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*Ménage Amour*

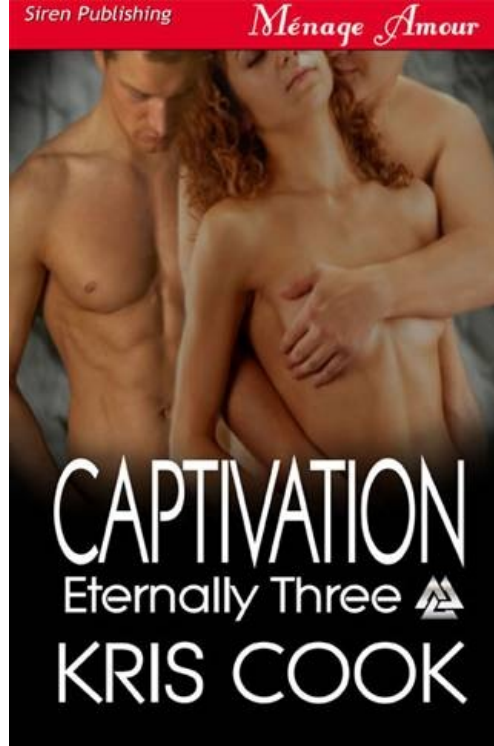


# CAPTIVATION

Eternally Three 

# KRIS COOK





## Eternally Three 2

### Captivation

Though tripling is necessary for immortals to survive, warrior angel Kronos doesn't want to share Eve Rousseau. When she slips away undetected, his guilt multiplies. He swears to find her before it's too late.

Eve's rescue from a band of demons ends in captivity. The immortal warriors say it's necessary for her safety, but she doubts their motives.

Jinn commander Nash is rewarded for rescuing Eve from the claws of the monsters. He's assigned to identify which two immortals can activate her dormant bloodline magic. But being near her ignites something inside him that he doesn't understand and can't snuff out. All he can think about is bending her to his will and providing her with pleasure.

Eve wants nothing to do with the invisible world, including Nash and Kronos. Will she fall victim to the evil pursuing her, or will she finally surrender to love?

**Genre:** Ménage a Trois/Quatre/BDSM/Paranormal

**Length:** 63,862 words

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#### *Eternally Three 2*

Kris Cook

### MENAGE AMOUR



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## **A SIREN PUBLISHING BOOK**

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CAPTIVATION

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With deep gratitude,

Kris Cook

## **DEDICATION**

To my Wednesday night chat regulars: Ali, Bonnie, Heather, Janey, Michelle, Stella, Tara, & Tina.

To cover artist, Jinger.

To Alison at Siren.

To the ones who believe in me and cheer me on: Al, Angelina, Steve, Phillip, Juanita & Lalo, Mike & Chuck, David & Bert, Jay, Libby & John, Eric & Randy, Mike & Chuck, Jim & Michael, Mike & Michael, Ty & Michael – (too many *Mikes*, I know. LOL!).

To my author friends: Nikki Duncan and Candace Havens.

To the members of North Texas Romance Writers of America.

To my author-mentor buddies: Shayla Black and Melissa Schroeder.

And to Stephen.

# CAPTIVATION

*Eternally Three 2*

KRIS COOK

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Chapter 1

*A month ago, I learned from the bloodline genealogical pages in the book that our mother had a sister that neither Micki nor I ever knew. Our aunt is dead. But she had a daughter. I found her with the help of the book. She'd been living on the streets in Los Angeles. She hadn't eaten in several days. She was only three when her mother died. No siblings. I'm so glad I had Micki growing up. I can't imagine how my cousin survived.*

*David agreed to place her under the Alliance's protection.*

*She's only a year younger than Micki, but she, too, will die unless I can figure out how to fix the Bloodline's genetic time bomb.*

*I can't believe that I'm tired of sex, but I am.*

Eric's Flash Drive: day 55—entry 6

\* \* \* \*

Eve Rousseau ran fast, looking over her shoulder. Her heart punched her ribs like a boxer. Her lungs nearly sawed out of her chest.

No place to go. Nowhere safe.

Still, she ran. No way in hell was she simply going to give up and die.

A block back she spotted the three strangers in dark trenchcoats, all male, who had been tailing her for the past ten minutes. When they entered the lit area under a lamppost, the tallest nodded toward her and pointed. She'd been foolish to think that wearing a large overcoat and tucking her distinctive red hair into a cap would be camouflage enough to elude these creatures. Even from this distance, she swore the tall guy wore an evil grin. Then the trio sped up, their gaits becoming sprints.

She whirled forward and ran harder. Though they looked normal enough, she doubted they were.

Frantic for a policeman, a crowd, or an escape, Eve scanned the street but found it empty. Regretfully, this part of the city shut down much earlier than downtown, where, until three nights ago, she'd been staying for the past two months.

Eve longed for the room she shared with her roommate, Mava, but she'd left it back at the nightclub, Zone Three, in her rush to escape that arrogant prick David.

*And Kronos.*

Part of her wished Kro was by her side now. She'd been enjoying his company for the past couple of months. His humor and kindness always made her weak in the knees. At first, it had been fun and games. His sexual skills had taken her to heights of pleasure again and again, and with his gentleness and caring, he'd begun to peel away the fortress around her heart. And she'd been terrifyingly close to letting him.

With Kro beside her, she'd always felt safe, but he worked for David, just like the men following her. She didn't want anything to do with David—the icy control freak—or his secrets. And knowing what she knew now, Eve would never feel safe with Kronos again.

The slap of the men's boots on the pavement behind her spiked her adrenaline. They were getting closer.

*Oh God!*

Pushing her fatigue aside, Eve ran faster.

Ahead, an all-night diner's sign burned like a promising light at the end of a long, dark tunnel: *OPEN*. She darted toward her only chance at safety.

When she ran through the diner's glass door, the bell above jingled. Panting, she slammed the door and twisted the silver knob, locking it, a poor deterrent given what these guys were capable of, but her only available option. She killed the lights on the neon sign by pulling its chain and hoped like hell David's thugs wouldn't find her.

Shaking, she turned. The décor was a throwback to mid-century design. Red laminate tables and matching red vinyl chairs, all with chrome legs, filled the space. The jukebox in the far corner of the diner twanged with a country ballad. The place smelled of bacon and eggs, just like her childhood memories of Aunt Penny's kitchen.

Feeling dark stares on her, Eve looked back through the glass to the street. The three men no longer ran but made a beeline toward her almost lazily, as if they knew they had her cornered. Cold settled deep under her skin.

"Well, don't stand there by the door, hon. Sit anywhere you like," a lyrical voice wafted her way.

Thank God she wasn't alone.

Eve tossed a glance over her shoulder at the woman pouring coffee for the place's only customers, an elderly couple. The plastic tag pinned to her uniform gave her name: *Nancy*.

*Please, God, let there be a muscled cook with a gun in the back!*

"Call the police!" Eve shouted.

The woman's eyes widened, and the couple turned their gaze to her, their faces revealing concern.

Nancy tilted her head. "Honey, what's wrong?"

"Everything. Please, call nine-one-one. Three very big men are chasing me. Call the police now!"

Eve moved away from the entrance and looked back through the glass. Her assailants now stood glaring in the middle of the street, like circling vultures ready for a dinner from a rotting carcass yet too cautious to swoop in for the meal. Had the men decided against pursuing since there would be witnesses?

Suddenly, a white utility van pulled up between the diner and the thugs, blocking them from her sight. On the side of the vehicle *Grafton Cleaning Service*, along with a phone number, was written in blood red letters. She felt hope rush in. More witnesses. Thank God.

She waited to see who might exit the van, but the passenger's door remained closed. Squinting to see the driver, she detected dark hair. Nothing else. Whoever sat behind the wheel didn't immediately leave the vehicle. Would the trio rip the driver to shreds once out of the van?

"Oh God! No!"

"Sweetie, I don't see any men chasing you. Are you hurt?" Nancy asked. "Bump your head maybe?"

Instead of turning to the woman, Eve kept her gaze fixed on the danger just outside the glass door. They looked like ordinary guys, but she suspected they weren't. "No! I swear, there are men following me who want to hurt me. They're outside right now!"

Suddenly, the smell of sulfur filled her nose.

"Wrong, bloodliner." The speaker's voice came from behind her. Inside the diner.

"How the hell did you get in here?" Eve whirled and gasped, trying to swallow down a double dose of fear.

Somehow, the creatures who had been following her had gotten inside the diner, despite the fact she'd locked the door—and that they'd never come near it. She thought about running to the van, asking the driver to hit the gas and provide her escape, but before she could act a man's hand clamped down on her shoulder.

Bringing her knee to the asshole's groin, she lost her footing when he shoved her to the ground before she could connect. Her back hit the tiled floor with a thud. Sharp pain shot through her spine. Eve bit her lip to hold back the tears. The son-of-a-bitch wouldn't see her cry.

She stared up at her assailant who was standing and glaring down at her. The creep was as tall as a giant and built like a jagged boulder, and his face looked like a block of cold granite. His nose spread across his mug like a mountain, and a wide purple scar trailed from his ear to his lips, but the strangest of all his features were his eyes: no irises or whites, only empty black. She turned to take in the other two shorter thugs and found the same dark, evil orbs.

"The police are on their way already," she lied. "Nancy just called them."

"Is that right, Nancy?" The man's voice sounded like buzz saws on a chalkboard.

"No, I didn't call the police. No time," the waitress stated flatly.

When Eve looked at Nancy's slackened face, she knew why. Somehow, the men—correction, *monsters*—had hypnotized her. The old couple, too.

Eve rolled to her side to try to get to her feet.

"Still some fight left in that morsel," the shortest man mocked, nodding at her.

All three held a long sword in one hand and a menacing pistol in the other.

Both of scar-face's weapons were pointed at her.

She had to keep him talking, arguing, whatever. If she couldn't... well, she didn't want to think about it.

"You're not taking me back to David."

The short man laughed. "Isn't David the one who put that mark on your face, Irkon?"

"Yes. Goddamn bastard," he spat.

So they weren't working for David. In fact, they sounded like his enemies. Her mind whirled. Did they think he was her employer?

"Hey, I'm no friend of David, either."

"Is that why you lived under his roof for the past several weeks? Don't lie to me, bitch. David's not the type to be a sugar daddy to someone without fringe

benefits." Irkon took a menacing step towards Eve; one more and he'd be on top of her. "Tell me, did he like bending you over and shoving his dick up your ass?"

Eve clenched her fists, fighting to keep her tone free of fear and anger. "David never touched me, and I wouldn't have let him."

"You're telling me that he gave you a free ride?" Irkon's mouth twisted into a hideous smile. "Impossible. That Alliance fucker always has an angle."

Eve agreed. She'd met a man named Eric several months ago who claimed to be her cousin. He'd introduced her to David, who'd offered her room and board at his nightclub.

Zone Three's customers had specific sexual tastes, running to the multiple partner variety. At first she'd thought David wanted her to use her body for the rent. She'd played up her flirtatious side in order to get a hot meal and a soft bed. If he'd ever tried to press her for more, she would've taken off. But after a few weeks of his apparent indifference toward her, she'd let herself believe that the owner of Zone Three didn't require anything from her in exchange for lodging. For the first time in her life, she'd let her guard down and felt safe and protected.

Those mistakes might be her death. If she survived tonight, she'd never again be so stupid.

"Yes, I took the handout. Who wouldn't? But I'm no friend of David. I owe that asshole nothing."

Irkon laughed. "You're a pistol, bloodliner."

*He called me that before. Bloodliner. What does that mean?*

"If you want to get back at David, maybe I can help. I know how to get past the bruisers surrounding his place."

Irkon tilted his head. He looked intrigued.

She continued, her gut unclenching in hope. "Do we have a deal?"

"Okay, human. You tell me what you know, and we'll let you go."

She doubted Irkon would release her voluntarily, but the secret entrance she would lead them to always had massive Zone Three bouncers guarding it. Most were Kro's buddies. They could ensure this bastard stuck to his end of the bargain.

"There's a door in a building two blocks south from Zone Three. It leads to a tunnel. You'll need me to show you where."

"A waste. We already know about that. I suppose you thought you could walk us right up to those fuckers and you could get away. Nice try. Not too stupid for a human female."

Her heart sunk.

"Enough of this stalling."

"Wait! I know more."

"No. I've got some special treatment planned for you. You'll be screaming to return to Zone Three and your angels. But I won't let them save you." He holstered his gun, keeping his sword pointed at her, and then he unbuttoned his pants with an ugly smile. "I'm gonna rip your body apart from the inside out."

Icy fear pounded Eve. She tried to push it aside and kick at him. But suddenly she couldn't move; her legs felt cemented to the floor. *No, not just my legs, my whole body.*

"What have you done to me?"

"A little spell. I'd like to taste you for myself."

*Some sort of magic?* The whole world had gone nuts, and now she was slipping into insanity along with it.

She stifled a scream of terror as the bastard squatted down on top of her, his ass pressed against her denim-covered thighs.

"Let's see your pretty red locks." He removed her cap then threaded his fingers through her hair. "Does the carpet match the drapes?"

She wriggled under his weight. "Fuck off!"

Smiling, he reached for her top and ripped it open, sending its buttons spilling to the floor.

Cold air hit her skin. *Shit!* Her heart chugged faster and faster. Fear tingled across her body.

"Touch me and you'll regret it."

"Really?" He smiled at her wickedly and cupped each of her breasts. His fingers seared her even through the bra. "This how those fucking do-gooders touched you?"

The asshole's hands on her chest made her skin crawl, and she dreaded what was likely to come. Still, a combination of cold air and insistent fingers had her nipples beading against her will.

"She feels nice, guys. We can all have some fun with this one before we take her to the Master." He grabbed the bra's cups and pulled hard.

Her back lifted off the floor, but the paralysis remained. He pulled his hand back and positioned the sword's tip at her shoulder.

*This is it. This is how I die.*

The blade went under one strap, and Irkon sliced it in half. Then he did the same to the other. In a split-second, the band around her rib cage was severed and her back hit the floor again. The beast tossed the ruined bra to a far corner of the diner. Her breasts spilled free.

Irkon's gaze settled on her chest. He looked like a rabid dog staring at fresh meat.

"Stop. You're making a mistake. I really can help you. David doesn't give a damn about me."

"Neither do I." Irkon raked his long fingernails over her left breast.

Stinging pain burned her, igniting trails of fire. She looked down and saw five tracks of blood on her skin. Irkon clamped down on her nipple with his thumb and forefinger, as if he wanted to rip it off.

Unable to hold back due to the pain, Eve screamed.

The other two men snickered wickedly in response.

Acid burned in her mouth. "Get your fucking hands off of me!"

"That's it. Fight me. Makes it much more fun."

Eve closed her eyes to calm herself... and to think. Since he hadn't paralyzed her mouth with his mind control, she could speak. But words seemed futile with Irkon. What could she do to distract him? The only weapon she could come up with sat at the back of her throat. A risk, but she had to get his attention.

"I can't wait to hear you scream, bitch." He leaned down.

*Closer...*

When she could see her own reflection in his black eyes, she sent a wad of saliva flying. Bullseye!

His two partners cracked up, but he didn't. Irkon wiped off her spit then his free hand curled into a fist and *whapped* the side of her head.

Pain exploded across her cheek. Eve tasted blood. Hate broiled inside her as her face burned and throbbed, but she knew that punches were better than rape.

Irkon brought the tip of his sword to her throat. She felt it slice the top layer of skin. Fight roared through Eve, but she couldn't move. No more options. Her street smarts didn't stand a chance against Irkon's kind. If he'd been human, she could've gained some advantage to eventually escape. She'd done it before with other menaces. But the jerk wasn't remotely human.

The monster tore her pants off. Only her panties covered her now. Though she couldn't move her body, she still felt the chill.

*This can't be how it ends. Time to change tactics.* "You want a struggle? Too bad. I won't fight. Just take me and get it over with."

Another punch and more pain. "You better fight."

"Forget it. I won't."

"But you will, bloodliner."

The tiny bell jingled as the door opened. For an instant she wondered if it might be someone who could help her, but the smell of sulfur that accompanied the new arrival dispelled that hope quickly.

"Irkon, get off the human." The new arrival was a woman.

When she came into view, Eve marveled at her beauty. Straight black hair cut chin-length. Pale skin. Violet eyes. She wore thigh-high black boots and skin-tight leather that outlined an incredible body.

"Azian, what are you doing here?" Irkon's face showed his anger at the female's presence. "I've got this under control."

"No doubt." The woman tilted her head. "I was sent to assist."

"Why did you bring a van?" the smallest of the three males inquired.

"Clean up for these other humans, Pratt. But this one," Azian pointed to Eve, "is too precious cargo for that. I'll use a portal to transport her."

"What makes you think we need a van for these humans?" Pratt licked his lips. "There won't be anything left when we're done."

"You'll have time enough with them later."

"Then why not use a portal with them, too?"

Azian narrowed her eyes. "Use your brains! One large enough for these mortals and yourselves would easily be detected by Alliance warriors in the area.



A small portal for the bloodliner and me would not. We need to move—now!”

Irkon’s demeanor darkened. “Who said you could take charge?”

Azian didn’t answer.

Eve felt the magnetism on her arms and legs relax. Without hesitation, she punched Irkon in the throat. He fell backwards. She tried to free herself from him, but the bulk of his body remained on top of her. Then she felt her hair jerked hard as Azian pulled her out from under his weight.

The paralysis returned, clenching down on Eve as her feet dangled inches from the floor.

Irkon coughed violently as he stood. His face contorted into a murderous form.

“You’re something all right, human.” Azian’s violet eyes sparkled. She turned to Irkon. “Take care of the witnesses. I’m teleporting her directly to the Master.”

### *The Master?*

The woman’s free hand moved in a circle. An electric charge spread over Eve, but within moments it ended.

Azian’s eyes narrowed. “The Alliance must’ve put some kind of dampening spell on her.”

The short monster snorted. “Never heard of such a thing.”

“Neither have I, Pratt, but how else do you explain it?”

“That must’ve been how she broke free from my restraints.” Irkon choked out.

“I can’t teleport her.” Azian studied her. “How am I going to get you to Vincorte?”

“If we had more time,” Pratt informed, “I believe I could break through the white magic.”

“Azian, isn’t it?” Eve prayed for any advantage, however miniscule. “If you will turn me loose, maybe I can help.”

“Very impressive indeed.” The woman smiled and eased Eve down, releasing her hair.

Eve’s scalp hurt from the hair-pulling, but she wouldn’t rub it or otherwise indicate weakness. Azian might be a monster, but she was female. She also liberated her from Irkon and seemed to be in charge now. *Best to get on her good side and avoid more molestation.* “Thank you, Azian.”

Then, Eve watched as enormous bat-like wings popped out of Irkon’s back and horns formed on his forehead. Black fire shot up from his feet to his knees.

*Oh God! He’s a demon. They all are.*

As a teen, she’d worked as a fortuneteller for a traveling Renaissance fair to make ends meet, but had never really believed in the supernatural.

Years later in one of the V.I.P. rooms at Zone Three, when Kro had introduced her to a guy named Jared and asked if she’d triple with them only to be flung across the room by some invisible force the second they touched, she had questioned her disbelief. Even Kro seemed stunned by it, but never explained. Still, she’d stayed, trying to convince herself that her imagination had gotten the best of her.

Then three nights ago at Zone Three, all hell broke loose. She’d spotted some people with *wings* flying up the stairs of the club to what sounded like some kind of battle. Freaked and panicky, she hadn’t waited to find out what the ruckus was about. Instead she’d made her escape. Hours later, her rational side had kicked in again, trying to explain away the occurrence. Now two feet from Irkon and his display, denial seemed ridiculous.

*What the hell have I gotten into?*

“We could fly her to the Master,” Irkon growled.

“With all the Alliance warriors in the area, not a good idea.” The female’s voice, sounding like silk, never faltered.

“Listen, you have nothing to worry about with me.” Eve hoped she sounded convincing. “I don’t work for David. Never have. My cousin introduced me to him. At first, David seemed nice. He gave me a job, a place to stay—”

“Slow down. What’s your name?” Azian asked.

“Melody,” Eve lied.

“Good. Melody, you’ll now be staying with us.” Azian pointed a pistol at her chest. “See that van outside.”

Her gut tightened, but she nodded.

“That’s the chariot that will take you to your new residence. Turn around.”

Eve complied. “If you’ll just tell me what you want, I’ll gladly give it to you.”

She felt the barrel of the gun between her shoulder blades.

Move.”

“What about our *hors d'oeuvres*, Azian?” Pratt whined.

“You can’t use the van. That’s for Melody now. So, each of you take one of the humans and head out in different directions. When you’re far enough away, open a portal and get them to the intake location.”

Eve turned and found that the old couple and Nancy had been stripped of all their clothing. One of Nancy’s breasts bled from fresh teeth marks.

“What the hell have you done to them? They are innocent. Leave them alone!”

“Move, Melody. I won’t say it again.”

Dread rolled through Eve for the old couple and Nancy. She wished she could do something, but with the steel of Azian’s weapon pressed to her back, she knew she couldn’t.

She thought about asking for her clothing, but the shreds that remained would barely cover a few specks of skin and they were on the floor near Irkon and his buddies. Instead, she pushed the door open, walking out with her head held high in nothing but her panties.

The air hit her like a razor. She wrapped her arms around her chest. She thought about trying to scream for help, but the street still looked deserted. Fear like she’d never felt before rose up, threatening to choke her.

Eve tried to calm herself. She needed to think clearly. Irkon could’ve raped her—and worse. But he hadn’t. As long as she kept moving ahead, she had a chance.

The sliding door to the van opened as if by magic. The gun at her back nudged her forward. When Eve entered, Azian slammed the door shut, leaving her isolated inside.

*What’s happening to Nancy and the old couple?* A pang for them poured through her. Hoping for the refuge of safety in numbers, she’d put them in danger. Regret seared her insides.

She hated how alone she felt, even though she’d endured it for most of her life. Facing these monsters with no ally overwhelmed her. When the lock latched, Eve felt exactly how alone she really was.

Slowly, her eyes adjusted to the dark vehicle’s interior. The space looked more like a cage than a cargo area. The transportation her captors provided wasn’t built for luxury. She sat on one of two metal benches soldered to the van’s walls. Another wall separated the passengers from the driver’s seat. The only light afforded those in the van’s coach class shined through the wall’s single window decorated with steel bars.

The vehicle’s engine roared to life. Where they were taking her, Eve didn’t know. Anger zipped through her, along with fresh fear. *Who are these monsters, and what do they want?*

She spotted what looked to be a small pile of rags next to the dividing wall on the floor between the two benches. They rose and fell as if breathing. She squinted in the poor light and realized that the rags were not rags at all, but a person. A girl.

Azian had not tied Eve up, so she could still move freely about the back of the van. She leaned down over the little form. The rag girl breathed erratically. Her hair appeared matted and dirty with no sign of its original color; now it was a puckish black.

Eve checked for a pulse, putting her finger to the side of the girl’s neck. She detected a faint heartbeat. Eve was relieved that the poor thing wasn’t dead.

“Honey, are you awake?” she whispered.

A moan came suddenly from the child’s mouth, as if Eve’s question and touch raked across some hidden wound. Her moan resounded with desolation and despair. Eve’s own desire to connect with another human in this alien world pushed her on.

Looking closer, she saw that the rag creature was not a young girl at all but a malnourished adult woman. Her body was but mere bones and skin, which showed years of suffering in the scars and infected wounds that covered every inch of her.

Horror washed over Eve. *God, how this woman has suffered!*

The woman coughed violently, causing her tiny body to shake. Eve touched her, hoping to soothe her, but felt helpless. What else could she do? How could these monsters do this to a human being?

After a few minutes the coughing stopped and was replaced by a wheeze. Eve suspected extreme pneumonia wracked both the woman’s lungs.

“Can you hear me?” she continued. “Can you open your eyes for me?”

The rag lady roused. Eve was reaching her, and hope vaulted within her as she leaned down. The woman’s eyelids popped open, revealing sockets that didn’t contain eyes. Instead, one housed a spider, the other dead flies.

Eve stood but could not move further, paralyzed not by some demonic spell but by the horror of the scene. But when the poor creature let out a piercing screech, Eve stumbled backwards, falling onto the metal bench with a thud.

*Oh God!*

She watched as violet smoke appeared, and then Pratt materialized on the bench. “I love when the food plays together, don’t you, Irkon?”

The buzz-saw disembodied voice of her would-be rapist echoed in the vehicle. “Vastly entertaining.”

Eve’s heart jumped up to her throat as she felt Irkon’s invisible hand grab her breast.

## Chapter 2

*I’ve read until my eyes burn. It seems that immortals need humans for life essence. But it takes a triad, similar to the laws of electricity and the flow between positive, negative, and conduit. In this case, an angel, a jinn, and a human. If I try to tell anyone this, will they believe me?*

Eric’s Flash Drive: day 9—entry 3

\* \* \* \*

Cloaked in invisibility, Nash stood at the corner of the street, the center of his team’s latest sweep. They searched twenty blocks in every direction. This part of the city was dotted with liquor stores, seedy motels, and boarded-up buildings.

Flying towards him, Stone sent a silent, *nothing yet, sir*.

The soldier landed next to Nash with a thud.

Breathing heavily, his muscled black body was coated in a layer of sweat. Even his shaved head glistened.

Seventy hours without rest was clearly getting to the angel. Stone needed to triple for life energy. Sex with a human and a jinn would have him recharged and good as new.

*Get to Zone Three, soldier. Triple. Be back in an hour.*

Stone bowed, spread his white wings, and shot into the sky.

The search party under Nash’s command hadn’t found a single sign of the bloodliner escapee, Eve Rousseau. If the Dark got their claws on her, he knew all too well how that would end.

The Bloodline had been thought extinct for at least a thousand years until Eric, Eve’s cousin, had shown himself to David. The unanimous edict from the Council of Seven came shortly after that. The Alliance must gather up all living bloodliners before the darklings did. Should the Alliance fail, a new Dark Age more horrific than any before would encircle the globe, ending in the destruction of all humankind: Armageddon. Hopefully the others looking for her were having better results.

The newly formed Perfect Triad—Bradley, an old friend and an angel; Jared, an even older enemy and jinn; and Micki, Eve’s bloodliner cousin—searched west with a large Alliance group. The last communication from them had been the same: no luck.

Nash’s commander, David, hunted with a group of over three hundred angels and jinn to the east. They were also coming up empty.

Kronos, a warrior angel, led the largest team in the north. He’d demanded to lead a troop, and David had conceded. It was strange, but Nash supposed his commander wanted to give the angel who’d failed his assignment to keep Eve safe a chance to redeem himself.

Nash knew that Kronos had tripled with Eve. But truly brow-raising was the knowledge that Kronos had also *coupled* with Eve. An immortal joining alone with a human amounted to nothing more than sex. Pleasurable, yes, but it produced no energy. A waste of time in Nash’s opinion. But Kronos exhibited signs of possessiveness, something almost unheard of in their world. The angel’s passion for the human could very well jeopardize the mission—something they couldn’t afford.

Nash spotted another on his team flying towards him. Trey, a jinn, landed on the sidewalk and saluted.

“Commander, we found remnants of the spell David placed on the bloodliner. We know where she’s been staying.”

“And?”

“A motel three blocks over. She’s not there now, but the manager of the place said Ms. Rousseau paid for four more days.”

Alarms went off in Nash’s head. Three hours after midnight and the woman was not in her room sleeping?

“Did you check the place out?”

“Yes, sir. Nothing was disturbed. Looked like she hadn’t been in it since the maid cleaned the room yesterday morning. She might have found another place to stay.”

“Maybe.” Why would she abandon a paid room? It was likely she hadn’t, but had been captured. His gut clenched. “What about the surrounding area? Have we checked that out?”

“Yes, sir. She ate a bagel at the coffee shop two blocks away. Other than that, no sign of her.”

“Any more traces from the spell?”

“None that we can find.”

Nash rubbed his chin. “Probably something to do with her being a bloodliner.”

*Commander, we've spotted her.* The message came from Raf, team lead of his blue squadron.

Nash questioned, *Where are you?*

*Seven blocks due west of your location. The Dark captured her and stashed her in a white van.*

Nash morphed into his smoky jinn form, his human body vanishing. The warmth of his green power circled around him. He rocketed into the air.

Nash sent, *Howmany darklings?*

Raf responded, *Four, but we sense more headed this way, sir.*

Trey winged beside Nash. They flew over rooftops of empty buildings. Seconds later the vehicle that housed the bloodliner came into view. The van headed south on the freeway at a steady speed.

A demon flew above it. Nash sensed other immortals in the vehicle, but couldn't get a clear read. Two or three. No more. Strange. Perhaps the darklings were keeping a low profile, hoping to elude the Alliance's detection.

He pulled out a ball of green energy from his core and threw it in front of the van. When the vehicle hit his spell, it stopped, causing its back wheels to lift off the ground before slamming back to the pavement.

A female ifrit and two demons left the van and joined the aerial fight, guns and swords drawn. Bullets flew, not deadly to immortals but able to slow them down. Still, the darklings' blades could deliver a final blow to angel or jinn with just the right strike.

Nash barked silent orders to the Alliance warriors, *Take them out. Make a path to the bloodliner.*

Trey smiled. *Yes, sir!* The soldier fired several rounds into the horde of darklings from his semi-automatic pistol.

Nash blasted the van with a sphere of green energy.

*Not so fast.* One of the demons sent a ball of black flame hurtling towards them.

Without slowing his dive to the vehicle, Nash knocked the dark orb aside with a flash of green while severing the darkling's head with his blade, sending him to the Ether prison where immortal souls rotted.

More demons and ifrit appeared. Nash's squadrons engaged them, but the odds were tipping. He cursed when several of his own soldiers vanished into the Ether.

Then Nash saw an opening and shot straight into the van, morphing back to his human form.

He found two women. Which one was the bloodliner?

He'd never met Eve. One of the women was minutes from death. The other, though trembling, glared directly at him. Long, twisting auburn hair. Hazel eyes, just like her cousin Micki. Her arms were wrapped around her naked chest defensively. Lacy panties barely covered her most secret flesh. To his shock, his jinn hunger rose up, voracious, seething with greed he'd never experienced.

He pushed it down. This sort of desire undermined his control, and that he couldn't allow. Ever.

"Who the hell are you?" Eve growled.

No time for talk. He needed to get her away from the darklings now.

Nash grabbed her arm.

She thrashed, loosening his hold on her. "Get your hands off of me, prick."

"Shut up. I'm trying to save your ass, human."

He pulled her close, holding her so that she couldn't move. She wiggled against him, and his cock hardened. *Fuck!*

Never had desire for a human thundered through him so strongly. He wanted to strip her down and fuck her like there was no tomorrow. Nash wished he could blame it on his own lack of energy, but the urges she caused inside him couldn't be easily explained. What did he really know about bloodliners? Not much. No one did.

With such cravings, he needed to be rid of her soon or he wouldn't be able to resist. He should've tripled before now. Too late for that. Once he was done with this task, he would juice up on top of some other female with an angel, completing the triangle. Now he must get the bloodliner to safety. But visions of Eve writhing under him kept impeding his thoughts.

*I must focus on the mission!*

Nash blasted the door open with green energy, and took on his smoky form. Eve gasped. He spotted Trey struggling on the ground with a female demon and Raf trading punches with a scar-faced demon.

He flew straight up with the human woman in his arms. She gasped and shivered against him, clinging in a way that only made him want her more. "We're ...flying? You feel solid, but you look..."

"I won't drop you."

She didn't acknowledge him, just grabbed him tighter. A fresh wave of desire for her surged through him. Damn it, he couldn't get rid of this bloodliner fast enough.

Police sirens sounded in the distance. The firing of guns must have alerted them. Nash looked back at the bloody action below. The Alliance warriors were finally getting the upper hand. Pride for his team filled him. Any other time, he would've joined them, but his mission was getting Eve to safety. He desired nothing else.

Holding her felt good. She was soft. Warm. Strong. Though scared, she met the nightmare with courage. He had to admire that, even when he didn't want to notice a damn thing about her.

The wind picked up, threatening to unlock his hold on her. Moving to better his grip, he wrapped one arm around her waist and the other around her chest. His hand accidentally brushed her breasts. He sucked in a breath as his body went white hot. What the hell was this need, and why did it grow every second he was near her?

Eve wriggled, relocating his hand to her shoulder. "I'd slap you for the cheap feel, but I'm afraid you might drop me."

And he'd deserve it. But he wasn't apologizing for something that felt so good.

Nash pulled her in tight, securing her. Since they were far from Zone Three, the Alliance's stronghold, the best course of action was to get out of the sky. Up there, they were easy targets for the Dark.

One of the guardian posts scattered throughout the city would be safer. He wouldn't make it to Zone Three without backup and a plan.

Every post had at least two warriors defending it at all times. Station thirty-one below, disguised as an innocent house in a sleepy neighborhood, often had as many as fifteen soldiers on guard. There he might have a good chance of getting his mind on his mission and his dick out of the way so he could safely deliver Eve to David.

His body didn't care about the mission. It wanted Eve. *He* wanted Eve—far more than he should.

He scanned her but saw nothing unusual about her. No red lightshow like her cousin Micki's when she'd met her mates. Eve's output of energy looked normal, just a slight wispy gray like most humans.

Lightshow or not, he only tripled with women for a single night. He never wanted them any longer than that. He never wanted to *know* them. Much better that way. The fact that curiosity ate at him to know more about Eve couldn't lead anywhere good. Sure, he would love the opportunity to fuck her out of his system, but David had plans for Eve that didn't include him. Others, maybe Kronos and another jinn, would be chosen to awaken her bloodliner power and to bind it to the Alliance.

Nash stifled a foolish sense of regret and focused on getting Eve to safety. When accomplished, he'd kick some darkling ass. Years ago, he'd lost his focus with one human ward, Gwyneth, ending in her demise. Never again. The anger he had deep inside him for those responsible for Gwyneth's death filled him. And he let it. After all, fury bred purpose.

A drop of warm liquid that splattered on his fingers pulled him from his thoughts. He pushed aside Eve's hands, which she'd drawn modestly over her nudity. His inspection of her breasts revealed blood seeping from fresh scrape marks across her flesh.

Black fury roared inside him, endless and consuming. When he found the darkling who'd marred her, hell would be paid with their severed heads hitting pavement.

"When we reach Zone Three, someone can heal your wounds."

"So, you work for David, too? Figures." Despite the derision in her voice, it mesmerized him.

"In a manner of speaking."

"Got a name?"

"Nash."

"Is part of your job to press your dick against my backside, Nash? Never happening. Got it?"

Yes, he got it. He even agreed. But somehow he had to get the message to his body that this firebrand wasn't his for the taking and never would be.

Nash gritted his teeth and flew them down to the street by station thirty-one. When his feet touched the ground, he held Eve tighter in case she tried to escape. He hoped she understood the danger she was in, even if she didn't seem particularly fond of him.

\* \* \* \*

*I've learned from the book that the Alliance and the Dark are sworn enemies. Where does the Bloodline fall into this scenario?*

Eric's Flash Drive: day 13—entry 1

\* \* \* \*

Kronos flew hypersonic, pushing his wings to their limit.

Eve had been found and rescued from a band of darkling thugs. *Bastards!* But he knew the real bastard—himself. He tightened his jaw at the thought.

No other immortal could be blamed. David's orders had been clear: *make sure she triples often with several immortal combinations until her power is activated, and keep her safe.*

He'd failed on both. Yes, he and Eve had tripled, but only twice. The first time, jealousy rose up in him like acid, burning him alive. Though stunned by his own feelings, he'd tossed the young jinn from the room immediately after their ménage. It was strange. The need to possess her for *himself alone* warred with his knowledge that tripling for immortals was not a nice-to-have but a necessity. In his ninety-five years as an angel, he'd never experienced such feelings for a human. The second tripling attempt with Jared ended abruptly before consummation because the jinn was already bound to Micki.

What if Eve didn't have the bloodline power that her cousin had? David would want her magic sealed to the Alliance, and that would only happen if she tripled until she found the right immortals to awaken her. Kronsos knew that the archangel would never stop trying to awaken it, inside her or not, which meant that Eve would have more lovers—many more.

An image of a naked Eve binding to another angel and a jinn filled his mind. His stomach tightened.

*No! Never!*

An icy headwind stung his face, pulling him from his thoughts and hindering his progress. He flexed his shoulders, flattening out his wings to maximize speed against the blast. His entire body ached from the flight. No matter. Until he had Eve back in his arms, he would not slow.

Besides being incredibly sexy, she was smart, savvy, and full of grit. No doubt she'd seen through the deceptions he'd told her about Zone Three, about tripling—about himself.

How many times had he wanted to tell her that he was an angel, a warrior of the Alliance? Too many to count. He'd maintained the lies to keep his vow to the Alliance, a vow he'd taken on the very first day of his immortal life:

*I swear my eternal allegiance to the Alliance and to its leaders in the Council of Seven. I swear to protect mortal and immortal from the Dark.*

The vow meant everything to angels and jinn.

Only one of the Seven could give leave for a human to be brought into the trust of the Alliance. And try as he might to get David's permission to tell Eve all, the archangel refused.

Vow or not, he would tell her everything once he held her again—David's rules and punishment be damned. She deserved to know. Then they could work to unleash her bloodline power; she could bind to him. He'd find some way to stomach a jinn touching her. It was the only way to truly keep her safe.

\* \* \* \*

*Why do bloodliners die so young? It doesn't make sense. I cannot figure it out. I need to find someone to help me understand this, but whom?*

Eric's Flash Drive: day 15—entry 3

\* \* \* \*

Eve's stomach flip-flopped as Nash pointed to one of the houses on the sleepy suburban street that they'd landed on. She was glad to be back on the ground.

"Go there," he ordered, pressing his large hand against her back, roughly guiding her to the walkway of a ranch-style home that looked like every other house on the block.

Unable to free herself from Nash's grip on her arm, Eve stopped resisting. Another opportunity for escape might present itself. Until then, she'd play up her submissiveness. Not hard to do with Nash.

He waved his hand inches from the doorknob then opened the door without using a key. With his hand on her back, he pulled her inside, then he shut and bolted the door.

Eve scanned the place. A fifteen-by-fifteen square room sported hospital-gray walls, green linoleum floors, and a single incandescent bulb in the middle of the ceiling that provided the room's only light.

Nash released his hold on her. She turned to get a better look at him. Short brown hair, commanding dark eyes, biceps as big as her thighs, a quiet confidence that spoke volumes, over six feet of full-scale sexiness. The man was a walking fantasy. But he wasn't really a man at all—and she was merely his prisoner.

Still, her stomach went topsy-turvy when he'd swept her up in his arms in the van and shot into the air. She blamed it on the surprise, but she knew better. Something inside her would respond to him if she let herself.

*Oh, hell no.* She couldn't risk giving her trust to anyone, but especially anyone associated with David and Zone Three. Emotions must be controlled, and years of practice had taught Eve how to keep hers in check. The consequences of failure she knew all too well.

Nash's intentions were less violent than the demon Irkon's in the diner, but were they any less wicked? She wrapped her arms around her naked chest. Maybe someone was looking out of those windows from the other houses and could call the police, though not a lot of good that would do with someone like Nash.

