



A Vampire  
Christmas

A. J. LLEWELLYN



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# A VAMPIRE CHRISTMAS

By

A.J. LLEWELLYN



## DEDICATION

*Maxine Hong Kingston, Living Treasure of  
Hawaii and to my fabulous editors, Jay Austin  
and Heather Bennett, my personal Living  
Treasures.*



## AUTHOR'S NOTE

In January, 2003 construction began on a superblock mall to be built on *Keeaumoku* Street in the heart of *Waikiki, Hawaii*. Workers on the already controversial project soon made a startling discovery. Twenty-five sets of skeletal remains were found, buried deep beneath the surface streets.

State archaeologists examining the graves backing onto *Malaoa* and *Sheridan* Streets believed these were the unfortunate victims of the catastrophic smallpox outbreak of 1853. They demanded work be stopped until further excavation could determine how many other gravesites were there, and also for the descendants of the victims to be contacted.

As the state of *Hawaii's* Historic Preservation Division struggled with court filings from property developers, decisions had to be made on how the remains of the graves would be treated.

Three other bodies located in the same burial site predate the smallpox deaths, according to archaeological reports, because the bodies were buried in the fetal position, which was the custom of ancient *Hawaiians*.

The discovery of these human remains reopened the issue of so many ancient burial sites being looted in the islands with caskets and treasures put on display in museums and some even sold on the international black market...

*A Vampire Christmas* is a work of fiction inspired by these events.



## CHAPTER ONE

Midnight. There was a kind of hush over the Misland of *Oahu* as we passed from Christmas Eve into the big day itself. Somewhere, Santa Claus was dropping presents down chimneys as little kids fought sleep, visions of sugar plums, turkey...and all those toys. And boy oh boy, Santa had brought us a humdinger.

A baby in a basket right at our door.

My husband Tem looked at me with those big, dark cocoa eyes of his, the ones that seduced me from being straight to gay, and begged.

"Please, Div. *Please* let's adopt this baby. I love him so much!"

"We just found him five minutes ago. How much love can you have for him?"

"I loved you the second I saw you, Div."

*Damn.* My man knew how to shut me up. I rocked back on my heels as Tem gazed lovingly down at the hideous little beast in his arms.

"You want to adopt a demon baby." It was a flat statement, not a question. I wanted to make sure I wasn't hallucinating.



“Yes, yes, darling. I do.”

Outside in the chilly night air, there was no sign of anybody who could have left the baby here. No signs of tire treads, foot prints, no written notes, no baby bottles or extra clothes, just the kid dumped in a basket in our garden.

Tem’s face was serene and I glared at our cat Moontime, who’d dragged the little ankle biter across our threshold in the first place. And I do mean ankle biter. No more than a few hours old at most, this baby had red eyes, pointed ears, a forked tongue, sharp finger nails and, God save us, tiny, pointy, vicious little fangs. Moontime extended a paw like he was Sugar Ray Robinson delivering a nifty right hook and licked his claws clean. He was constantly bringing home stray animals. This was his first stray demon baby. Our home was host to an array of recuperating creatures. Sometimes I felt like Doctor Do-Vampolittle. And Tem knew I was vampire putty in his hands.

I tried again. “Let me get this straight. You want to adopt the *incubus*.”

“It’s Christmas, darling. Everybody deserves a fresh start, a family for the holidays. Look at him, isn’t he adorable?”

*No, he’s not. He’s goddamn ugly. Ten fingers, ten toes, blood-red eyes and teeth that would scare a tiger shark.*



"It's not like you to think such mean thoughts," my husband sniffed. As usual he could read my mind, one of the less attractive qualities of being a vampire in moments like this. "Are you afraid I won't want you as much now that we're parents?"

*Parents?* Oh geez. It wasn't like we were talking about a cute kid, or even one of our own, like a baby vamp. I could even imagine living with a werewolf...maybe. But geez, a demon baby?

"It's going to be hard to find a pediatrician for him."

Tem beamed at me. "We'll have the *odaisan* look at him."

Geez, he already had an answer for everything. Our family priest and spiritual doctor was getting rich quick dealing with our family's many problems lately. The demon baby glared at me and I knew I had more than my hands full with this pudgy little monster.

I tried again. "What about school? We can hardly send him off to *Honolulu* Elementary."

"We'll home school him."

"I don't think either of us is qualified to teach our son —"

"Are you saying I'm dumb?"

"I'm not saying that at all. Tem, I *adore* you. You are the smartest, sexiest guy I know. I just...I can't imagine the *Honolulu* Unified School district would qualify us as teachers. We're gay, we're



vampires and, until three months ago, we were porn stars.”

“And your point is?”

I stared at Moontime, who stared back at Tem, whom he worshipped more than anything in the world, even more than freshly sliced *ahi* tuna three times a day. Damned bossy psycho kitty. Why couldn't he be normal and bring home bugs and birds?

“Moontime, I'm going to put the baby down for a nap now.” Tem fussed over the infant's grubby bedding. “You watch him for me, sweetheart. I want to have a little word with daddy.”

Okay, I wasn't too upset about the idea of having *a little word*, especially since I had a spooky feeling sex might be involved. I sprinted to our bedroom and ripped off my kimono, Tem arriving a minute later with a small bowl of frozen blueberries. *Blueberries!* Tem watched my cock spring into happy anticipation, pointing straight at him. I treasured what he did with frozen blueberries. He laughed at what he always called my *royal salute*, reaching one hand out to stroke the shaft, then pushed me to the bed, climbing on top of me.

“Tem, take that *kimono* off.” I loved him naked more than *anything*, more than eating red velvet cake from his fingers three times a day. He removed his *kimono*, one of his own fabulous



creations, his cock hard now as he sat astride me.

"Divine Thunder, you honestly think I could ever love a child more than you?"

"Well..."

Tem shook his head. "How many times a day do we make love?"

Was this a trick question? "Three, maybe four," I mumbled as his hands slid over my body. In our porn star guises, we were Jimmy Thunder and Angelis. At home, we were Div and Temeura Thunder. Just a couple of vampires in *Waikiki*...

Tem intruded on my thoughts. "And you think I would let anything stop that?"

"Babies are a lot of work."

"You're jealous!"

"Of course I'm freakin' jealous. We just got married three months ago. I love having you to myself." I looked up at that gorgeous man fate had miraculously allowed me to love and he smiled down at me. I still could not believe how beautiful he was. A mixture of *Hawaiian*, Japanese and New Zealand *Maori*, his skin was the color of milky coffee. His long black hair fell around his bare shoulders. One flick of his hot tongue across my lips, just one little kiss and it would be all over. He could have whatever he wanted.

I would beg him to adopt a houseful of harpies...I would swim across shark infested waters to bring him *twiformed Scyllas*, crawl on my



knees up a sandalwood mountain to bring him a one hundred-armed *Briareus*. I would ford any stream he wished to bring him Satan's spawn...oops...we already had Satan's spawn.

Tem bent down and gave me a long and sultry kiss. I felt his teeth elongating against my tongue and I lifted my mouth from his.

"What's our baby's name?" I asked, already under my man's love spell as his head moved down to my cock. His big brown eyes shone with happiness.

"His name is Beelzebub."

*Aw, geez. Talk about advertising his satanic heritage.* "Umm...bub? Because he's a baby?"

"You're so smart, Div."

*Yeah, right, I know I'm being played.*

"I might be a new doting parent, darling, but I can still read your mind."

*Oh shit. I mean, great!*

"Er...don't you think he might outgrow the bub part, sweetheart?" It was hard to concentrate with Tem licking my cock with such obvious enjoyment. When he was aroused, his canine teeth elongated, but he never grazed my cock with them...not yet, anyway. I gulped in frustration when he took his mouth off me.

"We'll cross the name bridge when we get to it, Div. He's still a newborn, you know. But when he gets older, he can just be Beel." His smile was



disarming, his tongue, oh so talented.

"Yeah...Beelzebub," I muttered. "Great name. Oh, Tem..."

"Have I told you lately how much I enjoy this lavish, uncut cock?"

Actually, he told me all the time, but I believe in show rather than tell. Reading my mind, he placed a handful of frozen blueberries in his mouth and got back to work. The sensation of the frozen berries tumbling inside his mouth against his tongue and cheeks was indescribable. Tem had perfected this art of ice and fire and I had to fight not to come too quickly. Swallowing the first batch of berries that had warmed in his mouth, he picked up a second handful, gave me the wickedest grin I'd ever seen, took hold of my cock again and, grabbing a handful of blueberries and stuffing them in my mouth, I upended my hot island hunk and found his cock just ripe for the licking.

"Oh, Div..." Tem murmured around my cock. The sounds of our impassioned sucking filled our bedroom and oh...yeah...I found my thrill on *Blueberry Hill*.

Tem and I coaxed one another to bone-jarring orgasms. My heart beat wildly against my beautiful man's chest as I turned him back around and held him in my arms. We gave each other sticky, sweet kisses. I heard him, felt him,



breathing his contentment, his pleasure in our shared tranquility. Tem's eyes opened as I gazed down at his head on my shoulder and I saw the uncertainty there.

"Div," he whispered. "There might be one small problem." He gently bit my shoulder and I felt a frisson of joy shooting right down to my toes.

"What's that, my love?"

"How will we explain the baby's um...appearance to my mother?"

"Your mother?" The sexual fog lifted from my brain. His mother was not our only problem. Half of the island of *Oahu* was coming to Christmas dinner, our first Christmas dinner as a family.

Yeah, how in heck were we going to explain the kid to anybody?



## CHAPTER TWO

The kid in question was screaming, and it wasn't pretty. His beady red eyes oozed venom, his little talons opening and closing, his forked tongue zigzagging in and out of his minute slash of a mouth. He breathed in and wound himself up for another unholy hissy fit.

Tem, who was busy opening up shopping bags filled with eight hundred thread count bed sheets and the most elegant, expensive blankets available in *Waikiki*, had been buying house wares like crazy for the last month since we'd invited and were now expecting a house full of guests for Christmas dinner. Twenty people for dinner, ten staying for the next couple of days.

All the beds were made, the rooms dressed with tropical island flowers and these were extras. I didn't care what he'd spent, I cared that it was all going to hell because we had a little maniac on our hands.

Tem took his time selecting the softest blanket in the bag, a blood red cashmere throw. At least he



wasn't going to give the kid one of our family heirlooms, like my Aunt Genoa's antique *Hawaiian* quilts.

My sister-in-law, Clancy clapped her hands over her ears. "Make it stop! Please!"

Clancy's wife, my beloved sister *Kalani*, glanced at me in desperation. "Okay, I give up. What is that thing?"

I nudged *Kalani* into silence, not just because I'd caught Tem's sharp look, but because I was aware that what we were talking about, in spite of the unearthly racket, was after all, *a baby*.

There was a soft knocking on our back door. I was surprised we could even hear it with all the noise. I opened the back door and found a paper sack on the *lanai*. I peered into it. Bottles, formula, diapers and a baby bottle warmer. What was going on here?

Back in the kitchen, I handed it to Tem. "This was outside on the *lanai*."

We all looked at each other, then Tem busied himself opening the package.

Despite her initial disgust, my sister took a closer look at the screaming fiend. *Kalani* is the most nurturing woman I know. She picked up the squalling bundle of blubbering Beelzebub and held him close, well, as close as she could without anything important getting near those razor sharp little teeth. She cooed at the baby and his forked



tongue slithered out in a menacing way at her right ear.

“Oh my God...did you ever see anything quite so...vile?” She held him away from her, wincing.

“Are you calling my baby ugly?” Tem looked at my sister with such fury, she was totally taken aback. They had never, not since the day they met, exchanged even a harsh word. They venerated each other, to the point that my sister usually took *his* side when Tem and I had one of our infrequent arguments.

It was two a.m. and the baby had woken our entire house. This was a hard thing to do since our walls were thick and our interior doors were all made of the finest *koa* wood. It was a major achievement considering *Kalani* and Clancy lived in the far western wing of our sprawling ranch house at the foot of the spectacular *Tantalus* Mountains.

“I coulda sworn I heard a baby...yow, what the hell is it?” Tem’s brother *Todah* was in the kitchen now, looking out from the doorway. Wrapping a lime green *pireau* around his waist, *Todah* blanched when he took one look at the screwed up little face, its open mouth engaged in a long, non-stop wail that cut right through each one of us.

Even my doting Tem was starting to come unglued as he tried to tuck the cashmere throw back around Beelzebub’s thrashing, agitated little



body.

"*Kalani*, did you just say that my baby is ugly?" he huffed.

*Todah* glanced from his brother to my sister and back again. "This is *your* baby? Is this another family curse? I mean...geez...he's one ugly little..." He caught my warning glance and stopped mid track.

"Well, Tem, he *is* a demon baby." *Kalani* was rocking the baby in her arms now. "Even you must see he's not George Clooney."

"Who?" Tem was mystified. Since his transformation into a vampire a scant three months ago, Tem had lost a lot of his human memories. They were coming back, but his absorption into our world, our secret world shared only by my sister, her wife Clancy, Blossom, our self appointed matriarch and queen of Chinatown and Tem's brother *Todah*, well, Tem's mind was full to bursting. Between his total devotion to me—mutual, I might add—and our immediate family, his burgeoning design business *Thunderwear* and the wonderful, seductive night life we shared, he cared little for the past.

"Okay, so he's a devil child," I shrugged. "When you're a perfect person, *Kalani*, you can criticize."

"Thank you, Div." Tem gave me an appreciative smile.



"Well!" My sister raised her eyebrows at me. "No need to get touchy. I've just never seen an incubus before."

"Well, he's not a complete incubus," I pointed out. "The curse isn't fully set."

"Why do you keep talking about a *curse*?" Tem's voice could have shattered ice. I glimpsed the fruit knife in his hand and kept my voice soft.

"Look at his feet, sweetheart."

"What?"

"His feet!" I had to shout above the baby's now deafening roar.

Tem gasped. One little foot had escaped the cashmere throw. It was an ordinary baby's foot. In my mind, I felt the thoughts skittering through Tem's mind like a tennis ball against the wall of my brain as the matching emotions played across his face.

"He probably needs food. I'll go see if any of the stores are open." *Todah* started moving toward the front door.

"We've got some already. Somebody left us a parcel...they even put in a bottle warmer. Wasn't that nice?" Tem kept veering from being his old self to verging on hysterics.

"Nice...who hates you this much?" *Todah* asked, ignoring my warning glance this time. At twenty three, *Todah* was a younger, thinner, but equally handsome version of Tem, except his hair



was short and his patience with women was too. After he converted to being a vampire, he changed his name to Thunder. I wanted him to be a legal heir to our family. I wanted him to have all rights to our name and fortune under the law.

He meant a lot to me, this kid, but right now I could have clocked him.

A weird crackling sound permeated the baby's screams as he lay in my sister's arms. We all stopped. His tiny little baby hands were turning into claws.

"Dang." *Todah* kinda summed it up well, I thought.

"What are we going to do?" Tem was never this rattled.

"Sweetheart, it's going to be fine."

"No, it's not." His face was awash with grief. "Beelzebub spits at people and he's destroyed all the baby bottles. Look...he keeps shredding the nipples."

"His name is Beelzebub?" *Todah* just stared at him.

I gave *Todah* another warning look and touched Tem's face. "Get another bottle ready. I have an idea."

His glance stayed on mine. We were besotted with one another. Like me, he felt like he was finally, fully alive, even though he was technically undead. Our marriage made me feel the same



way, not the least because there were gifts to being a vampire in love that even I was only just discovering. I loved Tem with all my heart. I still could not believe each and every day that he'd given up being the hottest, busiest bottom in the gay porn business to be my loyal husband.

He refused to even look at his movies now, even though the last two we shot featured just the two of us and were the biggest sellers he'd ever made. For Tem, love and family came first. And today...today I was finally meeting his parents. It had been difficult for him to allow his folks to fly here from the mainland and join us for Christmas. They were not exactly *thrilled* their son was gay and was sharing his life with me. On the other hand, I think they liked it a whole lot better than him being the sluttiest bottom in gay porn.

Technically speaking, I was married to Australian-born Clancy. I married her in a legal ceremony to give her immigration status and the family name of Thunder. But she was bonded by blood to *Kalani* as Tem was to me. Being vampires was our closely guarded secret. I didn't see how Tem's family would have to find out, but things had been so...blissful for the past few months, he dreaded anything upsetting our harmonious home.

