

Changeling Press

# Treats for Trixie

Michele Bardsley



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Published romance author Lanie Haart is really just Southern girl Trixie Lulabelle Jameson -- a single mother who still waitresses to pay the bills. Ever since her husband ran out on her and their daughter, she's decided writing about love is the closest she's going to get to the real thing.

Marcus Moravius is a literary agent and a vampire, one of the oldest in existence. Once, he was a Praetorian Guard, whose wife and two little girls were assassinated by the mad Roman Emperor Caligula. Marcus is not interested in emotional entanglements, but he certainly doesn't mind a beautiful woman warming his bed.

At the Halloween weekend party hosted by famous author Steven Jones (a.k.a. Adora LaFortune), Marcus spies the lovely Trixie and decides to seduce her. However, Trixie is not easily swayed by charm or good looks or even vampire glamour. But what Marcus wants... Marcus gets.

## Chapter One

"Trixie Lulabelle Monroe Jameson."

"That's your real name?" asked Val Sanderson. "No wonder you write as Lanie Haart."

"Trixie Lulabelle sounded more like a porn star's name than a romance writer's."

"I think it's a toss-up," said Val, grinning. They sat on a love seat in the living room. Some people milled around holding drinks or tiny plates filled with nibbles from the buffet. Others, like her and Val, squeezed on to available seating and conversed. It was All Hallow's Eve and the weekend-long party at the home of famous writer Steven Jones/Adora LaFortune was in full swing.

Trixie sipped her champagne and giggled. "Oh, my. I do believe this bubbly is going straight to my head."

"That's the benefit of staying at your host's mansion. You just have to stumble up the stairs to your room."

"I certainly feel privileged to hobnob with the stars of our industry," said Trixie. "Do you know I ran into the goddess herself in the ladies room? I nearly swallowed my tongue just trying to say hello."

"She's very nice," said Val. "And she's got killer fashion sense. Did you see her shoes?"

"Did I?" Trixie fanned herself. "I think you could buy a small country for as much as those cost."

"No kidding." Val looked at Trixie. "How's your little girl?"

"Sadie's spending the weekend at the farm with her grandparents. They always do a pumpkin patch and hay ride for the locals. My daddy is in charge of scaring the

kids. Last year, he dressed up like a vampire and jumped out of the bushes as the hay ride ended."

Val laughed. "You sound very close to your family."

"Yeah." Trixie wanted to sigh, but she sipped champagne instead. She loved her daughter and she loved to write, in that order. It felt selfish and wrong to give up a special family get-together in order to pursue her career interests. "Quit packing for a guilt trip," her mamma had said. "This is your dream and all dreams require sacrifice. Besides, you need to go have some fun. You're single, honey, not dead."

"So, how was the Bahamian wedding?" asked Trixie.

"We got married in this little chapel near the beach -- on the fourteenth of February." Val shook her head, her smile wide. "I used to hate Valentine's Day, but Michael made it special for me."

"I don't think I could ever get married again."

"I felt the same way," said Val. "But Michael is the best thing that's ever happened to me."

Trixie watched her friend track the handsome Michael Sanderson across the room. Val's husband was a well-known publicist and sweet as sugar. Trixie envied her friend a little too much. How could she ever hope to find love again? She might settle for less than love if she could find a decent man who would treat her and Sadie with respect.

This time, the sigh escaped. Val looked at her sharply. She placed her hand on Trixie's arm. "You'll find someone. You deserve a good man and true love."

"I'd settle for a good lay," lied Trixie. She hadn't had sex with a human being since Jasper left her and Sadie almost seven years ago now. And Jasper had been her one and only lover. The only action her bed saw these days was when she got desperate and pulled out her big, pink vibrator.

"I'm going upstairs for a while." Trixie stood up, drained her glass, and set it on the tray of a passing waiter.

"Don't miss the fireworks." Val stood, too. "They start around ten o'clock and they're going to be spectacular."

Trixie glanced at her watch. It was just after seven p.m. She had plenty of time to go to her room to shower, change, and mope. "I'll be there."

\* \* \*

Marcus Moravius leaned against the wall with his arms crossed and watched the lush blonde sashay through the living room and up the stairs. His cock stirred as his gaze roved over the nice ass wiggling inside the gold lamé dress. Then she was gone. He'd overheard part of the conversation between her -- the lovely Trixie -- and Michael's wife.

He snorted. Why the hell his friends insisted on marrying mortals, he couldn't comprehend. Beautiful women were everywhere and most would do anything asked of them. A vampire didn't even need to bend their wills. In all his years on the earth as a vampire, nearly a thousand now, he had never married. In his human life, before his maker found him and turned him into the living dead, he had been a husband, a father, a warrior for Rome.

"I've seen that look in your eye before," said Steven. "It's the same look you get when you go after editors for more money."

"That's my job as a literary agent. And I don't hear you complaining."

