

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

Between
a Rock
and a
Hard-On

Tricks
and
Treats

CINDY SPENCER PAPE

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



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Between a Rock and a Hard-On

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BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD-ON

Cindy Spencer Pape

Dedication

Dedicated to the wonderful friends I've made among my fellow authors in the Pond – and to the big frog herself, our editor Helen. Happy Halloween.

Chapter One

He couldn't fucking believe it.

One of the most sacred nights of the pagan calendar and his boss was making him hang out at a party. Not that he was particularly religious, but his sister Dana was going to tear a strip off his hide if he missed her coven's ritual tonight after he'd promised to be there. Besides, this was a *children's* party and Bram wasn't all that comfortable around children. Not to mention the fact that if any of his brethren saw him standing here in a hotel ballroom, passing out candy in a black acetate cape and cheesy plastic fangs, he'd never hear the end of it.

"You're not Dracula!" One tow-headed boy of about six, who smelled strongly of sugar and candy-maker's wax, tugged hard on Bram's cloak.

"No, I'm not." Bram's voice was slurred by the fake fangs. "He gets invited to much better parties on Halloween. I'm the low-budget version. A second cousin on his mother's side." He pushed just enough genuine power into his words to make the boy's eyes go wide. Nodding as if that answer made perfect sense, the kid took the candy bar Bram held out to him, then scuttled off to the next station.

"That wasn't very nice." The voice in Bram's ear didn't have a body to go with it, so Bram knew who it had to be. There was only one ghost on the team of paranormal enforcers the mayor had put together.

"Hey, Frank." Bram gave a grim smile to another group of approaching youngsters. "How come His Honor doesn't have you doling out goodies?"

"There's the small matter of my hands—not to mention the rest of me—being incorporeal," Frank reminded him. "Actually, he had me stationed in his pathetic

excuse for a haunted house. Fortuitously, all of the urchins have now completed that portion of the entertainment.”

Bram laughed. Trust Mayor Pendleton to have a real ghost working the haunted house at his Halloween party for underprivileged kids. He passed out treats to the three kids in the next batch, then spoke to Frank again. “Yeah, well this party better finish up pretty quickly. I’ve got places to be tonight.”

“Ooh, a hot date? Do tell.” He could hear the envy in the ghost’s disembodied voice. “I remember those.”

Poor Frank. Bram decided to take pity on him and tell him the truth. “Nah, not a date. I’ve got a Samhain ritual I promised to attend.” His tongue tripped over the plastic fangs and he damn near drooled. Ugh! Enough! He surreptitiously spat the stupid things out into his hand and shoved them in the back pocket of his black chinos, then allowed his own canine teeth to lengthen. To hell with the mayor’s “better ideas”!

Another group approached, made up of a bunch of smaller kids this time, shepherded around by a grown-up. Bram had to look twice to figure that out—she wasn’t much taller than the kids, but judging by the generous rack that filled the front of her cheap, black witch’s outfit, she was an adult. One more look had Bram adjusting his damn cape to hide the sudden hard-on that had sprung up in his pants. But the mayor had screwed up when he’d dressed her as a witch instead of a fairy princess. Long, platinum-blond curls tumbled out from the pointed cardboard hat. She had big, slightly tilted, green eyes and plump, glossy lips that would look just right wrapped around his cock. He only hoped none of the kids she was wrangling were hers.

“Trick or treat!” Five of the kids chorused the refrain, but one small one began to whimper and point at Bram. He felt a frisson of power and cursed mentally. That kid was a damn wizard, or would be one day. Unfortunately His Honor seemed to have forgotten that kids with magic could usually see through the façade of humanity that Bram wore on a daily basis.

"Don't cry, sweetie, he's just a pretend vampire." The ersatz witch picked up the sniffing toddler and cuddled him close while Bram passed out goodies to the others.

"Here's one for the little guy." He held out a lollipop to the woman as the teary-eyed urchin hid his face in her generous cleavage. *Lucky kid!* Privately, Bram thought the tyke had already gotten the best treat in the place. Bram would happily trade every last piece of candy in Philadelphia for the chance to bury his face between those breasts.

"Thanks." Her voice was soft and breathy and her bright green eyes twinkled as she grinned at Bram. A human wouldn't have been able to discern color in this half-light, but Bram had excellent night vision. "Sorry about Kevin."

She reached up to pluck the candy from his hand and just for a second, their fingers touched. And where they did, they burned. Just a momentary flare of heat, but it was like nothing Bram had ever felt before. If he'd thought he had a hard-on before, now he was going to have trouble walking, his body was so stiff. He actually felt dizzy for an instant as all the blood left his brain. She pulled her hand away like it was burning, so she must have felt it too. It wasn't just a shock of static electricity, it was magic, and Bram knew he was going to have to ask the mayor about her when he got the chance. Maybe the little fake witch was a real one. Wouldn't that make his sister laugh?

* * * * *

Twyla hurried through the woods of Philadelphia's Fairmont Park, cursing the mayor and his stupid party. She'd promised her roommate Katie that she'd be at the Samhain ritual and she was pretty sure she was too late. She shivered and speeded up to a jog. She'd pulled off the tacky witch's costume on the way and magicked it back to her apartment so she wouldn't offend any of the real Wiccan practitioners, but the tank top and running shorts she had on underneath were nowhere near enough for warmth on a chilly October night.

What had possessed Mayor Pendleton to insist that his entire staff work the children's Halloween party? Other than next year's election, of course. Did he have to

include his team of paranormal advisors? Most of the mayor's staff thought Twyla was just an educational consultant—couldn't he have let her off the hook? Not that she minded helping out at a party for orphans, but did it have to run so late on the actual holiday? She'd told him herself that Samhain was a holy day to a lot of people. Twyla wasn't normally very big on ceremonies, but Katie's coven was inducting three new elders tonight including Katie, and Twyla had genuinely wanted to be there for her friend's investiture.

She reached the clearing that Katie's coven used for rituals and could tell immediately that it was too late. The glade was empty, but there was still a strong aura of residual magic in the air, along with the scents of sage, cinnamon and other incense.

She paused at the flat granite boulder the coven used as an altar and laid her hands on the rock, murmuring a short prayer of regret for missing the ceremony. The warm tingle of leftover magic crackled through her fingertips and pulsed through her body, straight to her core. It was almost as sexual as the jolt she'd gotten from the guy dressed as a vampire at the mayor's party. He hadn't felt black or empty, so she knew he wasn't a real vamp. But he had been—something. She had no idea what, but she'd never felt quite such a strong sexual pull in all of her six hundred years. One touch and her nipples had sprung to attention and her panties had gotten soaked. Fang-boy had sent all of Twyla's senses humming with nothing more than a casual brush of their hands. If she hadn't been in such a hurry to get to the ritual, she'd have stuck around to find out who—or what—he really was.