And now we had Beelzebub.

"You're musicians," I reminded *Todah* and



Clancy. "Can't you play him something?"

"I am going back to bed. I have company." *Todah* yawned. It wasn't easy being the horniest playboy in *Waikiki*, but he was more than up to the challenge. "Say, the house looks cool. Love the palm Christmas tree."

"Thanks, *Todah*." Tem grinned at him. "Div and I decorated it all night. We've got pine cones and evergreens on all the mantels."

"It was Tem's idea to buy a live palm tree," I added. We decorated it with vintage German glass ornaments we found at a yard sale in *Kaimuki*. We put the massive palm in the living room, covering it in twinkling red lights.

"How cool! So what...in the new year we can plant it in the garden?"

"Exactly!" Tem looked at him. "Sweetie, did you say you have company? You want to take her some fruit?" He went back into Susie Homemaker mode, reaching for an array of tropical fruit he'd picked from our garden.

"Is she cute?" I whispered.

"Oh yeah...I think this one might be a keeper." *Todah* had that dreamy eyed look he got over every single girl he bedded.

The baby went full throttle on the screaming.

Clancy pushed *Todah* aside, ran for her violin and started playing, right there in the kitchen. The baby suddenly stopped shrieking.



"What is that? Chopin?" Tem asked, so distracted that *Todah's* breakfast papaya was being diced, not sliced.

Clancy stopped playing for a moment. "No, *Lucifer's Black Mass*, actually."

*Oh, spiffing. This was going to be some Christmas...*

Tem looked startled. "You're kidding, right?"

"No."

*Todah* laughed and Beelzebub started wailing again.

"Keep playing, keep playing," I implored, and we all visibly relaxed when the baby's hysterics subsided into animal growls and hiccups. Once again, Tem's thoughts reached mine.

*My parents are going to be here in twelve hours.* His troubled gaze found mine again as the bottle monitor pinged and Tem's shaky hands retrieved yet another bottle with warm baby formula out of the heating unit.

"That violin's fantastic." *Todah* was falling asleep on his feet as he took his fruit bowls in hand, sloping off back to his bed with his latest female conquest.

"Have fun," I called out, catching my husband's baleful stare. "Tem...sweetheart, once *Hiroshi* arrives, we'll have a better understanding of what we're dealing with." I wrapped my arms around him, wanting to reassure him. "In the meantime, I have an idea." I reluctantly let go of him and



started rooting around the kitchen cupboards.

"He really doesn't mind coming here? I mean, it *is* the middle of the night and it *is* Christmas morning..." Tem sounded hopeful again.

*Hiroshi*, our family *odaisan*, had seen us at our worst. When *Todah* had been possessed by an *inu gami*, a dog ghost, it was *Hiroshi* who had helped us.

"I think he's intrigued, to be honest." I found a steel tipped spout, the type that goes into the top of a liquor bottle. I duct-taped it to the bottle of formula and both Tem and I held our breaths as my sister put the tip into his mouth. Grasping the bottle with both claws, the baby suckled in a starved way, which of course, he was.

"Oh, God," Tem wailed. "It's getting worse. Whatever he has...it's really taking hold of him now, Div."

But still the baby suckled, something resembling happy sounds coming out of his grasping mouth.

"Oh, he's hungry." Tem's face went soft with compassion. I put my arms around him again. "Oh Div, this is breaking my heart." I held him tighter and somehow, the baby, guzzling for all he was worth, drinking, feeding...fighting for his life, woke up something in me.

"You big softie." Tem's hand slipped under the folds of my *kimono*, placing a hot kiss right over



my heart. Damn. My cock was getting hard again.

I kissed his silken hair. "Tem, have you thought about what happens if we fix Beelzebub and reverse the curse?"

He lifted his face away from my chest. "You don't think for one minute I'm giving him back?"

I shook my head. "I have no intention of returning him. We have no idea what his circumstances are." I kept my voice tender, so the baby could remain calm, in that focused state of receiving nourishment. "I do intend to find out who would do this to a child, though."

Clancy was perched on the counter top now, sawing away on her priceless *Baltic*, made by Joseph Guarneri del Gesu in 1731. It had been my sister's wedding gift to her. I had no idea what *Kalani* paid for that extraordinary piece of art at auction, and it was none of my business. It was certainly the most valuable thing in our home, and Clancy treasured it.

Tem and I watched as my sister's beatific gaze fell on Clancy's face. Me, I was transfixed, as always, by the exquisite workmanship of the violin. Del Gesu's trademark scroll work and painstaking woodcutting made the violin one of the thirty most coveted string instruments in the world.

The baby snorted and giggled and a long claw snaked out from beneath his baby blanket. Tem



reached out just in time and caught his talons before he left scratches on that work of art. The baby looked across at Tem in total surprise, then started howling again. Mercifully, the doorbell rang.

“What if—” Tem’s tortured question had to wait. We were long on what ifs, short on answers. As I once again reluctantly let go of my wonderful, warm man, I checked the square peep hold of our seventeenth century Tibetan Namdrooling monastery front door, relieved to see it was *Hiroshi*.

“*Mele Kalikimaka*,” he grinned as I let him into the house.

I gave him a rueful smile. “Good morning, *Hiroshi*. Let’s hope you still think it’s a Merry Christmas when you see what Santa left on our doorstep a few hours ago.”



## CHAPTER THREE

“So, what do you think, *Hiroshi*?” I was anxious now, not just because Tem’s nerves were getting the better of him, but because, for better or worse, they were getting to me as well.

*Hiroshi*, a tiny, tidy little middle aged Japanese man, hair slicked back in a smooth, short black ponytail, was dressed head to toe in black. It was a pity, really, since Beelzebub kept spewing orange bile on his nice, clean clothes.

He was examining the naked baby on one of Aunt Genoa’s vintage *Hawaiian* quilts—I just *knew* Tem would, at some point, draft those lovely heirlooms into baby butt duty—spread on the kitchen table. I tried not to show my apprehension about this, as the baby, lying on his back, playing with his feet, swerved giddily between snapping and biting and cooing and giggling--when he wasn’t upchucking Technicolor fluids.

“Actually, I think he’s a very sweet baby...when he isn’t trying to kill me.” *Hiroshi*



was studying the alternately gurgling and hissing baby boy inch by inch. He seemed fascinated by the kid's feet. So far, only one was turning into a beastly claw. "And you're right. This is a curse, in case you were wondering."

"Well, he landed in the right house, then." I caught my husband sharp, shrewd glance. *Hey*, I reminded him silently. *I'm a vampire. I know from curses.* As much as *Hiroshi* knew about our family, our deepest, darkest secret was unknown to him. There was no reason for him to know the truth about us being vampires, unless it was absolutely necessary.

"Can you remove the curse?" Tem was anxious to hold the baby who seemed quite content in *Hiroshi's* care. I detected more than a little jealousy here.

"Not yet." *Hiroshi* glanced at me. "As Jimmy here pointed out, we don't really know what we're dealing with. But I can definitely slow it down."

"Who would do this to a child?" I asked as Tem watched *Hiroshi* mix some herbs in a small dish, grinding them with a pestle.

"What are they?" Tem asked, and *Hiroshi* rattled off a long list of *Hawaiian* names. I'd lived on the islands for hundreds of years and not one name was familiar to me. I wanted to ask him to slow down, to tell us herb by herb what he was feeding the kid, but everybody was on the edge



with the sound of his plaintive wailing, which now struck up a new and sharper octave.

We watched *Hiroshi* mix the herbs into a paste with some amber liquid and the strangest thing happened. He opened the strange little onesie on the baby and there was a very odd odor to it. I could have sworn I knew the smell, but could not place it. We were all surprised to see that the baby's umbilical cord was still attached.

"This was a home birth," *Hiroshi* announced, sounding grim. "At least they didn't throw him in a dumpster."

*Kalani*, Clancy, Tem and I exchanged looks. As far as we *knew*, nobody had dumped the baby in any trash. The first Tem and I knew of the little brat, Moontime was scratching at the front door, the basket strap clenched in his little kitty jaw.

*Hiroshi* held out his hand to Tem. "Get me a sterilized knife, please. Wash it well in boiling water and wipe it with this alcohol solution." He rubbed a hand around the baby's belly, leaving some brown sticky residue on it. When his pinky finger moved to the baby's mouth, Beelzebub opened and suckled on it, until *Hiroshi* hastily removed his finger before he lost it.

"The teeth are very sharp, but quite soft." He took the clean knife from *Kalani*, severed and tied off the umbilical cord, handing it to me. "He didn't feel a thing. I anesthetized the area. You



will need to keep the cord. Put it in plastic for now in the freezer. If ever he needs plasma or blood work, nothing is better than having the umbilical cord for comparison." He hesitated. "While I'm here, do you want me to circumcise him?"

"Hell, no." Tem's voice was firm. "My husband is uncut and it is a joy to behold..."

"Thanks for sharing," *Hiroshi* chuckled. He put on his stethoscope, placing it over the baby's heart, picked up a tiny wrist in his fingers and checked his watch.

As the baby gurgled, growled and spat, there was an odd look on *Hiroshi's* face. His hand moved to Beelzebub's other wrist. Then he tried taking the baby's temperature with a rectal thermometer. He tried again and again.

"Mmm...how strange."

"What is?" I asked.

*Hiroshi* didn't respond. He shook the thermometer again, inserted it into the baby's bottom, and with his other hand examined the little shirt the baby had been wearing. He looked at me.

"This basket...is that what you found him in?"

Tem nodded. "I know...it's hideous, isn't it? I'm going to throw it out. I can't bear to look at it."

"I wouldn't do that if I were you."

"Why not?" I was curious now.

"Well, unless I'm mistaken, there's



something...I don't quite know how to say this."

"Just say it," I insisted.

*Hiroshi's* expression was now agonized. "Well, I don't really know how to tell you this."

"Just spit it out." I winced as the baby hissed, his forked tongue sending spittle all over the place.

"Well, the thing is, call me crazy, but as far as I can tell, this baby has no heart beat, no temperature...no pulse. This is a dead baby."



## CHAPTER FOUR

Clancy almost dropped her violin. “What did you say?”

Kalani and I were staring at each other. A *vampire baby*. We knew a thing or two about vampires that our newly converted spouses did not. Some humans did not hear vampires’ heart beats.

I caught Tem’s anxious gaze and his thoughts flew into my brain. *Don’t let him take this baby from us, Div.*

*Not a chance, Tem.* My man, still new to the art of reading my mind when I wanted him to, must have caught the drift of my thoughts, because he looked relieved.

*Hiroshi* was actually excited. The scientist in him was incredulous, rather than fearful. “He’s dead. I don’t know how, but somebody has conjured this kid up from beyond...you know...the grave...” His voice trailed away and he shrugged. He glanced at me and Tem. “How



many people know about your family affliction?"

Tem, *Kalani*, Clancy and I collectively jumped as if poked with the same red hot cattle prod.

"What...*affliction*?" I asked, my voice sounding squeaky even to my ears. Some alpha male I'd turned out to be.

*Hiroshi* looked exasperated. "*Todah's inu gami* possession, of course. Apart from me, who else knows about it?"

We all looked at each other. "Blossom, I guess," was the first name on my lips. Our self-appointed matriarch was not actually related by blood, but she had been the one to find *Hiroshi* for me when *Todah* was in trouble.

*Hiroshi* fixed the steel tip on the baby bottle with the doctored formula and hoisted the baby into his arms, feeding him. "This has a number of herbs that will stop the bile rising in his throat, and it will slow down the metamorphosis into complete demonic possession."

"You say that so matter of factly," I replied.

"I would say this baby died at birth and somebody went to a soothsayer...or somebody to get him, you know...revived. With catastrophic results. I can't say I've seen it before...well, not exactly."

"What exactly have you seen before?"

*Hiroshi* lifted his shoulders in a helpless way. "When parents lose a baby they try many bad



things...drastic things." He checked the contents of the bottle and stuffed the tip back into the hungry baby's mouth. "What we have on hand here will keep the baby happy and give you time to get down to Chinatown and figure out who sent you a nest of vipers for Christmas."

Tem stared at him. "Chinatown? But we can't go anywhere. We're expecting twenty people for Christmas dinner. My parents will be here in...eleven and a half hours."

"I suggest you get going then." *Hiroshi* handed the baby off to *Kalani*, the little beast suckling in a more genteel way on his bottle now, his small body apparently in a state of exhaustion from all the amateur theatrics.

*Hiroshi* assembled three more bottles and refrigerated them. "Each bottle will keep him calm and nourished for one hour, possibly a little longer, but you're looking at four to five hours tops, then I have no idea what he'll be capable of...whoever sent this little keg of dynamite wasn't doing it with *Aloha*."

"You think it was an attempt to kill us?" I was incredulous.

"Oh, no. This is an ancient curse. See this basket? It's a burial casket. This baby was brought to you in the very basket he was entombed in...at least I think it was his casket. You can still see his body formation on the base of it. And look at his



burial shroud..."

*And here I'd been thinking it was a onesie...*

"Wait a second...if he's an ancient baby, how did he get dug up again?" I asked.

"Good question. But I don't have any answers for you."

"He doesn't smell like a dead baby. He has that new baby smell to him." Tem gave the baby a finger to hold and those tiny talons gripped him like a vice.

It was true, Beelzebub did not seem ancient at all. My thoughts raced. Maybe the basket had been stolen and someone thought it would be a fitting burial home for the baby.

*Hiroshi's* voice sliced into my reverie. "He must have been the child of somebody important. He was buried in the fetal position, which ancient *Hawaiians* used to do. And..." *Hiroshi* held up the tiny garment. "It has the crown flower pattern on it. He was the child of an influential person, maybe even an *ali'i*."

"Well, it sounds like they think we're important, that's why they brought him to us." That was Tem, always trying to look on the bright side of things.

*Hiroshi* gave him a long look. "Guys, I have no idea why somebody would send you a revived dead baby, but this kid died a long, long time ago. You're paying me for my spiritual divination as



well as my medical skills, and I feel this is tied up in old family business. The words that keep coming to me are *bad blood*."

He gave us a little wave and seemed in a real rush to leave. "I'll see myself out."

For a few moments after he left, the four of us remained silent.

"Beelzebub...he's one of us, isn't he? A vampire?" Tem asked finally.

"Yes, I can hear his heart beating steadily." *Kalani* smiled down at the baby who looked drowsy now.

"I never knew humans couldn't hear our hearts beating. In all the time I knew you before I knew you...of...you know what I mean, I could hear your heart beating." Tem was staring at me.

"Because you loved me. You were tuned into me. I am not sure that *Hiroshi* is right about somebody dumping the baby on us. I'm inclined to think Moontime found him and dragged him here." A bad feeling was coming over me, that somebody had been in the act of burying what he thought was a dead baby when the cat interrupted them.

"So how do you explain the demon curse?" Clancy asked.

"You heard the man. He said bad blood. Old business." I caught my sister's frightened look. Old family business and a lot of bad blood had put



a curse on the Thunder family. I had no idea if the bad blood was ours, or the family business, but it was time to start getting some answers.

"What if the baby's family tried to remove the vampire curse and stirred up the demon curse?" Kalani asked. "What if..."

I cut her off. "Kalani, Clancy...can you take care of the baby while Tem and I go to Chinatown?"

The girls nodded. I glanced at Moontime. "And you stay here and watch the baby. Daddy and I are going the fast way."

"We're going to fly?" Tem brightened instantly. He lived to fly. One of the perks of being vampires in love was our ability to fly...together. He was oblivious to the cat's pissed expression. Until I knew what we were dealing with, I wanted the cat indoors, safe. Moontime was staring at me. "For your own safety, Moon...stay indoors."

"You think somebody wants to hurt our *cat*?" Tem looked even more worried.

"I don't know, darling. I do know we're running out of time. Let's roll."

Tem and I went to our private quarters, removed our *kimonos* and put on our favorite flying gear, leather pants, vests and long coats. Tem had made our matching outfits and had made a variation on them for the women in our family as Christmas presents. We let ourselves out of the house and walked to the *mauka* side, or



mountain side of our property that spread *makai*, or toward the ocean on the other end. The night was dark, with scattered stars, some puffy clouds and a brisk freshness on the air.

Joining hands, we made a run at the edge of a gap between our private road and a rocky ravine and we took off. Our flight time would be about six minutes, but Tem and I liked to circle our property, surveying our land, checking on the horses, goats and pigs, and we found our little estate undisturbed.