"I'm not." Steven's gaze bounced over the people in the room, stopping on the brunette conversing in a corner. Marcus resisted the urge to roll his eyes. He couldn't deny that Steven had been blissfully happy in his marriage to Eve. However, the idea of love for vampires was laughable.

"Will you turn her?" he asked.

"If she wants."

Marcus frowned. "And if she does not?"

"Then I will spend every day of her mortal life with her."

"You would taste love for a blink of a vampire's eye rather than take it for all eternity?" Marcus chewed over this alien concept. "She would forgive you for turning her... if she loves you so much."

"Ah. You can take the warrior out of Rome, but not Rome out of the warrior." Steven looked at his friend. "I won't make the same mistake with Eve that I made with Derina. Love is not about conquering, old friend. It's about surrendering."

Steven nodded goodbye and joined his wife, leaving Marcus to ruminate over their conversation. He didn't believe in love, but he knew all about honor and duty.

Caligula had named him a Praetorian Guard and lavished gifts on him, including his marriage to the daughter of a Senator -- Julia. Their union had not been a love match, few Roman marriages were, but they had affection and respect for each other. The first time he had known real love was the birth of his twin daughters. Only then had he known the true fear and longing of wanting to protect something precious and irreplaceable.

Then Caligula had taken them all away -- the whim of a mad emperor who could do anything he wanted because he was powerful. He thought himself a god. But Marcus and his fellow conspirators proved that belief a falsity. With the blessings of Julia's father and others in the Senate, and with the help of other Praetorians, Marcus had been among those who assassinated Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus. *May the bastard rot in hell.*

But not even the death of the one who'd murdered his wife and children had brought them back. Lost in the dark memories, Marcus felt pain bloom in the region of his never-beating heart. He didn't want to bury himself in old regrets and past mistakes. His life now was one of meaning and of pleasure.

Gorgeous women populated the party and more than one had made it clear they would be happy to spend the evening in his company. Still, his gaze went to the staircase as he thought about Trixie Jameson.

She was the one who stirred his blood. She was the one he wanted.

And so, he would have her.



## Chapter Two

Trixie finished towel-drying her hair and tossed the towel into the hamper. Wow. She felt so much better. Her opulent guest room included a private bathroom. The tub was huge and had *jets*, for heaven's sake. She'd sat in the churning water until her skin crinkled.

Now, she was tucked into her favorite terrycloth robe and she had no intention of getting out of it. Her room faced the backyard -- if five acres could be called a backyard -- which gave her a perfect view for the Halloween fireworks. She imagined there would be plenty of orange sparkles.

All she really wanted to do was crawl into the luxurious bed with the latest Dakota Cassidy novel and lose herself in a wonderfully quirky world that offered love and laughter. But she should probably turn on her ancient laptop and try to write a few pages on her new novel.

She looked at the laptop, sitting on the desk a few feet away from the bed. Then she looked at the novel sitting on the nightstand. Guilt warred with indulgence.

Dakota Cassidy won.

Feeling giddy, Trixie practically skipped toward the bed. A knock on her door stalled her progress. Crap. Had Val decided to make *sure* she attended the fireworks?

Deciding to plead a headache, Trixie turned on her heel and hurried to the door. When she opened it, Val wasn't the one standing in the hallway.

The man was tall, olive-skinned, with eyes like obsidian. He wasn't handsome so much as he was striking. His nose was crooked in the middle, his cheeks slanted, and his lips a little too full. A crescent scar curved from his right brow to just below his eye. His brown hair was cut short, but the silky strands begged to be touched. He was dressed in tailored Armani. His smile was almost... feral.

She held closed the gap at the top of her robe, realizing just how naked and vulnerable she was underneath the terrycloth. Still, she put on a brave front. She looked him straight in the eyes and said, "May I help you?"

"I hope so."

Her bravado appeared to amuse him. His voice had a hint of an accent... Italian, maybe? She stared at him, waiting for him to reveal why he'd knocked on her door.

"You are quite beautiful." He stepped close to the doorway and Trixie automatically moved back. She cursed her stupidity. She hated that he intimidated her. What did he want? Her heart turned over in her chest. Oh, hell. Surely he wouldn't try anything with a houseful of guests downstairs.

"Please go away." Her voice shook.

*You want me to stay.* That lovely voice echoed in her mind, wrapping around her thoughts like a gift. It was liquid desire. It was a promise made. A wish granted. *Invite me inside.*

Trixie shook her head. What was wrong with her? She felt strange. Her gaze narrowed. Boldly, she reached out and pushed him. He was so startled, he stumbled backward and she slammed the door in his face.

Mr. Sassy had picked the wrong girl to play weekend paramour. She wasn't a slut. And she sure as hell wasn't interested in sex games -- no matter how handsome or intriguing the man might be. Honestly! The *nerve* of some people.

He knocked again.

She stared at the door, astonished. What kind of moron couldn't take a hint? "Go away!"

"Please, Trixie. Allow me to apologize."

She pursed her lips. He sounded sincere -- which didn't mean jack squat. Most charismatic men could make a lie sound like the truth. "How do you know my name?"

