



MEGAN ROSE

The Fellorians:
Thirst for Revenge

Red Rose™ Publishing

Fellorian
Vampires 1:
Thirst For Revenge
By
Megan Rose

Dedication

To my parents.

For all their love and support.



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Author's Note

Fellorian Vampires are time travelers. They inhabit their own realm known as Felloria. This realm is ruled by a monarchy, in conjunction with The Death Council, a board of 12 Highborn Fellorians who ensure the smooth running of the realm. All subjects are loyal to the crown.

Unlike other vampires, they have adapted to live in the mortal world during daylight hours, although the night is still preferable to them. The majority of them have managed to curb their lust for human blood, relying instead on the blood of animals.

For the most part, they are a tranquil breed of vampire, usually employed as special peacekeeping envoys throughout the vampire world. Fellorians do not travel to the mortal world unless The Death Council or The Monarchy has specifically requested it.

Chapter One

The room pulsed with the sounds of cheering women and heavy bass music that was something akin to a throbbing jungle beat. Dry ice fog flowed softly across the stage as the man clad only in black, skin-tight trousers and a bandit's mask struck out the beat with a ferocious leather whip. He knew the methodical snap and crack were enough to send shivers down the spines of most of the women in the night club. Those distracted enough not to be looking his way soon found their attention caught by his taut, muscular frame, now taking complete command of the stage.

The women's hands picked up the rhythm and within seconds the whole room moved to the boom, boom of the beat. Satisfied that he now had the full attention of the women before him, he ceased moving the whip, allowing their concentration to fall on him and him alone. Instantly the seductive atmosphere escalated to fever pitch as the masked man slowly made his way to the front of the stage.

"Ladies," declared a female voice over the PA system. "Stormy Nights is proud to present—The Bandit."

The music became more sensual now and The Bandit began to move his hips in time to the rhythm, hypnotizing the women standing before him. Back and forth, back and forth, slowly mimicking the sex act. With each movement, his trousers stretched tantalizingly over his muscular thighs. The snug, silky material fitted him like a second skin. He knew it highlighted every sinewy muscle he possessed below the waist. As his groin continued to thrust, it would be impossible for them not to see his impressive cock nestled between his powerful thighs. With every forward motion he made, the material strained against him, cupping and caressing his thick bulge.

He knew that this was what they came here for, these mortal, power hungry women. They worked hard, uncomfortable hours all week: building empires, selling stocks, fighting corporate legal battles. By the time the weekend came they were hot, horny and in need of a release. They were sexual predators, as soon as they walked through the doors of Stormy Nights.

A sardonic smile played briefly on his lips. In the end, they were all brought down to his level. They too became the lone hunter, the night creature, only existing because they possessed a need within them that could not be satisfied. These human females came here for the long, hot promise of a look at his cock, for a few minutes of hard, tantalizing, visual stimulation, for their chance to imagine that it was a prelude to sex.

As one of the best in his business, The Bandit also knew that these women yearned for seduction. They needed to be teased slowly and deliciously, brought to the brink by his swaying hips and the throbbing tempo of the music. He knew exactly how to make a mortal woman seep her juices into silken underwear without even touching her. He knew the movements which would have her yearning for release, the ones which would have her slide her hands between her thighs, if only she were alone.

He moved around the stage now, working the room, just enough so that most of the women could gain a good view of him. His pelvis swayed rhythmically to the music and once more he began to crack his whip onto the floor. With every rise and fall of his arms, his biceps rippled, replicating the cogs in a well-oiled machine. Many might wonder how a man so large could move so gracefully--but move he did.

Each carefully timed step enabled him to scan the crowd. Every night he looked for her, anticipating the moment when they would finally meet. She would eventually come here, to a place like this. That was why he had been chosen for this mission; for his body, for his skill as a lover and for his proven reputation as ruthless killer. She would come because eventually she would need to feed, need to sate her hunger for sex and blood. And when that time came, he would be waiting.

Over time he had learned the fine art of patience. He had honed to perfection the requirement to wait. For most of them, he had waited months, for others, years. In the present case, it had been hundreds of years. Sent to modern day New York, he was here to slay a killer; the most wanted female in the history of his people. He could wait for her forever if he needed to, because waiting was what he did best. Waiting and killing.

The cavorting that he endured here in Stormy Nights felt ridiculous to him. Stripping every night seemed futile in many ways and a waste of his true resources. He was, after all, a trained assassin and had graduated best in his league. If the women who stood before him knew that, would they still stand so close?

What would possess them to stay and drool over a man who ripped out the hearts of some victims, slammed stakes through others and blasted yet more with silver bullets? Being the best for him meant he possessed the ability to adapt. And for some reason that he found vaguely amusing, he had adapted very well to being The Bandit. Most of the guys at Stormy Nights just waved their asses and flashed their cocks. But not him. He gave one hundred per cent to everything he did—and that included his nighttime employment at the private members-only club.

High rolling women paid big dollars to get into Stormy Nights and once they did, they were treated like queens. The champagne and anything else they wanted was readily available. If you could buy it, then Stormy Nights would sell it.

Everything had its price—everything except him. The Bandit was not for sale. He was here on a mission and no mortal female offering herself on a platter would distract him. He did his routine and then left on his Harley, like a phantom in the night.

Taking center stage, he spread his legs out wide and in one swift and well-practiced movement pulled away his silken trousers. The women howled in delight, like a pack of baying wolves. He saw their gazes instantly fall to his cock, some of them actually licking their lips in appreciation. Clearly they delighted in the fact that he was covered by nothing more than a wisp of a black satin pouch that barely restrained him.

His hair was as black as his mask, his eyes shone like emerald jewels and he possessed a body that women desired. He was indeed a banquet for the eyes and without a doubt the club's best asset. He let a sexy little smirk dance on his lips, sliding his large hand against his dark nipples and down to the flat plane of his stomach before reaching down to stroke himself. Slowly he brushed the palm of his hand against his obviously lengthening cock. It was a simple movement, but it transfixed the women before him.

Dropping swiftly to the floor, he began to pump up and down, his arms straight, his muscles taut. Not a woman in the room missed the blatant sexual message that he gave out. Each rise of his torso revealed a tantalizing glimpse of

his satin covered shaft. For a few brief moments, he knew, they were all imagining just how it would feel to be beneath his magnificent body, what it would feel like to have him pumping in and out of them.

By the time he rose gracefully from the stage floor, the women had reached the point of hysteria. He knew what they wanted and yet every time he still asked the question. It was all part of the routine.

“Are you ready, ladies?” he called out to them.

The screams and whistles that reached his ears told him all he needed to know. He turned his back to them and swiftly pulled away the pouch, tossing it over his shoulder and into the fray of eager women. Their howls of delight were ear splitting. As he stood there naked, the lights dropped to a dim glow, with a soft spotlight caressing his body. He briefly turned to face the audience, an air of smugness gracing his high cheekbones and sensuous mouth. Gasps and whimpers of delight greeted his ears as the women cast their eyes down to his swollen cock. With one last crack of his whip, the lights fell to blackness.

Though it was a frustratingly brief glimpse of his full magnificence, the women bore no disappointment. Many, in fact, had been pushed past the limits of their already heightened states of arousal. Tonight, however, he too possessed some modicum of satisfaction. On his last turn towards the audience, he had seen the female. A small group of mortal women accompanied her, but he had seen her

never-the-less. Her black aura was invisible to all but him, her evil intent only there for the likes of him to see.

With grim satisfaction he knew that she would be contacting him soon, of that there was no doubt. He possessed everything that a woman like her desired. His cock and his blood would be all she required. She could feed off him for weeks, maybe longer if she did it slowly. Yes, he thought smugly to himself, he was too good to resist. Tonight, he vowed. Tonight Valendera, the once high priestess, would die by the hand of Marcus, chief assassin of the Fellorian Vampires.

Chapter Two

Valendera's eyes lit up at the sight of her lover striding purposefully across the crowded nightclub towards her. Kayla's body was a walking work of art. Even covered in a burgundy business suit, she still looked magnificent. Her full breasts swayed subtly under the jacket allowing Valendera's well-trained eye to see that she wore no bra, just a camisole. Her hair hung loose, falling in a long sable cascade down her back.

Each step that Kayla took towards her, allowed Valendera to absorb every detail. Her hands itched to run her fingers through her lover's hair, to burn kisses along her smooth throat and down to those weighty breasts in which she found so much pleasure. Her clit began to swell as she wriggled in her seat, her nipples growing hard at the thought of all the pleasures to be gained in Kayla's exquisite perfection. She could feel a growing dampness between her thighs that even the sexy male dancer with his green fuck-me eyes and his come-and-get-it cock had not been able to call forth.

"Kayla my love, you've just missed the most magnificent cock. Let me get it for you as a present," she purred, her eyes continuing to devour her lover.

Kayla sat down next to her, caressing Valendera's cheek with a swift kiss.

“Not tonight, Val.” She leaned in closer, fingering Valendera’s silky blonde mane. “I want your hot little pussy all to myself.”

Valendera smiled, her lips moist with want. “Of course, my sweet--but at least have a look at it. We could always invite the owner to join us one evening.”

Kayla placed her hand in Valendera’s and pulled it beneath the table. She directed it to the apex of her own thighs and held her lover’s gaze.

“Can you feel how wet you make me, Val? Can you feel the heat in my cunt? That’s all for you baby, every hot sticky drip. I don’t want to share you,” she whispered, her deep blue eyes glistening with determination.

Despite the trouser suit Kayla wore, Valendera could indeed feel the heat seeping from her lover’s curl-covered pussy. It felt like pure torture to sit here in a crowded club when all she really wanted to do was delve her fingers deep inside that beautiful place and lick Kayla’s sweet nectar from her fingers. But she had felt compelled to come here.

Just the thought of the male dancers writhing before her had made her mouth water. She knew full well that for the right price some of the men at this particular club were available for more private viewings. It had been months since she had feasted and her strength was fading. Being with the beautiful Kayla was proving too distracting.

Though Val knew that she could feed from a male or a female, she always took a male. The thrill of taking his life's blood just as he was reaching orgasm always quenched her thirst. A throbbing cock inside her as its owner slowly faded away always made her come harder and longer.

Kayla apparently sensed her disappointment. "You can look, Val, but don't touch. Ask him to the apartment if you must. He can dance for you, but that's all."

Valendera smiled and attracted the attention of a nearby host. The young man came over immediately, as she'd known he would. She was a regular at the club and a well-known big tipper. "Make The Bandit aware that his presence would be gratefully appreciated at my home later this evening," she requested in husky tones.

"I'm sorry madam, but he only works here. He doesn't usually undertake any extra work."

A flicker of annoyance sparkled in Valendera's eyes. "Well, you'll just have to explain to him that this will be a strictly pleasurable invitation. Nothing at all like work." She reached into her purse and handed him a hundred dollar bill. "You'll do that for me, won't you?"

The young man bowed his head, "Of course, Madam. Consider it done."

Valendera rose from the table, her companions following suit. "It's time to go to one of my special parties, ladies. I've just ordered us the best cock in town."



At close to two in the morning, Marcus made his way to the underground parking lot. The club was still open, but Marcus had more important work to do. He had received his invitation from Valendera hours ago, but there was no way he would go rushing into this one. He needed to be totally prepared. It was imperative that he get this right.