"I love you!" Tem shouted as we rose above the dense sandalwood forest, what little remained of it on the crest of *Tantalus*. The spicy, heady scent of the dusky wood was especially intoxicating in the summer months, but to us, was always pervasive. We threaded our way between old, old trees, releasing and catching one another's hands over and around branches and leaves, until we found ourselves flying over *Waikiki*.

"Tem, I love you," I shouted at my man, who grinned as the wind whipped his face.

The stars twinkling so close never failed to delight us. For so many years I'd been grounded by my unusual vampire's curse. The *kahuna*, or high priest who'd placed it on my grandparents had allowed our family to enjoy some daylight, food, many of the typical things that a *Hawaiian* would enjoy. However, things like flying were



denied us unless we were bonded to a mate. I'd forgotten how wonderful it felt to fly until I met Tem. I had always bedded women until I fell in love with him. Once I knew I needed to be with him, being without him would have been the worst curse of all.

I held his hand tighter as we neared *Waikiki*, its city lights like diamonds in a bed of green and black velvet. We zeroed in on Chinatown. Until we touched ground, humans could not see us. We hovered over Merchant Street and as we began our descent, the sound reached us like the blast of a car horn. People laughing, talking...and oh yeah, some idiot really was honking his horn. Tem and I touched down gently and I gathered him to me.

"Where to?" he asked me, smelling deliciously of sky and stars and a little bit of sea spray. We were close to the water's edge, maybe half a block.

"Something's off. I can feel it."

"Me too." Tem paused. "There's tension in the air."

I wished we were home in bed. Tem gave me his mouth and we exchanged a lovely, open-mouthed kiss that threatened to get hot and dirty fast. I pulled back from him and his face took on a mournful expression.

"God Tem, you always turn me to mush."

"Not completely." His hand migrated to my rock hard cock. "That's what I'm talking about."



I laughed and gave him another quick kiss. "Let's start with the dragon queen herself."

Tem had a very good relationship with Blossom, who ruled Chinatown with an invisible empirical rod. She publicly kept herself scarce by day, except for those she knew well. Like me, she preserved her energies during the day to deal with her twilight world at sundown. Owing to her great age, which I believed to be in the hundreds, she lived by her own rules. She had outlived the whaling trade of the early 1800s, the devastating smallpox outbreak of 1853, the Chinatown plague of 1900, two bad fires, the second of which completely destroyed Chinatown, Pearl Harbor and Nine Eleven, the last of which, she assured me, rattled her the most because it had devastated world trade into *Honolulu*.

Running a smooth, intricate network of gambling, opium and what she insisted were *love dens*, she knew everybody in *Honolulu*, even if they didn't know her. Nothing happened in this town that Blossom didn't know about. Tem had captured her heart with his stunning clothing designs and his complete devotion to revamping her many businesses. She and I had always maintained a cordial, respectful distance. I was still uncomfortable with her in the self-appointed role of family matriarch, but it sure as hell was a lot more pleasant than being in her bad books.



Tem and I turned down the narrow back alley side street off River Street, surprisingly alive with activity at this hour. This was one of a string of Blossom's opium dens, this one her new favorite because it was disguised as a noodle shop out front.

Pausing at the entrance, I smiled at the view inside. "Darling, the girls look so good." I turned and smiled at Tem who frowned at me.

"What do you mean, *good*?"

"Well, considering they used to have their tits falling into the *saimin*, they actually look presentable. I love the outfits you designed for them."

I was aware of Tem's enraged sniff as I admired the figure-hugging tight little red velvet dresses that cleverly accentuated each womanly asset on the five food servers behind the counter. For a few bucks more, you could have your pick of girl and some opium out back. A few more bucks would get you a nice hand job as you got high, your head nestled in her lap. More money got you a blow job and the equivalent of the state deficit would get you an actual piece of ass.

"What would you like?" the closest girl to me called out.

I moved up to the noodle counter, my gaze falling somewhere between primitive lust and genuine intrigue. How the heck did she keep those



tits from jumping out all over the place?

"Ah...yes, I wouldn't mind some nipples. Er...I mean...noodles. How about you, Tem?"

"None for me." He was beyond enraged now, making a dangerously wide turn toward homicidal as he stared at what he thought was my object of desire.

"No?" I glanced away from him back to the counter girl. "Well, in that case, do you mind telling Blossom that Jimmy and Tem Thunder would like to speak to her, please?"

The girl hesitated. "Blossom?"

"Yes, Blossom." I was starting to lose my patience now.

"She's not here."

"Not here? That's impossible."

The counter girl looked uncertain and I guessed that her hot red high heels were uncomfortable. She shifted her weight from one foot to the other. A genuine noodle customer came in, being ridiculously fussy over the nutritional qualities of two orders of *chow fun* as Tem and I waited. As soon as the guy took off, I started in on the girl in front of me.

"Look, we are friends of Blossom's. Tem here, in particular."

The counter girl shook her head. "She's not here." Something like fear...or was it excitement...a tremor in her eyes. "Big meeting



tonight."

"Meeting?" I wondered if she was negotiating yet another peaceful truce between the *Fuk Ching* and Snakehead gangs.

"You like to get high?" The counter girl thrust her chest toward me and I could see two crests of nipples at her plunging neckline now. She glanced at Tem, only just catching the crazed look on my husband's face.

"No, I never get high, unless I'm sucking my husband's cock. That gets me plenty high." I knew I'd just made Tem's day and glimpsed his radiant smile. "This is business. What kind of meeting?"

The girls all looked at each other.

"She didn't tell me." The counter girl was parking her titties back into her bra.

"*Lamia*," the girl down at the end of the bar whispered.

My head swiveled in her direction. "*Lamia*?"

The girls all nodded like little robots. *Lamia*. I was aware now that Tem could easily murder everybody in the shop. He *hated* being left out of the loop, any loop.

"Wait a second...you're telling me *Lamia* is in *Waikiki*?"

"That's what Blossom said." The girl down at the end of the counter looked keyed up now. If *Lamia* was here, that explained the underlying tension in Chinatown.



"Thank you, ladies." I took Tem's hand in mine, steering him from the shop. He waited until we'd rounded a couple of dark alleys before refusing to take another step.

"Okay, who or what is *Lamia*?"

"Well, I've never met her..."

"Cut it out, Div. First you have your tongue hanging out over some titties, now you're keeping secrets from me?"

I drew him away from the store, down an alley, the smell of rice and fish bones strong as I huddled with him in a doorway. Gazing up at the moon, I gathered my thoughts. Could this have anything to do with Beelzebub? Some ideas were forming in my mind, but I needed time to think.

"Div, what is it?" Tem's voice was soft. He knew something was wrong, he just didn't know what. When my thoughts became muddled, which was very rare, he couldn't read me. When that happened, I wasn't sure who it scared more. Me, or Tem.

"They...they say that she is a monster. I never thought she was real. The idea is sort of mind boggling, actually."

"What sort of a monster?"

"A sort of a vampire."

"A vampire? Why do people always call us monsters? We're nice people, some of us..."

I shook my head. "Not *Lamia*. She...ah...is



rumored...well, legend has it that she steals newborn babies and...drinks their blood."



## CHAPTER FIVE

“That’s very icky, Div. You don’t...you don’t think she has anything to do with Beelzebub?”

“I don’t know sweetheart...I mean, it would be a strange coincidence if we get a cursed vampire baby on our doorstep the same night *Lamia* rocks into town.”

“So who is she, exactly? Is she a sort of...vampire queen?”

Tem was obsessed with the idea of vampire queens and coveted Blossom’s vault with its antique collection of tiaras and scepters.

“Yeah, come to think of it, she is. I remember my grandfather telling me she was supposed to have been the lover of one of the big Greek gods, Zeus, I think. Yes, that was it. She had a woman’s head and breasts, but a serpent’s body. The story goes that she was one of Zeus’s lovers and she bore him children. The goddess Hera, in a fit of jealousy, caused each child that was born to die. In



despair, *Lamia* became a monster jealous of mothers with healthy, living children. So she devoured those children." Lapsing back into thought, I remembered the rhyme my grandfather had taught me.

"There is one verse I remember." I paused and it came back to me, nights of lying in my bed at night, a candle burning by my side. I could almost smell the beeswax as I went back there in my mind, my gentle grandfather saying,

*Shall Lamia in our sight her sons devour,  
and give them back alive the self-same hour?*

While mortal kids went to sleep with fairytales of *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Three Little Pigs*, my sister and I got *Lamia*.

I must have said these thoughts aloud, for Tem was nodding.

"All those fairytales are gruesome, when you think about it. I mean, a wolf disguised as a grandma eats up Red. *Snow White's* step monster poisons her with fruit, *Sleeping Beauty* is buried alive...or undead or..." he frowned.

"It comes back to that..." I shook my head. "I have no idea exactly how or why...but *Lamia* is in *Honolulu*, and as far as I know, she's never been here before. Like I said, I always thought she was a sort of vampire fairytale."

"I wish I could have met your grandfather."



Tem stroked my back in that darkened doorway and when I turned to look at him, I realized we were on the doorstep of a Shinto temple. I tried to think holy thoughts, not bad ones as I gazed into the beautiful face of the man I loved.

"Oh, sweetheart, I wish you could have met him, too. He was a good man, even if he was the reason our family was cursed."

Tem and I had never fully discussed the family curse. Bit by bit, parts of the story had come out, but we had fallen for each other so fast, our need to become bonded mates so great, nothing else had mattered. And now, nothing consumed me more than keeping Tem safe and happy.

He smiled at me in the darkness. "I hate when you admire hot chicks. I still get jealous. Man, the way you stared at that chick's chest. I was waiting for you to motor-boat her boobies."

I laughed. "I was admiring the mechanics of the dress that *you* made, darling. I don't crave boobies. I crave you. A man can admire a piece of art and not want to fuck it, you know."

"You thought she was art?"

"No, I think you are. High art. I idolize you, Tem."

He knew that was true. I was gaga over this guy. So lost in love, I was prowling dark streets before dawn to help some demon spawn he wanted to rescue.



"You wanna fuck your husband in the doorway of this here Shinto temple?"

I opened my mouth. "Oh, yes."

Tem laughed as I pulled him closer, our mouths touching at last. When I dated women, I lost interest in just a few weeks. But when Tem's canine teeth elongated and I felt his cock hardening against my crotch, mine got just as hard for him. I could never, in a thousand years or more of living, get enough of him.

His teeth got my teeth going. We hadn't fed on each other's blood for a couple of days. I fed out of necessity. Tem seemed to actually enjoy it. He was a lot more ready to kill for blood than I was and we had shared a couple of bad guys in dark alleys such as this. Now we were two bad guys anxious to share ourselves with one another.

I pressed his back against the cold brick wall, aware of a fluttering ghost. This was one I was used to seeing in Chinatown. He was an old Chinese man with a queue of hair down his back, a victim of homicide, always warning me of some other impending victim of violence.

"That old man kinda has a thing for you," Tem murmured against my throat.

Now it was my turn to laugh. "I have all the man I can handle right here." We kissed with increasing fervor, despite the difficulty of our battle teeth. I loved the low, growly noises Tem



made when he was aroused. This was something new since his blood transformation and it made me want to be inside his hot little ass so badly. His tongue lashed at my lips.

“Please, please fuck me, Jimmy.” He turned away from me, his face pressed to the wall, bracing his hands against the dark, heavy bricks and I heard his sharp intake of breath. It was quiet now, save for footsteps somewhere, lights from the art deco lamps Blossom had strong-armed the Chinatown City Council into placing in strategic spots leaving small, powdery rainbows in the alley. A light tropical shower started to fall as I slid my arms around Tem’s warm, muscular waist, undoing the buttons on his leather pants, lowering the zip, feeling that huge cock spring straight out into my waiting hand. God, how I coveted his body. I just loved fucking him. I loved the feel and taste of him, the sounds he made when he was getting fucked.

One hand stroking the ass it was my privilege to pleasure, I luxuriated in the silkiness of his skin. I wished we were in bed, but a quickie in a doorway in the rain was a turn-on.

“Look at the moon,” he whispered, and as my cock stroked back and forth across his lovely, tight ass cheeks, I stole a look at the sky. I realized it was the perfect *hula* moon. It was a night for dancing and lovemaking under the stars. I



couldn't wait a second longer and neither could Tem. I fell to my knees, turned him around, his cock reaching for my mouth as my tongue lapped at it. I could always tell what Tem had been eating by the taste of his come. Mmmm. Papaya. Oh yeah...he'd been eating blueberries, too.

"Oh yeah," he moaned. "Let me feel those teeth."

I had never, ever allowed my canine teeth to become exposed when I was fucking a woman. In my hetero days, not one woman ever guessed my secret life. When Tem persuaded me to do gay porn with him, I'd become so lost in the sensation of fucking him, keeping control of my deep, inner impulses became impossible. Now I had no control at all. I could not get my teeth to recede. The vampire and the man in me needed him. I tried hard not to graze that precious cock, and despite wanting him to come in my mouth, I knew I had to wait.

Tem's loving face gazed down at me. "Can I have you in me now? Or do I need to beg you some more?"

I pushed him back against the wall.

"No. From behind. Take me and fuck me. I am your whore, remember?"

"Yeah. And I'm your bitch. Bitches rule."

Tem laughed, but turned around anyway, arching that wonderful ass back toward me,



moaning as I entered him. I reached around to hold his cock again. Tem wanted to feed, he needed to feed. When we spent a lot of time fucking, we took turns feeding on each other and it only heightened our lovemaking experience. I leaned forward and he sighed as his tongue found its favorite place on my arm.

I let my leather coat fall from my right arm. To anyone watching, it might have looked like I had him a headlock. It was hard keeping up the aggressive pace of fucking my husband's ass with his teeth looking for their nesting place but I did it, the initial pang of pain subsiding...he had much to learn about taking his time and biting gently. It was my fault. We were always much too hungry for one another and now, as he fed on me, he reminded me of the baby...taking what was his, what he needed...his face glued high on my arm, I urged him to come as I felt my own orgasm build up inside him. I watched Tem's face change as our blood mingled once more and I knew I was hitting the right spot inside him. His teeth released their grip on me as he came and I emptied my soul into him.

I felt my blood trickling down to my wrist and Tem, murmuring in his bliss, saw the trail he'd left behind and quickly went back to my skin, his lips and tongue closing the two little gaps he'd left in me.



"Don't pull out. It feels so good." His head rested back on my shoulder as I kept stroking on his cock that had exploded all over the slick bricks of the temple entrance. Now this was hallowed ground. Our friend, the old man's ghost was back, pacing and I knew danger was near.

"Tem, we've got trouble." I pulled out of him, glad one of us had fed because we would need the extra-sensory strength. Getting caught in the act of fucking was part of the thrill of our nocturnal street quickies, but as footsteps neared us, I realized it was a woman. High heels. Tem gasped when he saw the shadow on the ground.

"What the hell is it?" he whispered when he saw what looked like a hag.

"Blossom." I knew by her gait it was the dowager queen of Chinatown and she chuckled as she caught us, man on man, up against that wall.

"Mmmm...well, well, well...and to think you two got camera shy. What a waste. You should get paid to fuck." That was Blossom, always thinking about money. "If you've finished mauling each other, we should talk."

Neither Tem nor I could speak. I think we were both still coming. I stared at Blossom in her long, red, silk and lace dress with the hand-stitched quartz crystals covering it, her high-piled lacquered hair and... something was off. She



looked even paler than usual. Tem huddled against me and my arm encircled his waist. I knew now something bad was afoot. I was guessing *Lamia*. We had to get out of Chinatown.

A sound distracted her and she turned her head. The tell tale signs of her opium addiction, the calluses behind her ears, were there on Blossom's head, but now...something else was going on. Something shimmered in her profile. Something had overcome her, and if there was one thing Blossom would not tolerate it was competition. Especially in her own body. Blossom looked back at us, a shocked look on her face, and fell to the ground in a heap. We heard the sound of something like banshees piercing the still night sky, and as we looked at the woman who had become a big part of our lives, Tem waited for my direction.

"We need to leave," I whispered. "Right now."



## CHAPTER SIX

We stepped over the prone body of our friend and I hoped she would have no memory of our having to remove her shoes and pick her up off the ground like a cheap street whore. We flew off with her dangling between us toward her high rise apartment on the corner of *Nu'uaniu* and *Kalakaua* Avenue.