She wanted something to swing at him in case he intended to use all that strength to demand what his dick apparently wanted, but the room was completely empty. No other doors except the one they'd entered through. Not even a single window.

*But I saw windows from the street.*

Eve frowned. Like everything else she'd experienced around the Zone Three crowd, this house wasn't what it appeared.

Weaponless, she crossed her arms tighter over her chest and curled her fingers into fists, though she doubted they could slow such a man. She could imagine what kind of appetites he might have. Her heart thundered in her chest. Still, if he was determined to cast her in the role of victim, she would refuse to take the stage and perform.

"Sit." He pointed to the wooden chair surrounded by dissipating moss-colored fog.

The chair hadn't been there a second ago. Her body went ice cold. The world had turned upside down and sideways ever since she'd seen those horned monsters with leathery wings at Zone Three on the upper floors. Had she seen too much? Was keeping their secrets safe so important that Nash would kill her? Clearly, he was no friend to Irkon's circle, but he screamed danger.

She took in a slow breath. *Don't lose your head. Stay in the game.* No stranger to tight spots, Eve told herself this wasn't any different.

Trying to sound compliant, she answered, "Okay." She dropped her eyes and drooped her shoulders. *Let him think he's subdued me.*

Lowering herself to the chair, she feigned hesitation and looked at Nash. He cocked an eyebrow up. She hadn't fooled him, not one bit. *Damn!*

A new voice jolted her from her thoughts. "Commander, no sign of darklings for a ten block area."

"Who said that?" Eve leapt up, arms tight around her breasts.

"Pardon me." The voice sounded like a deep, still lake.

A flash of blue light filled the center of the room. As it faded, a man appeared. He was six foot six with emerald green eyes, bulging muscles, and blond hair long enough to brush his collar. He wore a slate-gray, long-sleeved shirt, black slacks, and designer shoes that must have cost a fortune. He could have walked onto any runway in New York, Paris, or Milan. But what surprised her most were the white wings that jutted from his shoulder blades.

She remembered seeing him at Zone Three a couple of times, but he'd been wingless then. His name was Gideon, and he was a friend of Kronos.

Nash wrapped his hands around her shoulders and pushed. "I said *sit*."

Eve's knees buckled, landing her back in the chair with a thud. Normally such treatment would rouse a fight in her, but not with Nash. Innate caution warred with warmth sizzling inside of her. Tingles danced across her skin.

"Stay," Nash added.

*Screw false submission.* "I'm not a pet you can order around."

He stared down at her. She expected him to growl some cold quip, but he didn't. His gaze heated her up, but she didn't drop her eyes from him.

The silent battle dragged on for a seeming eternity. She all but drowned in his chocolate eyes. Dizziness assailed her. Suddenly he dropped his gaze to her chest. *Can he see through my arms to my breasts? My nipples?* Her paltry human defenses were no match for his confident, sexual stare. She shivered violently and squeezed herself tight.

Thankfully, Nash turned to Gideon. Disaster averted. Or so she thought. Nash walked behind her and returned his hands to her shoulders. From just his touch on her bare skin, desire threatened to boil over. She squeezed her fists tighter, hoping to beat down her lust. Her nails scored the insides of her palms, but it didn't reduce the fever from his touch.

Nash leaned down, his lips grazing her ear. "You would love being my pet. The pleasure I would give you would blow your mind."

Eve closed her eyes, hoping to fight back the lust he called forth from deep inside her. It didn't work. She squeezed her legs together tight.

Nash leaned back up but kept his hands on her shoulders. "Gideon, how many men are assigned to this post?"

"Two, sir." Gideon waved his hand and magically a white robe appeared. He held it out for Eve to take. "This is for you."

Still naked, except for her panties, Eve felt heat rush to her cheeks. "Nash, I can't dress if you don't release me."

Slowly, he removed his hands from her shoulders then stood between her and Gideon. "Turn your back, soldier."

Gideon obeyed, but Nash remained facing her.

"What about you?" Eve smirked. "Looking for a free thrill?"

"Enough talk, little one. Dress, now."

She should've been pissed at Nash for calling her *little one*, but she wasn't. He likely meant it as an insult, though his tone sounded only mildly gruff, almost...tender.

Turning her back on both men, she slipped on the soft garment, but stopped short of wrapping it around her chest when she noticed her breast. "I don't want to get blood on this."

Nash moved in front of her, eyes narrowing on her wound as he reached up as if he meant to touch her there. Eve flinched and pulled away.

His hand forming a fist, Nash clenched his jaw, then turned to Gideon. "Tend to her, soldier."

"Yes, sir." Suddenly, Gideon was by her side, sizing up her injury. "I'll fix that for you."

"Why you?" she asked. "Nash isn't a doctor, but you are?"

"I can heal. He has other skills." Gideon raised his hand. A ball of blue floated toward her.

"What the hell—" She tried to dodge the thing, but couldn't.

When the sphere touched her breast, the bleeding stopped instantly, as well as the stinging pain. Moments later, she saw nothing but smooth, unblemished skin. She gasped.

"I see some bruising around your eyes." Nash's face darkened. "Did a darkling hit you?"

"If by *darkling* you mean demon, yes."

His hands curled into fists.

"There's also a little cut on her throat, sir." Another ball of blue floated toward her from Gideon.

This time she didn't flinch. She closed her eyes. The pain evaporated.

"Thank you, Gideon." She pulled the robe tightly around her body, hiding her chest, drew in a deep breath, and turned to face Nash.

"I liked you better without the robe." Nash's gaze filled with sharp heat.

"Too bad. This isn't a free peep show." She turned back to Gideon. "You seem to be a gentleman. What else are you?"

The man looked at Nash.

"There's no sense in waiting for David. She's seen too much." Though Nash spoke to Gideon, his eyes never left her. "He's an angel, a warrior of the Alliance"

Gideon smiled.

*A real angel?* "So, white wings, angel. Leathery wings, demon?"

"Yes."

*Angels and demons. Unreal.... Howam I gonna get out of this one?* "And what is this Alliance you mentioned?"

The angel's tone deepened. "The immortals of Light that defend humanity from the Dark."

"So you're the good guys." She fixed her gaze on Nash. "But you're definitely not a gentleman or an angel."

Nash answered, "No, I'm just the guy who saved your ass."

"Did I forget to thank you? Oh right, your payment was feeling me up."

"Watch your mouth." He leaned closer, jaw clenched. His eyes bore into her, the edge of his control clearly nearing. "I'm a jinn, and I know how to discipline sassy little girls like you."

"Jinn? Like in the Arabian Nights?"

"No, and no more questions."

She thought about ignoring his order, but merely rolled her eyes. "Whatever."

He sent her a hard glare then turned back to Gideon. "Where is the other soldier?"

"Atticus is flying above, keeping an eye out for darklings. We're ready to accompany you and the bloodliner to the stronghold on your command."

There it was again: bloodliner. *What did it mean? Could they have mistaken her for someone else?* Nash and Gideon's conversation suggested that they were part of a military unit, with Nash as the senior officer and all a part of an Alliance of immortals. *What did that make David? A general? And was Kro a soldier, too?* A pang for Kro pulled at her insides then mixed with anger at his deceptions and omissions.

"Let's move." Nash edged closer to her.

"Where are we going?"

Nash didn't answer. He lifted her up in his arms, with one around her back and the other under her knees, and pulled her in tight. Part of her was glad that the cloth of the robe kept him from touching her skin. Yet, a traitorous part of her missed the heat of his skin on her body and wanted to feel the hot strength of his touch again.

"Sir, did you get that message from Raf just now? The darklings have retreated."



Yes. It might be a plot, but I doubt it. Just in case, I want you and Atticus to go with us."

Eve glared at Nash. "At least tell me how long it will take to get to wherever you're taking me."

He didn't reply. Instead his body changed before her eyes, becoming green and smoky and almost transparent. He shot them up to the ceiling and through it, as if it were made of air. Her stomach jumped up to her throat, and in the next instant, wind hit her face. They were flying again.

To her left she saw Gideon. White wings spread out from his back, and he held a long bow and arrow, cocked. To her right, she saw another man flying, his body part flesh, part green smoke. He clutched a sword in one hand and a pistol in the other. Atticus, she guessed. Nash's arms felt real enough, even though they looked vaporous, like steely bands of hard muscled flesh. She didn't dare look him in the eyes but buried her face in his neck and let herself melt into his strong body.

"Where are you taking me?"

"To David."

The last person she wanted to see. However, until she knew exactly what she faced with Irkon and crew, it was probably better to go along for the ride. At least David had kept her safe—so far.

The Alliance, whatever they actually were, didn't cause her physical pain. And now that she knew that she was important to David, maybe this time things would be different. She'd have more bargaining power. If not, she'd escaped his clutches before and she would do it again.

### Chapter 3

*The book has a list of the locations of the Alliance's strongholds and the Dark's lairs—present and past. Babylon, Atlantis, Pompeii, Camelot, Transylvania, and others, each with their own secret immortal sites. Today, all the major cities have at least two—one from each side.*

*The outsiders, the Rogues, have no formal headquarters. They seem to congregate haphazardly.*

*Tomorrow I'm going downtown to our city's Alliance stronghold.*

*Even though Lillian told me to avoid all immortals, going to Zone Three may be the only way to save my sister and me.*

Eric's Flash Drive: day 32—entry 1

\* \* \* \*

Kronos tucked his throbbing wings in tight, bulleting to the roof of Zone Three where Nash had taken Eve. The angelic sentries flying above the nightclub waved at him.

He landed by two large air conditioning units. Every inch of his body hurt from the long flight, but he ignored the pain. He had to get to Eve.

Two jinn guards on the roof nodded in his direction. He went to the rooftop door and descended the steps to the lower floors.

He took the stairs two at a time until he came to the landing on the uppermost floor of the building. The door to the left opened to the Alliance's war room, the one on the right to David's lush apartment, and the one ahead to the stairs leading to the next floor.

He blasted through the door ahead and descended to the level that housed the playrooms for tripling. Down he went, taking every flight in a burst of speed too fast for humans to detect. Street level held the public area, dressed as a trendy nightclub with flashing lights, flat screens, sofas, and a dance floor. The crowd undulated with the music, and the heat from their lust drew an ample supply of humans for tripling.

No sign of Nash, David, or Eve.

Kronos spotted Mava, one of the Alliance's in-the-know, standing on the other side of the club. As Eve's roommate, she'd also been assigned to keep tabs on Eve.

Understanding most immortals could hear from afar, Mava whispered. "They have her downstairs." The only door to the lower floors stood behind the bar.

He nodded.

"Kronos, tell her that I'm sorry."

The club's fog machines kicked into high gear, and Mava disappeared from his sight.

Not waiting for the smoke to clear, he pushed past the mortal club-goers and hungry immortals, heading straight for the entryway that led to Eve. Trey, a young warrior jinn, leaned against it with his arms crossed, a muscled blockade for any who might dare to try to go through it uninvited.

"Move, Trey." Kronos noticed a long, fresh wound on the angel's arm. It must've come from a darkling sword, as the healing hadn't been instantaneous.

"It's not good. Don't go down there."

Rage rolled up inside him. He felt the heat of it boil his skin. "Get the hell out of my way."

"You know the rules. No one goes down there during an intake until David says otherwise. You willing to disobey his orders?"

"I'll risk it. Don't forget I outrank you. Move. That's an order."

I may be only a fourth blade to your third, but it's gonna be your funeral, Kronos." Trey stepped aside.

Kronos sped down the stairs. The first lower level housed the apartments for those who resided at the stronghold. Eve had shared a room with Mava. It was the third door on the left. The next level contained the barracks for new immortal recruits and the vast weapon cache. The third level held the quarters for mid-level officers that resided on property. Down to the fourth where the senior officer's apartments were. Then he came to the metal door. No doubt, Eve was behind it.

Kronos scanned the metal. As he suspected, a shimmering enchantment danced across its surface. He hoped it wasn't David's magic.

Kronos closed his eyes, took out a marble-sized sphere of blue from the energy in his core, and disabled the spell. The door opened with a loud scrapping noise. Thankfully, someone other than the archangel had enchanted it, otherwise the door wouldn't have budged an inch.

First, Kronos saw David, Nash, Atticus, Gideon, and Hayden. Next, he detected a woman, but she wasn't the one he'd come for. Finally, he spotted Eve. She wore a white robe and stood with her arms crossed and her chin tilted stubbornly. A rush of relief blew inside him. *She's safe.*

David's silent message shot to him. *No thanks to you, Kronos.*

*I won't let it happen again.*

The archangel glared at him. *No, you won't. Why are you here?*

Possessiveness welled up inside Kronos. *I must protect her.*

Eve spotted him. She wiggled free from David and ran toward him. He expected her to melt into him so he spread his arms wide to receive her.

Instead, she shoved him. "Why the hell didn't you tell me the truth?"

Her fury made him hesitate and clench his jaw. "I couldn't. I had orders."

Her eyes widened. She pounded his chest with her fists. "Damn it, you played me, and I let you. Never again."

Her pain stung Kronos to his core. He wanted only to care for her, to protect her. Her words made it clear that she'd never give him another chance.

"Eve, listen—"

"No. I won't."

David glared in his direction. "Kronos, bring the woman here."

Eve stilled and stared up at him, her eyes hopeful, pleading for an escape.

Kronos leaned forward and whispered. "Sweetheart, everything will be okay."

Betrayal tightened her face. "I don't believe you."

"I know I haven't earned your trust, but I will."

The metal door to the upper floors remained open. If he could get through it and swing it shut before David and the others could react, the spell would reset. It might give him enough time to get her away from Zone Three and to a hiding place for them. He would need help from the only immortals he could turn to. Before Eve, he would never have considered turning to the Rogues, but he'd never met anyone like her before.

David's eyes narrowed. "Did you not hear my order, soldier?"

\* \* \* \*

*What can I say about David? Yes, he's an archangel, but not the kind I learned about when I was little.*

*Wings? Yes.*

*Halo? Not that I've seen.*

*Kind? When it serves his purpose, but he can also be cruel.*

*What is his real motivation in helping me? I don't think he's lying, but I also don't think he's telling me everything. Besides, his plan still isn't working.*

*Great sex, guilty sex, useless sex. Still, thanks to David finally finding two immortals that were magically compatible to me, my bloodline power activated. But they weren't compatible enough to save me. Since then, I've tripled with sixteen different immortals with no success. The clock just keeps ticking.*

*Why can't David find the right combination? Am I just a guinea pig for him to experiment with? If I don't connect soon, I will be dead—or worse.*

Eric's Flash Drive: day 56—entry 1

\* \* \* \*

Every bit of fight Eve had evaporated the moment Kro lifted her up in his arms. She'd missed him so deeply it scared her. The desire to tell him burned her insides, but she didn't dare.

"Surely you wouldn't be foolish enough to try to escape with her, Kronos." A threat peppered David's tone.

Was Kro thinking about springing her? A quick read of his face told her that he was. That he would even consider it stunned and thrilled her.

She studied the room. Cabinets lay against one concrete wall, wires and electrical boxes on another. Several lockers filled the far side of the room, and the only exit with the metal door to the stairs was located opposite the lockers.

She glanced over at Nash. His eyes narrowed, showing her that he wouldn't let Kro take her away without a fight. The guy was such a hardass. Still, Kro and Nash seemed pretty equally matched. She wasn't sure which one of them would win in a knock-down drag-out. Most likely it would end in a tie.

Upstairs would be more guards to try to get past, and Nash wasn't the only one interested in keeping her there. David and crew would do whatever it took to stop Kro from leaving with her. The other men all looked like flesh-and-blood males, but she knew better, especially about Nash. She couldn't let Kro make the attempt. It was time for her to take the wheel.

"Stop. Put me down." She needed to be free of Kro's hold, or the itch she felt with him would soon demand a scratch. "I can walk over to the son-of-a-bitch on my own two legs."

Kronos turned to her, his green eyes full of concern and question. Finally, he nodded and lowered her so that her feet touched the floor.

"Thank you."

"Eve, come here," David ordered.

Kro stayed beside her, his arm wrapped possessively around her shoulders. Together, they stepped forward.

David wore narrow glasses. Most likely he donned them for some kind of statement since he surely didn't need them to see. His steel-gray eyes were studying everyone and everything. His sinewy frame was draped in designer clothes that gave an air of sophistication.

Gideon, now wingless, stood with his arms behind his back.

Atticus leaned against the wall. Short dark hair, tan skin, massive muscles, an appearance alluding to an incredible strength.

David had called the man with the goatee Hayden before Kro showed up. He held a woman with long black hair by the arm who seemed confused. She was a prisoner, just like Eve.

Glancing at Nash, Eve noticed his earlier expression full of carnality had darkened. Was it because Kro touched her? Whatever it was, Nash's fixed gaze on her was like an intimate touch. Coupled with Kro's touch, it became a double-team that ignited something deep inside her. She couldn't afford the new craving to grow. But they soon proved that her desire was stronger than her will.

She couldn't deny that it felt good being held tight against Kronos again. Had she let him down, too? She'd never lied, but she'd also never divulged much to him. Every question he'd shot her way she'd deflected or ignored. But the more time she spent with him, the more her defenses weakened. Her heart urged her to open up, but whenever she thought she might, her mouth clamped shut.

Three days ago she'd left Zone Three and Kronos to get away from the crazy things she'd seen. At least that's what she'd told herself. But a part of her had been looking for any reason to leave. Being with Kronos had been too good and too comfortable. She'd known that it would end, like everything else in her life, so why prolong the inevitable?

She'd left behind no note or message. Not the most courageous way to make an exit, but letting loose ends remain untied had always worked when she needed to leave in a hurry.

"Come closer," David ordered.

Kro removed his arm from her and stepped in front of her protectively. If he meant to be subtle, he'd failed. "Sir, thank you for bringing her back safely. I'm ready to resume my duty guarding her."

"Kro, I don't need to be guarded, and I don't need someone speaking for me." She moved around him.

Kro cupped her chin and turned her face to him. "Eve, there's more going on here than you know. Please, let me—"

"I know more than you think." She shoved his hand from her face. "I got thrown across a room. Remember?"

"Yes. There's an explanation for that."

"I'm listening."

"David ordered me to take an energy-starved ji—um, soldier to you for help."

"Help? How does that work?"

David raised his hands. "Questions and answers can come later. Now is not the time."

Nash grabbed David's arm. "She deserves the truth. I've told her some of it."

David's face burned red. "What exactly did you tell her?"

"Sir, she'd already seen and heard enough to put two and two together. She's as sharp as a tack."

Fine. What does she know?"

"That I'm a jinn and Gideon is an angel."

Kronos turned to David. "Sir, permission to reveal the rest."

Irritation flashed across his commander's face, but he didn't argue. David lowered his hands. "As you wish."

"Eve, I'm not human." Kro reached for her, but she pulled away.

"No kidding. Tell me why you and I flew across the room with that guy, the energy-starved soldier?"

"Jared is a jinn. Our immortal's existence depends on connecting with mortals to maintain our life source."

"Finally, the truth." Eve's heart pounded hard in her chest. She needed to know all of it. "Is that why you kept me in bed? For power?"

"Of course not."

She rolled her eyes.

"Truly." He seemed to be scrambling to tell her. "Power requires a triad, not a coupling."

The looks of surprise from Gideon, Atticus, and Hayden told her that Kronos had admitted to something a bit taboo.

He'd taken her to bed many times, just the two of them. Did that mean he'd done it not for power, but because he felt something for her? The fact he'd been willing to defy his commander to break her free suggested yes.

That scared the hell out of Eve.

"One angel, one jinn, and one..." Nash pinned her with a lusty stare that seared her entire body. "...smoking hot human like you, Ms. Rousseau, makes a triad. Mix it together, and you have the recipe for immortal mojo."

"Nash, that's enough." Kronos's eyes narrowed. "You don't touch her. I know too much about you."

Eve wondered what Kro knew about Nash. "So are you an angel, Kro?"

"Yes."

"Why else would you fuck me if not for power?" Once she asked the question, she wished she could take it back. She feared the answer.

"Because I—"

Nash interrupted. "Eve, I've already told you. Stop playing dumb. You're too smart for that. This angel fucked you alone. Fun, but no energy. A waste. The voltage inside you is something I'd enjoy sampling."

Nash's deep, derisive voice mocked all that she and Kro had shared. But instead of infuriating Eve, the jinn's voice heated her up a thousand degrees. She could picture doing with him all she'd shared with Kro. *Oh God!* Something about all that controlled power of his made her crazy. She squirmed, pressing her thighs together. She didn't like Nash, but damn he made her want him.

*Gotta keep cool. Can't let him get under my skin—or in my pants.*

Kronos sneered at Nash then turned to Eve, touching her cheek. "More than fun, and never a waste."

Kro's caress on top of Nash's enthralling voice made her body burn like a supernova. This was a bad development. She'd already revealed more than she should have. Kro had kept his secrets, and she would continue to keep hers.

"In your opinion, angel." Nash's stare caressed her entire body. "But looking at her curves, I don't think I blame you. I'd fuck her."

Eve glared at him. "I've already told you—not happening."

She turned back to Kronos. His expression was like a thunderstorm cloud. He looked ready to steamroll Nash.

"So why did we fly across the room when I touched the guy David sent to me to help give him life source?" Eve asked.

David strolled closer and within her slapping range, but she restrained herself. Barely.

He answered, "Jared is part of a permanent threesome, which means he was unable to triple with anyone else, something I was unaware of at the time."

"What does all this have to do with me? Why am I here?"

The other woman struggled in David's grasp. "I'd like to know what you want with me, too."

"Leah, I'll deal with you later."

At David's firm, grim, and curt dismissal, the woman hesitated but finally lowered her head and nodded.

A ghost of a smile played at David's lips. "Eve, you remember your cousin, Eric. His sister is Micki, also your cousin."

Eve remembered meeting a woman at Zone Three asking about David and Eric Langley. Must've been her. Eve had denied knowing him, thinking Micki could've been his ex, a cop, or worse. Eric had rescued her. There was no way she would spill any information on him to a stranger.

"So?"

"Micki bonded with Jared and an angel named Bradley, sealing them together—forever. End of discussion." David turned his gaze to Kronos. "I need you, Hayden, and Gideon to report to guardian post seventeen. I've gotten word that the Dark is amassing more troops just to the north of there. I want you ready should they attack."

"I'm not leaving." Kronos hands curled into fists.

*Oh no!*

Hayden shifted his weight to his other foot. "Sir, consider letting him stay. His presence seems to calm the bloodliner."

"Hayden, remember your station." The soldier nodded and took a step backwards. David turned to her, narrowing his eyes. After a full minute, he said, "Though you might be right. Kronos, I won't suffer more insubordination. You can stay, for now."

David waved his hand and several chairs appeared behind every person in the room. "Since this discussion won't be a quick one, I suggest we all sit."

Most complied instantly except Nash, Kronos, and Eve. Wow, David was quite a puppet master. He took a seat himself. Eve considered remaining standing, but fatigue rolled through her. Sitting would be nice.

She plopped down, then Kro followed suit. Nash put his boot up on the chair next to him, but never took a seat.

*Jinn my ass. He's pure devil.* Her heartbeat quickened.

"I met Bradley before at Zone Three. Nice guy. Of course, I remember Jared." She leaned forward. "What does my alleged cousin and her lovers have to do with me?"

"The sealing of immortals to a mortal had long been considered a myth, but they succeeded, creating the first Perfect Triad. A very powerful trio."

"And? Get to the point."

David raised a haughty brow at her demand. "Like your cousins, you are a bloodliner. You carry a gene that allows immortals to unleash your power and bind to you. Leah here is also a bloodliner."

Eve frowned. "I hate to break it to you, but I don't have any power."

David pointed at Kronos. "If he had obeyed my orders, your powers would likely already be blazing and we'd have your magic bound to two Alliance warriors."

"What orders?" she asked David.

"Kronos was to arrange for you to triple with as many immortals as possible."

Kro had secretly pimped her out. The realization of his betrayal cut her in two. She turned to lash out at him, but his demeanor stopped her. *Hadn't he done everything possible to keep me to himself? Why?*

Nash shook his head. "Kronos, you didn't call me to share your girl. I'm hurt."

Kro lunged from his seat at the jinn.

In a flash, David got to his feet, placing his body between the two adversaries. "Kronos, if you want to stay, relax."

"I'm not the only one who needs to back off."

"Agreed." David turned to Nash. "You're unusually verbose tonight. Stop egging the angel on."

The jinn shrugged.

"Soldiers, take a seat."

Kro sat back down and took her hand. He squeezed it tight.

She looked over at Nash. He glowered, but also sat down.

"Thank you." David took his seat then turned back to her. "According to information Eric left me, bloodliners have only so much time to activate and bind their power or they die, somewhere south of thirty years old. You're young and have a few years left, but I knew if the Dark got wind of your existence, they would do anything to obtain you. Hence, the scene in the diner."

Eve rubbed her forehead. Her mother had been just a few months from turning twenty-nine when Eve had last seen her. Could there be a connection to her disappearance and this bloodliner crap? "I'd like to see Eric's information myself."

"It's safe in my possession, and it will stay that way."

She motioned to all the men in the room. "They might enjoy bowing and scraping to you, but I won't. If he really is my cousin, then let me talk to him."

“He’s dead.”

“I just saw him three weeks ago at the club.”

“The darklings work fast.”

Her mind mingled images of Eric, Nancy, and the elderly couple screaming at the hands of Irkon’s demonic buddies. She’d faced horrors before, but nothing like this. She tried to get her mind around it but failed. Never had her life felt more surreal. She needed to keep up, take it all in, and not freak out.

Her mouth went bone dry. “What about Micki?”

“She’s on a mission with Jared and Bradley.”

“Fine. When will they be back?”

David rubbed his chin. “You’re a very tenacious human.”

“Tonight? Tomorrow? Do you even know when?” She peppered the last question with a tone she hoped would tinge of doubt.

“I have nothing more to say on that subject, so I suggest you turn your questions elsewhere.”

“How did Nash find me at the diner?”

“The day you first arrived with Eric, I put a spell on you so that should you ever get more than a mile from Zone Three, an invisible beacon would switch on. Any Alliance warrior would be able to see it.”

“You put a magical GPS on me. So I was under house arrest from day one.”

“Yes.”

“So why did it take you so long to locate me?”

“Likely, your bloodline power threw it off.”

*So much for the all-powerful David.* “And you’re the guy who’s keeping me safe? Not very comforting.”

Nash stood up and grabbed her by the elbow. She tried to jerk away, but he held her firm.

“Woman, you have no idea what would’ve happened to you if David hadn’t tagged you with that spell and I hadn’t pulled you from the van.”

Kronos rose to his feet.

“Kro, just cut the act. You’re part of David’s team, too.”

“Eve, it’s not like that.”

“Whatever.” She turned to Nash. “And what’s going to happen now?”

Not waiting for the jinn to answer, she jerked her elbow from his grip. He didn’t give an inch.

“I tire of this.” David fixed his gaze on her.

She glared back at him. “I know what kind of place you operate here, especially now that I know what kind of creatures you are.”

“Really?” David smiled mockingly.

“Yes, you’re all monsters. I’m nothing more to you than a piece of flesh for you to peddle.”

Not entirely true. During her previous time at Zone Three, no one had ever tried to rape her, threaten to kill her, scratch her, or much less subject her to whatever it took to bring that rag woman in the van so near to death.

Nash touched her cheek. “We’re not all monsters.”

His sudden tenderness sent a jolt through her. She sensed he wanted her and bad.

“Stop touching her, Nash.” Kro fisted his hands.

Nash’s mouth crooked up, but he released her slowly. “Don’t forget your rank, angel.”

Kro ignored him, wrapping his arm around her shoulders and addressing David. “Eve needs me. I can protect her.”

“Soldier, I have another assignment for you.”

“But—”

David stood, and two massive wings emerged from his shoulders. A blinding blue light surrounded him. “Do not question me.”

Leah gasped. "What the... I really don't belong here."

"Sit, bloodliner." David took off his glasses. "I generally don't explain myself, but I will suffer it this once. Leah, you do belong here. And Kronos, you already failed this assignment. Eve left Zone Three without protection. The Dark captured her. Can you imagine what would have happened if Nash hadn't arrived in time?"

Kro closed his eyes. "Sir, I won't fail again."

"I know, because you won't be assigned to her. This woman is too important to our cause."

Anger welled up inside her like a supernova. "Stop talking about me like I'm not here."

David cocked his eyebrow. "Hayden, take your bloodliner to the upper floors." His gaze skated over Leah dispassionately. "I've set up the Cave room. I have a human male ready to breed her."

"Breed her?" Eve gasped. "That doesn't sound like something good guys would do."

"But it is, Eve. If I fail, the world you know will come to a horrific end."

"Breeding? Is that your plan for me, too?" she choked out.

He didn't answer, but turned to Nash. "Take her to The Ranch."

Kro touched her shoulder. "I will not leave her, David."

"You won't have to. I'll see to that." David raised one hand, and a sphere of blue light surrounded Kronos. His face seethed with fury, and then he disappeared.

Eve felt fear wrap itself around her heart like a tight fist. Then she heard her own scream.

## Chapter 4

*11) I stood on the hill by the olive tree where the angel Rajiah had taken me. Together we watched the battle in the Valley of Old Blood below 12) The sun stood high in the sky as the immortals of Light and Dark warred together. One by one, I watched as the angels and jinn spilled the blood of demons and ifrit. I marveled at how the blades of the immortals of Light and Dark cut so deeply that the victims vanished before my eyes. 13) I asked the angel Rajiah, "Can these blades make a righteous king invincible?" 14) The angel spoke unto me, saying, "Listen and write down my words for the enlightenment of humankind! The swords of flesh and blood may slow an immortal, but only an immortal's blade can bring down another celestial being. Such weapons cannot cut mortal flesh." 15) I asked Rajiah, "Why do the demons vanish when struck?" 16) He answered, "Immortals never die, but are imprisoned in the Ether."*

*The Book of Timu: Verses 11 through 16—Chapter 7*

\* \* \* \*

Nash wrapped his arms around Eve, trying to calm her down.

She screamed at David, "Y-You murdered Kronos. You monster!"

"Enough!" His commander raised a hand, and sent a small speck at Eve, rendering her unconscious but unharmed.

Her body slumped against Nash. Anger welled up inside him for the emotional pain David had caused her.

Hoisting her up in his arms, he glared at the archangel. "You shouldn't have shocked her by killing Kronos. She's too good to be in your custody."

David raised an eyebrow. "The angel is fine. I just sent him away, so I could get back to the mission at hand. Will I have to do the same with my first blade?"

Nash's gut clenched, and he pulled her slack body tighter into him. Still, he said, "No sir. I'm a soldier and you are my commander."

"Good. I trust you to get her safely to the Ranch. I want her tripling as much as possible."

"Sir, I'd like to bed her myself."

"She's not for you, Nash. I know you like your conquests, but she's too important to be a one-nighter for you to enjoy."

David knew him well. But that wasn't what he felt for Eve. "What if I'm the jinn that is her true mate?"

"This is a side of you I've never seen, first blade." David shrugged. "If you were her true mate, I think she would've lit up by now. You've been with her ever since the rescue. No, she's not for you."

"Then why should we have her triple with immortals? Let's just parade them by her until she fires up."

"I've thought of that, but she was exposed to a lot of immortals at Zone Three. Nothing. Eric didn't come into his power until a tripling. Unfortunately, I couldn't get him bound to any immortals before the Dark got to him. No, I want her tripling as often as possible. There's got to be the right combination of

Immortals that will work on her. That's the strategy for now."

"But sir—"

"There's already been more discussion tonight than I should've ever allowed. You have your orders, Nash. Go."

\* \* \* \*

Eve remained asleep in Nash's arms. He wrapped them tightly around her. Desire for her roared inside him. As he studied her during the flight, his balls loaded up and his cock lengthened.

Eve had awakened minutes after he'd taken to the air, and she'd started pounding on his chest. When he'd told her that David had only subdued Kronos and sent him to a holding cell via magic, she'd calmed down a bit—or at least stopped hitting him. She'd cried herself to sleep in his arms.

He hated how much she suffered. Soon, he would add to her suffering. His gut clenched at what David had ordered him to do.

David didn't believe Nash was one of Eve's true mates, but the archangel did trust him with the mission of getting her to a safe place and making sure she tripled. It was likely that David had given him the assignment as a kind of honor for saving her. Any other time Nash would've been thrilled, but not now, not with this woman who bowled over his willpower like a steamroller. This mission he dreaded. In fact, his commander's order pissed him off. Nash wanted Eve, but he needed to check himself. Being a good soldier—a respected soldier—had been his number one priority since joining the Alliance. His brothers and sisters in arms were his family and his purpose. That would never change.

The quarter moon and cloudless night lit her luscious, slightly parted lips. Though she didn't stir, his cock did.

He scanned his remaining energy. A small sphere the size of a small green apple spun inside him. There'd been no time for tripling before he left. He would rectify that in the next few days, but not with Eve no matter how much he longed to sleep with her. *Damn!* All he had to do was oversee the triplings to activate her power and keep her safe and nothing more. But, God, he wanted more, so much more. Heat rose up inside him.

He looked down at the human in his arms. In all his centuries of existence he'd never met a woman like Eve. Everything about her pulled at him.

*Fuck!* If he didn't get a grip and resist his desire for her, he would fail his mission and risk everything.

Eve was strong and confident, brash and foolish—just the right ingredients to get her killed.

At Zone Three, he'd tried to teleport her to The Ranch, the top-secret Alliance location David had ordered him to take her to, but the simple spell didn't work. Others tried, too, but got nothing.

Puzzled, Nash had little choice but to fly her there. Even more confounding, invisibility spells didn't work on her either, so they flew at night, with sixty warriors that David had sent fanned out around them. The archangel wasn't taking any chances with Eve. Luckily, there'd been no sign of darklings during the trip to the secret stronghold.

The Alliance had acquired The Ranch several years ago, but few were aware of it. Nash, who'd worked hard to achieve his status as a first blade under David, was in the know about all the Alliance's holdings in North America.

Built in the early sixties in rural Kansas, The Ranch had been an underground missile complex for the U.S. Military. Abandoned and decommissioned, the Alliance had bought it and an adjoining thousand acres. They put a nondescript house over the concrete silo lids, typical barns over the air vent towers, and bulldozed the pavement to leave a dirt road, all to hide their secret fortress.

In a few hours Nash would initiate David's experiment by choosing the first angel and jinn to triple with Eve from the detachment of warriors. Then Eve would triple with a new pair as often as possible until her power activated and was bound. If it didn't happen, David would send more immortals to fuck her.

Nash's stomach tightened at the prospect of Eve with another jinn.

The Ranch's two permanent guards, a female jinn and a male angel, waved at them from below, looking like they stepped out of Grant Wood's *American Gothic*.

With Eve still sleeping in his arms, Nash landed next to a tree with a tire swing. The jinn dressed in a simple dress and apron looked like a typical farmer's wife. The angel matched her perfectly with his overalls and pitch fork in hand. Nash knew that under their disguises beat the hearts of killing machines.

They saluted him, and in unison said, "Sir!"

"Your names?"

The male spoke first. "Ezra, sir."

"Nadine, sir."

"At ease, warriors. Have you made the preparations?"

"Yes, the rooms are ready." Nadine stepped closer and looked down at Eve. "She must be freezing. Come in."

Nash stepped up on the porch and looked down at Eve. Her eyes were still closed in peaceful slumber. He pulled her close then sent to his lead warriors flying above, *Break up into two twelve-hour shifts. One keeps watch, the other rests. During your rest periods, I will be selecting two immortals off-duty to report to me.*



The leads acknowledged the order and began giving out assignments to their teams.

The inside of the house had a small entry with a wooden bench. The interior gave off a simplistic feel with its wood paneling, textured ceilings, and secondhand furniture.

“This way.” Ezra pointed down the hallway and to the left.

When they got to the last opening on the right, the male warrior disarmed the magical lock and opened the door. In the middle of the room was the entrance, a hatch with a ladder to the first level of the complex. Rather than use the ladder, Nash floated down the opening with Eve in his arms. Fifty feet down he landed softly on the platform, a circular room with four doors evenly distributed around the walls. Ezra and Nadine landed next to him.

The passageway had multiple doors on either side. In the middle of the tunnel, Ezra stepped ahead. He opened a door on the left.

“Here’s her room. Your observation room is next door.”

Nash stepped in. Blistering hot anger seethed inside his guts at the thought of watching Eve with other immortals. It looked like an average bedroom. It had a king bed, nightstands and lamps, dresser, and a mirror. Another door in the room led to a bathroom with a shower, commode, sink, and mirror.

Both mirrors looked typical enough but were instead two-way, so he could monitor Eve from his temporary quarters.

Nadine pulled the top sheet and blanket down, fluffed the pillows, then stepped aside.

Nash gently placed Eve on the bed. She shifted slightly but didn’t awaken. He covered her with the bedding. She looked beautiful and peaceful. He wanted to climb into bed with her and hold her tight against his body. He’d never before experienced such a reaction with a woman… not until Eve.

“Sir,” Nadine whispered. “You best get some rest yourself. We can start with the first candidates in the morning.”

Nash clenched his jaw tight but nodded.

How the hell could he watch Eve, stripped, between two lusty soldiers without committing murder?

\* \* \* \*

*I walk with Mommy, hand in hand, through a meadow of wild flowers, listening intently as Mommy hums a sweet lullaby. I spot my white teddy bear, a wicker basket, and a portable radio all resting on a blanket in the middle of the field. Me and Mommy sit down together at our ready-made picnic. The breeze feels good on my face, and the fresh chocolate chip cookies smell wonderful. Mommy smiles, leans down—*

A creaking sound tore into Eve’s awareness. The dream ended, snatching away Mommy’s treasured image.

A door slammed shut and consciousness jerked her fully awake.

“Hello, Ms. Rousseau.”

Her eyes popped open like a cheap roller shade pulled too hard. Reality slammed into her as she found two strangers, both male, standing between her bed and the door—her only possible exit. In an instant, her heartbeat cranked up, all but pulverizing her ribs.

She tugged the covers over her naked body. The white robe was long gone. Had Nash removed it when he put her in this room? Had he looked his fill? She should call him every sort of pervert, but the thought of his dark eyes on her every curve and secret crevice made her shiver. He’d been so different with her earlier during the flight. Tender and kind, assuring her Kro was not dead. *Thank God Kro’s alive.*

“Ms. Rousseau?” One of the strangers prompted, bringing her back to the here and now. His eyes were brown, like Nash’s.

*Shit!* No windows. No phone. No convenient weapons. They must be more of David’s cronies—immortals, no doubt. She grabbed the lamp and hurled it at the one closest to her. Calmly, he caught it and sat it on the floor.

“Ms. Rousseau, we’re not here to hurt you.”

“No, you’re here to *breed* me.”

“Immortals can’t breed,” brown eyes said quietly.

The other man stepped to the far side of the bed. His eyes were green, just like Kro’s. “But we sure can try, and with such a fucking gorgeous human, it’ll be fun. I’m Wright. He’s Quade.”

Her blood froze. “Wow, you introduce yourself before you fuck me against my will. What manners.”