The Death Council would brook no excuses if he should fail. He knew when he had signed up for Special Missions that failure would mean instant death-- though perhaps instant was not the correct word in this case. It was well known that failure resulted in a slow, painful and often humiliating death for those in his line of work. It was not a possibility that Marcus felt willing to risk.

Marcus noted how the florescent lights were unusually dim this evening, but was for once, rather thankful. Though he had adapted to many of the mortal ways, bright light was still something of a shock to his system. He shouldered his backpack, reaching into his jeans pocket for the keys to his Harley.

Distracted momentarily by the task in hand, the vampire assassin was more than a little startled when a blow from behind forced him onto his stomach. The weight that straddled his back now held his head face down onto the cold concrete floor. He felt his backpack being ripped away from him as ice cool steel pressed against his face.

“I don’t carry money, pal. You’re mugging the wrong guy,” he managed to gasp out. The blow had really winded him. Who ever he was, his assailant must be built like an outhouse.

“It isn’t your money that I want, stud muffin,” purred a distinctly female voice.

Oh, shit. Somehow, he preferred a mugger to a psycho female stalker. The other guys at Stormy Nights had warned him about obsessive female fans. But Marcus had so far managed to evade them.

“Hey, if it’s a date you wanted, all you had to do was ask,” he tried to joke.

But the psycho bitch was having none of it. She pressed the blade closer to his skin. Enough was enough. Gathering his strength, Marcus lifted his head, bucked against his assailant and threw her onto her back, causing her to loose her grip on the knife.

She kicked up against his shins, giving herself a chance to stand while he recovered. Her elbow came out to strike his stomach, but he was ready for her this time. Grabbing both her wrists in one large hand, he pulled her forwards and held onto her hair with the other hand, yanking her head downwards.

Pushing her roughly towards his Harley, he pinned himself against her back. The maneuver allowed him the time to assess his attacker and figure out his next move, before she made one on him. Forcing her over the side of the bike allowed

him even more time to think, yet also, he reluctantly conceded, to be far too distracted.

She was bent right over now, her shapely ass pressed up against him, her trim form proving an intriguing yet lethal weapon. Marcus heard oaths and promises of revenge uttered from her, but since her head was hanging over the other side of his bike, he couldn't make them out. He was just about to pull her head back with her hair and taunt her a little, when he noticed something fascinating on the nape of her neck. *So, she was a stalker with a tattoo was she?* But that was no ordinary tattoo. Moving closer to her body, Marcus felt his blood run cold as the reality of what he was looking at sunk into his brain.

The mark of the Golden Crest lay before him, almost hidden by the thick mane of the female's hair. Even a vampire as keen-sighted as he could have missed such a mark. Not only did she carry the symbol of a Highborn Fellorian, but she had displayed some of the moves of a Shadow Fighter. They took covert missions, where stealth and flying were key features of their attack.

"Let me go, you fool," her muffled voice demanded from the other side of his bike. She wriggled against him, her bottom grazing his groin.

Marcus chuckled. "I don't know about that, lady. I'm kind of enjoying things from this side of the bike." The female instantly stilled.

"I'm not here to get your rocks off, pretty boy. Now let me go."

Obligingly Marcus pulled up on her hair and got her back into an upright position. He quickly turned her over and spread his legs, trapping her against him again.

“I said let me go,” the woman spat out against gritted teeth. Her blue eyes flashed with fire and from the position that he held her in, he could practically feel her blood pounding through her body. Marcus leaned into her, causing her to arch her back against the leather seat of his Harley. Her breasts heaved against his chest as she fought to gain control.

Marcus swept his gaze across her sun kissed face. Not the usual alabaster skin of female Fellorians, he noted. However, there was something about her appearance that made him instantly think of home.

Her rich ebony hair reminded him of night skies, never seen by mortals. Her eyes were the deep blue of the Fellorian seas. She was a mixture of the mortal world and of his. Yet every sense that Marcus possessed told him that she was a pure breed. A pure fighter too, judging by the way she had caught him unawares.

His eyes traveled down her body, past her long, delicate throat, down to large round breasts, a flat stomach and the firm, trim thighs that were caught in the grip of his own. A cute little package wrapped in black leather. For the first time in months Marcus thought about sex. He felt himself harden at the thought of

taking this hellcat right now, over his bike. He grinned wickedly as her blue eyes widened. She had obviously felt his reaction.

“You can put your little package away pretty boy. That’s not why I’m here.”

Marcus raised an eyebrow quizzically. “Oh? I could have sworn you just pushed yourself against me, honey.”

She wriggled free and dusted herself down, retrieving her blade from the ground. “Don’t flatter yourself. We don’t have much time thanks to your dicking about, so you’d better listen to me. Get rid of all that mumbo jumbo shit in your bag and get your costume.”

Marcus’ eyes glistened with amusement “I thought sex was off the agenda?”

The female’s eyes blazed with cold fury as she flew at him, throwing him against the wall behind him. “I said listen to me. I know where you’re going tonight. And I know why. Believe me when I say that you’ll just need your costume. There are things that you don’t know about. Things I can’t tell you right now.”

“And why exactly should I listen to you?” Marcus asked.

“Because right now, stud muffin, I’m the only thing that’s keeping you alive tonight. You’ll be searched when you go into the apartment, and taking in all your Rambo gear will get you straight to hell. Do it my way and maybe you’ll live to flash another day.”

Marcus pushed her away, grabbed his backpack from the floor and walked over to the Harley. “You could just be lying, of course.”

She followed him back, her hands at her hips. “You’ve seen my mark--I wouldn’t lie. I’ve been sent here personally by a member of the royal family.”

Marcus sat astride his bike and eyed her skeptically. “Yeah, well I’m here on a government mission, lady. A *lone* government mission. I think someone would have told me if I was going to get an assistant.”

The female raised her hand to slap him, but he caught her wrist. “I’m no assistant to the likes of you, you two bit stripper,” she hissed.

“Now, now honey, we both know what I’m really capable of.” She stilled instantly. Of course she knew. His record as an assassin was more than exceptional and several centuries long. He watched her blue eyes flash with alarm. “Let’s stop with the name calling and let me do my job.”

“So far, your job has consisted of you flashing your cock and parading about in front of mortal women,” she accused. “For an assassin, you’re doing a pretty poor job.”

Marcus grinned. “So you took some time to take in the show. I hope you enjoyed it.”

“I barely looked. Unlike you, I take my work seriously.”

Marcus snapped. Jumping off the bike, he rushed at the female, forcing her into the side of a parked car.

“I take my work and my vows seriously. I do what I do, because I have to. It’s as simple as that,” he growled through gritted teeth.

“What’s simple is the fact that you’ve taken far too long to do your job. That’s why I’m here. There are very impatient vampires back home. They’re done with waiting. They need to see justice served.”

Pushing Marcus away from her, the female began to dust herself down. “But they don’t need to see you dead just yet, despite your inadequacies. Just remember what I’ve told you tonight, before you go any further with your plans. And if you can possibly manage to stay alive past the next few hours, maybe I’ll let you be *my* assistant.”

Marcus had never wanted to cause harm to a Highborn before, but this female seemed to be pushing all the wrong buttons in him tonight. Squeezing his hands against his thighs, he blotted out her insulting words and began to make his way back to his Harley.

“Well?” she questioned. “Are you going to take my advice or are you going to throw it all away?”

“Only time will tell Honey,” he called, as once more he seated himself on the bike. He watched in smug satisfaction as frustration spread itself all over her

pretty little face. It wouldn't do her any harm to sweat for a while, he told himself. Shadow Fighters always thought they had a right to ride rough shot all over everybody else. It was about time that one of them was taken down a peg or two.

Starting up the engine, he rode off into the night, leaving the black haired vixen swearing profusely after him.

Chapter Three

It was just as the female had told him. Marcus had indeed been searched, his backpack rifled through with a fine-toothed comb. After a personal escort up to the penthouse suite of the exclusive apartment block, he had been shown to a small bedroom where he had been told that he could change. So, his little miss firecracker had been right about one thing. What else did she know? Placing his bag on the bed, Marcus decided to explore his surroundings. He might have come without his mortal weapons, but he still had his Fellorian instincts, and they told him that it was best to know what he was up against as quickly as he could. He would change into his costume later, if need be.

He slowly opened the door to his room and looked to his left. The butler had abandoned his post by the door and from the sound of things, he was busy seeing to the needs of some female guests in the lounge area. Judging by their screams and raucous laughter Marcus was not the only form of entertainment available tonight. He looked to his right and found his attention drawn to a room at the end of the corridor. The door was ajar and candle light slowly flickered against the walls. Treading softly upon the carpet, Marcus made his way towards the door, feeling an inexplicable desire to look inside the room.

Soft female moans floated to his ears before he even reached the door. Could Valendera already be enjoying some poor mortal's blood? He cursed the female from the parking lot. He should have brought a concealed weapon tonight. Now it would be too late. Bracing himself for what he was about to discover, Marcus slowly pushed the door open just a fraction more and was stunned to see Valendera spread across the bed and enjoying the oral ministrations of a very naked, very female companion.

Though hate was a feeling he associated easily with Valendera, Marcus found it hard to deny that the woman was blessed with a voluptuously bewitching body. Her fair hair was scattered across pale silken pillows, her face upturned towards the ceiling, her eyes closed in a moment of pure sexual bliss. Her slim hips shimmied in small circular movements as she toyed lazily with her own breasts, kneading them with the palms of her hands.

Gently she began to pinch her nipples until they stood out dark and hard, ready for her lover to take over. Valendera raised her bottom slightly off the bedcover, her lover moving too, the contact between them never broken. As her arms slowly spread wide in complete abandonment, she was so vulnerable that Marcus again cursed the damned female from the parking lot. Now would have been the perfect moment.

A softly murmured word of encouragement shook Marcus from his thoughts. Valendera was enticing her lover to move more swiftly.

“Bite me harder, my love.”

The dark haired female between her legs obligingly obeyed and Marcus’ attention moved from one female to the next. Seeing her naked bottom high in the air and her face buried deeply at the apex of Valendera’s thighs, Marcus felt himself suddenly grow hard, in a state of complete adulation for the unknown female. It was almost as if she were bowing down, kneeling before Valendera and worshipping her. He was totally dumbfounded.

As her dark head bobbed back and forth, Marcus watched how her bottom moved rhythmically with each stroke of her tongue. The subdued lighting flickered against her curvaceous rear and every now and then Marcus would gain a glimpse of her swaying breasts and the dark hair covering her pussy, from between her parted thighs. The urge to slide himself into her from behind nearly overwhelmed him. He could almost feel himself moving slowly in and out of her; feel her rhythmically swaying against him. He reached down to rub himself through his jeans and could feel himself begin to leak slowly into his silk boxers.

Valendera’s lover raised her head and reached towards the nightstand.

“You’ve been a bad girl today, Val. Going to that club without me was very wrong. You do know that, don’t you?”

Valendera raised her head slowly from the pillow. “I just wanted a look at some cock that was all.”

“It’s too late for explanations now, baby. You’ve got an important lesson to learn this evening.”

Opening the drawer the dark haired woman pulled out two long red satin ribbons and began to bind Valendera’s hands above her head. Then she sat astride her and placed herself onto Valendera’s face. “Now lick me, Val, like the bad little bitch you are. I want you to never look at another cock again after tonight. Make me come real hard, honey. Real hard.”