"I know Steven and Michael."

That didn't exactly answer her question. "Who are you?"

"My name is Marc."

"Okay then, Marc. Apology accepted."

"I will not feel that I have earned your forgiveness until I see you face-to-face and offer my penance."

Trixie rolled her eyes. "That's an awful lot of words just to say I'm sorry."

"Must we converse through this door?"

Frustration seeped through his slick charm. Well, he might be human, after all. Trixie cracked open the door and stuck her face between it and the jamb. He looked at her, his expression caught between amazement and confusion.

"I'm sorry," he said, not sounding contrite at all. His brows furrowed. *Invite me inside.*

"What the hell for?"

He looked her over, the dip between his brows deepening as he frowned. "You are... different."

"You're not the first to make that observation." She opened the door a little more. "Look, I'm not your girl, okay? I'm not interested in one-night stands."

"I will give you great pleasure."

"I'm sure you would, honey, but the answer is no."

He studied her so intently, she felt like a bug under a microscope. Apparently, he was unable to solve whatever mystery she represented.

"Can I kiss you?"

Trixie sighed. "No."

"Please. One kiss."

Strangely, she was tempted. Marc's manner had changed somehow. He seemed less arrogant and more tentative. She hadn't been kissed in so long her lips had probably forgotten what to do.

"Oh, all right. Come in and kiss me."

She should've known he wouldn't settle for a mere peck on the cheek. No, he cupped her face, stared deeply into her eyes, and brushed his lips across hers.

Electric thrills raced up her spine. His fingers slid into her damp hair and he angled his head for better access. His lips were like a butterfly cavorting among wildflowers. Landing, flitting away, capturing, but not conquering.

By the time his tongue pierced the seam of her mouth, her knees had gone watery.

Damn, the man could kiss.

His tongue drew hers into a mating dance. Trixie clung to his arms, her heart pounding erratically. *I like him*, her body trilled. *He should stay and do more naughty things.*

All too soon, Marc pulled away. As he stepped back, she nearly lost her balance. He steadied her, his eyes showing both his desire and his caution.

She stared up at him, confused and delirious and *hot*. She pressed trembling fingers to her swollen lips.

"I want very much to spend the night with you," he said. "Let me make love to you, Trixie. Please."

She'd bet a whole month's salary that this guy rarely, if ever, said please. And maybe she was still rattled, but he sure sounded desperate -- like if he couldn't have her, he'd just die from the wanting.

Trixie couldn't form a denial. She didn't think sex for the sake of sex was something she'd like. But the way this man made her feel -- oo-wee, she'd never felt such lust. Not even for Jasper, who couldn't unhook her bra without a light on and an instruction manual.

She bet this guy could unhook a bra in one second flat.

"Okay," said Trixie.

He took her chin and gave her another one of his sexy, deep stares. "Are you sure? Oddly enough, I want you to... want me. Sincerely. Without any coercion."

She wasn't exactly sure what he was talking about, but she understood that he needed reassurance.

"I want you," she said simply. "My thoughts, my actions are my own."

"As are mine."

Marc shut the door and turned the lock. When he turned to face her, she could see that his confidence had returned. He wore arrogance as comfortably as some men wore coats.

He walked to her and untied the loose knot in the robe's belt. He slid it from the loops and her robe gaped open. He draped the belt around his neck then pushed the robe off her shoulders.

The terrycloth pooled at her feet. She wasn't ashamed of her body. Let him look. She kept in shape, though she was short and her breasts were on the small side.

His fingers traced the stretch marks on her stomach. His gaze flicked to hers. "You are a mother?"

"I have a seven-year-old daughter. Her name is Sadie."

He flattened his palm against her tummy. To her surprise, he knelt in front of her and pressed his lips to her slightly rounded belly. For a weird moment, she felt as though he was worshipping her.

Sliding lower, he kissed her pussy, his tongue sliding into her moist folds. She clutched at his hair as she spread her legs further apart. He flicked her clit rapidly. Pleasure sparkled, as hot and bright as tonight's promised fireworks.

He worked two fingers into her pussy, curling them up to rub against the bundle of nerves above her entrance. As he stroked in and out of her pussy, his tongue did marvelous things to her clit.

Her fingers dug into his skull as he stoked her higher and higher. Trixie tipped over the edge, flying into dazzling pleasure. She nearly fell, but Marc held on to her, his mouth roving over her pussy, his tongue lapping her come.

Marc stood up, wiping his chin with the sleeve of his very expensive jacket.

Her whole body quaked and she felt dazed. What had just happened? The man had only been in her room for five minutes and had already given her an orgasm. She wasn't sure what to do. Thank him and ask for more? She couldn't get her voice to work.

But he didn't need her encouragement or her permission.

He pulled her belt from around his neck then walked behind her. He grasped both her arms and put them behind her back, tying her wrists with the robe's belt.