Wright didn’t reply, while Quade stared into the mirror above the dresser for a long minute.

Then Quade nodded and turned back. “We’ll make sure this is pleasurable for you. It’s our mission to activate your bloodline power and bind you to the Alliance. Without this, you will die.”

“So I’ve been told, but I have until I turn twenty-nine. I’ve got almost four years. What’s the rush?”

Quade pivoted back to his reflection. *What the hell is he doing?* “Making sure every hair is in place?” She mocked.

Quade smiled. “Something like that.”

Wright's gaze glimmered wickedly. Of the two men, he seemed by far the more dangerous.

"One of you is supposed to be an angel, and the other one is supposed to be a jinn." Eve pointed to Wright. "Which immortal are you?"

"I'm the kind that's gonna enjoy fucking you from behind."

Suddenly, Wright's leer fell and he jerked around to stare at the mirror again. Then he sighed and grumbled, "Yes, sir."

Someone was watching from behind that mirror and giving orders. She'd bet anything it was Nash. Was he really willing to peep at her—and do nothing to help her—while these two strangers took her against her will? *Bastard!*

Eve looked directly into the middle of the glass. "Too scared to get on top of me yourself? So you send in your boys. Classy, Nash. Real classy."

The men's attention fixed on her. Quade waved his hand over her, and the blankets disappeared, exposing her naked body.

She hated that her hands trembled. She clenched her fists, desperately trying not to show any fear.

"Nice trick," she spat, refusing to play fair. "You usually need tricks and spells to get lucky?"

Their clothes magically disappeared, revealing cocks that stood at attention like good little soldiers. Inside her, fear and anger mixed like dynamite and flames. Whatever she needed to do to get free of this nightmare, she would do.

"So, how are you going to rape me exactly? I'd like to know the plan." *Get close enough to me, and I'll kick and claw the hell out of you.*

Wordlessly, their hands came down like vise grips, each anchoring an arm and leg. She tried to thrash free, but they held her tight.

Wright moved in close, his face inches from her breasts, his breath skating over her skin. He dipped down and licked her stomach, flicking his tongue in her belly button. "Tasty."

Her thoughts whizzed and popped like an old pinball machine. How could she just lie back and let them take her? Give up? Give herself away? *Not my style.* She didn't trust David and his schemes, but how could she stop these two immortals, each with an arsenal of unknown magical powers? It was impossible. She couldn't without help.

Closing her eyes, she took in a long breath. She felt teeth clamping down on her nipple, and at the ripple of tingling pain, Eve gasped and opened her eyes. Wright's mouth covered her left breast. He had a lascivious leer all over his face. Again, she tried to free herself from their holds. Nothing.

She looked up at Quade with eyes both splitting mad and pleading.

He smiled kindly. "I promise you will enjoy this. I've had hundreds years experience pleasing women. Please let yourself relax."

"How old are you?"

"Five hundred and twelve, but most guess me at thirty." He winked.

"Angel or jinn?" She tried to sound calm through her panic.

"Jinn." He ran a soothing hand over her shoulder.

"So, your nasty buddy with the sharp teeth here is an angel?"

Quade frowned. "Yes."

"Could have fooled me. So you're forcing me to have sex for my own benefit? Wow, my heroes," she snarked.

"Ms. Rousseau, if you'll stop fighting and connect to us, we'll be able to give you the sort of climaxes you didn't know were possible."

*Connect to them?* She never did that. Ever. She'd come close with Kro, but now? It was not happening with strangers. Besides, she wouldn't give David the satisfaction.

"Please tell your friend to get his angelic maw off of my breast." She normally enjoyed nipple teasing. Not tonight, though. Her breasts ached, and her body vibrated with undercurrents of pain and something unwanted. Blood rushed to the hard tips.

Wright lifted his head, his lusty face absent of any hesitation. He waved his hands, and she felt invisible restraints wrap around her wrists and ankles. When they tightened, her body lay out spread-eagle. Panic boiled up inside her.

She struggled but found quickly that she couldn't move an inch. Every fiber of her being, inside and out, wanted to run. But they'd made that impossible.

"What the hell are you doing?" she demanded.

"Do you think chaining her is necessary?" Quade stepped back and peered at her reluctantly.

Wright's hands cupped her breasts. "Why not? She looks hot."

"YOU ASSHOLE!" She struggled against the tethers, writhing with all her might, but they held her firm.

"Very hot." Wright leered. "We've got ourselves a screamer."

Quade snapped, "Shut up, Wright."

The nasty angel wasn't going to stop no matter how badly she resisted and no matter how much she didn't want this.

Eve dipped down deep into her thoughts. She needed to sever the connection between her mind and body and what these immortals were doing to it.

Even as she tried, the jinn's fingers danced over her frame, cascading down the side of her neck, tickling the soft skin under her arm, pressing ever so lightly on her breasts. His angelic partner pinched, tweaked, and nipped her torso. Her mind remained locked as tight as the restraints even though their wicked touches on her body fired every nerve ending.

*God, no!*

"Ms. Rousseau, we won't rush. I want you to breathe slowly." Quade's voice was mesmerizing, and it resounded with sincerity. He massaged her legs expertly, his lips inching toward her own. Her tension began to ease. Wright, too, began moving slow and easy, with a light touch on her neck that caused her skin to burn.

She couldn't stand this. No one should be in control of her sexual response except her, and Nash forced his soldiers on her with innuendo and gentle touches, trying to pry a response out of her. She was as human as the next girl but way tougher. No way was she putting up with this shit.

"Stop them, Nash. I know you can hear me."

Nothing.

She closed her eyes tight. These Alliance warriors claimed to be the good guys, but they used rape to get what they wanted? She had some kind of power that they needed. Fine, but if they activated it, would she be their prisoner for the rest of her life, to be used at David's discretion? How many immortals would she have to bed? How often would Nash watch? Her stomach clenched.

*Damn it!* She needed to act fast.

Quade moved lower, his tongue gliding down her side toward her hip. Wright tweaked one nipple and sucked on the other. Eve flinched, eyes still closed, willing herself to feel nothing.

She felt the tethers on her wrists and ankles relax then release. Quade and Wright seemed oblivious to the change in her restraints. Finally, the opportunity she needed.

Eve opened her eyes. *Wait for it.*

Quade licked her leg. Wright shifted, giving her the perfect shot. She jerked her leg, using her foot to shove Quade away, and then shot her fist out, straight into Wright's groin.

Wright jumped back and doubled over, groaning.

Quade tilted his head. "Wright, did you remove your spell?"

He choked out, "N-no."

The jinn turned to the mirror, then back to Eve. "You've got more tricks, I bet."

"You can count on that." Eve jumped out of the bed and darted for the door.

Quade stepped aside. "Give the handle a try. The door is magically locked. I don't think even a bloodliner could get through it."

Eve rolled her eyes. She touched the doorknob, but it didn't turn. *Damn.*

"We got off on the wrong foot, Ms. Rousseau. I'm sorry about that." He reached out and took her hands. His brown eyes, so like another's, never wavered from her, and she didn't pull away. "You're a very beautiful woman who just learned about the invisible world of immortals and that you're a part of it. I don't want to force you to do anything you don't want to do, but the stakes are higher than my wants—or yours."

"Your stakes, not mine."

"You're wrong. I heard about your harrowing evening at the diner. You think those demons were scary, you should meet their bosses. And you will if we don't follow David's orders."

God, what if Quade was right? Was she being foolish to resist? Could she save herself by following their immortal recipe? Well, Quade was a jinn, Wright was an angel, and she was what exactly? Scared. Not willing to open up. She'd charted her own course for so long she didn't know how to live otherwise. And if she did give in to David's wishes, it would be with Kro and a jinn of her choosing.

Nash? Yes. No sense denying it. If she must triple, then he was the jinn she wanted. Because he was a challenge? Because despite his caustic remarks she trusted that he wouldn't hurt her? Nash was the kind of person that wouldn't ask for her to connect, he would demand it. That scared the hell of her, since she doubted she could resist. Yet, something about him pulled at her when she really should feel nothing more than contempt. If she got a taste of what he could offer, would she be able to walk away? She'd barely been able to do that with Kro. With both of them surrounding her, overwhelming her, Eve wasn't so sure.

"You deserve to be pleased, to not have a care in the world." Quade continued, his voice smoothing out her anxiety.

Her thoughts softened then faded. Part of her screamed to hold onto her fears, to make an escape plan. But her mind drifted with each syllable from...

Whom? She couldn't remember his name...

Eve had never been hypnotized, but suspected this was how it must feel. She closed her eyes, losing herself to the sleepiness. Colors of green and blue whirled around her.

*Eve felt Kro's kisses rounding her nipples, sucking then biting gently. Nash's hands settled lower, one teasing her backside, the other placed flat on her vulva, middle finger sliding between her lips, tip moving in and out of her pussy. She felt moisture seeping from her body. Nash's fingers, now soaked, covered her clit then moved in deliciously slow circles. Her body vibrated. Her orgasm was close. Shivers rolled over her.*

"Quade, we need to get inside her now. She's about to come."

At the sound of their voices, reality intruded. Her body stiffened, and she pushed back her looming climax.

Somehow, she'd drifted off listening to Quade's mesmerizing voice, fantasizing that she was with Kro and Nash. Clearly, she wasn't. Quade and Wright had tricked her with magic.

"Bastards!"

Sandwiched on the bed between Quade's and Wright's muscled bodies and their rock hard cocks ready to enter her, she glared at the mirror. "Nash, you're really going to let them do this? You don't have the balls to come lay me yourself!"

## Chapter 5

*1) At the rising of the sun on the first day of the month of Asvina, the angel Rajiah appeared unto me. 2) I bowed low and said, "Mighty Rajiah, I am your humble servant." 3) The angel said unto me, "Rise up, bloodliner." 4) I rose and said, "Why have you honored such a lowly mortal with your angelic presence once again?" 5) Rajiah did not answer but said, "Timu, if a jinn knocks on your door, will you open it?" I answered, "I will." The angel said, "If a jinn asks you for food, will you place your best fruits and wine on your table?" I answered, "I will." 6) The angel said, "If a jinn seeks shelter for a night, will you extend an invitation?" I answered, "I will. But not just for a night and a day. I will offer my house for a month." 7) Rajiah spread his wings, flew into the air, circled above my head, and then shouted down to me, "Timu, you are the wisest of all mortals, for whatever a jinn longs for, he will find a way to possess. Wise Timu, if you meet such an immortal, tremble and hold back nothing he requests." 8) I watched as the angel flew higher into the sky. His last words that morning came like thunder. 9) "Hear my words, lovers of the Light, fear the hunger of the jinn."*

*The Book of Timu: Verses 1 through 9—Chapter 2*

\* \* \* \*

Watching Quade and Wright caressing Eve pushed Nash to the edge. When she accused him of not having the balls to lay her himself, all his resolve went AWOL, shoving him past his limits like a rocket. His blood boiled, burning with a potent possessiveness.

*Fuck!*

He should continue to follow David's orders and allow the two immortals to finish their tripling with Eve. But Nash didn't believe for a second that either Quade or Wright were any part of her perfect triad. Bloodline magic mystified him. Hell, it seemed to mystify even Nash's commander.

But how much did Nash really understand about her bloodline power? A few weeks earlier, he'd seen red energy shooting out of her cousin Micki at Zone Three the same night she met Jared and Bradley. Tonight, Eve didn't emit even the smallest spark, even with Quade's and Wright's caresses.

If any of these experimental triplings had a chance of working, Eve's defiance had to be dealt with. Nash knew precisely how to handle that. But was he only trying to convince himself so he would have a chance to fuck her?

But the more they touched her, the more he wanted to pulverize their heads into the floor. He'd never felt such a protective urge, and his thoughts, normally easy to govern, crashed against his willpower like a tsunami created by his proximity to Eve.

Such strength, such grit. God, he'd never met a more amazing woman. She would be a delight to pleasure—but she would be a thrill to claim as his own.

*But I have my orders.*

A good soldier would set all personal desires aside, yet Nash was finding that impossible to do with her. Screw David's mandate, at least until he could figure out how to get Eve out of his system. Not an easy task, but he had to try. And if his thirst for her didn't lessen, well... he would cross that bridge when he got to it. Besides, her resistance had to be broken down in order to save her. And being the one who helped her open up might just help him to get a handle on his appetite for her, too. Insane, yes, but at the moment he didn't give a damn. She needed *him*, not these two fools.

He sent a silent command to Quade and Wright. *Get out of there, now!*

In unison, they questioned, *Sir?*

*Get the fuck out of there or I swear on the Alliance, I'll send you both to the Ether with my own blade.*

Yes, *sir!* The two soldiers unlocked their bodies from Eve and peeled off the bed in a flash.

Quade's voice came through the speakers from the hidden microphones. "Ms. Rousseau, please forgive us."

"Just leave." Eve wiggled under the blanket, pulling it up to hide her mouthwatering breasts.

Quade and Wright exited, shutting the door behind them.

Eve’s hazel eyes brimmed with tears as she faced the reflective glass. Her gaze seemed to lock in on him, despite the two-way mirror. Could she actually see him? *Impossible*.

He couldn’t deny that the hunger growling inside him played a part in what he was considering, yet he honestly believed that without a change in attitude her odds of accessing her inner energy and binding to two immortals was nil. And he knew that meant she was going to die young. His gut clenched tight.

“Enough,” he said to himself. “I know what I have to do, and I *will* do it.”

Eve raised her hand and flipped her middle finger skyward, sending a very clear message. She rolled into a position so that her back faced the mirror—and him.

*Damn it!* He knew that she not only desired his type of sexual expertise, she needed it.

Craving poured from him. He lusted for her surrender. The thrumming inside him, the lengthening of his cock, and her shaking body on the bed mixed together, creating a need he could no longer resist.

Eve would not die on his watch.

He turned off the lights in her room to take away her vision, not his. He’d still see just fine.

“What’s this about?” Eve sat up. “More games, Nash?”

He didn’t answer but magically transported next to her bed. Though he wanted to touch her soft skin, he didn’t. *Not before she wins my caresses*.

Her pupils expanded, but the room held only darkness. The lack of light kept her blind and vulnerable, just like he wanted.

He could never really hurt her, but to teach her a little humility to garner the submission he craved—that he would do tonight. Besides, he sensed she needed to learn to trust or she wouldn’t survive for long. He needed to unravel her before she unraveled him.

He’d mocked Kronos back at Zone Three about the angel’s longing to keep Eve all to himself. Now he understood what it meant to be snared by such desires.

He’d seen how Eve looked at Kronos. She cared for the angel, but clearly had never opened up to him. Not fully, anyway.

Eve needed someone to trust and believe in, and God help him, Nash wanted to be that someone, if only for one night.

His gut tightened. Tomorrow, he would resume playing the good, dutiful soldier. Could he be saved from his hunger to possess Eve for himself and no other? Or was it already too late?

\* \* \* \*

Someone was in the room with her. Eve’s breathing turned shallow and quick. Her skin heated. Though she couldn’t see the intruder, she sensed him. She pulled her robe tight around her body.

“Who’s here? Nash, is that you?” She succeeded in keeping her voice from faltering, though anxiety tore at her insides.

“Yes.”

*Oh God!* “Are you here for a ‘thank you’ for sending Quade and Wright away? Whatever. You took too long to make that happen. Were you getting your rocks off watching?”

“You need to control your mouth.”

“Oh I am. I’m saying exactly what I want to say. I bet you want to fuck me. So you going to do it or not?” *Please do it*.

“Best not to tempt me, Eve.” His voice seemed to gush with hunger for her, yet he didn’t pounce. How deep was his desire for her? She tingled from head to toe.

“So, what are you going to do to me?”

“Whatever it takes, Eve. Spells seem to either work for a brief time on you or not at all, so tying you with magical ropes won’t suffice. I want you bound tight, dripping with desire, begging for more, forgetting past and future, feeling only the present, a present I will orchestrate for you.”

An ache for what he promised welled up from her core. How could she resist such strength of will?

Nash pulled the sheet off of her. Her heart thudded like a hammer in her chest.

“What are you doing? Give me my sheet back!”

“*Your* sheet? Now is the time for you to realize who’s actually in charge here. It’s not you.” He moved to her ear and growled, “First, you must earn the pleasure I want to give you, little one. Then, I will grant you ecstasy that you won’t believe you can bear, but you will bear it and much more when my dick plunges into the depths of your tight pussy. When you finally stop fighting me and submit, then, and only then, will I allow you the most amazing orgasm of your life.”

God, you think highly of yourself. You always promise more than you can deliver?" She squeezed her thighs together, trying to rein in her desire.

"Orgasms are hard for you to attain."

"None of your business."

"I wasn't asking. It's obvious reaching climax doesn't come easy for you. Tonight, leave that to me. Whatever your old life, I'll make you forget it. Old relationships, family, friends, ex-lovers, pain, disappointment... all will fade to nothingness."

Nash's words hit a nerve. If he continued juicing up her insides, she might lose herself to burning need.

"Just turn on the lights."

"No. Get ready to take a humid, delirious joyride that will end with your ultimate surrender to me."

The thought revved her up, but also surprised her. *I'm not giving myself over to him. I can't.*

She heard Nash ripping the sheet into strips. No spells from him, just old school all the way.

He tied her arms and legs to the bedposts with the sheet strips.

"Damn it, Nash. What the hell are you doing? Turn the lights on and knock this shit out."

"No."

Once, she'd nervously asked Kro to tie her up, but he'd only laughed, playing it off as a joke. She'd never asked again. Since then, she wondered if Kro had actually agreed, could she have gone through with it. Being restrained, even by someone she cared for, contradicted her demand for control. Therefore, she'd never cultivated that fantasy.

How had Nash known that she would respond to such treatment? When he'd busted into the van, his eyes seemed to see some nexus inside her. Again, at the house in the suburbs, his gaze had flustered her. At Zone Three, the wickedness of his powerful stare had penetrated her. During the flight here, his gentleness and concern had surprised her. *And now?*

"Then get it over with, Nash."

"Believe me, I want to drill my dick into your hot pussy right now." He sounded like he was struggling to keep his head.

"So, why aren't you? You're the one calling all the shots."

"True. My wants have to wait."

Nash's strength of will amazed her. Her own wantonness for him screamed loud inside her. *I can't give in. I won't. Let him do whatever he wants to my body. That would surely be quite a ride. But nothing more.*

"What are you waiting on, Nash?"

"You'll find out soon enough, little one."

She gulped. Heat rushed deep into her insides.

"I understand you think I need sex to turn on some latent power inside me, but how does having sex with *you* help that? Don't we need an angel to make the hocus-pocus work?"

"I could parade a thousand angels in here, but until you take down some of those defenses of yours, it wouldn't do a damn bit of good."

"Really? So the guys do the foreplay, then you rush in to finish the task? That how it works?"

"Quiet," Nash commanded in a voice so controlled it shook. "I like your nerve. But if you don't get it reined in, it will get you killed."

Eve felt a cold shiver crawl up her back. Still she pushed back at him. "Why should I be quiet?"

"I know you're a bit frightened. I get that. Don't be. I will never put on you more than you can handle or need. I also know that you're tempted and more than a little curious."

"What if I am? So what?" *I'm like clear glass to him.*

"You need this more than you know, sweet girl."

Eve licked her lips, wantonness causing droplets of moisture to pop up on her skin. Panting softly, she sighed. "Okay. Give me your best shot."

"You're very tricky, but that won't work with me. I'm the one holding the wheel here, not you."

A new primitive need gnawed at her insides. He hadn't even touched her, and her body was beading for his fingertips. Her mind also had to be kept in check. "Nash, is tying down a girl the only way you can get sex? Untie me."

He leaned down and whispered in her ear, "It's necessary for you, not me."

*Oh God!* She needed to get his attention and stop this train wreck. *Sure it would be fun, but what then?*

She tried to head-butt him, but no luck connecting.

"Naughty girl. That earned you five smacks on that lovely ass of yours."

"Whatever. Screw my body all you want." *Oh God*, yes. "I'll never turn over my will or mind to you."

"I'll see about that. Five more."

Eve grinned.

"By your smile, I know that you're intrigued. That's very good."

*He can see me even though the room is pitch-black. Good to know it is best not to give him any more clues about me.* "I can take anything you dish out, buddy."

"That's *Sir* to you. Keep talking, Eve. You'll earn yourself a nice rosy-red ass. That makes fifteen."

She opened her mouth to say something then closed it tight. What could she say to change his mind? Maybe if she screamed someone would come.

"Eve, get out of your head. I'm sure that you are working all the angles, plotting and searching for any advantage that might lead to me ending this. Not happening."

*Damn.* How could he see so deeply into her? She'd slipped some pretty dangerous men in the past, but none were like Nash: dangerous, sexy, and unnerving. She had no doubt that he wouldn't stop, even if it took all night to get what he wanted. Her body buzzed with craving.

"We're both going to enjoy this, little one. You'll see."

Was she only a challenge for him? Someone to unhinge, get underneath the layers? Given her hardening nipples and growing moisture between her legs, could she resist?

"Now that I have you properly restrained, I wonder if your pretty cunt is already nice and wet for me."

"Don't you think—ohh!"

Nash brushed her nipples with his fingers, causing her lips to tremble ever so slightly, before moving his hand to her secret flesh. Desire flooded her body, taking her to the limits of her control.

He licked her neck. "I gave you one order, a single word. What was it?"

Dozens of sparks fired through her body as he grazed her clit. Wherever Nash touched her became a vortex of vibrations.

"The word was *quiet*."

"You remember. Good."

Eve felt Nash lock his lips on hers, as he continued fingering her mound. He played her body with the skill of a concert musician, bringing her right up to the big drop, then pulling back. Loud and growing: *Crescendo*. Soft and retreating: *Diminuendo*. His sensual push and pull drove her higher.

He sent his tongue deep into her mouth, multiplying the urgency banging inside her body. *Could a mere kiss have so much potency?* She'd never thought so before, but now... Nash blew her away to the edge of conscious thought. Though she wanted their kiss to go on and on, he released her.

"Eve, listen to me. I will touch you anywhere and any way I want. To get your attention when you disobey me, I will punish you and withhold your pleasure. Follow my instructions, and you will climax tonight like you've never climaxed before. But you cannot come until I say. Understand? Answer with a yes or no."

"B-But..."

He lifted his thumb from her clit and stopped licking her neck. Immediately, her ache for his touch grew.

"See, sweet girl. You did not follow instructions, and I stopped touching you. That's not what either of us wants. Your punishment now sits at twenty slaps to your perky ass. No coming until I say, understand?"

With a sarcastic tone, she answered, "Yes."

"Good. Add *Sir* to your responses from now on. You ready for your spanking?"

"Do I have a choice?" Her body vibrated, due to her anxiety. Or was it desire?

"You have much to learn." Nash rolled Eve onto her stomach and began paddling her ass with his hand.

His first smack grabbed her attention, warming her bottom. The second sent a buzzing heat just under her skin. The third splintered her thoughts, leaving her in an altered state of consciousness.

She bit her lip, attempting to hold onto her defiance but feeling it slip away from her grasp.

Abruptly, he stopped tormenting her ass. "Good girl." At first, he massaged her backside, then his hand pressed her swollen folds, transporting her to a wonderful oblivion.

His mouth feathered her lips, and his kiss brought her to the shore of her climax. But again, he pulled back in the last second. As the tide of her ache receded slightly, Nash would press her most sensitive flesh.

"You're driving me insane, Nash." She licked her lips. "Let me come."

The room's pitch-black persisted, concealing him from her sight.

"No. You still have punishment left to take."

He began again spanking her bottom with a controlled hand that delivered sizzling stings. Tears flooded down on the pillow from her excitement and confusion—not pain. Nirvana called to her out of Nash's mind-numbing treatment.

Eve delighted in the chance for Nash to take her body, but she feared he wouldn't stop there. No, he would try to seize everything inside her only to toss her aside when he tired of her. Let him take her body and enjoy the moment, but then she had to resist just enough so she didn't lose herself.

Her mind had been swept to a place where he controlled everything. He'd moved her into a space where her thoughts quieted. Much more of his wicked approach, she would lose herself in what would become an inevitable heartbreak. Determined to block out the pleasure in his touch, she squeezed her eyes shut.

"Still holding back, I can tell." He tapped her lightly on the flank with what felt like a crop. He kept it up, here a smack, there a touch, until the little stings came from every fleshy place on her ass. "You've got lots to learn. Can you deny that you don't want this?"

She shivered with delight and anticipation. Every effort to break free of the strips of sheet failed. Her hands remained bound behind her back, her ankles locked together tightly. Her body throbbed and vibrated. She felt very vulnerable and totally overpowered—and extremely turned on. Holding onto conscious thought was becoming more difficult. Not a good position to be in for her. Much more of his manipulation and she could drain her resolve. No attachments. She'd survived by holding to that one rule.

*I can't just roll over and play dead with him.*

"You want to use a crop to my bottom. I don't want that," she lied. "What choice do I have, Sir?"

Nash's hot breath hit her neck like a warm breeze. "Liar. Not only do you want to be dominated, you need to be. You and I both know it. Bloodliner, yes, but still very human and female. I felt you get out of your head for a bit. Good. My job is to get you there again and keep you there, sweet girl."

Even though he wasn't touching her anywhere, his words shook her everywhere. Vibrations spanned every part of her body. In a final effort to derail him, she whispered, "Even if I am lying, Sir, does that change the fact that you're going against David's orders?"

"Another question. You must like breaking *my* rules." His tone made her tremble. "That will change."

Still, she pressed on. "Do you have an answer, Sir?"

"Since this is your first time to be submissive and we're just getting started, I'll let it slide. But don't push it. Understand?"

She knew he meant business. Softening her tone, she said, "Yes, Sir."

"Here's my answer, little one. You're a woman who has had to depend on no one. You size up people quickly, do whatever is necessary to get through terrible obstacles, and have a strength that few expect. Am I right so far?"

Eve's gut turned several somersaults. How could he know so much? The man got to her, and, hell, that scared her more than his punishments.

"Yes, Sir."

"Sweet girl, you've been on your own for a long time. Though you can handle much more than most, deep down in places you don't want to admit to, you wish you could trust someone, fully and completely. You want to find rest—and peace—if only for one night. Sound right?"

*Oh my God!* No one had ever gotten close to the truth. And somehow, Nash figured her out in a matter of hours.

What little fight she had left inside her deflated like a punctured balloon. At first, she'd found his sexual antics to be intriguing. Now, she realized he'd upped the stakes. If he could discern so much in so little time, what more could he tell about her if she didn't stand up to him.

She lied, "No, Sir. That doesn't sound right. Not at all." *Please, take my body, but nothing more. Leave me with my walls intact.*

"You shouldn't lie to me."

"Do your worst, Sir. I'm up for it." *But I'm not. Not really.*

"You will be. I'm taking you on a sexual journey, where you can quiet that overworked mind of yours."

"Sir, may I ask another question?"

"You're making my ears bleed, little one." He laughed. "One question. No more."

"Thank you, Sir. Why did you send Quade and Wright out?"



"You weren't ready to triple with anyone."

"Or were you jealous...Sir?"

He didn't answer for what seemed like eternity. "That mouth of yours just earned you more punishment. I gave you *one question*, and you asked two. Understand?"

She'd hit a nerve. Good. "Yes, Sir."

Nash grazed her back with his hand with a light touch. "I won't send in another immortal duo unless I know you're okay. I'm not willing to risk you."

*Oh God!* He sounded like he cared about her. No way. His actions had more to do with her bloodline power than anything else. His performance was Academy Award-worthy.

"Eve, get out of your head. Just feel." Nash's lips pressed against her neck.

Her body warmed, and a sweet shiver shot down to her mound.

He stung her ass with two slaps of the crop on each cheek. Her body vibrated with desire. A million thoughts whirled inside her. *Just feel*. She didn't know how. Her internal brakes needed to be punched hard to slow things down.

"Yes, Sir."

"If your bloodline power had activated, who knows what might've happened to you. I can't take the chance until I am certain you are safe."

Hoping to stay on top of the situation, she braved resisting his dominance one more time. "Good excuse, Sir, but I think you really just want to fuck me. Deny that."

"No denial necessary. But your disobedience I can no longer let slide."

Eve felt him loosen the restraints and pull her up off the bed. In a single movement, he sat back on the mattress and placed her face down over his knee. Her skin touched fabric. Nash was clothed, but even through the pants his erection pressed against her belly.

Afraid to push him, she remained silent, though her mind tried to hold on to her walls of fear. The palm of his hand connected with her backside, at first like a light tap but growing in intensity with each smack. He worked over each cheek, again and again. Her mental fingers slipped from the crumbling debris of her resistance. Heat welled up deep inside her mound. Her mental anchors cut away, and she drifted into a dreamland. Just when she thought his torment had ended, he spread her legs wide and fingered her pussy.

"I'm going to fuck your mouth silent tonight. You want me to, I know. But I'm not stopping there. I will take you every way possible. Your ass is mine. Your pussy is mine. I will claim every inch of you, and you will relinquish control to me if it takes all night, sweet girl."

She'd never felt so exposed, so wide open, as his demands of submission made her feel. Nothing like this had ever happened to her—she'd made sure of that until now.

"Bending you to my will is going to be such an incredible experience. For me and for you. Stop and just feel. I am responsible for your pleasure, not you. Understand?"

His dominance thrilled her. "Yes, Sir."

Her life had been nothing but tragedies, train wrecks, and hardships. Every day, her survival depended on her choices to scrape out enough to eat, to find a safe place to sleep, to avoid risks and danger—all to stay alive. Why did she fight so hard for such a difficult existence? It didn't seem worth the struggle. And now Nash was taking charge and giving her only pleasure. Could she really let go for him?

"I can tell you're still deep inside your head—scheming, I bet. Don't waste your time. Only one thing will stop me."

Eve ached everywhere for him. She couldn't catch enough breath to do more than whisper, "Please, Sir. Tell me."

His hands caressed her ass. "All you have to do is to say that you don't want this."

"That's it, Sir?"

"Yes. But you have to mean it. Once done, I'll send for David. He has other methods to ensure your cooperation. But I think you *need* this and won't ask me to stop."

His fingers traveled, tempting her backside's entrance, drifting to the skin between there and her mound, finally reaching her swollen folds. Then, with incredibly skilled fingers, he tormented her clit. Electricity ricocheted from her pussy throughout her body, inside and out. Dizzy with desire, she shuddered.

"You ready to tell me you don't want this?"

Eve couldn't answer. Did she really want what Nash offered?

"For a woman who has a lot to say, you sure got quiet all of a sudden. Better tell me to stop now, or you won't be able to stop me later."

Nash scared the hell out of her. Not because she thought he would hurt her, he wouldn't, but because he would dig past her defenses to the truth. "I want it, Sir."

"I know you do."

"Sir?"

"Yes."

"I've never done this kind of thing before."

"Don't worry, little one. I have. Stop talking, and start feeling."

"Yes, Sir."

"Good girl. I can't wait to fill your hot pussy with my dick." Nash's voice bowled her over.

He cupped her ass with both hands. It still stung from his spanking, making her want him more.

"Your cute ass is nice and pink for me."

"Sir, how can you see it in the dark?"

*Whack!* Her ass burned nice and warm.

"You've got to be the most obstinate submissive in the world." He laughed, and that pleased her. "You don't need answers. You need to stop trying so hard to control the situation. You have to do one thing. Once done, you leave the rest in my hands."

"What thing do I need to do, Sir?"

"You must surrender to me."

A delicious shiver shot up and down her spine. She craved to submit to his dominance. "Yes, Sir."

"The beginning of sweet submission, little one. I hear it in your voice now. That pleases me." Nash moved her back to the bed, face up. "That's the prettiest pussy I've ever seen."

Eve felt electric pulses shoot through her body. She should've hated the way he objectified her with his talk, but she didn't. Instead, it aroused her and sent her higher.

His fingers lightly pressed on her clit again. The little flesh swelled and throbbed. She tried to squelch the urge to pant. It didn't work.

He gave her no respite. Instead, with his free hand he worked her nipples back and forth. Right breast, left breast, each time harder and more intense. Then she felt his lips tantalize her hardening tips. The teasing burned her hotter with ever increasing heat that rolled through her body like waves of lava. God, she yearned for his mouth to latch onto her nipples.

"Sir, please turn on the lights?"

"You will learn to keep quiet, I guarantee." He moved her into a sitting position. "That lovely mouth of yours needs to do something besides talk."

The thought of sucking on his dick got her even wetter. She trembled, listening to him undress.

"Can I—"

He pinched her right nipple. *My God that feels amazing!* The ache took her up and away, shutting out everything. All that remained was Nash. He flipped her onto her stomach. *Smack!* The delicious sting stopped her from finishing her question.

"Before you get to enjoy swallowing me, I have to spank you a few more times. You understand why?"

"Yes, Sir. I disobeyed you."

"That's right, little one."

A nervous hunger clamped onto her. The flat of his hand struck her backside seven more times. She wondered if she would be able to sit comfortably for the next few days, but she didn't care. Her body burned with desire like a supernova as her mind reached an ultimate calm.

Eve wished he would turn on the lights so she could see his face, but she knew he wouldn't. Still, she could almost swear his hot stare actually touched her in the dark.

"You took your punishment like a brave trooper. That pleases me. Are you glad that it does?"

"Y-Yes, Sir." Most of her mental walls crumbled to dust. A few remained despite Nash's skill.

"I know you don't mean that response the way I want you to right now. I promise you that soon you will." He pulled her to a sitting position.

The tip of his dick skimmed her mouth. The taste and texture of the head of his cock thrilled her. How she wished her hands were free to fondle his balls, to circle his girth, and to pump him. Instead, she used her tongue to explore. His dick was massive.

"That's it. Good. Now, swallow my dick."

Greedily, she obeyed, tightening her lips around his cock, sucking with all her might.

Nash thrust his dick deeper into the back of her throat. His lusty grunts pleased her. She loved that her mouth provided such pleasure for him. His hands fisted her hair. Clearly he wanted her to surrender full control.

*I can't. Not really.*

She tried to free herself, but he held her tight.

Suddenly, Nash's hands gently stroked her hair. His cock jumped in her mouth, but he didn't move it in deeper. God, the man's patience amazed her. His lust shot out at her like a living thing, but he managed to keep it leashed.

"Relax, sweet girl." Nash pulled out partially, leaving only the head of his dick in her mouth. "I won't hurt you, but you must understand who's in control. It isn't you."

Though she knew it to be a fool's attempt, Eve opened her eyes wide, hoping to see anything in the room, but especially Nash. Of course, it didn't work. Her blindness remained.

Nash pulled his cock free of her mouth. "Who is in charge?"

As the familiar frenzy of constant whirling emotions, plans, and confusion slowed—Nash held her complete attention.

"You are, Sir," she breathed. *God it felt good to say that.*

"Don't forget that." His dick slid back into her mouth.

Her own want burned inside her, her skin tingling, her channel constricting in need. She moved her tongue to the tiny slit in the head of his cock.

"That's really a great job you're doing on my cock."

Eve dove onto his shaft and began bobbing up and down.

"Fucking amazing!"

His hands moved to her shoulders to steady himself.

"God, yes! You're incredible. Drain my dick. That's it..."

Not a big talker outside the bedroom, but inside... The more Nash spoke, the more her cravings grew. Her libido roared, searing everything inside her.

She sucked harder and harder, speeding her assault on his cock.

"You like swallowing my dick, don't you?"

Nash seemed to be getting close. His hands tightened on her shoulders.

His breaths came out shallow. "I-I'mmm..."

Not ready for him to come yet, she slowed her pace and eased up on the suction. His grip relaxed. Nash might be running the show, but she was directing this moment. That delighted her.

She felt his dick leave her mouth.

"You're not fooling me, little one. Stop trying so hard, stop holding back." He lifted her up off the bed then planted a toe-curling kiss on her mouth.

His lips reduced her to a puddle, and his tongue's penetration into her mouth vaporized her self-control. His palms glided down her sides, outlining the shape of her body, teasing her breasts, ending in a whisper above her clit. She melted into a puddle of need under his hands.

His voice dipped to a low octave of masculinity. "This is how I like you."

Nash's touches ignited something instinctual deep inside her. She wanted more, needed more. Trying to hold back her responses to him was no longer possible. His hands moved lightly over her thighs, and he spread her knees wide.

"Time for me to enjoy a taste."

His tongue danced on her folds, then moved to her clit, laving her into frenzy. Her fingers and toes curled tight. Her body rumbled from the approaching climax.

"I'm getting to you, aren't I?"

"Y-Yes, Sir."

"That's the perfect response. You're learning." He dove back down, this time moving just shy of her clit and driving her insane with desire. She tried to push into his tongue so that he hit her pleasure zone, but he dodged her with a clever nip and lick.

"A little patience will get you what you want, but the more you try to take the wheel, the more you'll have to wait. So, take a deep breath. Good. And another. Excellent. One more. Let it out really slowly."

Eve felt her pent-up tension ease back just a bit as she exhaled her final breath of air. Nash kneaded her shoulders, and the knots released.

“Really good.” He pinched her aching nipples.

Tears of pleasure swelled in her eyes.

“You want me to fuck you?”

“Yes, Sir!”

“You have to earn it.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Will you make me proud, little one?”

She nodded, though her heart raced at what might be coming next.

“Good girl.”

Nash quickly untied her restraints, flipped her on her stomach, and retied the restraints.

She felt him apply a slick liquid to her backside. Where had he gotten the lube? A finger slipped past her tight ring. She clenched her teeth to fight back the pain. It had been awhile since she’d attempted anal sex, and she’d never really enjoyed it. Somehow, she suspected with Nash it would be very different.

More fingers tunneled into her. Next, she heard a buzzing sound. Though she couldn’t see it, she knew he must’ve switched on a vibrator. Nash pressed the device against the back of her leg. Tingles spread from where it touched and over all her skin. Since the darkness masked the sexy jinn, she closed her eyes and brought an image of Nash, naked, muscles bulging, and cock erect.

He removed his fingers then the vibrator parted her rosette. It stopped at the entrance and lingered. Tremors rumbled through her, like an earthquake, its aftershocks shooting deep into her. When he eased the shaking missile into her, she bit her pillow. The little pain felt scrumptious.

Slowly, patiently, in and out, he guided the vibrator into her ass, lighting her up with unbelievable pleasure and tearing down her invisible defenses.

She’d been on the run for a long time. Tonight, Nash offered a chance to open the fortress she’d created for herself and really feel something. But could she? Her walls had helped her to endure, to keep moving. The streets were harsh and unforgiving of weakness. She couldn’t be weak—*ever*.

“I can tell you’re slipping back and trying to regain some control. Not happening.”

Nash pulled the vibrator out of her backside then he paddled her ass again with his hand. These whacks felt more like tiny massages than a punishment. She giggled under his treatment.

He planted a couple of stinging slaps to her ass. Her backside warmed up.

“Come on, Eve. Let go.”

His thumb grazed her clit, causing a quake deep inside her core. Tears poured out of her eyes down her cheeks. A bittersweet need to surrender came with each drop. She sobbed, crying out his name.

“That’s it. Good girl. Tell me what you want, little one?”

“You inside me, Sir.”