From what Marcus could see Valendera was enjoying her “punishment” almost as much as her lover was. Her hips were rising from the bed with each thrust that the other woman made and her muffled groans of delight were enticing Marcus to stay and view the scene for much longer than he knew was wise. Yet some deep animal instinct forced him to stay and play the part of voyeur. He felt totally enthralled and hypnotized by the sight of the dark haired woman writhing on top of Valendera’s face.

He could only imagine how wet her lover’s mouth was making her. He could only guess at the movements of lips and tongue against her soft intimate flesh. He could only fantasize that it was his mouth she was grinding her sweet pussy into. As Valendera’s lover slowly began to climax, Marcus was powerless to stop

himself from reaching into his jeans and gripping his cock tightly. It unnerved him that he had become so hard--but he knew that he would have given anything to have that raven haired vixen sit on his face and come like that.

As her orgasm began to build, Marcus felt spellbound by the way she began to grind herself against the eager mouth below her, rolling her hips and thrusting her breasts. Valendera grabbed her ass cheeks, almost grazing the skin with her fingernails as her climax overpowered her body and she cried out in delight.

Slowly leaving her position, Valendera's lover moved to place herself between the other woman's legs. "Now baby, you come for me. Show me how sorry you are."

She placed her head between Valendera's legs and Marcus saw Valendera's grateful smile of pleasure as she lay back on the pillows. Still he seemed powerless to resist looking at the sight on the bed and even more powerless to stop sliding his hand along his rigid length. But he knew that if he came his presence would be made known. Reluctantly he took his hand away and resolved to take care of himself as soon as he got home.

Judging by the sounds from the bed Marcus assumed that at least someone was getting some relief. He heard Valendera begin to climax as her lover quickened the pace. Valendera's thighs spread out wider and her lover's head moved with a desperate haste. Marcus felt the strain of his cock against his jeans and the

desperate ache of his balls. Not even as an adolescent had Marcus felt so out of control. Had Valendera somehow bewitched him, or was it just the sight of her lover in action before him that had managed to get him harder than stone?

Valendera sighed with pleasure and her lover raised her head, running her hands along her parted thighs.

“Turn over, Val, and I’ll give you a massage. It’ll relax you.”

Valendera giggled, “I’m already relaxed, darling,” she murmured sleepily. “Let me rest and I’ll join you and the others soon. I promise.” She closed her eyes and turned onto her side, curling up like a small child. Seeing her like this made Marcus bitterly regret listening to the unknown female. Valendera was an easy target for him now. He could have had her dead within seconds. Turning slowly away from the door he was about to return to his room when the other female turned her head and looked directly at him. It was the hellcat from the parking lot.



Shrugging on his jacket, Marcus was determined to leave as swiftly as he could. There was no way he was going to stay here and be served up for a late supper. Reaching for his backpack, he turned as the bedroom door opened and the hellcat stood before him, wrapped in a long red silk kimono that did a damn fine job of highlighting her rounded breasts and slim hips.

“Hey, I’m going lady,” he blurted angrily. “You play your sick games on some other fool. I’m coming back with my stuff, and you and your flesh eating lover will be dead meat before sunrise.”

Kayla leaned her back against the door and closed it shut. “You’re not going anywhere.” She smiled smugly at his crotch. “And you certainly won’t be able to get on your Harley with that in the way.”

Marcus actually felt the heat rise in his cheeks at her words, but there was no ignoring the truth of what she said. “So? I got hot from a little girl on girl action. It’s no biggie.”

She smiled again. “And so modest, too, stripper boy.”

Marcus attempted to move past her but she gently held onto his arm. “We need to talk. There are things I need to tell you and now might be as good a time as any. She’s resting now.”

Now it was his turn to grin. “Yeah, I watched the work-out you gave her.”

Kayla raised her eyes to the ceiling. “For god’s sake, just try and pretend that you’re mature enough to handle this situation. We don’t have long.”

Marcus shrugged his shoulders. “Okay. I’m listening. But it needs to be good. If I think you’re feeding me some line, I’m out of here for good.”

Kayla removed her hand from his arm and started to pace slowly around the room. “I explained earlier that a member of the Royal family has sent me here. It

was a decision made without the prior knowledge of The Death Council, although I'm sure by now that they know I'm here."

Marcus shook his head. "That's it sugar, you just lucked out. If what you've just said were true, then you'd be dead by now. You might have royal permission to be here, but you'd still need the council to have the final say so. Only royalty can..." His words trailed off as he looked into the woman's eyes. He had never been privileged enough to look upon any of the royal princesses, but he would bet his Harley that he was looking at one of them right now.



Kayla turned towards him, raising her chin as she did so. "I am Fellorayar-Mikayla, first-born daughter of Fellorah-Karl and Fellorayar-Yarra, special envoy of our Queen, and chief of the Shadow Fighters. I have been sent by her highness to avenge the death of my brother Fellorah-Glaane, whose blood was spilled upon the altar of our kingdom by Valendera High Priestess of Felloria five hundred years ago." Her eyes burned with tears as she spoke of a young Fellorian she had never known, but had always loved.

Marcus swallowed and immediately fell to his knees before Kayla, placing the palms of his hands on top of her feet, as was the traditional greeting when meeting a member of the Fellorian royal family. "My loyalty and life are yours, Fellorayar-Mikayla," he whispered softly.

Kayla glanced down at him, his dark head bent in complete submission. Usually she hated such customs, yet there was a flash of something faintly wicked in her that enjoyed having him on his knees before her. The urge to keep him there was a temptation. He would only be able to rise with her permission and this was one Fellorian that needed to learn some manners. Biting her lip with regret, Kayla acknowledged that whatever satisfaction the act would provide to her, it would only serve to waste yet more precious time. “On your feet, Assassin. I think we passed such formal greetings several hours ago.”

Though Marcus moved to stand up in one quick and fluid motion, he did so reluctantly. It was one thing to greet your princess, but quite another to be inches away from a woman he had been dying to plunge himself into since the moment that he had met her. He rose to his feet, noticing how the silky material of her robe draped itself snugly over her thighs, gently caressing the raised mound between her legs and molding itself to breasts that Marcus would have killed to touch. *Shit, she was one hell of a female.* A female he would never even be able to touch unless she gave her express permission.

Kayla moved back a step as Marcus reached his full height before her.

“After you’ve finished here tonight, go straight to your apartment,” she instructed. “You’ve nothing to fear this evening. Her strength is fading, but we can’t act now. Meet me tomorrow at The Showcase Gallery. Do you know it?”

Marcus nodded.

“I work there,” Kayla explained. “If anyone questions you, just say that I’m helping you get some modeling work. I’ve got to go back to her now, but remember, do nothing tonight.”

Marcus raised an eyebrow. “Is that an order, Princess?”

Kayla gazed steadily into his hard green eyes. So he wanted it like that, did he? “Yes. It’s an order.” She could soon cut his attitude down to size. He was nothing more than brute strength and a cute face. She had faced men like him before and beaten them hands down. This was her show now, and she would have him toe the line or get back home. Her only problem was, home was the last place she wanted him to be.

Chapter Four

Kayla spent the following morning at her desk pondering whether or not Marcus would show. She had spent a sleepless night with him on her mind and now she felt restless. For years she had wanted him, and now that he was within reach, she was suddenly at a loss to know how to behave. She had fantasized that he would submit to her will easily, imagining that because of her birth he would give her whatever she demanded. Now that she had actually met him, she knew it would be an easier task to tame a wild beast. That must be the price for sneaking a forbidden look into the palace fighting school, she told herself.

As a young Fellorian Princess, Kayla had had the run of her father's palace--all except for the training academy. This was set in the heart of the palace, surrounded by high balconies where their superiors could watch the candidates' progress easily. She had heard many rumors that the candidates trained naked, in order to maintain the strictest discipline over their bodies. For a young Fellorian princess whose sheltered life was suddenly becoming unbearable, this news was almost too tantalizing to resist. As a Shadow Fighter, Kayla knew it would be easy to check out the truth of this rumor.

And so, one midsummer's evening in her seventeenth Fellorian phase, when the sky turned from dusky pink to scarlet red, Kayla had decided to investigate for herself. Flying down through the trees that surrounded the training courtyard, she had expected no one to be there. Her intention had merely been to scope out the area and locate a good hiding place. However, as she soared high above the palace grounds her line of vision was disrupted by a swift movement in the courtyard. Kayla came to land gracefully on one of the balconies and quickly hid herself there in the dark shadows.

Below her in the center of the walled area stood a tall, dark haired Fellorian Vampire, practicing his fighting skills. His body moved swiftly, like no other vampire she had ever seen. His grace was almost feminine, his speed like that of a hunting cat and his body totally beyond her young imaginings. Kayla recalled even now how her insides had twisted at the sight of him. It had been like seeing an answer to every question that she had ever asked.

The setting sunlight glowed softly upon his naked flesh and Kayla had remembered the words of her nurse--that Fellorian females could only ever gain true pleasure in the arms of one of their own kind. Seeing this male standing so proudly beneath her, Kayla could well believe such a tale. Everything about him suggested strength and power, from the muscles flexing in his arms, to the sheer

bold, concentration written on his face. He radiated confidence in his every gesture. Here was a Fellorian worth waiting for, a protector and a lover all in one.

Every night after that, Kayla flew to watch this disciplined warrior. She went to him like an addict to a drug. Her waking hours were filled with thoughts of him. Her nights were replete with the sight of him. Rumors circulated that he was to be trained to protect her father on visits to other realms, to be groomed as a Death Council watcher, and most privileged of all, to be an assassin.

Kayla felt distraught. She knew the life of a Fellorian assassin demanded a lifetime spent away from home, constantly at the disposal of the Death Council. She knew that if he were to leave she would never know how it would feel to touch the smooth contours of his body, to feel him against her or to hold him inside her. She knew even then that no other Fellorian would do for her. If she never mated with him then she would never know the fulfillment that her nurse had described. Just one brief Fellorian phase after Kayla had first seen Marcus, he left to begin Special Missions in the human world, never even realizing that he had left behind him a shattered life.

“Dollar for them?” interrupted the masculine voice.

Kayla looked up startled and discovered that Marcus had entered the office without her knowledge. It was obviously a required skill in his line of work. She

raised one eyebrow questioningly. “A whole dollar? Are my thoughts of so little value to you, Assassin?”

Marcus smiled, his lips curling in a most distracting manner. “Not at all, Highness. It goes without saying that as your most humble servant I am exceptionally intrigued by the workings of your mind.”

Kayla rose from her chair. “Are you aware that sarcasm is the lowest form of wit? I think I prefer you to act the dumb stripper rather than an obsequious servant.”

Marcus rounded on her instantly, facing her directly across the desk. “You may be a Highborn, but understand this: I’m no servant. I offer you and your family my loyalty, willingly. But I’m not here to pander to your every whim. And quite frankly, I couldn’t give a damn about your preferences for my behavior. As for what I said about your mind, I am interested. After all, what thoughts could possibly go through the mind of a woman who regularly fucks her brother’s killer?”

The brutality of his words felt like a slap across her face. His question lingered in the air between them and Kayla felt the color rise high on her cheeks. She knew that she had to remain calm, even though she was cut to the quick by his question.