Leaning over the altar stone and just thinking about the pseudo-vamp had her tingling all over again and her pussy actually ached for attention. Then she realized that a good bit of the sexual energy she was feeling was emanating from the boulder. There had been sex magic in tonight's ritual, damn it, which wasn't something Katie's coven of white witches usually dabbled in. Whatever the reason, Twyla knew she'd better head back to her apartment and her trusty vibrator. The zing of residual magic was like a feather brushing rhythmically against her clit. It was enough to keep her in a

perpetual state of arousal, but not enough to get her off. At times like this she almost missed being at her mother's court, where you could always count on finding a randy faun or pixie when you needed one for a quick roll in the clover. Sex was a lot more complicated here in the human realm where she had to be constantly careful to keep her — er, *family connections* a secret.

Twyla started to straighten, ready to return home, when she felt a sharp blow across her shoulders. She cried out and tried to turn, only to find herself pressed facedown into the rock.

"What?" She kicked backward, connecting with something hard and evoking a grunted whoosh of fetid breath from her attacker. "Let me go!"

"Looks like we got us a pretty one, Tirg. Feisty, too!"

The voice came from off to the left, so Twyla struggled against the weight on her back, finally managing to twist her head and get a look.

"Oh shit! Satyrs!"

Twyla might be feeling horny, but no way was she interested in being the filling in a satyr sandwich. Aside from being supernatural rapists, the goat-boys were known for inflicting pain on their victims. Real pain, not just harmless S&M games. And on top of that, judging by the one pinning her to the rock, they smelled like week-old shit. She managed to wriggle 'til she was facing that one, then slammed the heel of her hand up into his nose, not even caring when the blood sprayed down the front of her tank top. Not as long as he let her go.

"Get her, boys," he grunted, clutching his face. Oh fuck, there were more than two! Before she could run, strong arms grabbed each of hers, stretching her out as if for crucifixion. She barely had time to register that indignity when she felt the sharp bite of cold iron clapped around her left wrist. The burning pain dropped her to her knees while the satyrs yanked both arms behind her back and shot the handcuff around her other wrist as well, doubling the sting.

Now she couldn't run and she wouldn't be able to cast a spell. The effect of the steel cuffs scrambled her sense and made it hard not to vomit. "What the hell are you boys doing in Philly?"

One of the satyrs looped a length of chain around the circular base of the altar stone and ran it between the linked cuffs and Twyla's back before padlocking the ends together into a tight ring around the bottom. Now her hands were dragged down to the ground and she was effectively chained to a ton and a half of granite.

"Looking for fun." The one she'd hit licked the blood off his lips and rubbed his engorged red phallus, making Twyla swallow some more bile. "Only night of the year we don't have to put clothes on." Of course. On Halloween no one would look twice at the horns on their shaggy heads or the furry legs ending in cloven hooves. People would just assume they were really good costumes. Unless they got a look at those disgusting and oversized cocks.

"Help me pick her up, Jagron." She kicked at them as they lifted her body and turned her 'til she was lying on her back on the altar stone, her arms hanging down behind her head. Her wrists had gone numb, relieving most of the pain from the iron, but the rock was hard and rough against the tender skin of her wings beneath the thin tank top. Even worse, the sex magic from the rock was hitting her whole body now, making her go wet and pliant even though she wanted nothing to do with these monsters.

The ringleader approached the rock, still pumping his rampant cock with his hand. Blood continued to drip from his broken nose, but it didn't seem to be slowing him down any. Twyla screamed as he reached down and ripped her tank top right down the middle, exposing her unbound breasts to the cold night air.

* * * * *

Bram hurried through the woods. His human guise was still in place but he made use of his extra strength and speed to move faster and with less effort. Damn the mayor

for catching him and wanting to chat just as Bram had been trying to leave. He was sure he'd missed the ritual by now and Dana was going to be pissed.

A scream ripped through the night. Since it was coming from the ritual glade, Bram broke into a dead run, shedding all pretense at humanity. His claws lengthened and his teeth slid down and into place. He pulled off his shirt to let his wings unfurl and his skin hardened into a pattern of bronze-colored scales. His sister might be in that glade and nobody was going to hurt her and live. Not while Bram was alive to do something about it.

He burst into the clearing and felt a moment of relief. The ritual was apparently over — there was no crowd in the glade. Just three men and one woman.

Fuck. Make that one woman and three satyrs. One of the bastards had just ripped her shirt open and two others were holding her feet, spreading her legs wide for their friend.

"Leave. The. Woman. Alone." Bram threw all of his power into his voice, knew the human's ears would be ringing, but if he saved her from being raped, that was a small price to pay.

"Go get your own." The satyrs didn't even turn and look at Bram. One of the ones holding a foot was jacking off with his other hand. The one in the middle pulled the woman's running shorts down to her knees before ripping them apart with both hands. "This bitch is ours."

"I don't think so, goat-boy!" The woman was still putting up a fight, even though she was pinned and outnumbered. "Sooner or later you'll have to let me up and then I'm going to rip your intestines out and dance on the remains."

"I said, let her go!" Giving his full dragon's roar, Bram bounded into the clearing. One of the satyrs finally looked at him and screamed, dropping the girl's ankle.

"Dragon!" The others looked up at that and all of them paled.

Bram exhaled smoke through his nostrils. "You've got two seconds to run. After that I'm having goat for dinner." He let a small stream of flame escape his mouth.

Two of them fled even before he finished his sentence. The third one, probably the one in charge since he was the one on the woman, just straightened and glared. Blood dripped down his face. Good girl, she'd apparently busted the bastard's nose.

Bram huffed out a little more flame. "One."

The satyr growled something unintelligible, then dashed off into the underbrush after his pals.

Carefully, Bram approached the altar stone. "Miss, are you all right?"

She twisted a bit and moaned. As he walked, he resumed most of his human appearance, leaving claws and teeth in case the bastards came back.

"Miss?"

He got close enough to see her, saw that her hands were chained to the base of the rock, leaving her laid out on the altar defenseless. God knew he wasn't a sicko like the satyrs, but the position was inviting as hell, especially with her big, full breasts bared to the sky, the nipples drawn into knots, whether from fear or cold. Then he noticed the long white-blond hair and groaned. "No fucking way."

It was. As he leaned over her, wide green eyes gazed up at him. It was the witch from the mayor's party. "Thank you," she whispered.

"Are you all right?" There was blood on her torso and he carefully wiped it away with the shreds of her shorts. His arousal was inappropriate, but overwhelming. He wished circumstances were different so he could pause and play with the sexy little diamond barbell piercing her navel.

"Not mine." She was twisting under his touch, almost as if she wanted—more. "I think I broke the leader's nose."

"Looked like it," he agreed, trying to will away the massive boner in his pants.

"Are you really a dragon?"

Looking into those eyes, he couldn't lie to her. He might have to do something about it later, but right now she deserved the truth. He turned so she could see his wings. "Half. My mother was human."

"Cool. I knew you weren't a real vamp the moment I touched you." Okay, she was at least a witch and he breathed a little easier. She was no stranger to things that went bump in the night. She closed her eyes for a minute and hummed, still squirming. "There was sex magic here tonight. Can you feel it?"

