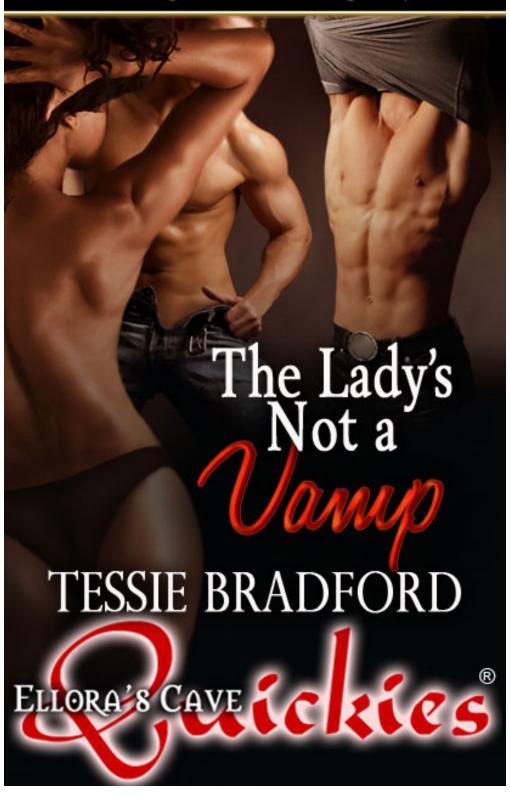
Ellora's Cave Presents



The Lady's Not a Vamp

Tessie Bradford

Sandy's perception of reality is taking one serious ass kicking. Two stunningly handsome vampires come to her aide, boldly announce she is their blood mate and send her soaring on waves of orgasmic delight with every touch. It's a lot for a gal to process in two days!

Tony and Rick weren't looking for a third, but when the spunky, courageous, sexy-as-hell human woman needs blood, their bodies and souls instantly recognize Sandy as their perfect match. Now they just need to convince her to embrace all they have to offer.

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



The Lady's Not a Vamp

ISBN 9781419928604 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED The Lady's Not a Vamp Copyright 2010 Tessie Bradford

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THE LADY'S NOT A VAMP

Tessie Bradford

Dedication

For two very dear friends –

Katalina, your encouragement, positive energy and wickedly wonderful sense of humor keeps me going!

Mia, without your support, I wouldn't have books to write dedications in!

Chapter One

Was it actually possible to have a hangover for three days? Despite the fact the early fall evening sky was filled with ominous clouds, Cassandra Morley used one hand to shield her eyes while using the other to guide the shopping cart through the pothole-filled obstacle course of the market's parking lot. The banging, throbbing and pulsing taking place in her skull had her clenching her teeth, and she didn't give a shit when she stopped the cart with the bumper of her car. She roughly tossed four paper sacks into the trunk while wondering how such a pitiful amount of food could have cost fifty dollars. The two empty water bottles, evidence of what she had consumed during her very short shopping excursion, were thrown in next. Why in hell was she so thirsty?

Instead of walking the empty cart back into the store, as would be her normal way, Cassandra gave it just enough of a shove away from her car so she didn't drive over it on the way out. As soon as she flopped into the driver's seat, she rummaged through her purse for sunglasses and a tissue. Refusing to dwell on the strangeness of needing the unstylish but deeply tinted lenses, she wiped away the tears streaming down her cheeks.

"That'll teach me to order the bartender's special recipe at a place called Dave's Dive," she muttered, resting her head against the steering wheel. "I'm such a lightweight."

A tap on the driver's side window had her head snapping up so quickly, a wave of dizziness threatened to forcefully empty her stomach. It didn't cross her addled mind to lower the window. She swung open the door instead.

"Yes?" she asked a bit crabbily.

"I don't mean to intrude, miss, but are you okay? I saw you in the market, and it was pretty clear you're not feeling well. I just wanted to see if you needed help."

Cassandra, Sandy to those who knew her, stared open-mouthed at the man offering assistance. Boy, things were sure different in a small town. She was relatively certain if she'd passed out cold in an aisle at the mega store in the city, ten people would have stepped over her prone body to get to the canned goods.

"Um, I really appreciate your concern but I'm fine." She pushed her sunglasses up over her forehead and smiled feebly. It was just her luck such a fine specimen of manly goodness would present himself when she was not at her perky best.

There wasn't a headache on the planet, however, that could keep her from appreciating the guy's rugged good looks. Light brown hair, wavy and windblown, framed a strong forehead, defined cheekbones and a chin with a perfect little cleft. His eyes were a glorious shade of the deepest green, and when he returned her smile, she took note of his perfectly formed lips and straight white teeth.

"At the risk of sounding argumentative, I think 'fine' might be a slight exaggeration. You're as white as a sheet and it looks like you've been crying." So much for first impressions, Sandy groaned inwardly. "Can I drive you to a doctor or something?"

"I swear it's not necessary, Mister..."

"Rick, Rick Duggan." He offered his hand and Sandy shook it with as much strength as she could muster.

"Thanks a lot, Rick, but I just need to get home and rest." His fingers were long and his palm was slightly calloused, and for some reason, Sandy didn't want to let go. "I'm Cassandra Morley, by the way."

"Yes, I know," he responded while his grip tightened noticeably.

"Excuse me?" Sandy jerked her hand free.

"Sorry, that sounded stalker-like, didn't it?" He flashed another killer grin but a faint pink tinge colored his cheeks. How cute was that? "Janice, your real estate agent, is a friend and you bought the house to the north of my property. I planned on introducing myself after giving you time to settle in first."

His explanation sounded truthful enough. "Well, it's nice to meet you, Rick, and call me Sandy." Sandy reached for the door handle. "When I'm feeling better, maybe we can have a neighborly visit."

"Sandy, I'm on my way home too. If you won't let me drive you, I'm going to follow so I'm sure you arrive safely." He tipped his head and moved to the pickup parked next to her.

It was a free world. He could drive the same streets. Sandy repositioned her sunglasses, started the engine and drove slowly out of the parking lot.

During the twenty-minute drive home, Sandy found herself checking her rearview mirror more than necessary. So, genuinely nice men still populated the Earth? Her experiences definitely spoke to the contrary, but damn if he didn't come across as completely sincere.

Cassandra had lived in Deckton for less than a month and just started her part-time job at the clinic last week, but the people she'd met so far had all been warm and welcoming. It was one of those friendly coworkers who had coerced her to go out for drinks Friday night. The mere thought of it had her stomach churning and grumbling. She swallowed convulsively, willing herself not to hurl. The long, winding driveway leading to the modest brick ranch was a sight for her very sore eyes. Parking her car in the attached garage, Sandy was surprised to find Rick pulling up behind her. She walked the short distance to the front porch and waited.

"Thanks for following me, but you really didn't have to stop. I'm fine now that I'm home." Her treacherous head chose that particular moment to throb so painfully hard Sandy gasped and swayed.

"Yeah right," he scoffed, wrapping a muscled arm around her waist. "House key, please?"

Sandy hesitated only briefly before dropping the key in his outstretched palm. If he was plotting dastardly deeds against her person, so be it. Maybe he would render her

unconscious. Wouldn't that be better than the pain and nausea? She leaned against him as they entered the house.

Rick guided her to the couch, positioning throw pillows against one arm before helping to swing her legs up onto the cushions. Sandy laid back and closed her eyes. His large hand rested against her forehead briefly.

"You don't have a fever," he stated matter-of-factly. "What exactly are your symptoms?" He slowly ran his hand down her cheek and along the side of her neck.

"My head feels like it's going to explode and I'm trying desperately not to throw up on either one of us."

"How long has this been going on?"

"I woke up with it Saturday morning. I obviously had too much Friday night." She chuckled weakly. "I think I only had one drink, but damn, it was a doozy."

"You're not suffering from a multi-day hangover, Sandy."

"Are you a doctor?" she asked, cracking open an eye and watching him walk with purpose toward her kitchen.

"No, I'm not." He returned quickly, offering her a bottle of water. "Tell me what you did Friday night." Rick sat down in the chair across from her. After downing half the water in one long, unladylike gulp, Sandy recapped it and let the bottle drop to the floor.

"I went to Dave's Dive with people from work. I had a drink. I danced. Next thing I sort of remember is having trouble speaking and being really light-headed. Carol drove me home. I've felt like utter crap ever since."

"You don't remember exactly what happened?"

"I confess, the details are a mite sketchy." She threw her arm across her eyes and stifled a groan. Rick probably thought she was some kind of alcoholic floozy.

"So, you danced with one of your coworkers?"

"Definitely not a coworker." Sandy sighed as she struggled to recall the details. "The man seemed to appear out of nowhere. I think we talked for a bit before he took my hand and led me to the dance floor." She remembered the tingle that darted down her spine when he drew her up against his hard body. "We danced. He whispered something to me I couldn't understand, and then... I'm not sure, but I think we danced a lot. I have a vague recollection of complaining about being uncomfortably warm, but there was something about him, a magnetism, I didn't want him to let me go." Why in the world was she telling this to a perfect stranger?