His eyes bore into hers, making her instantly feel vulnerable. Like a warm flow of air, the sensation engulfed her, stilling the blood in her veins and

momentarily causing her to fight for breath. For years, she had kept her feelings for this vampire a secret. Now suddenly she felt as if he knew all about it, knew how at nights it was only the thought of his sleek and muscled body that kept her from falling deep into a hellish nightmare, how after sex with Val she would creep into the bathroom and shower, thinking that it was him washing her clean from the stench of death that she felt lingering on her skin. It was difficult to regain her composure when all she had ever longed for and yearned for stood before her.

“Just sit down, Fellorian. The workings of my mind are no concern of yours.” She kept her voice cold and steady. “You’re here to do a job, and I’m here to tell you how to do it.” She refused to give him even the slightest hint of how disgusted she felt with herself over her behavior. To him she must indeed appear to be a cold-hearted bitch who could give herself freely to a murderer.

If only he knew the strength that being Val’s bedmate actually took. It would be so easy to turn to him for help, to share her pain, to beg him to plunge deep inside her, because that would be the one thing that could take away her pain. The image of him training in her father’s courtyard flashed again before her eyes. She remembered every inch of his body and knew just how far into her he would be able to go. Dragging her eyes away from him she perched herself on the edge of her desk, as Marcus insolently sat before her, his long denim-clad legs stretched out before him.

“Now let’s get down to business, Assassin. I need to tell you why acting on your own will not help you defeat Valendera. And why you need my help.”

Marcus let out a deep sigh. “Well then Highness, I’ll let you have your say, but that’s only because of who you are. Believe me, if you were anyone else I’d be long gone by now.” He leaned forwards. “But remember this, I work alone. You’ve already involved yourself too much in this situation. I doubt that your parents are aware of how close to Valendera you’ve become. They’ve lost one child to her already. Do you really think that losing another will help them?”

Kayla’s eyes clouded over. She felt ashamed of herself every day for the way that she needed to act with Valendera, but that was nothing to the shame and guilt that she now experienced. Marcus’ words made her feel dirty. She knew full well how her parents would react if they knew how deeply involved she had become. But for Kayla, sex was the only platform on which she could tackle Val. She used her body on a regular basis only in hopes of bringing about the downfall of the woman who had hurt her family so terribly. Keeping her enemy close by was Kayla’s only hope to finding a weakness in Val’s armor.

“They won’t lose me. I’m fighting to win, I will bring her down, and you are going to help me.” She clenched her fists as she spoke, her mouth set in grim determination. “You must be aware of the penalties that can be imposed upon you if you refuse the will of a Fellorian Royal.”

He rose from his seat and stood before her. Resignation filled his voice. “Under such a threat I can hardly refuse you, Highness. I accept that I have no choice other than to concede to the privilege that your birth grants you. However, I do have some stipulations of my own. We will work together. Neither of us will have the upper hand. We’ll be a team,” he paused before placing heavy emphasis on his next words, “up until the point I tell you to leave.”

Kayla’s head jerked upwards “Leave...”

Marcus took her chin in his hand, “Yes, leave. You’re my Princess, and I will do everything to protect your life. Including giving my own.”

Kayla felt a sudden rush of blood through her body. Those were tender words, words that she would have longed to hear from him under other circumstances. He had promised to give his life for her. But it was only the word of a protector, honor bound to her family. Marcus was speaking as a sworn guardian, not a lover. No matter how strongly she was attracted to him, she had to remember why she was here in the mortal world. The time to think about Marcus in any capacity other than an assassin would have to wait.

She stood and walked over to her bureau, taking a small journal from a locked drawer. “Here,” she said, handing the book to Marcus. “This is a collection of all the information that I’ve gathered on Valendera. There’s even the address of the apartment that she thinks I know nothing about.”

Marcus raised his eyes questioningly to her. “And what goes on there then? More wild parties?”

Kayla returned to her side of the desk and sat down. “It’s her killing ground. Thanks to my presence in her life, her visits have been severely restricted--but I’m guessing that any time soon she’ll need to go again. I’m just waiting for her excuse to be away: sick relative, business trip, anything that will require an overnight stay.”

“You’ve been keeping her busy then, have you?” His voice was smooth like silk, but the barbed comment was there none-the-less.



Kayla shook her head and Marcus had to admit that he enjoyed the sight of her raven tresses rippling over the shoulders of her red silken blouse. “I’ve been doing what I need to, what I have to do. My presence in her life has kept her from killing others and thus weakening her power.”

Marcus smiled. “Then we can act now. If she’s so weak then it’s the perfect time.”

“No, it’s not. You need to know all the facts. If you can bear being told what to do for a few moments, then I suggest that you sit down and let me explain.”

Marcus was very nearly rendered speechless; the woman’s arrogance astounded him. So what if she had been right last night? Princess she might be, but

Marcus took orders from one place only. Even though she angered him beyond belief there was no way he was going to stalk out of the room right now. Aside from the fact that he was getting one hell of a hard on from looking at her breasts shimmying under the silk of her blouse, he also needed answers.

Despite what Marcus had said earlier, he was well aware of the emotional strength it must take for her to sleep with her brother's killer; physically she was a match for him but seeing her now, he was suddenly aware of how vulnerable she was, too.

He relaxed back into the soft leather of his chair. "I'm listening."

Kayla rested her elbows on the desk and slowly rubbed the sides of her neck. Marcus could sense that whatever she was about to tell him was going to be difficult for her, and though he admired her strength of character, he still found himself consumed by thoughts of her naked body from the previous night. That image combined with the feelings that he had experienced as they had fought in the garage were nearly sending him to distraction. As her slender fingers slowly worked at the knots in her shoulders, he found himself imagining how she would feel under his own hands as he worked them back and forth across her skin.

"Look, I've not got all day, Princess. If you've got something to say then get on with it. I've got an appointment later today." He had no such thing, but if he watched that blouse slide across her full breasts for another minute, he would

either embarrass himself or forget that she was a High-Born and take her right on the desk in front of them.

Kayla glared across at him. “Yes, of course you have. I’ll try not to keep you.” Was that a hint of irritation he could hear in her voice?

“For hundreds of years my mother has gathered extensive research on Valendera. The conclusions are all in the journal that I’ve given you, but I’ll briefly outline them for you now and then you’ll have a good idea as to where we stand.” She rose from her seat and walked towards the window, giving Marcus time to once again admire her pert ass snugly encased in her skirt.

“Val has evaded death for one very simple reason and one reason only. My brother’s blood flows through her veins, giving her life beyond death. Previous attempts to take her life all failed because of this reason. We now know how to bring her down and end her life permanently. But it must be done at the right time. If we act too quickly then she won’t die, our cover will be blown and all this,” she waved her arm around the room “will have been for nothing.”

Marcus nodded in agreement. “Ok, I hear what you’re saying, but when will the right time be?”

“The exact anniversary of his death. I believe that the mortals refer to it as Halloween.”

Marcus nodded. “Then after tonight that gives us exactly two days.”

Chapter Five

Marcus' feet pounded the pavement as he briskly made his way to one of the seedier sections of Manhattan. Prostitutes and tramps had littered his way for the last three blocks, but now there was no one. He rounded a corner and headed towards an abandoned warehouse; all the time acutely aware that a pair of eyes were upon him from a great height.

The streets might be empty, but the skies were not. It was almost dark now, and several hours since he had finished reading the journal that Kayla had given him. However, the very nature of this visit meant that a nocturnal meeting was his only option. Checking briefly over his shoulder he turned into an alleyway between two of the empty buildings and climbed up the narrow fire escape.

Entering the building through a broken window, he almost vomited at the stench. Almost, but not quite. There was still a part of Marcus that remembered that he too was undead and that he should never forget his roots.

His scuffed work boots crunched on what he hoped was broken glass, but here one could never be sure. A small, softly glowing light in the corner of the room caught his attention.

“When did you take up smoking, Arrbern?” he called out.

A deep, throaty laugh greeted his ears. “Marcus, my friend, you know that evolution is a blessing, don’t you? Besides, I need to fit in with the neighbors.” The chuckle became louder as the owner of the voice walked towards Marcus. “Not to mention the fact that it gives me something to do while I wait for the sun to set. Me and my cigar, that’s all I need.”

“Yeah, and a few pints of the red stuff,” retorted Marcus, as the two figures embraced.

Arrbern smiled and stepped into the moonlight, allowing Marcus to look upon the features of a gaunt and bedraggled looking creature, a mere shadow of the vampire that Arrbern used to be.

“Yes, that too, my dear friend. We each of us have a raging thirst within our souls; for some it’s just more literal than for others. Now tell me, Marcus, what terrible event would cause you to seek me out?”

“I need a weapon.” Marcus spoke matter-of-factly. “One of your crafting and design.”

Arrbern’s face stilled. His black eyes sparkled with joy and for a split second, the room was silent. “Do you know how long it has been since that request was made of me, Marcus?” He paused. “A thousand years, my friend. A long time, even for the likes of me.” He sounded almost wistful, lost in his thoughts of an era that had long ceased to exist.

“I’m well aware of it, Arrbern. And I’m also aware of why. What I need you to do is create a weapon with the same properties as the last one. I need it to kill a Highborn.”



Kayla relaxed into the warm, fluffy suds of her bath. Her head rested back onto the large pillow of towels behind her and she closed her eyes at last. After Marcus had left her office earlier that day, it had been almost impossible to get anything done. She had paced the floor, picked through papers and made several phone calls, yet a force that would not rest seemed to possess her.

By late afternoon, she had begrudgingly acknowledged what it was that she needed. It was Marcus. She bit into her lower lip angrily, realizing that she was frustrated with herself on so many levels. First and uppermost in her thoughts was her sexual frustration. Secondly, she had to ask herself just what on earth was she doing fantasizing about the unobtainable assassin.

Many moons ago when Marcus had left Felloria, she had grimly accepted that she would never see him again. Over the decades, her ache for him had gradually subsided, though she had never completely forgotten him. Until the other night her plan had been simple and she had congratulated herself that soon she would be in a position to avenge the death of her brother. Now there were

added complications. Correction--one complication and one hot desire that was threatening to burn a hole between her legs.

Since the night at the club, Kayla had felt her desire for Marcus overwhelm her entire being. Seeing him before her once again naked and glorious evoked all her old memories. Even more, he'd been moving with an animal passion and rhythm that she'd only previously imagined.

The fact that she was in a room full of howling women, mattered little to her. It was only Marcus that she saw as she'd felt her body moisten in readiness and hunger. She had been seemingly oblivious to the shouts and whistles around her as she realized at that precise moment that if she never mated with him then her existence was meaningless.

Swirling the water gently between her fingers Kayla inhaled deeply and imagined running her fingers over the smooth contours of Marcus' firm body. She would explore gently at first, touching his arms, chest, stomach and legs. She would lightly feel her way along his muscular torso, whilst her eyes feasted upon the delights that lay just a touch away. She would eagerly anticipate the moment that his beautiful cock would harden and throb, just for her. She ached for the time when she could claim him with her mouth and pussy, when she would possess all that she had ever desired and yearned for.

Moving the bubbles across her thighs she imagined that Marcus was with her now, touching and wanting her. She moaned huskily, the mere thought of him sending shivers across her stomach and down to the lips of her pussy. Her mouth opened slightly as she moved the suds up over her breasts, rubbing them gently as she did so.

It felt so good imagining that these were his hands, that it was he who was drawing his palm light as a feather across her darkening nipples. She lowered herself deeper into the warm water and held the full weight of each breast in her hands. Moving her hands in a slow circular motion, she brushed each peaking nipple with her thumbs, round and round until she gasped at their hardness. She was hard for him. Hard, hot and very, very wet.

