershocks. All the same, she wasn't anywhere near ready to quit. *You're not finished yet, are you?* she mind-spoke, her breathlessness coming through as the whisper of a sex kitten. *There has to be something else that'll make us all happy.*

Oh, there is. Damon floated gracefully up to face Erin. He kissed her, letting her taste her own salty, womanly cream. As he did so, his cock probed at the sensitized folds of her pussy, letting her know what he had in mind. *I got to be the first to devour your cunt with lips and tongue. Now, I want my cock to be the first thing deep inside you.*

Any risks? Erin asked, still kissing Damon. She had to hand it to whatever forces had changed her -- this was a hell of a way to operate. No need to break apart to speak - she could just continue pressing her lips to her lover's, delving deep in his mouth for his own unique flavor.

Not a one, Devon answered from behind her. *We're mostly human without our skins, and you're something else altogether. You couldn't get pregnant this way, and there's no need to worry about disease.* He cradled her close, the hard ridge of his cock nudging her ass. *You're safe with us, Erin. Trust us to do right by you?*

I do trust you. Erin rocked between the two men. *A couple of months ago I'd have thought this was crazy, but after all we've been through, I couldn't not believe in every word you say.*

Then believe me when I say, Devon whispered, *you're the most beautiful woman we've ever met, selkie or human. So round and full, like a ripe fruit, full of sweet juice, and willing to believe in both us and our world. We couldn't ask for anything more.* He probed at her again. Erin could almost see the grin on his face. *Well, except for one small, or not so small, favor.*

Erin wiggled back against him. She loved anal sex now, when she hadn't been able to bear the act before her twins.

Damon, let's take her together, Devon suggested, winding his arms around Erin. *You from the front, and me from behind. Let's make her fly underwater.*

Erin laughed across the link. *Do I get a say in the matter?*

You can always tell us no, Damon said softly, meeting her eyes. *Do you not want us right now?*

In answer, Erin rubbed her sopping pussy against the tip of Damon's cock. *Do I feel like I'm saying no? Take me, Damon. I'm aching to feel you coming home where you belong.*

As am I, he whispered, beginning to slide his cock into her hungry pussy. At the same time, being filled from one side, Erin felt Devon begin to slip into her from behind, no pain, only pressure and the delicious sensation of being stretched wide.

As am I, Devon echoed. *You are our heart's love, Erin. Never forget what I say.*

Never, Erin managed to project to both twins. *I belong to you, and I won't lose sight of either. You're mine. Mine!*

Both twins thrust forward as one, and Erin almost opened her mouth to scream. She projected her cries across the mental link instead, hearing them joined by the twins' as the three of them fucked and were fucked.

She had no idea what the future might bring. That aside, though, the present moment couldn't be better.

Nothing could spoil this perfect moment.

* * *

"Are you ready, then?"

War Dogs sighted his gun out at the water, where they could see the water's disturbance from creatures frolicking underneath. "As soon as they come up for air, they're mine," he said grimly. "I'm finished with waiting. I'll swim out and get them if I have to."

"You're a determined man."

War Dogs gritted his teeth. "I want what's mine." He jerked his chin at the water. "And those three? They belong to me, whether they know it or not yet."

"It's all just a matter of time, now."

Chapter Five

When Erin and her twins surfaced, laughing, she knew right away something had gone wrong. The sky above them swirled with dark clouds, as if a night storm were coming on. Lightning flashed from one bank to another, with thunder pealing seconds after each burst of light.

"Look up there," she said urgently, pointing. "We have to get out of the water!"

Devon stared at the gathering forces of nature, his eyes wide. He swore in Gaelic. "I've never seen anything like it. This is no ordinary storm, Erin."

"You think?" Erin scooped wet hair away from her face. "We need to get moving, now. Back on land before we get fried like a triple flounder special. Come on, go!"