“Soon enough, but only when I say so. Not before. Besides, this isn’t about me. This is about you. Getting you to let go and feel deeper than you’ve ever felt is my ultimate payment.”

Eve felt cream being applied to her skin. He rubbed her shoulders, back, legs, and the sore cheeks of her ass. His soothing massage went on and on. Her desire shot off the charts. She quivered with excitement. Waves and waves of want, growing stronger and more urgent, wafted inside her.

He spanked her again, his hand firm. He finished with a gentle caress. “Now, do you think I have the balls to take you?”

She shivered. “Yes, Sir.”

“You’ve done great. Time for your reward. Take a deep breath. Let it out fast.”

As she exhaled, his dick entered her ass, taking her to the brink.

“O-Ohh…” The pleasure-pain shocked her eyes open. In the darkness, she thought she saw tiny flickers of green. Must’ve been her imagination, as they vanished instantly.

“Relax, Eve.” His voice sounded full of craving, but he stopped and held her tight, petting her. “You’re really amazing.”

She loved that she’d pleased him so much.

He nibbled her ear. Her need grew again.

“Sweet girl, I want you to push back into me.”

Using her knees as leverage, she maneuvered herself to take more of his dick. She'd never felt so full and ready to explode. Still, she moved down. The deeper his dick went, the more her hot, insistent need took her over. At last, he was seated deep inside her. She felt taken and dominated, and yet completely trusted that he would not only never hurt her, but instead would give her ultimate pleasure. For a moment, she let herself believe that she might actually be able to surrender all of herself to Nash.

"That's so good." He plunged in and out of her ass, his rhythm perfect to the ache rolling inside her. "Eve, you're like no one I've ever known before."

In and out. Deeper and deeper still.

His strokes lengthened. Each time as he pulled back, he blazed a path back into her that took her breath away. His sweat dripped on her shoulders.

"You're so tight. Unbelievable."

Stroke by stroke, Nash's fervor intensified. His body rocked against her back as he continued the stabs of his cock into her ass.

"Little one, I'm going to move your legs apart more."

Out of the corner of her eye, she saw a flash of green light, then she could no longer pay attention to anything but him as used his legs to spread hers wider.

"Excellent. Tighten your ring on my dick."

Eve flexed her stomach. His cock jerked inside her.

"Perfect." His pumping into her sped up, as did his breathing.

An agonizing appetite amplified over her tingling skin, her soaked pussy, and her burning ass. In and out he went, faster then slower. The torture went on and on, bringing her so very close then backing off just before she could pass the edge. Her head spun, and her body ached. She craved release with Nash inside her. She couldn't last much longer.

He touched her clit gently and pressed his lips to her ear. "Open up, Eve." Sparks ignited inside her from his touch, his words. "Do you surrender to me?"

"Yes, Sir." A satisfying jolt shot down her spine, ending deep inside her pussy. Her body vibrated furiously.

"Say it like you mean it, Eve."

"Yes, Sir!" Her insides flared hot.

"So close to *real* surrender, but enough for now. You've earned your pleasure." He laughed, and she loved the sound, rich and honest.

Breathing heavily, he said, "Time to remove your restraints."

A flash of green lit the room for a split-second, and her hands were free.

Eve fisted the sheets, as Nash shoved his hands between her and the bed, down to her wet pussy. As he drove deep into her backside with his cock, he pressed her folds with his fingers. Lights sparked in her mind's eye. Her body felt electric. Currents ran from his cock to her core.

"You're going to come for me. Understand, little one?"

"Y-Yes, Sir!"

She felt his hands on her waist, his lips on her neck.

"Now!" A single massive thrust, and his cock plunged deep into her ass.

Her orgasm shook her entire body. Reaching climax had always been hard for Eve, but not tonight. Not with Nash. She trembled, and the waves of pleasure pushed her forward.

"O-Ohh!" they screamed in unison.

She could feel his dick pulsing as he shot his liquid into her.

Every cell inside her hummed with satisfaction. Slowly, her release settled back and her breathing eased up. Nash spooned her with his muscled body.

After a several minutes, he flipped her on her back. The lights came on. His smile undid her. He pressed his lips lightly to hers. If she had a white flag, it would be waving right now. He deepened his kiss. *Oh God!*

Releasing her mouth, his gaze locked onto her. "You've been untied for too long, sweet girl."

"Yes, Sir." Her wantonness rose back up inside her in an instant.

As Nash trussed her up with her back pressed to the mattress, her mound to the air, Eve scanned his body. His dick lengthened right before her eyes, and his rock-solid chest rose and fell. He looked like a bull ready to take down an army of matadors. When he finished securing her, he slipped a finger back into her pussy.

"I love your pussy. So tight and wet. Just the way I want it."

Suddenly, the door opened and slammed against the wall with a deafening thud.

Nash leapt up, ready to face the intruder.

Her blood turned icy. She turned to the door to see the danger.

Eve blinked, and her heart clenched. "Kro!"

## Chapter 6

*10) The next morning, at the rising of the sun on the second day of the month of Asvina, the angel Rajiah appeared unto me, Timu. 11) Just as I had done the day before, I bowed low and said, "Mighty Rajiah, I am your humble servant." 12) The angel said unto me, "Rise up bloodliner." 13) I rose to my feet and said, "Why have you honored such a lowly mortal with your angelic presence once again?" 14) Rajiah did not answer but said, "Timu, I ask you, whom should mortals fear the most?" 15) I answered, "The demons and ifrit of the Dark." 16) The angel said, "Tis true. Whom else?" I answered, "Please tell me, Rajiah, what power is more terrifying than the servants of hell." 17) Rajiah spread his wings, flew into the air, circled above my head, and then shouted down to me, "Timu, you are the most courageous of all mortals in the world to ask the truth from me, a mighty angel of the Alliance. 18) Therefore, I will tell you whom to fear beyond drought and famine, storm and earthquake, demon and ifrit." I watched as the angel flew higher into the sky. His last words that morning came like thunder. 19) "Hear my words lovers of the Light, fear the wrath of an angel."*

*The Book of Timu: Verses 10 through 19—Chapter 2*

\* \* \* \*

The moment Eve saw Kronos in the doorway, her spirit lifted and she breathed a sigh of relief.

*He's really alive. Nash told me the truth.*

But Kro didn't look to her like a hero ready to save the day. Instead, he looked like a man capable of homicide. Staring directly at her, his eyes widened, then narrowed. His nostrils flared. The next instant he charged, bulldozing Nash into the far wall. The sound of the collision reverberated in the room.

The two exchanged brutal punches, one after the other, but Kronos's sudden surprise attack had given him a slight advantage, at least for the moment, enabling him to keep Nash, still naked, pinned to the wall.

"Kro, what are you doing?" she asked. "Let him go."

"Sweetheart, I've known this creep a long time." Kro held Nash by placing his forearm against his throat. "He's getting what he deserves."

Her heart thudded hard in her chest. She hated for these two to fight over her. "I'm okay. Really, I am."

Kro turned back to her but kept his hold on Nash. "It doesn't look like it to me. I've heard whispers over the years about this prick's sexual tastes. Now I know those rumors were understated. He's tied you up like a turkey ready for roasting."

*God, was that how she looked? How else would he respond to such a scene, especially given what she knew about his style in the bedroom?*

Incredible, yes. His tender lovemaking always made her feel totally adored, like the fairy-tale princess she'd yearned to be as a child. He was a man who could give and give and give until her toes curled and her climax peaked in sensual waves that left her breathless.

But bondage? No, Kro would never tolerate that.

How could he ever understand the sinful side of her that responded to Nash's lusty harshness and absolute dominance—providing an equally satisfying orgasm? Especially since she barely understood it herself.

"I know what Eve needs, and your soft pillows and silk sheets aren't going to cut it," Nash choked out, and then punched Kro in the stomach.

The blow almost worked to free him, as Kro jerked back but was somehow able to keep his hold on Nash.

"You'll pay for what you've done to her, asshole, I promise."

"Big words, warrior, especially since I'm your commanding officer. Or have you forgotten that?"

Testosterone overloaded the room as the fight spun further out of control. She needed to act fast to stop them. Her entire body tightened with fear. "Stop antagonizing him, Nash. You think you know me. You don't." Softening her tone, she said, "Please, Kro, leave him alone. He didn't hurt me."

He remained silent and kept his forearm at Nash's throat.

"Soldier, what exactly do you plan on doing to me?" Nash seemed poised for some kind of defensive response to Kronos's treatment.

To her, they seemed equally matched—at least enough to kill each other if she didn't figure out how to diffuse the situation.

"Damn it, what is wrong with you two? You're acting like little boys."

"Listen to Eve. Either do something or let me go. My patience is running thin."

"I will." Kro kept his one arm pressed hard against Nash, the other he stretched out to the side. Blue light shot out his hand then a sword appeared out of thin air.

“What the hell?” Eve’s stomach tightened.

Fists are one thing, but if Kro used magic to introduce weapons, things were about to get a whole lot more serious.

“No, it’s not from hell.” Nash tilted his head. “But it can send me to a place very much like it that we call the Ether. So, angel, are you taking off my head or not?”

Kronos placed the sword tip at Nash’s chest. “That’s exactly what I’m going to do.”

Eve could almost feel the rage inside Kro. It was like a living thing.

Nash folded his arms, closed his eyes, and leaned forward, stretching his neck. “Take your best shot, warrior.”

She didn’t believe for one second that Nash was giving in. It seemed more like he was trying to gain an advantage by feigning defeat so he could then strike. If she didn’t stop this now, one—or both—would be dead.

“Kro, if you do this, I’ll never forgive you.” Eve fought against her restraints until sweat dotted all over her skin.

The sword tip didn’t move, but Kro turned his head back to her. “But if I don’t, I’ll never forgive myself. Look at you. How could he do that to you?”

“It was really easy.” Nash shot his knee up into Kro’s groin.

Kro stumbled backwards with a groan, swiping the sword in front of him wildly as wings popped out his back. “Y-You’ll regret…”

Nash’s body turned the smoky green she’d seen before, but this time he held daggers in both his hands. Dread twisted her stomach. Both immortals were set on killing each other, all because of her.

Before she could scream for them to stop, the door swung wide.

David stepped into the room with his arms held straight out in front of him. Two bolts of blue light shot out from his hands. One went to Kro, the other to Nash. They wrapped around the two men, who struggled against the strange blue magic.

Relief swept over Eve, and she let out a long, draining breath.

“Are you two ready to stand down?” David smirked. “Or shall I show you what an archangel who sits on the Council of Seven can really do?”

“Can you keep them restrained?” Eve asked.

He pivoted toward her, and she noticed the corners of his mouth curve up into a wicked grin as he scanned her entire naked body.

Her face burned. “I always knew you were a pervert.”

He shrugged, turning his attention back to Nash and Kro.

“David, will you at least untie me?”

“No. Too busy at the moment.”

“Will you two please tell him that you will not fight anymore, shake hands, and make up?”

They didn’t speak or move. Upon a harder look, they appeared to her as if held in some kind of suspended animation.

“Are they able to communicate, David?”

“Yes, but not verbally?”

“How then? ESP?”

“Something like that.”

The blue lights around Nash and Kro dimmed, and Eve detected slight movement from them. She turned to David. Sweat popped out on his forehead, as the archangel struggled to keep his magic bindings around the jinn and angel.

“Sir?” Wright asked, stepping into the room. Behind him came Quade, seemingly confused.

“I’ve got this.” David nodded toward them. “By the way, good job, Wright.”

“What the hell did he do that was good?” Eve asked.

“Unlike these two, he followed my orders. Then he let me know that Nash had stopped him and Quade from completing a tripling with you.”

Eve remembered how she’d been lost to the lovemaking with Wright and Quade, dreaming that the two warriors on top of her weren’t unwanted assailants but were actually Kro and Nash. When she’d snapped out of the hypnotic hold and called Nash a coward, the man who’d rescued her from the demon’s van stopped the duo from continuing their assault on her body.

She hadn’t given much thought about the trouble Nash would be in with David for stopping Wright and Quade just short of entering her depths. Now, she was seeing live and in person.

“David, listen up. Nash saved me from this angelic prick from ripping my flesh off. I was scared, and he intervened. Got it?”

David didn’t respond. *Archangel or not, he’s a total asshole.*

At first, she’d thought the same about Nash. Now, though, she knew there was so much more to him underneath the steel surface. Even when he’d spanked her, she sensed he wanted to protect her, as well as possess her. *Why?* She didn’t know, but it thrilled her. A deep ache to be touched and kissed by Nash again rocketed through her body.

*I hope I get a chance to thank Nash.* And wouldn’t it be wonderful to show Kro between the sheets that she’d forgiven him? Yet, if David had his way, she’d be the plaything for a number of his soldiers, and none of them the immortals she really wanted—Nash and Kro.

*Oh God!* She realized now that the fantasy of making love with both of them at once had been brewing inside her since seeing them together in the basement of Zone Three.

*What would happen when David finally did release them?* They wanted her, but not the way she envisioned. No. They wouldn’t ever be able to share her. So much for her dream of being with them both at the same time. Still, if she could figure out how to get them to let go of their hate for one another and work together, just maybe...

*What the hell am I thinking?*

Her head spun and her heart chugged. Sex with either of them could never happen again. Not worth the risk to her heart. Time to cut her losses and try and figure a way out of this total cluster fuck. The trick was controlling her desire for them—even though it still clawed at her insides.

Wright’s gaze wandered over her body. “Sir, I’d be happy to fuck her for you now. She’s ready. I can smell her need.”

“Bastard! Come one inch closer, and I swear you’ll regret it. You’re nothing but a cruel monster.” She was painfully aware of her current situation: naked, tied to a bed, and alone with five men in the room.

The nasty Wright leered at her. “I like your fight, human.”

“That’s enough.” Quade’s hand came down on Wright’s shoulder.

The lascivious angel shook free of his friend’s hold. “Is that an order or a request? If the latter, forget it, Quade.”

Eve was grateful for Quade’s attempt, but she wondered what it would take to shut Wright up.

“Then listen to me, Wright.” Nash’s tone threatened. “Trust me, you won’t ever touch her again.”

Wright jerked around toward Nash.

David looked puzzled. “How did you break free of my spell?” More blue poured from his fingertips.

Nash’s body remained motionless.

*Thank God for Nash.* Her shoulders relaxed, if only slightly.

It might be foolish to try to make a case to prove to David Wright’s intentions had nothing to do with obedience, but she had to try. If she couldn’t, the archangel might let him fuck her. “David, did this angel also tell you that Kronos was here?”

“No.”

“I didn’t know.” The creep glared at her.

She kept her gaze on David. “You had no idea until you walked in that Kronos had beaten you here?”

“True.” David’s breathing seemed labored.

“I doubt that there weren’t some kind of magical alarms going off somewhere. Isn’t this sorry excuse for an angel supposed to be one of your finest? Doesn’t that include guard duty? You said that I’m important. Well, this one either turned a blind eye, or the prick isn’t a very good soldier.”

“Interesting assumptions, Eve.” David looked as if he might be considering her argument. *Thank God!*

Wright’s mouth opened to say something, but then clamped shut.

Eve felt pleased that she’d gotten to him, but thought best to stop the needling. She had more pressing things concerning her at the moment, like figuring a way out of this disaster.

Another man sauntered in, wearing a gray Italian suit. He looked to be mid-forties, but with this crowd, appearances were more than deceiving.

*Great. Nowsix men and little naked me.* The odds were worsening.

She spat out, “Did one of you bring a pole for me to dance around?”

“Not a bad idea,” Wright mocked.

Her gut tightened. Though difficult, Eve thought that she better keep her sarcastic remarks to herself, or she might suffer worse consequences than she



could imagine.

Though she knew it to be a waste of energy, she couldn't resist pulling at Nash's ties. She needed to be free. *Damn!* The restraints held, as she knew they would. No change to her situation. *Still a hostage.* A dreadful shiver skated down her back.

"Parkor, what are you doing here?" After David called the man by name, the others fell to their knees.

*Who the hell is he?*

"As you were." The man moved over to the bed.

He leaned down close to her face, looking like a biology student studying a frog about to be dissected. His breath smelled of stale cigar smoke.

"Steady on, David." Parkor's accent held a high brow British timbre. "I'm only taking a look at your latest catch, this little bloodliner."

Eve stared up at the guy. "Will you get out of my face, asshole?"

Parkor grinned then straightened up. "David, are you losing control of your force?"

"Not your concern. North America is my worry, and Europe is yours."

No wonder David acted so high and mighty. Made sense to her now, knowing he was the angelic top dog of an entire continent. Still, she would never give him a curtsy or bow. *Once a prick, always a prick.*

"True, but given your territory seems to be, bloody hell... how shall I say... in play, the others on the council thought it best for me to make a visit."

"Ramon would've been a better choice to send to me."

"He's busy dealing with earthquakes generated by the darklings in Chile and Peru."

David snorted.

Parkor put his arm around Quade, who looked surprised. "I think you can release your men now. They couldn't be stupid enough to try something with me here and you, too, of course. What's your name, son?"

"Quade, sir." The jinn looked rattled and in shock.

David's face darkened. "He's my soldier, Parkor, not yours. Back off."

Clearly, David and Parkor didn't care for each other, but David did lower his hands. The blue light around Kro and Nash faded.

Kro rushed to her side, untying the restraints. Next, he positioned himself between the bed and the others, to shield her naked body from their view. The man always knew just how to make her feel treasured.

Nash waved his hand over her. A sheet materialized, covering her. She was grateful for the draping. Then he began dressing, as if nothing of significance had occurred.

Eve leaned up and freed her ankles. Even though it was crazy, she longed for a single glance from him, but nothing. Instead, he seemed fixed on clothing himself. Why had he created fabric to cover her? An act of kindness or pity?

Why should she expect anything else? Was she only a fuck to him? A prisoner with benefits?

Just when she was ready to write him off, Nash turned to her and mouthed, *You okay?*

God, he got to her. She nodded.

He really seemed to care about her but didn't want the others to know. Why did she always think the worst? Experience was why. He didn't deserve that from her.

A fiery flicker made its way deep into her pussy, and she brought her knees up to her chest, circling her arms around her legs.

David barked at Nash, "Explain yourself, commander."

He stood up, now completely dressed except for his boots. "I had the situation under control."

"Go on."

"These two did not." Nash pointed to Wright and Quade. "Instead, they only caused her pain, so I doubt they would've been able to help her activate her power. And by the slim chance they had, she would've used it against them because they scared her. I wasn't willing to take the risk."

Kro spat, "So you tied her up?"

Eve could almost taste the acid that must have burned in Kro's mouth.

"Necessary."

"Did you fuck her, Nash?" David asked.

“I deemed it important.”

“Alone?” David grimaced.

Kro added, “A coupling? Very convenient.”

“Like I said, she was scared. Still is, I bet. The Alliance doesn’t have a chance in hell of getting her powers up and working that way. I wanted her to surrender and trust me.”

“You’re a damn liar,” Kro spat. “You wanted her for yourself, admit it.”

Nash’s hands curled back into fists. “Pot. Kettle. Black.”

“Fuck you!” Kro’s face turned deep red.

This needed to end, right now. “May I have something to wear? Or am I the matinee for today?” Eve hoped her tone would rouse someone to action.

Kro spun around. He waved his hand and a pale blue robe materialized. Handing the garment to her, he turned his stare back to the other men. He was in soldier-protector mode all the way. It made her feel safe. But she doubted that he could stop Parkor and the others from doing exactly what they wanted to her, whatever that might be.

She hoped that the crisis could be avoided for a few breaths at least.

“Thank you, Kro.” Eve held the robe close, but stayed under the sheet. “May I have some privacy to dress, please?”

He scowled at the other men in the room. “Get out.”

“Delivering orders are you?” David folded his arms. “Interesting, considering you disobeyed mine and came here.”

“Yes, I did. But I’m certain that I am the angel she needs to ignite her bloodline power.”

Parkor tilted his head. “It seems to me that you can’t control your warriors, David. Perhaps I should notify Ramon and the others. We may need a change in leadership here.”

David ignored the man, turning back to Kro. “Why do you think you can ignite her power, warrior? You had your chance, and it didn’t happen.”

“She’s more important than—”

“What the hell are you doing to this poor girl?” The question came from a woman entering the room.

David spun around. His gaze fixed on the speaker with her blond hair pulled back in a ponytail.

“And who is this human?” Parkor sneered.

David didn’t respond, seeming unaware of him or anyone else but the woman.

Eve had never seen him so unnerved. Was the woman really able to get under his skin? Unlikely. Not with David. Still, his instant change of demeanor at the female’s arrival was strange, even for him.

“Can’t you tell, Brooke?” Another woman stood in the doorway.

Eve recalled seeing her at Zone Three, asking about Eric. She had dark hair and hazel eyes just like hers. *So this is Micki, my cousin.*

“He’s working tests on her like he did with Eric. David, need I remind you that failed?”

“Micki, this is none of your business.” David shook his head, resuming his arrogant bearing.

“Humans aren’t lab rats for your sexual experiments.” Brooke pushed David, and he stumbled back.

Yes, the woman did get to him. If anyone else dared to push David around like that, he’d probably strike them dead before they could draw another breath. With Brooke, the archangel’s norm vanished. Still, David didn’t come across to Eve as very long-suffering.

She wanted to warn Brooke. Humans had to stick together in this crowd. “Be careful.”

“Thanks.” The spunky woman turned back to David. “You need your wings clipped.”

Two more men bolted into the room and rushed to Micki’s side.

“Everything okay?” The one with the long dark hair wore a leather jacket and wrapped a possessive arm around her.

Eve tensed, recognizing Jared. The last time she’d seen him, she’d been flung across the room at Zone Three.

The other man had short blonde hair and carried a machine gun. She remembered Bradley from the club, too. Nice guy, but one hundred percent soldier.

*Swords and machine guns? What next? Bazookas?*

Seeing these men and how protective they were of Micki caused twinges of envy to pop up inside her. Such devotion would be so wonderful for any

woman to have.

Like every other man in the room, these two were built like armored tanks. Each took one of Micki's arms.

Micki went up on her toes and kissed them one at a time. They each hugged her tight, uncaring of who saw their display of affection.

"Stay right here, next to us." Jared looked to be sizing up the room.

"This is an Alliance stronghold and far off the Dark's radar, honey." Micki touched his jaw. "What are you worried about? I'm safe here."

Bradley cupped her chin and turned her face to his. "Sweetheart, we'll let you know when we think it's safe."

Micki giggled. "You guys are too much."

Eve couldn't remember ever seeing people so obviously in love. She wondered how that would feel. For a moment, she thought how nice it would be to be surrounded by such strength and affection, Kro on one side of her, Nash on the other. The thought was ridiculous. The two would rip her apart trying to kill each other. No time for such a silly whimsy.

"Eve, this is Jared." Micki patted his stomach. She turned over to her other man and touched his cheek. "And this is Bradley."

"I've met them both before at Zone Three, Micki." She didn't want to think about the failed tripling with Jared, again. That made eight men and two women in her bedroom. Nifty. "Maybe I should be selling tickets. Standing room only tonight."

Brooke put her hands on her hips. "She's right. Every man needs to get out of here right now."

"And you are?" Parkor asked.

"A woman you don't want to mess with, mister."

Parkor smirked. "Seems you can't control your human lovers either, David."

"We're not lovers," Brooke spat.

Micki spoke up. "Parkor's just trying to get to you. Pay him no mind."

David's gaze had never left Brooke. It was as if he were in some kind of trance.

"Snap out of it." Brooke waved her hands in front of his face.

David blinked then turned to the other men. "Everyone out!"

Wright turned on his heels and exited. Quade followed.

Micki winked at her lovers. "Sweethearts, let us girls have some alone time. Okay?"

Jared and Bradley didn't budge, but seemed to be sizing up the remaining men.

"Not until they all leave." Bradley motioned to the other men in the room.

"I'm just asking you to go into the other room, honey. Besides, they will follow you."

"After they leave, then we will." Jared's scan of the other men continued.

"Baby, someone has to be the first to leave, sweetheart." Micki's adoration for her lovers couldn't be hidden. "Don't forget, I have my own defenses: bloodline power. If there's any trouble in the next few minutes, I'll send you a mental distress signal." She took her finger and made an X over her chest. "Cross my heart."

Eve found it interesting that Micki could send messages to them. Perhaps having some bloodline power might not be all that bad.

"All right. But they better be right behind us." Jared planted a kiss on her, and then he glared at the other men. "Right behind us, not a second later."

Bradley pulled her tight into him. "Listen to the grumpy jinn, sweetheart. This is one time I agree with him."

"Just leave, will you." Micki laughed.

The two men walked out of the room.

Brooke motioned to David, Parkor, Kro, and Nash. "All you guys need to leave, too."

"I'm not leaving her." Kro grabbed the hilt of his sword with two hands.

David pulled Brooke behind him. The woman frowned but didn't move.

"Me either." Nash's voice sounded like a growl, full of threat.

Kro and Nash's apparent possessiveness made her weak in the knees, but if Eve didn't quit indulging the idea that Nash and Kro might actually claim her for their own, she'd never be able to stop. Her heart breaking in two would be the inevitable conclusion of her foolish fantasy. It had to end right now.

Her gaze went back and forth to the two men who had opened her up for a few fleeting moments to hope again, to believe again. Yes, that terrified her. She needed time to catch her breath and figure things out.

“Go! Please!”

## Chapter 7

*I just finished the passage about the Dark's deadliest attack on the Bloodline. According to the book, the Alliance wasn't of much help then. An entire family branch destroyed because of the Alliance leaders' ineptitude. Though the Seven were the most powerful of the Alliance, they were not invincible. Long ago when the Seven still met in the open, the Dark massacred four of them, hundreds of angels and jinn, and twenty-seven bloodliners under the Alliance's protection. That day, all immortals—Alliance and Dark—thought the Bloodline eradicated. But they were wrong.*

*Could it be that simple—bloodliners needing immortals as much as immortals need humans?*

Eric's Flash Drive: day 30—entry 9

\* \* \* \*

Micki and Brooke pointed to the door, their silent command for everyone to exit and leave Eve alone with them.

Jealousy scorched Kronos's mind with the picture of Eve restrained on the bed by that damn jinn. He couldn't walk out. Not before letting Eve know how much she meant to him and that he would never deceive her again. He wanted her to understand everything.

“Sweetheart—”

Eve leapt from the bed. “Just leave. Please don't make me ask again.”

He'd never seen her this closed off, but how could she not with all she'd been through. His gut coiled up in guilt for his past failure to keep her safe and for his past lies to her at Zone Three.

“Can't you see you're upsetting the poor thing?” Brooke raised her eyebrows.

That was the last thing he wanted to do, but the woman was right. Eve's hands were shaking. *Damn!*

“Seems to me that the humans are running things here.” Parkor pointed to Eve. “And this one needs to be reined in immediately. David, I'll be back very soon. And I won't be alone.”

David gave him a mocking wave. “Goodbye and good riddance.”

The immortal ruler of Europe smirked, then disappeared in a flash of light.

“Eve, are you hungry?” Brooke asked.

Eve shrugged. “I could eat.”

Brooke tilted her head to David. “It's bad enough that you let the Dark get to Eric. Were you planning on starving his cousin and saving Vincorte the trouble?”

The archangel tried not to wince as he waved his hand and a gold dish loaded with fruit, cheese, and crackers appeared on the table next to her bed, along with a crystal tumbler and pitcher filled with water. “Let's give them a few minutes.” Not waiting for a response, the archangel stepped out of the room.

Kronos had never seen David's behavior so odd. Acquiescing to humans—and females to boot? Perhaps it had something to do with Brooke being pregnant with Eric Langley's child. If the new mother could carry the new bloodliner baby to term before the Dark got to her, David would have a part in bringing up the newborn under the guise of protector. The thought concerned Kronos. He could only imagine how manipulative David would be with an innocent infant.

David's plans for Eve couldn't be any less dangerous. No doubt, the archangel would bring in a revolving door of immortals to fuck her until she powered up.

“Eve, you really want me to leave?” He hoped she'd say no.

Instead, she nodded, looking weary. “I need a few minutes.”

“Okay. I'll just be in the next room.”

Nash stood beside him, looking like he wanted to touch Eve again, which made Kronos want to spit nails. “Me, too, little one.”

She looked down, flushing at Nash's tender words and lusty gaze.

Ever since walking in the room, Kronos became more and more agitated by anything David's second-in-command did or said. Coupled with the image of Eve naked and tied up while Nash did who knew what to her, he felt his anger turn to hot rage.

Eve held up her left hand. “Guys, while you're gone, please don't kill each other. That would really piss me off.”

Her words caused Kronos to recall a line from Othello: *Murder's out of tune, and sweet revenge grows harsh.*

He kissed her cheek. "I'll do my best, honey."

Walking to the doorway, Kronos thought that he might have to let Nash's treatment of Eve slide—for now. But if the jinn ever molested her like that again, he'd slice the asshole in two that very instant without qualm.

A corner of Nash's mouth curled up. He stepped next to Eve and kissed her on the mouth. Her long ginger lashes fluttered shut as their embrace deepened. She moaned.

In Kronos's head, he heard Nash's voice. *Like I said earlier, I know what she needs.*

The blood in Kro's temples pounded like a sledgehammer against granite. He clenched his jaw and squeezed the hilt of his sword tight.

"Get away from her, asshole!"

Eve grunted in frustration. "Both of you, get rid of your weapons, and get over this petty shit. Neither one of you owns me."

The jinn flinched at her words, but didn't respond. Nash's daggers vanished. He turned on his heels and pushed past Kronos. It took every bit of willpower not to pummel the guy with his fists. Obeying Eve's request, Kronos also banished his sword.

"Kronos, before you leave could you conjure a blanket?" Micki asked.

Regretfully, he ended his kiss with Eve. "Sure."

He wondered why she wanted it. The temperature in the room neared an uncomfortably warm level. Pulling a dot of energy from his core, he visualized a dark blue fleece blanket. When it solidified, he handed it over to Micki. "This good enough?"

"Yes, thank you. Now go."

Kronos stepped into the hallway and Brooke shut the door behind him. Instantly, he hated being separated from Eve.

Since the night he'd met Eve, he couldn't stop thinking about her. For an immortal, he was young, only ninety-two years since his rising. Yet, in those years, he'd never met such a woman. She was sexy from head to toe: long, curly red hair; soft skin; a strength that surprised most; a curiosity that never seemed satisfied; and an intelligence that amazed him.

Still, he'd always sensed a brokenness that kept part of her closed off from everyone. If he could just spend more time with her, give her everything she could ever want or desire, then maybe, in time, she would open up and believe in him. How he longed to be alone with her again, pleasuring her, kissing her wet lips, tasting her taut nipples, fingering her moist folds, laving her tight pussy, pulling out her moans of delight. But all that would have to wait. Her safety needed to be his priority. The Ranch seemed impenetrable, but so had Zone Three, which the Dark had broken into the night Eve ran.

No matter what David demanded, he would never be more than a room away from her ever again.

Walking into the observation area, Kronos found David pacing, while the others sat, staring through the two-way mirror at the women.

Jared and Bradley's concentration on the other room didn't irritate Kronos. They were fixated on Micki. But Nash's focus chafed. The intensity of the jinn's stare stirred up a seething concoction inside him.

Kronos looked past Nash to the object of the jinn's attention: *Eve.*

She sat back on the bed, closing her eyes. An unquestionable urge to run into the room and whisk her far away from Nash built up inside him. But before he could act, Eve disappeared from the two-way. All he could see through the mirror was something blue. He realized that Micki and Brooke must've placed the blanket he'd given them over the glass, blocking the room from view.

*That's why Micki wanted it. Smart woman.*

"Now we can't see them. That's just fantastic," David said sarcastically. His gaze went back and forth from Nash to Kronos. "Why have two of my best men deliberately disobeyed my orders?"

Nash stood up. "Sir, I told you why I did what I did. How is that disobeying your orders?"

"You said that you needed to make sure she wouldn't hurt any of your men should her power get activated. That's why you coupled with her. Right?"

"Yes."

David held his wings tight against his back, continuing his circular march. His demeanor spoke volumes. "So you're ready to send in other immortals to triple with her?"

The jinn didn't answer.

"Exactly what I thought." David turned to Kronos. "And you, what's your excuse?"

"I know Eve better than anyone else. She'll trust me, and without trust, she'll never open up enough to release her bloodline power."

"Really? That's why she sent you out just now? That's why she left Zone Three in the middle of the night without a word to you? Don't bother answering. I already know the truth."

Kronos couldn't deny David's logic. He'd run the same questions over and over in his own mind. The truth was clear: Eve didn't trust him. His gut tightened at the thought.

David continued, "Neither of you understand what is going on, what will happen if we fail. You're letting your dicks do your thinking. I don't give a damn what you want. Humanity depends on us to do what is right, no matter what our own desires may be."

Bradley stood. "Perhaps you have some desires of your own for Brooke that you're wrestling with."

"Mind your own business. Did you retrieve *The Book of Timu* yet or not?"

"No." Bradley glared at the archangel. "You know the book is in the Ether, which only Micki can open a portal to."

"And the delay is what, exactly?"

"She has to cross into the Ether for the passage to work. So, Jared and I have made the jump with her six times already. Whenever we sense any threat near us, we leave. Believe me, there are horrific creatures in the Ether that you can't imagine. Neither Jared nor I will risk her safety."

"Damn it." David stopped his pacing abruptly. "Terrok, the demon prince, is still in there. With the book, he could find a way out with one of his underling's help. We've gathered up only three bloodliners that were listed in Eric's flash drive besides Eve: Leah, Simone and Cash. Only an hour ago in an apartment in New York, Stone's team found the body of a female bloodliner reduced to a pile of ash by the Dark. Our security guarding Eve must be sufficient. She's safer bound to the Alliance, and I came to check her progress."

*An hour ago?* Kronos's blood froze. He would never leave Eve's side. Not again. Not with the Dark's target on her back.

"Why is the Dark killing bloodliners?" Jared leaned against the wall and folded his arms in front of him. "I thought they wanted some of their own."

"I don't know why. Vincorte is Terrok's number two. He's no idiot. Whatever his plan, it doesn't bode well for any bloodliners not in our care. He'll try to use them, dead or alive, to open the Ether and release his master."

"Can that really work without a bloodliner bound two immortals?" Jared asked.

"I've only known for a few months that bloodliners still exist. It's anybody's guess what will work or not." David's words gave Kronos cause of alarm for Eve's safety. "How secure is the Ranch?"

"I've assigned several teams to the area, in the air and on the ground. I dare any darklings to try to charge in here."

Nash took a step toward the archangel. "I'd like a few more soldiers assigned here."

"Agreed." David turned to Jared and Bradley. "There are over seventy more bloodliners Eric identified from the book that we can't find. Plus, there may be more others named in that book. We need it."

"Back off. We know that." Jared rose to his feet, his face dark with anger.

"Then why are you here and not looking for it? I understand keeping Micki safe, but you have to keep trying. Jump in, look around, jump out. Keep it up until you succeed. If the Dark gets to it before we do, then all hell will break loose from the Ether."

Jared grabbed David's shoulder. "Micki wanted to make sure you weren't mistreating her cousin or Brooke. We told her about the Ranch and that it was the safest place for Brooke and Eve, but she had to see for herself."

"Fine. She's seen them." The archangel twisted free of Jared's hold. "When she comes back in here, get back to your mission."

"What's with you, David?" Jared leaned against the wall. "You're behaving like an even bigger prick than usual."

"Only back for a few weeks from exile and you think you know me."

"Probably better than most, old buddy."

"Cut the crap. I don't need your psychobabble. I need Eve's power activated—now!"

Bradley asked, "Have you considered, sir, that maybe she doesn't have any powers?"

"Of course I have, but I can never know until she triples. These two jackasses—" David pointed at Kronos and Jared. "—have kept that from happening."

"Micki didn't need to triple to activate her bloodline power." Jared shrugged. "It shot out the moment Bradley and I saw her. Seemed to be more of a proximity thing. The binding happened later with our tripling."

Bradley nodded in agreement to Jared's claim.

*Could Eve be powerless?* If so, Kronos vowed never to share her. Yes, he'd need energy from a tripling, but that could be done with an immortal buddy and a human other than Eve. The possibility of keeping her all to himself kindled hope inside him.

"She's been around hundreds of angels and jinn but nothing has happened." David waved his hands, and his wings disappeared. "Adjacency to immortals doesn't seem to work for her, but maybe she hasn't come in contact with the right ones."

Micki opened the door and stepped between Jared and Bradley hands on her hips. "David, did you try your dream trick on her?"

"Of course. It didn't work with Eve."

Jared put his arm around Micki. Bradley took her hand.

“What dream trick?” Nash frowned.

Micki raised a dark eyebrow. “David sent me dreams about Jared and Bradley a few days before I met them. I believe he thought it would be a kind of magical enhancement, hedging his bet.”

David sat down. “It worked didn’t it?”

Micki put her hands on her hips. “No. It had nothing to do with your dreams. Even though I was looking for my brother, I also was unconsciously looking for something for myself.”

The archangel sent her a suspicious glance. “What?”

“Love. Something I don’t believe you will ever understand, David. My cousin may be a bloodliner, but she still has a flesh-and-blood heart. Your experiments didn’t work on Eric, and I doubt they’ll ever work on her.”

Suddenly Brooke entered. Kronos noticed David’s eyes widen. The archangel stood and prowled closer, his expression one of barely-checked hunger.

The woman put her hands on her hips and faced David. “You’ve treated Eve like she’s your property. She isn’t.”

“I don’t understand what you mean, nor do I care.” David glanced around the room, then back at Brooke. “I need any power Eve has to activate, then for her to bind with two Alliance warriors. I gave you time alone with her. Did you two learn anything from her that will help me?”

“Always about you, is it?” Brooke sat, shaking her head at the archangel’s audacity.

“I’m done with talking. Brooke, go back to your room.” David pointed to Micki, Jared, and Bradley. “You three, get back to your mission and recover that book.”

“What about Eve?” Kronos asked, his body taut as he awaited the answer.

“That doesn’t concern you or Nash any longer.”

Brooke stood and approached David, wagging her finger in his face. “You’re so wrong about that.”

“Really? How so?”

Micki chimed in. “Brooke is right. Eve didn’t share much with us, but one thing both Brooke and I noticed is that she responds to Nash and Kronos. I think she cares about them.”

Kronos hated that the women might be right. *Eve responds to Nash? Because he tied her up and forced himself on her? Or because, as Micki thinks, Eve actually cares.*

David raised a haughty brow. “Eve gave me no indication of that.”

Brooke laughed. “Super angel or not, you’re still male. Of course you’d miss the signs.”

“You want her powered up, then let these two triple with her.” Micki pointed to Kronos and Nash.

“No!” Kronos would never allow Nash near her again, no matter what David commanded. *No way!*

David nodded. “For the first time today, I agree with him. The answer is *no*.”

“Give them a week. I have a sense about this... Eve isn’t giving anyone a chance, but she might care enough about them to try.” Brooke’s voice changed to a softer tone. It seemed to have an impact on the archangel.

Kronos brought his sword to the forefront of his mind. If he needed it, he’d call it forth again and get a deathly blow off before the others could stop him. “I won’t let Nash near her, let alone triple with her.”