She didn't protest. She had never done bondage, but it appeared that tonight would be filled with many firsts. As she waited to see what Marc would do next, she heard the whisper of clothing falling and shoes thumping. When he returned, he was naked. His impressive cock jutted from a spring of dark curls. He wasn't circumcised, either.

Wow. Another first for her.

He looked her over, his gaze dark with lust. Just that look re-ignited *her* lust. Her nipples hardened under his amorous scrutiny. She ached to be touched, to be kissed, to be ravished.

Marc merely smiled then he turned and walked into the bathroom. She heard him rattling through the drawers and wondered what the hell he could possibly need.

He returned with dental floss.

Obviously, he wasn't interested in tooth care. He unwound a long strand then put the floss case onto the nightstand. Marc closed the distance between them and leaned forward, sucking on her nipple. The peak bloomed in his hot mouth. He blew on it and her flesh crinkled. For good measure, he twisted the turgid point until she gasped.

Then he took the floss and wound it three times around her nipple. The pressure was intense and the waxy string bit into her sensitive peak. He leaned down and suckled her other nipple, blowing across her skin again before twisting it hard.

She exhaled a shaky breath. Her bound nipple throbbed as he bound the other one with the floss. Then he tied the loose ends together.

Trixie panted, closing her eyes as she tried to absorb the pain. It pulsed in her nipples. A matching rhythm thrummed in her pussy. Shuddering, she opened her eyes and found Marc staring at her.

"You are so beautiful." His hands coasted down her sides, stopping to rest on her hips. He scooted close, pressing his cock against her weeping pussy. Her oversensitized nipples scraped across the hair on his chest.

Trixie cried out.

She shuddered, her body overwhelmed by the erotic thrills of pleasure and pain. Marc lifted her left leg, drawing it around his waist. As she balanced on the other leg, he worked his cock inside her pussy. God, he was huge, filling her, stretching her.

His other hand cupped her ass to steady her as he began to thrust. Trixie moaned. Had anything ever felt so good? She couldn't do much but accept his plunging cock. Her raw nipples brushed against his chest, every movement spiraling into her cunt.

Marcus groaned, stilled, his eyes closing as he came. She felt the jerking of his cock, the hot spurt of his seed, and clenched him to keep him inside her.

She was sweaty and breathless, leaning against him as he recovered from his orgasm.

"No worries, Trixie. I can stay hard for a long time."

True to his word, his cock was firm and full inside her. She didn't care that he was a superman. She was too close to her own pleasure to question his virility.

He brushed a kiss across her mouth then he withdrew from her. He led her to the bed, lying on it and patting the spot next to him. "Come here, Trixie."

## Chapter Three

She did as he asked, climbing onto the bed. Marc grasped his shaft and she took his meaning instantly. She straddled him and he helped guide his cock into her aching cunt.

For a long moment, she could do nothing but absorb all the sensations rocketing through her. Then Marc grasped her hips and thrust upward. Trixie rode him as best she could with tied arms.

He was merciless, his eyes never leaving hers as he fucked her. Her whole body felt on fire. It had been so long since she'd been with a man. Since she felt the thrust of a real cock.

"Marc," she moaned. "Oh, Marc!"

"Marcus."

She looked down at him, dazed. "What?"

"Call me Marcus."

Something flashed in her brain. She knew that name, but the details were fuzzy. Oh, hell. What did it matter?

"Fuck me," he demanded.

She began a frantic pace, grinding her clit against him. He let her take the lead and she built her own pleasure. It wound tighter and tighter, threatening to shatter.

Marcus reached up and pinched her swollen, raw nipples.

The orgasm screamed through her. "Oh, God! Marcus!"

Her pussy clenched so hard, his cock slipped out. Her come gushed onto him. For a long moment she couldn't think, couldn't breathe, couldn't focus.

Marcus bit through the floss and freed her nipples. Blood returned to the battered peaks and offered a painful rush of incredible sensations. He licked her nipples



to soothe them. The light flicks of his tongue felt incredibly good. Then he untied her wrists and rubbed the circulation back into them.

They lay together on the bed. Trixie was on her side and Marcus on his back. She explored his chest tentatively. His skin was nicked and scarred. She wondered what kind of life he'd led, what kind of man he was -- both questions she might've pondered before inviting him into her room.

She couldn't deny that she was wickedly attracted to him. He was like the bad-boy heroes she loved to write about in her books. Like those men, he seemed broken and like her heroines, she wanted to fix him. To soothe his emotional wounds. Gah! How much of a Miss Lonely Hearts was she, for heaven's sake?

No, she needed to enjoy these moments for what they offered and expect nothing else. He was obviously not a man who wanted more than an evening of pleasure with a willing woman. She was happy to be that woman. She wouldn't think about it further.

Trixie got on top of him. His languorous gaze reminded her once again of a predator. He seemed content to let her do as she wished, though Trixie knew he might take back control any moment. He was fierce, her lover. And that fierceness made her belly squeeze in excitement.