"Like a drug shot straight into my veins." Thank the gods she felt it too. At least now he wouldn't have to apologize for the hard-on. The sight of her offered up like a virgin sacrifice sent all the blood in his body straight to his cock.

"Me too." She gave a little laugh. "Katie's coven had to pick tonight to try that. There's so much oozing off the rock I can't even feel the steel in the cuffs anymore. I don't suppose you're into bondage, are you?"

His answering moan echoed through the clearing. "Goddess help me, I am."

"Maybe you wouldn't mind helping me out then? Right now I don't think I could walk, even if you could get me loose."

"You want me to fuck you?" This couldn't be happening. He didn't want to think he was like the satyrs, taking advantage of a helpless female.

"Only if you want to. But goddess, I wanted you right there at the damn kiddy party. Now it's all but unbearable."

"We should get out of here." He was already unbuttoning his pants.

"After." She lifted her feet to the rock and bent her knees to widen her legs. Bram caught a glimpse of neatly trimmed pale blonde curls. Damn, she was a natural blonde! Then he caught a whiff of her musk and no force in the world could have kept him from burying his face between her thighs.

“Yes!” She bucked against him and cried out as he licked her dripping pussy in one long slurp. She tasted of salt and earth and sex. He ran his tongue lightly from anus to clit, teasing without offering relief. “More!”

“What’s your name?” He lifted his face from her cunt just enough to speak, blowing gently on her engorged clit as he did. “No more ‘til you tell me.”

“T-Twyla,” she whimpered, rotating her hips against his face. “I’m Twyla.”

“You’re beautiful, Twyla.” He lowered his mouth back down and circled her clit with the tip of his tongue. “My name is Bram. And I wanted you at the party, too. But only if you’re really willing.”

“I was planning to go home after the coven meeting and think of you.” She huffed out the words between gasps. “While I got myself off. Then I was going to ask the mayor about you tomorrow.”

Yeah, that had been pretty much his plan too. With the energy from the rock, the weird magnetism between the two of them and the taste of Twyla on his tongue, his conscience was outnumbered. He reached up with both hands and palmed her breasts while he feasted. The pale nipples were as hard as diamonds under his calloused hands and she moaned when he rubbed them. Oh yeah, she was more than willing. He’d lay money on the fact that she liked being tied up, as long as it wasn’t satyrs doing it.

He nibbled on her plump labia and sucked lightly at her clit, earning himself another whimpered “Yes”. He barely paused to breathe—he couldn’t stop himself from wanting to devour her, to wring every last drop of pleasure he could from a situation that had started so badly. His tongue slid along her folds, circled her puckered rosebud anus, then drew back up to stab inside her. He was pretty sure they heard her scream in Center City as he tweaked both her nipples at the same time as he licked her. She came in a rush, even more of her sweet juices running down between her thighs and coating Bram’s chin as he continued to lick and suck until her tremors ceased.

“Do you want me to stop now?” Maybe now that the worst of her tension was relieved, she’d change her mind and decide she didn’t want to fuck a total stranger while she was chained to a rock.

“Try it and I’ll kill you.”

The intense, downright painful arousal had ebbed a bit when she came, but Twyla still wanted him inside her almost more than she wanted her next breath.

He straightened and she could see his hands shaking as he unzipped his fly, toed off his loafers, then shimmied out of his trousers. Goddess, he was perfect—long and thick and delicious. Her cunt throbbed in anticipation of having all that up inside her. She writhed against her bonds. Her wrists had gone totally numb after their prolonged exposure to the toxic metal. She was turned on by the restraint but at the same time longing to get her hands on that magnificent body. “Hurry.”

“I’m right here, babe.” He braced his arms on either side of her chest and leaned over her on the boulder. “How about a kiss first?”

“Please!” She knew she sounded pathetic, but she didn’t care. As he leaned close she could see the glint of moisture on his face, smell herself on his skin. She hadn’t thought she could be more turned on, but impossibly, she was. His longish dark hair dusted over her cheekbones as he bent down. Then his lips brushed hers and she flat-out forgot how to think.

Nothing in her experience had prepared her for this. Every other man she’d ever been with faded into oblivion beside the sheer beauty of his lips shaping hers. His hands weren’t even touching her and his hairless chest barely brushed the tortured peaks of her nipples, but the flood of sensation from the kiss set every square inch of her skin tingling. When he ran his tongue along the seam of her lips she opened readily, greedily sucking him into her mouth. He tasted of coffee and Twyla’s own arousal as he explored the cavern of her mouth. Her tongue danced and slid alongside his, while she lifted upward, trying to rub her nipples against his chest.

"Oh goddess!" He broke the kiss, leaving both of them gasping for breath. Then he knelt on the stone between her legs, nuzzling the side of her neck and then down between her aching breasts. "You are amazing, Twyla." The words were a whispered caress as he circled one nipple with his tongue, shifting his weight off one hand so it could cup and squeeze the other peak. She pulled against the bonds holding her arms over her head, turned on further by the restraint. When he sucked the beaded point into his mouth, she cried out, arching her back up off the stone to force her nipple deeper into the hot cavern. He got the hint and suckled harder, pinching the other nipple with thumb and forefinger. She was so turned on she could almost come again just from this. Then he pulled back and switched sides, nipping softly on the swollen nub.

Colored sparks of light flashed in front of her eyes as she came, a wordless cry forcing its way past her lips.

"That's two," he murmured, laving the abused nipple with soft licks. His voice was deep and rumble, husky with desire. "Want to stop now?"

"Not done yet." She could already feel her body coiling up for another round. She wanted him so much her womb actually hurt—more than she'd ever wanted anyone before. "Inside me this time. Please."

"Your wish is my command, princess." He'd retracted his claws and now he used one big, long-fingered hand to test her pussy, probing and sliding two long fingers inside before he scissored them open, stretching her tight channel.

"More!" His fingers soothed the empty ache in her womb, but only slightly. She wanted him all, every long, thick, hard inch. And she wanted it now, with an urgency she knew was only partly due to the sex magic spilled here tonight. A good deal of her need had been there the moment she'd laid eyes on him in that hokey fake vampire costume, with his shining dark chestnut hair, glowing golden-brown eyes and gleaming white fangs.

And then he pulled his fingers out and took his cock in hand, positioning it between her swollen labia. He rubbed it against her, coating the fat, dark head with her juices. She craned her neck upward to watch.

"I'm not going to last long, princess." His voice was thick and deep.

"Thank the goddess! I want it *hard*."

"That I can manage." He pushed into her in one powerful shove. He was so big it would have hurt if she hadn't been so fucking turned on.

"All right?"

She looked up into his eyes, which were glowing in the moonlight with a gold metallic sheen. The pupils were just slightly elongated, though she didn't think they'd been at the party. It was as if he was too aroused to control his appearance. Every muscle and sinew was taut beneath the smooth skin that showed just the faintest trace of scale lines. Even the fangs were in evidence when he smiled and Twyla hummed her approval. "Perrrrrfect."

Then he started to move and she forgot how to speak.