She licked her lips slowly as one hand left her breast and moved down to the wet hair between her thighs. With her palm out flat she brushed back and forth against her mons and imagined how Marcus' touch would feel the first time that he moved against her body. As she rubbed, she could feel her clit standing out from between her lips, its hardness exciting her. She wondered if Marcus would know instinctively how to rub, squeeze and pinch her, just as she herself did.

Picking up the momentum, she began to rub against herself, the bath water and her own arousal making her ridiculously slippery. She parted her thighs even further, pushing them against the sides of the bath, and imagined that it was

Marcus' tongue, not her own finger that massaged her pulsating clit. She arched her back and thrust her breasts forwards as the pressure rose deep within her core. Pushing her finger deeper between her swollen lips, she began to increase the friction and quicken the pace, all the while telling herself that it was Marcus who caressed her, Marcus who excited her and Marcus who was taking her to the delicious brink of orgasm.

Making swift circular movements against her clit with one hand and across her nipples with the other, she brought herself panting and breathless to a climax so strong that her knees quivered against the sides of the bath sending water and bubbles splashing against her flushed skin. As her breathing steadied and her mind cleared, Kayla began to feel suddenly bereft. Yes, the ache between her legs had now subsided into a dull pulse, but the one that lay deep within her center was still burning bright for the real thing. Feeling strangely deflated Kayla rose from the water and began to dry her body.

Chapter Six

It was dawn by the time Marcus arrived back at his apartment. Arrbern had needed to work especially fast and Marcus knew the great debt that he now owed to the ancient vampire. He only hoped that he would be able to repay it. Feeling the weight of the newly fashioned dagger in his inside jacket pocket, Marcus made mental plans on how to handle the situation with Kayla. She was not going to take his next set of plans lying down, he knew that much. He pushed open his front door and grinned to himself, suddenly flooded with the image of Kayla taking him lying down.

He debated whether he wanted her so badly because he knew he could not have her, or because she was so damned hot. Hot won out. He had wanted her even before he knew who she was. Now it seemed impossible to keep her from his mind. For all her talk of slaying Valendera and seeking retribution, he knew deep down that she was scared. Sure, she could fight, bite and fly with the best of them, but Marcus had seen a hidden vulnerability lurking in the depths of her eyes, on more than one occasion. There was more to his luscious Princess than met the eye and though his killer instincts were now starting to kick in, so too was an instinct that was just as basic and just as dangerous.

Prior to meeting Kayla, Marcus had given very little thought to sex. Though he was offered money constantly for his services at the club, he always refused. He rarely if ever needed the release that now seemed to be setting his insides ablaze. He was in the mortal realm to do a job.

If there was time for anything more then so be it, but never had he felt the tremendous urges that were coursing through his bones right now. Just the thought of Kayla sent the blood rushing to his cock, leaving him uncomfortable and restless. If only she were not a Highborn. He would easily have had her by now and all these distracting thoughts would have been pushed from his mind. As it was, both his cock and his head were pulsing with the thoughts, sight, sound and scent of the one Fellorian he could never have.

He entered the living room and began to push his boots from his feet. That was when he noticed her. Curled up like a cat in the corner of his sofa was Kayla, fast asleep. Her hair had fallen like a curtain over her delicate features and her small, trim frame shifted ever so slightly with each breath she took. What she was doing here he had no idea, but he could have stood watching her quite happily for the next few hours. Unfortunately, she had sensed his presence and was now beginning to wake.

“Do you break and enter on a regular basis, your Highness?” Marcus asked, with a bemused tone in his voice.

Kayla lifted her arms and stretched them high above her head, causing her breasts to rise and push out against the soft cotton of her t-shirt. So far, his morning was looking pretty good.

“I wouldn’t call it breaking, exactly. You left your window unlocked.” She spat the words out and rose from the sofa. “It was an open invitation and a clumsy mistake for someone in your line of work.”

“Forgive me, Highness. Living ten floors up, I should exercise more caution.”

Her steady blue eyes made contact with his as she lifted her chin towards him. “Yes you should. Especially when you take it upon yourself to consort with an enemy of the Fellorian Crown. Now tell me, Assassin, why would you be doing such a thing?”

Marcus smiled as the reason for Kayla’s early morning visit became clear. She had obviously found out about his visit to Arrbern. If that were the case, then she probably also knew what he had concealed in his jacket.

“I think you already know the answer to that one. I thought that tailing me would have been a little beneath your Highness. Obviously you want to know who my intended victim is going to be. You’re wondering if I’m going to kill you. You doubt my allegiance to Felloria because right now you’re so scared that you don’t know who to trust anymore. You’ve lived too long with evil to know friendship and loyalty when you see it.”

Kayla's eyes grew wide and her teeth worried over her full lower lip. "And I suppose you are such a friend, Assassin?"

"I might be, if you gave me the chance," Marcus whispered.

Kayla smiled cynically up at him. "You have just obtained one of the most powerful weapons in the history of Felloria, and yet you calmly stand there and tell me that you can be trusted. You deserve no chances, Assassin. And for the record, I'm not scared."



Though she tried to keep the steadiness in her voice, Kayla knew that she was failing miserably. Since the events of last night, everything she had previously thought about Marcus had been cast into doubt. Why on earth had he gone to see the outcast vampire? Could the Fellorian that she had craved for hundreds of years really be nothing more than a creation of her young imagination? Had her desires and longings been for nothing?

She had spent the entire evening in turmoil, her head swimming with doubt that Marcus was really nothing more than a cold, ruthless killer. And yet something deep within her had compelled her to come to him and seek out the truth. She needed to know his intentions, needed to know for certain, needed, in truth, just to be with him.

Marcus bowed before her, all glint of amusement gone from his eyes. “When we met the other evening, Highness, I promised you my loyalty. Yesterday I promised you my life. I can understand your confusion, but for your part, you’ve got to understand me. My actions may appear questionable, my motives ambiguous, but never question the loyalty that I have sworn to my world--and to you Princess. Especially to you.”

Something in Marcus’ words pulled at the blood in Kayla’s veins, causing it to rush and pulse potently through her body. The fear and doubt that she had been under all last night left her and somehow she knew that he was telling her the truth.

“I believe you, Marcus,” she almost whispered. It was the first time that she had used his given name, and the sound of it on her lips sent a shiver down her spine. What a beautiful name it was, so strong and sure, just like him. If only she had the right to whisper it through all eternity.

Marcus smiled, his green eyes shining with something more than satisfaction at her words. “I’m glad. It’ll make things a lot easier from now on.” He gestured towards the sofa where she had slept. “Please take a seat. We’ve a lot to discuss, and as you know, time isn’t on our side.”

Kayla sat down, suddenly aware that there had been a recent shift of power between them, but too entranced by his masculinity to care. He was so much more

than the sexual partner that she had craved; he was capable of taking charge, of offering help, of being the strong protector that she had sought for many Fellorian phases. She knew then that if he asked her too, she would willingly follow him to the end of Felloria and back again. Whatever he required of her over the next two days she would gladly concede.

After removing his jacket, Marcus sat down next to her and stretched his arm along the back of the sofa. “I went to see Arrbern, the outcast as you call him, because though in theory your plan for Valendera is sound, there was one flaw that could prevent her death. Within her body flows the blood of your brother. Highborn Fellorian blood. We have to take that into consideration and act as though we were about to kill a Highborn. All our bases need to be covered, Highness. The time, the weapon and the place. If possible, we need to take her on neutral ground. You’ve got to keep her away from the apartment that she goes to. We need as many advantages as we can possibly muster.”

Kayla listened steadily and nodded. “I’ll do what I can. She’s growing steadily weaker, so it shouldn’t be too much of a problem. But what I want to know is, how did you know where to find the outcast? He was banished from our realm hundreds of phases ago. You couldn’t possibly have known him on Felloria.”

“I didn’t. Arrbern taught my father his shadow fighting skills. I knew what a great vampire he was even before I met him. He was one of the most outstanding

Shadow Fighters of his age and one of the best Crafters too. His part in your Great Uncle's death was fabricated by enemies of the crown. My father believed in his innocence and so do I."

"But he made the dagger responsible for Barath's death. How can you possibly say he is innocent?" questioned Kayla.

Marcus' steady green eyes held her gaze. "Because I can, Highness, and I'll continue to help my friend until his innocence has been proven. Do you think that I always act alone when I come to the mortal world? Arrbern has been my protector for as long as I can remember, and I'll do everything in my power to help him return to Felloria with his reputation intact. I owe him a great deal, including my own life."

Kayla's mouth fell open. "Your life? But how is that so?"

Marcus smiled again and shrugged his shoulders. "That story will have to be told another day." Turning towards her, he reached across and touched her shoulder. "I have something much more important than that to discuss with you now."

Kayla felt her body respond instantly to the light hand Marcus placed on her. She was amazed that so powerful a vampire could possess such a feather light touch. Feeling a growing need beginning to build within her body she instinctively found herself licking her lips.

“Highness, there is the strong possibility that you will lose your life if you involve yourself further with this plan against Valendera.”

Kayla felt the blood drain from her face. This was certainly not what she had been expecting. “I...What do you mean?”

“I mean that as long as this dagger,” he patted the jacket next to him, “is in existence, then you are in danger. I’m telling you that as far as this plan is concerned your involvement will end once you have safely delivered Valendera into my hands.”

Kayla practically jumped from the sofa. “Never, Assassin. I’ll be there to see that bitch die. I’ll be the one to tell my parents that I saw the life flow from her veins, slowly and painfully.” A sudden burst of rage made her clench her fists by her sides and nearly shout. “Do you think that I’ve been fucking her night after night so that you can take my revenge away from me now, at the last moment? Do you think after months of enduring her touch, her kisses and her perverted pleasures that I will be denied the relief of seeing her die? How can you even ask me to bow out now? Since the moment I was told the story of my brother I knew that I would be the one to see his murderer die. Me, do you hear me?”

The rage drained as suddenly as it had surged and Kayla collapsed to her knees, sobbing uncontrollably and pounding her fists onto the carpet. Marcus was by her side instantly, murmuring words of comfort in their ancient Fellorian

tongue, muffling her sobs against his shoulder, but her pain was still raw and her body shook with the ferocity of her grief.

“Then you shall be there, Highness. You shall.” She heard his soft whisper and felt his hand move slowly up and down her back in a gesture of combined reassurance and comfort.

Several minutes passed before Kayla’s sobs subsided and Marcus pulled gently away from her. Lifting her chin he gazed intently at her before speaking again. “But Highness, I must suggest that you make your final goodbyes to friends and family, tie up any loose ends that you may have in your life. There really is a possibility that if you’re in at the kill, you won’t make it out.”

Kayla knew that his words were meant to shock her into leaving everything to him, but right now, all she could think about was the pleasure that she felt from being in his arms. He had opened the floodgates to a passion that she had kept to herself for too long. Now all she wanted to do was unleash it.

Chapter Seven

“I want you, Marcus.” Kayla blurted the words out before she could stop herself. No longer was she afraid of voicing her need or of even feeling his rejection. He was right. She might die and if she did, how would it feel to lie bleeding to death, knowing that she had passed up her chance to feast upon the one thing that she had yearned for all of her adult life? For the moment, his startled gaze should have been all the answer that she required, but she carried on regardless.