With her tongue, she traced every visible scar. She found herself kissing his boobies, which was a silent offering she rather hoped he didn't figure out. She pressed her lips against the hard flesh of his pectorals, laving at the flat brown nipples. He dragged in a shuddering breath, his hands drifting to her hair.

His fingers remained intertwined with her curls as she explored his ribs and stomach. His flesh quivered beneath her lips and fingertips, and Trixie took pleasure in causing those reactions.

She loved the feel of him, silk and rough. He wore cologne -- some subtle, woodsy scent -- but underlying that was the musk of masculinity, and *that* truly made her want to lick him.

She rose above him, and guided his cock inside her slick pussy. Leaning forward, she offered her breasts for him to feast on, and he did, cupping and kneading them, pinching the raw nipples until she moaned in pleasure.

Trixie felt as though her whole body had been electrified. She moved faster, pressing her palms against his chest as she ground her clit against him, panting.

"Trixie," he said harshly, clamping onto her hips as he met her every thrust with his own. His fingernails dug into her flesh and that biting pain quivered all the way to her pussy.

Her nipples were tight buds, still sweetly abraded from their earlier treatment. As turned on as she was, she needed something more. Her desperate gaze found his and somehow, some way, he knew what she wanted.

One hand released her hip then swung to her ass. The open-palm slap sent tingling pain all the way to her throbbing clit.

"Oh, Marcus. Yes!"

He spanked her again and Trixie couldn't believe how much she liked it. She had never been paddled during lovemaking. Hell, Jasper couldn't be bothered to figure out where her clitoris was located, much less explore what other actions might offer her pleasure.

Marcus growled low in his throat and a dark thrill zipped down her spine. He lifted her off his cock and tossed her face-first into the bed covers.

"Don't move!"

Her heart hammered in her chest and her breathing was reedy. Her whole body felt deliciously tormented. She lay against the bed, her ass hovering in the air and her cunt so wet, she felt the cream drip down her thighs.

"Place your arms in front of you. Keep that beautiful ass right where it is."

She did as he asked. Marcus grasped her arms and she realized he'd located the robe's belt again. Once more, he tied her wrists, but this time they were above her head. He left one side long and that end he tied around one of the circular openings in the elaborately carved headboard.

He left the bed again and when he returned, she felt his slim leather belt slide over her ass. She sucked in a shocked breath. "Marcus..."

"Tell me no and I won't do it."

Her heart pounded furiously and fear settled coldly in her stomach. All the same, she couldn't bring herself to chicken out.

The first snap of the belt across her buttocks made her cry out. His fingertips traced the welt lovingly. She nearly swallowed her tongue. *I like this. Oh, God. I'm such a heathen.*

The second blow reverberated straight to her aching pussy. She braced for another smack, but instead felt Marcus's soft lips pay tender attention to the sting he'd caused.

He whipped her twice more, pausing to soothe her battered flesh. Then she felt the bite of the belt again and again, until her ass felt deliciously sore. Her whole body quaked from the sensations and she couldn't stop from moaning.

Marcus slid his cock between her thighs, guiding it into her pussy. She nearly wept at the relief of being filled so completely. When he began to move, she sucked in a steadying breath. Her arms tingled, but she barely felt their ache. It was the pleasure-pain caused by Marcus's movements that held her attention.

Her orgasm bloomed, low and hot in her pussy, and her breath caught as she teetered on the precipice.

Marcus smacked her ass with his open palm and the pain made her orgasm implode. He smacked her again and her pleasure tripled. She fell off the edge and into the sweet dark of her bliss.

She barely heard Marcus's groan as he reached orgasm. Trixie was trapped in her own soft world of pleasure and gladly drifted there.

## Chapter Four

Marcus's fingers brushed her arm, down her side, to her hip. "Your skin is so soft." He stroked her tender buttock, cupping it and kneading it. Then his hand moved leisurely to her thigh. "You smell good, too."

"So do you," she murmured, stretching against him. She looked at him through her lashes. "I've never been tied up or spanked before."

He chuckled. "Are you surprised you like it?"

"Yes."

He rolled her onto her back and covered her, his hard cock nestled against her pussy. "You are beautiful."

"So are you."

Her words earned more laughter. She smacked his shoulder playfully. "Hey, I can give compliments, too!"

"You piggy-backed on mine, so it doesn't count." He kissed her shoulder and the soft press of his lips made her quiver. He tasted her collarbone, moved up her neck, and peppered kisses along her jaw. His eyes were glazed with desire, his breath harsh against her lips.

Marcus stretched her arms above her head. Her back arched slightly, pushing her breasts into his chest. Her nipples pebbled against his hard flesh.

Her gaze found his and he smiled. He kissed her, a slow melding of the lips that made her heart hammer and her lungs forget how to operate. His tongue slipped into her mouth and danced with hers. He tasted like champagne.

She felt his cock jerk against her clit and knew he wanted to fuck her again.

Marcus cupped her breasts, and she sighed with relieved desire. He pinched the nipples into hardness.