Even though she was wetter than she'd ever been in her life, his size made sure she felt every bit of his slow slide out and forceful thrust back in. Her back scooted a few inches up the rock and she cried out at the abrasion to her wings.

"Sorry." He leaned over and slid his hands under her shoulders, wrapping the fingers around to hold her in place. He raised one eyebrow and grinned, but didn't say anything when his fingers brushed against the tip of her wings. The move put his face above hers and it was the most natural thing in the world to crane her neck upward, silently begging for his kiss. He gave her his lips, sliding his tongue into her mouth at the same time as he pistoned his cock back into her pussy, and he swallowed the little whimpers of pleasure she couldn't help making as he fucked her fast and hard.

It was only a few strokes later that their breathing became too labored to maintain the kiss and Bram's head fell to the side while Twyla gasped for air. Before she could even catch her breath, he caught the tendon on the side of her neck with his teeth, biting

just hard enough to trigger some sort of pain-pleasure nerve she didn't know she had. At the same time, he slammed into her one last time, setting off the most powerful orgasm she'd ever experienced.

Colored stars filled the grove around them as Twyla screamed, and her pussy clamped down on his cock. That must have done it for him—she felt his whole body tense even further, then with one final thrust, he held himself deep and came, the warm, wet spurt of his seed jetting into her still-pulsating womb. The eroticism of the moment sent her over another peak and she strained against her bonds and cried his name as the stars exploded in front of her eyes brighter than ever before. The sensation was so overwhelming that the world faded to dark.

Chapter Two

Holy shit, she'd passed out. Bram had enough strength, barely, to push himself up with his arms and not collapse on top of Twyla. She was so damn tiny he'd probably suffocate her, and that would not be a good way to end what had turned out to be a pretty fucking good evening. Though he still wished he'd had a chance to take the asshole satyrs apart with his bare claws. And maybe teeth.

He pushed up to his knees, then used one hand to brush her tangled blonde curls away from her face. He trailed a finger down to the two small puncture marks on her throat. They were tiny wounds, meant to mark rather than draw blood, and the hormones in his saliva made sure they were already healed shut. What the hell had he been thinking? He'd never bitten a lover before in his life. That was strictly a mating ritual for dragonkind.

Now that he could breathe, could think again, he realized he had to get Twyla out of here. Those cuffs were iron and a lot of the Fae were susceptible to the stuff. It was probably draining her strength even while she was unconscious. He slid off the boulder and examined the cuffs that bound her hands. Swearing at the satyrs, he let his claws out and used one talon to pick the lock on the left cuff. He swore some more when he peeled it away and saw the red, angry burn that circled her pale, tender skin. He released the cuff chain from the longer one that circled the boulder, then climbed back onto the rock and pulled Twyla into his lap to remove the other bracelet. By the time he was done, she'd come to and was smiling up at him.

"Thank you."

He grunted, not sure if she was thanking him for freeing her or for the sex. "You okay?"

She giggled and licked her lips. "Marvelous." She stretched, causing the lower edge of her wing to rub along his cock, which had only gone down to half-mast in the first place. Then she winced. "Okay, a little sore, but I can live with that."

"You've some pretty nasty burns from the iron on your wrists. And I'd like to take a look at those wings in better light, make sure they aren't torn from the rock."

Her eyes darted away and she bit her lower lip. "Busted, huh?"

"Fraid so, princess. On the up side, I won't need to mess with your memory about seeing mine. What are you anyway? Faery? Pixie? Sprite? You're definitely not a dragon."

"Pixie," she answered in a tiny voice. Then she shivered.

There weren't a lot of pixies running around the mortal realm. They tended to be a bit too flighty for things like jobs and mortgages, but Bram supposed there were exceptions to every rule. He shook off the thought. He could worry about that later. Right now, this little pixie was cold and that was something Bram had the power to do something about. He gathered her close in his arms and sent a warm breath down her spine. Sometimes there were advantages to being a half-dragon.

"Mmm. That was nice." She snuggled into his embrace like she belonged there. "I suppose my clothes are completely trashed, aren't they?"

"Pretty much. Can you conjure yourself some more?" He couldn't remember exactly which magicks went with which branch of the Fae.

She wiggled in his lap 'til her hands were free and her face was no longer burrowing into his chest. Her eyes closed and her lips moved, but nothing else happened.

"Apparently not. The iron cuffs probably sapped things for a while."

She cuddled back against his chest, which Bram had to admit, didn't bother him a bit. Well, it bothered part of him, but only because his cock was starting to think about round two. But then she yawned and he knew he was going to have to wait. It didn't

for a second occur to him that this might have been a one-shot deal. There was no doubt in his mind that he'd be seeing Twyla again. Right now though, he needed to get her somewhere warm, somewhere he could take care of the burns and abrasions.

"Okay, princess, time to get moving." Without dislodging her from his arms, he stood and stepped down from the boulder. "Can you stand?"

"Sure." She unfolded her legs and obediently stood on the ground. After one shaky moment when she grabbed his arm for support, she seemed to be fine, so he let her go and took a few seconds to pull on his pants and step into his shoes. She picked up a small purse that had been dropped beside the rock and he handed her a pair of flip-flops, which were apparently the only things she'd had on that the bastard satyrs had left intact. Then he lifted her back into his arms.

"I could walk, you know." But she wrapped her arms around his shoulders and nestled her face into his neck, so he figured the protest was just for show.

"I can move faster, unless you think you can fly. My shirt's a few hundred yards back up the path. Then neither of us will be in trouble if a cop spots us."

She didn't bother to answer and he was already moving. In just a few seconds he was at the bend in the path where he'd dropped his shirt. He set her on her feet and pulled the blousy white linen over her head, though it almost seemed like a sin to cover those curves. "Nice dress."

She laughed at his remark. "It does come to my knees. Thanks."

"Don't mention it. You have a car around here someplace?"

"No. Cars have too much iron in them. I can ride in them, but they never seem to work right when I try to drive. I took the bus."

"Okay, mine's not far. Come on."

* * * * *

She didn't know why she was suddenly apprehensive about getting in a car with him. She'd just let him fuck her literally senseless and all he'd done when she passed out was free her from her bonds. Shaking off her doubts, she didn't demur when he clasped her hand and started walking toward one of the many parking areas scattered throughout the park.

The shirt smelled like him, strong and masculine with a touch of something unfamiliar. It was the sexiest scent she could imagine and she knew it also clung to her skin where they'd touched, almost as if he'd marked her with it. She inhaled deeply and the potency of his musk had her creaming again, as did the stickiness of his semen drying on her thighs. What was it about him that turned her into a nymph? Pixies were pretty sexual beings, but it had never been like this before. Even now, her fingers tingled where they interlaced with his.

"Where do you live?" Was his voice always deep and gravelly like this, or was he still as turned on as she was? A glance down at the front of his pants had her licking her lips. Oh yeah. They were just getting started!