“Like you could stop me.” Nash already held daggers in his hand. “Besides, what makes you think I would ever consider sharing her with you?”

Kronos brought his sword into focus.

Micki raised her arms and opened a portal. *Bloodline magic*. Not like any magical passage he’d ever seen or created before, its edges were multi-colored and vibrating. The Ether’s darkness spun in its middle.

“Put your weapons away now, or so help me I’ll kick your butts in there and leave you to rot out eternity.”

Jared and Bradley were next to Micki, their own weapons drawn. David also had his sword out.

Brooke trembled, but kept her cool. “Kronos, Nash, are you two idiots? Aren’t you forgetting about Eve? Stop this jockeying for advantage and start thinking about her needs.”

Nash glared directly at him. “What do you say, angel? Shall we go a round right now?”

If it weren’t for Eve, Kronos would run the guy through—fuck the consequences. Instead, he put away his sword by dematerializing it.

Nash did the same with his daggers.

“Good boys, you both want to live.” Micki waved her hands, and the portal disappeared. “If you kill each other, maybe nothing will happen to Eve. But if Brooke and I are right, Eve will die without you. Is keeping your pride in tact really worth watching her die?”

\* \* \* \*

*Brooke came home from work, and I kissed her, even though I was filled with incredible guilt for what I did last night at Zone Three. She doesn't seem to suspect anything. What a fucking good liar I've become.*

*David set me with two immortals. I'd hoped it would work, but I didn't feel much. So I don't think it did. What did I do wrong?*

*Damn it, I must try again, for myself, for Micki—and, yes, even for Brooke. Because I'm still dying, and so is my sister.*

Eric's Flash Drive: day 41—entry 1

\* \* \* \*

Eve sat alone in the room. She glanced at the mirror, knowing that more than likely a whole gang of immortals were on the other side of it. Thankfully, the thing remained covered by the blanket. She hoped it prevented whoever sat on the other side of the two-way from peering at her, but she couldn't be sure. Her head still reeled from all the hocus-pocus. No matter how long she was exposed to it, she doubted that she would ever get used to magic.

She twisted the tie of the robe into a tight knot. She'd given up on the idea of escaping. Leaving would be too dangerous. For all Nash had spanked her, he'd done it with pleasure in mind, not to cause her pain—unlike what Irkon and his pals would've unleashed on her.

Eve nibbled on the sweet and juicy grapes David had provided, recalling a past when she knew hunger, not the kind that came when a person missed lunch, but the kind that gnaws at your insides like a rabid rat day after day. She should be thankful to the Alliance for the food, shelter, and protection. But every time things got better with some benefactor for her, the strings attached tightened around her throat suffocating her very soul.

She swallowed the last grape and started in on the cheese.

Like it or not, she was stuck. There'd be more immortals like Quade and Wright coming to her room. Someday, maybe this power they all thought she had would awaken and bind to two immortals.

An image of Kronos and Nash popped into her mind. *I need to get a grip. That isn't ever going to happen.*

The door opened, pulling her from her thoughts.

The angel and the jinn she'd been daydreaming about entered the room. Seeing the expressions of love between Micki, Jared and Bradley had spawned a desire inside Eve. If even for one night she, too, could feel adored and cared for by Kronos and Nash, her life would be sweeter.

As much as she hoped, she couldn't believe they were here to share her. Not possible with the animosity between them.

Instead of looking her way, they glared at each other, walking to opposite sides of the room.

“I swear guys that if you try to do each other in, I'll—”

“Stop talking and strip,” Nash growled.

A shiver rolled down her spine. “W-What...?”

“Damn it, Nash. Don't be such an ass!” The blood in Kronos's face drained away, leaving a white-hot expression.

“Are we here to fuck her or not?”

Kro didn't answer, but knelt down in front of her, his blue eyes implored her.

“Answer his question, Kro.”

He nodded and, with a tentative smile, took her hands.

*Oh God!*

## Chapter 8

Eve's gut rolled like a carnival ride at full speed. “Did everyone draw straws, and you guys got the short ones?”

Kronos squeezed her hands gently, giving her warm tingles. “Hardly. Apparently, Micki and Brooke believe that this creep and I are the immortals who will be able to unlock your powers.”

“And David agreed to that?”

“Reluctantly, but yes.” Kro moved next to her on the bed.



Desire for these two people up and took a seat inside her, buckling in for the ride. Still, she found it hard to imagine them working together. She melted into Kro's tenderness, and burned hot against Nash's discipline. Each reached her completely but in different ways.

"So, I won't have to face more Wrights and Quades?"

Nash stepped closer, causing quivers along her skin. "Only if this angel and I don't triple with you and get that red energy inside you opened up."

She felt Kro's grip on her hands tighten at Nash's words. "No need to rush, jinn."

Clearly the tension between these two hadn't melted, instead it remained frozen solid like the middle of a glacier.

"You heard David, Kronos. We have been given only seven days with her. No more. Time to get started."

*I get an entire week with them! Not enough, but forever doesn't really exist for me. It will have to suffice.* Feeling flirty, she grinned and blinked slowly. "We could start off by all taking a shower together."

"We've already showered." Kro touched her cheek.

"I haven't. Don't you want me squeaky clean?"

Nash stroked her hair. "Nice try, but I'm not willing to wait. Besides, I like you just the way you are."

She swallowed hard. The man's lusty talk sent shivers deep into her gut. "I'm confused at how you two are going to share me when neither of you can't stand being in the same room with the other?"

"That's not your worry, little one." Nash's commanding tone undid her, detonating hot bombs throughout her body. "Is your tight pussy ready for my dick, sweet girl?"

"Back off, Nash. Give her some space."

The possibility of having her fantasy with them was evaporating right before her eyes. Clearly, Kro didn't want to make love to her with Nash...and Nash only wanted to rush in and get her back into a submissive state.

"You actually want me to believe that you two will not end up punching each other or worse before getting me naked between you?"

Kro cupped her chin. "Eve, please. It's just that—"

"Give it a rest, angel. She's got a point. Either we set our differences aside for the moment or we're wasting our time here. Better to send in other immortals that will work together for her."

"No!" Kro's face darkened. "No other immortals."

"Then you're stuck with me, like it or not." Nash slid his hand down her back. "Besides, there's one thing we do agree on."

"What's that?" Kro glared at him.

"We both want her dripping with desire, right?"

Kro turned back to her and shot her a wide, lusty grin. "Definitely."

Moisture pooled between her legs, and her belly flip-flopped. She looked in their eyes. The anger at each other had been replaced by hunger for her.

"We've got seven days and nights." Nash's stare never left her. "I'll try it your way this time, angel."

"My way?"

"Without paddles, blindfolds, ropes, clamps. Vanilla sex is your style, isn't it?"

"Your BDSM toys aren't coming near Eve as long as I'm around." Kro's voice went lower and his tone more threatening than she'd ever heard before. "And I plan on always being around. Do you get that, Nash?"

"We don't have time to play games, soldier. The clock is ticking. Her power needs to be activated and bound ASAP. I'll use any method available to make sure that happens. Or are you willing to fail her again?"

Kro glared at Nash. "You think you know what she needs? You don't." Then he placed his hands on her thighs. "I promise, I will keep you safe. No matter what."

"Really?" Nash snorted. "Ask her yourself if she liked what I did earlier?"

Eve wrapped her arms tight around her chest. *Oh God!* Newborn tingles danced inside her. But how could she admit to her angel how she lusted for such wickedness?

Kro snapped back, "Back off, or so help me—"

"Are you afraid of what she will say, soldier? Tell him, Eve. Did you enjoy *my* methods?"

Kro stared at her, waiting for her answer.

At first, when Nash had tied her up in the shadowed room, she'd been terrified. Now she felt consumed with desire for more. His control over her had released the most powerful orgasm she'd ever experienced. The man's sexual demands had peeled back the layers inside her, and that scared the hell out of her. But he'd also unchained a longing deep within her that couldn't be chained again. Could she admit to Kro how much she craved Nash's type of sex? As insane as it sounded, Eve knew that both men reached her deeply, one with kisses, the other with ropes.

"Do what you came here to do to me and be done with it."

Nash waved his hand, and the lights dimmed. "We will. This isn't a game, Eve."

"I know that."

"I don't think you do. There are evil immortals with massive power that would make Irkon's bits of magic look like child's play. These creatures are willing to do whatever it takes to capture you. You're safe here, but no place is forever fool-proof."

A shiver ran up her spine. "How long before they come?"

He cupped her chin. "Little one, I didn't mean to frighten you, but you need to know the truth. Believe me, the angel and I will keep you safe. Pleasuring you, well, that's an added benefit."

Goose flesh popped up on her skin and warmth shot through her core.

Nash's stare mesmerized her. "You've been a bad girl. Sassy. I think you need a paddling. Don't you?"

She longed for the mental space he'd taken her to earlier with his regimen of pleasure and pain...a place with no worries. "Yes, Sir."

"Good girl. Angel, let's get on with it. I know you can smell her soaking need."

Kro's eyes widened. "Is that what you really want, sweetheart?"

She trembled, squeezing her legs tight. "Only if you want to, Kro."

He pulled her into his chest, wrapping his arms around her. "I can't imagine you liking that. Was our time together less pleasurable?"

"No, Kro. You're amazing."

He smiled at her, and her heart fluttered. "So are you, Eve."

"Got it. Mutual admiration society." Nash rolled his eyes. "Are we going to triple or not, little one?"

Kro gazed at her, awaiting her answer.

"P-Please." The anticipation of being naked with both of them kept her from breathing calmly.

Nash smiled. "Good. Kronos, is it your way or mine?"

Kro kissed her, tasting like warm chocolate. "Yes. Eve, I'll do whatever you want."

"I want... Well, I don't..."

"Dammit, just say it, woman." Nash's impatience should've irritated her, but it didn't.

Instead, she felt completely turned on. She had a chance to be tied up between the two men of her dreams. How could she refuse?

"I want to try it Nash's way tonight."

"Okay." Kro nodded and stood up. "How do we begin?"

"Magic seems to have little or no effect on her. I had to use physical restraints with her before. We'll have to do that again. I'll be back with what we need."

Nash vanished in a green smoke.

Kronos sat back on the bed and locked his stare on her. "You're sure about this?"

She did love Kro's tenderness in bed, but she couldn't deny something inside her couldn't get enough of Nash's treatment, either.

Eve's insides pulsed violently. "I am sure, Kro. Thank you. I know this isn't something you—"

"Hush, sweetheart. Since you want this, I want it, too."

Nash materialized at the foot of the bed, carrying a large metal case. He placed it on the floor at the foot of the bed.

"What's in there?" Kro asked.

"Exactly what we need tonight." Nash opened the case, but Eve couldn't see its contents from where she sat.

Without pausing, he pulled out a pair of leather handcuffs and ankle restraints for her to see. Her womb clenched tight in anticipation of what he had in mind for her.

“What about your sheet ties, Sir?”

Nash whirled on her, flipped her on her stomach, stripped her of the robe, and landed his palm on her ass. The sting instantly focused her attention.

“Don’t talk unless given permission.”

“What the fuck!” Kronos yelled. “Back off, or I swear—”

“You in or out, angel? Either you give her the fantasy she asked for, or you don’t. I’m weary of your vacillating.”

Eve didn’t speak though she wanted to assure Kro how much she wanted this. She’d not been given permission.

Kronos stared directly at her for a long time before answering. “Okay. But next time, it’s my way. Tonight I’m *in*.”

“Hear that Eve? Your angel is *in*.” Nash had her hands in his cuffs in a split-second, locking them tight behind her.

“Look, Kronos. Isn’t she beautiful this way?”

“She’s beautiful no matter what.”

A tremble of delight shook her whole body. With her hands still restrained behind her back, she wiggled her fingers, feeling the upper most flesh of her ass.

Soon, the paddling would begin followed by caresses. Her mind would quiet again. Nirvana. Eve licked her lips. *Pleasure and pain*.

In a funny sort of way, she thought that kind of summed up Kro and Nash. No, that wasn’t quite right. Both gave their own type of pleasure. Kro’s came from gentleness; Nash’s from dominance. And what about them giving her pain? Someday they would both leave her, delivering up a double dose of suffering to her heart. He gut clenched at the thought. She didn’t want to think about that now. All she wanted was for them to take her, fulfill her fantasy for the next several days.

“You’re in your head, I can tell. I’ll fix that.” Nash touched her legs lightly with his fingertips. “You are such a lucky woman. Your body is going to go on a pleasure ride until you collapse from exhaustion. First, however, your ass is going to warm up nice and pink from the paddling we’re going to give you.”

Eve felt her breath catch in her chest and her pulse race as Nash raked his nails over her backside, stopping just shy of her shackled hands’ fingertips.

Nash’s hand slipped between her backside’s fleshy cheeks. “I’ve been here. Let’s see if you’re good and wet for me and Kronos.” Then his hand curved between her legs and under her body, caressing her mound. His fingers pressed in her swollen folds.

“Is she?” Kro’s tone sounded lustier than she’d ever heard.

“She’s moist, but not enough. I’ll fix that. Hand me the blindfold out of the case.”

Once Kro gave it over, Nash placed it over her eyes and all light disappeared. Electricity zipped through her body.

“Can you see anything, sweet girl?”

“No.”

*Smack!* The sting of his open hand on her ass brought her to attention. She contemplated refusing to say *Sir* just to see what kind of punishment Nash might deem appropriate for such an infraction, but then thought better of it.

“No, Sir!”

“That’s my girl. Kronos, hand me that paddle. No, the other one with the holes in it.”

“How many whacks are you going to give her?”

“Normally I would tell, but not with her. She’s too smart for that I’ve learned. When she knows the number, it gives her information. She’ll start counting down instead of just responding to the paddling. This will work better if she doesn’t know. Bit by bit, she’ll stop counting. She might even think the punishment will never end. When that happens, we have her.”

“I don’t understand.” Kro sounded concerned and confused.

“No, I didn’t expect you to. Trust me, soldier. I know what I’m doing.” Nash’s lips brushed against her ear. “No climaxing until I say so. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Let her answer a question for me, Nash.”

“Whatever you or I command, she’s to obey. Take the steering wheel if you like. Little one, Kronos and I command you and you obey. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Eve, I’m okay with this as long as you are really enjoying yourself. Are you?”

“Yes, Sir.”

"If you ever aren't, just let me know. We'll stop."

"Yes, Sir."

"Satisfied, angel?"

"No. Isn't there supposed to be some kind of safe word or signal for her?"

"You surprise me, Kronos. Yes. You have one in mind?"

"I do. Eve, the safe word is *Pirate*."

"Yes, Sir." The playroom at Zone Three that she and Kro had frequented was called the *Pirate Room*. He wanted her to remember. That pleased her.

"Okay. I'm satisfied she's doing this willingly," Kro conceded. "Let's continue."

"Brace yourself, Eve. What you felt earlier from the crop was just a warm up."

*Oh God!* Quakes rocked through her.

"Look, Kronos. Her entire body is heating up to a bright crimson just thinking about us pounding that delicious ass of hers."

Eve bit the sheets, readying herself for the coming whacks.

"I can't wait to turn those fleshy mounds a pretty pink." Nash continued his torturous words. "She wants it bad."

Eve did. *Why wasn't he starting? Did it have something to do with—*

His slaps came down on her buttocks deliberately, one after another. Her logical mind resisted at first. She teethed the sheets, hoping to hold back an outburst. Her body heated with every whack. She half-expected Kro to try to stop Nash, but he didn't.

The paddling stopped, and they flipped her on her back. Then she felt four hands roam over her body. Two of them gently massaged her chest. One squeezed her thigh. And the last one enfolded her mound. Even with the blindfold, Eve sensed sparks firing in the room. She pictured their colors to be brilliant and deep. Real or imagined, her body was charged up by them.

The paddle came down on her again. She could hear the whistle of the air traveling through its holes. Each smack caused an ache to grow deep in her channel. Liquid spilled out of her pussy. She felt the rush of blood to her face as he replaced the paddle with his hand.

"Have you ever seen such a perfect ass?" Nash asked.

"Never." Kro's lusty tone thrilled her.

She loved them talking about her, loved the feeling of her bare backside exposed for these men. The stinging grew and grew. Nash didn't stop. Her clit swelled. She ground her mound into the bed as her normal ever-present companion, self-control, vanished. Her mind spun like a top, and she suppressed a giggle as the punishment continued. *Sir wouldn't like me giggling*. That thought almost sent her into hysterics.

Suddenly, the spanking stopped. Her mind jerked back, whirling with a million thoughts. She craved for Nash and Kro to take her consciousness to subspace.

"Kronos, your turn."

Her stomach flip-flopped. Would Kro do it? She hoped so.

"Don't you think she's had enough of that?"

"Eve, do you want Kronos to spank you?"

"Y-Yes, Sir!"

"There you have it. Apparently this sexy little vixen wants more."

How she wished she could see Kro's face right now, but the blindfold kept her from it.

"All right. But I'm not going to be too hard on you."

Eve turned her head and stuck out her bottom lip.

"Little one, you're not in charge here even if you've got the cutest pout I've ever seen." Nash's tone turned serious. "Make her know you're the boss."

Eve felt the paddle coming down again on her backside half as hard as Nash's whacks.

"You can do better than that, warrior." Nash's mouth feathered her lips for a moment, melting her to the core. "Have you been bad, Eve?"

"Yes, Sir!" She needed the pain to focus her mind.

"Do you deserve your punishment?"

Yes, Sir.” *Please, Kro. You can do it.*

“Good girl. When the angel delivers just the right hardness, I want you to moan for him. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir.” Her body buzzed with heat. She pressed her mound hard into the sheets, waiting for Kro.

*Whack!*

Tears of passion flew from her eyes from Kro’s wonderful strikes. He cared for her enough to do this. *God, I’ll lose myself if I’m not careful.*

*Whack! Whack!*

The burning that had begun from the spankings spread out through her body. Her throat vibrated as the moan escaped through her lips.

“Sweet girl, that’s it.” Nash’s tone deepened with heat. “Let’s take her to the edge, angel.”

Kronos massaged her shoulders, while kissing her back. Nash pressed on her clit. Her insides hummed like a jet, readying for takeoff.

“Eve, now! Come for me and Kronos.”

Her clit swelled up, and dizziness took hold of her. She jammed her pussy into the bed and cried out as a climax flooded her. Inside and out, her body shook.

When the room stopped spinning, she felt hands massaging her shoulders.

“So far, you’ve done great,” Nash whispered in her ear. “More to come. Still closed off, but we did make it through some of your walls. Good girl.”

He pulled her up from the bed, placed her on the floor in a kneeling position, and then removed the blindfold. She closed her eyes tight against the returning light.

“Your backside needs a rest,” Nash informed. “Time to work on your front now.”

Little flickers of heat danced on her skin.

“We’ll start out with you swallowing our dicks.”

Eve opened her eyes and found both Nash and Kro naked. They must have stripped while she had been blindfolded. Their massive cocks jutted out like steel beams.

Nash ordered, “Stick out your tongue, sweet girl.”

She obeyed instantly.

He slapped her tongue with his rock-hard dick. She leaned forward, trying to catch it.

“No!” He reached down and thumbed her nipples.

The pleasant pain took her even higher. “Yes, Sir!”

“Don’t do anything unless we say so. You’ve got to let go. Stop trying so hard.”

Eve looked at Kro. His face showed a dose of confusion mixed with a double dose of hunger.

Nash grinned at her then turned to Kronos. “Want to be first up to bat?”

Kro stepped forward. She studied his cock. It was just like she remembered—thick. It pulsed like a living thing. She bathed the head with her tongue.

“Did you give her permission to do that, angel?”

“Ease up, Nash. I’m enjoying her mouth on my cock. Go ahead, Eve. Swallow me whole. You have my permission.”

She obeyed and dove down. Up and down his shaft she worked, staring up at him. His eyes closed. She felt his hands thread through her hair.

“Y-Yes. That’s amazing.”

“Suck his cock. Drain him dry.”

Eve continued her assault on Kro’s dick. She loved giving him pleasure and seeing him lose control. She waited patiently for the liquid it would deliver to her, revealing how much she’d satisfied him.

She looked over at Nash. He fisted his cock, keeping it hard for her.

Kro growled, “I-I’m s-so close…”

“Do it, angel. Shoot that load down her throat.”

“G-God!”

The first spurts shot into her mouth, thick and creamy. She swallowed fast and hard. More of his warm liquid poured into her.

"How do you like pleasing this angel?"

She looked over at Nash and nodded, keeping Kro's cock in her mouth.

"You're going to love mine, too."

Nash's promise thrilled Eve.

She sucked hard, pulling out the last drops of stickiness from Kro.

"That's enough, Eve." He stepped back, removing his cock from her mouth. "You want to suck Nash now?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Okay. Wait." He went to the bed and grabbed a pillow.

"What are you doing, angel? I'm fucking on fire and need that hot mouth around my dick."

"Here." Kronos handed the pillow over to Nash.

"What is this for?"

"You'll see." He stepped behind her.

He put his arms around her and lifted her off the floor.

"Put the pillow on the floor."

Nash frowned, but did it anyway.

Kro lowered her knees onto the pillow. It felt good. His tenderness and caring seemed endless. He'd pushed past his boundaries tonight just to make her happy. Resisting him would be next to impossible.

"She's tough enough for the floor, angel."

"Nash, her knees need a break. The pillow doesn't stop you from enjoying her oral expertise. Having just experienced it, I wouldn't wait if I were you."

"You got that right." Nash stepped up to her, cock in hand. "Show me how sweet your mouth can be."

"Yes, Sir." Her need to please him seemed endless.

Nash's cock throbbed in front of her. She kissed the tip, and then dove down for a quick taste of his hardness. *God, he's like a rock.* She released her mouth's hold on his cock and licked her way down his shaft. Next, she laved his monstrous balls and sucked gingerly.

"Holy fuck!" Nash shouted.

She could feel his lusty cry vibrating in her mouth and through her body.

"That's it, Eve." He pumped his dick, while she continued imbibing his sack.

"You've got the bastard now. Let him know who really is in charge." Moving behind her, Kro freed her hands from the cuffs.

Eve sent her hands to Nash's backside. She dug in her nails into his flesh.

"G-God, yes!" He pumped hard and fast.

From behind her, Kro kneaded her breasts while she continued sucking on Nash. Her clit swelled once again. As Nash's orgasm approached, so did hers. She released his balls and dove down on his cock. Up and down.

"F-Fuck yes! Little one, you're unbelievable."

A jolt shot through Eve when Kro's fingers glided down her stomach, ending at her mound.

He pressed into her wet folds. "You feel so good, Eve."

With Kro's hand positioned perfectly against her clit and Nash's cock sliding more urgently down her throat, the ache in her pussy needed to be alleviated. *Please give me permission.*

"Keep sucking, little one. Perfect. Yes. Very close."

Nash's hands went to the back of her head. "I'm c-coming!"

He pulled her in, and she swallowed him whole. She felt his cock jerk in her mouth and his hot juice slide down her throat.

"Eve, go ahead. I can tell you need to come." Kro urged her on with his fingers pressing her clit.

Her body shook violently with a toe-curling orgasm, mushrooms from deep inside her. Wave after wave of heat and electricity poured out of her. Lightheaded and weak, she thought she might even fall over.

Kro removed her ankle restraints, lifted her up, and placed her on the bed with her back pressing the mattress and her front exposed to the air.

"Angel, she's shown no power. Part of her is still closed off to us and to herself. We're not done."

As the climatic surges continued, she wondered if she could take anymore from these two. *God, I hope so.*

"True. But it's time to slow things down for a bit." Kro covered her up with the robe then he crawled in next to her.

Nash snorted. "Cuddling is not my style."

"I didn't think it was. But it is mine."

"We need to complete the triangle. That might get her power activated."

"We will triple with her soon enough. Time to coast for a bit, jinn." Kro rubbed her stomach and kissed her cheek. "She needs a minute. So do I."

Her angel had changed directions just when she needed him to. His tenderness flattened out her resistance.

Nash nodded. "She does deserve a break." He pressed his mouth to hers. "You did great, little one."

Nash knew just what worked to dissolve her completely. With his soft touch and praise, she felt adored, cared for. How easy it would be to lose herself utterly to them. Too easy. And the pain to follow when it did end would destroy her. Still, she wanted to enjoy this moment with them to the fullest.

"Thank you, Nash. Please join me." Eve patted the other side of the bed.

He stared at her but didn't move.

"Or not. I have other options." She rolled to face Kro, and kissed him, hoping to nudge Nash to her side.

When her kiss ended with Kro, she turned to look at Nash.

Kro kissed her neck. "Give my way a try, jinn. Who knows, you might learn something from me. And it just might be the medicine she needs to reach her potential."

Nash shrugged and hopped in behind her, his hand on her hip possessively, his hot kisses trailing across her shoulder. Kro smoothed her hair away from her face with an encouraging smile.

If they were glaring at one another, she didn't want to know. Instead, she sank into the warmth of being sandwiched between them. Could she ever feel more protected and safe as she did in their arms? No. Never.

How foolish to believe such a fantasy, no matter how bad she wanted. This wasn't something that could last. Sure, Kro cared for her, no doubt. But Nash? She sensed he was holding something back. Was it because he didn't care for her or some kind of hang up? Maybe she was only an experiment to see through to the end.

None of it mattered. Her whole life was about the here and now. Tomorrow always disappointed. She needed to be in the moment so that she could have clear memories of her time with Kro and Nash.

After several minutes, her body relaxed and her breathing calmed.

"Break's over," Nash announced, tossing the robe to the floor.

"Yes, Sir."

Without hesitation, both men worked her over with their hands, heating her up all over again. They each caressed one of her legs. Their dicks hardened against her thighs.

She wanted this to last, but she knew it wouldn't. Nothing good ever did.

"Stop thinking, Eve. Start feeling." Nash dove down, kissing his way down to her pussy. His tongue and lips sailing against her folds drove her insane with want.

Kro kissed her chest then leaned back. His stare made her weak in the knees. "God, you're so beautiful."

"Kronos, you should take a look at her tight little cunt. Perfection."

"I've seen it many times before, Nash. But it is always worth another look." Her angel smiled, touched her mouth with his index finger, then he moved down next to Nash.

The jinn pushed her legs wide. She watched as both men took turns to inspect her secret flesh with hands and tongues.

She fisted the sheets as their treatment drove her to the edge.

With his fingers, Nash coaxed her pussy and explored her inner depths.

Kro moved back up and latched her mouth onto her left nipple. Eve closed her eyes as the men took her higher and higher. Nash and Kro found her desirable. They wanted her. And she wanted them. That was enough for now.

"I'm going to fuck that perfect pussy of yours, woman. Angel, you get her tight backside ring."

Immediately, she craved the feeling of their cocks inside her. She'd never felt such desire that cried out for satisfaction at such a deafening level.

Kro rolled her onto her side. He lifted her leg high and planted a kiss on her ass's entrance. His tongue explored until he whipped her into a wild frenzy. When his fingers probed her back there, she thought she might go insane with wantonness.

Nash worked his way up her body until his cock was positioned perfectly to enter her pussy. Everything felt so good. Warning bells went off in her mind. *Feels too good.*

"Stop holding back, Eve. Open up to us." Nash's tone seemed anxious.

"I'll try, Sir." She wanted them, if just for this moment. "P-Please, I need you in me."

Nash plunged his cock into her channel, filling her up completely. He pumped in and out of her like a jackhammer. Dizziness assailed her.

She felt Kro apply lube to her backside.

*Oh God! Yes!*

"Ready, Nash?"

"Yes." He buried his dick to her base, and then stopped moving.

"You ready, sweetheart?"

She felt the tip of Kro's cock at her back ring.

"Please. Do it."

Eve felt his dick push past her tightness. The pain stunned her but only lasted for a moment, then...amazing sensations crashed over her. The two men she cared for were inside her right now—and it was everything she'd hoped.

She clung to Nash's shoulders, nails digging into him until her fingers cramped, until she couldn't find a breath. But they still continued on. Her body heated, and perspiration covered every inch of her skin. Stroke after stroke, they made her feel desired, possessed. She'd be sore tomorrow—and she didn't mind it. She was with the only two men she'd ever really cared about in her life.

She loved the feel of Nash's hands on her waist. Her heartbeat raced at the intensity of his stare locking on her eyes. It felt like she was seeing into his soul.

Kro's fingers feathered her hips, and his lips grazed her ear. He whispered, "Eve, you're the only one for me. You're my heart. I'll never lose you again. I promise."

"Come for us, little one."

Eve's climax came like a jolt, ending in a million quivers. She closed her eyes tight. She felt both men tighten every muscle as they shot deep into her.

Catching her breath, she touched Nash's muscled chest with one hand, and sent her other hand behind her to feel Kro's tight waist.

"Well, did anything magical happen to me? Did my bloodline power turn on?"

They didn't answer, but by their expressions she already knew the truth. Her heart sunk like a stone.

\* \* \* \*

*15) These are the bones of a bloodliner whose heart is closed to love. 16) Though this mortal found their power, they never sealed their heart to their true immortals, angel and jinn. 17) Timu, I say unto you, "Woe to the bloodliner whose magic is found but whose heart is cold." 18) Take heed of my warning, demons and ifrit will find such a bloodliner and leave only bones behind.*

*The Book of Timu*: Verses 15 through 18—Chapter 9

## Chapter 9

Kronos walked down the hall, hoping to see no one.

*Bad luck.*

Wright stood in the way between him and Eve's room.

The warrior spotted him before Kronos could try to teleport to her.

Teleportation at the Ranch was tough with all the magical defenses, but not impossible. Now, Kronos wished he'd risked it.



“Hey, buddy.”

Not wanting to talk to Wright, he only nodded and kept walking.

“I bet I can guess where you’re going. Too bad we’re both angels. I’d love to triple with that warm piece of pussy. I can’t believe that idiot jinn commander stopped Quade and I before we could nail her.”

“Watch your mouth, Wright.” Kronos hated how Wright talked about Eve, but he kept his anger controlled.

“She’s got to you, I can tell. Still, a little taste, even if there isn’t an energy exchange to—”

“Forget it!” Kronos’s curled his hands into fists.

“Excuse me?” Wright tilted his head.

“Looks to me that Nash has put you on guard duty, right?”

“Yes.”

Rage bubbled up inside Kronos. “Then get to it.”

Wright laughed and stepped to the center of the hall, arms touching each wall, as if daring him to try to pass. “Kronos, you bucking for a promotion? You and I are the same rank, buddy. Just because you’re tripling with Nash and the human doesn’t mean you can order me around.”

All Kronos wanted was to get to Eve before Nash returned. He wanted time alone with Eve—*he needed time alone with her*. This asshole angel was about to get a two-fisted order if he didn’t move out of the way.

Kronos heard footsteps behind him. *Damn, too late!* When he turned around, he didn’t find Nash.

Quade looked at Wright. “I’m third blade, a grade higher than you, Wright.”

“You’re actually going to pull that on me?”

“I am. Step aside.”

Wright complied, and in a mocking tone said, “Yes, third blade.”

“Thank you.” Kronos uncurled his fists.

Quade nodded.

Wright grabbed Kronos’s shoulder. “I think Commander Quade, being a jinn, will be joining you. Right, sir?”

Kronos spun around, beginning the spell to call forth his sword. No one would touch her unless she wanted them to. That meant him and Nash. Quade or Wright wouldn’t come near her. He’d make sure of that.

“No. I think Kronos needs to see the woman alone.”

“That doesn’t make sense.”

“Wright, just shut the fuck up. If you’re going, Kronos, you better go now.”

Kronos turned and sped to Eve’s door. He didn’t knock but opened it gingerly.

As he’d expected, she slept soundly.

Breathing rhythmically from her deep rest, her body was wrapped up in the new sheets and blankets that Nadine had brought to the room as he and Nash had exited.

Kronos walked in, closing the door behind him. He stepped over to the side of the bed. Hating to wake Eve, he just stood staring down at her. God, she looked so beautiful. He wanted her, not just for energy and sex, but for always. He’d actually been head over heels for her since they’d first met. After losing her, he really knew how much he loved her: enough to break his vow to the Alliance, should it come to that. He would even share her with Nash if it would get her to bind to him. But even though she responded to the jinn and him, a part of her still remained closed off. He and Nash sensed the power inside her, but it was buried deep. They had to get her to open up. But how?

“Kro? Is that you?” She sat up, her eyes glazed and unfocused, the sheet falling away from her naked breasts, stirring his cock to attention.

“Yes, Eve. It’s me.”

“Good.” She rubbed her eyes and let out a long yawn.

Instantly, his mind spun like a top and desire pulled him forward, the clarity of the moment blasting away any doubt. A mega storm of desire for her blew over him—an undaunted need to touch and taste, a craving to possess and protect, and underneath it all, love.

Still half asleep, she put her head back on the pillow and pulled the covers up to her neck. “Kro, have you been gone long?”

In a flash, he curled up with her under the covers. "No, my love. Not long."

Her skin felt silky soft, and she wiggled her back tighter into his front. Lusty heat rolled through him.

"Not fair. You have clothes on." Eve grinned.

Her laugh thrilled him. "I can fix that."

He closed his eyes, and the clothes vanished. Now they were skin to skin, with his cock pressing against her ass.

"I guess there are good things about this magic stuff."

Nothing in his immortal life had ever felt so right yet so hard to attain. She'd been on her own for so long, and her defenses had been built over years of heartache and hurt. What could he do that would make her understand that she needed him as much as he needed her? He didn't know, but he had to try.

Kronos rolled her to face him, and he studied her sleepy countenance. Her hazel eyes were half-lidded, and her lips parted slightly. Unable to resist, he leaned in and kissed her. Her soft, full lips opened for his greedy tongue to explore.

He pulled her in tight with one hand to her back and felt her breasts with the other. His fingers grazed against her hardening nipples, and he felt her send a long hot breath into his mouth.

When he ended their kiss, her eyelids fluttered then opened wide as she reached full consciousness. He smiled. Having her in his arms again sent him to the stars.

"Kro, I just don't know why it didn't work with you and Nash. It's me, isn't it?"

He pressed his index finger to her lips. "Eve, you've been through hell, literally. It's going to take time."

"Isn't that the problem? Sure, if bloodliners die when they turn twenty-nine or thirty, then I have a few more years. But since the demons know about me, the clock is ticking. Besides, I can't face a string of David's immortals coming in here and screwing me silly."

Eve started to cry. He'd never seen her do that before. He pulled her in close.

"Sweetheart, we'll figure this out together." He kissed her forehead.

"What if I don't have any powers, Kro? What if this is just a waste of time? What then?"

She leaned her head into his chest. God, he hated the burden she carried. If she didn't exhibit any powers when David returned in six days, Kronos would do what he had to. That meant breaking his vow and whisking her away from the Alliance and out of the reaches of the Dark.

"We've only tripled once, sweetheart. Just once. You're putting too much pressure on yourself. What you need to do is stop trying so hard." He slid his hand up her side and moved across her chest.

"B-But..."

"Shh. Right now isn't about tripling or activating your power. It's only about you." He gently began massaging her breasts. "I want you to feel pleasure that blows you away."

Her eyelids started fluttering again.

"That's it, Eve. Let go. Enjoy. We can worry about the other stuff later."

"When Nash gets back?"

"Yes." Like it or not, he would have to work with the jinn, especially since Eve did respond to him on some level.

Kronos took possession of her mouth with a kiss, hoping to weaken her boundaries. He pulled his mouth from hers and kissed his way from her cheek to her neck. When he came to her earlobe, he bathed it with his tongue. She tasted like pure snow with a drop of honey.

Eve tilted her head, and he dove onto her neck. She let out a sweet little moan and he felt her shiver as he raked his palm across her nipple.

He craved to pleasure her until she was soaked with the desire for him.

Between licks, he whispered against her nape, "You like, sweetheart?"

"Oh, yes."

"I can't wait for my dick to be inside your pussy, filling you up."

"P-Please, I want it." She reached down between his legs, grabbed his dick, and squeezed.

His cock grew from her touch, raising the temperature of his insides to red hot.

He swallowed hard. He wanted her so badly he could taste it. "Not yet, my love."

Taking her wrist, he brought her fingers up to his mouth. He kissed them.

But—”

“Eve, this is about you. I'll give you what you want, but you have to open up to me. One thing that Nash is right about is that you try too hard.”

“I have to.”

“Why? You're here with me now. I enjoy giving you pleasure.”

Her hazel beauties brimmed with unshed tears. “I know you do, Kro.”

He laid another claim on her lips, penetrating her mouth with his tongue. His body buzzed with desire. He moved his hands over her chest and taut stomach. Soft. Silky. Warm.

He broke the kiss and leaned down to take in her hard nipples. He sent a hot breath over each of them before kissing them softly. He looked up at her face that flushed with want.

“Eve, I've wanted to make love to you again ever since I saw you in the basement of Zone Three.”

“But you already have.”

“No. I mean alone. Just us.”

“That's not how it works for immortals, or did I get that wrong?”

“You got that right. Tripling is necessary for us to survive.” He shifted his body down so he could kiss her belly. “I just like having you all to myself, too.”

He licked at her navel, and he heard her take in a quick breath. Slipping a finger into her pussy, he found her damp and slick. She sucked in another mouthful of air.

He delighted that she stroked his head, threading her fingers in his hair. As he continued kissing her delicious belly, he felt her legs tremble. When he placed his thumb against her clit, her entire body vibrated.

He slid down between her thighs, delivering kisses on every inch of them along the way to her pussy. He spread her legs wide and kissed her swollen mound. Her fine pubic hair glistened with moistness. He dove down into her channel with his tongue.

Her hands left his head and found his shoulders. She squeezed them tight and bucked like a wild horse when he grazed her clit with his lips.

“Kro, H...”

“Open up to me, Eve.”

He laved her swollen folds. Her nails dug into his flesh, driving him mad with desire. He cared for her like no other.

She writhed under him. “Kro, you're driving me crazy.”

He looked up from his sweet meal. “I know.”

“Please—”

He assaulted her lips with his own, silencing her. His tongue danced with hers, pushing in deep.

“Lose yourself to me, sweetheart.” His cock ached for the warm tightness he tasted with his mouth. He lapped up her juices, like a man with a desert-like thirst.

“Tonight, let me make love to you, my love.” His heart pounded hard, and his breathing sped up.

His blue power pulsed hot inside him. Coupling provided no energy, but it was no matter. He was here for pleasure, hers and his, nothing more.

He moved up on top of her. Her hands left his shoulders and fisted the sheets. Her head moved side to side as passion's delirium engulfed her. He stared down at her. Her beauty bowled him over. Her hazel eyes hazy from desire pulled at him.

When his cock touched her slick folds, it took incredible willpower not to plunge into her with one stroke. He wanted her even hotter, panting with ecstasy.

“You've totally captivated me, Eve, my love.”

He felt her shiver against him, but she responded with whimpers, letting him know how close she was to coming. He sensed she was still holding back, not enough to push away her coming orgasm, but just enough to keep him out of her most secret places.

*Why won't you open up?*

Slowly sliding his cock in and out of her pussy, he brought her closer to the edge of release, his own lust growling for a conclusion. Eve wrapped her legs around his hips, and he threaded his hands into her soft red hair.