Even when she was a working whore, hot off the boat from Japan, yes, Japan, not China, she'd never been cheap. She'd been an *oiran*. That was the version of *geisha* girls who were skilled in the art of sex. She'd come to *Honolulu* in 1810, when almost all the prostitutes were Japanese and every single last pimp was Japanese too. I met her in a whorehouse about forty years later...in fact, I was supposed to lose my virginity to her, but I could not muster much interest in the middle aged *oiran*.

She and my grandfather selected a younger and prettier version of *oiran* for my cherry-busting and naturally, I fell in love. I had no idea that she was



faking everything, from her interest in me to her orgasms, and I suppose it tainted all my future relationships with women. With Tem, I always knew for sure that my man was switched on and happy. It was my mission in life to make him feel better and better every day. With women, I was a loner. A notorious bedder. As we flew toward Blossom's home on the edge of Chinatown, I sighed with relief that women were a mystery I was grateful I no longer had to solve.

Blossom felt like a ton in her long, red, crystal beaded gown. The day I met her, one hundred and fifty years ago, she had been wearing a traditional *kimono* with the *obi* tied in front. By then it was a costume she affected because it was good for business. She was the one who told me how you could tell a *geisha* from an *oiran* and it had shamed Blossom terribly in her youth. She hated having to tie the *obi* in front. Yes, it meant the *kimono* could be taken off quickly and with much needed frequency, but she felt it was disrespectful to her as a woman.

Her *donna*, or patron, had been a man she loved very much and when he'd unexpectedly died, her lavish lifestyle was gone in a second. She somehow managed to salvage the many splendid gifts he gave her, despite being locked out of his house by his family who flew in from *Osaka*. She had also managed to save most of her money. She



opened an opium den on Merchant Street in Chinatown, because by then the drug was available on the islands and she preferred selling drugs to selling herself, but she soon found the two complemented one another. She never in her life allowed another man to control her after her *donna* died.

As a brothel madam, she was fair and kept nothing but clean, beautiful girls on her payroll. But she was finding, like a lot of things in life, good help was hard to find and she had an invisible revolving door in all her businesses.

Tem and I flew to her penthouse suite and knocked at her sliding glass door, after negotiating the endless jade plants positioned on her balcony. Her two faithful *kagema*, gay male prostitutes who doubled as her bodyguards, were shocked to see us thirty stories high, but came rushing to unlock the heavy glass doors and let us in. The *Janī*, the Japanese version of twink, were, like Blossom, vampires. She had converted them. I didn't quite understand their sexual arrangement but Tem told me they were *rezu*, versatile. Both men fucked each other and other men, upon Blossom's request. They fucked Blossom upon her demands, too.

"How do you fly?" one of the *Janī* asked.

"What happened?" the second one interjected.

"Why is she passed out?" They were cute in a



Japanese cartoon-boyish way. They wore matching blood red *kimonos*, and I knew by the shimmer of lilacs and deep purple in the fabric that Tem had designed and made them.

"She just dropped on the ground in the middle of an alleyway." Tem led her gently to the sofa, placing her on the big seat cushions, easing her legs together, resting her head back against a small embroidered pillow. She seemed to be having trouble breathing, but now that she was sitting up, she seemed okay again. Oops, she was snoring softly now.

"In the middle of Chinatown?" one of the *Jani* asked, horrified.

"Don't tell her. Maybe she won't remember." I looked at them as they both nodded. "I think she needs blood."

They glanced at each other as sweet, beautiful Tem rubbed Blossom's slender, pale hands in his. The slightly bigger *Jani* shrugged.

"She fed from me a few hours ago. It's the opium. She's become quite addicted. She has bad hallucinations, she's forgetting things..." He shuffled away and the smaller man offered to make us tea.

Tem and I accepted and, as he too shuffled away, my husband grabbed my hand. "We need to check on the baby." From out of his leather coat pocket, he extracted his cell phone, paging down



with his small black stylus. "The girls sent us a text. He's sleeping." Tem looked so happy. "Div, don't you love the idea of having a baby in the house?" He looked so dreamy eyed I just had to smile. Then, "What do you think of the apartment? You haven't been up here since I finished decorating it."

I walked around, wishing we were home in bed, but I had to admit, he'd done a splendid job. He'd toned down Blossom's passion for big, gaudy red fixtures with pale pink and black touches, a black lacquer box here, a pink tray there...it was, oddly, very relaxing, and yet you wanted to take your clothes off and ball like a madman, too.

"Well?" Tem was anxious.

"It's like a *yoshiwara*. A good, old fashioned Japanese brothel."

He beamed. "That's just what she wanted. We have *ylang ylang* oil burning in secret scent pots."

"Ah. That explains my desire to get naked and do the funky chicken with you."

Tem grinned. "I could do the same thing to our bedroom."

"You can do whatever you want with our bedroom. Just please let me keep sleeping in it with you."

Tem laughed, delighted. He came over to where I was standing and gave me a wonderful



kiss. "I don't know how I ever lived without you."

"Oh, Tem..." Our mouths met, our bodies melting into one another.

The two men were back and I noticed a flash of jealousy sparking in their eyes. I knew then that Blossom fully controlled these two. They were probably never allowed to touch or kiss one another unless she allowed it.

"Jin and Yi, I don't think you've met my husband, Jimmy Thunder."

The two men smiled. "We've...seen your movies." They giggled conspiratorially. For the first time, Tem seemed uncomfortable. Any reminder of the past was anathema to him.

I slipped my arm around Tem and smiled at Jin and Yi. "Thank you." I didn't know what else to say and that was my best stand-by. It did the trick.

"I made you *Tieguanyin* tea." Jin waited for my impressed reaction.

"You don't say?" Tem was all excited. I looked at him and he explained. "It's the most expensive tea in the world. It costs \$1,365 a pound. It's green tea from..." he screwed up his face trying to remember.

"The *Fujian* province," Jin prompted, as he placed the tray on a low-lying coffee table.

Tem and I squeezed into a wing chair together as Yi prepared an opium pipe for Blossom, snapped something under her nose and she came



to, her eyes focusing on nothing but the pipe. Her raspy breath as she took in the drug seemed to bring her out of her trance and she glanced at us, a wild look in her brown eyes as she saw us watching her.

"What...how?" She closed her eyes as the drug started to work in her system. "Oh..." her head drooped and Yi stuck the pipe back in her mouth.

"Normally she eats it," Jin sighed. "But we try to stop her now, since it's easy to overdose that way, and she's been nodding off a lot lately."

Geez, if I were these guys, I'd be using her incapacitated state to buy me some cock sucking time. She was a vampire. She could not die from an overdose.

"Quit talking about me as if I'm not here." She was back in her body. "How did I get here?"

"Aren't you funny?" Tem slapped his knee. "Isn't she funny, Div?"

"They flew in with you," Jin said, then cringed, realizing Blossom would be embarrassed.

"Flew?" She narrowed her eyes. "I've never flown in my life. You have to be in love to be able to fly." She turned an accusatory gaze on her flunkies and they bustled out of the room.

Blossom rapped on the table, signaling her desire for tea, an irritating custom of hers I'd forgotten about, but Tem sprang forward and poured out three cups. She sipped and rapped,



sipped and rapped, Tem's gaze on two red lacquered doors with brass tigers' heads for door handles.

"Please Blossom, please may I just have one quick look at your tiaras?"

"Of course." The color was coming back to her cheeks and she picked up a small black box, flicked through its contents and removed what looked like a flat black piece of lava. I knew that it was opium and she ate it, chewing in a slow, deliberate way as Tem ran through her closets.

"My favorite one is missing! The one Napoleon commissioned for the Empress Eugenie..." He came back to the door. "Oh, how can it be missing? You don't think somebody stole it, do you? And the scepter that goes with it..." Back he went on the hunt and Blossom and I exchanged evil grins. Little did my man know I had bought them from Blossom in an exhausting negotiation that had taken two months, some legal mumbo jumbo and a massive transfer from my bank account to hers. At this very moment, they were waiting for him under our Christmas tree, wrapped in magnificent, tissue thin rice paper inside the most wonderful old Chinese silk-screened box I had found in an antique store in *Waikiki*.

"It has to be there somewhere, Tem," Blossom was enjoying our little subterfuge. "Oh, come and



see the wonderful ruby ring I bought."

"Ruby? You bought a ruby?" Tem rushed out of the bedroom again to inspect the ring she was removing from yet another box on her coffee table.

"That's a beauty. It's truly something..." Tem inspected it with a practiced eye. The long, feminine fingers modeling it shook a little in his big, manly hand. He was immediately concerned. "You are okay...aren't you, Blossom?"

She smiled. "Of course I am okay." She glanced at her *Jani*, as if assuring herself they were still there.

"Blossom." I tried to keep my voice low and calm. "We need to talk to you about something very important."

She frowned. "Pertaining to what?"

"*Lamia*."

She laughed, but it was a harsh, barking sound. Totally phony. "*Lamia*? That is a fairytale for children." Her eyes glittered dangerously and she withdrew a second, larger piece of opium and chewed it, her gaze shifting from me to her *Jani*.

I knew she was outright lying, but I also knew I could not push the issue in front of her little playmates. Something was very wrong with Blossom, but now she was tucking her feet under her on the big sofa.

"Jin, Yi...make an old lady happy. I want to watch you together."



The two men exchanged chatty glances. I knew they were wondering if their little show would involve ménage, but they would have no such luck. I was ready to leave when neither man moved.

Then Blossom purred, "Jin. I want you to *ketsuman*. I want you to bottom."

The two men's faces fell. Tem was back in the wing chair with me and we sat, riveted as the two men seemed to be struggling with their lady boss's demands. Blossom threw back her head and laughed.

"Yi is always the *ketsuman*. It's time he gets to *tachi*, to top." Blossom reached for another piece of opium. Man, she'd consumed enough to kill a horse. It was not bringing out a very nice side of her. She was enjoying their discomfort. Me, I was ready to roll. Tem's body was rigid against mine, and not in a good way.

"Move to the floor so Jimmy Thunder and his man get a good view." She chewed another, bigger piece of opium. The two men moved to the floor and undressed each other. They forgot everything then as two men are wont to do when fucking is involved. Jin had some serious hardware on his not too small penis. I'd never seen so many piercings on a cock.

"You ever fucked a guy with all that jewelry on his pecker?" I asked Tem, who gave me a sullen



look.

"Only the cock rings I put on you...and the little restraints."

*Oh, God.* He was making my dick hard now and his stroking hand liked what it felt through my tight leather pants.

"Not so fast. I do believe I owe you one, Mr. Thunder."

Tem rubbed his face into my neck. "We pleased each other," he whispered, but his eyes were alive with excitement.

"Yeah...but you thought of the blueberries and I do believe I'm hungry again."

Jin was on his back now, squeezing his pierced nipples in his fingers, watching us as Tem and I watched him. Yi spread Jin's ass and the look on his face was priceless as the other man's mouth connected with his ass hole. There is nothing like a tongue in your ass, as I have learned. The slurping sounds Yi made seemed to be turning my man on and I unzipped his fly. His lovely, luscious cock sprang out, needing its man to relieve it.

"Oh...look how big that is," moaned Jin, and Yi stopped what he was doing to take a look at Tem's rigid cock. I always said Tem could have been a fantastic top in movies, except for his overwhelming desire to be fucked. Yi turned back to the hot body in front of him as my mouth went to Tem's goody bags. His balls were the biggest,



juiciest ones I'd ever had, in my limited experience of men. My tongue licked away at them because I knew Tem liked it so much.

He slouched further down in the wing chair and I had to have possession of him now. I pulled the leather pants down his thighs and all the way to his ankles. They got stuck on his boots so he lifted his legs and I positioned myself between them.

"Yeah..." Jin groaned, and I glanced up to see a couple of Yi's fingers massaging their way into Jin's bottom, the thumb rubbing against his perineum.

I mirrored his actions, Blossom's mouth slack as her gaze moved from us to them and back again. Tem went crazy when two of my fingers worked into him, stroking his prostate, my thumb on the other side keeping up a maddening pressure on his perineum. I took his cock all the way in my mouth, my left hand gently nursing his balls.

Tem's legs flailed about as I slipped a third finger into him. The sounds of slurping man joy were loud in that big red room as dawn broke and a soft, very soft apricot glow shimmered through the windows. My husband came in my mouth, bucking hard against my hand, his legs shaking as he flooded my throat. I didn't think he was going to stop coming. Little Jin writhed about on the floor too and Blossom was in a state of womanly



arousal.

“Very nice...very nice. Jin...Yi...you come to my room...mama needs you now. It’s time for your *special* Christmas presents...and then you can have the ones you open.”

She chuckled as the two men scrambled to their feet, her hands stroking their asses in a possessive way. A shaky Tem slumped in my arms as Blossom swept past us, a huge smile on her face as her gaze met ours.

“Merry Christmas.” She turned to see her two *Jani* exchanging heated kisses. “Save some turkey for me. I might be a little late.” The two men fell on her big round, red velvet encased bed. “Very late,” she whispered, revealing a mouth of very dark teeth, an indication of her advancing addiction. She shut the bedroom door on us.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

Tem and I headed home and his hand felt warm in mine. We flew over the old neighborhood I'd grown up in...and something was off. Something was bothering me, I just didn't know what.

"Let's go down!" I yelled.

"But we need to get home..." He saw the urgency on my face and he stayed with me, right in my rhythm like the passenger on the back of a motorbike. We landed further up *Nu'uaniu Pali*, and as I looked at the clustered houses lining both sides of the highway, I was remembering the old days. I was remembering back to the time just before it all changed. Tem came and put his arms around me, his head touching mine, and the lines of the song *You're My World* filled my head as ugly thoughts were pushed to the side.

*With your hand resting in mine, I feel a power so divine...*

"What are you remembering?" Tem asked, his voice husky. Sometimes, when our emotions got



so deep, our thoughts clouded and I could feel him searching my mental rooms, hunting for the images in my mind. Now I saw him standing in the doorway, looking along with me. And I knew he could see it.

"Whose house is it, Div?"

My voice cracked. "My grandfather's house."

"What are the sticks outside it? I see four of them."

His arms tightened around me, his breath came in little cold puffs against my chin.

"They're *kapu* sticks."

Tem was quiet as he absorbed the image in his own mind. "Why do I see fire? Men with sticks on fire?"

I rushed to fill in details for him. "Over here was my grandfather's house." I pointed to a site where five very big houses now stood. "The night my aunt and cousins all died of Smallpox fever—"

"Your favorite Aunty, Genoa?"

Her name and her hideous death stabbed at my heart. "Yes. She had come here to care for my niece and nephew. None of them were vampires. They all died and a *kapu*, a forbidden zone, was placed on the house. It had to be burned down."

"How did they avoid the...you know...curse?"

"They were on my mother's side of the family."

I was remembering that night, my grandfather and I fleeing before we could be quarantined or



killed, hiding in the yam farm that made up the entire rear of my grandfather's property. It was all streets and smaller, divided parcels of land now.

Tem was watching the movie in my mind, trying to superimpose the images on the street on which we were standing. "I don't see cars. I see horses...hand pushed carts...oh wait, a couple of horse-drawn carriages. Oh, Div, how beautiful it was."

I smiled then. "Yes, it was. It was a different time. Do you know I still miss the smell of kerosene lamps at night?"

Tem's mental picture gallery was on fast forward. "Wait...that wall...I see it. It's still here."

I nodded. "Part of it." I took his hand and we took off again, flying low over what had once been our family land. Acres and acres of it. Parts of the wall were still there. It was the wall that protected the secret remains of long dead relatives.

Tem was looking at me with such sadness as we came to land on the other side of the wall in what was wilderness, a wonderful thing in big and bustling *Waikiki*.

"Not long after we were allowed to bury our family members, right here, on our property, my grandfather was murdered. We never discovered who did it or why, but we found him slumped over a fence, a wooden paling piercing his heart. Ironic really, considering that a stake in the heart



is an effective way to kill a vampire, but I don't think his killer knew he was a vampire. I believe they had a bad fight over gambling debts. My grandfather loved cards...they just didn't love him back and he lost big...constantly."

"So you think they wound up here and he got thrown onto the fence in the middle of a fight?"

I nodded. "There were marks and bruises all over him. His knuckles were broken. He'd hit somebody, we just never knew who, but he'd definitely been in a fight."