"Wow, you must be forming a great impression about me, huh? I swear I don't... I mean I'm not that kind of..." She uncovered her eyes and met his piercing gaze. Nausea washed over her again, causing her to moan softly.

"Of course you're not," he interrupted. "Why don't you take another drink of water and rest for a little while? I'll stay, watch over you."

Sandy's gratitude for his help warred with unease over being at the mercy of a stranger if she drifted off. "So you're really just a nice guy, not some weirdo with ulterior motives?"

"Cross my heart," he answered while moving a finger over his chest.

Rick sent Sandy a mental push to sleep. Her eyes fluttered closed and she settled back on the couch. Good lord, she was beautiful. Her auburn hair spread out on the pillows with a few errant strands touching her rounded, lightly freckled cheeks. His gaze drifted to her ample breasts, slowly rising and falling with her now-relaxed breathing, and his cock twitched with appreciation. Cassandra Morley was no stick-thin model type. Her curves were lush and full, perfect to cradle a man as he worshipped every inch.

Sandy was suffering from an excessive loss of blood. Anger boiled through his veins. Whoever had violated her would answer to him. No honorable vampire took blood without the consent of the giver. Of course the vamp community had its share of

criminals and rogues, but they weren't welcome in Deckton. As one of the two protectors in the area, it was Rick's sworn duty to find the lowlife bastard. Humans and vampires had lived in harmony in the secluded area in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan for generations, and it was going to stay that way.

Tony, we have a situation.

Wow, could you be a bit more specific? I'm a kind of busy at the moment.

As soon as his partner opened the mental link they shared, Rick knew his timing sucked. Waves of lust rolled through him, along with the vivid image of the woman lying spread beneath Tony, head thrashing in the throes of ecstasy.

Sorry, man. Finish up what you're doing. I can handle things on this end until you get here.

Are you sure?

Rick had no doubt that if it were an emergency Tony would stop immediately and come to his aid, and he loved him for it. He stifled a mental groan as he felt Tony's body racing toward orgasm.

Positive. He quickly severed their link.

"Damn, that man is hot," he muttered, pressing a hand against his now-raging hard-on. Mistakenly, he focused on Sandy, and his balls literally clenched with desire. "Oh, this is priceless. The sexiest woman on the planet is lying completely vulnerable and within reach while the sexiest man on the planet lets me into his lust-filled brain, and I can't fuck either one of them." He ran a shaky hand through his hair and let out a loud breath.

Rick went to the couch and gently lifted Sandy's upper body. Sitting down, he positioned her to lean back against his chest. He gently stroked her hair. The waves were so soft and, lifting a piece to his face, smelled of spring flowers. They would feel like heaven if they brushed lightly across his abdomen while she... He quickly shook his head, trying to clear the image as he pierced his wrist and brought his arm around to her mouth.

"Drink, honey. You'll feel all better, I promise." He gently cooed the words out loud as he telepathically nudged her to comply. The second her plump, moist lips touched the trickle of blood, she licked and suckled with shocking vehemence. Rick howled and his hips jerked. Every nerve in his body sprang to attention.

In his almost three hundred years, Rick had shared a lot of blood with a lot of humans and vampires. It was always highly erotic—one of the many benefits of being vampire—but he only felt this intense, pounding, physical and emotional reaction when he was with one other living being.

He clutched Sandy more tightly and soared on wave after wave of euphoria. The desire to sink his fangs deep into her and taste what he was sure would be the sweetest of nectars threatened to overwhelm every rational thought. He ran the tip of his tongue along her slender neck, stopping to feel her pulse beat. His fangs ached. Somewhere in the back of his mind he knew he had to stop, but he couldn't. He needed just one more moment of heaven.

Jesus Christ, Rick! What the hell is going on?

Tony's frantic interruption penetrated his lust-fogged brain. He pulled his wrist from Sandy's lips and quickly healed his puncture wound. With trembling arms and legs, he fumbled off the couch, wobbled back to the chair, dropped his head into his hands and struggled to breathe normally.

Damn, damn, damn...

I'm coming.

Rick sensed rather than saw Tony materialize in the room. When he laid his hand on Rick's shoulder, calming warmth followed. He lifted his head and met Tony's worried stare.

"I think we have more than one situation on our hands." Rick watched surprise and confusion play across Tony's features as he took in Rick's passion-filled face and the unconscious woman on the couch.

"Why are we in our new neighbor's house, with her all passed out and you looking as if you've just experienced some kind of freaky sexual epiphany? Beyond the obvious explanation, of course," he added with his trademark sarcasm.

"All I meant to do was give her a sip, make her feel better, but as soon as she started to drink, shit, I almost lost it."

"I think you better start at the beginning of this story."

Rick brought Tony up to date in choppy half sentences, peppered with a whole bunch of "damns" and "what the hells".

"Interesting."

"We have an unknown vamp helping himself to innocent humans, I confess nearuncontrollable sexual desire for someone other than you, and that's all you can say?"

"Have I mentioned how your youthful innocence never ceases to give me a hardon?"

"More than once, old man." Their one hundred year age difference was one of their favorite subjects to jerk each other around with. "So, what do you want to deal with first—bad vamp or good woman?"

"You actually have to ask that question?" Tony leered over at Sandy and licked his lips. "Seriously though, we need to get more info. Wake her up and let's have a chat. When we're finished, we'll erase her memories and go find the bastard who did this to her."

"I want us to do a whole hell of a lot more than have a conversation. I swear she's different somehow. When I tasted her, it was just more. She reacted differently than any other human woman I've known. There's something about her, her and me, oh hell, I can't explain..."

"I get it, Rick. You're still functioning on pure fang and dick."

"You have no fucking idea what I'm feeling or what's going on." At Tony's raised, questioning eyebrow, Rick rubbed his forehead and drew a deep breath. "Sorry, man,

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give me a second." Tony waited silently. "Do me a favor. You go into the kitchen and let me talk to her first. My gut is telling me she can handle the truth."

"After giving her a couple drops of blood?"

"It's not as if she'd be the first human on the planet to know about vamps."

"I realize that, Rick, but it takes a very special human to deal with the reality of the world as it truly is."

"Give me a little credit, will you? I'm more than capable of handling one human female. If she wigs out, I'll make her forget the whole thing—no harm, no foul. On the other hand, she might just be one of those very special humans. I want to find out."

"How much of the truth are you planning on telling her?"

"I'm not sure yet. Guess I'll play it by ear."

"Ooh, this should be entertaining!" Tony chuckled and strolled out of the room.

Chapter Two

Sandy rubbed her eyes and rolled over to face the back of the couch. The first thing to register was the lack of a headache and a settled stomach. The next was her pebbled nipples and the gentle pulsing of her clit. Images of a gorgeous man coming to her rescue, bringing her home, promising to make her feel better floated through her mind. Wow, what a dream! She stretched her legs and snuggled her hip more deeply into the cushions. She thought she heard a quiet groan from somewhere across the room, but that was impossible, she lived alone. A tiny itch caused her to rub her ass cheek slowly as she delighted in finally feeling like her old self again.

"Oh come on, give a guy a break."

Sandy jerked around so fast she had to brace her arm on the floor to keep from tumbling flat on her face. After fumbling around to regain a sitting position, she stared at Rick, who sat across the room.

"I thought you were a dream."

"Nope, I'm very real, but thanks for the compliment." His smile lit up his face. "Are you feeling better?"

"As a matter of fact, yes, I am. How can that be?"

"Sandy, what I'm about to say is going to sound crazy, but please try and hear me out, okay?" He laid his hands on the arms of the recliner and slowly crossed his legs. It was obvious he was trying to affect a casual pose, which immediately caused her concern.

"I'm listening," she replied hesitantly.

"The man you danced with at the bar isn't human."

Wow, at least he'd warned her first. Sandy quickly scanned the room, disappointed to see her purse with her cell phone inside, over by the front door. It would be quite impossible to get past Rick from where she was sitting. Humoring him for the moment seemed the best course of action while trying to figure out a plan B. "May I ask what he is then?"

"A vampire and a law breaker, but I promise he will be brought to justice."

Sandy briefly studied Rick's expression, so calm but also serious, then did the only thing that came to mind. She burst out laughing. Of course the most beautiful, compassionate man she'd ever had the pleasure of meeting was as nutty as a fruitcake!

"A criminal vampire as opposed to the model citizen kind, huh? Leave it to me to attract a bad one. Is his crime dancing me to the point of illness?"

"He took your blood without permission."

Sandy ran both her hands along her neck. "Without leaving any teeth marks too. I appreciate that."

"He healed them, of course."

"Riiight." She nodded her head in agreement and slowly stood. "This is certainly a very plausible explanation for me not feeling well. Thanks for clearing everything up. I suppose I should call the police and make a full report?"

"I am the police."