“I want you, not out of any misguided sense of needing comfort or of wanting to feel whole before I die, but because I’ve ached for you for so long that I can’t stand it any longer. I need you inside of me so badly, Marcus. I need you to call me Kayla, not Highness, I need to feel your arms around me, I need...” She gasped for breath, suddenly taken aback by her outburst. “I...I just need you.” Shrugging her shoulders, she sank back on her heels and sighed deeply. Perhaps it had all been in vain, but at least she had mustered up the courage to finally speak her heart.

“You’ve seen me before this time?” he asked.

Kayla could see the confusion running through his mind. She swallowed and her eyes steadily met his. “Yes. When you went to the outcast last night, you

accused me of following you. Have you ever felt such a feeling before? Eyes watching you?”

Something stirred within Marcus that reached even beyond the raging hard-on that had overtaken him ever since he'd taken Kayla in his arms. A memory lingering in the back of his mind, from Felloria. His brow furrowed. Suddenly all the pieces fell into place. Beating wings, piercing eyes, the setting Fellorian sun and the rising Fellorian moon. She had been with him all along.

Those cold nights when he had stood in the courtyard shivering from the sheer physical torment of his training, when the wind and the rain had beaten his body until he thought that he could endure no more. It had been she who had guided him, spiritually held his hand and never let him give in. He had felt that presence with him for so long, never questioning its nearness, just accepting it. And when it had gone, he had mourned its loss and somehow moved on with his life, with his work. And all along, it had been Kayla. His Princess.

Taking Kayla's face in his hands, Marcus leaned forwards and gently brushed his lips against hers. Though he so desperately wanted to show her the passion that was boiling in his blood, he also wanted her to see how much he needed this too. Despite all Marcus' good intentions however, the very first touch of skin against skin nearly sent him over the edge. Within seconds he felt consumed by the memories of her pert ass and swaying breasts as she had

mounted Valendera's face. He wanted that too, but certainly not on the floor of his apartment. His Princess deserved a bed at least. Breaking away from that first tentative kiss, Marcus took her hand and helped her to stand before silently leading her into the other room.



His kiss had been like velvet gliding along the edge of her mouth. His hand in hers had been so strong and self-assured. Now the lips and tongue that moved urgently against her throat and the hands that kneaded her breasts were instruments of pure, luscious torture. Kayla reached around Marcus' neck and embraced the full strength of his body. She wanted to savor every delicious moment of this experience, to always remember how it felt to hold him close, to be able to recall the feel of his blood pumping through his veins and remember with pride the evidence that he wanted her as much as she did him.

As his hands slid from her breasts to cradle her hips, she felt a surge of longing overwhelm her. "Make it soon, Marcus. I've waited so long I don't think I can wait another second."

"As I've said before, I'm here to do your bidding." His whispered words tickled her hair, making her feel almost weightless, as though she were floating on a pure sexual high.

Slowly, but with the confidence of one who knew what he was doing, Marcus began to remove her t-shirt and her delicately lacy bra. “You’re so beautiful, Kayla. If I didn’t need to fuck you so badly, I’d gladly look at you all day.”

She smiled, her eyes dancing in delight. “Why don’t we try that later? I know I could stand it if you could.” She felt her blood flutter through her veins with pure pleasure—her dream was finally becoming a reality.

Marcus nuzzled his mouth against her throat, “Yeah. I could stand it all right.” He trailed his tongue along her breasts and Kayla felt her knees begin to buckle. If it had not been for Marcus’ firm grip on her hips she knew she would have toppled onto the bed. Briefly, his hands left her sides as he removed her jeans with a leisurely, almost painfully slow pace. As her ebony curls became visible through her delicate white panties, she heard his sharp intake of breath.

“Do you taste as good as you look, Kayla?” he asked, his breath tickling her thighs as the wispy material slid down to her feet.

“There’s only one way to know for sure.” She pushed his shoulders down, bringing his head in line with her seeping hot pussy. She could detect the scent of her own arousal, its presence giving her a growing confidence, before she boldly pushed herself into his face. Quick as lightening his tongue darted out to caress her pulsing clit and investigate her slick folds. Her own wetness made his movements bold, the pressure and rhythm sending darts of pleasure straight to the

nerves in her breasts. She relieved the ache by pushing her palms onto her budding nipples and squeezing her breasts. As she massaged herself, she let her head fall back and heard Marcus' groan of arousal, his tongue lapping at her with a newfound vigor. But still she needed more.

Almost as if Marcus had read her thoughts, he ever so gently began to caress her clit with his teeth. With each sensuous nip, Kayla ground herself into his face and his luscious magical mouth. Now her hips swayed gently to the rhythm of his tongue and she felt his hand caress her ass before lingering for a moment by her hole, as if seeking permission to enter her. Dizzily she lifted her head. "Yes, Marcus, do it." She gasped. "Fuck me there with your finger. Fuck me hard."

As she continued to squeeze her throbbing breasts, Marcus lubricated his finger with the juices spilling down her thighs. He slowly inserted his finger into her ass. She bucked beneath the sensation and couldn't tell which way to thrust herself. Before her was a biting, tugging pleasure that increased in intensity with every thrust of his tongue.

Behind her was an invasion so powerful that she could not help but physically beg for more. Impaling her ass onto his probing finger, she began to feel her knees shudder. She reached down to hold onto his shoulders for support as her orgasm steadily began to build within her. Like spiraling tentacles, the feeling seemed to spread itself through her body, starting in her stomach, then to her legs

and then her pussy, until finally it came crashing out with an explosive cry of release. Marcus stayed with her right until the end, drawing out every pleasurable moment for her until she pulled away from him gasping for breath.

Her eyes were wide with wonder as she looked down with awe at the vampire at her feet. “You look like the cat that just got the cream,” she murmured.

Marcus smiled, his eyes devilishly roving over her body. He rose from his feet and removed his t-shirt in one swift, fluid movement. “Oh no, Sugar, the cream is just for you.”

Kayla glanced down to see the promising bulge inside his jeans. Oh yes, there was plenty of cream for her in there, all right. She tugged at his belt, like an impatient child with a present. She slid his boxers and jeans off in one quick movement, so eager were her hands to uncover his cock. Sure, she had seen it before, but this time it was just going to be for her. All for her. She gasped with pure delight at the sight of his beautiful arousal, so hard and thick. Her lips twitched at the thought of putting him hot and hard into her mouth, her lips gliding over his dark pink tip and sliding down the ridge of veins that throbbed with his blood.

Never being one to procrastinate for long, Kayla immediately dropped to her knees and placed the tip of Marcus’ cock against her lips. It was the most exquisite sensation she had ever felt. He was so velvety smooth, yet as she took the rest of

him in her hand, she could feel the strength and power that lay in just that one part of his body. His hardness astounded her and excited her all at once. Taking him more fully into her mouth, she moaned in delight; her own wetness spread down her legs, making her yearn for his touch again.

As his cock pumped in and out of Kayla's eager mouth, her fingers gently began to explore his heavy sack. All at once, her senses seemed to be on overload. He felt slick and throbbing in her mouth, hot and weighty in her hand and encasing her in the musky scent of his masculinity. Another few moments of this and she felt sure that she would come again. Sensing her eagerness, Marcus slowly withdrew himself and smiled down at her.

"Much as I'm enjoying this Kayla, I so need to fuck you some other place," he growled.

Kayla held his gaze with her most innocent of expressions. "Do you mean a change of venue? Maybe outside? Or the bathroom?"

Marcus dropped to the floor beside her. "You've teased me enough for one morning, Princess. You know exactly what I mean." He ran his fingers through her hair, simultaneously exploring her luscious curves with his eyes. "I need to be inside that fiery little pussy of yours in the next two seconds or else I'll explode."

Kayla's eyes darkened with pleasure and she lay back on her elbows, spreading her thighs wide. "Then you better come and fuck me now, because I'm in a pretty similar situation myself."

Marcus needed no further invitation. His cock pulsed with desire at the sight of Kayla's dark curls and moist folds. He moved towards her purposefully, drinking in the sight of her shimmering thighs and heaving breasts. As he plunged deep inside of her, Kayla fell back onto the floor in wild abandonment, spreading herself as wide as she could, arching her back and simply reveling in the ecstasy that this moment with Marcus had become.

With each forward motion Marcus made, Kayla could feel more of herself being given over to him. This was more than just a mating. It was total possession. As his cock drew sensuously against her clit and his balls ground into her asshole, she felt dizziness overwhelm her. Her whole body seemed engulfed in the sweet sensation of weightlessness and total abandonment. She could feel herself clinging to his shoulders, her body rocketing from a sense of fullness to a sense of loss each time Marcus withdrew. Her climax mounted deep within her core and she ground herself against him, desperate for the release, yet determined to prolong her pleasure for as long as physically possible.

As each penetrating thrust claimed her body, Kayla felt the blood course through her veins with a ferocity that startled her. It was as if being with Marcus

was heightening her awareness of so much more than her sexuality. It was as if she were being reborn. Now powerless to control her orgasm for any longer, she let her head fall back against the floor and allowed the explosive sensation to wash over her. Calling out his name Kayla felt Marcus' body tense as he too joined her in the final and complete ending to their mating.

Still gasping for breath Marcus whispered her name, sending small shivers of pleasure throughout her body. "You'll have to excuse my impatience, Kayla. The floor was certainly not the place where I intended to take you."

Kayla looked up into his face and giggled. "The place was unimportant, Marcus. But if you do have your mind set on somewhere else, I'll give you a few minutes to recover and then you can show me what you had planned." Never had she felt so complete or so happy. She could not recall the last time that her mind had not been occupied by some thought of revenge for her brother's death. Her nurse had indeed been correct. With this Fellorian, she had truly found peace.

Chapter Eight

Valendera's car pulled up outside the underground sex club. This part of the city was not somewhere she usually frequented, but every now and again, it was nice to break the rules. Giving her driver instructions to wait, she stepped out of the car and walked towards the address she had been given. Considering that it was past midnight and the place was supposedly a popular haunt, she was surprised to see little activity in the area. As she rapped on the door, a large hand landed on her shoulder.

"You don't wanna go in there, Honey. Stick to your side of town," warned a rasping voice.

Valendera turned to face the owner of the hand, not the least bit intimidated by the man's tall frame and thickset body. "Oh, but I do. You see, Salamander sent me. He assures me that I'll have a good time."

The door attendant's eyes roamed suspiciously over Valendera's body, taking in the fur coat, silk stockings and perfectly made up face. "Well, you got the password right, but don't say I didn't warn you. We're not talking a bit of slap and tickle in there. A babe like you'll get eaten up and kicked to the curb."

Valendera laughed. "I doubt that. I'm the only one who does the eating around here. Now let me in."

Slowly he reached for his keys and unlocked the door, shaking his head the whole time. "I can't come in if you start screaming, Honey. Them's the rules. You gotta know that now."

Valendera stepped into the darkened passageway. "I can take care of myself," she murmured, following the steps down to what she hoped would be a promising few hours. As her heels clicked against the stone, she again felt the sharp itch that ran through her veins. It was a feeling she knew well. She just had not expected to feel it now. Not with Kayla. The pain savaging her veins was the pain of betrayal. Somehow, she knew that her beloved Kayla had betrayed her. She just needed to regain her strength and then she could punish both Kayla and her new lover, whoever that was.