"But the house was gone, wasn't it?"

"Oh yes, but he planned to rebuild. He still had the farm...he still had considerable holdings. He sold a few acres here and there to pay off gambling debts. He was a wonderful man with poor financial judgment."

"So the family curse...the *kahuna* cursed your great grandfather on your father's side because..."

I knew this day would come. I always had. "Love. That's usually what it's about. They loved the same woman. My great grandfather got her, but he got a nasty curse along with it. Like I told you before, I tried my best to get the curse lifted and the best thing the *kahuna's* family could do was give me a second chance at love."

Tem was looking at the land around us now with new and very wide eyes. "So when he died, what happened to this land?"



I sighed. "The government got it. My sister and I left this island. We had to leave. We had no idea when grandpa was murdered if people knew we were vampires. We just went into hiding. We hid for a while in my Aunt Genoa's house...her husband, my uncle took care of us but we felt we were putting his life at risk. He lived on for several more years and left the house to us. The house we all live in...but for a long time, we had to hide and...and..." And then it was all back in my mind. I pointed to a mangrove swamp ahead. "That used to be a natural spring. People came from miles to bathe there."

"Really? How come I don't see it?"

"It was filled in many, many years ago."

"No, I mean in your mind."

"I've blocked the memories..." I glanced at Tem. "Not from you. From myself. Until I met you, those were the last days I was truly happy."

He put his hand to my face. He knew the truth, he could read it. "I want to see it."

I shook my head, feeling broken pieces shaking like loose change inside me. "It's all gone now." But Tem was a persistent presence in my head. You might say relentless.

"What are the yellow flags?"

*Oh, God.* He was taking me...no, dragging me back there, to the night the entire street was torched by health officials. Nobody was allowed



to enter the houses except medical personnel. Bodies were piled up in the middle of each home, dumped with clothing, books, bedding...anything that allowed spores to travel. So much rumor had persisted about how smallpox was spread. It was, in fact, transmitted by bedbugs, but that didn't stop the hysteria. The yellow flags were flags of death, and health officials on horseback went to each door, one by one, throwing in burning logs, torching every last house to the ground.

Tem shook his head, not believing the gruesome images. He watched me running with my grandfather and my sister...my beautiful sister, running...terrified...people screaming ahead of us, suffering from the disease. I watched them jumping in the mineral spring in an effort to cool off, killing each other trying to get in and out of the deep pool. I remembered hungry pigs circling and dragging off dead bodies.

I remembered...I watched as my sister and I pulled my grandfather through a dense forest of *kawao* trees...trees no longer readily available on any of the islands.

Tem squeezed my hand. "Where did you go when you left *Oahu*?"

"*Kauai*. My uncle let the government take my grandfather's land. I think he always felt guilty about that, which was why he gave me and *Kalani* the *Tantalus* property."



"But by rights, if what I am seeing is correct, a large chunk of this *Pali* highway really belongs to you?"

I nodded. "To *us*. What's mine is yours."

"Wait a second, Div...the Smallpox outbreak was 1853. Are you telling me for real that now, a hundred and fifty years later, you've found happiness again? Because of me?"

"Because of you."

"I'm really your second chance at love?"

"Yeah. You took your time getting here, you know that?"

He stepped closer, kissing me and our kiss lingered, threatening to get us both rock hard and naked in about sixty seconds.

"I just thought of something." I took my mouth off him, making him scowl.

"Div, I want you to fuck me right here in this place you used to love."

"I will," I whispered. "Very soon. But we have to leave, baby."

"Why?"

I took his hand again and we took off for the western flight path toward our mountain, toward home.

"What is it?" Tem shouted as the rain started coming down again. "What's wrong?"

"*Hiroshi*. Remember he said something about the baby being a nest of vipers?"



Tem frowned. "Yeah, that wasn't very nice."

I shook my head. "It's worse than that, baby. *Lamia*...she's supposed to have the face and breasts of a woman and the body of..."

"A snake! Oh, Div..."

Tem and I looked at each other and, carried by a *kiu* wind, a top wind from the mountain, we took the extra fast way home.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

“He’s fine.” My sister looked down at the baby who was drooling in his sleep in a basket that had, up until a few hours ago, held vegetables in our kitchen. Aunt Genoa’s quilt lay underneath the baby, the cashmere throw covering him. I was so relieved the house was still standing that I didn’t care about our family heirloom being under our demon seed’s butt.

“Would you stop that?” Tem looked exasperated. “He is our *son*. He’s not a demon seed...well, not completely, right?”

Back in our home, it was hard to believe the baby could be Satan’s spawn, a victim of *Lamia*...any of it, frankly. He looked so peaceful, pale pink color in his little apple cheeks as he dozed. Moontime, disgusted at no longer being the center of Tem’s divided universe with me, padded off to our room. I knew we would find him curled up under our bedspread, waiting for his breakfast.



Clancy was grinning. "Look, we bathed Beelzebub after he spat up all that bile on himself...and the strangest thing happened. Check out his left hand."

Tem and I could hardly believe our eyes. Beelzebub's little hand was turning back into pudgy baby fingers.

"How about that? Love does conquer everything." Tem looked ecstatic.

"I think those herbs of *Hiroshi's* might have had something to do with it." *Kalani*, however, looked very happy.

"Has he called or come back?" I asked.

She shook her head. "I keep getting his voice mail. Even God's spiritual envoy wants us to leave a message."

I grinned. "I'll try him again. Those herbs must be really something."

*Kalani's* gaze fell on the sleeping baby again as we told the girls what had happened since we'd left them. We told them everything except about our hot little tryst in Blossom's penthouse apartment.

"It's so odd that you went by the old place." My sister glanced at her wife. "Clancy and I looked at the casket the baby came in. It is definitely not his burial casket. The baby that was in it was much bigger. We measured very carefully. This is a newborn vamp for sure, with an extra little kick



for good measure. I have a feeling this casket was stolen and somebody tried to bury it, put it back...you know? I think it might be valuable."

A spooky feeling came over me. "You think it was from one of the graves they found, you know...when they started construction on the Wal-Mart up on *Keeaumoku* Street and found those graves?"

Tem looked at me. "Div...those graves were from the smallpox outbreak, weren't they?"

I nodded. "Yes, they were."

*Kalani* tucked the baby in a little tighter. "But a few of them weren't, Jimmy. A few of them predated the smallpox outbreak. Remember? They said they found three graves where the victims were buried in the fetal position, the way the ancients used to bury their dead."

"But I don't remember there being talk of a baby being buried there."

"So, maybe there's a connection. Maybe there isn't. Maybe there's a fresh grave somewhere real close." *Kalani* looked at her wife. "I think *we* should take a little fly around and see what we can find. It's getting lighter now."

"It's Christmas!" Tem glowed as our old grandfather clock struck five a.m.

We all hugged and kissed each other and my sister hugged me one more time, extra hard. "You keep calling that witch doctor. We'll be in touch."



She tried to suppress a laugh. "There's one bottle of that special milk left. Good luck."

"You want your Christmas presents now?" Tem asked. "I think you might find them useful."

The two girls looked at each other.

It was *Kalani* who spoke. "*Todah's* asleep. That wouldn't be fair."

"I'll wake him up." Tem ran off like a little kid. I loved being with a man who loved Christmas.

"Well, we brewed some coffee," *Kalani* admitted. "I suppose a few minutes to have a cup of coffee and open our gifts...just to be sociable, you know..."

"Yes. Just to be sociable." We grinned at each other, both of us so happy, and so happy for each other that we couldn't even talk about it.

Tem returned looking furious, his sleepy brother in tow. "You should see what he dragged home last night."

"Don't you mean *who*?" And then I knew. I just *knew* that *Todah* was back on with *Nonita*, my ex-girlfriend and the bane of Tem's existence. Despite my total lack of interest in her, Tem felt wounded that she'd tried to dupe us into believing she was carrying my child at one point. Then she came under Blossom's fire and almost got herself killed.

These days, *Nonita* was a little porn starlet and ran a couple of clubs in *Waikiki*, keeping in Blossom's good books, as far as I knew. *Todah* was



not fussy about where he dipped his wick, but he hadn't been dipping it into *Nonita* in the past couple of months.

"What time did you two come home?" I asked *Todah*.

"Why do you care?" he shot back.

I arched a brow in his direction and I could almost hear the pennies dropping in everybody's collective banks. *Todah* was outnumbered and outmaneuvered.

"Okay, okay. I got home about one thirty." He looked very shifty. He was not telling us the truth.

"Has she been with you the whole time?" *Kalani* asked.

"Well...I don't...I...why? What's going on?"

"Did she leave the bed for any reason?"

"To pee, if that's all right with you." *Todah* glared at his brother.

"What time?" This time it was me pouncing on him and he looked shocked.

"About an hour ago. What's all this about? You don't think the kid is *mine* do you?"

Nobody said anything for a moment.

"First of all, I can't reproduce unless I'm in love, and I'm not in love. Remember? You told me the rules of being a vampire, Jimmy. I can't reproduce until after my first full year as a vampire and it's only been three months."

"You said she was a keeper," I reminded him.



*Please God, don't let him want to keep Nonita in the family. It's going to be hard enough getting Tem to accept her at the table for Christmas dinner...*

"Well, you know...the sex is pretty hot." He paused. "Don't look at me like that, Tem. But actually, there's another girl I like." He lowered his voice. "That's what I didn't want to say. I met somebody else. She came over for a couple of hours and left around three o'clock...*Nonita's* like the, ah, second shift, if you want to know the truth. But don't tell her I said that, *please...*" He looked at me. "She's a little spitfire, isn't she?"

"That's putting it kindly." I could not help smiling. He was a chip off the old Thunder block.

Tem gave me a withering look then turned back to his brother. "Why couldn't the first girl stay?"

"It's Christmas...you know, family visiting. Some old aunt visiting..."

"At three in the morning?"

*Todah* shrugged. "Hey, I was half asleep. She's been in a weird mood for days...I just wanted to get laid, you know?"

"Oh, callow youth." Clancy gave him a playful belt in the arm and *Todah* laughed.

Tem looked at me. "Are you sure he can't give or catch any sexually transmitted diseases?" This, from the man who used to fuck for a living. It was so endearing how protective Tem was of his brother.



"None." I dropped a kiss on Tem's mouth. I couldn't help myself. "The only thing he's spreading is...some good Christmas cheer."

*Todah* laughed. "Yeah, that's me. Sexual Santa."

"Oh. Well in that case, bravo, bro'. So who's coming to Christmas dinner?" Tem asked. "Which one?"

*"Nonita."*

Tem grimaced. "I can't believe it. I have to cook for that little wretch." He banged around the kitchen, passing out cups of coffee and slices of thick, buttered *Hawaiian* bread. We all helped ourselves to chunks of papaya and strawberries drizzled with fresh lime juice. Moontime soon turned up whining for his *ahi* and everybody's mood brightened with a little sustenance.

Moontime and I got even merrier with a little extra lovin' attention from Tem.

*Todah* laughed as he sipped his coffee. "*Nonita* won't be staying that long. She's got her own family dinner to go to...unless you'd like them to come here."

"No!" Tem and I shouted in unison. I could just imagine the scene now...I shuddered involuntarily.

*Todah* snorted. "Geez, keep your vests on, guys...say, those are some chillin' outfits..."

Tem went back into gift-giving mode. "Wait...I have something for you."



And then the gift opening frenzy began.

The baby slept on as we exchanged wonderful gifts, the girls and *Todah* thrilled with their leather flying outfits. *Nonita* came into the living room and perched on the arm of one of the chairs as Tem opened his box under the Christmas tree.

"For me?" He bit his lip. He and the girls oohed and aahed as they lifted layers of the gossamer rice paper. "I love this," Tem murmured. I couldn't wait to see his reaction to the tiara and scepter. "Oh...dear God. Oh...Div. You didn't. Empress Eugenie's tiara!"

*Kalani* and Clancy helped him put it on his head and he held the scepter in his hands.

"You are so gay!" *Todah* screeched, and *Nonita* just looked jealous. "Where are you going to keep it?"

"On my head." Tem looked indignant as his brother kept laughing. "Where else?" He turned to me. "Oh Div...what...how much you must have paid for these. I can't believe it." He sat on my lap, raining my face with kisses, and I ate up the attention.

"It's absolutely beautiful." *Kalani's* eyes were riveted. "Those pearls are so luxurious."

"There are two hundred and twelve of them. And...oh, I forget exactly how many diamonds. But almost two thousand of them, right Div?"

I nodded.



"Napoleon had it made for her as part of her marriage *parure* in 1853," Tem knew the entire history of everything in Blossom's vault. "It was originally a seventeen piece set. And I have two of them! Oh, Div..."

"1853...how odd it would be the same year as the smallpox outbreak here. As our people were dying like flies, somewhere else in the world, beautiful treasures were being created."

"Please let me try it, please let me try it!" Clancy implored, and Tem generously allowed her to put it on her head. He kept a sturdy grip on the scepter, however, as he remained on my lap. My own sexy, studly vampire man queen.

"You look hot," *Kalani* told her wife.

Clancy sighed. "You two give the best gifts. I got my violin and Tem got his tiara. I must say, I feel like an empress in this, don't you, Tem?"

"Not anymore. Give it back, please."

"I want to try it." *Kalani's* face shone as Clancy fitted it on her dark tresses. "Wow..." Fidgeting on her chair, I knew *Nonita* was dying to try it on but did not want to ask.

"How did you manage to get Blossom to part with it?" Tem kept asking me. I just kept shrugging and kissing him, and at last he very sweetly offered to let *Nonita* try it on.

"No." Her tone was abrupt. "I have to get going. *Todah*, please see me out."



"Right now?" *Todah* wasn't big on undercurrents, that's for sure.

"Humph. Green with envy," Clancy sniffed, as *Todah* walked her to the door. "Nobody bought her a tiara. And you know what, she has about the biggest *arse* I ever saw on a woman."

Tem laughed uproariously. He loved when Clancy's Australian side flooded to the surface. "I mean, don't you think, *Kalani*? Absolutely bloody huge!"

"It's not that big," *Todah* mumbled when he returned.

"Of course it is," Clancy scoffed. "She's one chubby Chihuahua." She popped a wedge of lime into her mouth and tore off the fruit from the rind with dainty, decisive teeth.

"I can't believe how pretty this is...and heavy, too." *Kalani* held the crown in her hands. "How *did* you manage to get it away from Blossom?"

"More to the point, how did you manage to keep it a secret from me?" Tem asked. "What else are you hiding inside that wonderful mind of yours?"

"Nothing." He could look and see it was the truth.

He wound his arms around my neck, stroking my head. "Are you ready for *your* Christmas present, Div?"

*Todah* was grinning now.



"I already have what I want, right here." I held Tem's body just a little tighter.

"Well, Santa's not through with you yet."

"But I don't want you to move."

Tem laughed. "Clancy honey, can you pass me the box with the red velvet ribbons, please?"

I wasn't pleased when he slid off my lap, but he kneeled at my feet as I opened the lovely package. I hadn't given a single thought to what he might have bought me. I had been so consumed with having the tiara and scepter evaluated, cleaned, photographed, authenticated and insured and it had been a rewarding mission. Now, as I sensed Tem's eagerness, I knew whatever he had given me he, too, had put a lot of time and effort and secrecy into *his* mission.

The others sat around grinning as I opened the intricately carved sandalwood box. It was about a foot long, in beautiful condition, but I knew it was very old. The scent of that box alone stopped me. It was the smell of my island, before the trading with the logging ships began.

"Oh, Tem...oh darling. How in the world did you find it?"

"Look inside." He was bursting with excitement now. Our family members all beamed. Clearly, they'd all been in on the secret. I was holding in my hands the one thing I had long coveted. It was a book. A fine art edition of



Maxine Hong Kingston's *Hawaii One Summer*. I looked at Tem, wishing we could be alone so I could show him how much I loved him. But I also couldn't wait to open the first page.

"Only one hundred and fifty of these were made, half with this casing...how...where did you get it?"

Tem laughed, delighted by my reaction. "*Todah* helped me find it. Smell the pages."

I opened the book and put my nose to it. It was indeed a gift to be able to hold this treasure. I carefully turned the pasted, hand wood-blocked rice paper from an old paddy in South Korea. I loved this book and had always wanted to see one of the fine art editions, but never even hoped to own one.

"We found it." *Todah* looked very proud of himself. "Tem wouldn't let any of us touch it without wearing cotton gloves."

