

Incubus Inspiration by Marie Harte

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Incubus Inspiration

"What's another word for suck?" Holly Rain glared at her computer monitor. She'd had a mother of a headache all day long and tonight's brain cramp wasn't helping. If only the screen in front of her made a lick of sense.

"Son of a bitch," resounded through the apartment, scaring the crap out of her. It sounded as if the giant uttering the words stood right next to her. A glance at the clock showed her it hadn't yet reached eleven. He was early tonight. Another problem she didn't want or need with a deadline looming like the hangman's rope.

Glaring at the ceiling and her new inconsiderate neighbor, Holly had half a mind to storm upstairs and make Grant Blackstone wish he'd never moved in. Hell, the rundown building had fewer than twenty tenants in residence as it was. As soon as the para-normals had moved in, real estate value in the once pricey building had taken a dive.

Good luck for Holly, bad luck for the building's owner. Then again, if Blackstone was more than the artist he seemed, he belonged in here.

Just like I do.

Holly rubbed her temples and concentrated on her assignment. If she missed tomorrow's deadline, she might as well hand in her resignation. Her boss was just waiting for a reason to fire her after she'd accidentally outed him. Holly understood. The knowledge that her boss was in fact a warlock had created a big stink in the publishing world. Prejudices against para-normals -- those humans who went bump in the night -- raged out of control.

One careless slip of the tongue and now she was stuck reviewing this piss-poor article. If Holly gave it a negative review, she'd remain true to herself and the standards of *NightWatch Weekly...* and find herself out of a job, considering the boss's girlfriend had written it. Not to mention that lying wasn't an option, not if she wanted to remain sane.

Holly had been living with the truth-teller's curse all her life. Hence her creative steak. There were so many ways to dance around the truth. Which gave her a terrific

idea. Pleased at the thought of putting this nightmarish review behind her, she put her fingers on the keyboard.

Another boom shook her ceiling, shorted out a light, and caused a chunk of plaster to fall two inches to her left.

She completely forgot what she'd wanted to type.

Fuming, Holly called Blackstone every name in the book as she lied to herself -- the only person in the world she could lie to. She hated Blackstone's deep voice and earthy scent. Couldn't stand the fact that he never seemed to wear a shirt the few times she'd seen him out and about. Those biceps and pecs offended her so much she found talking to the man impossible. As if allergic to him, Holly's throat closed, her pulse raced and her body tingled anytime she came in direct contact with him.

Her answer: avoid the man.

"Fucking come on already," Blackstone yelled as if she'd conjured him. A loud thump struck above her. Either Blackstone was literally wrestling with his artistic muse or he'd subletted his place to a herd of elephants.

Another chunk of plaster fell. This one splashed into her antique mug and sent it crashing to the floor. Her temples throbbed, and her computer monitor flickered.

Holly had eyes only for her mug. "That's it. Blackstone, this is *so* on, perfect chest or not."

She stalked out of her apartment, down the hall, up the stairs and down his hallway. Pounding on his door, she started on him the minute he opened it.

"You've shouted down the building for the last time, buddy." She opened her mouth to blast him again when she realized he stood two inches from her in nothing more than a towel draped around his waist. The damned thing barely reached his thighs. At his hip she noted a familiar mark and felt the blood rush from her head.

Grant Blackstone belonged to the prince of lust, Asmodeus.

Hellfire and damnation. Her pulse raced like a greyhound rounding the track.

"It's about damned time." Blackstone shot her a wicked smile. He planted his large hands over his hips, drawing her attention to the impressive bulge growing beneath the thin terrycloth of his towel. "I thought for a minute I was going to have to fall through the floor to get your attention."

"Huh?" Brilliant, Holly. She cleared her throat. "You broke my light."

"I've been waiting for two weeks. What the hell did you think I was doing in here?"

"You ruined my concentration, broke my favorite mug, and nearly shorted out my computer."