She gave him directions to her apartment in Manayunk while they walked. With every step she let some part of her body brush against his and had to hold herself back from jumping him there on the trail. When they got to the secluded parking area it was still and deserted, with just one car in the corner. She watched as Bram sniffed the air, as if making sure there was no one around.

"No satyrs. No humans. Good." His voice was a rumble, the pitch so deep she could barely hear it—and she had keener hearing than a human. He planted his feet slightly in front of him and leaned back so he was not quite sitting against the front fender of a big vintage muscle car. Then he yanked her into his arms.

She whimpered and practically climbed up his body trying to get her lips on his. Why'd he have to be so damned tall? He must have got the hint, because his strong hands slid up under the oversized shirt and palmed her ass cheeks, then lifted her up, crushing her breasts to his sculpted chest and settling her dripping pussy right over the

enormous bulge in his pants. She ground shamelessly against it while they kissed, his lips and tongue devouring hers.

“Goddess, are all pixies as hot as you?” He leaned back, taking her weight on his body, and slid one hand into the crack of her ass, then forward, slipping and sliding through her wet folds.

“Don’t think so.” She dropped kisses all over his cheek and neck while she squirmed, trying to get those long, talented fingers into her cunt. “I’m not even normally like this. I mean, sex is fun, but I’ve never needed it like this. If you don’t fuck me again soon, I’ll go insane.”

“Pretty sure I’m already there, princess.” He bit down on her throat again, but this time without the fangs. At the same time he stuffed his middle finger into her pussy and wiggled it, finding the knot of nerves that set her screaming. When she started to come he took his thumb, which was slick with her cream, and ran it in a small circle around her anus.

“Yes!” She choked out the word, barely able to breathe. When his thumb breached her sphincter and went into her ass, she convulsed, coming so hard she was afraid something was going to break.

He waited ‘til she stopped coming before he shifted her enough to reach the straining zipper of his pants. As soon as she figured out what he was doing, she slid down him, dropped her feet to the ground and replaced his hands with her own. Then very carefully she slid one hand inside his waistband to protect him from the zipper’s teeth as she worked it down. He bucked against her hand and gripped the edge of the car with both hands. His spine bowed out as he leaned back over the hood. When his pants dropped down around his ankles, she pulled back a second just to take in the view. The single light in the parking area gleamed off his hairless chest and the glistening tip of his magnificent penis. His cock was pointed up at the stars with the head already weeping.

He'd gone down on her on the rock, now it was her turn. She leaned forward and rested her hands on his chest. "Stay still."

His odd, intense, otherworldly eyes bored into hers. "Whatever you want, princess. As long as it's *soon!*"

She hummed low in her throat. "Oh yeah!" Then she leaned forward and nipped at one bronze nipple.

"Fuck!" She felt his cock grow impossibly larger against her belly.

"We'll get to that," she assured him. Then she sucked his other nipple into her mouth and swirled her tongue around it.

"Damned straight, we will!" His breathing was harsh, fractured, and she could tell it was taking a whole lot of willpower for him to keep his hands on the car and not move.

She trailed a line of kisses down his belly, rimmed his navel with her tongue. When she reached the sparse nest of hair above his cock, the only body hair he seemed to have, she inhaled deeply, soaking in the scent of his musk mingled with the traces of her cream and his cum from before. "Stars, yes!" She had to taste that cock, never mind that she knew he wasn't all going to fit in her mouth.

He bucked against the car, his hips coming away from the fender as she licked her way up his shaft, tasting every inch of his skin along the way. She'd never been with anyone so big before and she wasn't about to waste any of it. She wrapped one hand around the shaft, unsurprised when her fingers didn't touch in the back. Her other hand slid downward to cup each of his heavy balls in turn. She was delighted to find them drawn up tight and taut.

The tip of her tongue circled the flared head of his penis, tracing the underside of the glans before running up along the slit and licking up the thick drops of pre-cum that beaded on the tip. His taste was salty and slightly bitter but hit her like a drug, making her pussy clench and her knees wobble. Unable to wait another instant, she sucked the entire head into her mouth, wrapped both hands around his shaft and squeezed.

Bram literally saw stars in front of his eyes when she slurped his cock into her hot little mouth. She set up a rhythm with her hands, rubbing up and down in time with the swirls of her tongue and the suction of her throat. Her cheeks hollowed as she sucked and he had to lock his knees in place so he didn't slide down the side of the car. He was pretty sure his claws were going to leave marks in the hood of his prized possession, but right now he couldn't bring himself to care, not when Twyla was doing her best to swallow his cock. He felt it bang against the back of her throat and she gave a pleasant hum, sending waves of vibrations through his penis and all the way up his spine.

He wasn't going to last this time either. Fucking her mouth was another way to mark her as his and every cell in his body was determined to do that, with or without his brain's consent. She kept making little noises as she sucked him hungrily, like she couldn't wait to taste a mouthful of semen. Her plump, sexy lips caressed the outer rim of his glans and her busy fingers were hitting every nerve ending up and down the length of his cock. He groaned out loud as his balls drew up even tighter, preparing to spurt down her lovely throat.

"Fuck, yes!" He heard the screech of metal as he pulled his hands away from the hood. He retracted his claws and relaxed his hands so he could bury them in her hair. He gently gripped her scalp and held her head in his lap. He tugged a little on the hair, wanting her to know he was paying attention and she moaned again, deep in her throat, all the way around his cock. He pushed in a little farther, stretching her jaw, and pumped his hips.

"Now!" Even he wasn't sure if it was a command or a warning, in case she wanted to pull back before he erupted. Instead, she took her hands off his cock and dug them into the muscle of his ass, holding him close and deep. She swallowed, forcing his cock farther down her throat and swallowed again, the muscles of her throat milking his penis. That was all it took and he let out a full dragon roar as he shot down her throat,

spurting jet after jet of cum into her mouth. Each time she swallowed it triggered another spurt until, completely spent, he fell back onto the hood.

Or so he thought. He learned otherwise when she crawled up his chest and impaled herself onto his still semi-hard cock. Her wordless little cry and the sudden spasming of her vaginal walls around him had him fully erect again in a second. Damn, they were liable to kill each other before they ever even made it out of the fucking parking lot!

Bram stopped driving his cock into her and lay on his back on the hood of his car with a limp pixie sprawled on his chest.

"You okay for now?" He wasn't, not even close, but he figured he could just about make it to Manayunk before he fucked her again. He wasn't even going to pretend it wouldn't happen again the second he got her behind a closed door.

"Yeah." Her answer was little more than a sigh against his chest.

"Then let's get you home, princess."

"Kay." She stretched and peeled herself off him, grinning when their skin stuck together for a second. "Or we could go to your place. I've got a roommate."

"My place it is, then. If you don't mind."

"I know I should just go home and try to sort out what the hell is happening here. But I don't want to, Bram. I want to be with you tonight, wake up with you in the morning."

"Hell yeah!" He had an idea about what was going on, but didn't think she was ready to hear it just yet. For that matter, he wasn't sure he was ready to acknowledge it yet either. He hopped down from the car and pulled his pants up, while she smoothed his shirt back around her curves.