Damon's hand landed on her arm, arresting Erin in her tracks. "I don't think so," he said oddly. "The shore, Erin. Look at the shore." As she did, his voice dropped to something dark and dangerous. "I think we've been found at last."

War Dogs stood on the beach, holding his gun steadily in front of him. The barrel was trained on Erin and her twins, and the man didn't look like he would waver an inch.

Erin treaded water. "Shit," she cursed, "shit, shit, shit! What do we do now?"

Caught between the forces of nature and the ugliness of man, they floated, each one pulling in a different direction, unable to decide.

* * *

"Got 'em in my sights, now," War Dogs crowed, targeting first the freak woman, and then each of the men in turn. "They won't get away from me this time."

Derrick lounged against a stone pillar. "D'you think shooting them out in the water is wise, especially with this storm coming on?" He struck a match and lit yet

another of his cigarettes. War Dogs didn't know why the man bothered -- the coming rain would get his smoke soaked.

"Why?" he asked suspiciously. "They're sitting targets, and they're close enough to wade out for and drag in."

"Well, right now, sure." Derrick gestured expansively with his hands. "But when you get them knocked out and floating, are you going to swim these waters when there's lightning? Get you fried, sure as twenty beats ten." He paused. "Then again, if you don't and they get zapped, you've got bugger-all for your problems." Shrug. "It's a conundrum, innit?"

"What the hell do you suggest I do, then?" War Dogs snarled.

"Try giving them a call," Derrick said mildly. "Play the one against the other. I'd hurry, though, 'cause you never know when --"

"When the man with the money will grow impatient," Rombere finished for Derrick, stepping out from behind a stone pillar. He looked like an ordinary Joe, dressed in a loose shirt and blue jeans, but he carried two pelts over his arms and had an expression on his face no sane man would argue with.

"I want my selkies, War Dogs. Now, you hear me?"

War Dogs' spine crawled. He didn't mind playing grown-up games, but this was going a little too far. He figured Rombere was bent, what with how he and Derrick played around, but you didn't fuck your prey. They weren't there to be wanted -- they were to be taken. Taken down to the ground.

"I've got a lock on them," he growled. "Just a few more minutes, until they decide whether they're staying out in the water like crazy people or coming in to nice, safe, dry land."

"Where a man with a rifle intends to shoot them," Rombere finished archly. "If you disappoint me, War Dogs, I will be more than angry with you." His own eyes flashed colors briefly. "Do you know anything about Gypsy magic, stupid little man? I can make the soles of your feet so hot you feel as if you are dancing on heated irons. I can cover you with invisible insects that no one can see, but you never stop feeling. I

could turn your skin inside out, so that we can see all the little juicy bits, including your dark and shriveled heart. I can do all these things and more, little man." He paused, a heavy beat marking his emphasis. "Fail me, and I will."

War Dogs began to sweat. "Just hold on, damn it," he swore. "See what they're going to do."

"Don't disappoint me," Rombere warned again, before leaning back against the pillar.

War Dogs didn't see him make a small, flicking gesture with his fingertips. A small thing... but it would prove to be enough.

* * *

The rain began to patter down around Erin and her twins, fat drops hitting the water with dark gray splashes that seemed to taint the placid green. Although, from the looks of things, their lagoon wouldn't be calm for much longer. Waves were picking up, threatening to tear the three of them apart. Wind howled above their heads like an angry god denied of some prize.

"We've got to get out of here," Erin shouted at her boys. "Go back under, and let's swim for it!"

"Are you mad?" Damon demanded. "Head for the shore, where there's a man pointing a gun at our heads?"

"Have you got a better idea?"

"Go below," Devon bellowed to be heard over the rising wind. "Wait them out. We can stay beneath as long as we need, with Erin's new magic."

"And what, you think he'll just go away?" Damon jerked his head toward the shore and the waiting man. "He took our skins. We've been chasing him, but now I'm suspecting that he's the one who's been after us."

Erin shook her head. "What do you mean?"