His brown eyes darkened to black as he closed the distance between them. He slicked back his damp hair and a drop of water ran down his lickable chest. "Tell me something. Is that blond hair real? You can't possibly be this dense on purpose."

"What?"

"Or maybe you can." He narrowed his gaze. "What's your full name?"

"As if I'd tell you." And announce her ties to the Soleil clan? Her family lived to engage in demon wars. If she wasn't mistaken, they were embroiled in one right now.

"Does Holly Janine Soleil ring a bell?"

"No." How could a name "ring a bell?"

Unfortunately, Blackstone had a brain under all that muscle. "Let me rephrase that. Is Holly Janine Soleil your real name?"

She wanted so badly to say no. "Yes."

"Do you know what I am?"

"An artist."

"What I really am?"

She glanced at the small black tattoo on his hip. Crap. "Yes."

Blackstone smirked. "Want to see the real me?"

"Hell, yes." She blushed. Sometimes her inner voice couldn't be contained. "But I don't have time for this. I have a deadline to meet and you're distracting me..."

The blood rushed from her brain when the incubus in flesh dropped his towel and exuded sex like a heady cologne.

"Inspire me, Holly."

This was not going to get her review written. Then again, by the size of his erection, she had a feeling she'd soon be reviewing *him*.

She let him tug her into his apartment. He closed the door behind her and pressed her against it.

"How did you know my na--"

He kissed with his whole mouth. Lips and tongue and a carnal nip that made her knees buckle. Suddenly, "you suck" took on a whole new meaning. He thrust his tongue

deep, rubbing against hers with an agenda she couldn't possibly miss. His cock shoved against her belly, pressing too high to do her any good. God, it had been so long since she'd been touched by a man. And she'd never had one this skilled.

An incubus. In her building. Right in the middle of a Soleil-demon war. What were the odds?

"You're thinking too hard," he murmured against her lips. Running his hands under her shirt, he quickly released her bra. In seconds, his hands molded around her breasts. "You like that, don't you?"

"Oh yes," she breathed, unable to do more than feel.

Cupping her breasts, he slid his fingers over her nipples then pinched them hard as he took possession of her mouth once more. Need, fierce and hot, pulsed between her thighs.

Blackstone's kiss deepened, his hands grew more insistent, and before she knew it, Holly stood naked against an incubus far more worrisome than any deadline she'd ever faced.

He left her mouth to trail his lips down her throat, his fingers inching closer and closer to the ache between her legs. She arched into him, unable to control a shiver when he pressed the pad of his finger just above her clit. He moved again, and the friction of his chest against her nipples pulled a gasp from her throat. A surprising orgasm loomed close. Blackstone was like one giant hum of pleasure.

"Wh-why are you doing this?" she managed. "I have nothing to do with my family."

"Trust a Soleil to question attraction, fate, and the lure of forbidden romance," he rasped with a slow smile.

She licked her lips and drew his gaze without trying. "But I--"

"Holly, do us both a favor and shut up." He lifted her in his hands and stepped closer, positioning himself right where he needed to be. "Fuck, you're hot. And wet." He closed his eyes tight. When he opened them, she saw flickers of red in the fathomless black of his pupils. "And *mine*."

He entered her in one tight, hard push.

Holly had never felt so full. As he rocked into her, she could only hold on, completely under his spell. No one could resist a incubus, and she was only human. Mostly.

"Tell me how much you want this," he breathed into her ear as he crammed himself deeper.

"Yes," she moaned. She'd die if he stopped.

"Tell me that you want me," he prodded, pulling out, only to slam inside her again.

Holly teetered on the keen edge of ecstasy. She'd been unwillingly attracted to Grant from the beginning, fascinated with his art as much as the man himself. But she'd never imaged she'd have sex with him, or that it would be this good.

He angled his pelvis so that her clit felt every push and pull of their joined bodies. "Tell me, Holly," he growled.

"Grant. *Please*. I can't think. Don't stop." Emotions burst from her in words she had no control over. "It's only you. I can't get enough," she admitted, wanting everything from this stranger. *What exists between me and Grant Blackstone far exceeds incubus magic*, the truth forced her to confront.