And it keeps getting better, she thought, desperately choking back another round of giggles.

"Then I leave the situation in your capable hands. Be sure and let me know how it all turns out, okay?" She took a few steps and motioned toward the front door.

"We most certainly will."

Sandy audibly gasped at the man now standing in the kitchen doorway. Shockingly, he actually fit her idea of what a vampire might look like. Long, jet-black, perfectly straight hair hung loose over his shoulders to fall below his armpits. His full-

length leather coat hung open, revealing a black shirt stretched tight across his chest and worn blue jeans riding low on his hips, clinging to his muscular thighs. Even from across the room, she was mesmerized by his ice-blue eyes and sharp facial features. When he winked at her rakishly, a shiver of lust skittered along her skin. He looked bad and oh so good all at the same time. "Who the hell are you?"

"Cassandra Morley, meet Tony DeLucia, my partner."

Coaxing one delusional man out of her house seemed doable, two most likely would be impossible. Her legs began to shake. She turned toward Rick. He was out of the chair and at her side in a flash. He wrapped an arm around her waist, steadying her.

"Relax, honey." He gave a gentle squeeze to her hip. "There's nothing to be frightened of, he's here to help too."

"Don't insult the woman's intelligence, Rick. She has every reason to be scared shitless." He spoke softly, his tone deep, sultry. "I think she's holding up miraculously well, considering the circumstances." Tony came forward. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Sandy." He smiled and gently cupped her right hand between both of his and gave a tiny shake.

Warmth radiated across her palm and up her arm. A rush of heat tingled between her legs. She gasped in surprise but didn't pull away as she stared up at Tony. His eyes darkened seductively. Her pulse raced. He leaned closer. Her mouth went dry. He started to lower his head. Rick groaned as if he were in pain. The spell was broken.

"Um, thanks," she whispered. Much to her disappointment, Tony let go of her hand. She cautiously stepped out of Rick's embrace, pleased when she didn't melt into a puddle on the floor. What in the world was wrong with her? If there was ever a time for maintaining one's focus and keeping one's wits about them, this was definitely it. "I assume you heard our little discussion. Are you also of the opinion that I've been used to slake the thirst of an unscrupulous creature of the night?"

"I am, and nice campy horror movie description of the event."

"I definitely feel like I'm in the middle of some sort of Hollywood production at the moment," Sandy commented, and rubbed her hands over her eyes. When neither man responded, she noticed they weren't currently paying attention to her but instead were staring intently at each other.

This was her golden opportunity for escape! But for some inexplicable reason, she didn't feel as if she were in any serious danger from these two. They were eccentric, quite possibly certifiable, but they hadn't hurt or threatened her in any way, and it was definitely time to bring this bizarre encounter to an end. Sandy walked over and opened the front door before loudly clearing her throat.

"Thanks again, Rick, for all of your help, and it was nice to meet you too, Tony." They both turned to her with startled expressions. "I'm sure we'll see each other again sometime."

"So that's it? You're all good with the whole vamp thing? No more questions?" Tony stalked in her direction, skepticism written all over his face. When they were toe-to-toe, he rested his hands on his hips and raised an eyebrow. "I bet you can't wait to hightail it into town, go straight to the authorities and report everything."

"Oh yeah, like I want to introduce myself to the Deckton police by claiming a guy I'd never met before but who I let into my house, and his friend, told me I've had a runin with a vampire? I'm planning on making a life here, hopefully someday even striking up a friendship or two. The last thing I need is people thinking I'm a complete lunatic!" Everyone's probably well aware that you two are a few sandwiches short of a picnic, she thought to herself.

"See, Tony, I knew she could handle the truth."

"She thinks we're insane."

"And that's what will keep her quiet until we've had more time to properly explain the way of things, right, honey?" Rick came up behind her and laid his hand on her shoulder. As with Tony earlier, her body reacted with instant sexual awareness. What was it about these guys that sent her libido into overdrive? "Yep, absolutely, I'm cool."

"Sweetheart, you're the farthest thing away from cool."

Tony cupped her face as he leaned in and kissed her softly. Sandy swayed back against Rick. She couldn't stop her moan of appreciation at the hard evidence of his arousal pressed at the top of her ass. Rick's hands went around her hips as Tony's tongue swept into her mouth. She clutched Tony's shirt and held on as he kissed her into a state of near-mindless ecstasy. She felt a growl rumble in his chest right before he pulled back. He pressed something into her hand. Sandy struggled to focus.

"Business card, our phone numbers..."

"Tomorrow night, coming back..." Rick appeared to be having as much trouble as Tony in the speech department. Sandy didn't even give it a shot. She nodded silently.

They walked out into the night, leaving Sandy panting in the doorway.

* * * * *

"Un-fucking-believable." Tony materialized in their living room, a few feet behind Rick. "Christ, what a rush! It was all I could do not to take her where she stood. How in the hell did you keep your shit together when she sucked your fucking wrist?"

When Rick spun to face him, Tony's cock swelled and lengthened. Rick's irises were nearly black and the whites glowed red. His fangs were fully exposed and his chest rose and fell violently with each breath. This was his friend, confidant, partner and lover at his virile best. He was a sight to behold.

"I'm out of control." The words were hissed. He opened his mind and Tony was inundated with decadent images of Rick fucking both him and Sandy in every conceivable way and some that possibly defied even their own talents. "Help me."

With a growl, Tony lunged. He shoved Rick against the wall, pinning his arms above his head. He sank his fangs deep in Rick's neck while grinding his cock into Rick's groin and fed on his fantasies as well as his blood. In all the years they had been together, nothing compared to this extreme, intoxicating lust pulsing between them.

Tony shifted, transferring both Rick's wrists into one hand so he could tear open Rick's pants with the other. His cock sprang free, hard and hot, the crown damp with pre-cum. Rick always picked the right times to go commando. Wrapping his fingers tightly at the base, Tony stroked in rhythm with each deep draw on his neck. Rick shouted out and his hips bucked in wild abandon as he came.

Tony's heart slammed with anticipation as he watched Rick drop to his knees. Together, with shaking hands, they pushed Tony's pants to his ankles. He flexed his hips forward in encouragement. Rick ran his hands up and down his thighs, stared at his crotch, but did nothing more. Tony grabbed a handful of Rick's hair and tugged forward.

"Not the time to mess around with me," Tony warned.

"Just trying to catch my breath."

"Breathe through your nose."

Tony pressed his cock against Rick's lips. Rick opened immediately and Tony slid deep. A shiver racked his body when he hit the back of Rick's throat. Exquisite suction combined with talented tongue action had Tony's balls drawing up tight. A finger teased his anus. He wanted to hold out, prolong the sweet agony, but even he had his limits.

"Now damn it!" He held Rick's head as he frantically pounded his mouth. At the stinging pierce of fang, Tony exploded, physically and emotionally. He sent waves of love as Rick drank his essence and then roared his satisfaction at the intensity of feelings he received in return. They collapsed together on the floor.

"Thank God you decided to go grocery shopping tonight." Tony chuckled, cradling Rick's head against his chest.

"This isn't funny, man. You feel it, this can't be normal."

"It most certainly is." Tony remained still when Rick sat up and stared at him with doubt and confusion. "Why are you panicking over finding a woman who can drive us this crazy with lust? I was in your head, and except for questioning the logistics of a couple of your fantasies, I can't wait to get the party started."

"We've never reacted this way to another living being. Only blood mates are supposed to affect each other so intensely. What the hell does it mean to our relationship if we both want someone else so badly?" Rick raked a hand through his tousled hair.

"Jealousy isn't a vamp thing, Rick. You know that."

"Is it possible to be blood mates with more than one person? I've never heard of that happening. Doesn't it break a rule or something?"

Tony laughed while playfully pulling Rick into his arms. "If there's a vampire rule book, I'm unaware of it. Let's just get to the fun of showing Sandy the special abilities our kind has to offer."

Chapter Three

Sandy lifted her face into the spray of warm water and finished rinsing the lilacscented shampoo from her hair. She was bone-tired and her muscles ached, but a
person could eat a meal safely off any surface in the house. When stressed out, Sandy
cleaned. Today, however, due to complete brain overload from the events of last night,
regular dusting and sweeping hadn't been enough. She'd gone on to empty and put
away the contents of the ten or so boxes left from the move. Next came scrubbing the
grout of every tiled floor in the house, washing the windows inside and out and finally
reorganizing the dishes and glassware, despite the fact she'd only put them in the
cupboards a few weeks ago. A trip into town to buy the supplies necessary to patch and
paint the empty spare bedroom had provided a break from the activity but not her
jumbled thoughts.

"A vampire," she muttered for the umpteenth time as she slipped on her favorite oversized t-shirt, which read, *Sarcasm*, *just one more service I offer*. It hung to mid-thigh, and even though it was barely seven o'clock, she was more than ready to settle in for the evening. A bowl of leftover spaghetti waited in the fridge, and hopefully something decent would be on TV.