"He doesn't just want our skins," Damon said grimly. "He wants us. And now that you've changed, he'll want you too. Hell, he probably did from the start, just because you knew what we were."

"Below!" Erin decided instantly, diving beneath and dragging the boys with her. However, as soon as she breached the surface, she stared at the formerly smooth, sandy floor in horror. Rocks, some of them ancient as the stones in the abandoned fishing village, and other small stones churned around in a deadly dance. They came perilously close to their legs, and Erin couldn't understand why they hadn't been hit yet.

Up, up, up! she commanded over the mental link.

The three surfaced, automatically dragging in deep breaths of air. Erin shoved at Damon, the one who usually had all the answers. "What the hell was that?" she demanded. "The sea's turned against us!"

"I -- I don't know! The sea is our home. It's always welcomed us. Now, the waters have gone all nasty for our trio. I've no idea what to do next, Erin! We can't hide, and we don't dare swim for shore. We're out of choices, lass."

"So, what? We just stay here and wait to be killed by one thing or another?"

"Not while there's breath in my body." Damon clutched Erin to him in a tight hug, Devon following, both selkies protecting Erin with their bodies. "We'll figure out something. There has to be a way."

"There isn't." Erin clung to her boys. A whistling noise sounded overhead, causing her to look up. "Oh, shit -- duck, duck now!"

A chunk of stone from the fishing village flew over their heads, as if thrown by a giant hand, splashing violently into the sea. Damon gripped Erin tighter. "It's as I thought," he shouted into her ear. "This is no ordinary storm -- this is magic!"

"Who's doing it, then? That big guy with the tattoos, War Dogs? Surely he doesn't have this kind of power. He wouldn't need a gun, then."

"Look behind him," Devon shouted over the roar of the storm. Erin and Damon turned to take a glance. Erin felt Devon stiffen. "Gypsy. A pair of them. They're helping War Dogs out. Trying to drive us to shore."

Erin felt a boiling rage surge up from deep inside her. No way they'd take her, or her boys. Not while she had breath in her body. Raising her fist in the air to shake it at

the men on the shore, she didn't realize a chunk of stone was headed directly at her head. Devon and Damon's shouts came too late, but, Erin --

Erin caught the stone in her hand. It felt light as a feather, although bigger than a bowling ball. Holding it, wondering, a slow smile spread across her face. "Maybe there is something I can do about our fix," she exclaimed. "Hey, War Dogs! Asshole! Take this!" Drawing back her arm, Erin flung the chunk of stone directly at the man holding the gun.

War Dogs never saw the missile coming. One eye squeezed shut, the other at his scope, finger on the trigger, he was preparing to shoot.

And then all was blackness, and he knew no more.

"You two," she ordered the twins, "Go below, and find more pieces for me to throw. Hurry up! Maybe we can drive him back to his truck, to wherever he comes from."

"Erin," Devon said, laying a hand on her arm. "I don't think you need to worry about War Dogs. Not anymore."

Erin looked up at the shore. Her lips parted in horror. "Oh, God, I killed him? Did I kill him?"

"Looks that way, lass." Damon took a tighter hold of her arm. "Don't you waste one second of regret over the bastard. Skin-stealer, money-grubber -- he deserved everything you could have thrown at him, and more. You just got lucky on the first shot."

"I killed him," Erin whispered.

"*Hissst!* The Gypsy!" Devon shook Erin out of her daze. "He's coming toward the water. What if he can swim, like us?"

"He'll make his way out to where we are," Erin finished. "Get me more stones, boys. We're not going down without a fight."

Even as they began to dive, the splashing rain subsided around them. Erin stared at the sky in confusion. The storm clouds were parting, revealing a beautiful evening sky. Parting too fast, as if by magic.

The Gypsy stood at the edge of the water, something dark... and furry... clutched in his arms. He held them up. "I think you have been looking for these," he called. "Come and take them from me. I've carried the things for far too long, and you have been separated from them for longer. Time for the pieces to go back in the puzzle where they belong."