He handed her into the passenger side and was pleased when she scooted across the wide bench seat to sit in the middle even though he knew it was a bad idea with his control the way it was. He slid in beside her and dropped a kiss onto her forehead.

"Over there. The way this is going, we don't dare risk touching while I'm trying to drive. I want us in one piece when we get to my place."

Which reminded him of her wrists and wings, damn it! She moved to the far side of the seat with a rueful chuckle. "Yeah, I guess that's a good idea."

"First, give me your hands."

She paused in the middle of strapping on her seat belt. "Why?"

"Dragons can get kind of rough during sex. So our saliva has a hormone in it that reduces pain and promotes healing." She held out both hands and he took them one at a time and swiped his longer-than-human tongue gently around the abrasions on her wrists. "Better?"

"Just drive. Fast." She slumped back in her seat, breathing heavily.

"How do you know the mayor?" He figured it would take about fifteen minutes to get to Old Town. Ten if there wasn't a lot of traffic. That was plenty of time to get to know each other, wasn't it?

"He's put together this task force of paranormal advisors. It's a cool idea and it's soothed out a lot of the racial tensions in the city, even if most of the humans don't know we exist." She paused and tipped her head. "I wonder why he doesn't have you on it."

"Because I'm on his other task force. Paranormal Enforcement. He uses us if somebody's getting too out of line. I'm actually a paid member of the police department, but we report directly to the mayor."

"That's cool." She nodded. "So he made you come to the party too. What were you doing in the park after?"

"Looking for my sister Dana and her coven."

"Me too. The coven, I mean. My friend Katie is a witch. I think I've met a woman named Dana at one of her parties. Is she a half-dragon, too?"

Bram nodded, merging into traffic at the highest speed he considered safe. "Different mothers, but both human." Time to change the subject. He didn't really want to discuss any more about dragon family relationships. "So what are you doing in the human realm? Pixies don't come over here all that often."

He saw her shrug from the corner of his eye. "I like it here. Sometimes the Pixie Court can be kind of—confining."

"Court, huh? So you really are a princess."

"Yeah. Queen Mab is my mother. Since you've been calling me princess, I assumed you knew."

"Nope. I didn't. But when I saw you in that crappy witch costume, my first thought was that Pendleton had goofed. He should have cast you as a fairy princess."

"Not fairy, but close." She gave another little laugh. "Just like I knew you weren't a real vamp, but you were just as dangerous."

"Never to you, baby. You know that, don't you?"

Maybe not physically. He might like it rough, but she knew he'd never really inflict damage on a partner. But what about to her heart? Twyla chewed on her lower lip and stared out the windshield of the muscle car in silence. She'd never fallen for a guy like this—not ever. And even though she couldn't have pulled back from him if she'd wanted to—which she really didn't—the whole idea of a relationship was still almost as scary as the damned satyrs.

He parked in a small brick-paved lot in the oldest part of the city—a place where some of the streets were too narrow to accommodate a car. She loved this part of town, the mellow red brick of the buildings had always seemed so warm and cozy. Bram led her down one of the narrow lanes to a three-storey townhouse. The soft glow of the streetlamps showed a red-painted door and a bronze doorknocker in the shape of a dragon. She touched the metal sculpture, admiring the sleek lines that managed to convey both strength and courage.

"Truth in advertising?"

He laughed. "A bit. The humans just think it's a piece of artwork. And if any of the non-human bad guys come snooping around, I consider it fair warning. Nobody's tried to get past the wards on the place and break in yet, anyway."

He unlocked the door and drew her inside. A lamp glowed from the parlor off the tiny foyer, showing a comfortably furnished room in keeping with the three-hundred-year-old character of the house, but not fussily so. Before she could look any closer, Bram closed the front door behind him and scooped her up into his arms.

He took a few long strides into the parlor. "Not going to make it upstairs this time, princess."

"Good." She was already wet, just from sitting next to him in the car. She didn't want to wait.

After one deep, wet kiss, he set her down on a plush sofa then strode over to the fireplace, which already had logs and kindling waiting in the grate. He pulled back the screen and blew gently, his fiery breath igniting the newspapers and twigs. Then he replaced the screen and stood before the hearth on a thick, fluffy fake bearskin rug. "Come here."

She didn't even have to think about it. As she moved toward him, she pulled his shirt off over her head and tossed it aside. "Your wings are gorgeous." She'd seen them in the moonlight and the parking lot, but now the flickering flames reflected off their metallic bronze scales. They were bigger than hers, muscular, with pointed tips and tough, scaled membranes. She reached out a hand to touch the sleek folds, pleased when he shivered at her touch.

"So are yours. How badly do they hurt?" He took her by the shoulders and turned her around so he could examine them. His voice was low and resonant, thick with desire.

"Not much." They were pretty scraped up and more than a little bruised, but not seriously torn.

"Poor princess." He dropped little kisses and licks along her small dragonfly-shaped wings, the drug in his saliva soothing the sore spots. She looked down at her wrists and realized her burns were more than half healed already. Damn, he should bottle the stuff. She moaned when he took the sensitive tip of one wing into his mouth and laved it with his tongue. The pleasure it gave her was both relaxing and sexual. Meanwhile one of his hands snaked around her hip to palm her mound.

"I'd love to tie you up again, but I don't want to hurt your wrists." He licked up her spine between her wings. "So we'll save that for another night."

There was going to be another night? Thank the gods and goddesses! He could tie her up anywhere, any time he wanted. She even had some velvet-covered handcuffs he could use. But right now she wanted him inside her without anymore fun and games. Her legs gave out beneath her and she sank to her knees on the rug. "Now, Bram."

He followed her down, kneeling behind her. He bent his head to her ear to nuzzle and whisper. "Lean forward on your elbows."

Oh yeah! She bent forward at the waist and braced her elbows on the rug, which canted her ass upward. The fluffy rug teased her nipples as her breasts swung beneath her. Bram's hands gripped her hips and his rock-hard penis grazed her butt before he flexed his hips and drove inside her weeping pussy in one fierce thrust. He was so deep he seemed to fill up every bit of space inside her.

He leaned over and nipped the point where her neck met her shoulder. The sensation was so erotic and compelling she pushed back with her butt, driving his cock even deeper into her already-pulsing cunt and cried out his name.

"Twyla!" He straightened his spine and pounded his cock into her pussy, hard and fast and deep. She gripped the rug hard with her hands, rocking back against him as each stroke rubbed her hyper-sensitized nipples against the artificial fur. Another mini orgasm shook her body each time he filled her. "Take me inside you, Twyla. Take all of me."

“Everything,” she vowed. “Anything you want. Just keep fucking me like this forever.”

“Always!” She knew it was just sex talk, but she’d never wanted to believe anything more. “You.” Thrust. “Are.” Thrust. “Mine!” With one more deep thrust he sent them both over the edge into a screaming kaleidoscope of an orgasm and colored lights burst around the room like fireworks. Her pussy contracted hard to grip his penis tightly, trying to milk every drop of his hot, spurting seed. She whimpered when he pulled out after the first rush to pump himself with a fist, but it turned to a moan of pleasure when he cried out her name and sprayed the rest of his cum all over her back and wings and ass.