Her mind had been racing a mile a minute all day, and what did she have to show for it? More questions than answers. Sandy ran through the short list again. Rick behaved gallantly, seeing her safely home and staying with her. How much of an idiot was she for not pressing the subject of *why* she felt back to her old self when she woke up? Rick announced his vampire explanation. Why in the world had she felt comfortable enough to respond with her trademark dry humor? When Tony appeared from her kitchen, why hadn't she panicked? Sandy plopped down dramatically on the end of her bed and roughly combed her hair. Each movement of her arm rubbed the t-

shirt along her hardened nipples. "And therein lies my problem." She let out a huff and tossed the comb across the room. Obviously, the lack of male companionship for more than two years had robbed her of any hope of rational behavior when presented with two breathtakingly handsome, albeit crazy men. Her divorce had been finalized months ago, but the marital bed had gone cold long before. Stan, the philandering ex, had never missed a chance to remind her of her shortcomings in the sex department. In the beginning, she told herself it was a very convenient excuse to use in order to justify his actions, but after hearing it for so long, well, maybe it was true. Lord knew she'd never experienced any of the wondrous, toe-curling, explosive, sensual pleasures expounded upon in the books she delighted in reading.

But Tony and Rick had definitely been interested in her on a physical level and she'd responded with an intensity she'd never experienced before. Her cheeks heated with the memory of being sandwiched between their hard bodies, Rick's cock against her back while Tony showed her what a kiss was supposed to be.

Sandy made her way downstairs. In five short minutes, settled comfortably in the living room, she dug her fork in the steaming-hot bowl of pasta while flipping through channels with the remote. On the second pass through one hundred stations of crap, she couldn't help but wonder why her cable bill was almost the size of a car payment. Finally settling on a home improvement show, which was demonstrating proper spackling techniques, she finished both her dinner and a generous glass of chardonnay.

The business card she'd tossed on the coffee table last night caught her eye. Grabbing her cell phone out of her purse, she programmed in the numbers.

"Only because I misplace things," she muttered, tossing the card into her oversized bag sitting on the floor and the phone back on the table. "I need to get a dog or something. At least then there'd be something else in the house listening to me chatter." She gathered her empty dishes and headed for the dishwasher. "Maybe a cat or two? No, I'm definitely too young to be a woman living alone with cats."

"I totally agree, Cassandra."

The bowl and glass slipped from her fingers to break into pieces on the kitchen tile. "God damn it, Rafael!" she screamed, stumbling against the doorframe and clutching her chest. "What the fuck are you doing in my house?"

"I'm impressed you remember me, my dear."

The night at the bar came rushing back. The ladies from her work were all on the dance floor. Rafael appeared at her table, introduced himself and started flirting mercilessly. He was more than fine to look at, with his dark, wavy hair, cover-model-perfect face and expertly tailored clothes. His Italian accent was sexy as hell and although Sandy realized from the start he was a player, it had been fun to be the object of his attentions. When he asked her to dance, she eagerly accepted. They danced to a few rock-and-roll songs and then the music changed. At the first notes of the slow, sultry ballad, he wrapped his arms around her, held her cradled against his body, kissed along her neck.

"You bit me!" A shiver raced along her spine at the memory.

"Indeed I did. You are a most delectable treat, one I've decided I want on a regular basis." He smiled broadly, displaying a terrifying pair of lengthened incisors.

"Jesus Christ, you're a vampire."

"Guilty as charged." He chuckled.

Oh my god, they aren't crazy, they were telling the truth! Why didn't I listen? Oh my god! This was very bad. Sandy frantically tried to figure out what to do as she watched Rafael idly check his perfectly manicured nails. Her cell phone was too far away and the house phone was on the counter behind him. Common sense told her she probably couldn't outrun a vampire. Her heart thudded and her pulse pounded in her ears. Wait, Rick had said they'd be back tonight, but when?

"Why me? There were lots of women there. I'm nothing special."

"I'm afraid I have to disagree with your self-assessment for a number of reasons. You are a beautiful woman who immediately caught my eye. When I searched your mind, I discovered an independent spirit and strength of character I find exceptionally

appealing. And now that you've shown the ability to overcome my efforts to block your memories of me, I'm even more intrigued. It's been a very long time since a human has interested me as anything more than sustenance. I will take care of you, show you wonders of the world you never dreamed existed, and will ask for very little in return."

Great, the vampire had a crush, but as long as he was talking, he wasn't biting. "Rafael, I'm overwhelmed by your attentions, but I don't have any clue what you're offering." She forced a smile and looked at him with what she hoped was curiosity.

"At the risk of sounding boastful, my financial assets are quite impressive. With me, you will live a lifestyle few humans could hope to obtain. I have a villa in Sicily, an estate in Wales and a penthouse in New York City. Together we can cruise the oceans on one of my yachts or gaze at the stars from the beach of my private island."

"I've always dreamed of traveling some day, and I can't deny that the thought of not having to work or worry about paying bills is very appealing."

"And there will be other benefits to being my companion, Cassandra. You will experience indescribable ecstasy being my lover." His leer caused her skin to crawl.

"Um, wow." She shuffled on her feet, at a total loss of what to say.

"All I ask of you is to allow me to treat you like the treasure you are and of course drink from you whenever I choose to do so."

"Is that what you meant by asking 'little' of me?" Sandy attempted to keep the revulsion from her tone.

"I'm affording you a tremendous honor, my dear. I'm giving you the opportunity to come with me willingly, but make no mistake, I will have you." He rose from the table. Sandy watched with rising fear as he moved toward her.

"Please, please don't hurt me," she whimpered, slowly backing out of the kitchen.

"You have nowhere to go, Cassandra." In the blink of an eye, he was directly in front of her.

"Help, help!" she managed to cry out before his large hand wrapped around her throat. As if she weighed nothing, he lifted her off the floor. She flailed her arms and legs as best she could, the hopelessness of her situation evident when he had no problem keeping hold of her.

A loud thud sounded behind her. Rafael dropped her back onto her feet and swung her around so her back was against his chest without breaking his grip on her neck. Relief and hope raced through her as Rick and Tony charged into the living room.

"Well, well, if it's not Deckton's finest. I should have guessed that you two would have sniffed out this most delectable human."

"Rafael, I thought we made it crystal clear the last time you came through town that you're not welcome here."

"You and your partner are complete fools, Duggan. Your laws mean nothing to me. I go where I please, take what I want." He punctuated his words by giving Sandy a violent shake.

"Let her go," Tony ordered quietly.

"I'm wondering why you are here." He applied painful pressure underneath Sandy's chin, forcing her head to the side and leaving her no choice but to look up at him before he spoke again. "I will be very disappointed to discover you have been sharing yourself with these two, my dear." What was he talking about? She struggled to breathe. "What reason could you have to be at her home tonight or any night for that matter?"

"She's a citizen who needs our protection. We just happened to be passing by."

"Forgive me if I don't believe you." Rafael let go of Sandy's neck. She gasped but had no chance to get away. Instantly he had a fistful of her hair and Sandy found herself again hoisted off the floor to dangle helplessly in his grip. She wrapped her hands around his wrist and kicked her legs with all of her might.

"Put me down, you bastard!"

Sandy started screaming again, hysteria rising hard and fast. Tony and Rick both hissed and displayed lengthened incisors before lunging forward. Rafael threw her across the room. Her forehead struck the mirror hanging on the wall with such force the glass shattered and stars danced in front of her eyes. She tried to focus on the fight as she reached up and touched the gash above her right eyebrow. The last thing that registered before she fainted was that her house was overrun by vampires.

Rick and Tony easily overpowered Rafael. With one quick twist, Tony separated his head from his shoulders. Rick went to Sandy. Blood ran down the side of her face from the four-inch cut on her forehead. He quickly checked the injury. Luckily there wasn't any glass in the wound, nor was it too deep. Sandy groaned when he carefully picked her up.

"I'm taking her home, Tony."

"Do it, I'll be right behind you."

Rick raced out of the house at the blinding speed of his kind. He understood all too well how Tony had to take the few minutes necessary to incinerate Rafael to keep him from rising again. Rick was furious at himself, at Tony, at the situation in general. They'd been protecting the people of Deckton for generations but couldn't keep their blood mate from being injured?

In mere seconds he had his precious cargo in the safety of their bedroom. After tossing the thick comforter to the end of the bed, Rick carefully laid Sandy on her side in the middle of the king-sized mattress. He lapped gently at the seeping wound on her forehead and almost immediately the bleeding stopped. The healing properties of his saliva would also ward off any type of infection.

"I'm here."

Rick looked up as Tony entered the room, pulling his shirt up over his head. Rick lifted Sandy just enough for Tony to position himself at the head of the bed. He opened a large cut above his heart, and together they moved her until her lips were against the

wound. "Drink," Tony commanded, pressing her into his chest. Sandy moaned and tried to pull away.