"Kayla, sweet Kayla," she murmured, taking in the sights that met her at the foot of the stairs. Masturbating men, naked women and loud raucous music blasted her senses. The walls were draped with red and black fabrics, which hung loosely from ceiling to floor. Val watched as shadows moved sensuously behind the curtains, bodies entwined, limbs tangled; flesh calling to her. Yes, she would find much pleasure here. Pleasure that would distract her from thoughts of Kayla.

Long ago, Valendera had experienced a much similar pain, when Karl had rejected her and married the insipid Yarra. How on Felloria could that weakling compare to her, Valendera, High Priestess? She had sworn then that they would pay for their crime. And pay they had. Taking the life of their only son had been a soothing balm to her wounded pride. But now she was hurting again and someone else would have to pay. She smiled as a hooded man approached her, his naked cock obviously hungry for her. Yes, someone would pay. But Valendera always put pleasure before business.



Valendera's first hour in the club had been a pleasurable enough experience with the hooded man, but now it was time to get down to some real fun. After paying more than necessary for a private room, she was escorted into the back of the club by two young men known simply as Night and Day. Each man wore a simple white pouch which drove Val's attention immediately to what lay beneath the scraps of fabric. Impatient for more than a peep show, she took her place in a comfortable chair and began to sip slowly on her vodka. Bodies like theirs deserved to be savored, she told herself. And that was exactly what she intended to do.

She watched intently as each man walked around the room, lighting the candles that covered the three tables in the room. Each group of flickering lights

seemed to spark her excitement more and more, as they highlighted the skin tones and muscles of each of the men.

Night, as his name suggested was dark skinned, with deep brown eyes and a closely shaven head. His shoulders were broad and easily supported his perfectly honed torso. Val looked lower and smiled in satisfaction at his promising bulge and thickset thighs. Before long all the candles were lit and she turned her attention to Day.

The paler man had to be Scandinavian, she mused. His features were finely chiseled, with blue eyes, a wide pleasing mouth and almost white hair which fell in waves to his shoulders. Just like a Nordic God, she thought, finishing the vodka and pouring another for herself. Tonight she intended to drink her fill and not just of the alcohol.

Night moved towards her, his eyes fixed intently on hers, but Val shook her head. "I want to watch tonight," she told him. "Have you ever fucked each other before?"

Night shook his head.

"Have you ever wanted to?" Val asked.

Day moved towards Night, placing his hands upon the other man's shoulders. "He's in my dreams every night."

Val crossed her legs, kicking off her shoes, as she did so. “Then let me help your dreams to come true. Fuck each other...as if tonight were your first and last night together. After all, none of us really know when our time will end do we? Make the most of this time together gentlemen.”

Her voice was low and calm. She could already see the hypnotic effect that it seemed to having upon the two men. Night turned towards Day, his arms easily entwining around the other’s body, as they began to kiss. Val watched in satisfaction as they moved their tongues in a journey of swift exploration and became immersed in their own thoughts and actions.

She sipped her drink, watching the men before her and smiled with mischief as the candle light from the various corners of the room, cast long shadows upon the walls and ceiling. Had the men been less involved with each other, they would surely have noticed the human-like form that these shadows were now taking on.

They danced around the room, their long fingers caressing the mortal men in the middle of the room. Each shadow seemed to guide the men deeper and deeper into their passionate embrace, directing hands and mouths upon the body of the other.

Val’s breathing deepened as she watched Day step out of his pouch, before kneeling before his partner and undressing him. There they were before her, naked and proud; no longer aware of the watching eyes around them. Day reached for

Night's jutting cock with his eager hands, before placing him inside his mouth. Val watched in fascination, as Night threw back his head, giving himself over in complete surrender to the other man.

As Night pumped in and out of Day's mouth, the muscles in his ass began to clench and Val directed the shadows towards the two men. Hungrily she watched as red, gold and scarlet flames licked up the arms and legs of the men. They flickered over the nipples of Night as he gave himself over to the pleasure of his partner's mouth, before sliding slowly towards his balls, where they danced and licked with impish delight.

The scents of sex, hunger and desire filled the room, leaving Val almost breathless. It had been so long since she had enjoyed a moment like this. She almost felt regret that it would have to end. And soon too, she reminded herself, feeling her blood course excitedly through her veins.

Night tugged at Day's hair, urging him onwards with his task, as the flames licked up their bodies, consuming them and heightening their desire. Val shifted to the edge of her seat, concentrating hard on the grunting and panting that came from Night's mouth. It was always such a turn-on to watch mortals mating, especially when she knew that soon they would die.

Her senses were heightened now, as she honed in on the blood swelling in the cocks of both men. She licked her lips in anticipation. It was almost as if she

could taste them already. Night made one final cry into the room as he came into the waiting mouth of Day. Pure pleasure was written all over the face of both men and Val felt herself stand trance-like to join them in the middle of the room.

“Let’s take it to the bed, gentlemen,” she instructed, as the flames left the skin of the men and jumped towards the awaiting bed.



Almost twenty-four hours had passed since Kayla had shared the most exquisite passion she had ever known with Marcus. As dawn began to break on this Hallow’s Eve, the joy she’d experienced was fast fading from her memory. Today, Valendera was supposed to die—but now, thanks to her own stupidity, her plans seemed very likely never to reach fruition. If only she hadn’t been so sidetracked by her own lust. If she had kept herself focused, then perhaps she’d know where Valendera was. As things stood, she and Marcus had about eighteen hours to find and kill a vampire who had suddenly disappeared off the face of the earth.

She paced her bedroom floor and pondered her next move. Already she had gone through Val’s desk and other personal belongings. There had been no clue at all as to where she might have gone or why. After spending most of the previous day in bed with Marcus, Kayla had arrived back to an empty apartment, with no sign of Valendera. As the hours had passed Kayla had grown tense, sensing that

something was definitely wrong. Was it at all possible that Valendera had become aware of her plans? For the first time since she had embarked upon this mission, Kayla felt herself questioning her success.

It had been about three o'clock that morning when Kayla had finally decided to pay a visit to Val's killing ground. Kayla had arrived fully expecting to find Val feasting upon some nameless victim, but the place was untouched. Though the light odor of blood and death hung in the air, it was obvious that no one had been to the apartment in quite some time, maybe for months. Finding herself at a loss, Kayla returned to her own apartment to see the sunrise over the Manhattan skyline and contemplate her next move.

The sound of the intercom buzzing startled Kayla out of her daydream. Valendera would have used her key, and she certainly was not expecting any other visitors at this hour. As she approached the screen, she could see that it was Marcus. "I've got a lead on Val," he told her. Buzzing him in, she could feel the tension rise in her body. At last she could see hope that their mission might succeed, but she was just as aware of how difficult their task was now going to be.



"Are you sure this is the place?" questioned Kayla, as she and Marcus stood in the dingy alleyway. Though it was now nearly seven in the morning, the closeness of the buildings seemed to block out any daylight whatsoever.

“Positive. Arrbern knows this area like the back of his hand.” His confidence in his friend was apparent.

Kayla looked around in disgust. “Yes, he must fit in well around here.”

“Arrbern has had to adapt, Kayla. He was forced into these circumstances through no fault of his own. If it wasn’t for him, we’d have no idea of where to turn. A little more grace and a lot less suspicion might be in order.”

Kayla reached out to touch Marcus’ arm. “I’m sorry. He’s your friend. I’ll try to be more tolerant. It’s just that for years I was taught that he was an enemy of Felloria. I guess it’s hard to change a lifetime’s teachings over night.”

Marcus nodded, acknowledging her apology. “Let’s just get Val out of the way now shall we? Then we can worry about clearing Arrbern’s name.”

Kayla swallowed and braced herself. This could turn out to be a fight to the death or a quick execution. She readied herself for both. She certainly had never expected to find the high-maintenance Valendera slumming it in an underground sex club. Marcus handed her the dagger. “Are you ready, Kayla?” he asked.

Kayla nodded, her throat too dry to speak. What she held in her hand could very well be the death of her. It was up to her and Marcus to now ensure that it would be the death of Valendera.

Marcus picked the lock to the door of the club and slowly pushed it open. From the top of the stairs, he could see the flashing lights belonging to the sound

system, but there was no music to be heard. He guessed that most of the members would have left by now, but hopefully Valendera would still be inside. Cautiously, he led the way downstairs; his gun was loaded and Kayla had the dagger. He just hoped that it would be enough.

They reached the foot of the stairs and he heard Kayla's quick intake of breath. The sight that met his eyes astounded Marcus. Never in all his years had he seen carnage on such a grand scale. Blood splattered tables lay before them, torn fabric littered the floor, broken bottles were strewn across the bar and mutilated bodies lay before him. Though the full horror seemed scaled down somewhat by the gloomy lighting, sporadically the flash from the spotlights highlighted a body, causing even his stomach to turn.

There must have been at least twenty bodies in this part of the club. Marcus could only guess at the power and force that Val must have possessed to take them all. Admittedly, many were tied to chairs or chained to the walls, but some of them must have struggled.

Their tortured faces were contorted in pain and horror; their lifeless limbs were savaged and bleeding. She had ripped through them mercilessly, taking life after life, ripping through arteries with the force of a hurricane and feeding her need with a violence that revolted him.

All he wanted to do in that moment was protect Kayla and take her away from the worst slaughter that their kind could possibly inflict upon the human race. But in the same instant, he knew that they had to see this through to the end. Tightening his grip on the gun, he continued slowly towards the back of the room.

A low groan from a back room stopped him in his tracks. He motioned to Kayla to keep close and they crept as silently as they could manage across the floor towards the direction of the noise. Marcus counted to three and then stormed the room, holding his gun out and preparing for the worst.

The sight that greeted him was similar to that in the main part of club, but the man, or what was left of him, was tied to a bed. His throat had been torn out, his body savaged. The sweet stench of his blood made it obvious that he had only just passed away. And if that were the case, Valendera must still be close by. Quickly he began to scour the room for any evidence of Valendera. But when he pulled back a curtain on the far side of the room and revealed an open window, his heart sank.

“She’s gone, hasn’t she?” Kayla’s voice sounded so tiny he hardly heard her. In it he recognized the sound of despair, of loss, of failure. He summoned the courage to face her. He knew that his own failure would mean punishment from the Death Council, but it was not that he feared. It was never seeing, holding, or being with Kayla again. In just one morning she had turned his world upside

down, and he had welcomed it. He welcomed it too much to let it go now. With renewed determination, he strode towards her and took her in his arms. “Yes, she’s gone. But we still have nearly seventeen hours left to find her. We will succeed, Kayla. I promise you that.” Though he spoke the words with conviction, he was not sure that he spoke the truth. All he knew was that he had to give Kayla a reason and a hope to continue.

Chapter Nine

It was nearly twelve hours later when Marcus and Kayla returned to her apartment, exhausted and defeated. No stone remained unturned in their search for Valendera, but there had been no signs of her anywhere. Even revisiting her killing ground and the club where Marcus danced proved fruitless. With only five hours left of Halloween, it appeared that Valendera had escaped the revenge of Felloria's best assassin and its first Princess.

Kayla sat down despondently on a large sofa. Marcus knew they both felt mentally exhausted as well as physically drained. They had done all they could and it had not been enough.

"What will happen to you now, Marcus?" she asked.

"After tonight I'll be recalled to Felloria." He faced away from her as he spoke, finding the sight of her grief too much to bear.

"They'll kill you, won't they, Marcus? I mean, that is the punishment for failure, isn't it?" she asked quietly.