"I love that," she murmured, wanting more of his touch. When his mouth surrounded her nipple and his tongue flicked the peak, she cried out. Pleasure jolted through her, spearing her at the core. He laved her nipple, suckling one while his hand tormented the other. Then he switched mouth and hand and she went up in flames, wiggling against him and begging for his cock.

"What was that?" He crawled down her body, assaulting her flesh with nips and kisses. His mouth licked a path to her navel. His tongue encircled her stomach before sliding oh-so-slowly to her thigh.

Trixie fisted her hands in the covers as he pushed apart her legs and kissed her pussy lips, his tongue parting the folds to taste her.

Joy pierced her, trembling, aching tendrils that demanded more from this man who showed her such wicked pleasure as well as tenderness. He flicked her clit, teasing the hard nub, before sliding down and tasting her essence. He boldly stroked in and out of her pussy. Exquisite sensations pulsed there, and she moaned as lust overtook her again. How much of this man could she want? She'd never felt so out-of-control.

His tongue parted her slit, licked the juice pearling there, then his mouth settled on her clit and sucked it, hard. The orgasm swelled, waves of pleasure threatening, then burst, sensation after joyous sensation rolling over her. She screamed and bucked, her cunt pulsating as she came.

Marcus pushed her legs up and forward until her heels rested on his shoulders. She panted, still shuddering from the orgasm, when he lifted her hips and plunged inside her. His enormous cock impaled her to the womb, stretching her and filling her in a way that made her feel complete.

"Yes. Oh yes..."

He groaned, his face tight with consuming lust. His hands were sweaty on her thighs as he held onto her legs and pumped into her again and again. The rocking of their bodies singed her to the core. Unbelievably, she felt the rise of another orgasm. Her body strained toward bliss... again. Good lord.

His thumb rubbed her clit and he fucked her harder, his cock pistoning into her pussy. She was greedy for him. She closed her eyes, matching his movements, her heart pounding, sweat slicking her skin.

"Marcus!" As she plunged over the edge into endless bliss-filled waves, her lover shuddered and came, emptying his seed into her sated pussy.

God, she was wrung out. She rolled onto her side and lay next to Marcus, her hand drifting through the black curls on his chest.

A whistling noise was followed by a loud pop.

"The fireworks have started," said Marcus. "Do you want to watch?"

"Nothing can compete with your brand of fireworks."

He chuckled, threading his fingers through hers. "No regrets?"

"No," she lied. "None at all."

"Good." He paused. "I have something to tell you."

She looked at him, wondering about the tone of his voice. He sounded worried. Her gaze drifted to his cock and she froze. "No condoms. Oh, shit!"

He shook his head. "I'm sterile. And I'm disease-free."

Relief rushed through her. "Thank God." She rose onto her elbow and stared at him. "I mean, not that you're sterile. I'm disease-free, too. So, what is it?"

"I'm a vampire."

He sounded completely serious, but he had to be joking. She laughed. "Yeah, right." His expression didn't change. Her heart stuttered in her chest. "That's impossible."

"I'm real. And if you don't believe me, ask Steven and Michael. They're vampires, too."

"What?" She wanted to deny it and call him crazy or a liar. But she hesitated.

Both men worked at night. Eve and Val always had ready excuses about why their husbands weren't available for daytime functions.

No. It was too ridiculous. Surely, she'd seen Steven and Michael at conferences -- in the evenings.

"Trixie." Marcus captured her gaze again. As she watched, his fangs descended and his opaque eyes went red. He took her hand and pressed her palm flat against his chest.

No heartbeat.

"My name is Marcus Moravius."

Oh, dear God. Surely she had not slept with one of the top agents in New York. Her heart started to pound. No. No way.

Then she realized that sleeping with a power player in the publishing industry was the least of her problems. The man thought he was the undead.

Lord-a-mercy.

"I was born in the year nineteen, the son of a Roman general and a noblewoman. I knew how to wield a sword before the age of ten. Because of my father's influence, I was allowed into the army at the age of sixteen. I was mentored into the Praetorian Guard and became a friend and bodyguard to Emperor Caligula."

Fascinated despite her doubts, she didn't scramble off the bed and try to run away. He seemed to be waiting for her to do that.

"I watch History Channel," she offered. "He was crazy."

"Yes."

"I-I don't know what to say."

"Just don't say goodbye."

Trixie saw his vulnerability. She felt a connection to him, one forged by their passion. If he'd been human... but no, he was a vampire. And that meant he drank blood.

She had Sadie to think of, too. What kind of mother would she be if she brought a blood-sucker into their lives? "I'm sorry," she said. "This is all just too much."

In the moment before he closed his eyes, she saw a flash of pain. She realized then that he was not a man who admitted to his true nature. He had taken a risk on her. And she had rejected him.

Her heart ached for him, for them, for what could never be.

## Chapter Five

One week later...

"Momma," said Sadie as she speared a chicken nugget with her fork, "what is a literal agent?"