"Damn, she's stubborn," Rick remarked as he applied gentle pressure against the back of her head.

"No shit," Tony muttered, draping his arm across her back. "Shh, relax, sweetheart. Taste me, take from me. Let me give you what you need to feel better." His voice was magic itself, deep, compelling and smooth as silk.

Sandy's tongue slowly emerged from her parted her lips. She began to make little sucking noises and her hips moved along Tony's muscular thigh, which was pressed tight between her legs. All of a sudden, relief wasn't all he was feeling. Damn vampire lust, he cursed as he tenderly caressed her back.

"If I could, I'd kill that bastard again for touching her," Rick grumbled.

"Jesus fucking Christ." Tony moaned. "I can feel her wet heat through my jeans."

The intoxicating scent of her arousal perfumed the air. Rick slid his hands under her shirt, hoping to provide comfort and needing to feel her bare skin. The second he made contact, all hell broke loose. Sandy bucked violently. In an effort to still her frantic movements, he attempted to hold her against Tony's leg. Tony added his hands to her hips and drew his foot up on the mattress, lifting Sandy's ass higher. She jerked back from his chest and cried out in abandon while grinding herself mindlessly through the most beautiful orgasm Rick had ever witnessed.

When her body stopped trembling and her head fell back down, Rick carefully moved up along her back. With a few practiced motions, he sealed Tony's cut and kissed him hard on the lips.

"We may not survive having sex with her when she's awake."

"I can think of worse ways to die," Rick answered solemnly. "Now it's my turn to take care of you." Rick offered his neck.

Chapter Four

Sandy came slowly awake. Her head felt foggy and her mouth was as dry as the desert. There was weight pressed along both her sides. She opened her eyes, blinked a couple of times and tried to focus in the dim light of the unfamiliar surroundings. "Ummm..." Warm breath tickled her chin.

Sandy lifted her head off the pillow enough to determine she was wedged between two other bodies. Rick's arm rested across her abdomen. Tony's right leg was entwined with her left one and his bare chest was magnificently displayed. Rick looked like a studly angel, sound asleep with his wavy hair tussled and framing his face. As she glanced from one to the other, the events from her house slammed into her. She shimmied and squirmed, bringing them out of their slumber.

"Whoa, relax, honey, everything's okay. It's me and Tony." Rick propped himself up on one elbow but didn't remove his arm from across her. "How's your head?"

"Fine, I guess," she replied, touching where she had connected with the mirror.

"You should take it easy for a bit, make sure you're not dizzy or anything." Tony rolled onto his side to face her. He reached up and brushed a piece of her hair off her forehead. "That was a nasty wound, sweetheart. Just lie here with us for a bit longer."

"We need to discuss exactly why I'm in your bed, along with a number of other important subjects, don't you think?" Sandy sat upright. "You two left out some very pertinent information when we met."

"It would have been foolhardy for us to reveal our true nature before we determined if we could trust you."

"I guess that makes sense, but I'm wondering if I can trust you two? You lied about who, what you are. I seriously don't understand anything that's happened since Rick

came up to my car at the store, and obviously you guys have been really light on the details." Sandy furrowed her brow.

"Honey, Tony and I will tell you anything you want to know. We realize this is a lot for you to process in such a short time."

"That might be the biggest understatement I've ever heard," she remarked as questions formed at lightning speed. She decided to take them in order of importance. "You're good vampires, right? I mean, I'm safe with you? You're not going to turn me into dinner or anything? Wait a minute, why would you tell me the truth if that was your plan?" She scanned the large bedroom, discouraged as to how far away the door was. As if sensing her unease, Tony and Rick sat up and moved to the farthest edges of the bed.

"We haven't lied to you. Rick and I are in charge of upholding the laws of the vampire segment of Deckton's population, so yes, I would classify us as 'good' vamps."

"Where is Rafael?"

"I killed him, as our law dictates. Who knows how many innocent humans he preyed on outside of Deckton. We made a horrible mistake by letting him leave alive the last time he came through town. Rick and I both have now given you what you needed to heal. I certainly hope you can begin to trust us." All other questions suddenly seemed unimportant.

"You saved my life." Gratitude, relief and emotions far deeper brought tears to her eyes.

"Things weren't as dire as all that, sweetheart," Tony answered quietly.

"I can still thank you," she whispered. Tony's smile warmed her to her toes.

"You're welcome."

"The situation shouldn't have happened in the first place, Sandy. Hopefully someday you'll forgive us."

"For what? Unless you ordered him to come to my house and confess his creepy desire for my fluids, why are you blaming yourselves?"

"We're blood mates. Nothing is more important than your well-being. It's our duty to..."

"Hey, Rick, how about taking it down a notch."

"We fucked up, Tony. She has to understand that we can protect her, will protect her, love and cherish..."

"Seriously, man..."

"Okay, I have absolutely no idea what you're talking about. Didn't we only meet yesterday?"

"Actually, it was the day before yesterday. You slept for almost twenty-four hours."

Sandy's bladder cramped violently at that revelation. "That's probably why a bathroom seems to be where I need to visit at this moment."

"Right through there." Rick tilted his head to the left, indicating a door she hadn't noticed. They both got up and helped her off the bed.

"You're very nice men, I mean vampires."

Rick cupped her chin and leaned in close. "Never doubt that we're men, Sandy." His featherlight, chaste kiss sent her pulse soaring. "We'll be downstairs. Everything you need is already in the bathroom." They took a step back.

Sandy couldn't believe her eyes when she turned on the light. The bathroom was huge and tastefully decorated with sleek stainless steel fixtures, marble countertops and dark cherry cabinetry, but that wasn't what caused her jaw to drop. Arranged on the counter was her shampoo, soap, toothbrush, comb, a small pile of clothes and her tennis shoes. "Unbelievable," she whispered before she went about the business at hand.

A half an hour later she made her way downstairs. Apparently, being vampire police paid very well. Exquisite paintings, intricately carved wood and glass breakfronts displaying gorgeous antiques and two massive brick fireplaces adorned the

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living room. Following the sound of Tony and Rick's cheery voices, Sandy made her way to the kitchen doorway.

"Do you think this is enough food?"

"Let's see, six turkey sandwiches, giant salad, cheese plate, this is enough food for a small army."

"She needs to rebuild her strength. Protein, vegetables, we need fruit. What's in the crisper?"

"What the hell is a crisper?"

"The bottom drawer in the fridge. I think there may be apples or something in there."

"I'm only seeing some hairy grapes and what I think used to be an orange."

"Crap."

"Not my fault. You're the one who loves grocery shopping."

"I can't believe I forgot fruit."

"I can't believe you think I can eat all of this," Sandy commented, her stomach growling in a most unfeminine manner as she eyed the beautiful meal they had prepared and laid out on the table. Rick turned away from the counter, holding silverware and napkins as Tony straightened out of the refrigerator with a bottle of wine. Her mouth began to water, as much due to their state of bare-chestedness as her hunger for actual sustenance. Broad shoulders, sculpted abs, biceps, triceps and other muscles she didn't know the names of filled her field of vision. Thank god they had sweatpants on!

"Some of it is for us too." Rick smiled.

"But vampires can't eat food."

"Come sit down, Sandy." Tony pulled out a chair for her. "Vampire 101 class is about to be in session." They all sat down and Tony filled their glasses. Sandy eagerly loaded her plate and took a huge bite of sandwich.

"Obviously, I have a lot to learn," she admitted as both men dug into their own meals.

"Vampires are human beings who, with the change, have been altered and enhanced with certain gifts. Although not technically immortal, we live for a really long time. Rick is two hundred fifty-four, and I'm three hundred and fiftiesh."

"Three hundred fifty-nine to be exact."

"Thanks for clarifying." Tony rolled his eyes and Sandy tried not to choke on a piece of cheese. "We're nocturnal and, yes, sunlight will burn the shit out of us but only kills the newly changed. When we sleep, our powers and strength are being renewed, so it is a much deeper state of being than human sleep. Our hearts are still beating, we can wake if absolutely necessary and we don't sleep in boxes. We can shift into different forms. We eat food because we enjoy it. Where our mates are concerned, we are protective, loyal and intensely passionate."

"Damn, it's good to be vamp." Rick smirked over at Tony and winked.

"And some of us are smartasses."

The two men laughed and for a moment had eyes only for each other. Sandy was in awe of the emotions she saw pass between them.

"There's the 'mate' word again. I get that you two are together and all, which is great, by the way." She certainly didn't want them to think she was homophobic or anything. "But I'm seriously confused." And severely turned-on, she realized. Thoughts of them making love, their magnificent bodies sweaty with exertion... Was it getting hotter in here? She made a production of refolding her napkin as heat infused her cheeks and warmth tickled between her thighs.

"All of a vampire's senses are enhanced, Sandy. Fidgeting around doesn't hide anything from us," Tony whispered. "We can smell your arousal." She gasped in shock. "I believe honesty and directness are vitally important."