"Yes, I have some in the box." Tem pointed with his scepter.

"Come here." He scrambled back onto my lap and let me give him a little preview of coming attractions.

"Geez, you two, no wonder *Nonita* got jealous." *Todah* looked at me. "I think she still has feelings for you, Jimmy."

"I hope not. For your sake."

He shrugged. "Doesn't matter to me, but..." his



cell phone was ringing and, with a nervous look, he skittered away to take the call in private.

"What's going on with him?" Clancy asked. She leaned toward me and Tem. "I heard loud...discussions coming from his room early this morning. Whoever he was with, left in a huff." She frowned. "I hope he isn't going to be a total jerk with *every* woman he meets."

I had no desire to discuss my brother-in-law's peccadilloes. I wanted to share a piece of literature that meant the world to me. I opened my book.

"Listen to this...Maxine Hong Kingston's essay on Chinaman's Hat."

"That's that little island way out on the north shore, right?" Clancy asked. "*Kalani* and I keep meaning to swim out to it."

"Well, after you hear this, you will want to," I assured her.

*We were climbing down to the boat, holding onto the face of the island in the dark, when a howling like wolves, like ghosts, came rising out of the island. 'Birds,' somebody said. 'The wind,' said someone else. But the air was still, and the high, clear sound wound like a ribbon around the island. It was, I know it, the island, the voice of the island singing, the sirens Odysseus heard. The navy uses Kaho'olawe for bombing practice, not recognizing it as living, sacred earth. We had all heard it, the voice of our island singing.*



"I've heard that song." Clancy's voice was quiet. "Lately, since I fell in love with *Kalani*, I hear it louder and louder."

My sister went berserk, scrambling on her knees to reach her wife. There were still many presents left unopened, but they were in haste to make it back to their bedroom and Tem and I lost no time racing to ours.

Tem placed his scepter and tiara on our altar table, made of ancient *koa* wood. We kept it in honor of our ancestors and our love. With bowls of gardenia on it and candles galore, we reminded one another each day of the importance of our time together. Even Moontime respected that altar and didn't toss around the fruit we left for the gods. I put my book right next to the tiara and Tem looked across at our cat hogging the bed.

He opened one eye, sensed our need for some man-on-man passion and stretched out right across the covers, challenging us to move him.

"Daddy is a resourceful man," Tem chuckled. He stroked the cat's thick black fur and, anxious not to lose one more moment, I dragged him into our bathroom.

"Mmm.." Tem allowed me to pick him up and put him on the vanity. "I love when you get macho."

"Macho? I haven't even started with you yet."



Tem allowed me to take off his kimono, his large dark eyes ready for whatever I wanted to do to him. I wanted to kiss and lick his body and got about half way, his stiffening cock just smacking into my face looking for its fair share of attention. I reached into a drawer.

“Oh...lover. There’s something I’ve been wanting to try.”

“What’s that, baby?” His voice was thick with desire, his legs were open, his feet up on the vanity. I think he thought I was going to fuck him, but I had other ideas. I reached into a drawer and pulled out the cardboard tubing from a toilet roll.

“This looks like it shouldn’t work, but I’m told it does.”

Tem was pulling on his nipples now, very aroused. “I’m game.”

I tore off one third of the tube and placed the rest over his cock. As thick as his cock was, it was hard to get the cardboard over it, but at last I had it a good way down, exposing just the head. I went to town licking and sucking on him.

Tem’s face went into multiple contortions. “Oh my God....Div...that...oh God...it feels incredible. God, I want you to fuck me but I don’t want you to stop licking me.”

I did not stop licking him, enjoying the buildup of pressure I could feel simmering in his cock. The tip was bright red, and when I tore off the



cardboard his cock was so sensitive that, when I plunged my own cock inside my man's steamy, open ass, Tem came the second my belly rubbed against his shaft. I picked him up, holding him as he wound his legs around me. I held his ass, feeling his orgasm roaring through him. I could not get close enough...deep enough into him, and my canine teeth elongated.

"Yeah, yeah...bite me! Come on baby, I want to feed you!"

My head went to Tem's chest and his arms fell back so he could brace himself against the bathroom mirror. We'd fogged up the place like we'd taken a scalding shower, and Tem left long streaks on the mirror as his hands slid to the vanity. I thrust harder and faster and he started coming again as I bit into him, feeling his blood in my mouth, burning my heart, soothing my soul.

"Fuck me!" he screamed, and I did not stop until both of us came. It was only then that I took my teeth from him, licking closed to the two little marks on his chest.

"Oh, Div..."

I picked him up, bringing him close again, my cock still hard for him. His eyes were half-closed, his tongue running over his dry lips.

"Oh, Tem..." I licked at his lips, kissed his tongue, his cheeks, his eyes and his nose. I relished the taste of him, of us.



*"Mele Kalikimaka, Tem. Merry Christmas."*  
As if on cue, our baby fiend started to scream.



## CHAPTER NINE

Slipping on our *kimonos*, Tem and I rushed into the kitchen and found the baby's little fists screwed up into balls of fury in his bed basket. I picked him up as Tem warmed the last bottle in the fridge, calling *Hiroshi* yet again.

"You know, he told me some of the herbs. I swear he was making up names." Tem cursed when he got *Hiroshi's* voice mail again.

The girls ran into the kitchen, looking disheveled but glorious in their flying outfits.

"We're going out to take a look around now...you sure you're okay with him?" *Kalani* asked.

"Absolutely," I nodded. "Hey, *Kalani*, maybe you could stop by *Hiroshi's* house and bang on his door and get some more herbs from him."

"Good idea." She took *Hiroshi's* business card from Tem, stared at his address, blew us a kiss and left as the bottle warming unit pinged. The baby must have sensed what that sound meant



because suddenly he smiled up at me and I couldn't help but feel a rush of warmth for the little monster. He opened his mouth like a baby bird, ready for the magic in that bottle.

"You've done this before?" Tem asked as the baby suckled and slurped in a starved way.

"No, baby. Never."

Tem reached over to me, yanked the folds of my *kimono* aside and sucked in my left nipple. I groaned. "You know you look hot with our baby."

I laughed. "I do?"

We grinned at each other and the doorbell rang.

"Who the hell could that be?" Tem glanced at the clock. Seven in the morning. He rushed out and rushed right back in again.

"Jesus H...honey, it's my *parents*. They're only six hours earlier than they should be."

The doorbell rang again.

"Where are they?"

"Outside."

"You left them out there? Why?"

"I was hoping they might go away. How the heck did they find us? I live here and I can still hardly find my way home."

The doorbell rang incessantly now and the baby was starting to get agitated.

"Let them in," I sighed. "Let the chips fall where they may."

Tem looked at me. "Chips? Your family is so



obsessed with gambling.”

In spite of everything, I laughed as he rushed out of the kitchen again. Gazing down at the baby, I whispered, “Are you ready to meet your new grandparents? Can you say, *Aloha*? Can you say that? *Aloha*? My love to you?”

The baby’s eyes flickered and his little mouth laughed around the steel tip on the baby bottle. *Dang*. Less than a day old and the kid was already laughing at my jokes. I felt a huge shift in me. I knew in that moment I would do anything for this kid. I would protect his secrets, as those who had loved me when I was a baby had done for me. My fingers closed over the malformed left hand as Tem came back.

For a moment he just watched us, a look of tenderness for me and the baby who was still giggling. Behind Tem stood his astonished parents, and as they stepped forward, his mother’s face registered shock.

“Whose baby is that?”

“Ours.” Tem sounded defensive. “We’re adopting him.”

“But he’s so ugly.”

“We think he’s lovely.” I bounced the baby in my arms, determined to keep him in high spirits.

Tem was about to say something when his mother spoke again.

“Now that I think of it Tem, you were no oil



painting either and you turned out great.”

“Well!” Tem was wounded, but his father just laughed.

“What’s his name?” he asked.

“Beel—”

I jumped in. “Billy. His name is Billy.” I had just begun the process of shielding our child from the outside world.

Tem’s father looked so happy. “After me? Heck, I’m so honored. And don’t listen to your mother, son. I think he’s kinda cute...in a nerdish kind of way.”

I blinked a couple of times as Tem stared at me in surprise, which was quickly fading to joy. I’d scored bigger than I thought.

His parents were attractive people. His father, being a *Maori*, had the look of ancient warriors and was a very impressive sight. At around six feet tall, he was good-looking, built of solid muscle, topped with some gray and black hair that showed me my Tem would grow older and more and more gorgeous.

Tem’s mother, being a mix of Japanese and *Hawaiian*, was a woman of contradictions. She was tall, around five eight, looked like a *Hawaiian*, walked with the seductive sway of a *Hawaiian*, but talked like a neurotic, ninety year old woman.

“What kind of a nipple is that on the baby’s bottle?”



Her question made my man jittery, but I was very calm.

"You know Tem," I smiled. "Always on the cutting edge of fashion. Even baby couture...and accessories."

"Baby couture..." I could see Tem's mind already whirling with ideas. I let him take the baby from me, trying not to worry about the fact he'd just guzzled the last of the doctored milk. As Tem put the baby over his shoulder to burp him, I made sure my *kimono* was securely fastened, then shook his parents' hands.

"You've probably already guessed that I'm Jimmy. I'm so glad to finally meet you. We weren't expecting you so soon, we thought we were picking you up this afternoon. I'm sorry we're still in our pajamas."

Tem's mother flapped a hand at me. "Please, call me Anna, and don't apologize. It's all Bill's fault. He wanted to surprise the boys and...we were dying to meet you and...and...what's wrong with that baby's hand?"

She'd caught sight of the talon before Tem could cover it up again. The baby was crying now and Tem's distraught expression had me reaching for fresh excuses. I was becoming a lying linguist.

"It's a slight birth defect."

"Slight? What a bummer. Maybe he'll outgrow it? When Temeura was born I was afraid we'd



have to get plastic surgery." She was oblivious to her son's steely stare. "The things they can do with a surgeon's knife nowadays are not to be believed. They can do miracles!" She turned to the sink, missing the snapping sound of Tem pretending to bite at her.

She stared out the window in awe. "You own everything we see out there? It's huge."

"It sure is." I grinned at her, glancing back at her husband. "Those are some impressive tattoos you have on your arms, Bill. Are they tribal?"

"Naw. Military tattoos. Well, you know, the result of getting drunk in various sea ports with the guys on too many lonely Saturday nights."

*Excellent.* "Would you like some champagne? We can open up a bottle, get you settled in your quarters and you can take a shower or bath if you want."

"Oooh, that sounds fab." Anna was excited. Just as I'd hoped. I could keep them tipsy and under control. I popped a bottle of 1911 *Moët et Chandon* champagne and the sound startled the baby who launched one of his ear-piercing rocket howls.

"I'll hold him, Tem."

Tem gave him to me again and took over the champagne pouring duties. He handed his parents our best crystal glasses.

"Does he always scream like that?" Anna



asked, wincing as her glass shattered in her hand. She yelped and poor Tem dropped to his knees, cleaning up the debris. I poured her another glass.

"My God," Anna gawped. "What are those bite marks all over your chest, Jimmy?"

Damn. My *kimono* had come loose. I gathered the folds back together and hugged the baby.

"Insect bites." I couldn't tell her we were vampires and that her loving son loved leaving his marks on me...all over me.

"You got an infestation in the house?"

"No...oh no." I shook my head. "We went hiking and..."

"They must have been big insects," Bill observed. "What kind were they? Big bees?"

"Bats?" shrieked Anna.

Bill laughed. "Vampire bats!"

They both thought this was hysterical. Tem just stared at them in mute horror and I quickly topped up their drinks.

The baby started wailing again.

"Oh. My. God. What's wrong with his tongue?" Anna looked appalled. "Is that another birth defect? Wow, you got one heck of a handyman's dream there, you know that?"

"Why do you keep insulting my baby?" Tem huffed.

She gave the matter a moment's thought. "Because I can. I mean, you're such handsome



men, you could have come up with a prettier child with a surrogate."

"I love him. He's my son."

"You think I'm handsome?" I asked for some ludicrous reason, and I wasn't even drinking yet. I was so anxious for Tem's parents to like me I was turning into the biggest loser in the world.

"Except for the bite mark, sure." His mother giggled. We were going to need way more champagne. I needed to get to the wine cellar.

"Hey, where's *Todah*?" Bill, too, was slurping down that vintage booze. "Am I reading this label right? This is champagne from 1911?" His eyes were like orbs.

"Absolutely. Wait until you see the beautiful meal Tem has planned. He has had three Christmas puddings soaking in cognac in the fridge since October, and there's turkey and..."

"Is there any more champagne?" Bill wanted to know.

"Tem, why don't you give your parents a quick tour, take them to their room, and I'll ah...jump in the shower. We need to get this party started."

"Okay." He looked depressed, but I gave him a reassuring smile.

I whisked the baby out of the room, but not before my sister and her bride flew through the kitchen window.

Bill and Anna stood there in shock.



"We can't find *Hiroshi* anywhere, but we did find what looks like a grave somebody was digging...right between the edge of our property and the Huang property. Hello, and who are you?" *Kalani* asked, casting a glance finally at Tem's parents.

"*Kalani*, these are Tem's parents."

"Hi there," she grinned.

"How did you do that, come bursting through the window like that?" Anna asked.

Thank God, she hadn't seen them flying...

"A lot of practice," *Kalani* laughed. "Oooh, champagne. I love it. Clancy darling, you want some?"

"That would be yummy." Clancy took her arm from around *Kalani* and accepted a glass.

"So you two are a couple?" Anna asked.

"Yes." *Kalani* sounded defensive, but Anna seemed merely curious.

"And you all live together?"

"Yes. My sister and I have lived her for many years...and then, like magic, we met these two wonderful people and they came into our lives and—"

"And what did you mean about a freshly dug grave?"

The baby started the hideous wailing again and I ran from the kitchen with him, a fresh bottle of formula in my spare hand.



In our bedroom, I paced with him, but he would not accept the bottle. Nothing I did placated him. We needed those herbs. I didn't know what to do with him. His body felt hot. Maybe he had a fever? I ran lukewarm water in the bathroom sink as *Kalani* slipped into the room and joined me.

"Here...let me help you." She squeezed some lavender body soap into the sink and helped me undress the wriggling, burning up baby. The unearthly screaming stopped as his body descended into the scented suds. He laughed happily and the strangest thing happened. One of his razor sharp little demon teeth fell out of his mouth.

*Kalani* and I kept sponging him and the baby luxuriated in the sensation of being in water. Plop, another tooth fell out. A third one landed on his chest. The baby allowed me to trickle water over his head.

"Don't look now...but I've just figured out something," I told my sister.

"I know what you're going to say." Her voice dropped to a whisper. "He's a storm demon, isn't he?"



## CHAPTER TEN

Tem was sitting in the bath with me, holding our wet, naked and kicking baby in his arms. "Okay. So now, explain a storm demon to me again."

"It's very simple, really. He was born a vampire, but someone thought he was dead and tried to bury him. There was rain last night, the baby was struck by lightning and...voila, we have ourselves a storm demon."

"So...wait a second, you don't think he's an ancient baby?"

"No. In fact, I am beginning to wonder why *Hiroshi* even floated that possibility out to us."

"Maybe he knows we're vampires?" Tem looked at me, nervous now.

The thought had occurred to me, too. "Could be, but I don't think so. I do think he suspects the baby is a vampire...and I do know that we need to bury that old casket. If it is what I think it is, the casket of an *ali'i*, ancient royalty, there is a *kapu* on



it and if there is one thing this family doesn't need is more bad luck."

"But what about the baby? Are we supposed to keep him in water to keep the demon curse off him?" Tem stepped out of the bath, handed the baby off to me and dried off hurriedly.

"One man's curse is another man's blessing, sweetheart. He's a hybrid. They're very rare. When he's older, he'll be able to control the demonic side of him. Like any baby, we need to nurture and grow him...very carefully."

"You seem very excited that he's a storm demon." Tem's curious gaze was on me as he got dressed for Christmas dinner.

"Sure I am. I've never met one before. I want to make sure he puts it to good use, that he uses his power wisely. Until then, yes, we need to keep him in water. As he gets older, he'll need it less and less."

"So he's kind of like Spiderman, a sort of super hero?"

"Exactly. A sort of vampo-demo Man."

Tem looked delighted. "With all his powers, he can right wrong, destroy evil doers everywhere..."