"That's it," he panted and swelled inside her. He increased his pace, rubbing with firmer strokes against her.

"Oh yes, oh yes," she cried as she clenched tightly around him and came. The orgasm seemed to last forever, even beyond his own climax. Holly experienced a rebirth of pleasure deep within her soul and a freeing of her mind. A myriad ideas presented themselves, and she knew exactly how she would finish the annoying review waiting for her in her apartment. That's if she could untangle her ankles from behind Grant's back.

She didn't want to move and chance that he'd withdraw from her, not when their union felt so damned good, and oddly, not yet complete.

"Baby, that was worth two weeks of starvation," Grant muttered and leaned his forehead against hers. To her surprise, he looked flushed all over. A rosy, inhuman glow suffused his body before it slowly disappeared.

"Starvation?"

"The minute I saw you I had to have you. No one else would do. And that has nothing to do with my current job."

Holly looked past him toward a blank canvas propped on an easel in the corner. "Ah, a new piece for the gallery?" Several of his works already lined the walls of an upscale art gallery downtown.

"Oh no. The artwork's for fun. My real job was to seduce you. The boss wants to see you."

Asmodeus. She sighed. This had to do with her family. She knew it. "Well, wham bam, thank you, man."

He grinned and shifted inside her, still erect. "That's 'wham bam, thank you ma'am.' But you know what? You're not going anywhere, Holly. I was supposed to bring you back last Monday, but I couldn't. I needed you to come to me. I can't claim a woman who's unwilling."

She swallowed hard. "Claim?" she asked weakly. The word meant a lot of things to a lot of people. Though to demons, "claim" had the same meaning as marry. *For life*.

"Yeah, *claim*. We have a lot to talk about, and from what I've gathered about you, a ton of arguing before we settle this." He sighed and murmured, "Damn truth-tellers can't ever see the truth when it's right in front of them."

"You can't claim me," she instinctively argued. She wanted to deny the possibility, but he started moving inside her again. And God help her, she wanted him just as much as she had before. "You don't know me."

He lowered his head and tugged at her nipple with his lips and teeth. She ran her fingers through his hair, holding him as he teased her breasts with enough sensual torture to drive her insane.

He raised his head moments later, that fire back in his eyes. "Baby, you have no idea what's really going on."

How he managed to walk, holding her while remaining inside her, she had no idea. But in moments they entered his bedroom. The feel of satin sheets under her back and Grant Blackstone inside her made everything else fade in importance.

"We'll sort it out later, hmm, Holly?" he asked as he took control once more, slowly stroking inside her until she wanted to scream. "So is this an okay first date, or would you have preferred flowers?"

"Sex, definitely the sex," she helplessly admitted.

He chuckled, then moaned when she latched onto his mouth and kissed him for all she was worth. He rotated his hips and deepened his thrusts. She came again just as he stilled and exploded inside her.

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Energy passed from her into him, and once again Holly saw a better way to amend her review, as well as a way to help settle her dealings with her boss.

Grant groaned and withdrew. He rolled over and pulled her on top of him. "And that's just a small measure of what we can do."

"We?"

He nodded to his canvas. "You inspire me as much as I inspire you."

She turned and gasped at the masterpiece sitting on the easel. A beautiful depiction of two lovers as one, lines and curves flowing into one another in several shades of red, covered the canvas.

"Now let's clean up and get you back downstairs to finish your review. Don't worry, Holly. It won't take long." The look on his face both scared and thrilled her. "Because I'm just getting started."

Biography

Marie Harte is a romance author who loves to write about the passionate side of love and the paranormal, where anything goes. A consistent Fictionwise bestseller, Marie's written over thirty books. **Circe's Recuits: Derrick** will be released from Loose Id in March 2009, as will **Creating Chemistry** from Total E-Bound. For more information, visit http://www.marieharte.com.