"Me too, but I try not to embarrass the shit out of people."

"Ah, sweetheart, the last thing I want to do is embarrass you." Tony reached over and took her hand. Sandy actually whimpered. How could one touch pebble her nipples and have her pussy creaming?

"I'm trying to explain the way of things between us."

"Please, let's just get there, okay? What have you guys done to me?"

"Vampires need blood to survive, and the giving and receiving of it between mates is an integral part of lovemaking, of the bond. Rick and I have both given you blood."

"Am I a vampire?" She could barely squeak out the question.

"Absolutely not," Rick answered with vehemence, taking her other hand. "The change is a sacred process. It's not only against the law to turn someone without their permission but it takes time to complete."

"You still aren't telling me why, why I'm so, oh hell," she moaned, terrified she was going to come now that they both were touching her.

"We believe that the three of us are blood mates. Your body recognizes it and is calling out to ours. Don't be afraid, honey. It's natural and beautiful, and we're incredibly lucky to have found each other."

"This doesn't feel natural!"

"Being human, it will take a bit of time for you to adjust to the intensity but we're quite able and more than willing to help you." Sandy heard the playfulness in Rick's voice and appreciated his attempt to lessen her distress, but when he started to massage her forearm, she pulled away and stared down at the tabletop.

"You don't understand."

"Talk to us then."

Easier said than done, she thought desperately. Even in her wildest dreams, the potential of being with two men just didn't come up. These poor guys were going to be horribly disappointed. How could she explain her insecurities? If she had her cell, she could call the ex and he could clue them in.

"I'm really bad in bed."

Or she could just blurt it out and see what happened.

"What?"

"Excuse me?"

"Having sex is not something I'm good at. We all have our talents, and doing the nasty is not one of mine. I've adjusted. There's more to life, you know. I suggest we forget the whole 'mate' thing and go on with our lives as they were a few days ago." They stared at her as if she were crazy. Well, they needed to buck up and deal with the truth.

"You're fucking kidding, right?" For some strange reason, Tony sounded angry.
"Why would you think such a ridiculous thing?"

"I may have all the right parts in the right places, but I was able to chase away the only man I've ever been with by my lack of skill in that department. Not like you'd know or anything, but I'm probably the least passionate person on the planet. I've tried, it just doesn't work for me."

Chapter Five

Is she serious?

Most definitely, look at her. Tony studied Sandy with concern.

Sandy's fingers were so tightly clenched together her knuckles were white and anxiety radiated from her in waves. What idiot human male had convinced their mate she was anything less than the most desirable woman on the planet? Dressed in the tight, skimpy t-shirt and clingy sweats they had selected, she was a vision of loveliness. Due to their conscious decision not to bring her underwear, Sandy's nipples were clearly visible through the thin fabric, and Tony would bet his bottom dollar the fleece between her thighs was damp with her juices.

I'm going to have a ball choking the life out of the bastard who made her feel this way. Rick's expression darkened.

No, you're not. Sandy's sexual disappointments are proof positive of her being our mate. She's been waiting for us to show her what passion is all about.

Then let's get to it, old man. Our woman needs our help.

"Sweetheart, your sexuality is off the charts."

"And you say this based on what exactly?"

"Your pussy grinding against my leg the moment Rick touched your skin. I swear the heat scorched me through my jeans. Your orgasm was a sight to behold."

Rick shot Tony an angry glare when Sandy gasped loudly.

That was subtle.

It was the truth. We can't let her waste another second worrying that she is undesirable or sexually incapable.

"You you came apart in our arms as we took care of you. It was perfection."

"I was dreaming."

"No, you weren't... Remember." Sandy's eyes fluttered closed. Her breasts began to rise and fall as her breath quickened.

"You were lying on top of me, your amazingly sexy and talented mouth sucking gently on my chest, taking what I offered to heal your wound. Rick slid his hand under your shirt. You went off like a firecracker." Tony fought to control a groan of appreciation as he watched her place one finger against her lips and lay her other hand against her abdomen. He was completely caught off guard, however, when her eyes snapped open, bright and focused.

"Don't use your freaky vampire mind tricks on me, Tony."

"I did nothing more than help open your mind to memories of real events."

"So you say." The distrust was obvious in her tone. "How will I ever know what thoughts are mine and what ones you're planting in my head?"

"Do we have the ability to affect a human's memories? Yes. There are times it's necessary for their protection and our own but, sweetheart, we want to be with you, to learn everything about you. If we messed with your head, wouldn't it defeat our purpose?" Encouraged by the slight relaxation of her upper body, Tony smiled. "For example, are you a fan of steamy summer days or cuddly winter nights? What was your favorite subject in school? Do you prefer roses or daisies, or are you allergic? What are your favorite movies, TV shows and books? Scrambled eggs or over easy?" He reached out and trailed a finger along her jawline. He didn't miss it when she quickly glanced at Rick before making eye contact with him.

"Okay, I appreciate you guys wanting more than a quick bounce on the mattress, I really do, and I'm flattered, but you have to listen to me. This entire situation is way out of my league." She quickly grabbed her plate and took it to the sink. "You two, sitting here half-naked, talking about suckling and writhing and all could make a rock horny.

Believe me, I wish I was the woman you think I am, your blood mate, but I'm not." Her expression of longing and sadness tugged at his heart. Tony went to her.

He wrapped one arm around her back, used his other hand to cradle her head and pulled her firmly into his embrace. Uncertainty, passion and innocence all played across her expressive face as heat singed every part of his body where they touched.

"You want too much," she whispered, laying her head in the crook of his neck. "I can't..." Her lips fluttered against his skin. "I don't know how to..." She nibbled the sensitive spot just above his collarbone. "It's not right how I want you, him, both of you..." When she shifted restlessly against his erection, Tony turned them in the blink of an eye so he rested against the counter with Sandy leaning fully against him.

Her hands slowly slid up his chest to wrap around his neck, and he couldn't wait another second to kiss her. He lowered his head slowly, allowing her ample time to pull away but knowing she wouldn't. Their lips met and he was lost. Deep in his mind, there were brief thoughts of finesse and tenderness, but they were lost on a wave of uncontrollable lust. She encouraged his possession by stroking, parrying and finally sucking gently on his tongue. He devoured her, couldn't get enough. She was the sweetest, most-heavenly treat he'd ever tasted.

Tony ran his hands down her back, stopping just above the swell of her bottom. On the trip back he rolled her t-shirt upward, shifting to allow her breasts to spill free before crushing her back against his chest. Skin to skin, each time her pebbled nipples rubbed along his heated flesh, desire shot straight to his cock. He flexed his hips forward, and Sandy responded with a moan and little wiggle of her own. No further encouragement was required.

Without breaking their kiss, he tore the waistband of her sweats and let the pieces drop. Cradling both cheeks of her ass, he hoisted her up off the floor. She squealed and wrapped her legs around his waist. Tony easily steadied her with one hand as his other caressed slowly toward her core. Warm cream dampened her thigh and coated her pussy lips. He touched and teased the delicate folds and traced circles around her

entrance. Sandy broke the kiss, wrapped her arms and legs more tightly and started undulating against his cock. She whimpered and nuzzled his neck as her movements became almost frantic.

"Sweetheart, please let me get these fucking pants off." He closed his eyes and gritted his teeth in frustration as once again Sandy's wet heat made contact with fabric instead of his naked dick.

"No...can't wait...going to..." He plunged two fingers deep into her body and she went off like a rocket, crying out his name and riding his hand in glorious sexual abandon. It was heaven and hell all wrapped into one. The elation for bringing his mate pleasure warred with the now-painful throbbing in his groin.

Feel this.

A guttural moan came from across the room a second before Rick's thoughts and emotions slammed into him. The love, protectiveness and sense of joy he was experiencing were astounding, but it was the catastrophic level of lust and desire to participate, however, that had Tony praying he didn't blow in his pants.

"I can't believe that just happened." Sandy's breath tickled the side of his neck then her body tensed. "Is Rick still sitting at the table?" she asked hesitantly.

"He is, and you have rendered him speechless, sweetheart." Tony chuckled. Sandy lifted her head. Her eyes were still dark with passion.

"I know I should be horrified," she hesitated, raising her eyebrow and running her tongue along her lower lip, "but it's kind of turning me on."

"I'm glad to hear that because we're about to go upstairs and do this right." Doubt crossed her features and Tony cringed at his poor choice of words. He cupped her cheek. "Let me rephrase." He smiled and kissed the tip of her nose. "We want to make love to you, with you, together." Sandy pouted her lips but there was playfulness in her eyes.

"At least this time I was fully conscious." Sandy's legs slid down from his hips.

"A definite plus." Tony laughed, scooping behind her knees, lifting her off the floor to hold her close. "But the next time you come, my dick will be an active participant."