"Yes, when he gets control of his bladder." I pointed to the baby lying on a bed of towels. His wiener was having a wee wee fiesta. "Don't worry, I'll clean him up." I glanced at my man. "Must you cover up that gorgeous, delicious, hot



bod with clothing?"

"For now." He grinned. "I do belong to you, remember? I plan on a little fun with you the moment we're alone again."

"Good." I watched him moving around in his tight black pants and red cashmere sweater, and I *longed* to get my tongue on his skin again.

"You're wearing the hunter green sweater." Tem gave me a kiss, his long, pink tongue flirting with my mouth.

I squawked when he moved away from me again. "Hey, I was starting to enjoy myself."

"That was just a little *soupçon* of what's in store for you the second I get you back in this bedroom tonight."

"Tonight? Can't you give me a little *soupçon* more?" I whined.

I got one more tiny, sweet kiss and he picked up the baby bottle. "Well, darling, at least we don't have to worry about getting more of these herbs from *Hiroshi*."

I picked up the baby from his towel collection and put him back into the makeshift bath in the sink. He was a little darling now that water was getting to him in big doses. I made funny faces at Beelzebub and Tem shook his head.

"And all this time we thought it was the herbs...but it was the bath the girls gave him? Div, we can't spend all day bathing him."



"We have to do it in turns. At least once every hour, somebody has to bathe him." I checked the baby's mouth. Two very stubborn bottom teeth remained and only one ear was pointed now. Both his hands were baby's hands again, but he still had a forked tongue.

Tem sounded stressed. "I am in the middle of cooking Christmas dinner, you know, Div."

"I assure you, between the four of us, Clancy, *Todah*, *Kalani* and I can handle it."

"Where is *Todah*, anyway?"

"I have no idea. I came in here with you after we opened a few gifts...I haven't seen him since."

Throwing on some clothes as Tem played with the baby, I tried not to feel the stab of childish hatefulness that I wasn't the one getting my tummy tickled.

There was a knock at our bedroom door. I picked the baby up out of his bath and checked the time. Eleven a.m.

"All we need to do is keep this little guy on his water schedule and keep your parents on champagne and we'll be fine." Tem opened the bedroom door as the baby kicked his little feet in a big fluffy towel.

"Say...his hand is all better!" Anna pointed a drunken, wobbly finger at the baby who looked at it like it was food. I was afraid his two remaining teeth would sever that finger in one little chomp.



Christmas in the emergency room wasn't my idea of fun.

"Hi there...yes, amazing isn't it?" I grinned. "Are you ready for more champagne?"

Anna nodded. I stole a kiss from Tem who gave me the baby and hustled off to the kitchen. Anna followed me down the maze of stairs to the cellar and a weird feeling came over me.

*Someone was in here.* I felt acute danger and tried to stop my mother-in-law from entering the climate-controlled cellar. She pushed her way forward and another strange sensation passed through me. Nobody was here. I was imagining things.

Anna's eyes popped at the stunning collection of wines we kept in the rooms.

"Oh, Bill has to see this." She turned around and tore up the stairs and the baby blew a raspberry at me.

"Your grandma is funny. Can you say funny?" I whispered to him, and the baby yawned in my face. Geez, in just a few hours he's already figured out I'm not the funniest guy in the world after all. Bill arrived, equally impressed with our stash of vintage wines and he and Anna grabbed a couple of bottles each. I picked out some wines for dinner and we went upstairs again.

In the kitchen, my husband was the picture of domestic god-lieness, turning over the huge pieces



of sea bass that had been marinating in hoisin-lime glaze since the previous day in large baking dishes. He brushed a thin layer of butter over the whole snapper with ginger and lemongrass, tied up in rice paper. Then he dotted some more butter on his turkey with the wasabi soy crust and prepared to steam the lobsters from the freezer with garlic, ginger and chili.

He had things under control, but I could feel his mind humming with the details as he turned his attention to the bunches of Thai basil that he started to chop for the Szechuan shrimp. Tem had spent the previous day hand cranking sesame udon noodles for his Vegetable Penang dish. For dessert he was making banana spring rolls and tamarind Buddha chocolate. This was my favorite thing in the world, next to Tem's red velvet cake. It consisted of a hand formed bittersweet chocolate shell filled with a rich tamarind-flavored chocolate and ginger mousse. For the fresh *Kauai* estate Peaberry coffee he was planning to serve with it, he had traded it, via the old *Hawaiian* bartering system, with our neighbors, the Huang family, for his best-of-the island *poi*.

"Can you take the *poi* next door, darling?" he asked me. All our neighbors went mad for Tem's *poi* and I was thrilled to be married to a man who could make it better than even the old timers.

"I think I am half out of my mind with love for



you," I told him.

"That's lovely, sweetheart, but it still won't get you out of helping me," he laughed. I knew our entire menu, I had listened as Tem changed it daily. Now it was happening and I wanted nothing to spoil our first family Christmas. This was the most important day for him as a newlywed and so far not one single thing had gone according to schedule.

"Don't worry, I'm all yours."

My sister was on her cell phone, a furrowed look to her brow.

*Hiroshi*, she mouthed to me.

"What is it?" I asked the second she ended the call.

She glanced at Tem and back at me again. "I need to get that burial basket back outside," she whispered. "That was *Todah*. *Hiroshi* is here...he won't come in. He says there's a *kapu* on the house."

*Oh, smashing*. I tried telepathing all of this to my husband, but he was too busy wiggling out over Christmas dinner. I could read his thoughts. He was focused completely on cooking times and fretting about running out of butter. I handed him a fresh two pound box of organic European butter out of the fridge and he gave me a dazzling smile. Now he was worried about not being ready when we had a house full of guests due to arrive in a



couple of hours.

"You don't need to come with me, Jimmy." *Kalani* indicated the array of half cooked dishes on the counter tops.

"I'm not leaving you on your own out there. Besides, I have to take the *poi* next door." A *kapu*. My God, that was fine and dandy on Christmas day.

"Here." Tem handed me a basket of freshly baked croissants and brioches. "Give these to anyone who wants them on your way out. Oh...and Div, can you do me a favor? Can you give my mom one of her presents to open? She's driving me crazy and I am afraid I will murder her. I'm this close." He held his thumb and forefinger together.

"Understood. Which one do you want me to give her?"

"It's a white box with a red velvet ribbon. And please don't be long, Div. I *need* you. Do you have any idea where *Todah* is?"

"No. It's so weird. Where could he have gone?"

*Kalani* shrugged. "Probably on his fourth shift by now."

I gave Tem another kiss, for medicinal purposes, and went off to find Anna and Bill in the living room, yucking it up with two other family members I'd barely had time to meet. Tem and *Todah's* middle-aged Aunties had arrived



from San Francisco. They were women who dressed conservatively but I knew, after a couple of drinks, they'd be a gas. Tem had told me so.

"Hello, Jimmy. I'm Rita and this is Sandy." *Was she flirting with me?*

I gave them a smile, popping the basket of baked goods on the coffee table.

"How are we supposed to meet men when all the good ones are married or gay?" Sandy pouted.

"I honestly don't know. Would you like a blueberry Brioche?"

As they attacked them, I rooted around the base of the tree, handing out a few gifts to keep them distracted.

"And this one is a special gift for you Anna, it's from Tem."

She grabbed the box like an eager kid and I saw where Tem got his capacity for open, honest joy. She ripped off the ribbon, staring at the huge letter K on the lid.

"I think I smell chocolates." She threw open the lid. She was right. There were ten of them, all with the same letter K stamped on top. "I wondered what the K stands for? Maybe they're German chocolates?" She looked at me, but I had no clue.

"Well, how...nice." She seemed a little taken aback at first, but she bit into a chocolate, passing the box to the old ladies.

"Don't mind if I do," one of them said.



"They're a bit chewy, but I'm starved." Anna reached across for a second one and I drifted back to the kitchen.

I watched Tem doing the work of five people and I made an executive decision. "Clancy, can you please watch the baby? If I am not back by noon, please bathe him."

"What do you mean, not back by *noon*? Where are you going?" Tem was near hysteria. I took his face in my one spare hand and kissed him. His skin was feverish and I knew he was on the verge of collapse. Between his mother's incessant barbs, the cooking and his worry over the baby, he couldn't cope with much more.

"Just trust me, darling. We're going to re-bury the funeral casket."

"And take the *poi* next door," he snapped. Then, "You're doing what with the casket?" His eyes were on the bubbling pot of sticky rice on the stove and I gave him one more kiss, leaving the house with my sister, who was carrying the casket we'd found our Beelzebub in just a few hours before in the dead of night.

Outside, I glanced at her. "Where did he say *Hiroshi* would meet us? And where has he been all this time?"

She shrugged. "He didn't say. He just said to meet him out here. He also said something weird. He asked where the baby was and said I should



bring him.”

And then I sensed a human presence. *Hiroshi* was in our backyard, coming from the side of our house. My skin prickled in an unpleasant way. I was pretty certain he’d been in the cellar when I was down there. What had he been doing?

He wanted to get the baby alone and never got his chance. I put the poi down on the grass. I was going to need both hands, judging by the manic look in the little priest’s eyes as he came out from behind a lemon tree. He was nervous and his gaze moved from my face to *Kalani’s*.

“Did you bring the casket?”

She held it toward him.

“Not so fast.” I put my hand over hers. “I have a question. What kind of *kapu* has been put on our house? And who put it there?”

*Hiroshi* opened and closed his mouth. One hand was behind his back. *A weapon*. I was certain of it. Before I could make a move, however, Tem came running out of the house, brandishing a big wooden spoon.

“Divine Thunder! I just picked up on your thoughts.”

“Took you long enough, sweetheart.” I chuckled.

He thrashed his spoon in my face. “Don’t you start with me!” Then he turned to *Hiroshi*. “What do you mean there’s a *kapu* on my house? I don’t



have *time* for a *kapu*! I'm having *twenty* people to dinner and my oven isn't working!"

*Hiroshi* took a step back, producing a long piece of wood from behind his back. He brandished it over the top of his head in the classic fighting style. The stick was an *Escrima*, a Filipino martial arts stick, except this one had been sharpened to a point at the end.

*Kalani*, *Tem* and I stood staring at it. It was unmistakably a stake. And, as every vampire knew, it was the only certain way to kill a vampire.

"Just bring me the baby, leave me the casket and we'll all be friends." *Hiroshi's* voice was high pitched with fear.

"You want to kill a little baby?" *Tem* was incredulous.

"He's already dead. I figured out he's a vampire. He needs to be buried. If I had any idea when I found him that he was a vampire, I would never have brought him here."

"You brought him here?" I couldn't believe what I was hearing.

"I got him from...I won't say where. I knew something was wrong with him, and I figured you're rich and *Tem* would flip over him..."

"And you thought you'd make money off us?" *Kalani* sounded disgusted.

"You can afford it."



This was a side I had never seen on *Hiroshi* and it was not a side I liked. At all.

"Just bring the little bastard here and go back home to your gay Christmas party."

"You really despise us, don't you?" I was starting to worry about what he'd given the baby.

"I don't despise you..." he started to laugh. "We can all be friends. I just need to kill the beast."

Tem stepped forward before I could stop him. "You are not touching my child." *Hiroshi* hadn't seen this side of Tem, but *I* had seen this side of Tem.

"Child? He's a *monster*." *Hiroshi* spat the word out, swinging that *Escrima* over his head. He narrowly missed Tem because I lunged and snatched him out of the way. *Hiroshi* made a bad mistake moving toward my sister. He never got to live to regret it.

"Oh that does it." Tem snapped his wooden spoon in two and got between *Hiroshi* and *Kalani*, thrusting the jagged edge of the spoon handle into *Hiroshi's* chest. It went right through his neat black clothes and into his heart.

*Hiroshi* grabbed at it with both hands, but fell to the ground, still clutching the spoon in his chest, a look of surprise on his dead face.

"Geez, hon, and that was your best spoon." I kissed Tem whose pale face glistened with sweat.

"Humph. I know it...but I guess that's the end



of the *kapu*, huh?" Tem dropped the other end of the spoon and stared down into the face of our family *odaisan*. "And to think I liked him."

We'd all liked him.

"What do we do with him now?" *Kalani* asked.

A sound of banshees and I knew that Blossom was near. How she managed to get around, appearing and disappearing was anybody's guess. But suddenly there she was an apparition in red, surrounded by her two *Jani*.

It took her a second to take in the scene. "And you killed the priest because...?"

"He wanted to kill our baby. Your godson."

Tem looked at her.

Blossom blinked. Once, twice...tears coming into her eyes. "You're going to let me be his vampire godmother?"

"He's a storm demon." Tem grinned at her.

"Wait a second, how do you know it's a boy?" I asked.

"He called my baby a monster. And my stove doesn't work." Tem glanced at me now, ready to fall apart.

"I'll fix your stove, baby." I put my arms around him, feeling him tremble. I think it was the first time he'd killed and not enjoyed it a second of it. My new vampire was growing up fast.

Blossom laughed. She seemed a lot better than the last time I saw her. "I was the one who had the



baby brought to you."

"You mean he's *your* baby?" Now I'd heard *everything*.

"Well, I am glad you think I can create miracles, Jimmy-San...but I am afraid, in spite of my girlish figure, I am way beyond child bearing years."

"Not by much," Yi whispered, giving her an adoring look. *Sheesh*.

"Jin and I brought you the bottles and stuff." Yi looked pleased with himself.

"Why all the subterfuge?" I was pissed now. All this time Blossom knew we had the kid.

"Yeah, and why did the priest tell us he found the baby?" Tem asked.

Blossom raised her hand. "The mother called me asking for help. She was alone and very scared and she didn't want her parents to know."

"Is she a friend of yours?" Tem asked.

"No...not really. She's a friend of *Todah's*."

"*Todah*? Tem and I said in unison.

"He's been missing all morning," I added.

Blossom shrugged. "I can't help you there. "She called me..."

"What's her name?" Tem asked.

"I forget. Wait...Ellen, Ella... *Elenai*...yes, that's it. *Elenai*."

"Our next door neighbor's daughter's name is *Elenai*." Tem looked at me. "You think it could be her?"



"I'll soon find out when I take them their *poi*."

"She thought the baby was dead. The priest called me and I told him to bring the baby to you. I knew it had to be a vampire baby, especially when he told me it was struck by lightning and was turning into a demon. He was frantic, terrified. He wanted to kill it."

She stared down at the body still holding the wooden spoon stuck in its heart.

"A vampire baby," I mused. "There's only one I know of who could have fathered this kid."

"*Todah*," Tem and I said in unison again.

"But I thought he couldn't father a baby for the first year?" Tem was getting hysterical again.

"Only if he's in love...and he did tell us he met someone he thought was a keeper. I didn't bank on him falling in love, darling."

"But he said he wasn't in love!"

"He had *Nonita* in the house." I stroked Tem's back. "He was confused and feeling guilty for sleeping with her."

"What does that little witch have that makes the men in my family go nuts?" Tem was pissed now.

"Nothing, my love. We don't go nuts for her. That's why she couldn't stand being in our house anymore."

Tem relaxed a little bit and Blossom took charge.

"Yi, Jin, dispose of the priest's body and the



evidence. This casket needs to be returned to the burial ground from which it was stolen."

"I'll do that, I think I found the place." *Kalani* reached out a hand for it.

"No," I insisted. "Tem and I will do that after dinner. It's better to do it under cover of darkness."

"I agree." Blossom nodded and stepped back as the *Jani* dragged the priest down our backyard, toward the big mountain standing guard over our house.

"You knew about the casket?" I asked her.

She pointed to it. "Not until now. I recognize it. It is sennit. An ancient weave. I would say it belonged to a member of the royal family and somebody stole it. Now let me meet the new addition. Godmother eh...I suppose you know Tem, this means I'm going to need a *wonderful* new dress for his baptismal fire..."



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

I went next door the Huang family and the husband, Joseph came to the door, a distracted look on his face.

“Merry Christmas, Joseph!”

“Have you seen *Elenai*?”

“*Elenai*?”

“Yes, my daughter. She’s been gone all night. I know she and *Todah* have been thick as thieves lately.”

“No, I haven’t seen her, but if I do, I will send her home.”

“Look.” He seemed to be picking his words out of mountains of anguish and I saw tears in his eyes. “I know I told her not to see *Todah*, I know I have made it tough for them, but tell her, we love her. Please. We are her parents and if he truly loves her as he told me this morning he does, then we will accept him as our own.”