Damon shook his head. "How do we know we can trust you?" he shouted across the water.

The Gypsy shook his head. Behind him, the smaller man lit a cigarette and leaned against the remnants of a wall, grinning broadly. "You can't," he yelled. "You can only take the chance."

Damon turned to Erin. "Our skins," he said desperately. "Right there, waiting for us."

"In the arms of someone who's just tried to kill us all!"

"Erin..." Devon took her in a gentle hug. "This can't go on forever, lass. We've beaten one enemy. If this Gypsy wants to kill us, we've already seen what he can do with the wind and the water. He'll have us dead if that's his goal."

Erin began to tremble. "I don't want this to be happening. I don't want us to have to make this choice."

Damon stroked her side. "We've been through so much, Erin. Just a little more, and we can rest. One way or another, we can rest."

"Please," Devon added, pulling her tighter. "We can't pass up the chance at our skins."

"But then you'll leave me. Won't you?"

"Never," the twins swore as one.

"You're part of us now. We made you a promise, remember?" Devon kissed her cheek, tender and loving. "We won't leave. That's our vow."

Erin stayed huddled in her twins' arms for a moment, then nodded her head shakily. "All right, then. Fine. But we do it my way." Raising her voice, she called, "I'm not afraid of you!"

"You would do well to be." The Gypsy seemed bored. "What, do you not understand who I am? What I am?"

"I understand plenty." Erin gritted her teeth. "Lay the skins down on the water's edge. Slowly, so I can see every move you make."

"I would advise obeying her," a deep male voice rumbled from behind Erin. She startled around to see a massive man behind her, ancient forked trident in his hand. *Holy shit! Poseidon?* "Otherwise, we'll see you spitted on our weapons and eaten for our dinner."

Our? Erin stared as head after head popped from the water, some seal, mostly human. *My God, they're selkies. All of them, selkies. They've come to help us out! Did Devon call them? Did Damon? Or have they just taken this long to find us?*

"They're here!" Devon shouted, answering her question. "Kinfolk, thank you!"

The huge man shrugged off his gratitude. "This is still your mess, lad. You tangled yourself up in the net, and now it's up to you to figure out how to get out of it," he growled. "But we'll stand with you. We take care of our own."

"You hear that?" Erin shouted in triumph. "I've got a whole fucking army at my back, and all you have are showy tricks. Which, by the way, I ought to let them have you for. What are you, nuts? Throwing rocks at me and my boys? You could have killed us!" She glared at the Gypsy, letting him feel the full weight of her loathing. "You think you know how to put on a big show and act like you're going to cause some damage? Have you ever been on the receiving end of a Black woman's temper? You have a lot to learn if this is new to you."

The Gypsy laughed, full-throated, seemingly not disturbed at all by Erin's temper or the sea rapidly filling with still more of the seal-folk. "You burn with a fine, fierce fire," he shouted in approval. "You're a worthy adversary, woman."

"I have a name," Erin fired back at him.

"Excuse me -- Erin." The Gypsy mimed a bow at the waist to her. "And your two lads, although I haven't ever gotten their names. You three *have* had fun getting to know each other, haven't you?"

"That's beside the point." Erin gritted her teeth. "I don't know if you heard me, so I'm going to tell you again -- put those seal skins down, and you keep your hands in plain sight. No more fancy tricks, understand me? I don't want a single thing out of you but listening to what I say."

With a careless shrug, the Gypsy obeyed her. "Here they are. Come and take them if you like."

"Uh-uh." Erin shook her head. "I want your ass way off this beach before I set foot on land. Are you crazy enough to think that I trust you?"

"Of course not. But I'm not going anywhere." The Gypsy grinned as his shorter partner in crime sidled up against him, pulling on a cigarette and slinging his arm around the bigger man's waist. "Neither is my associate. The choice is yours, but you have to trust me enough to come and get the skins while I'm standing here."