Sandy shivered at his decadent promise. Rubbing against his impressive erection while his fingers played her like a fiddle had been more intense than any sexual experience in her life, but she wanted—no, needed—more. Her mouth actually watered at the thought of being with these two men. Maybe what they said was true, they were connected somehow, destined to be with each other. As her body pulsed with anticipation, it seemed a logical explanation for her decreased levels of self-doubt and embarrassment. Who was she to question a couple of hundreds-years-old vampires? A few days ago, life was regular, normal, boring. Tonight was filled with new realities and possibilities. Who knew what tomorrow would bring?

"Just remember, I was painfully honest regarding my skill level." She smiled shyly first at Tony before turning toward Rick, who was now standing next to them. "But I'm game if you are."

Rick flashed his killer grin as he lowered his head. Sandy eagerly reached out and pulled him down to her lips. He laid one hand on her thigh and gently cupped her breast with the other. His kiss was tentative, as were his hands. Hers were not. She grabbed a handful of his hair as she guided his fingers to play with her nipple. He pinched the hardened tip, and when she whimpered with pleasure, his tongue slid between her parted lips.

Unlike Tony, who had taken command and control of their passion, Rick coaxed and teased, allowed her to set the pace. Sandy's confidence increased with each touch and taste. When she tried to shimmy closer to Rick, Tony's arms flexed, reminding her she was held by one man while she made out with another!

What was a girl to do? Still kissing Rick, she let go of his hair and wrapped her arm around Tony's neck, pulling them all more tightly together. She stroked his skin as he dropped kisses on the top of her head.

"I swear to God we are going to leave this kitchen." Tony's strained words had her laughing against Rick's lips.

"Aren't you kind of in charge of that?" she asked playfully, looking down at the floor and swinging her legs that dangled over his arm.

"Indeed I am," he agreed quickly. "Upstairs, Rick, now."

"I think I could get used to this mode of transportation." She giggled as Tony took the stairs two at a time. His eagerness was endearing, thrilling and wildly arousing. Her confidence increased with every step he took.

"If it makes you happy, we'll take turns carrying you everywhere you want to go, honey." Rick laughed as they entered the bedroom.

"An interesting concept but kind of problematic in public though."

"Then we will only use our very private way of transportation to get you to where we can make love." Tony set her gently on the bed. In a flash, both men were gloriously naked and crawling onto the mattress. They knelt at her feet and began caressing up her legs. She couldn't help but stare at their magnificent, fully aroused cocks. Desirability and a sense of pure feminine power thrummed though her system, raising goose bumps and sending her heart racing. She reached out, but Rick caught both her hands in his and kissed her fingertips.

"Lie back, Sandy," Rick coaxed, sliding up along her side as he guided her down onto the pillows. "Hold on here." He placed her arms above her head and wrapped her fingers around the wooden spindles of the headboard.

"But I want to touch you," she whimpered.

"Right now, honey, just feel." Warm lips tickled down her neck to the swell of her breast. Hands ran along her ribs, across her tummy, over her hips. Tony's tongue glided up her inner thigh as Rick's swirled around her nipple. She closed her eyes and rode on wave after wave of pleasure. Every nerve was on fire. Holding tightly to the headboard, she writhed beneath their skilled attentions, trying to move her body in a way that

would bring their lips in better contact with her neediest parts. When she spread her thighs wide, Tony's hands slid beneath her ass.

"That's it, sweetheart. Open for me."

Sandy cried out and her back came up off the mattress at the first sweep of his tongue along her slit. Rick instantly began to suck one breast while fondling the other. Both men expertly worshipped her with the perfect combination of tender strokes and aggressive, hungry caresses. Unable to focus on any one sensation, she gave herself up to the beauty of being loved so completely. Her body shook with the need to climax. She pressed herself against Tony's mouth and dropped her hands to clutch Rick's head to her chest.

"No." The word was growled against her cunt. Her eyes snapped open and she struggled to focus as they pulled away. Why were they stopping? Had she done something wrong? Oh God, leave it to her to mess up the best sex ever.

"I-I'm s-sorry," she stuttered. "I t-told you I'm not very good at this..." She warily watched Tony come up her body. He braced himself on his hands at either side of her head. His lips were damp from her juices. His hair was wildly mussed. His eyes were a freaky shade of red. He was the hottest thing she'd ever seen.

"What you're doing is making me so goddamn horny I almost came on the sheets, sweetheart." She gasped as Tony's cock head nudged her pussy. "And I told you where I'd be the next time you got off." Relief coursed through her as she grabbed on to his arms.

"After tonight you'll understand how perfect we are together." Rick now knelt on the end of the bed and wrapped his hands around her ankles, keeping her legs spread wide. Tony rose up on his arms and flexed his hips.

"Wait, we need a condom." Sandy groaned, fighting the urge to impale herself.

"Vampires can't give or get human diseases." Tony's arms shook beneath her grasp.

"Pregnancy?" She curled her toes and wiggled her legs, testing Rick's grip.

"Humans and vampires can't conceive but there are legends of..." A loud slap coincided with Tony's hips flinching forward.

"Enough."

"Not nearly," Sandy murmured, fascinated as a sexy moan rumbled from Tony as he briefly closed his eyes. This was a scenario she wouldn't have imagined in her wildest dreams. Her breathing became labored.

"What's wrong, honey?" Rick asked, leaning over Tony's shoulder and looking down at her with obvious concern.

"You're going to make love to him when he makes love to me."

"Not if it upsets you."

Sandy knew without a doubt he meant what he said. They wouldn't do anything that she wasn't comfortable with. They both held perfectly still.

"Not upset," she panted, attempting to calm her rising lust so as not to orgasm at the mere thought. "Just never considered..."

Ever so slowly, Tony began to move. She gasped as his cock stretched and filled her needy pussy. "Oh god, yes." She tilted her hips in an effort to take him deeper.

"So fucking tight. I don't want to hurt you." Perspiration dotted his forehead.

"You're gonna kill me with kindness," she ground out, making sure to use her fingernails when she tightened her grip on his arms. "Rick, let go of my legs so I can move, damn it!"

"Go for it, honey." Rick chuckled.

"Please, Tony, I won't break." Sandy hooked her heals around his thighs. "Fuck me hard, fast, don't hold back. I want all of you. God, I'm so horny." Wow, did I really say that out loud? She was given no time to ponder her newfound boldness. Tony was a very good direction follower.

In one forceful thrust, he was fully seated with his balls resting against her ass. He scooped under her arms, laid his head in the crook of her neck and proceeded to fuck

her into near-mindless oblivion. She clawed at his back and raised her ankles to lock them around his waist. Their combined grunts and groans escalated in volume. The bed shook and banged against the wall.

"Yes, yes," Tony chanted while sucking and licking her neck.

"Time for me to play too," Rick announced as his large hand wrapped around her entwined ankles. "Hold still for a sec."

"You're kidding, right?" Her hips kept moving.

"Tony appreciates my skill of preparation." Sandy appreciated when Rick's warm, damp cock tickled the sole of her foot. "Our lube of choice," a popping noise sounded, "has a very interesting warming quality."

Tony's head jerked up off her neck and he shoved backward. Sandy grabbed on to his thighs, refusing to allow him to leave her.

"You're a fucking master. Just hurry the hell up."

Sandy squealed when he swiveled his hips. Visions of Rick stretching the little rosette, pumping his fingers in and out, preparing Tony's ass to be fucked, sent her over the edge.

"Ah shit, *now*, Rick," Tony cried out. Rick grasped her ankles again and pounded Tony impossibly, wonderfully deeper with each driving thrust. Every muscle in her body clenched with the power of her orgasm. This was ecstasy, euphoria, perfection. She thrashed and writhed as best she could beneath the glorious weight of her lovers.

As the shudders of release calmed to mere flutters and her limbs began to feel as if they'd turned to jelly, Sandy closed her eyes, sighed and entertained the thought of drifting off into a satiated sleep.

"Look at me."

She did as instructed and shockingly, wasn't frightened by what she saw. Tony's fangs were fully extended and his expression was dark with passion. It was easy to read the barely restrained lust in his glowing eyes, but so much more shone forth. She knew

what he wanted. He was vampire. He'd explained how this was a natural part of making love for them, and she wanted to experience everything. Her body sprang again to life and Sandy freely offered her neck.

The exquisite pleasure-pain of his teeth piercing her skin in no way prepared her for the maelstrom of sensations that flowed through her. Amazingly, she felt Rick's cock in Tony's ass and experienced being fucked by Tony from his point of view. She instantly understood their love and devotion to each other. They had been partners for hundreds of years. But it was the intensity of their emotions toward her, their combined certainty she was their blood mate that ignited both her body and soul. Another searing climax raced through her system as Tony and Rick pounded out their simultaneous release.

Chapter Six

"So, you guys left some things out during vampire class earlier, didn't you?" Sandy snuggled against Rick's side after he propped himself up against the pillows.

"We had planned to tell you more, honey, but it became obvious our first order of business was proving how sexy you are and how much we want to be with you." Rick stroked her hair. "Please don't be angry."