He took the *poi* from me, shutting the door



without another word.

I blew out a sigh and headed home. In the kitchen, Tem opened his mouth and I inclined my head toward the cellar.

"We have more trouble, baby. Come on."

"Trouble? Isn't the *kapu* finished once we bury the casket?"

"Not by a long shot."

"I don't have time for any more trouble, Div."

"You'd better make time, baby."

I heard their voices, *Todah* whispering, the girl crying and Tem bit his lip and I pushed open the heavy door that led to our family crypts and special, private sleeping places. I saw a thin trail of blood and the girl, wild-eyed and exhausted on a pile of bloody blankets. Her face was ashen, a grief-stricken *Todah* holding her in his tired arms.

Tem and I rushed to them.

"I'm going to get help." Tem ran back upstairs again.

"Make her feed," I told *Todah* whose uncomprehending gaze rested on my face.

"I can't. She's dying. I don't want to live without her, Jimmy, but she's lost so much blood. I had no idea...no idea..." His head tossed back and forth.

"Please, *Todah*, listen to me. She's lost blood because she gave birth."

"I didn't know. I found her down here...I felt



her. I saw all the blood.”

“She has vampire blood in her now because of your baby. He is healthy, he’s alive and he needs both of you.”

*Elenai* looked at me. “He’s....alive?”

“Yes.” I nodded emphatically. “*Todah*, if you love her, truly love her, you must let *Elenai* feed from you.”

“She’s afraid of being a vampire.” His eyes moistened again. A rustle of fabrics and I recognized the smell. Blossom. It had been her scent on the baby’s *onesie*, or what I thought was a *onesie*. And I knew in that moment she was some kind of *ali’i*, vampire *ali’i* and I wondered if she was in fact *Lamia* herself.

A new realization came over me...maybe *Lamia* emerged at certain cycles...had Blossom fought the urge to destroy and found instead the urge to protect?

It took her seconds to take complete control of the situation. “Pick the girl up and carry her to *Todah*’s room,” she commanded.

I did, with Blossom giving calm instructions to Tem, *Kalani* and Clancy for boiling water, fetching clean sheets and hot mint tea.

As Blossom and the others fussed over *Todah* and *Elenai*, Blossom sent me to take care of our guests. She must have sensed that a new batch was arriving. Clancy’s mother, who had come to



our wedding all the way from Australia and taken up with our eccentric friend Sebastian Fortune, arrived with a basket of chocolate chip cookies. She was dressed in a dainty floral dress. Sebastian was in his usual attire, his nightgown, only this one was an improvement on his usual. I recognized it as one of Tem's creations.

Behind them were the causes of my biggest concern, the guys Tem and I had shot porn with. Our director Billy Flamingo and his boyfriend Luke, our rough, gruff camera guy Bull who had taken up an unlikely but apparently searing relationship with *Kipe* (say Kee-pay), the guy Billy was hoping to turn into the next hot bottom in gay porn.

"Darling, fabulous house. Where did you find all those *tikis*? So Hollywood!" Billy air kissed me. I didn't want to tell him the *tikis* were the genuine article. The real deal. Hundreds of years old and protectors of our home.

Tem rushed to the door. "*Todah* is a new daddy!"

"You don't say!" Billy sounded shocked. "You mean he's been running around *Waikiki* giving no glove love? Silly boy!"

The men came inside, giving us hugs and expensive bottles of wine and Tem rushed into my arms. "She's going to be okay and the baby is getting better and better. He still has red eyes and



the forked tongue, but all the teeth fell out so we can give him normal baby bottles now and oh...Div, they are the cutest couple!"

I kissed his nose. "Are you a little bit sad the baby isn't ours anymore?"

A momentary shadow crossed his face. "A little...but they're going to live with us and we'll be with him and...and...why are you smiling?"

"Your capacity for love constantly humbles me, Tem."

He stroked my cheek. "I think everyone's ready for some apricot margaritas."

"Coming right up." I gave his hot bottom a proprietorial stroke and he gave me a wink before hightailing it back to the kitchen.

I stopped by *Todah's* bedroom where his new mate was feeding on him.

"She's got the hang of it." I smiled as she suckled the greedy way Tem did when he first transformed into my partner for life.

*Todah* eased her away from his neck and Blossom leaned down, sealing the bites with her tongue.

"Get some rest you two. I'll be in to check on you later." She glanced at me. "We can tell *Elenai's* parents that the baby's eyes are red because of lack of oxygen at birth. The tongue...well, we can tell them it will get better. *Todah* and *Elenai* want to keep the family's secret, and protect the baby. You



will call her parents now and invite them over for dinner."

"Yes, mother." I said it without thinking and without a trace of sarcasm.

She smiled. "And bring me an apricot margarita. A strong one."

"Jimmy." *Todah's* voice was weak.

"Are you okay?" I perched gingerly on the edge of the bed.

"Yes. I am very happy. I am in shock, but very happy." He looked down at the baby nursing on *Elenai's* breast. "When will he need blood?"

"Not until his vampire teeth are in. Until then, mother's milk is perfect."

"Jimmy...can you please tell Tem, I'm changing the baby's name to *Akua*."

I felt such love for my young brother in law. *Akua*. The *Hawaiian* word for Godly. He was naming his baby Godly Thunder.

"*Akua Temeura* Thunder." *Todah* smiled, then snuggled closer to his woman and closed his eyes.

I got up quietly.

"Oh...one more thing."

"Yes, *Todah*?"

"That priest was in here...Jimmy...it was horrible. He found our family coffins...our sleeping places. He was convinced there were stolen antiquities here. He said he found a casket. An ancient casket buried outside. He ran out



there, I didn't have time to warn you. I didn't want to leave *Elenai*."

"It's okay little *brah*, I promise."

"He...he said it had a baby skeleton in it and he wanted to take it to the Bishop Museum to have it evaluated."

"He's dead. You don't need to worry about him anymore."

In the kitchen, I found Tem madder than a cut snake. "Jimmy Thunder! Why isn't my mother wearing the gift I gave her? I went to a lot of work making that top!"

"What top? I thought you gave her chocolates."

"Chocolates?" His eyes bugged out. "Not the ones with the letter K on them?"

"Is there a problem?"

"They were for *Kalani* and Clancy. They have been so anxious to try them."

A blast of female laughter from the living room and Tem closed his eyes.

"What...er...what's in the chocolates, Tem?"

"They're female Viagra."

"Maybe it won't be so bad." Who was I kidding? In the living room, we found that that both boxes of chocolates that had been under the tree were empty.

"Do you mean to tell me that baby belongs to *Todah*?" Tem's mother was incredulous. "I knew it! I knew he looked like Tem when he was born."



Did I mention that Tem was ugly, I mean *ugly* when he was born?"

Tem fumed silently.

"Are you sure those chocolates work?" I asked him. "Isn't it supposed to make her nice?"

"No. Just horny. How many did they have each?"

I had no idea.

"They're supposed to have only two in twenty four hours." Tem tossed out the empty boxes and got started with the first course. Everybody was getting along very well. Our dining room table looked festive and everybody wore their party hats after pulling Christmas crackers and finding paper crowns inside them. Tem of course, wore his tiara.

*Kalani* and Clancy must have gotten at least a few chocolates, since they were unusually amorous with each other at the table.

"No, darling. They've had about a keg of champagne each," Tem whispered.

His mother put on the top he had given her—finally—and it was very pretty, but I realized the real reason he wanted her to wear it. Tem had sewn a subliminal message into the fabric that only vampire eyes could read. *My son was born beautiful.*

Right across her tits.

The vampires among us laughed and laughed



and our first family Christmas was one Tem and I would not forget in a hurry. His food was perfect, the champagne and wine flowed and the women at the table were all over the men, gay, straight or married, they didn't care.

Tem's hot-to-trot Aunties Rita and Sandy disappeared before dessert with Bull and Kipe and Tem's mother kept squirming in her seat.

"God, I'm so horny, the doorknobs are starting to look good," she announced, making Billy Flamingo laugh so hard wine came up through his nose.

The biggest shock was Clancy and *Kalani* lamenting that they hadn't eaten one piece of candy.

"There's a box in your room," Tem told them. "I hid them from the crazy ladies."

"Then let's get this casket buried and get our lovin' on," Clancy declared.

"Yeah, I wanna have a party in Jimmy's pants." Tem was glancing at my crotch.

"Don't say that," I nuzzled his neck. "Or we'll never leave this house."

"I'm coming with you. Come on Yi, Jin." Blossom sighed. "We're going to travel the slow way."

If flying was the slow way, I was kinda looking forward to learning about her idea of the fast way.

Tem put Moontime to work guarding the house



until we came back. Until the *kapu* was no longer a threat to our family, the cat was still under house arrest. He sulked in the kitchen window, watching us take off.

"We'll make it up to him," I assured Tem as we flew beside *Kalani* and Clancy, who were assisting Blossom and her cohorts. As we came close to the area of land where *Kalani* had seen a disturbance earlier in the day, I could smell guava and ginger and night blooming jasmine on the vine. We landed with soft thuds and everybody looked around. There were signs of other holes having been started.

In one corner was the pitiful skeleton of the baby the priest had heartlessly tossed aside. Any remnants I had of guilt or sorrow for his passing were gone.

I put the tiny baby bones back in the casket, Tem at my side. Blossom looked more upset than I have ever seen her.

"This is a burial ground. Very, very old. The bones of the dead are sacred. The bones of our people have been tampered with for too long."

"Who would have done this?" Clancy asked.

"The priest, probably, after he found the first casket." Blossom tried hard to remain composed.

"Why did he bring the casket to us if he had ideas to sell it?" Tem asked.

"I don't think he intended to give it to us. I



don't think he even intended to bring us the baby, even once he realized he was alive."

"Moontime caught him!" Clancy gasped and we all stared at each other. "How did he get the casket all the way home?"

"He's a very smart cat." Tem's chest puffed out a little bit.

"So he...he played the concerned *odaisan*...gave us herbs..."

"A placebo," Blossom nodded.

"He had no clue that water would reverse the demon curse." *Kalani* sighed. "No wonder he kept demanding that I bring him the casket. If I'd gone out there alone to meet him..."

"You could have handled him fine," I assured her.

"Div, what do we do now? How can we make sure nobody else comes and harms the dead?" Tem was looking at me.

They were all looking at me.

"A great wrong was done to our family and the family of this disturbed baby. This is our chance to make some things right. We need to start looking for *pohaku*, stones."

"You mean like lava stones?" Yi asked.

"Exactly."

We moved in groups on the ground and above it, assembling a pile. We reburied the casket, taking our time covering the half-started holes and



the one containing the casket. It was hard to see where the holes used to be.

I took Tem's hand on one side, Blossom's on the other and we all stood in a circle.

After a moment, I spoke. "And now we say goodbye, the way *Hawaiians* do. It is understood by the children of these islands that in burying our dead, we return them, with love, to walk the rainbow with our ancestors. We return them to the wind. On the ground, no *kapu* stone is to be moved. There is life in the stone and death in the stone. We honor our dead, because the dead honor us."

Everybody picked up a stone and one by one, we arranged a *heaiu*, a temple to the dead. Anyone who walked up here would recognize the circular stash of stones for what it was, *sacred beauty*.

In time, we could plant flowers here, we could bring trees and remember those who had walked this mountain before us. We would come to acknowledge those who had been laid to rest here, but not given the right to a proper burial.

"Our work is done." Blossom hugged each of us and evaporated with her lovers. The four of us flew home, the cat arching a brow in our direction as we walked indoors.

"The world is yours again," Tem told him, but now that his favorite person was home, the cat wanted to be nowhere else but near him.



"You and me both, kid," I told the cat as the three of us headed to our room. I put my arm around Tem.

"Sweetheart, you ready to have a party in my pants?"

"You bet," he grinned. The cat just sighed in disgust.



## CHAPTER TWELVE

Midnight. December twenty sixth. Known as Boxing Day in England, Canada and Australia, it seemed fitting that since Tem and I had barely begun exchanging the pile of gifts that we had bought for each other, we should get to celebrate in private on that day. In medieval England, servants were required to work on Christmas, so the day after, Boxing Day, they were given gift boxes by their employers.

Though Tem had many gifts to open and he could hardly stop touching his tiara, he told me there was one thing he wanted that I didn't give him on Christmas Day.

My heart almost stopped. "What? What didn't I give you?" My thoughts meshed with his and I stopped panicking. "Oh....my ass, right?"

"My ass, bitch."

I laughed.

"Hey, you're my bitch. I own you. I have it in writing. Your pants say so."



"They do? I didn't notice. But don't all my pants say that?"

Tem laughed then. "I can't keep anything from you, can I?" He took off his tiara with great reluctance.

"Thank you for a wonderful Christmas, Tem."

"Div...I love you. *Me ke aloha pau ole*. My love for you will never end." We undressed each other slowly, relishing not having to do anything else but each other. I lay back on the bed, my cock already hard for him. He stood on the side and I slid down so that my head was off the bed.

"Oh, I love when you suck me like this," he breathed.

I took his cock down my throat, sucking, licking, grasping at his ass. He took longer, deeper strokes and I loved the feel of his need for me. For a few minutes, he let me lavish him cock with my mouth, then lifted it away from me. I opened my eyes and he was leaning over me, one ball lowering itself to my mouth. I sucked voraciously and he took it away from me, feeding me the other one. Back and forth, I sucked his balls, expecting that huge, leaking cock to come back, but Tem was in charge.

"Slide back on the bed, bitch."

I did as I was told and almost screamed with pleasure when he sat on my face, feeding me his ass hole. I could still taste myself in him from our



bathroom romp earlier. Tem straddled my head on his knees, grinding swaying and moving that ass across my tongue and nose. I gripped his thighs and held his ass hole to my tongue, lapping at it, lunging with wet strokes at it. He ground out a *tsk* sound, moving up to give me his cock again and then he fell forward, taking my cock deep in his mouth.

Tem hummed a little tune, enhancing the vibrations of his already perfect blow job.

“When I say come, you’d better come bitch.”

He took his cock from me, put his ass back over my mouth and his mouth went back to me, lashing at me with quick flicks of his tongue.

“All right, come now.” His fingers moved into me and his mouth swallowed me up and I flooded his throat. His balls swung in my face and I suckled on them until he got off my face, got between my legs and gave me the blistering fuck of a lifetime.

It always hurt when Tem first put himself inside me. He had been my first man and apart from an onscreen threesome, he had been proud of making me his bitch. I begged him to come inside me, to fuck me until he couldn’t take it anymore. His hand snaked between us, pulling my cock in time with his thrusts.

Yeah, I was his personal vampire putty. We came together, our shared moans filling our room,



the cat refusing to give up his third of the bed when we broke apart. I spooned my darling, holding him in my arms, kissing his neck and throat, my cock nestled between his taut ass cheeks.

From our open windows, I could smell mountain apples and figs. We'd have to pick some for breakfast. Or lunch. Whenever I could bear to leave our bed and face the world again. The only sounds were our breathing, the cat's faint snoring...and way down the other end of the house, the baby's *feed me* cry. From somewhere else I heard laughter, sex laughter. And I smiled against Tem's fragrant hair.

"Div?"

"Yes, baby?"

"What if the baby always has a forked tongue?"

"Well, he's gonna make some ladies very, very happy."

Tem laughed. "He will?"

"Oh, yeah. You know women's clitorises...each of them has one side that's more sensitive than the other."

"You don't say."

"I do say. He's gonna be a chip off the old Thunder block."

"You mean a happily married gay vampire?"

"Well...I know I am." I rolled myself back on top of Tem, covering his body with mine. His cock



lay rigid between our bodies and I thanked God, the angels, the demons and even the nudibranchs for sending me this man. As I started the pleasurable duty of making love to him slowly and for as long as we wanted, I was ecstatic that we were a couple of vampires in *Waikiki*.

A sharp claw in my ankle brought me to my senses.

*Ouch.* A couple of vampires in *Waikiki* with a very sharp, smokin' cat.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A. J. Llewellyn lives in California, but dreams of living in *Hawaii*. Frequent trips to all the islands, bags of Kona coffee in his fridge and a healthy collection of *Hawaiian* records keep this writer refueled. A. J. loves male/male erotica, has a passion for all animals (especially the dog, the cat and the turtle). A. J. believes that love is a song best sung out loud.

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