Trixie looked up from the pile of bills on the kitchen table. Her lunch -- a baloney sandwich -- was untouched. She blinked at her daughter. "What?"

"It's on that letter."

Trixie looked at the mail she'd gathered earlier from the mailbox. Sure enough, the top letter had a return address from the Marcus Moravius Literary Agency.

She picked up the envelope and opened it. Inside was a letter offering representation. Instead of being thrilled, she was unaccountably disappointed.

"Finish your lunch," she said. "Momma has to make an important phone call."

"Okay dokay." Sadie picked up a carrot slice and tried to feed it to her teddy bear, Windsor.

Trixie looked at the clock on the wall. It was close to five p.m. Chances were good nobody was in the office. She dialed the number anyway and asked for Marcus.

"Whom may I ask is calling?" said a cultured and decidedly snooty female.

"Trixie Jameson. I write as a Lanie Haart."

"Oh, Ms. Haart! How lovely to hear from you. My name is Alice." The voice warmed considerably. "We are truly looking forward to working with you. We've all read your partial for *Never Love Again*. It's quite wonderful."

Trixie paused. She hadn't thought representation had been offered based on her work, especially since she had never submitted that partial -- or any other project -- to Marcus.



"Thank you, Alice. Now, will you tell that no-good son-of-a-bitch I wouldn't be his client if he was the last agent on earth? I'd surely appreciate it." She slammed the receiver down.

Oo-wee! She'd rather never write again than trade her principles and pride for a contract earned by making love to Marcus. She couldn't regret her choice to sleep with him. She'd enjoyed it too much.

But she couldn't be bought, damn it. And she didn't need compensation, either.

\* \* \*

Trixie flopped onto the couch, exhausted. Getting Sadie into the bath, teeth brushed, pajamas on, story read, and tucked into bed was a two-hour ordeal. Finally, her little girl had gone to sleep with Windsor keeping watch on her pillow.

Her guts had been churning all day, thanks to Marcus. She alternated between being really pissed off and really disappointed. She stared at the TV and realized she didn't want to watch mindless sitcoms, so she turned it off. She couldn't quite work up the energy to go get her laptop. She really needed to write five more pages, but she was too tired to move. At least she'd taken a shower and she was in her comfiest nightgown. Maybe she should just tuck into bed and read until she fell asleep.

Someone knocked on the front door. It was only eight o'clock, but even so, she didn't know anyone who might visit her on a Tuesday night. She looked through the peephole.

Her heart beat wildly.

She flung the door open, stepped across the threshold, and opened her mouth to give Marcus a good what-for. Instead, the fool dragged her into his arms and kissed her senseless.

And she let him.

When he finally let her get a breath, she couldn't quite find the ire necessary to yell at him.

"May I come in?"

"Like you need an invitation."

"Actually, I do."

"Fine. Come in."

"I got your message." He followed her into the apartment, looking around her simple furnishings and small space.

"It's nothing fancy, but it suits me and Sadie." Trixie sat on the couch and looked up at him. "What do you want?"

"You." He walked to the bookshelf and plucked a picture of Sadie from the framed photographs. He returned the picture. "And I know you're a package deal. I hope that Sadie will like me. Maybe even one day love me."

"Putting the cart before the horse, aren't you?" Trixie watched him pace, and tried not to hope for too much. Had Marcus thought about her as much as she'd thought about him?

"Yes, I have. A lot."

Trixie's mouth dropped open. "I didn't say that out loud."

"I'm a vampire. I can read your thoughts." He stopped pacing, rounded the coffee table, and sat next to her. He grasped her hands. "I love you, Trixie."

"That's not possible."

"Like being a vampire isn't possible?" He made a sound of frustration. "I thought Steven and Michael were fools. They married mortals. And they're happy. I didn't understand." He looked nervous. Did he truly fear what she might say or do? "Trixie, you're in my head, my heart. I can't stop thinking about you or wanting you. I have never felt this way about a lover. My little girls were the closest thing to love I have ever known -- until you."

"You have... had children?"

"They were murdered."

"Oh, my God. I'm so sorry, Marcus."

"It was a long time ago, but it still feels like it happened yesterday." He looked at her. "My wife and daughters were assassinated by Caligula. A few months later, I was

part of the conspiracy to kill him. We rid the world of a monster -- I'll never regret that."

Trixie felt overwhelmed. She was sitting on a couch with a man who'd lived nearly a thousand years. He'd seen the world destroyed and rebuilt many times. He'd lived through the deaths of his family and God knew who else. Right now, all she saw was his pain, his need to reach out to another.

She wanted, more than anything, to take him into her arms and allow him into her heart. But he was a vampire. And she wouldn't risk Sadie. Not even for love.

"No! I would never hurt Sadie. I would plunge my sword into my own heart, Trixie, rather than see your daughter hurt." He cupped her face, brushing his thumbs along her cheeks. "I would gladly give my life a hundred times over if it meant I could have my children back. Sadie will always have my protection. No one will *ever* harm her."