"You're crazy," Erin declared flatly. "Out of your fucking mind."

"Am I really?" The Gypsy looked amused. "I think I know exactly what I'm doing. If you come up here, you see, you'll show that you trust me."

"I'll never trust you. Not if you were behind everything that we've gone through. And you are, aren't you?"

The Gypsy shrugged. "Close enough," he said. "I had my hand in things almost from the beginning, when I first heard through my many, many ears that there were two selkie skins for sale on the black magic market."

"You told War Dogs to hunt us down," Erin seethed. "It was you who had him tracking us like animals."

"I had to get your attention."

"Consider it gotten. Now walk the fuck away from this beach, and I'll let you live." Erin gestured at the water behind her, bristling with selkies and their weapons, the mass of men -- and women -- horribly threatening in their silence.

"And I tell you once again, I'm not going anywhere. But if you want, listen to my side of the story. Will you do as much?"

Erin eyed the Gypsy warily. Devon squeezed her hand, and Damon rubbed her back. "You can say no," Devon whispered. "We'll find a way out."

"No," Damon retorted, just as quietly. "We need to know why he's done this, in case he tries a stunt like this again. Hear him out, Erin."

Erin stared at her two boys. "Shouldn't you have these reactions the other way around?"

Damon shrugged. "I want to know how to stomp on the bastard if he tries this again."

Now that was her Damon. Erin took a deep breath, then faced the Gypsy again. "Go on," she said. "Talk. But if you try anything damn fool like throwing rocks again, I'm having these selkies pin you down like a hunk of meat." With a grin that showed big, sharp white teeth, the burly man next to her raised his trident, ready to throw. "I'm listening."

The Gypsy tucked his thumbs into the pockets of his jeans. "So! You wonder, probably, why I was the architect of all this commotion? It's a simple answer." He stuck a hand in his pocket and pulled out something shiny; a set of keys. "The Romany were once known as the best caretakers of horses," he said. "When the automobiles came along to replace them, we became the best mechanics there were. But there is only so much wandering our tribes can do, and we have crossed the continents on foot too many times to count. There is another world out there for us to explore -- the ocean."

"You want your people to live on the sea!" Erin blurted, hand coming to her lips in surprise.

The Gypsy nodded. "We can be kings of the road once again, plowing our way through the green, the blue and the gray. Over the waves and across the channels, we can be a glorious people in our own right. It is a great future I have planned for us, and as I am the King of my tribe, I will lead the way. But," he said, placing a finger to his nose, "I am not foolish enough to make enemies before I set out on a venture. I have heard of the selkie legends, and word came to me that there was one who had stolen and wanted to sell twin skins."

Erin found herself with a growing admiration for the man. "That's why you contacted War Dogs to buy them?"

The Gypsy grinned and folded his hands. "You have guessed the truth of this matter. But there is more. Will you hear me out?"

Erin exchanged glances with Devon and Damon. Damon rolled his eyes, but Devon nodded. "Go on," she called, putting her hands on her hips. "Keep talking. But this had better be good."

"What I desire is a truce," the Gypsy said flatly. "Long ago, around the time that the rifle was invented, selkies ceased their visiting with mortal folk and withdrew to deep beneath the sea. In the times before, they helped the sea-faring folk, driving good catches to their nets and leading them to sunken treasure, to the reefs of oysters containing fine blue pearls, and gave them gifts of aphrodisiacs that would charm any man or woman you cared to name. I want all these things for my tribe, and for others of my kind."

Erin laughed in disbelief. "And what makes you think that we're going to give in to you?"

The Gypsy raised his foot and brought it down on the seal pelts. "You didn't come and get these when I asked you to," he said, his voice mocking. "I can take them away and burn them, and I'll find another way to safely sail the seas. Use these fancy 'tricks', as you call them. I don't need your help, little halfling. I'm asking for it. But know this, I can do without it."