Chapter Three

She fell forward onto her arms, her pert little heart-shaped ass sticking way up into the air. He let go of his still-hard cock and used his tongue to spread her juices and his semen around her vulva, then all the way up to her puckered rosebud sphincter.

"Temptress." He used one hand to rub the head of his cock up and down the crack of her ass. "You're even wet back there."

"So do it." She wiggled her ass, tormenting him even further. "Just be careful, okay? You're not exactly small."

"Be very sure, princess." He leaned over and let his hot breath caress her throat. This was it, the final step in the mating ritual. He'd marked her neck with his teeth and her skin with his seed. He'd come down her throat and spilled into her womb. If he fucked her in the ass, he'd be bound to her forever. And every fragment of his being wanted that, wanted those bonds with a desperation he'd never dreamed it was possible to feel.

But he discovered that he couldn't make her his without her permission. The choice had to be hers.

"If we do this, it's the same as a marriage vow to a dragon." He was so hard he hurt, so aroused his words were barely intelligible. "So be very sure you want to be a dragon's bride, princess."

"Are – are you proposing to me?"

"I guess I am." And if she didn't say yes, he wasn't sure he'd survive.

"You've never done anal before? Is that what this is about?" Her tone was curious, but her breathing was as ragged with desire as his own. "You can fuck my ass without marrying me. I want you in every way I can get you, Bram. Even there."

"Goddess!" He hadn't thought he could get any harder, but he was. "It isn't that. I've played more sexual games than you can imagine. But dragons have this whole sequence of things we do when we find our perfect mate. And princess, we've already gotten to all but this one. This is the last step. Afterward it will be too late to change your mind."

"Perfect mate?"

Shit, had he really said that out loud? Too late to take it back now. "Yeah. Fucking perfect. For me. If you let me complete the ritual, I'll never be able to let you go. And both half-dragons and pixies live for a really long time."

"So I can look forward to several hundred years of your alpha-male bossiness?" She rolled so swiftly he didn't have time to react. Then her wide, tear-bright green eyes were looking up into his.

"Yeah. I'll try to control it, but I doubt I'll always succeed." He'd try to be an understanding mate, but it was his nature to be dominant, protective. And she was a pixie, a being who needed to be free. What the hell was he thinking to fall for her?

She pursed her lips and narrowed her eyes. "Is this something you want, Bram? Or just some physiological thing you think you need?"

"It does involve a physical reaction for me, but it's not involuntary, and it's not arbitrary. It's happening to me now because I want *you*." How could she doubt it? "From the moment I laid eyes on you in that damn witch outfit, I knew you were something special. Yeah, there's some weird biochemical or maybe metaphysical link between us. But it's not just physical. I like you, Twyla. I already know you're brave, you're a fighter and you have a hell of a sense of humor. You won't let me run roughshod over you and you'll give every bit as good as you get. But if you don't want me, aren't willing to have me as a part of the rest of your life, I'll walk away right now, even if it kills me."

Tears leaked down her cheeks but she made no move to wipe them away. Every bit of her attention was focused on Bram's strong, handsome face. His fangs were out a little with his pupils slightly elongated. She wondered abstractly if he knew that happened during intensely emotional moments—how sexy it looked.

She'd never planned to marry. Most pixies weren't into long-term commitments. She'd come all the way from her mother's kingdom just to gain her freedom. But to deny Bram—to give him up—would hurt more than if someone ripped the very wings from off her back.

Goddess help her, she'd gone and fallen in love with a half-dragon. Well, at least neither of them would freak when their kids came out with wings. She looped her arms up around his neck.

"I accept."

"Twyla!" His mouth crushed down onto hers, his lips hard and fierce. "Thank you, my love, thank you!" Then his tongue slid into her mouth like it belonged there, which she supposed it did. He stroked it along her own and caressed the inside of her cheeks and lips before thrusting in and out in an imitation of sex.

He called her his love! Had he meant it? She suckled his tongue, loving the taste of him, sweet and salty all at the same time. They ate at each other, drank in each other's passion, 'til Twyla couldn't wait any longer to have him penetrate her in that one final way. She wrenched her lips from his and drew in a long, shuddering breath.

"Take me, Bram." He loosened his grip enough to let her roll back to her knees. "My dragon!"

"Goddess, you have the most beautiful ass!" He used his hand to spread her lubrication, making sure her anus was slippery and wet. He dipped his thumb into the rim of her sphincter, ensuring she was wet inside as well. Then he leaned over and licked at it with his tongue. The pointed tip darted inside her hole and Twyla nearly leapt up off the rug at the intensity of the sensation.

"Take me!" She wanted him inside her in every way possible. In her mind, in her heart, even in her ass. She quivered, trying not to move as he scooped some of her own cream to lubricate his penis. The sound of him stroking himself was one of the most erotic things she'd ever heard.

"With pleasure, princess!" First one finger, then two penetrated her anus, stretching her wide. The hormone from his tongue must have prevented her from feeling pain. It didn't hurt at all when he added a third thick digit, then a fourth. She was breathing in little gasps and moans, but she didn't think it was turning him off. Not judging by the size of the erection that replaced his fingers when he positioned the tip of his cock at the entrance to her ass.

"You're sure?" She'd have sworn his voice almost broke over the question.

"Completely. Claim me, dragon. I want to be yours."

"Forever?" She knew he was just trying to give her one last chance to come to her senses, but she had no desire to do so. If this was crazy, she wanted to stay insane for the rest of her life.

"Forever!" She pushed back against him, forcing the bulbous head of his cock partway into her ass. "Fuck me, damn it. Now!"

"Mine!" His roar shook the walls of the townhouse as he rammed himself home. She'd never been so stuffed, so filled, so — whole.

She'd never be a docile mate and he couldn't be prouder of her.

He held himself still, deep inside her ass. "Are you okay?" He could hardly believe she'd taken him all in one thrust, though his slippery saliva had probably helped ease the way.

"Goddess, yes!" Her hips bucked against his groin. "But I need you to move!"

And that was all it took. Her sweet little rosebud hole gripped him tighter than he could with his own fist and the heat of her roared through his veins. Her wetness and

his hormones provided enough lube to allow him to slide, but not enough to dull the magnificent friction. He started slowly, gliding out until just the tip remained inside, then pushing himself back home. His claws gripped her hips, holding her in place for his strokes. She'd probably have small puncture wounds when they were done, but right now she didn't seem to mind. Something deep inside him roared with triumph at the thought of her wearing ten more of his marks.

It was impossible to hold back, to keep it slow. Not when her internal muscles sheathed him so tightly, when her broken little cries accelerated with every thrust. He pistoned harder, faster and deeper and when he felt his balls draw up tight to his body, he bent over her and pounded into her even more passionately.