Marcus simply nodded. "I knew the terms when I took on the task, Kayla. You mustn't worry."

Kayla stormed across the room and stood facing Marcus by one of the large windows. “Not worry? I’ve been searching for you my whole life and you talk of death as if you were just leaving to go on a special mission. I’m not worried—I’m distraught. Don’t you want to fight? Don’t you want to find her? We should be out there searching now.” She spoke with such dismay in her voice that Marcus could only hold her against him to soothe her pain.

Resting his chin on her head, he brushed his hands through her hair and used the soothing words of their mother tongue to calm her fears away. He knew that it would not be enough, that no amount of talking would ease the ache that they were now both feeling, but they had reached an impasse and there was nothing else left to do.

“I can and must accept the fate of the Death Council, Kayla. You must too. Val could be light-years away from us now; searching the streets here will be futile. Let’s spend these last hours together, Kayla. Let me give you sweet memories to carry with you.”

He lifted her chin and took possession of her mouth in one swift movement. As his tongue glided over hers, she knew that this was what she wanted. If she had to lose him, then these moments together would see her through the rest of her life. His velvety touch was all she needed; she responded instantly to the feel of his body next to hers.

“Take me, Marcus, take me and make me remember you always,” she whispered, as his hands began to roam freely over her body.

“Such touching words, dear Kayla. If only you had spoken to me in such romantic prose,” snarled Valendera.

Marcus and Kayla pulled apart instantly, shocked beyond belief that their target had appeared so suddenly. If it had not been for her voice, however, neither one of them would have recognized the being before them as Valendera. Gone were the immaculate looks, the well-groomed hair and pristine clothing.

Before them stood an unkempt and disordered beast; her hair tangled, her eyes blood shot and her clothing in disarray. Bloodstains marred her hands and clothes. The fangs that protruded from her mouth still held rancid flesh upon them. Whatever havoc she had carried out in the past few hours clearly went beyond the scenes at the sex club. They could only guess at the horror that she had created across the city.

“Cat got your tongue, lover?” She laughed wickedly. “Or shall I rip it out for you instead?”

Despite the fear that she felt coursing through her veins, Kayla spoke with a steady voice as she slowly began to reach into her trouser pocket for the dagger. “We’ve been looking for you, Val. You need to be stopped.”

“Fool,” screeched the beast. “You won’t stop me. My powers are growing by the hour. My reign in this millennium will be almighty. And you and your boy toy here will be witness to this. Before you die, of course.”

Slowly she approached Kayla, her eyes blazing with the atrocities she had carried out over the centuries. “Do you know how much I hunger for your beautiful royal Fellorian blood, Kayla? You disguised your true identity from me for far too long. Believe me, if I had known who you were before tonight, this moment would have come far sooner. My informants in Felloria are positively aching for me to claim your blood. Are you even aware that with yours and your brother’s blood churning through my body I shall have the greatest power here on Earth and in Felloria?”

“You’ll never take my blood, Val!” Kayla lunged across the room, the dagger poised in her hand. But before she could reach Val’s body, the beast held out both her arms and let forth a black whorl of electricity that sent Kayla crashing backwards into the wall behind her. Turning her attention to Marcus, Val now spat a flame of venom towards him. Marcus dived to his left and blasted five of his silver bullets at her. He knew that they would not stop her, but he at least hoped to hinder her in some way.

He quickly reloaded his gun behind one of the sofas, conscious that Kayla was still lying against the wall. He needed to get her out of there before Val took

her blood. As the beast stalked across the room towards Kayla's lifeless body, Marcus again began to shoot at her, but the bullets just seemed to be absorbed by her blood-soaked form. He desperately needed that dagger if he was to make any dent in Val's progress.

With each step that she took towards Kayla, Marcus watched her breath grow more ragged and her fangs sharper. For the first time in his life, he felt powerless. None of his training would help him now. She was going to kill them both, of that he had no doubt. He could see that Val was gaining her strength from the pure evil that ran through her and there was nothing he could do to stop her. But he would die before letting her sip the blood of his Kayla. Launching himself off the ground, Marcus propelled himself forwards and threw his full weight on top of Val.

Their bodies tumbled to the floor just as Kayla slowly began to come round. Hearing the clatter of their fall and Val's screams, she instantly reached for the dagger and ran forwards. "Die, you bitch," she screamed, making first one strike and then another into Val's back.

Marcus rolled to one side, reached for his gun, and again began to pump bullets into her body. Panting for breath, Kayla was again about to stab Val when both she and Marcus were suddenly aware of a low rumbling sound coming from her. Within seconds, a thick black smoke surrounded them and Val stood before

them laughing. “Your little tricks and toys are so outdated, Children. I’m having the last laugh this Halloween.”

Recoiling in horror, Marcus and Kayla could only stare speechless at the wild unstoppable vampire before them. Though his eyes smarted from the smoke, Marcus moved towards Kayla in one last effort to protect her. In that instant the large glass window suddenly shattered as if out of nowhere; splinters went flying out across the room, scratching their skin and landing in their hair. A piercing shriek blasted their ears and a wind came through the room so forceful that the furniture was tossed from one side to the other. Covering Kayla’s body with his own, Marcus could only hope that whatever was happening would be over soon.

Chapter Ten

As the wind continued to howl through the room, an icy cold blast seemed to reach towards Marcus and forced him to look to where the window had once been. With wide eyes, he took in the sight before him. A Fellorian Vampire with wings of crimson, each with a span of six feet, stood on the edge of the room. His white face looked almost skeletal, his lips a pale pink and his white hair matted and lanky. He would have been a terrifying apparition even to a fellow vampire but Marcus would know his friend Arrbern anywhere.

Rising from the ground, Valendera began to snarl and spit as she tried to move against the blasting wind. As Arrbern raised his wings out wider, the wind became more powerful, sending Valendera sprawling to the floor. The howling was almost deafening now and Marcus was struggling to hold onto Kayla.

“Hold the witch down,” bellowed Arrbern, as Valendera continued to fight against the gale-force wind.

Crawling on their hands and knees, both Kayla and Marcus slowly made their way towards Valendera. As they reached out for her, taking an arm each, Arrbern flew towards them and grabbed at her legs. “We need to drink her dry,” he shouted above the storm raging around them.

Kayla visibly blanched. “But her blood is tainted. If we drink it, we’ll become like her.” Her distress was clear, but something in the old vampire’s face told her it was their only chance. Pinning down the struggling Valendera, Arrbern glanced across at Marcus.

In that instant, Kayla knew exactly what she had to do. The three of them were being faced with an evil more powerful than anyone could ever imagine. Val had the power to take the world—but they had the power to stop her. With a grim face she nodded, turned her head to the ceiling, craned her neck and revealed her fangs. It was the most basic of vampire instincts, but something that as a Fellorian, she had never been called upon to do before.

Marcus and Arrbern followed suit, each taking an artery in the struggling Valendera’s arms as Kayla leaned towards her neck. Piercing the skin of the vampire she had loathed for so long brought Kayla an unexpected pleasure. She could almost understand the blood seeking lust that drove other vampires. But the blood that she drank was not sweet, like the blood of the animals that she feasted upon. It was coarse and putrid. She pulled away, grimacing, but the sight before her of Valendera still alive gave her the strength to continue. She would think about the consequences of these actions later.

As the three Fellorians continued to drink, the wind grew calmer and the icy chill gradually warmed. With each sip, they watched as Valendera became

weaker and weaker, until finally she lay lifeless before them. In one final act of hatred, Kayla slammed the dagger into her heart and then wiped the blood from her mouth. "That is for my brother," she whispered.

Marcus walked around to her side of the body and took her in his arms. "You were so brave, my Princess. So brave." Kayla began to weep softly against his chest. She felt exhausted, afraid and uncertain, but not brave. Not brave at all.

"What will happen to us now, Marcus? We're contaminated aren't we? Can we ever go back home?" she asked.

Marcus shook his head. "Kayla...I'm so sorry. We can't return to Felloria. Not just yet anyway. Tainted blood could manifest itself in unpredictable ways. We'd be considered a danger to our society. As for home, well, I hope that you and I will always have a home to go to. Together. We have the whole of time to make ours, Kayla. We'll make our own home and face whatever the consequences of this night have been together."

He kissed her cheek tenderly, praying that he would somehow be able to make up for the pain of Kayla losing her homeland. Reaching down he held her hand in his and found himself drawn to the mark that he now saw upon her wrist. A small black triangle covered her vein; a triangle that he knew hadn't been there before.

"Marcus, what is it?" Kayla questioned.

He turned his own wrist over and saw the same mark. “I’ve only ever read about this,” he murmured, as if in a trance. “It’s the mark of The Trinity. A mark that belongs to only three vampires in one Fellorian phase. They are said to possess remarkable powers and a sacred bond between them, that no mortal or vampire can ever break. They feel each other’s pain, each other’s joy. They are one. A union. A trinity.”

Kayla reached out to touch the mark at her wrist. “They? You mean us don’t you? But if there are three, then that means that Arrbern...” Her voice trailed off as she looked towards the other vampire.

The ancient vampire lay face down on the glass-spattered carpet, his wings gone and his body still. Marcus moved towards him and lifted him to a sofa. “Arrbern? Arrbern, speak to me.”

The body shifted and the eyes slowly began to focus on his surroundings. “I...I feel different,” he murmured. He held out his hands before him, showing not pallid skin stretched thinly across bones, but strong firm hands, with manicured nails. No longer did he have a thin, emaciated body, but a strong, firm and muscular physique. With tears in his eyes, he touched his now black shoulder length hair, his charming smile growing bigger by the second.

Marcus reached out towards his friend, taking his great hand in his own. “Welcome to The Trinity,” he said smiling.

Epilogue

London. All Hallow's Eve. 1815

The book lined room smelled faintly of cigars, male cologne and the crackling fire that burnt in the grate. In the corner, a small wretched female huddled herself against the wall. Her hazel eyes burned with fear, her body trembled, despite the warmth of the room.

"You were delicious, my dear." The male voice spoke with deep satisfaction, as its owner wiped gently at his mouth with a napkin.

The young woman reached towards her neck, her fingers feeling the wound where her master had drunk from her.

"It will get easier," he reassured her. "Go to your room now and rest. I need you to keep your strength up."

The woman stood, her legs shaking, but her eyes still holding contact with her master's. What she had done tonight caused such feelings of shame within her and yet she longed for the next night that he would call her to the library. "Goodnight, Master," she whispered, closing the door behind her.

Lord Basingthwaite reclined by the fireside, his cigar in hand and his brandy by his side. It was the perfect way for a gentleman to end his evening. Suddenly the door to his study flew open and his valet, the ever-faithful Sleeker, ran into the room.

“Your Lordship must make haste. Word has arrived from the old woman.” The servant was practically gasping for breath. “The Trinity...the Trinity has been formed, my lord.”

The color instantly left Basingthwaite’s face. “Make the arrangements, Sleeker,” he instructed, casting his cigar into the fire. “I’ve been waiting for this moment for three hundred phases. Now the time has come to take what is rightfully mine.”

The End

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Megan Rose lives in the English countryside, but loves to visit the city whenever she can. She has a passion for red shoes and red handbags, as well as an addiction to her Sex and the City DVD collection.

Red Rose Publishing:

Adam and Eve

Samson and Delilah

Torquere Press:

Toy Box Gags,

Toy Box Leather