"I don't trust you," Erin said suspiciously. "And I can't answer for all the selkies. What do you think they'll say about this?"

The burly selkie swam up next to Erin. "Lass," he whispered in her ear, "you don't know our ways, so I'll be plain. To lose your skin is to break taboo in the worst possible of ways. Devon and Damon did a damned fool thing by getting themselves involved in this tangle, but they are still my sons. If this is what it takes to restore the balance, we'll be willing. And while I may not speak for all the selkies everywhere, I speak for those here. We're willing to trade with the Gypsy... until some night when

he's sailing by himself." The selkie showed off those sharp white teeth again in a feral grin. "Then we'll have our revenge."

Erin could barely keep herself from laughing back. "Good," she said softly. "Good."

She turned to her twins. "And you? What do you think?"

The boys exchanged glances and then nodded at Erin, Devon simply and Damon reluctantly. They'd stand behind her in tricking the Gypsy, come what may.

And it was up to her to give the man on the shore his final answer. Raising up to put her hands on her hips, Erin shouted, "All right! We'll deal with you. But there's one more thing I want to know, and I'm betting you have the answer. What about me? Do you know anything about what will happen to me, now that I'm... what I am?"

The Gypsy nodded. "There are wise women in my tribe who have spent much time with the Irish folk, and even gotten the confidence of some selkies on their own. When you leave the waters of this place, you will change once again, and look as a normal woman does. Be wary, though, for whenever you enter any water, ever again, you will change. This cannot be helped; it is simply the way things are."

"Gypsy women? In the town? Who could have helped us?" Erin couldn't believe her ears.

Damon coughed. Erin stood up straight, putting two and two together, and turned on him. "That gel you tried to use on my skin. You got it from the Gypsy women, didn't you?" When he didn't answer, she poked him hard in the chest. "Give it up, Damon. Spill. Didn't you?"

"The blue knapsack," Devon said, rounding on Damon himself. "You wouldn't tell me where you got it from. Is Erin right?"

"She's right," Damon snapped. "But the one thing I didn't know is that they had ties to this man, or for that matter, that this man had ties to War Dogs. All I knew was that there were some friends of the selkies in the nearby town who might be able to help me out. For all the good it did. That ambergris mixture just burned your skin." He turned woeful. "I was just trying to help, Erin, I swear."

"If you want to know why it didn't work, the woman you dealt with didn't know your Erin had already begun the change," the Gypsy explained.

Erin eyed Damon up and down, shaking her head. "Honestly, I could just shake you -- or kiss you."

He grinned hopefully. "I know which one I'd choose."

"You," she said, "are so exasperating." Then she kissed him, warm and wide and open-mouthed. And so as not to leave his twin out of the fun, she turned and kissed Devon as well.

She heard the Gypsy chuckling. "If you are quite finished, you might come out of the water," he suggested. "Come and take your skins, and then take your leisure on the sands. Then, swim together, all three of you. Laugh and make love, and spread the word that Rombere is your friend, he and all the Gypsies who will soon be sailing the seven seas. Do we have a bargain?"

Erin nodded, agreeing for her boys. She could feel their anticipation to get at the skins just radiating from their bodies, but first things first. And... she placed a hand on both of her selkies' chests. "To remember this by," she said. Turning first to Devon, and then to Damon, she pressed her lips to theirs in a sweet kiss. "Go on," she whispered. "Go get your skins."

To her surprise, each seized her in a tight grip. "Not without you," they replied as one.

And so, hand in hand in hand, the three surged toward shore, and a new life -- together.

Lia Connor

Lia Connor supposedly lives in the South, but her job takes her almost everywhere but there. Her laptop is her best friend as she travels. She's thrilled to be working with Changeling Press. She loves to write about BBW's, hot, hot, hot threesomes and were-animals. Lia would love to hear from you. You can contact her at liaconnor@gmail.com.