Trixie wasn't sure about anything. She wanted to explore her relationship with Marcus, but she was scared. And then there was the blood thing.

"I don't have to take sustenance from humans," he said, once again reading her thoughts. "It is highly pleasurable to sink my fangs into a willing neck, but I often get what I need from blood banks." His gaze caressed her throat. "However, we must mark our mates. It's both a sign of possession and protection."

Here was a man who wanted her and Sadie. He offered her love and so much more -- if she had the courage to take it.

"I'll introduce you to my daughter tomorrow night. But if you break our hearts, Marcus, I will stake you."

"I would expect no less." He drew her into his lap. Trixie straddled him and grinned when she felt his hard-on say *hello*. She wrapped her arms around his neck and he captured her lips tenderly. For the longest, sweetest moment, all they did was kiss. A good smooch was the best seduction in the world as far as she was concerned.

Marcus's hands slipped underneath her short gown. His thumbs brushed the sensitive peaks as his mouth plundered her neck. She wondered what it would be like to feel his fangs sink into her flesh.

"Would you like to find out?" he whispered. "You smell so sweet. I bet you taste like the finest champagne."

Her heart nearly beat out of her chest. She was dating a vampire. She might as well get used to his... er, quirks. "Yes, Marcus. I want you to bite me."

She wasn't sure what she expected, but he didn't attack her like she was a Godiva truffle. Instead, he placed her backside onto the couch. He looped his fingers around her panties and pulled. They ripped right off. He tossed the useless underwear to the floor. Then he reached for the end of her nightgown and tore it in half. Oh, God. He was a helluva man. Vampire. *Whatever.*

"Sadie..."

"Is asleep. I can hear her breathing and heartbeat. Believe me, love, she's in dreamland."

"Well, that's a handy trick," she said.

His gaze feasted on her body and she responded to that ravenous look. She cupped her breasts, playing with her nipples while he watched. His gaze darkened with pure lust.

His palm covered her pussy and two fingers slipped into her entrance. He curled them up to play with the knot of sensitive nerves. Her breath whooshed out and excitement danced through every nerve ending. He removed his hand, much to her disappointment.

On the coffee table was a bowl with miscellaneous items. He extracted two small rubber bands. He got off the couch and knelt beside her. He sucked one nipple until it was stiff and then looped the rubber band around the taut peak twice.

Pain shot through her, zapping her all the way to her pussy. She bit her lip to keep from crying out. All the while, primal pleasure roared through her. Marcus

suckled her other nipple until it was hard and applied the other rubber band. Her nipples swelled against the tight restraints. They throbbed deliciously.

“Lift your legs up and hold your ankles.”

She knew what was coming, but she didn't want to wake Sadie. She sure as hell didn't want to be caught bare-assed on the couch with this sexy man. Guilt marched right through her lust.

“I can have you out of this room and into yours before she climbs out of bed.” Marcus smiled. “Another handy trick.”

Her heart kicked up a notch. She lifted her legs near her head and grabbed onto her ankles, lifting her ass for him.

The first swat nearly sent her into oblivion, but she held on, wanting the pleasure to last. The next slap ricocheted straight into her cunt. He spanked her several times until her ass was pink. She panted heavily, incredibly turned on.

She watched him unzip his pants and free his yummy cock. She was oh-so-ready. She let go of her legs, gesturing to Marcus. Her ability to speak was gone. All she had was... oh, yeah. Her thoughts. *Fuck me.*

*Gladly, love.*

Marcus covered her, his mouth paying homage to her breasts, flicking her protruded nipples. Pain radiated in erotic waves. Slowly, he worked his cock inside her pussy and she wrapped her legs around his waist. He was so big, but oo-wee, she loved how he felt inside her.

Moans escaped from them both.

She grabbed onto his shoulders and held on as he thrust inside her. Her whole body responded to his need, to his lust. And she felt the same urgency. Her raw ass rubbed on the couch fabric and her nipples pressed against the silk of his dress shirt. Sensations rioted. Oh, God. How could she hold on to her sanity? He was driving her wild.

His lips grazed her neck. She felt twin pricks of pain. The moment he sipped her blood, she nearly died from the intensity. She felt such a glorious connection with her

vampire. Pleasure beyond imagining claimed her. Then she was lost in that heavenly emotion, where body and soul aligned, with Marcus as her only guide.

It seemed like a year passed before they floated back to earth. Marcus managed to sit up, but he looked as dazed and giddy as she felt. He pulled her into his lap and removed the rubber bands, soothing the tortured peaks with his tongue.

When he was finished, he looked at her and grinned. "You're amazing."

"Thank you. I do try."

He laughed, lightly pinching her sore bottom.

"Ow!" Laughing, too, Trixie snuggled into his embrace. She was utterly and completely happy. He held her close, his fingertips drawing circles on her hips.

"Now, about my offer of representation..."

"One thing at a time, vampire. One thing at a time."

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