She cried out, “Kro, do it! I can't bear it anymore.”

Resistance no longer possible, he unchained the lusty beast inside him. “I'm going to drive my hard cock deep inside your beautiful pussy.”

Her eyes blinked, widened, then shut tight. A stream of tears poured out from them.

His body vibrated with desire. He shifted his hips forward, driving his dick into her slickness. The warmth around his shaft urged him in deeper.

Her head rolled from side to side, and she bit her lip.

"You're so tight." He pounded deeper into her. Harder and harder. "You feel so good." He slid his hands down her soft sides, slow and easy. Her skin felt like the softest silk.

Eve pounded the bed with her fists. "Y-yesss."

Like a rolling earthquake, her thrashing intensified as she lost herself to the orgasm he'd given her. His strokes inside her pussy sped. His orgasm inched forward. He wanted to hold back to make this moment last. Alone. Together. He clenched his teeth and tried to slow.

"Fill me up, Kro. P-Please..."

That lit the short fuse, and in one final thrust he drilled his dick deep into her slippery pussy. He felt her clench her womb around his cock.

"Eve, I'm gonna come!"

She felt like a live wire of heat and movement. "Y-Yesss!"

As he shot into her depths, his body stiffened. He felt her shivering underneath him from the orgasm exploding inside her.

For several minutes they stayed wrapped together like a hot pretzel. The afterglow of their lovemaking thrilled him. He rolled off her onto his side and walked his fingers over her body. Her breathing relaxed, if only a bit.

She opened her eyes and smiled. "Thank you, Kro. That was amazing."

He leaned down and kissed her cheek. "I love you, Eve."

"I know, and it should be easy for me to say that I do, too. It isn't."

Even though not surprised by her words, they still stung him to the core. "Why?" *Nash. That's why.*

"I know that most believe women should be able to say those three words easier than men. For me, though, it isn't true."

He took her hand and squeezed. "I know you've had heartache, honey. But you wouldn't with me. I'm here."

"For now, yes. But what if..."

"Shh. I don't want you to worry about anything. If you have power, we'll figure that out. If you don't, I'll take care of everything. I promise you. I'll never let you down again. You'll be safe with me."

She choked back a sob. "Kro, you're amazing. I want to, but I just can't. I'm sorry."

"You've got nothing to be sorry for, sweetheart. I've asked too much from you. But I promise, I'll find a way for you to be brave enough to admit to me what I already know is true—that you do love me."

\* \* \* \*

22) *Timu, I say unto you, "The mortal who drinks a demon's blood to find eternal life becomes undead and will forever live in darkness."*

*The Book of Timu: Verses 22—Chapter 2*

\* \* \* \*

Connor Grafton sat in the largest room on the top floor of the skyscraper bearing his name. It looked like what one would expect for the office of the top executive of a multi-national corporation: rich, rare wood furnishings, expensive paintings and sculptures, a wall of shelves filled with leather-bound books, and floor-to-ceiling textured silk drapes.

Only a few things looked out of context: the set of free weights, a punching bag, antique pinball machines—and Connor himself.

A giant of a man at six-foot-six, wearing only sneakers and shorts, his naked muscled chest heaved, glistening from the sweat of his workout. His blue-gray eyes could hypnotize in an instant. His dark hair would be a thrill for any woman's fingers to touch.

He wiped his forehead with a white towel, and then he sat in the high-back, leather executive chair and started signing the papers his secretary had left on his desk earlier. He looked at the clock on the wall by the door. 5:33 *pm*. He hated daylight savings time.

*Two hours left until dark.*

Most would guess him to be in his early-thirties, but they would be wrong. Connor had been born in the winter of 1718. Most of his long life was thanks to the Dark.

If the light-blocking drapes had been opened, the sunlight would have flooded into the office from two exterior walls of windows, burning him to ashes.

Connor remembered enjoying the sunrise and sunset from his cottage in the village of Falmouth, in what later became Portland, Maine. Since his turning,

he'd been unable to call up an image of the dayman from memory. Now he depended on movies and photos to remind him of what it looked like.

A massive sphere of black flames exploded in front of his desk. When the fire receded, the one he hated more than any other materialized before him—Vincorte, the archdemon.

Though the office was dimly lit, the demon didn't remove his mirrored sunglasses. He wore a designer suit customized to fit his muscled frame perfectly.

Connor stood and lowered his eyes slightly, as was expected of him. "Master."

Then he waited, calculating how long it would take to get his Berretta from his desk drawer. It wouldn't kill the archdemon, but it would slow him down, perhaps enough for Connor to escape. But to where? And for how long?

"As you were."

Being acknowledged, he was free to look up. He studied the man standing before him, hoping to see any sign of weakness. But as always, there was none.

The archdemon could walk on any sidewalk in the world and fool passersby into thinking he was a human. Still, heads would turn due to Vincorte's air of royalty, wealth, looks that dazzled and confused, and his unflappable charm.

"Shall I sit?" Not waiting for Connor to answer, Vincorte took a seat in one of the chairs meant for clients and guests. The monster was neither. "Have you located the Alliance's Ranch?"

"I've been able to pin it down to three possibilities. Two are in Montana. One is in Oklahoma. The Alliance purchased all of these through a dummy corporation several years ago."

Vincorte lowered his glasses on his nose, revealing his steel blue eyes. "I grow weary of your incompetence, vampire."

A blast of black hit Connor on the chest, knocking him to the back wall. Connor stood up, but never looked directly at Vincorte. Though he wanted to charge into the creature and hammer him with punches, Connor was no fool. The demon had pulled Connor's leash taut more than once to prove who really called the shots. Though he dreamed of being free of the bastard, he doubted he ever would be.

"Give me just one more night. I'll know which one holds what you want."

"I no longer need you to figure out the location."

"My lord?"

"Someone else has told me where another bloodliner and the pregnant woman is. I'll have all of the bloodliners very soon."

"Excellent, Master."

"What I need from you is to put together a special holding place for them. Do you understand?"

Connor's gut clenched. He did.

## Chapter 10

When Eve heard the door open, she looked up.

Nash glared at her and Kro. He sat down the large case he carried, and then jerked Eve's angel off the bed away from her.

Startled, Kro's wings materialized. "You may outrank me, but when it comes to Eve—"

"Are you nuts? Snuggling?" Nash turned and pointed an accusing finger at her. "You were supposed to rest so that we could triple and try to activate your power again."

His tone stung her. "Stop it!" She jumped to her feet, grabbed the robe, and wrapped it around her.

Nash's stare darkened. "Damn it, neither of you seems to understand. Time is running out. There are only six days and nights left before David takes you away."

"I won't let him," Kro stated flatly, as his wings disappeared.

"What are you going to do about it, soldier? Steal her away? You really think David hasn't considered that and made preparations for just such a possibility. Kronos, David is no fool."

Eve sat back down on the bed. "Kro, you can't. I won't let you."

He sat down next to her. "I'll do whatever it takes to keep you safe and with me."

Running from the truth would only serve up a foul dish that none of them would want to consume.

"And if the two aren't compatible? Safety and me being with you?"

"I'll make sure they are."

She shook her head. "You can't."

"But I won't lose you again." He cupped her chin. "It would kill me."

Nash took a seat on the other side, taking her hand in his. "Then we better do what we came her to do."

Eve loved how protective they both were of her, but still her heart broke in two, believing their lovemaking would come to an inevitable end. "But it didn't work, Nash. I may not have any power."

"I really doubt that."

She lost heart, and her shoulders sagged. "Why?"

"Because I've never met any woman like you before. The power must be inside you just like it is in your cousin. I sense it, and so does Kronos."

"He's right, sweetheart."

"We just have to find the key to unlock it, little one."

She couldn't give in to false hope, no matter how much she wanted to. "What if Eric's information was wrong? What if we aren't related?"

Kro laughed. "Not possible. The moment I saw you two together, I knew. You look enough alike to pass for sisters."

"Then why hasn't my power been activated?"

Kro grabbed her free hand. "That's a great question, sweetheart. Why do you think it hasn't?"

"When I was alone with Micki and Brooke, Micki told me that her bloodline energy went into overdrive the moment she got near Jared and Bradley."

"You're not her." Nash gently squeezed her hand that he still held.

"No, I'm not." Tears welled up, knowing she might lose Nash and Kro in six days.

Kro brought her hand up to his lips, then whispered, "But you're just as special... and to me, your so much more."

Nash stroked her hair. "Eve doesn't believe that. She also doesn't trust herself, especially with us."

Again, her jinn peered into her with such perceptive accuracy that it sent a shiver up her spine. Secrets would be impossible to keep from Nash.

"How do we get her to believe in us, jinn?"

Eve snapped her head back to Kro. *He is actually agreeing to work with Nash. Why?* So they could dig deep into her and make her face her worst fear—losing them no matter how much they cared for her or she for them.

"Kronos, you have to trust me. She's still closed to us. I've seen how she responds to your tenderness, but it isn't enough. You know that, too."

Kro didn't say a word, but she suspected he agreed with him.

Nash continued, "She's too strong, too closed for that to work."

"I've known you for many decades, first blade. I think I know where you're going with this."

Eve felt her blood pressure rising. "I don't. I also don't care for being talked about by two guys like I'm not in the room."

"I'm never unaware of your presence." Nash studied her for a moment then continued, "But you need to be peeled back. Those layers are so thick and old that you can't break free of them yourself."

"Let's do it your way, Nash." Kro stood like a matador heading to the ring. "It has to work."

"It will, angel."

"Do I have any say here or not?" But she already knew the answer.

Nash leaned over and kissed her. "Eve, you leave everything to us."

Kro squeezed her thigh. "We can't just get her power activated. She also has to bind to us."

"She will." Nash's confidence thrilled her. Her body was already buzzing and on the edge.

Before she could interject with an argument, he gently pushed her, fixing her back to the bed. She shivered as he tied her up with the sheet strips he'd used before.

"Strip her, Kronos."

He nodded, stood and waved his hands over her. The robe vanished, and the cool air chilled her skin, causing her to tremble.

Please, guys, this isn't going to work. I know it."

"You're wrong." Nash rose from the bed. "Besides, sweet girl, you must not speak unless spoken to. Remember? Kronos, hand me the largest paddle out of that case."

*Largest?* She gulped, knowing that he would burn her bottom.

Kro handed a large black paddle over to him.

Eve felt a lump in her throat.

Nash stared down at her, his face full of determination and strength. "So far, you've earned yourself a few licks from this paddle. Keep talking, and I will keep adding to it. Your only response is 'yes, Sir' or 'no, Sir,' unless we ask you a question that can't be answered that way and then you still address us as Sir. Understand?"

His powerful will blasted into her. How could she refuse him? She didn't think she could. But if he got to the crux of her fear, what then? Oh God, she didn't want to feel that loss again.

"Answer him!" Kro demanded.

Heat rolled through her like a wild fire. "Yes, Sir."

"I'm adding more slaps to your ass for your punishment for hesitating to answer." Nash's tone transfixed her, steady and strong. "Help me roll her over on her stomach, Kronos."

They flipped her over and tightened her restraints, shaping her body into an X with her arms and legs spread out.

*X marks the spot.*

"Are we going to blindfold her again, Nash?"

"Do you want to, soldier?"

Kro didn't answer, but must've nodded or made some kind of gesture to Nash saying that he did want her blindfolded. She didn't know which, but when her sight ended as the thing covered her eyes, that was when she knew that he had.

*Smack!*

The sting of the paddle smarted. Eve fisted the sheets and buried her head in the pillow. One down. Only they knew how many were left. But another spank didn't come.

Four hands kneaded her ass so gently, taking away the sting.

*Smack!*

She bit her lip. Back came the burn. Her mind went more quickly into the serene paradise of her two immortals making. Thoughts drifted and quieted.

Again, hands massaged everything away. She felt wetness between her legs from the treatment.

Hands off. She braced herself.

*Smack!*

"Good, Eve. Very good."

Nash's words thrilled her. God, she wanted to please him.

Now their hands massaged more than just her ass; they massaged her back, legs, and shoulders. Every knotted up muscle got worked on. Tension slipped out of her like warm syrup onto buttered pancakes.

*Smack!*

Was that number four or five? She'd lost count.

She felt warm oil applied to her back and shoulders. One of her immortals rubbed more deeply than before. The other kissed the soft spot behind her knees.

"You're doing great," Kro whispered in her ear, causing gooseflesh to pop up on her skin.

*Nash is kissing my legs!*

Her mind spun, and her body ached for more. When she felt them both stop the tenderness, she bit down hard on the pillow.

*Smack!*

How many more? She'd totally lost count, but started not to care. Could she trust them? Really trust them? How she wanted to.

*Smack!*

"Wait, you didn't massage me first. I mean...Sir."

"Just like I thought, you were in your head. You just earned some more. Understand?"

"Yes, Sir." Oh God. How much more could she take of their warming her up, pushing her higher, bringing the paddle down hard, and pulling her back.

*Smack!*

Though her backside burned, the pain didn't overwhelm her, but their tenderness between the paddlings did.

Kro threaded his hands in her hair while nibbling her earlobes. Nash spread her cheeks wide and dove into her with his tongue while his fingers moved to her swollen folds and found her clit. Eve felt a moan of pure satisfaction slip past her lips. An orgasm crept up and started to take hold of her.

*Smack!* Her pending climax retreated from the sting to the recesses of her body.

"No, Eve. This is important. You cannot come until I say so. Understand?"

"Yes, Sir."

Bit by bit, they were ripping her resistance to shreds. Part of her wanted them to undo her, but another part clawed at her insides like a cornered rabid she-wolf.

*Smack!*

The bite of the paddle burned her backside.

"Eve, get out of your head. You can do this."

*Smack!*

Nash's tone turned stern. "Stop fighting. Open up to me."

*I want to, I really do. I just don't knowhow*

*Slap!*

She realized he'd replaced the paddle with his open hand, thrilling her to the max.

*Slap! Slap!*

His slaps came harder and faster. The mix of the painful sting with the pleasure of his touch made her believe she could die from holding back from the soon-to-come orgasm that continued to grow inside her like a mushroom cloud of lust and heat.

She heard a cap pop open, then she felt a finger slick her ass ring up with lube. *Take my body, yes!*

She felt his fingers circling her backside entrance, and then a digit pierced through the tightness, making her cry out from sheer desire. In and out, he fingered her ass. Something akin to electricity shot up her spine.

In and out. Deeper. Another digit joined with the other inside her, stretching to make room for a massive cock. *Which one? Did it matter? No.* She craved them both, hoping to have her pussy and ass filled simultaneously by them. One in the front. One in the back. They called it *tripling*. She called it *heaven*.

"Eve, you belong to us." Nash's tone had softened. "You may not realize that now, but you will."

Kronos turned her head so that she now faced him. "It's true, sweetheart."

"Surrender to me and Kronos, tonight. We'll make sure no one ever hurts you again."

Her stomach flip-flopped.

"Her tight little ass is ready for your cock, Kronos. Get her charged up."

She felt him push his cock slowly and steadily past her ass ring.

Nash had moved onto the bed with her, his hands moving lightly over the skin of her sides.

Kronos went deeper still. Eve jolted.

"Hold on, angel. Let her get her breath back."

"She is so tight. I really want to stretch her wide open." But he didn't. He didn't move a fraction more into her.

The pain disappeared, replaced by a full-on ache.

"Good girl. You got it. Clamp down on his dick."



She obeyed instantly and tightened her muscles.

Kro groaned then plunged the rest of his cock into her. "Who's doing the torture here, us or her? I'm not sure I can hold back for us to form the triangle with her."

"Sure you can. This is necessary for her to finally surrender every shred of control over to us."

"That she will."

They both sounded so sure that she would. Her body had already waved the white flag of submission. But her mind? Her heart? They still held back, if only by a fingernail.

When he started his slow thrusts in and out of her backside, the thickness of his cock stretched her even more. No pain left, only wet desire. Warning lights flashed in her mind. *Too far! Go back!*

But she couldn't. Time drifted, and the world spun. Her brain began to quiet.

"That's it, Kronos. Keep it up. Perfect."

Her orgasm knocked at the door, but Nash hadn't given her permission to open up to it. She closed her eyes shut, willing it away.

"I think she's ready, jinn."

Seconds later, her restraints were removed. Kro's cock never left her as they pulled her to her side, and then to her back against his chest. His drilling slowed to a crawl inside her ass.

The air hit her wet pussy, causing her to shiver. When she felt Nash's dick rub against her mound, her eyes popped open. He gazed at her and smiled. "Open up to me, Eve."

She nodded.

His mouth latched onto her breasts' erect bits of flesh. The sensation rolled over the rest of her skin, causing goose bumps to appear.

His cock pierced her pussy with one quick thrust. A mind-blowing heat erupted inside her.

*Please, let me come.*

Nash held her waist firmly and nuzzled her neck. *Not yet, Eve.*

Had she actually heard Nash's thought? All reason disappeared as their combined assaults boiled her insides raw.

*Please, oh please. I need to come.*

His mental command came. *Surrender to us, and then you can come.*

She couldn't take anymore. Her past pain didn't hold a chance against these two. She let herself imagine a bright, safe future for the first time in her life. A future with her angel and her jinn.

*Nash, do you see it? Her red energy is dancing on her skin.*

Nash's and Kro's thoughts poured into her in a rush. They wanted to protect and possess her. They adored her. They believed in her strength and courage.

"Yes, I see it. Eve, tell me that you surrender."

"God, look at that power! She's filling up the room with it."

They'd peeled her back, crumbled her walls, and left her defenseless. She wanted to comply, to lean on them for what she needed, but still she held back.

*I don't want to be alone anymore.*

"Let go of it. Open up to me. You can do it."

Their thrusts slammed into her with more force—more need.

*I want to surrender and open up to them, but I just don't know how*

She felt tears roll down her cheeks.

Nash kissed her eyelids. "It's okay. You've done great. We have more time."

Had he heard her thoughts? She didn't know it was possible, but did she really know the extent of their magic.

"Eve, you can come for us now. Let your climax go."

Kro's thoughts shot into her. *Thank heavens, jinn. I can't last a minute longer myself.*

Nash laughed. "The girl can clench down hard, can't she."

"Time to form the triangle."

Eve saw green smoke surround Nash then move into her. Next, a blue light mingled with Nash's green—Kro's light.

The moment seemed so right, so perfect. How she wanted it to last and go on forever. All she had to do was find a way to surrender. She closed her eyes tight.

"She's doing it!"

Even with her eyes closed, she saw her own red power thread between their green and blue, beginning to form into an intertwined thread of multi-colored light. Micki had told her to watch for her red energy to change into colors of a rainbow. Once she saw that, then she would know that she, Nash, and Kronos were locked together, body, mind, and heart, into a Perfect Triad.

Still no rainbow, but the light started to change.

"I-I'm so close," Kro breathed.

Nash looked to be on the brink, too. "Go ahead, Eve. Come."

Their strokes ended inside her with two simultaneous thrusts, as they sent their liquid deep into her insides. Her orgasm came like a long overdue volcanic eruption, causing the air to blister, the sea to steam, and the earth to move. The rainbow vibrated in her mind. She longed for it to bind her to Nash and Kro. All she had to do was surrender to them.

But then an image of her mother leaving her all those years ago pierced through her release, causing her gut to spin. Next, she smelled bacon and eggs and thought of Aunt Penny and her asshole husband.

*Why am I thinking about those times now?* She pushed the memories away. She wanted to bring out the multi-colors inside her and give them to her lovers.

Quade's voice from the hidden speakers in the room jolted her from her thoughts. "Sorry to interrupt you. But we're under attack."

The rainbow in her mind vanished.

## Chapter 11

Eve watched Nash and Kronos leap off the bed. They waved their hands and were no longer naked but fully clothed and equipped with weapons.

Quade busted through the door, startling her to a sitting position. She pulled the bed linens up to cover her breasts. Her heart thudded in her chest.

"Sir, hurry." The intruding jinn's eyes darted back and forth from Nash to Kro. "There's a least four darklings flying for us. I'll be glad to guard the bloodliner."

Eve trembled, wondering if the likes of Irkon and crew were coming for her.

"Kronos, you stay here." Nash touched her shoulder and squeezed lightly. "Keep our girl safe."

Her angel nodded.

Nash stepped to the door. "Quade, you follow me."

"Yes, sir."

When the two left the room, Kro shut and locked the door. He kept his hand on the hilt of his sword, though it remained sheathed in his scabbard. Eve spotted the holster on his hip, holding a Glock at the ready. Whoever, or whatever, came through the door would be facing her lethal protector. She hoped no one would. *Please Nash, come back to me unharmed.*

"Kro, I'm so sorry."

"For what?"

"I tried, but I just didn't know how to let go. I wanted to, but I failed."

He lifted her up off the bed and squeezed her tight. "We succeeded in getting your power activated. That's a start."

"What if we run out of time?"

He lowered her to the floor, then moved to a place where he was between her and the door. She'd never seen his soldier side of him before, but she was thankful for it.

"Nash and I have over five days left with you, sweetheart. Plenty of time to work this out. We'll find a way, I'm sure. Don't worry."

What doubts she'd had about being a bloodliner had been blown away by the sight of her own red energy dancing around her. That meant Micki ~~was~~ her cousin.

The door swung open. In a flash, Kro drew his sword in one hand and held the pistol in the other. She stepped back and held her breath.

Wright blasted through the door. Kro brought the tip of his sword to the asshole's throat. "What are you doing here?"

"I heard we were under attack and wanted to make sure the two women were okay, Kronos. Can you please put down your weapon?"

*Don't do it, Kro.*

Kro lowered his sword just a bit. "And Brooke, she's okay?"

"Yes, I just came from her room. She's fine."

Nash walked in. "False alarm."

Eve sat back down on the bed. "You're kidding."

"No. Apparently, Quade misheard Wright talking with Ezra and Nadine."

Wright stiffened. "About what?"

"Something about four darkling prisoners being flown in for containment and interrogation. He only heard part of the conversation, causing the confusion."

Eve thought that sounded suspicious. Had Wright intended for Quade to believe the place was under attack? If so, why? Had he expected her to be alone when he'd walked into her room?

Wright smirked. "That jinn needs his ears checked."

"You seemed pretty certain there was some kind of attack happening when you came in here." Eve stiffened with worry and glared at Wright. "Who told you that we were under attack?"

The nasty angel glared at her and then turned to Nash. "Stone told me, sir."

"Who probably heard it from Quade," Kro added.

"Wright, go help make sure the prisoners are locked away securely." Nash turned to her. "You okay?"

She nodded, glad that he had come back unscathed.

He wheeled back to Wright. "I want double the men normally used to guard darklings. Understand?"

"Yes, sir." The dubious immortal turned and exited.

Kro's face looked troubled. "I thought David's instructions were that no more darklings should be brought to the Ranch as long as Brooke and Eve were here."

"That's right." Nash rubbed his chin. "But apparently, Parkor had something to do with these darklings coming here. They're from Europe, and the warriors bringing them in are from there, too."

"Cagey bastard. Archjinns and archangels still creep me out."

Brooke charged in. "Eve, are you alright?"

"She's fine," Nash answered.

"What about the attack?"

"There wasn't one. The information was incorrect."

The blond woman studied Eve. Apparently, she wasn't taking even Nash's word at face value.

When Brooke finished scrutinizing, she put her hands on her hips and turned to Kro and Nash. "There may have been no real attack, but clearly Eve isn't fine."

"I'm not? What do you mean?"

"Look at you."

Eve shrugged. "I don't follow."

"Of course not. You look exhausted. Did these two assholes think about giving you a break? Some food and some clothes?"

Brooke had a point. She did feel tired.

"Come with me, Eve." Brooke held out her hand, her disposition challenging Nash or Kro to try to stop her. "A nice hot bath will fix you right up."

"That sounds amazing." Eve thought a long soak would do wonders for her tense muscles.

"I also think you and I are about the same size. I'll lend you some clothes. You'll be wearing clothing that I brought with me to David's prison. I don't know

about you, but magically created clothes seem to always be a bit too tight. Too much hocus-pocus gets on my nerves.”

Eve liked the woman’s spunkiness.

“Go, sweetheart. Enjoy.” Kro kissed Eve on the cheek. “I won’t be far.”

Nash nodded. “Brooke’s right. You need a break. Go with her.”

Eve’s shoulders relaxed, and she looked at Brooke. “I’d love a bath and some clothes bought in an actual store.”

\* \* \* \*

Eve couldn’t remember ever being so relaxed. The reflections of a dozen candle flames danced together hypnotically on the water’s surface. Brooke’s delicious meal, two mojitos, and the warm bath mixed together perfectly, melting every knot of tension in her body.

Brooke told her to take as long as she wanted, and Eve planned on doing just that. The past few days had been quite a whirlwind. She needed time alone to think.

She twisted her wet hair, squeezed as much of the water out as she could, then draped her locks over her left shoulder. The length allowed it to reach to the top of her breast. Her freshly scrubbed skin tingled.

The last tripling with Nash and Kro had awakened her bloodline power. It felt something like intense electricity shooting from deep inside her. She recalled the internal quakes, which were different than any she’d felt before.

She’d seen the red light emanating from her body, but she didn’t know how to use it, or even how to make it appear again.

She raised her hands up to the ceiling. “Red power, come forth!”

Nothing. *I’m an idiot.*

The new challenge of binding her power and herself to Kro and Nash remained unsolved. To help her think more clearly, she closed her eyes. When David returned, if she wasn’t attached to them in that way, the archangel would bring in other immortals to screw her into submission.

*Damn!*

Images of Wright and Quade spun into her thoughts, and then she imagined the diner with Irkon standing over her. Her gut clenched. She brought her fists to the water, splashing it over the sides of the tub. “No!”

But how could she avert David from bringing in more immortals if she didn’t connect with Nash and Kro? All she needed to do was open up to them. Easy-peasy. *Like hell.*

Two amazing men wanted her. They were strong and powerful and vowed to protect her. Still, she held back. *What is wrong with me?* She’d reached the edge, readied herself for the jump, and then backed away. If Quade hadn’t jolted her with the false alarm, she might’ve actually found away to give herself over to Nash and Kro enough so that the magical binding could happen.

Her mind whirled with possibilities and with old fears. Being out of her head was not the way she wanted to feel. Still, just because she was pessimistic didn’t mean she was wrong. Loneliness had been her constant companion, and leaving it behind wasn’t that easy. She needed more time to get used to the idea that she wouldn’t lose Nash and Kro. But she had only five more days and nights.

She sipped the last drop of herbal tea she’d brought with her to the bath. Brooke had said it would help her sleep. Her hostess had become an ally in this crazy place. In fact, Eve had grown to like her very much.

During her meal, Brooke had filled Eve in on all that she’d learned listening and watching the soldiers, and what Micki had shared with her about this strange hidden world of immortals. When Brooke talked about Eric’s death, she’d shed tears. *Poor thing, she misses him so much.* When Brooke had gotten to the part about Nash having a past love, a woman named Gwyneth, who died years ago, Eve had tensed with concern. Was Gwyneth Nash’s true love? How could she compete with a dead woman?

The knots began creeping back into her muscles.

*No! I want something different. I want them. I know Kro wants me, and I think Nash does, too. At least, I hope he does.*

For the first time in her life she could imagine a different future. Everything could fall into place once she truly connected to Nash and Kro. It sounded so easy. But was it? Even if she were willing, would the binding magic work?

She didn’t understand the rules of her bloodline power, but somehow she had to figure it out—and quick. She must try again to bring her new magic out. Closing her eyes, she concentrated. She thought about what she’d seen during her last orgasm with Nash and Kro—green smoke and blue light. Her body was humming like a giant electrical transformer, and that’s when she’d felt her red energy explode out of her.

One of them had said something about forming a triangle. That must’ve been the moment of opportunity for binding, just as they all reached climax.

She brought up the memory of how she felt tied up and writhing on the bed. They had taken her to a place of delicious mind-blowing pleasure. Images of their naked muscled bodies appeared in her thoughts, and the vision continued with each of them touching one of her cheeks. Kro’s green eyes and Nash’s brown, filled with such emotion, knocked her over.

She gasped in surprise as dream-Nash began licking her hardened nipples. She reached up grazed the sensitive flesh, pretending her fingers were his tongue.

“Yes, Sir. So, good.”

Kro slipped farther down and blew a warm breath on her thighs. A shiver shot from her belly to her inner core. His touches heated her skin. His fixed gaze held her eyes captive. She could feel his fingers part her slit and brush up against her clit, sending shocks of desire through her.

She imagined him demanding a taste.

“Yes. Please, my warrior angel.”

Eve moved her hand down to her mound and began fingering where Kro’s mouth would go. His fleshy, damp tongue against her clit sent a battalion of trembles to every part of her body.

She watched as her red bloodline energy shot out of her. Willing it to wrap around the two men, her body sparked to life.

Their lips covered every inch of her skin. Nash ended his kissing journey by taking possession of her mouth with his. Kro licked her into a state of frenzy. God, she wanted to lose herself to them. To trust. To believe.

“It’s not fair,” she said aloud.

The two turned to her with eyes showing immense craving.

“You get to taste me. I want to taste you, too.”

The images nodded. Eve brought up her hand to her mouth, forming her fingers and thumb into a makeshift shaft. She sucked hard, pretending that the thing was the tip of Nash’s hard cock. In her mind, she crawled up between Kro’s legs. Her other hand became his erect dick. She dove down like a starving woman, tasting his flesh. She worked them over, back and forth. When one got close, she’d switch to the other hunk.

Nash threaded his hands through her hair. She imagined him saying how great she was doing. The ache exploded inside her. She needed them to triple again. This time, she would be able to surrender to them.

“Take me, Sir.”

Kro cupped her breasts and began gently massaging them. Eve continued sucking on him while Nash licked her backside’s rosebud. The men had her pussy dripping with desire.

When Nash replaced his tongue with his dick, she could feel his body tense, as if to say he didn’t want to hurt her. Sparks of red burst around and inside her.

One of her hands dove to her ass, a stand-in for Nash’s cock. The other went deep into her pussy, Kro’s understudy. The water splashed onto the floor as she thrashed against their double penetration into her.

Eve let out a cry of pleasure, as she imagined the men jackhammering her into submission.

Nash’s words drifted back into her mind. “Open up to us. Surrender to me.”

Their thrusts synchronized perfectly together with her inner spasms. Nash’s green smoke circled around her, warming her inside and out. Kro’s blue light wrapped her entire body in an electric charge. She brought her own red power out, making it interlace with the smoke and light. As their energies twisted together, Eve felt them all merge into a single sphere. Nothing could break such a bond. Quakes of desire grew inside her.

“Yes! God, y-yesss!” Her fingers’ strokes at her front and back tore into her, sending her higher and higher.

Kro cried out, as his hot gush shot deep inside her. Nash continued pummeling her from behind then suddenly pulled her hair back, as his own white liquid filled her up.

“I surrender! I open up to you!” Her breath locked up in her throat as her own orgasm mingled with theirs. She let out one final yell at the moment she reached the zenith of her own satisfaction.

Eve opened her eyes as her spinning climax slowed. Red fire danced on the water’s surface—her bloodline power. She grinned, and then realized she wasn’t alone. A shadowy figure stood just out of sight from the light.

*Oh no!*

## Chapter 12

The image of Eve screaming pierced Nash’s thoughts. Avoiding the Ranch’s magical defenses, he transported to her in a flash of smoke, daggers drawn, wishing Kronos were back from Zone Three. The angel had gone there to get some of Eve’s clothes she’d left behind in her hasty escape.

When Nash found her in a bathtub naked, with her eyes closed and *masturbating*, his muscles relaxed—but his cock hardened.

What he saw next astounded him. Red energy poured out of her like a powerful geyser. Had she learned to control it so soon? God, Eve amazed him.

She got to him in ways he couldn’t explain. He’d tried to convince David that the real reason he’d taken Eve for himself had been concern for his reports. Not true. Nash wanted her like no other before. He couldn’t get enough of her. Now, watching her pleasure herself, his familiar control failed him. He couldn’t let her go. Kronos wasn’t the first angel he would’ve picked to share her, but Eve wanted him. That was clear. So be it. Besides, Kronos seemed

as locked in to her as he was, and Nash had grown to respect him.

As much as her steamy self-pleasuring made him want to couple with her, he must stay focused on getting her to bind to him and Kronos. Now that he knew she was safe, best to leave.

Her eyes widened. "Who are you?"

*Too late.*

"Little one, it's me." He stepped forward so she could see him more clearly.

Her face flushed. "I need a towel."

"I don't think so. You sure put on a great show."

"For a peeping tom. Are you going to hand me a towel from that shelf or not."

"See, you do need me. If you had planned correctly, you would've placed a towel within reach before entering the tub."

She stuck out her tongue. His dick jumped up and saluted. The red energy licking at his legs unleashed his desire. No holding back now.

"Keep that up, and your backside will burn from my hand."

"Big words, mister," she teased, then her tone turned serious. "Tell me about Gwyneth."

"What do you want to know?" He wasn't fond of digging up those old memories.

Eve's gaze implored that he do just that. "Brooke heard that she died."

"Yes. A long time ago. She's actually an ancestor of yours and Micki's."

"Did you love her?" She lowered her stare to her knees poking out of the water.

"I felt responsible for her, but I'm not sure I'd call that love."

She sat up and the water dripped off her round, luscious breasts. "She died. How did that make you feel?"

"Are you a psychologist all of a sudden?" He didn't like this line of probing.

"Doesn't take a genius to know you're avoiding my question. Perhaps you feel a bit guilty for her death?"

She'd hit the crux of the weight he'd carried for so long. He should've protected her, should've been there. He wouldn't make the same mistake with Eve. She meant much more to him than just a ward to protect. She'd ensnared him, body and soul.

"I've got a better idea for this session, little one." The idea of joining her in the tub tugged hard at him, and it took every ounce of self-control not to jump into the water. "You'd like my type of therapy, wouldn't you?"

"Yes, Sir."

Eve had an appetite for sex that he would love to feed until she could barely walk.

"Stand up," he ordered. He wanted to see more of her.

She tilted her head then smiled. Sending him a mocking salute, she stood, leaving only her feet, ankles, and legs up to the bottom of her knees submerged in the water. Nash didn't hide his wandering gaze from her.

He must make Eve understand that every inch of her was his to enjoy with his hands, mouth... and eyes.

Her chest heaved, and Nash let his stare linger there. Her nipples jutted out as the air hit her water-soaked skin. A surge of lust pounded through his veins like a steam engine.

"Put your hands behind you, and pull your shoulders back."

She nodded and complied, which caused her breasts to become more prominent. Her instant submission pleased him and loaded his balls up tight.

"Spread your legs, sweet girl."

Again, she obeyed. Her pussy's fine hairs glistened from a mix of bathwater and Eve's slickness from her recent arousal. Primal urges stormed through his blood like an invading army of berserkers.

He could've spelled his attire away, but he wanted her to watch him undress without magic. He knew it would heighten her excitement.

He took off his clothing one article at a time, hoping to lengthen and expand her cravings. Inching along, he watched her pupils dilate as he removed each piece. Tossing them to the corner, he noticed her shivering.

"Get back in the warm water, Eve."

"Yes, Sir."

As she slipped back down below the surface, Nash walked to the edge of the tub.

His cock throbbed from his craze for her. “Same rules. You cannot come, unless I say so. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir.”

Her red energy vibrated through him. “Suck my dick.”

She sat up and grabbed it, circling her fingers around his shaft. Her tongue flicked his tip, sending a spark of lust down his spine. She’d overstepped his instructions by using her hands, and now she needed to understand that there was only one driver—and that the driver wasn’t her.

He cupped her chin. “Eve, what did I tell you to do?”

“To suck your dick, Sir.” Her tone revealed a mix of sexual longing and confusion.

“Did I say you could use your hand?”

She frowned like a naughty child caught with their hand in the cookie jar. The picture thrilled him.

“No, Sir.” Her hand left his cock.

“You just earned some slaps of my hand to your cute, little ass. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir!” The red light pulsed in the room like a high-powered beacon. No wonder David wanted her to bind with Alliance loyalists. If the Dark got wind—

Eve swallowed his dick in a single thrust, jerking him from his thoughts. His mind had wandered. So not like him. With Eve, his normal didn’t seem to want to stick around.

“Slower. That’s it. Perfect.”

Her head bobbed rhythmically up and down his entire length. Lust locked down hard inside his gut.

“Send your hand down to your pussy, Eve.”

She shivered, not from a chill this time, but from her juiced up libido. With one hand, she gripped the side of the tub, steadying herself, and the other she sent down to her cunt like a torpedo. When it hit its target, she moaned, and her lips vibrated on his cock. A column of heat blasted through him down to his balls.

“That’s it, little one. Perfect. Aren’t you tired of having to try so hard?”

With his dick still in her mouth, she looked up at him, questioning.

“Once you surrender to me, you won’t have to anymore. I want to make your life easy. No more worries. You can leave all that to me.”

Her hazel eyes softened, lashing fluttering.

“Keep sucking, sweet girl. You’re not done. You haven’t really surrendered yet. But you will.”

Her mouth worked him up to near climax, but he wanted to have her another way. “Stop. Release my dick.”

Her lips reluctantly left his shaft.

“Stand up.” The need to taste her right then drove him to the brink of insanity.

Eve jumped to her feet, shivering this time, not from cold, but from inner heat.

“Good girl. What are my rules?”

“No talking or coming unless given permission, Sir.”

“You’re learning. Those walls will come down if I have to chip away at each and every brick inside of you one at a time.” He went to his knees.

He closed his eyes and drew in a deep breath. Her lusty scent filled his senses and electricity jumped into his cock. Eve made him feel more deeply than he thought possible. Touching her, breathing her, tasting her, blended into a recipe for pure rapture. Never had he treasured anything or anyone more. He couldn’t let the next few nights be the only ones left between them. He wanted her for always.

Slipping his tongue between her slick folds, her slickness coated his tongue and detonated his taste buds like a wild fire.

He looked up at Eve. She closed her eyes and licked her lips. The sight caused a frenzy of sparks over his skin. Thrusting deep into her, over and over, he thirsted for more of her cream. He could feel her vibrating against his lips.

Each time he sensed her next to the edge of an orgasm, he backed off. As she floated to a more relaxed place, he dined on her delectable juices. To the edge, floating down, and back up—he wanted her to be mad with need. Over and over he continued the process, leading her to the edge, then pulling back.

Nash took her swollen clit into his mouth and slid a finger into her wet channel. He felt her clamp around his digit like a vise.

The water started to steam from her red power. His own green smoke swirled around him. Not possible with a coupling, but he couldn't deny what he saw. He doubted that they would be able to bind together without Kronos. Still, he might get her to let go of her fears and grab onto trusting him.

Keeping his finger channeling into her pussy, he released her clit from his mouth hold.

“Open up to me, Eve. You can do it.” He sent a hot blast of his breath over her mound then covered her clit with a kiss.

He added another finger into her slick tunnel and felt the room heat up. He released his own green energy. If she could feel his power and surrender to him now, then when they did triple again with Kronos it would be a snap to bind together.

“Say it, Eve. Tell me you surrender.”

Her insides constricted around his fingers. Nash knew how close she had to be, but still she didn't say it.

“Two words, Eve. Then I let you come.”