"Oh no, I'm not mad," she said, laying her hand against his chest and gazing up into his worried eyes. "It was the most amazing experience. I was actually feeling what you and Tony were." Heat infused her cheeks at the memory. "How can that happen?"

"Tony's a better teacher than I am, in some things that is," he raised an eyebrow and grinned seductively, "but I'll be happy to tell you what I know on the subject."

"Where is he, by the way?"

"When you dozed off, we flipped a coin to see who would make the nightly rounds in town. As you can see, I won the toss." He kissed her on the forehead.

Sandy tilted her chin, inviting more. Rick cupped the back of her head and his mouth captured hers. Gentle, tender nips and tastes quickly turned into lusty, decadent tongue play. All too soon for her liking, Sandy was forced to pull away in order to gasp for some much-needed air. Good lord, this man was sex on a stick.

"We're getting off track." She giggled, resting her head on his chest.

"Not my fault, honey."

"Sorry," she replied without a hint of regret while idly tracing patterns along his bare chest.

"Uh-huh." He chuckled, covering her hand with his and holding it still. "Keep doing that and I won't be able to form a coherent sentence."

"I promise to behave. Talk to me."

"Blood mates link telepathically. You have taken blood from both Tony and me. When he drank from you, you were able to be in his mind, to feel what he was feeling, hear what he was thinking. It's a physiological event that confirms the bond and gets stronger over time."

"Isn't that kind of intrusive?"

"You learn to control it. It's comforting to feel the connection but you don't always have to fully open your mind to the other person. As you discovered, it's a nifty addition to making love." Sandy snickered at his gift for the understatement.

"But when Tony bit me, I could feel both of you."

"I, of course, was linked to him as we made love. Your ability to experience both our sensations further proves we are blood mates."

"Can I call Tony with my brain now?" Giddy with excitement at the possibility, Sandy bounced into a crossed-legged sitting position and faced Rick. Remembering her state of nakedness, she started to pull the sheet around her. Rick removed the fabric from her fingers.

"Please don't. Your body is so beautiful. I love looking at you." She met his gaze, and for first time in her life felt completely comfortable in her own skin.

"So, what do I do?"

"Think of him, picture him and send out your thoughts."

"Are you in his head?"

"Nope, it's all on you, honey."

Sandy closed her eyes and blew out a calming breath. She had no problem conjuring up images of Tony's flowing hair, laughing eyes, sculpted muscles and fully aroused cock.

Sandy? His voice spoke to her mind.

Oh my god, it works!

"This is fucking crazy, Rick. I can hear him in my head!" She grabbed on to his thighs and laughed.

Hey, Tony, listen to me doing freaky mind shit. Sooooo, what are you up to? How's work going? His rumbling laughter caressed her from the inside out.

Luckily, I wasn't in the middle of anything too important, what with you tantalizing me with your nakedness and thoughts of my dick.

You can see me?

I can see through your eyes, feel what you're feeling. Your emotions are as intoxicating as any drug, not to mention, I greatly appreciate your somewhat romanticized image of me.

Hey, Rick told me to picture you.

I'm humbled you see me in such a way. More than his words, she literally felt his appreciation. This was communication in a way that encompassed every sense. He was right. It was a high unlike anything she'd ever experienced and she wanted more. Thoughts of pleasuring Rick, of him biting her, of the three of them being connected in such an intimate way set her pussy on fire.

When are you coming home? She leaned over and traced her tongue from Rick's collarbone down to one taut nipple. Ever so carefully she captured it between her teeth. As she played with the tiny nub, her hand slid down his hip.

Dear god in heaven, sweetheart, as soon as I can. Sandy grabbed on to the base of Rick's cock. After a gentle squeeze, she began drawing her hand up and down.

"Fuck yes, that feels incredible." She shimmied down to kiss along his tummy, around his bellybutton and at the little dip at the crook of his thigh. His penis swelled and twitched beneath her fingers.

"Take me in your mouth. Let me feel your gorgeous lips wrapped around my dick, honey."

Taste him, Sandy. Lick his cock head.

She tentatively ran her tongue across the swollen head. Rick groaned out loud as Tony moaned in her mind. Cream seeped from her pussy and her clit throbbed. Looking up Rick's body to meet his half-closed eyes, she smiled while tasting the precum dampening his crown.

"Tony's making suggestions."

"Tell him to shut up and let you concentrate."

Rick's afraid you're distracting me.

But I'm not, am I? Let me link with him, let him feel how your cunt is on fire and your mouth is watering.

Do it. Rick's hips jerked. His fingers speared through her hair and his breathing sounded labored.

Sandy proceeded to focus all of her attention on Rick's waiting cock. She marveled at the contrast of soft skin over steely hardness as she stroked his length. Her blowjob experience was limited at best, but she hoped her eagerness to worship the impressive organ would outweigh any lack of finesse. She took him into her mouth. He tasted spicy and exotic. She sucked and teased over and around the crown until he applied gentle pressure on the sides of her head. Relaxing her muscles, she slid down as far as possible, lingered and savored being filled to capacity before licking and sucking her way back up.

"Ah, fuck yes, just like that."

Again, take him all the way again.

"Your tongue is magic, honey, yeah, right there."

Play with his balls too.

With Rick in her mouth and Tony in her mind, Sandy soared with the knowledge she was pleasuring them both. Harder, faster, deeper, she couldn't get enough of his cock and she made sure to telegraph her rising need to Tony. She let go of Rick's balls and reached between her legs to rub her clit. Alternating strumming the hardened nub and plunging her fingers into her weeping cunt had her body flying toward release.

Wait! Ride him, fuck him, let him bite you while you come on his cock. Then we'll all be completely together, sweetheart, please.

"Up here now, Sandy," Rick ordered.

She bounced up, straddled his hips and quickly, almost desperately, impaled herself. Rick's lips crashed down on hers as she ground against his pelvis. Her inner muscles started to clenched and throb. Rick fisted a hand in her hair. When the first electric jolts of orgasm began, his mouth went from her lips to her neck. He pierced her skin.

Everything happened at once. Her body went up in flames. Warm cum pulsed into her pussy. Both Rick and Tony's emotions pounded into her with such intensity it was impossible to know whose thoughts belonged to whom. She screamed their names out loud while welcoming them into her mind and soul. Fulfilled, satiated, happier than she'd ever been, Sandy collapsed onto Rick's chest and held him close.

You have one mighty fine ass, sweetheart. Sandy smiled and wiggled her bum, being careful not to come off Rick's cock, which was still gloriously hard.

Wait a minute. I'm not looking at my ass and Rick can't see my ass from his current position, so how can you?

"Freaky vampire tricks?" Tony's warm hands cupped her rear cheeks, causing her to squeal with surprise. "As if I could stay away another second. Right now, I don't give a shit if the entire town becomes overrun with misbehaving nonhumans."

"Nice attitude for a cop." She chuckled.

"A huge perk of being the only enforcers in the area is that we answer no one but each other." Shivers ran up her spine as Tony's fingers dipped into her crack. "Hey, Rick, you have a problem with me ducking out of patrol early?" "Nah, you can just work longer tomorrow." His grip around Sandy's middle tightened. "Or better yet, how about you do all the policing from now on so I can stay home and take care of Sandy?"

"That doesn't seem very fair."

"Not to mention I'm perfectly capable of taking care of myself."

"Really?"

"Yes, really. I don't need a man or men or vampires, for that matter, to see to my well-being. I'm more than financially secure." Sandy's breath hitched when Tony spread her open and touched her anus with a dampened fingertip, but she struggled on to make her point. "For your information, I *own* the house next door to you and work part-time because I enjoy it, not because it's necessary." She lifted her head and tried to turn to look over her shoulder but Rick stopped her by anchoring his hand in her hair.

"I think we're having a miscommunication, honey. We were referring to taking care of you in a more carnal sort of way."

"Oh," she mumbled as heat infused her face.

"But not to worry, Tony and I are far from being economically challenged. He does have a tendency to err on the side of caution when it comes to investments, however. Do you play the stock market?"

"I can't fucking believe you two are having this conversation, any conversation at this particular moment!" Sandy couldn't help laughing at Tony's pained tone of voice and Rick's expression of devilish playfulness.

"There was something else you wanted to do, old man?"

"Yeah, what exactly is going on back there?" Sandy wiggled her ass in blatant invitation to Tony's skilled finger.

"I'm going to have my hands full dealing with the two of you, aren't I?"

"God, I hope so." They chuckled in unison.

About the Author

Tessie Bradford lives in Michigan with her husband of twenty-two years, two rescued pit bulls, a geriatric cat and a freakishly personality-filled parrot fish named Fred. When her youngest went off to college, she knew the time was right to pursue her passion for writing with the same fervor that her characters pursue their passion for each other.

Tessie welcomes comments from readers. You can find her website and email address on her <u>author bio page</u> at <u>www.ellorascave.com</u>.

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