When the explosion came, it was the strongest one he'd ever had. He was pretty damn sure he'd blown the top of his head off. Twyla screamed and shattered around him as he flooded her ass with semen, her muscles clenching him, prolonging his orgasm, wringing every last drop of moisture from his spent and exhausted body.

When it was finally over and even her twitching aftershocks had subsided, he pulled out and collapsed beside Twyla, wrapping her in his arms. This was where she belonged and he was never letting go of her again. As a half-dragon, he'd never been totally sure that the mating frenzy would happen for him, but now that it had, he couldn't be happier.

"We could go upstairs to bed," he whispered several minutes later, when he'd remembered how to breathe again. He smoothed her tangled curls away from her pink and sweat-dampened face.

She stirred and stretched, smiling up at him. "Sounds like a plan. I think I could sleep for a week."

"You've had a busy night." First there was the party and then the park. He thought about the satyrs and had to fight down a murderous rage. If he ever saw those assholes again, they were dead. And yet without them, he might not have found Twyla, at least not tonight. So he hugged her close and set the rage aside.

"You too." She ran one tiny hand through his hair, then tapped him irreverently on the nose.

"Best night of my life," he told her. And it was no less than the truth.

She turned to face him, her smile warm and wonderful, her glorious green eyes brimming with emotion. "I love you, Bram. I know pixies are supposed to be fickle and flighty, but I'm not like that. I can't believe it happened this fast, but I've fallen in love with you."

"Good." Goddess, were those tears clogging his throat? That was not supposed to happen. Grown half-dragons did not cry, especially not from happiness. He distracted himself by licking the small claw marks on her hips. "Sorry about those."

"Don't be." Her grin turned sultry. "I like knowing I bring out the wild side of you."

Could any woman be more perfect for a dragon's mate? Bram didn't think so. He started to tell her that when he heard music blaring from her purse.

"It's Katie." Twyla knew her friend would be worried, so she sat up and reached for the bag. She pulled out her phone, flipped it open and spoke. "Hey, Kate. Sorry I missed the ritual."

"Are you all right?" Katie was a worrywart.

"Never been better." She laughed, a sound Katie couldn't mistake as anything but sexual satisfaction. "And tell your friend Dana her brother is just fine too." Incredibly fine as a matter of fact. She reached out with one finger and traced a line down Bram's left wing.

"Thank the goddess! We were worried about both of you. Umm... You do know that Dana and her brother aren't totally – human, don't you?"

"Oh yeah. But since I'm not either, it isn't a problem."

"Did you run into him at the park?"

"Yeah. But it turned out we'd already met at the mayor's party tonight, by the way. Who knew he had a team of paranormal cops as well as our advisory task force?"

"Really? I only met Bram a couple of times, didn't know what he did. I'm glad you didn't make it to the grove, though. There was a group there ahead of us, so we had to move our ritual to Lexa's garden. I tried to call you." One of the witches in Katie's coven had a big estate out in Bala Cynwyd.

"I had my phone off for the party and must have forgotten to turn it back on."

"Well, I'm glad you're ok. I'm pretty sure that they were doing a fertility ritual, so we cleared out pretty quickly."

"Fertility ritual?" She managed not to shriek, but her hand flew up to her mouth. Bram grinned and raised one eyebrow in question. Lying stretched out on his side on the furry rug, he was still the sexiest damn thing she'd ever seen, even if she was totally worn out.

"Yeah. Anybody who hung around that grove tonight had better be using double or triple protection for a while. It was pretty powerful stuff. I could sense it from like a hundred yards away. So we split."

"I see." Stars and moon, she and Bram hadn't used anything! Not on the rock, not in the parking lot, not here on the rug! "Anyway, Katie, I'll stop by tomorrow to grab some clothes, okay? I think I'm going to spend a few days here with Bram."

Yeah, like the rest of her life. But she wanted to tell Katie in person, with Bram by her side. And they'd have to go tell her mother, as well. Wouldn't that be fun? Mab was not likely to be overjoyed at having a dragon for a son-in-law.

She hung up the phone and turned to Bram, her mouth completely dry. It took a second to get her voice to work. "You heard?"

"Somebody did a fertility rite in the grove?"

Twyla nodded, her hand going down to cover her womb. "Do you think..."

Bram shifted and sat up to pull her into his lap and take her in his arms. His hand slid down to cover hers. "It could happen," he said agreeably. "Would you mind?"

"I—I don't think so." Her mind whirled and she clung to him for stability in the storm. "I just wasn't thinking about it so soon."

"Then we won't worry about it one way or the other. I love you, Twyla. That isn't going to change, not now, not ever. I'd like to have kids with you, someday. Now or later doesn't matter. I watched you tonight with those orphans. You'd make a marvelous mother."

And he would be a fantastic dad. Whenever it happened. She smiled and laid her cheek against his chest. "I suppose it's too late to worry about it anyway. I'm either pregnant or I'm not and we'll find out soon enough. But the mayor is going to have kittens, after he's tried so hard to keep his two groups of non-humans apart."

"Pendleton will cope." Without shifting her from his arms, Bram stood and carried her to the stairs. "Time to go to bed, princess. We've got plans to make tomorrow."

"Yep." After a quick shower together, she snuggled into his chest, not wanting to be anywhere else in the world. He took her to what was obviously the master bedroom, set her down carefully beside the big, rumpled bed.

"You know the black comforter and curtains are going to have to go," she teased. "The parlor was fine, but this room just screams 'bachelor pad'."

"Even the silk sheets?" He drew back the duvet to reveal glossy black sheets. She allowed him to pull her down beside him, felt the smooth glide of the fabric against her skin and smiled.

"They come in other colors, fang-boy."

His chuckle was warm and seductive. He pulled her full-length against him and kissed the top of her head. "I can live with that. There's a room across the hall that will work as a nursery if we need it."

Twyla yawned. They probably would, if not right away, then eventually. "We'll worry about that tomorrow." She glanced at the clock. "Or more accurately, later today."

"Now my beautiful mate needs her rest," he agreed, then yawned himself. "And so do I. Glad I'm not on duty tomorrow morning."

"Me too." She relaxed into him, reveling in the feel of his hot, hard body lying so peacefully next to hers. "Love you."

He bent and pressed an exquisitely sweet kiss on her lips. "I love you, Princess Twyla, with every bit of my body, heart and soul. This has been the best Samhain ever."

Happy tears leaked from the corners of her eyes but he kissed them away. "I want you again already, woman. So if you want to sleep, you'd better tell me to go away."

"Don't go away, Bram." She shifted over him, then lowered herself to capture his cock with her cunt, loving the feel of him filling her, completing her. He groaned as she slid down to fully take him in and she looked into his incredible eyes. "Don't ever go away."

About the Author

Cindy Spencer Pape has been, among other things, a banker, a teacher, and an elected politician, though she swears she got better. Her degrees are in zoology, and she currently works in environmental education, when she can fit it in around writing. She lives in southern Michigan with her husband, two teenage sons, a dog, a lizard, and various other small creatures, all of which are easier to clean up after than the three male humans.

Cindy welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her author bio page at www.ellorascave.com.

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