“I...”

Her closed lids fluttered, revealing her internal struggle. He dove back down on her clit.

*Eve, just say it.*

*I want to, but...*

A shock rolled through him. He had heard her thoughts, and she had heard his. He didn't know that was possible.

*Little one, you can do it. I know you can.*

The red power shot in every direction as tears rolled down her cheeks. “I want to, Sir. But I can't without Kro. I need you both.”

The room's temperature shot up fifteen degrees in a split second. She'd gotten so close, but he couldn't let her suffer any more. She'd find a way with their next tripling with Kronos, he'd make sure of it. Once bound together, she would be his.

He looked down at Eve, his future. “Go ahead, little one. You can come.”

The red spun like a whirlwind around Eve, shaking her body. He felt her convulsing on his fingers inside her. Tighten. Release. Tighten. Release. This went on for a full fifteen minutes.

He looked up at Eve. Her slackened mouth, wet red hair, and tilted head thrilled him. No one could be more beautiful.

He climbed into the tub. The water felt hot, heated up from her red light, no doubt. He drew her in close to his chest. She trembled against him.

He waved his hand and several towels floated over.

“You wanted a towel.”

She laughed, sounding a bit amused but more guilty. “Nash, I'm so sorry.”

“Shh... It's okay, sweet girl. We couldn't have completed a binding without Kronos anyway.”

“I thought that, but I know you're trying to get me to open up. I want to. I really do.”

“What's holding you back?”

Her eyes brimmed with tears. “I don't really know. Maybe it's because I don't know much about you.”

He recognized her sidestepping again. Familiar habits, no doubt. Such pain. What could've created such a hard shell around her?

He cupped her chin. “You already know how badly I want to possess you and how I will do whatever it takes to protect you. What else do you need to know to surrender to me and Kronos?”

“I'm trying, Nash.” She shivered again. “I just don't know if I even know how to surrender...everything.”

## Chapter 13

Eve sat in Brooke's suite sipping tea and eating cookies. She'd come to enjoy the woman's company more and more over the past few visits. Her body needed these brief respites from the constant lovemaking of Nash and Kronos, and chatting with Brooke came easily enough.

“So, how's it going?” Brooke asked.

Eve frowned. David was due back tomorrow. “Not good.”

“Damn. I wonder what they're doing wrong.”

*They're not doing anything wrong. I am.*



Something deep inside her would not let go, no matter how many sexual strategies Nash and Kronos used to crack her open and free her for them to claim. Nothing worked.

She'd even said the words "I surrender" and thought she meant it but zilch, nada, zero.

There was a knock at the door, and Brooke jumped up to answer it.

Eve had just left Nash and Kro. They couldn't expect her to go back so soon. She wanted a bath and a quick nap. Then she could let her two hunks take her every which way and then some. *That is until David shows up and ends my last fragments of happiness.*

"Get in here, you." Brooke motioned the new arrival inside.

Eve stood up and offered her hand to her cousin. "Hey, Micki."

"Just a handshake? No way. You're my only relative left in the world."

Micki circled her arms tight around her.

Eve didn't squeeze her back, but she also didn't push her away. The hug seemed genuine, and she liked her cousin's openness.

"Micki, you're wrong." Brooke patted her stomach. "This little one is also family to you. And even though we aren't blood, I think I should be counted in that category."

Micki laughed and turned back to Brooke, pulling her in for a hug. "You are like a sister to me, Brooke. I can't wait to be an aunt. How are you feeling? Any morning sickness?"

Brooke grinned. "Let's not talk about mornings." Her tone turned sarcastic. "I'm great. Under the Alliance's protection, how else would I be?"

"I know it must be frustrating, but it is necessary. The Dark attacked an Alliance stronghold outside Denver yesterday."

"Oh, no. What happened?"

"A bunch of soldiers got sliced to ribbons and a bloodliner named Leah was taken."

Eve's gut clenched. She remembered the woman from the basement. "Why hasn't anyone told us?"

"Cuz, you'll learn these immortal men think withholding bad news somehow protects us. I still have to remind Jared and Bradley that isn't true."

"God, what could the darklings be doing to that poor girl?" Brooke's face tightened. "I wish I could send those assholes to the Ether myself."

Micki patted Brooke's shoulder. "You're a tough woman, but you're not a bloodliner. With no magic or immortal duo by your side, the last thing you need is to face demons. Besides, your baby is all you need to worry about right now."

Brooke had never said why David had brought her to the Ranch, and Eve had never asked. Now she knew. She carried Eric's baby, a *bloodliner* baby. She didn't want to think about what someone like Irkon would do with such a child.

"Let's all sit down," Brooke requested.

The three of them took a seat.

"I'm glad to see you again, Micki." Eve meant it.

"Brooke tells me that you're having trouble binding with Nash and Kronos."

"Yes. May I ask you some questions about your binding?"

"That's why I'm here. I bet that between us, we can figure this out. We're three smart women. These immortal men think they know everything because they've lived so long. Can you believe that? But at the end of the day, there still just *men*."

They all laughed.

Eve turned to her cousin. "Does your bloodline power put off a red light?"

"It did at first, but it's changed. I didn't realize it at the time, but later I noticed."

"What does it look like now?"

"I call it a rainbow, but it really isn't that since it doesn't shape into an arch unless I form it that way. It actually vibrates with every color imaginable."

*Micki can control her bloodline magic, but I can't.*

"So when did the red become the rainbow? After binding to Jared and Bradley?"

"Yes. The very first night together."

*The very first night!* Eve put her head in her hands. "There really is no hope for me for a life with Kro and Nash."

One more night with her two immortals, then they'd be gone from her forever. Her body shook uncontrollably at the realization.

She heard Micki stand up and walk next to her. "It's not time to give up yet."

Exhausted and defeated, she felt new tears soak her fingertips. "We've tried everything. I don't know what else I can do. The last few times with them, my bloodline magic didn't even manifest itself."

Brooke's voiced softly, "I don't know much about immortal or bloodline magic, but I do know that no man knows the works about what makes a woman's heart tick. Eric knew more than his fair share, but he didn't know everything."

The last sentence seemed to get caught in Brooke's throat.

Eve ached for Brooke's loss. Eric had died trying to find a way to extend his life. Death came early for bloodliners unless they were permanently bound to two immortals. Being a bloodliner was a curse not a gift.

"Eve, it will work for you. It's just going to take you more time."

"I don't have that luxury. David comes back tomorrow. That's all the time he gave Nash, Kronos, and I. It worked so much easier for you, Jared, and Bradley."

"So? Like Brooke said, we're women. We all tick differently. And David's experiments don't always work. He tried them on my brother, and they failed. We're not guinea pigs for him to put through one of his mazes."

"Tell me how you did it." Eve looked up at her cousin, hoping to learn something she could use with Nash and Kro.

"I don't really know. That first night blew me away. I came to look for Eric at Zone Three, not love. I'd played my entire life on the safe side, never taking risks. Whatever relationships I did have before never amounted to much. With Jared and Bradley, I took the leap. I guess I was open to love."

"I want to be, too, but I'm not sure how to be."

"Do you love them?" Brooke asked.

Eve closed her eyes and brought up images of Nash and Kro. "Yes. Absolutely."

"So, what's stopping you?" Micki probed.

Tears flew down her cheeks. "I'm afraid of losing them."

\* \* \* \*

Nash looked at the other three immortals around the table, each looking as perplexed as he felt.

Bradley thrummed the table with his fingers. Jared rubbed his chin. Kronos cleaned his pistol. He paced.

When he came to the wall, he hit it with his fist, leaving a large indentation in the concrete.

Bradley stood up, went to the cooler, and grabbed another beer. "There's got to be an answer to this. What are we missing?"

Nash's frustration mounted. David would be back soon, and he and Kronos weren't even a millimeter closer to binding with Eve than their very first tripling six days ago. With the stepped attacks from the Dark, he worried they would find the Ranch soon. *Fuck!*

"What about her thoughts. Can you hear them?" Jared asked.

"Only bits and pieces and only during sex." Kronos looked up from his task. "How about you, Nash?"

"I could hear her thoughts a little more clearly when I caught her alone, pleasuring herself."

Jared turned to him. "The same time you saw her bring up her red energy, right?"

"Yes, Jared." He hit the wall with his fist, leaving a deep indentation in the concrete. "It looked just like Gwyneth's."

Nash's blood boiled at the thought of seeing Jared in the Dark's cave two hundred years ago. He'd never forget that night, the night of her murder. When he and several hundred other Alliance warriors had busted into the darklings' lair to battle the demon prince and his brood, Nash had zeroed in on Gwyneth's lifeless body, surrounded by the last flickers of her red energy snuffing out, and Jared, his former mentor and commander, on top of her.

The bastard had killed Gwyneth, and Nash had watched her bloodline fire snuff out. Terrok, the demon prince, had fallen into the Ether with a scream. Nash had rushed to send Jared with him, but David had held him back.

Gwyneth had been Nash's charge. He should've protected her from such a fate, but he'd failed her. He couldn't fail Eve.

Jared nodded. "You have every right to hate me, Nash."

"Don't flatter yourself. Easing your guilt won't come from me."

"I didn't expect it to."

"Will you two shut up! I don't give a damn whether you bury the hatchet or don't." Kronos's eyes narrowed. "This is about Eve and no one else."

“You’re right,” Nash agreed. “Tell us more about your binding with Micki, Jared.”

\* \* \* \*

Eve stepped back into the room, and Nash grabbed her, pulling her arms behind her back.

*Oh my God!*

“I’ve had enough of your resistance, little one. You will open up tonight and bind to us, no matter what it takes. Kronos, get the clamps and cuffs out of the case.”

Dampness heated her thighs. She trembled and held her breath. This was make-or-break time, and Nash and Kro were going to pull out all the stops. She prayed it would work. The talk with Micki and Brooke gave her hope. All she needed was to trust in them and in herself to build a future together.

Early on, Kro had given her a safe word, *Pirate*. She’d come close to using it a time or two. Tonight, nothing they could do would make her utter a single syllable. Win or lose, she’d give them everything she was able to give—body, mind, and hopefully heart.

“Here, Nash.” Kro stepped up in front of her and handed the requested items over her shoulder to Nash. Then he leaned in until her nose touched his. “You will surrender. Don’t doubt that.”

Kro’s eyes and tone spoke more about his underlying will to succeed than did his words.

She couldn’t imagine being with anyone but her two immortals, but if they failed, tomorrow David would bring in others to fuck her.

After her talk with Micki, she knew that the obstacle keeping her from binding was her fear of losing them. She trusted Nash and Kronos more than anyone, but she couldn’t give herself over completely. Things happened. People left and died. Even immortals didn’t stay forever. She tried to shove the negative thoughts away. She wanted to connect to them, to surrender. *Please let it happen!*

Eve felt Nash attach a cuff to each of her wrists. Next, he raised her arms up, attaching the cuffs to a single massive hook that hung from a chain in the ceiling. Being restrained like this let her feet touch the floor, but she could barely bend her knees. What did he have in mind? Heat rolled through her gut down to her channel, stoking the fire deep inside.

Kronos waved his hand, and her clothes vanished. Warm air hit her skin, yet she still trembled.

Nash stepped out from behind her into view. “Eve, new rule.”

*Oh my God!* She watched as he toyed with the tit clamps meant for her. Her heart pounded fast.

“The new rule is that you will speak whatever thought comes into your mind. Every single one. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Open up verbally to us.” Kronos cupped her chin. “Once you do that, we can get you the rest of the way to submission.”

She watched his gaze wander down to her breasts. Her nipples hardened, and her chest lifted as if his stare commanded them. She longed for his fingers on her little berries.

“Speak up, Eve. What do you want?” Nash ordered.

Her mouth went bone dry. She couldn’t find her voice.

*Smack!* “Now!”

With the sting of his hand, her ache multiplied. She closed her eyes. “Please, Sirs. I want you to touch me.”

Kronos asked, “Where exactly?”

“My chest. Please touch my chest.”

“Just your chest?” Nash’s tone stiffened.

“No.” She opened her eyes and found both men still dressed. She frowned.

“You’re pouting. Why?”

“I don’t know, Sir.”

*Smack!* She bit her lip, as the slap sent a shiver up her spine.

“Every thought, little one. Don’t hold back. Why did you frown?”

“I’m naked. I want you both naked, too, Sir.”

“Good girl.” Nash’s lips curled up. “We know you like looking at us stripped.”

“You do.”

Yes, but tonight you have to let go of whatever is holding you back from us.”

Overcome, she didn't know if she could find the right thing to say—or even if mere words could express the depth of her emotions. How could she convey the fears and heartache that chained her from reaching for the promise of happiness when she didn't even understand it herself?

“I know. I'm trying.” Her voice shook in her throat.

“We know, sweet girl. We'll get you there, I promise.”

“Sweetheart,” Kronos whispered in her ear. “We'll strip when we know you're ready.”

“We'll touch you when we please, and not before,” Nash whispered in her other ear.

“We'll paddle that cute ass when you need it.”

“We'll let you suck our cocks when we're good and ready.”

“Oh my God! Please, Sirs! You're driving me wild with your talk.”

Nash nodded. “We've only just begun, my love.”

*My love?* Had he ever said that to her before? No. She would've remembered.

A river of emotions poured out of her. They wanted her, and she them. What more could a woman want? Hope burned bright.

## Chapter 14

Nash leaned down and moved Eve's feet shoulder-width apart with the crop he held. David would be at the Ranch very soon. Every second mattered now. Time was almost up. He clenched his jaw. He couldn't fail her.

“Please, I beg you. I can't stand you two not touching me, Sirs.”

“Keep talking, little one. Ask for whatever you want. Even though you don't get to decide when or how, I still want to hear you. Every word you utter helps Kronos and I to get to the bottom of your hesitation.”

“Okay. But what if it doesn't work tonight? What if I fall short, Sir?”

Nash sent the crop to her round ass. *Smack!*

“You won't be the one failing. That's too much responsibility for you to carry alone, my love. This angel and I will do what needs to be done. We will succeed.” *We must.*

He stood back and took in his handiwork. Eve's naked frame roused his cock to full length and loaded his balls up to the max.

With her arms stretched over her head and her legs parted, her body stood completely open for him and Kronos.

Eve wiggled, causing the chain to rattle. “If your hands aren't on me soon, Sirs, I think I'll die.”

He craved to touch her until he thought he might go mad. But she needed him to stay in control. Keep it together. He couldn't let her know how worried he really was.

Kronos pushed her hair out of her eyes, and reassured, “You won't die, sweetheart.”

Nash added, “You will be punished for holding back. You've made us suffer for the past few days and nights. Now, it's your turn. It's for your own good, little one.”

Eve squirmed. God, he wanted to move his mouth over her body and explore every detail of her warm, soft flesh. But not yet. He would have to use every ounce of willpower to withhold himself, until she bared herself completely to him. He must avoid the pitfalls of her excuses and pleas...no matter how hard it hurt him.

“I'm going to put these clamps on her nipples. Eve, you've had clamps on you before, but not like these.” Previously, Nash had used nipple clamps on Eve in order to free up his and Kronos's hands for other parts of her body, while keeping the sensitivity high on her areolas. Tonight was different, though.

Kronos asked, “What's special about them?”

“They have batteries in them and will send a quick shock to her plump little nubs whenever you or I press this remote.” He held a silver control up for her to see.

Her eyes widened, the hazel looking a bit more green than normal. “What will cause you to do that, Sir?”

“Disobedience. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir.”

Nash tested the pressure of each clamp on his skin between his thumb and index finger. The tension was perfect. He leaned in a half inch from her left

breast and let out a long exhale, warming the nipple up. He did the same to its twin. He watched her tiny bits of flesh harden up more. God, he wanted to taste them.

He latched the clamps onto her breasts. Eve closed her eyes and rolled her head from side to side.

"Tell me what it feels like."

"Tight, Sir."

"How's the pain?"

"Okay, even pleasurable, Sir."

"Nash, we haven't used this on her yet." Kronos held up the clit clamp with the little bell.

"You're right. You know how to put it on?"

"No."

"You want me to put it on her, or do you want to?"

"I want to. Talk me through it." The angel's hesitation for this type of sexual experimentation had completely vanished over the last few days.

"Just place the rubber-tipped ends on either side of her clit." Nash watched Eve's toes curl as Kronos attached the clamp to her.

"Like that?"

"Yes. Now, when the bell rings, we know she's responding to us."

"So, she gets pleasure if I tap the bell like this."

The angel flicked the bell. Eve moaned and licked her lips. God, she was so beautiful.

"Yes, she does." Nash felt his balls fill up, watching her fist the sheets. "Let's get started."

Eve's eyes popped open. "I thought we were already started, Sir."

Ignoring her, Nash nodded. *You've got the paddle, Kronos?*

Yes?

"My love, we want you to stop thinking and just start reacting. I'm going to ask you some questions. You're going to answer them truthfully. Understand?"

"Yes, Sir."

"What is your name?"

"You know my name."

The angel swung, and the paddle slapped her ass. She bit her lip, and Nash sensed her want rising.

"That wasn't a correct answer. What is your name?"

"E-Eve."

"Good. How old are you?"

"Twenty-five."

"Where were you born?"

"P-Please, Sir. I don't know."

"Is that true?"

"Yes, Sir. I promise. It's true."

"What made you leave Zone Three and Kronos?"

"I've already told you about being scared after the tripling when Jared threw me across the room. Then when I saw those monsters zooming up the stairs for Micki, I panicked and fled. Why are you quizzing me?"

Kronos slapped her ass with the paddle again while Nash pressed the control to send the sweet little charge to the nipple clamps.

"O-Ohhh... Why did you punish me for that, Sir?"

"You know already," Kronos answered. "We question—you answer. Nothing else."

The angel had promise.

Nash licked Eve's neck. "Stop thinking, and start feeling. We have to find out what's holding you back, sweetheart. We only have tonight."

"I'd tell you if I knew myself, Sir. I'm trying—I swear."

"I know. But we need to get to the bottom of why you aren't binding to us. Tell us about growing up."

"Not much to tell, Sir. My dad died before I was born. My mother left me with my dad's sister, Aunt Penny, just before I turned four. I lived with my aunt until I went out on my own."

"How old were you when that happened?"

"Twelve."

*Kronos, she was only twelve when she was on her own. Did you know that?*

No. "Tell us about your aunt."

"She was wonderful, always smelled of baked goods. Her pies were amazing."

Kronos pressed on. "What happened next?"

"She died, Sir."

Nash watched her face turn red. They seemed to be getting close to her pain and what was holding her back. "Keep talking."

"I don't think any of those old memories mean anything. This isn't getting us anywhere, Sir."

Nash pressed the remote and sent a pleasure jolt to her breasts. "Stop thinking, my love."

She jerked for a second then her hips swayed causing the bell on her clit clamp to ring. He switched the clamps on her nipples off.

"Yes, Sir. So g-good. Ask your questions and then let me c-come."

"What happened after your aunt died?"

"The night after we buried her, I left."

"Why?"

"I had my reasons, Sir."

Kronos slapped her ass with his hand instead of the paddle. "Stop fighting. Tell us everything. Hold nothing back."

Tears welled up in her eyes. "My uncle came in drunk and tried to rape me. Simple as that."

Nash's rage poured out of him. The green smoke burned around him like acid.

*Relax, jinn. We're a long way from why she won't bind with us.*

*If I find the bastard, he'll wish he were dead.*

*I'll help. But we have to keep our heads in the game if this is going to work.* "Did he rape you, Eve?"

"No."

Kronos questioned, "What happened?"

Eve closed her eyes tight.

Nash leashed the homicidal anger inside him for her uncle. "Take your time, but we need to know everything, little one. Don't you trust us?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Let me know the hurt that has been with you all these years. Share it with me." He leaned in and kissed her. Her lips fluttered against his mouth. "Tell me. Let me help ease your pain."

Her body shook violently. "I killed him, or I think I did. We were in the kitchen, and he leaned me up against Aunt Penny's stove. I took her favorite cast-iron skillet and swung it as hard as I could into the side of his face. He fell down to the ground. I saw blood coming out of his mouth. He didn't move."

Nash hated pushing her so hard. If he had more time, he would've nudged her memories free with less force, knowing there would be more nights to ease her deeper. But they didn't have more time. The window of opportunity was closing. So, he plowed forward.

"What happened next, Eve?"

Her reply seemed to take a lifetime to arrive. "I ran. I don't know if he lived or died. And don't care. I got away."

Kronos sat the paddle down and rubbed her shoulders.

"That feels so good."

Nash leaned in and whispered in her ear. "You know that wasn't your fault, my love."

"I know that."

"Had your uncle ever done anything like that while your aunt was alive?"

"No, Sir. He'd been like a father to me until Aunt Penny passed away."

Kronos stepped forward, handing the paddle over to Nash. "I've got some questions of my own."

Nash nodded. "Let's take the clamps off her breasts and the one off her clit. They've been on long enough."

He removed all the clamps and watched Eve's pupils dilate from the fresh blood rushing into the tips of her flesh. She moaned like a purring kitten. A lightning bolt of lust shot down into his dick from her sighs of pleasure.

Stepping back behind Eve, Nash looked at her round, perky ass, now bright pink from the angel's paddling.

"You told us that you left Zone Three because of the tripling with Jared and the monsters you saw later." Kronos cupped her chin. "Was there any other reason?"

Eve paused. "No, Sir."

"That's a lie." Nash swung the paddle and brought it down on her backside's softness. How he wished he could spank her with his open palm, skin to skin, but that would have to come later. He would not be able to control himself if he touched her so intimately.

Kronos continued, "Let me try again. Was there any other reason that you left Zone Three?"

"Yes, Sir. I was afraid that you and I were getting too close."

Nash rubbed her back. "Now, that's the truth. Good girl."

"Why were you afraid of getting close to me, sweetheart?"

"Things were getting serious. Relationships have never been my strong suit."

"My love, you're avoiding the question." Nash rubbed the paddle against her ass. "Feel this? Don't make me slap you again with it. Tell us everything."

"Yes, Sir. I thought if Kronos and I got too close, it would hurt more when it ended."

"Excellent, sweetheart. That earned you a kiss." Kronos leaned forward and planted his mouth against hers.

Nash saw her skin flush red. No energy yet, but still a good sign.

The angel ended the reward. "So you ran, sweetheart?"

"Yes, Sir."

"And now you're here. Surely you've learned more about me. Do you think I would leave you?"

"Not without a fight, Sir."

"And Nash? What about him?"

"Same as you. He wouldn't leave unless David ordered him to, Sir."

Her words made Nash's gut tighten. Her faith in him shocked him. David would never understand what Eve needed. No matter how many immortals the archangel might parade in and out of her bed, her only chance of binding was with him and Kronos—no others. Nash knew the truth of it down to the center of his existence. He'd never thought much of vow-breakers, but soon he'd likely be one. Should this final attempt to open Eve up for a binding fail, he and Kronos had devised a secret plan to kidnap her from the Ranch. Once out of the Alliance's reach, they would resume their attempts to bind with Eve.

"So, you never knew your father, your mother abandoned you when you were a child, your aunt died, leaving you with an uncle who you thought cared about you but obviously didn't, and then you were on your own."

"That about covers my history, Sirs. I don't know what else to tell you."

"Memories are a funny thing. I bet you have some of your mother. Don't you?"

"I don't remember much before going to live with Aunt Penny, Sir." Eve's red energy vanished. Her tone chilled. "You're both immortal. What do you remember when you were first born?"

*Fuck!* Nash's gut tightened. "Why are you angry, little one?" Kronos's questions seemed to be getting close to the decisive point of what she really feared to share.

“I don’t know, Sir. I-I’m confused.”

“Are you afraid of remembering?”

“Yes.”

Nash sent to Kronos, *She’s blocking something. When you get close to it, the red disappears.*

*Like some kind of protective blockage. Yes.*

*That’s got to be it.*

The angel transmitted, *So, if we can get her to face it, open her up to it then she’s free of the invisible anchor and she can bind to us.*

*Right!* Nash felt they might actually have a chance to get through to what held Eve back.

*We have to get her energy to burn high and bright. That means getting her heated up sexually more than ever before. When the red is at its fullest, we hit her with the questions in rapid fire.*

*Got it!*

*Once she opens up, we form the triangle and get her to bind to us right then.*

Nash had never met a more capable and intelligent warrior than Kronos. He wondered what it would be like fighting shoulder to shoulder in battle with the angel. He might learn sooner than later if Eve didn’t bind to them. If this didn’t work, they would steal her away. No one, not even David, would take Eve from him and Kronos.

Nash sent, *Let’s do it.*

## Chapter 15

Shivers ran up Eve’s spine. Red dots danced against her eyelids.

Kronos’s hard questions and Nash’s wicked punishments had ended, thankfully. She decided that their interrogation style of sinful cop-wicked cop needed some tweaking. But who was she to complain. Two hot men whom she’d come to care for had her naked and bound up to the hook in the ceiling for their pleasure. They’d created an addiction inside her for the subspace of their making. A place she could lose herself to bliss.

“What do you want, sweetheart?” Kronos kissed her cheek.

Her ache for them was so strong—*so overwhelming*. “Sir, please keep touching me.”

“I want your pussy nice and wet for my dick.” Nash’s voice deepened with hot lust. “That what you want, too, my love?”

She gulped. “Yes, Sir. Please.”

“Greedy vixen.” Nash fondled her intimate crevice with his fingers, sending little trembles down inside her.

If she was going to hell tomorrow when David returned, tonight she wanted to touch heaven with Kro and Nash.

“Kronos, those clamps did a number on her breasts. Wouldn’t you like to lick away her suffering?”

Her swollen peaks still burned from the clamps’ grip. She couldn’t imagine how she could bear Kro’s mouth there, but she also couldn’t imagine not having his lips on her chest. Her breasts heaved with an aching need.

She felt Nash’s finger slip between her folds. Her body hummed in anticipation.

“She’s wet, but I think she can get even wetter.” He dropped his hand to her thigh, igniting sparks wherever he touched.

She could feel Nash stroking her thighs, little touches designed to tease and not satisfy.

Kro stepped up, his blue eyes full of want. Pressing his mouth tight to hers, his kiss besieged and occupied her down to her toes. His tongue pierced past her lips and lingered. Feeling Nash’s touch on her thighs and Kro’s velvet jackhammer in her mouth, Eve lost herself to time and space. Now was the only moment she needed. *Let tomorrow never come.*

She could feel her wetness seeping down her thighs as Nash’s finger grazed her clit. Closing her eyes, she felt red fire jet through her.

Kro unlatched his mouth from hers. His blue eyes fastened onto Eve with a ferociousness that startled her and reached down to her pussy.

As if on cue, she felt Nash spread her folds with his fingers, causing her clit to throb. “God, you’re so wet. Kronos, I have an idea.”

The wickedness of that last statement caused her skin to stand up and tingle.

“I’m game. So is Eve, I’m sure. Aren’t you, sweetheart?”



She nodded, even though doubt needed at the back of her head. What on earth did Nash have in mind?

He walked over to his infamous case and pulled out some washcloths, scissors, some kind of can, and a straight-edged razor.

"I like this idea, jinn." Kro turned back to her and sent a sinful wink. "Let's shave her close."

Eve shuddered. She'd always kept her pubic hair trimmed nice and neat. Shaving her mound? Never. Trusting someone with a straight edge against her sensitive flesh, even Nash, terrified her.

"I-I'm not sure about this, Sirs. What if your hand shakes or I jerk suddenly?"

"Trust me, my love. I won't damage that beautiful pussy one iota. We're going to take our time. Kronos, can you conjure a bowl of warm water?"

She watched her angel shoot a sphere of blue light into his hand. In the next instant, a glass bowl with steaming liquid appeared. He squatted down on the floor and placed the water at her feet.

"Couldn't you use a safety razor at least?"

"No. Wouldn't get close enough." Nash sat down next to Kro on the floor.

Eve looked down at the two men at her feet about to remove every hair from her mound. They stared at her secret flesh like art enthusiasts looking at a masterpiece. She took in a long slow breath.

"We're going to go slow. This isn't something that you do in a rush." Her jinn sounded like a naughty professor lecturing a class. "First, we need to scissor-cut her to about a quarter inch from her skin. Kronos, will you do the pleasure?"

He nodded and took the scissors. "She's pretty trimmed up already. I've never seen a more beautiful pussy in my life."

Eve beamed with pride. She tilted her head down to look at her would-be barbers and found them absentmindedly stroking their cocks through their pants. Knowing that they responded to her so strongly pleased her.

"Angel, get rid of any loose hairs."

Kro leaned in. All she could see now was the top of his head, but she could *feel* his hot breath on her engorged folds.

*Snip. Snip. Snip.*

She bit her lip as her desires beat at her insides like a drunken drummer.

"That's great, soldier. No more lose hairs. Now we need to warm up her pubes and soften her skin."

Nash took a cloth and dipped it into the warm water, then pressed it against her mound. It felt amazing, and Eve shifted her hips slightly to push into the compress.

"That's it. Snuggle that pussy into my cloth."

When Nash removed the dripping fabric and put it back in the steaming bowl, Eve thought she might explode. He replaced the cloth with his fingers, pressing here, pulling there.

"What are you doing to me?"

"I'm examining how your hair grows. You don't want me to shave against the grain. Do you, little one?"

"No, Sir."

Nash looked up at her, his dark eyes transfixing her. "Time to get you slick and slippery."

He squirted a big dollop of the white shaving cream into his palm. Eve closed her eyes then felt the hot lather hit her genitalia. She jerked away from the silky foam.

"Sorry, Sir. I told you that I might do that." A shiver shot up her spine.

"It's okay, my love. I won't nick you. I promise. Trust me."

*Oh, my God! I'm really going to let them do this. Like I have a choice?* But she knew she did. If she protested enough, said the safe word, it would end. *No way.*

"Yes, Sir. I trust you. Go ahead and finish my shave."

"I don't need your permission, little one." Nash stood and tweaked her nipples, sending delicious sparks from where his fingers clamped on her breasts down to her pussy, sending her mind to the quiet space.

He knelt back down and blew his hot breath on her mound.

*Swish. Swish.*

She could feel the blade gliding over her lower flesh, and then he moved up. Her gut tightened. She didn't move a muscle.

Another round of the blade over her sensitive skin sent a shiver up and down her spine.

She braved a quick look. Kro stared over Nash's shoulder, looking hypnotized by the workmanship.

*Swish.*

She closed her eyes tight.

*Swish. Swish.*

When he stopped, she opened her eyes. Nash pulled out the cloth, twisted it, and then wiped her pussy clean.

"All done."

The air hit her denuded skin, sending her higher.

Kro grabbed her by the calf. "I need a taste of her depths."

"Wait, angel. Let's apply some edible oil then. She's going to be extra sensitive, and I don't want her to get a rash."

Nash's concern for her well-being made her heart race. Hard on the outside, warm on the inside.

As he applied the pleasant moisturizer to her mound, her own wetness seeped out. She looked down and found Nash and Kronos looking at her as if she were an innocent lamb and they were two hungry wolves.

"Nash, let's uncover the mirror so she can see what a great job you did on her pussy." Kro raised his hand and the blanket that had covered the mirror for several days vanished.

"Wait! What if someone is in there, Sir? Watching."

"Everyone's asleep but the guards on duty and they don't go in there." Kro smile melted her completely. "You're safe, Eve. Take a look at yourself."

She did. Her mound was completely bald of all hair. "It looks silly."

"How does it feel?" Nash grazed the top of her skin with his hand.

"It feels strange, but good, Sir." She giggled.

"Let me test it out." Kro moved over. His fingers roamed her flesh, igniting frenzy for more in her pussy. "I can't find one stray hair. Great job, Nash."

She looked back at the mirror and hummed to herself. Her pussy did look nice without pubes. In the reflection Nash moved his head, blocking out her newly denuded mound from view.

"Hey, I can't see."

"We're not here to just admire your new look, sweet girl." He kissed her mound then his tongue slivered through her folds to her clit.

Her stomach flipped and twisted. She curled her hands into fists as the pressure for release grew. How long would they make her wait? This was torture, pleasurable...yes, but still torture.

"I can't get enough of you, little one." Nash went back down on her and licked her folds with the tip of his tongue.

Red sparks danced around the room. *Her* sparks.

Kro stood up. He massaged her breasts gently, only grazing her sore nipples once with his thumbs. She'd never felt so lust-filled and hazy.

He whispered, "Go with it, sweetheart. Let that bloodline power out."

"Y-Yes, Sir." Drunk from their touches, her mind felt woozy as if she'd finished off several cocktails.

Kro kissed her and walked behind her. His finger tickled her backside's entrance with his application of lube. "You ready for my cock to be in that pretty little ass of yours? Or should I wait?"

"Don't wait, Sir. Please, I can't stand much more." She couldn't bear anymore of their back and forth treatment, heating her up to a mania only to slow her down to a hum over and over again. She'd never been more sexually pent-up in her life, and the pressure of her lust demanded the dam to break.

"Tell us about your parents? What do you remember about them, little one?" Nash asked before latching onto her sore nipple.

*Oh my God! My parents?*

"Yes, sweetheart, we want to know about your parents." Kro stroked her hair.

"I don't remember much. My father, not at all." She floated in the pleasurable oblivion created by her two immortals for her... to rest her mind.

Nash's thought shot into her. *What about your mother?*

She could feel Kronos's cock between her ass cheeks, teasing the entrance with its tip. Nash's lips nipped at her breast's berries. Her head spun.

Questions. Desire. Heat. Dizziness.

"She was beautiful. Dark hair, like Micki's. Hazel eyes, like mine."

"Tell us about the last time you saw her." Kronos licked her neck. The memory of the night her mother left, coaxed by their gentle caresses, floated to the front of her thoughts.

*"Mommy, mommy! I am afraid. Please don't leave me!"*

*Mommy leans down, kisses my head. "Baby, be a big girl. Here's your white teddy bear."*

*I toss the bear across the room. "I-I d-don't want him. I-I want you."*

*"Shhh. Penny is going to take care of you. She's a nice woman."*

*I cry so hard my stomach hurts. I reach for her but she's not there. So many tears... They keep me from seeing her leave.*

*"PLEASE COME BACK, MOMMY!"*

Her body shook violently from the painful memory.

Nash's voice pulled her back. "We're here, my love."

The sobs came from deep within her. They jolted her body like a million volts.

"Little one, it's okay. We'll never leave you."

"We promise, sweetheart. You'll never be alone again."

Eve felt them remove the cuffs. Her arms hung heavy by her sides. If they hadn't picked her up, she would've fallen to the floor. The convulsions kept rocking her.

Nash and Kronos placed her on the bed between them. They covered her with a blanket.

"I did good, Sirs?"

"Oh, yes." Nash smile melted her.

Kro squeezed her hand. "The flashback of your mother kept you blocked. The strength of your memories when you were three cemented to your subconscious like steel. Unbelievably powerful. Now that you opened up to us, we're home free."

As the sobs subsided, she tried to lean up on her elbows.

"Relax, sweetheart." Kronos kissed her hand. "You need to sleep. You've been through the ringer."

"I-I'm so sorry." She heard herself whimper.

Kro kissed her cheek. "Shh. You did great."

"But we didn't triple, Kro."

Nash cupped her chin. "No." His tone meant business, then he softened it. "You're too exhausted, sweet girl. But your power lit up like a Christmas tree. And now, you're ready to bind to us."

"B-but we should triple now—before David shows up."

"He's already here, but don't worry, you're ours from now on. Kro and I will make sure he understands that. We can triple and bind with you when you wake up."

"Sleep now, sweetheart."

*I'm theirs from now on...*

\* \* \* \*

The conference room at the Ranch could host more than twenty people around its large mahogany table, but only four immortals filled the space.

Kronos sat back and listened. Nash and David continued yelling at each other. Kronos's respect for Nash kept growing and growing. The other immortal in the room, Parkor, sat back smoking a pipe.

"How dense are you, David?" Nash glared at his commander. "It's not possible for Eve to bind to any other immortals besides me and Kronos."

"So you've been saying. I'm not convinced. You've had seven days, like I promised. I'm through talking about this. The moment we leave this room, I will be sending in two new immortals to triple with her."

Nash turned smoky green, daggers poised for action. "No one besides me and Kronos will ever triple with Eve."

"You threatening me?" David smirked.

Kronos stood up, spread his wings, and brought forth his sword. "We'll do what we have to, David. Be reasonable. She trusts us."

Parkor banged the table with his pipe. "Enough! David, this needs to be brought to the council."

"You're over-stepping."

"So you say. State your bloody logic to the others. Put away your weapons, soldiers." Parkor waved his hand and a golden door appeared on the wall next to him. "Nash, you and Kronos can make your case to the Seven, but I doubt you will sway us."

Parkor snuffed his pipe, placed it in his jacket, and walked through the door into the Secret Room, the chamber where the Alliance's highest nobility met and issued edicts.

"This is perfect. Now, we don't need David's approval." Nash stepped up to the portal, then turned back to him. "Come on. I know we can win enough of them over to get another night with Eve."

"I've got your back." Kronos followed his friend through the portal.

David grumbled, but came after them.

Kronos looked around the heptagonal room, comprised of seven walls of gray rock. Every wall had been painted with a large black symbol that he couldn't decipher. In the center of the room sat a large mahogany table with seven massive chairs nudged against it.

All but one of the Seven entered the room through the doors on the other walls. He knew that a quorum consisted of six of the Seven. No more, no less. One chair always remained empty, representing the absent member.

As each of the rulers entered, their doors vanished. Kronos looked back at the door he'd walked through. It was gone, also.

Ancient Gravian, ruler of Asia sat first. Kronos found it odd that such a powerful archangel walked with a cane.

Parkor took his seat next to Gravian.

The beautiful Jezzel, ruler of Africa, sat on the other side of Gravian. A string of emeralds draped her neck.

The rest followed suit: the archjinn, Samson, who ruled Australia; then David; and last came Mavin, her skin and hair so pale it reminded Kronos of the lifeless, cold continent she ruled.

Kronos noted the missing noble—the ruler of South America, Ramon, an archangel.

"Parkor, why did you summon us?" Samson asked.

"As many of you know, I've brought concerns about how David has been handling our latest threat."

Jezzel's eyes burned dark, like ancient earth. "Yes. And?"

"I've brought an example of such. We've all been told about the bloodliners David has found and about the woman carrying the bloodliner baby. Did you know that he lost one of the bloodliners to the Dark? A woman named Leah?"

David glared at Parkor, but didn't answer.

"Too many secrets, David. Not good." Parker turned back to the others. "His attempt to bind the bloodliner Eve Rousseau to Alliance immortals has failed."

Nash slammed his fist on the table by Ramon's empty seat. "That's not true!"

"No? Then tell the council that you and this young angel have succeeded."

Kronos watched them turn to Nash and fix their gazes on him.

Nash continued, "We have, to a point."

"Do bloody tell." Parkor sent a sickening smile across the table.

"Her power is activated."

"That only makes her more dangerous if the Dark gets to her, jinn." Parkor pulled out his pipe from his jacket, but didn't light it. "Do you think the darklings don't have a plan to capture Eve just like they did poor Leah? Of course they do."

"Shut up, Parkor." David stood up. "You told these two to come make their case. So let them."

"Nash, Parkor is correct that leaving her unbound to Alliance warriors is dangerous." Gravian stated flatly.

"Thank you, Gravian." Parkor's voice turned sing-song. "I believe that this Eve and the pregnant woman should be turned over to me."

"Fuck you!" Kronos's rage exploded. He'd fight every one of these royal bastards if he had to. "You're not taking her away from Nash and me."

Relax." Nash patted him on the shoulder. "Nothing has been decided yet, Kro."

Gravian nodded. "Tell us, what would you have us do?"

"We had a breakthrough tonight. Grant us one more night with her, and I promise you that she will be joined to Kronos and me."

David's wings popped out.

"What's wrong?" Gravian asked.

"I just got a message from Nadine. The Ranch is under attack."

\* \* \* \*

Eve woke to an explosion. The door opened. Though it wasn't the two she hoped for, she didn't mind who it was. "Quade, what is it? What was that sound?" When she saw the gash in his arm, her heart jumped up into her throat.

"The Ranch is under attack. I've got to get you out of here. Now!"

Eve dressed in a flash. "Where are Nash and Kronos?"

"They were called away. I promised to keep you safe. Follow me. I know a place where there aren't any magic-dampening spells. Once we get there, I can conjure a portal to get you out of here. Once you're safe, I'll get word back to them." He held out his hand.

"I can't leave without them."

"Eve, if you don't, you'll likely be killed."

Another explosion.

"This attack is because of you. The demons are coming for you. As long as you're here, they won't stop until everyone is dead."

Eve grabbed his hand and followed him out of the room.

## Chapter 16

Nova-like pain exploded behind Nash's eyes. Eve was gone.

He knocked Wright to the floor. The sound of cracking bones reverberated through the room. "Don't fucking lie to me."

"I swear, sir, I didn't know anything." The suspect angel's wings hung low.

Kronos pounded his fists on the table. "What about your buddy, Quade?"

"Like I told you—he said he was going to the bloodliner's room to make sure she was safe. That's the last I saw of him."

David walked in with Brooke in tow. "Sit."

"B-But—"

"Brooke, I said *sit!*" The archangel's patience had been thinned out small, like a razor's edge, after learning of the casualties. "Don't argue with me."

Brooke sat, her hands shaking. She'd hidden in her closet, avoiding abduction. Eve hadn't been so lucky.

*Fuck!* Nash's blood pulsed in his veins like a blacksmith's hammer against stone.

At a great cost, the Alliance had pushed back the Dark's frontal attack. It had been a ruse to distract the guardian troops in order to allow Quade, their person on the inside, time to finish his mission.

Nash didn't have the luxury to grieve his many fallen comrades like Nadine and Ezra. Every second that passed, the longer *they* had Eve. He must find her. Nothing else mattered.

He punched Wright, causing the immortal's head to pop left and blood to spill from his mouth. "You have to know something."

David grabbed Nash's arm, hindering him from delivering another blow. "The angel is telling the truth."

Nash jerked free of David's grasp. "The truth isn't really your forte, is it?"

His commander didn't seem bothered by his insult. "If he'd been part of the plan, do you think he would've stayed behind? Did you think to scan him? His energy is still blue."

Nash looked Wright up and down. Not one flicker of black.

*Fuck!*

Kronos swung his sword at one of the chairs. It splintered into a thousand pieces.

Nash couldn't blame the angel for the display. This nightmare threatened to push him over the edge, too. "Kro, you gotta try to keep it together if we have a snowball's chance in hell to get Eve back."

He and Kronos now shared heavy guilt. They'd left Eve defenseless, and the Dark had seized her. His gut winched up tight at what those monsters were capable of doing to any human, let alone the woman he loved—a bloodliner with active power.

Wright stood up, his face filled with regret. "I can't believe Quade has really fallen. It just doesn't make sense."

Kronos hit the wall. "Believe it or not, I don't give a damn. He is the one who handed her over to the Dark. If I find that turncoat, he'll pray to be sent to the Ether before I'm done with him."

"Kro, Quade isn't the issue." Nash steadied his own breathing. Like the angel, he also needed to stay focused and control his anger. "We have to figure out how to get Eve back."

"I agree." David glanced at Brooke then back at Nash. "Since you got her power online but didn't get her locked into you, we have to move fast."

"We shouldn't have left her." Kronos's shoulders sagged. "Where could those bastards have Eve?"

David rubbed his chin. "Since we destroyed Vincorte's last lair for his minions, I doubt he's had time to put a new one together."

*Damn it!* The archangel was right. That made finding her so much more difficult. "That means Vincorte must have a temporary location for his headquarters."

"Yes, but I doubt he would take someone as important as Eve there. Even a temporary lair would need to be large to accommodate at least a hundred of his lieutenants, too big to set up magical defenses and to block her red power from our detection."

Kronos stepped up to David. "You have any idea where they would've taken her then?"

"I don't know where, but I do think it would be a small place that he could spell the walls to absorb her power. It would only work for a short time."

"So we wait until her power finally breaks through Vincorte's magic, and then send in the cavalry?" Kronos shook his head. "No way. Eve could be dead by then."

David shrugged. "Does anyone else have a better idea?"

Nash did. "It's risky."

"Whatever it is, if there's any chance to save Eve, I'm in." Kro's wings spread out wide.

"I know."

"So, how do we start?"

"First, I go see an old friend."

David scowled. "Who?"

"Azlian."

\* \* \* \*

"In there, Eve." Quade pointed to the metal door at the end of a long hall. "It's open."

After traveling with him through a portal, she would never complain about air travel again. Her stomach *still* felt queasy, even though they'd been walking for over an hour on the street above before making it to the outside of this building.

"Quade, how did you get the magical passage to work for me?"

The female demon, Azlian, had tried to open a portal at the diner to shove her through but had failed. Plus, Nash had told Eve that something about her kept spells from working.

"With your power now activated, we believed that if you didn't feel threatened by someone, a simple enchantment might succeed with you." His voice was monotone, deliberate. "Lucky for us, it did."

He seemed off to her, *Very strange*.

"I thought you were taking me back to Zone Three."

"It's not safe at the club. This is better."

Maybe this was like the house Nash had first taken her to, a kind of outpost of the Alliance. "You will get back to Nash and Kro and tell them where I am?"

His jaw clenched as if he were in pain. Then his facial muscles relaxed. "We've got a surprise for you. You'll never guess who is inside there waiting?"

*Oh God yes! Nash! Kro!*

She ran to the door, swung it open.

Three men stood in the middle of the room. One she knew, the others she didn't. None were Nash or Kro. Disappointment drained her hope.

"Hello, Eve." Parkor smoked a pipe. He turned to the man to his left. "Connor, the room is perfect."

Connor was quite tall. Six-six, at least. Very handsome. He had a regal bearing. "Ms. Rousseau, would you like something to eat or drink?"

"That will be all, Connor." The man to Parkor's left pointed to the door.

He was dressed to the nines with a dark suit and silk tie and wore mirrored sunglasses. Strange. Eve had counted four flights she and Quade had descended from street level. Not a single ray of sunshine could make it down here. His stature was six-two, at least, and his shoulders were wide enough for the football field.

Connor bowed to the man and turned back to her. "Ms. Rousseau." Then he left the room.

Parkor looked her straight in the eyes, daring her to try to escape. "Let me introduce a friend of mine."

"I don't care about meeting your friends. Just take me to Nash and Kronos, or bring them here." She didn't trust the archangel. He gave her the creeps.

"Now, that's quite rude and foolish, human. Vincorte has gone to a great deal of trouble to set up this audience for you. You're not the only bloodliner he's hosting."

*Damn!* Nausea stirred the contents of her stomach, as she realized to whom Quade had taken her. A demon of the Dark and Parkor was in on it. Parkor's true colors showed through, figuratively and literally. Even his wings looked grayish to her. The few white feathers remaining were small and thin.

"My dear, I'm pleased to meet you." The man's voice came out silky and strong. Movie star looks, but she had no doubt that he wasn't human.

This was nothing more than a meeting that had a beginning and an end. Vincorte would never let her leave. Not alive, anyway.

The diabolical man motioned to Quade.

The jinn walked up behind her and pushed her forward.

"Watch it." She turned around to Quade. His eyes looked strange, as if fixed on something invisible.

"Forgive Parkor and this foolish jinn puppet. Their manners are a bit crude. I am Vincorte, your host. I hope you like the accommodations I've prepared for you."

At first glance, the room looked like any other commercial building's equipment rooms, what with the exposed air ducts and wires and no windows. The walls, floors, and ceiling were a dark gray. Glaring fluorescent lights lit the place. There was a single table and one pegboard wall that held lots of tools.

The more Eve studied the place, the more she realized the danger in front of her. Whips, chains, paddles, and knives were the few things on the pegboard that she could identify. The ones she couldn't looked capable of much more than just pain.

*Oh God!* She'd been led straight to hell. Her gut clenched with immense fear. She closed her eyes tight, praying for the impossible—for Nash and Kro to come rescue her.

Parkor ordered, "Quade, chain her up."

She felt the jinn's hands clamp down on her. Her inner cauldron began to boil red. "Get your fucking hands off of me!"

She felt him release her then heard a thud from behind. She turned around. Quade lay sprawled out on the ground, writhing. *Did I do that?*

Renewed hope sprung up like a fountain inside her. Maybe she could find a way to escape, to get back to Nash and Kronos. But when a searing pain seized her, her optimism dried up.

She jerked her head back around. Parkor stood with one hand pointing at her. A blue band of light shot from his fingertips to her waist. The torture it caused in her stomach felt like a giant snake's death-grip squeeze.

The bastard smiled. "Very interesting, bitch."

"Ms. Rousseau is quite a treasure." Vincorte walked up next to her. He removed his sunglasses. Steel-blue eyes fixed on her.

"Parkor, you don't need so much magic to hold her. Back off, please." Though his words seemed more like a request, the tone came out like a command.

The archangel frowned, but lowered his hand. Though the blue remained around her, the pain lessened immediately.

Eve gasped.

"I'll take that as a *thank you*. You're very welcome. I'm not sure what you've been told about the Dark, but we're not without manners."

The demon sounded polite, a bit too polite, though. She doubted that even an ounce of compassion existed inside him.

She braced herself. Best to put one foot in front of the other, even in this hopeless situation. "So, why did you have me brought here? What can I do for you?"

Vincorte grinned. His smile would've sent most women's hearts to the moon. Eve sensed malevolence behind the look. With the demon, she must use extreme caution.

"Parkor, I love this new generation of humanity." Vincorte rubbed his forehead. "How do they say it? Go with the flow. Don't make waves."

A green spear shot over her shoulder and hit Parkor in the chest, slamming him against the far wall. A blood-red patch expanded on the archangel's shirt from the deep laceration the weapon caused.

"You asshole!" Parkor pulled the lance out of his chest with two hands.

*Nash?* Eve turned around, optimism springing up inside her. It wasn't Nash, but Quade. The jinn's eyes narrowed, and he struggled to his feet.

"Eve, get behind me," he choked out.

Even as weak as Quade appeared to be, she just might be able to escape this horror with his help. She ran to him, placing his body between her and Vincorte.

"Parkor, your compelling spell on this warrior must've been negated by Ms. Rousseau's bloodline energy. How interesting."

"We're going to leave now," Quade stated. "Don't try to stop us."

"I'm very impressed with you, jinn. Though you nearly sent this archangel to the immortal prison with one strike, I'm an archdemon, not quite that easy to bring down. I can't let you leave. Either of you."

Vincorte pointed to the ground between him and Quade. A ball of black fire appeared on the floor. It stretched to the ceiling, and then morphed into a dark writhing plant with deadly looking thorns. Eve gasped.

A scythe materialized in Quade's hands. He whacked at the evil weed, slowing the thing's advance at first, but with each branch he sliced away, three new ones popped out. In less than a minute, Vincorte's vine immobilized the jinn by wrapping up his legs and arms.

Blood poured out of gashes the thorns had delivered. A pang for Quade hit her gut. He'd tried to save her but had failed.

Eve stepped forward, her insides trembling. "Let him go. I'm the one you want."

"He's not going anywhere except to the Ether." Free of the spear, Parkor raised his hand. "You're dead, jinn."

"Stop." The archdemon held up his hand. "I have plans for him. He will make an impressive ifrit."

"I'll never turn," Quade spat.

"Very impressive, indeed." Vincorte turned back to Parkor. "Time for you to go back. But first, I need to mask the darkness inside you."

The archdemon touched the archangel. Parkor's eyes closed, and his mouth twisted, clearly fighting some kind of pain. Eve watched the archangel's wings turn bright white, as thousands of feathers appeared.

"Excellent. If David doesn't scan you too closely, he won't detect a thing."

"Thank you, my lord." Parkor bowed.

Eve wondered how long the man had been working for the Dark's leader.

"I need to know what David's strategy is to try to retrieve this woman. I'm certain he will move the pregnant woman to another location. Find out where."

*Oh no! Brooke!*

Parkor nodded then asked, "What about the other bloodliner in your custody?"

"Leah Green? Not your concern."

"Yes, my lord."

"One more thing, Parkor. Bring me the transcription of Eric's flash drive."

"Sir, as I said before, David isn't sharing it with the council. I tried to get it, but—"

Vincorte shoved Parkor to the ground with such a force that Eve could feel the vibration of the archangel's fall in her feet. "I need that information. I've got two of my own bloodliners now. With their powers, I have a chance to spring Prince Terrok from his prison."

*Who?*

Quade couldn't help her. Vincorte's demonic plant immobilized the jinn's movement, and its black leaves filled his mouth and covered his eyes, silencing and blinding him.

Her stomach coiled in fear. *I'm on my own.*

Parkor bowed. "Yes, my lord."



Vincorte offered his hand to the traitor and helped him to his feet. "No more excuses."

"Yes, sir. When I'm done, will you complete my transformation to archdemon?"

"Of course. Now go. Send in the others."

Eve didn't like the sound of that. Every one of her muscles knotted up.

Parkor waved his hand in the air.

Vincorte laughed. "That won't work here. This room is portal-proof."

The archangel nodded and stepped towards the door. Passing her, he said, "Have fun."

The two words hung in the air like vultures. As the door closed and the lock turned, every internal alarm in her body sounded. Her mouth lost all moisture, and her blood turned cold.

Vincorte pointed a single finger at her, causing her to float next to him. Without touching her, he used magic to latch her to the chains hanging from the ceiling and the floor, each foot and hand with its own restraint. The tautness of the cables pulled her shoulders and legs until she thought they might pop out of their joints.

"Very strange. Something about you dissipates magic. I had to use more energy than normal for that simple task. Too tight for you, my dear?" The archdemon waved his hand, and the tension of the metal eased up a bit. "That's better."

Eve silently begged for unconsciousness to take her from the nightmare. Acid burned in her gut.

"Vincorte, what do you want from me?"

He ignored her and walked over to the shelves with the evil looking tools.

*If I'm going to do anything, now's the time.* Could she call up her bloodline power again? She had no clue how she'd been able to do it earlier to knock Quade to the ground, releasing him from Parkor's dark spell. But she'd done it. And she must do it again.

Vincorte turned back around. He held two nasty looking clamps. The look of determination in his eyes filled her with dread.

*Think! How did I do it before?* Her power always appeared red in color. She closed her eyes, willing to see the energy inside her. At first nothing happened, but then she sensed a single point of red. Small. Hot. *My bloodline power.*

A creak followed by a loud slam pulled her from her attempt to use her magic against the fiend. The red dot in her mind vanished.

Someone had come in through the metal door.

She opened her eyes and found a heaping pile of horror. Two men stood there. One she didn't recognize. Unfortunately, the other she did. The creep was as tall as a giant and built like a jagged boulder, and his face looked like a block of cold granite.

"Irkon and Tick, I'm so glad you could join Eve and I for some fun."

## Chapter 17

*The demons didn't know I could see them. My bloodline magic does come in handy from time to time.*

*I've locked all the doors and windows, for all the good that will do. I've called David, but no answer. Where the hell is he?*

*Thank God Brooke left for her mother's this morning.*

*If anything happens to me, David better make sure Micki is safe.*

*God, I hope these creatures don't know about her.*

Eric's Flash Drive: day 80—entry 12

\* \* \* \*

Two figures, one a jinn and the other a demon, sat across from each other in the coffee shop while unsuspecting humans sipped their beverages. Nash drank black coffee. Azian downed her third shot of espresso, leaving her fourth tiny cup of the dark brew still on the table. Nash imbibed to further mask his true identity from the humans in the place. She did it, he suspected, from an addiction to caffeine.

"Are these pages really authentic?" Azian asked.

Nash nodded.

He'd sent out a mental invitation to Azian, hoping she'd respond. She did. The bait had been some of the transcriptions of Eric's notes from his flash drive. David had needed some convincing to agree to Nash's plan, but he ultimately did. Eve was important to the archangel, too. For David, she was a misplaced weapon now in the hands of the enemy, and it was much too dangerous to leave her there. For Nash, he couldn't imagine one day, let alone eternity, without the woman he loved. How could he have been so stupid? He shouldn't have let her out of his sight until she was bound to him and Kronos.

He'd failed, and that brought him to his core.

Azian shuffled the papers. "I count thirty-nine pages. How many more are there?"

"Thirty."

"And why didn't you bring those?"

"This is all I could get. Do we have a deal or not, Azian?" If she didn't agree, he'd reach across the table and choke her until she did. Eve needed him, right now.

"I've known you for a very long time. At least four hundred years."

"Five hundred and twelve, actually. Back when you and I first took the Vow to the Alliance."

"Right. God, that takes me back. I just can't believe you're really ready to change sides."

"Believe it or not. Like I told you before, I'm tired of waiting to be elevated to the council of Seven."

"I doubt that. I don't take you for an immortal bent on promotion."

"Well, you're wrong." He hoped she would buy the lie.

Azian downed her remaining espresso. "If you do this, there might be a way back. Is that what you're hoping for?"

"Redemption?" Nash laughed. "When was the last time you heard of that happening?"

"True." She shrugged. "Still, both sides of the war had once believed that bloodliners were all dead. Now we're all fighting to get our own human blood bags. Why not redemption for a demon or ifrit?"

He tugged at the darkness inside him that had been born the night of Gwyneth's death. He knew the risk of facing Vincorte, yet still he had to push on for Eve. "Not for me. It's too late for that."

Her violet eyes blinked. "You sure about this, Nash? Once I take you to him, the die is cast."

"I'm sure."

"This bloodliner must be something else."

"It's not for her."

Azlain waved at the kid behind the counter. "Two more espressos, please."

"You must come up to the counter to order."

Azian sent a tiny flicker of black to the young man. It hit him between the eyes.

"I'll get that out to you right away."

"Why did you do that? And why aren't we leaving for your boss's place?"

"I did it because I can. He's not just my boss now, he's also yours. And we'll leave when I say so. Not before."

Nash knew he had to treat Azian with kid gloves. One false move, she'd kill the deal and he'd have to move to plan B. Not optimal, since trying to force her to take him would mean a day or two of intense interrogation, and he didn't have the luxury of time it would take to get the demon to comply. Eve would be dead by then. So, he kept his mouth shut.

She eyed him suspiciously, actually scanning him.

"I can't detect a spell, but maybe David's put some kind of beacon on you that he can find you anywhere."

She was painfully close to the truth. David had offered, but that kind of signal would be easily detected since it broadcast wide. Kronos had come up with the idea of the twin spell. Brilliant.

Nash had taken a sliver of his own unused green energy and placed it next to Kronos's sphere of energy inside him. Once Nash got to Eve, he'd call to the missing speck of power. Kronos would tether to it, following it all the way to him and Eve with David and other reinforcements. No beacon until it got activated, so nothing to detect.

The young man delivered the two shots Azian requested. "No charge. On the house."

"Thank you so much."

"Can you finish your drinks now? I'd like to get on with it."

"Patience. You can be such a hot-head when you're not careful."

Nash fought down the urge to send a shower of daggers into Azian, slicing her to tiny bits.

*The human will still die, and you will either fall or die resisting.*

Nash kept his thoughts hidden from Azian. He knew that the demon might be right, but it didn't matter. All that he could think about was Eve. He'd lost her, but he would get her back, one way or another.

He sent, *My call, not yours.*

Azian shot the two espressos back to back. "Okay. I might regret this, but let's go."

"Thanks." He prayed to find Eve alive and whole. If she was, there still was hope. If not, he'd take out as many darklings as he could before they sent him to the Ether. Maybe even Vincorte himself. Nash would keep attacking until the demons finally succeeded in ending his immortal life. Without Eve in the world, he didn't want to live.

\* \* \* \*

Eve trembled just thinking about the malice to come.

"Hello, bitch!" Irkon smirked. "Remember me?"

"Yummy." The man who Vincorte had called Tick rubbed his hands together and looked at her with totally black eyes, just like Irkon's.

She thought his name quite appropriate, since his lanky arms and legs looked so bug-like.

Vincorte waved his hand, and Eve's clothes vanished. The cold air hit her like razors.

"Hey!"

"Yes, my dear?"

Her mind raced. *Keep both of them talking until I can figure out how to use my power.*

"Why are their eyes totally black and yours aren't, Vincorte? Aren't you all the same?"

The man laughed. "No. Hardly. These are my children. Dumb but obedient. My eye color sometimes is just like theirs."

He handed a paddle to Irkon. "Thank you, Master."

*Oh God—no!*

Tick walked up to her and lowered his pants, exposing his ugly cock twisting downward. "This is for you."

"Fucking touch me, and you die."

"Threatening me? Little morsel, you're not in a position to do a damn thing."

Irkon walked behind her. "I'm going to so enjoy pulling screams out of you, cunt."

Pain shot through her as he landed the paddle on her ass.

"Let's cut her." Tick laughed like a madman.

Vincorte waved his hand, and a chair appeared. He sat down, never letting his gaze drift from her eyes.

"You're going to let them do this? What do you want from me?"

"Your power, of course. It's nothing personal."

"Take my power. I don't want it."

"My dear, that's exactly what Irkon and Tick will do."

"Do you have no heart? No compassion at all?"

"I think Voltaire explained it best: *When his highness sends a ship to Egypt, does he worry about the comfort or discomfort of the rats in the ship?*"

"You think of yourself as the king?"

"None other."

"And I'm a mouse." With his position and power, she could understand such sentiment. "Why the torture and rape? The immortals on the other side treat humans differently to get power?"

"Let me see if I can help you understand." Vincorte's voice sickened her with its condescending pitch. "During triplings, your Alliance friends pour energy back into their human lovers, providing an intense euphoria, a kind of payment if you will. Just imagine that you're starving and someone sets a rare filet mignon steak in front of you. What a crime it would be to eat only part of its delicious meat and throw away the rest, erroneously believing that the steak deserved to be spared of total consumption. My darklings eat every last morsel of their meals, wasting nothing."

Eve shivered violently as fear grabbed her insides and squeezed.

"Master, may I continue?" Irkon asked from behind her.

Vincorte nodded.

Irkon hit her again and again with the paddle.

She begged, cursed, and threatened, but nothing stopped the blows to her ass. The pain blinded her. She tried to bring her power back to the surface but couldn't.

"Can we fuck her now? Can we? Huh?" Tick's yakking sickened her.

"Yes," Irkon stated flatly.

She heard him undressing. Vincorte looked at her like she was a butterfly to be pierced with two sharp pins for his collection. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath. *I need you, power. Come!*

Images of Nash and Kronos floated in front of her mind. She missed them, needed them. When she looked again, they were gone. In their place were two spinning balls of red energy.

Just as she felt Irkon's hands on her ass and Tick's between her thighs, she sent the spheres like missiles to the fuckers.

She opened her eyes just in time to see Tick vanish in a cloud of red. Irkon screamed, and then he was gone.

Vincorte was standing, leathery wings spread out, horns on his forehead, black eyes. He hadn't lied.

"Interesting." He sounded calm, but his face harbored a storm of hate.

"There's more where that came from, buster." She hoped the bluff worked.

"Of that I'm sure." Vincorte's body morphed back to the wingless variety, camouflaging the monster within. He put his sunglasses back on. "They touched you, and you were able to send them to the Ether."

"Yes. Touch me, and I'll send you there, too."

"Mmm... How do I get to transfer your power to me without touching you? A challenge I didn't expect." He spoke more to himself, than to her.

"You don't," she said with as much false confidence as she could muster.

"Likely true. Unless, of course, I am able to break you down first. Get you to surrender to me."

"Never."

"I've heard that before." He stood up and walked over to the shelves. After a minute, he picked up a whip. "This should get us started on the right track. Let this leather be my touch."

Vincorte stepped behind her, out of sight.

"What are you doing?" *Please, red power. Come back.*

"I'm going to take little bits of flesh off your back."

Eve bit her lip, preparing for the worst.

Before it came, though, the door opened and Azlian walked into the room.

Instantly, she knelt low on the ground in front of the archdemon. "Master."

Vincorte stepped back into Eve's view, her flailing averted for now.

"Why are you here, Azlian?"

"I have some of Eric Langley's notes, my lord."

He held out his hand. Still crouching on the floor, Azlian reached down into some invisible pocket of her skin-tight pants and pulled out some white folded papers. She turned them over to Vincorte.

He paged through them and then looked up. "I'm very pleased. There are more?"

"Yes."

"How did you get these?" Vincorte cupped her chin and urged Azlian to her feet.

The female demon blinked her beautiful violet eyes. "I've brought the immortal responsible for getting these pearls to you. He's in the hallway, hoping to meet you."

"Do I know him?"

"Yes, Master. Nash, David's second in command."

*Nash is just on the other side of that door.* Hope sprung up inside Eve.

"Perhaps this female mouse has lured a tom cat to my ship. Azian, I want at least seventy-five darklings in that hallway in ten seconds after the jinn enters this room."

"Yes, Master."

"Excellent. I'll see him now."

Azian opened the door, and in walked the immortal who had stolen her heart.

"Nash, I thought I'd never see you again."

He didn't even look at her. Oh God. Was he also under some kind of spell like Quade had been?

He knelt down in front of Vincorte, placing his hands behind his back. "Master."

Vincorte laughed.

Eve's heart sunk. It had to be evil magic.

How could she cancel it out like she did with Quade? That had been a fluke. Now she couldn't even summon enough power to light a match.

"Azian, leave us."

The woman bowed low to Vincorte and then left.

The archdemon went to the chair and sat. "You bring me a gift of Langley's notes and think I'll take you right into my fold, Nash?"

"I hoped so, my lord."

"Tell me. Why leave the Alliance? You have a position of prominence."

Nash remained kneeling, but looked up at Vincorte. "David promised me that one day I would get a seat on the council of Seven. I'm sick of waiting for that day."

"Impatient. I like that in my children. I see some darkness in you, but still a great deal of light. What shall we do about that?"

"Speak, Master. I will obey."

Eve hated seeing him in such a state. She closed her eyes trying to gather up any bits of power she could find inside her. Nothing. *Damn it!*

"Well, you've come at an important time. I believe you know this woman."

Nash looked up. His face didn't show any sign of emotional connection. "I do."

"Well, she's a bit of a puzzle to me. An unbound bloodliner with power she can access sporadically. Sound familiar?"

"Yes, Master. I experienced the same from her at the Ranch."

"What came of it? Did she injure you?"

"No. No injuries. More of a light show."

"Can you get her to do it again?"

Nash answered, "I can."

Panic sprawled over Eve's skin fast, multiplying her trembles.

"Show me," Vincorte commanded Nash.

Nash walked over to her and pinched her nipples hard. "Slut, you're going to give me that tight hole. Do you understand?"

Now she knew that her life would end tonight. Even in his current state, she was glad he was here with her. If she had to go out, let it be by Nash's hands and not Vincorte's or any of the archdemon's ilk.

"Yes, Sir. I understand," Eve answered.

## Chapter 18

As Azian left the room, Nash fought down the fury burning in his gut caused by the sight of Eve strung up so exposed for Vincorte's amusement.

“What are you waiting for, jinn?” the archdemon asked. “You want to join my brood and become an ifrit or not?”

Coming down the stairway earlier, Nash had counted twenty darklings. There may have been more behind some of the closed doors. If his count was right, his plan might work, though it would be a long shot.

“Master, don’t you mean *archifrit*?” He hoped to continue the ruse of why he’d chosen the Dark over the Alliance.

“Arrogance. Very nice. Of course I meant *archifrit*, Nash.”

He hoped to keep Vincorte talking long enough for Kronos and David to bring in the troops. He didn’t want to expose Eve to more pain.

“And will I have my own darklings to command?”

“If that’s what you want. Just get on with it.”

Eve’s eyes were wide with fear. He hated that, but couldn’t slip and let Vincorte know the real reason he was here. If he failed, she would die.

“Yes, Master.” *Eve, please hear me.*

No response from her. He’d keep trying.

“What a pretty little slut. You love spreading your legs for me?”

She nodded.

*Eve, my love. Hear my thoughts.*

Nothing.

Nash probed her folds. No moisture. Fear had dried her up, no doubt. So he fingered her until her pussy wept and her body began to respond to his touch.

“Jinn, I want to hear her screams of submission to you.”

“Yes, my lord.”

*Please, little one. I’m here. Kronos is coming.*

Nash pinched her nipples hard.

Eve yelped.

“You want to be my whore?”

“Yes,” she whispered, her voice pulling at his cock. “I want to be whatever you need me to be. Please use me, Sir. Take me.” Eve licked her lips.

Her eagerness for sex caused a spark to shoot down his spine and into his balls. His willpower vanished. Vincorte’s magic or Eve’s bloodline power? He wasn’t sure. *I’ve got to stay in control.* But his cock betrayed him, hardening to the max. He watched Eve close her eyes. Her moans sent a come hither message to his lust. He needed a moment. If he wasn’t careful, he’d take her right then, forgetting about Kronos and the plan.

He stepped up to the shelves that held some insane devices. “Master, I want to make her suffer.” The words felt like acid in his throat.

“Get on with it. Check her cunt out with your fingers.”

*Fucking bastard! Eve, Kronos is coming with help.* He could tell that she still couldn’t receive his messages.

Nash took his hand and pressed her mound lightly.

A ghost of a smile flitted over her face and then disappeared.

“So, you can touch her. Excellent. But I want more.”

*Hurry, Kronos! I can’t fool Vincorte for much longer, if I’m fooling him at all.* Nash doubted the angel could receive his messages from down here, but he still had to try.

Still, just touching her started his lust engines and tightened his testicles. His mouth dried as he felt her trembling through his fingertips.

Her hazel beauties fixed on him. She took a deep breath, and her chest rose like an invitation.

Unconsciously, his tongue passed over his dry lips, imagining tasting her taut bits of flesh. His cock got even harder.

“I’m going to fuck you, human.” *Eve, please open up. Once you do, you might hear my thoughts.*

Her eyes widened, but she said nothing. Her expression was a mix of confusion and resignation.

“Jinn, I want to triple with you and this human, not in the Alliance way but in my way. You and me dining on bloodliner power. But I still don’t believe you have her controlled enough for me to touch her. Hurry up, or I’ll bring my other children to finish the job.”

“They wouldn’t be able to touch her either, Master. I just need more time with her.”

*Kronos should’ve been here by now.* Nash’s gut tightened.

“You’re stalling. It’s an insignificant inconvenience. You’re time is almost up. She may be able to blast two darklings at a time, but what about twenty? Forty? One hundred? If I lose some of my soldiers, so be it. I’m willing to find out the necessary number to break her. Are you?”

“Nash, there’s no hope. He wins.” The timbre of her voice waved the white flag. “Do what he says, please. At least I will have you touching me.”

His jaw clenched. Kronos should’ve been here by now. The plan hadn’t worked. He’d failed Eve, and now she would die. They both would.

“You’re so amazing, Eve,” Nash whispered. “I’ve been waiting for you for a long time. I didn’t know it, but I have.”

He touched her lips with his mouth, demanding entrance. She parted her lips, and he moved his tongue into her. She tasted sweet.

*I swear I’ll figure out a way to get you to safety and away from this asshole.*

Eve’s thought shot to him. *I know you will.*

He broke their kiss. *You can hear my thoughts.*

She nodded.

*Kronos is coming with help. We’ll get you out of here.*

Eve’s thought pierced him. *I trust you.*

“Enough!” Vincorte shouted. “Your time is up!”

\* \* \* \*

*David keeps asking about the book. He must know I have it. How? Magic? It’s the only leverage I have with him. I don’t doubt he would drop our project, and me, if he ever gets his hands on it. So, I used my newbloodline magic today to put the book in a safe place where no immortal can get it.*

*If we succeed, he can have the damn book. I still have the scanned images of all the Bloodline’s genealogical pages on this flash drive. Once healed, I will find all the living bloodliners if it takes my entire life, and I will get them the cure they need to live.*

Eric’s Flash Drive: day 68—entry 2

\* \* \* \*

Eve watched as Vincorte transformed back into his demonic shape with black fire licking at his legs and arms. Still, if anyone could figure a way out of this nightmare, Nash and Kro could. Dread filled her up to the brim.

Nash turned toward Vincorte, his own body reshaping into green smokiness.

An explosion resonated from the hallway. Vincorte jerked toward the door. It opened and in rushed David, Gideon, Atticus—and Kro!

Instantly on seeing Kro, she was filled with joy, even in this dark dungeon.

“How?” Vincorte asked, raising his hand sending black boulders at the new arrivals.

David conjured giant blue cylinders, intercepting and obliterating the archdemon’s magic. “What can I say, Vincorte? I’ve got smart immortals on my side, too.”

Nash sent a hundred magic daggers at the archdemon. Vincorte quickly diverted them.

Kro worked his way to her and positioned himself next to Nash. *How is Eve, Nash?*

*I’m okay, Kro.*

He turned for an instant toward her, then back to the battle still going on. *Sweetheart, I love you. We’ll get you out of here.*

*Yes, we will.* Nash agreed.

The skirmish continued with violent magical charges and countercharges. Eve could feel the air warming up.

Nash sent another volley of daggers toward Vincorte. *Where are Micki, Jared, and Bradley? They should be here. Are they still in the Ether looking for Timu’s book?*

*Yes. Either that or trapped there by Terrok.* Kro lofted a ball of blue energy at the archdemon.

Vincorte seemed to be struggling, but only slightly. Nash’s daggers and Kro’s sphere vanished in black flames.

Suddenly, Azlian and other darklings poured in through the door. The battle shifted instantly to Vincorte’s side for a moment, then the Alliance warriors somehow were able to push the demonic band back into the hall. Eve marveled at the their skill. Only Nash and Kro remained with her in the room.

Kro waved his hands in a circle in front of him. “Nash, I can’t open a portal.”

“Let me try.” He also drew a circle in the air. “Damn.”

“Our guys have them in the hall, but that won’t last. How are we going to get Eve out of here?”

“I don’t know.”

“Guys, I love you. I guess I have for quite awhile but was afraid to admit it. I surrender. Whatever happens, at least we’re together.”

“I love you, Eve.” Kro kissed her cheek.

Nash grabbed her hand and squeezed.

“How do we get her down from here?” Kro asked. “I’ve tried to dissolve her bindings, but can’t.”

“That’s it!” Nash exclaimed.

Kro stepped back. “What?”

“We bind to her right now.”

“That’s crazy.”

“Is it? What other choice do we have? If we don’t try, Vincorte will win the battle and she dies.”

More explosions erupted outside the door, sending shivers down her spine.

“And if we fail?”

“We won’t.” Eve felt warmth shoot over her skin.

She was ready to commit to them forever, even if their forever meant only a few minutes. Whatever the outcome, she needed to connect with them body, mind, and spirit.

Kro eyes studied her. “Okay. There’s nothing I want more, and I can’t argue the logic of the idea.”

Nash nodded. “First, let me conjure a wall between the battle and us. It might only hold for a moment, but it will give Eve the privacy she deserves.”

Smoke shot out from him, filling the center of the room and solidifying into a wall of green bricks. Instantly, the sound of battle lessened.

Kro’s fingers circled her clit while his other hand tweaked her nipple. Electric charges pulsed deep in her body.

“You’re fantastic, Eve. Let that red power out for me.”

“I’ll try my best.”

Nash slapped her ass. “Your best will be to succeed and submit. Holding back from us is not an option anymore. Your safety is too important for me to let you just *try*. I want you to do it. Understand?”

“Yes, Sir. But what if it isn’t just me that’s holding back?”

Kro tilted his head. “You mean me?”

“No. You want this. I can tell.”

Nash squeezed her hand. “You think it’s me?”

“Maybe. You both opened me up to my fear of commitment the other night. It all stemmed from losing my mother, my aunt, and the betrayal of my uncle.”

“Kro and I both know that. What about me?”

“Gwyneth. She’s holding you back from me.”

Nash snorted. “No. I cared for her, but that’s all. It’s not the same with you.”

“No? You were supposed to protect her, and she died. I think deep down you’re afraid that you will fail to keep me safe, too.”

Nash closed his eyes. “I will not fail you.”

“I believe that. Do you?”

“I didn’t love Gwyneth enough. I cared for her, yes, but still she died. What if I can’t protect you? What if you…” Nash opened his eyes. Eve could see the internal struggle on his face.

“Do you love me, Nash?”

“I love you to the core of my being.”



"And I love you. It's enough. Bind to me. Let go of the past. You won't fail me. It's not possible. If we only have moments left with each other, let's make the most of it."

Nash smiled then kissed her more gently than ever before. A massive pulse of longing rushed through her, and wetness seeped from her pussy. The next moment, all remaining clothes vanished. She stared down at fully erect cocks that revealed hunger, and her ache expanded.

The more they tasted her and touched her, the more the world seemed to spin. Like the subspace she entered by Nash's hand, all she could think about was being with these two amazing men—her men.

She tilted her head back as she felt Nash's dick slide between her ass cheeks. When Kro's tongue grazed her clit, red light bounced on top of her skin.

"Kronos, you see that?"

"Yes, she's powered up."

Eve licked her lips as Nash slicked up her ass ring with his tongue.

"You like this in you, Eve?" Nash asked between licks.

"Yes, Sir."

"Eve, your pussy is nice and wet for my cock. You ready?"

"Yes, Sir." She closed her eyes.

Each immortal entered her body with their dicks, filling her up. She'd never felt so good, so protected, so connected.

Nash sent, *Do it, Eve. Open up. Trust us.*

*Yes, Sir.*

"It's working." She opened her eyes and saw Kro's eyes gazing directly at her. He smiled and continued matching Nash's strokes, one for one. "Let's form the triangle—now."

They pumped deep into her backside and channel over and over. She could see Kro's blue energy and Nash's green wrapping around her. She sent out her red bloodline power to their magic bands. The three colors braided together.

"That's it, Eve. Bind to us." Nash's voice sounded excited.

Kro smiled. "Sweetheart, you can do it."

Eve felt tears of bliss roll down her cheeks. She could. The sound of the battle grew louder, but she didn't care. All she needed was to be theirs and for them to be hers.

"I surrender!" she yelled, as her craving for release crashed against her insides.

Eve opened up every part of her to Nash and Kro, and she felt her old pain wash away.

"Eve, are you close?" Nash asked.

"Yes, Sir."

"Kro?"

"I'm past ready, buddy."

"Come on my command?"

Eve curled her toes, holding back until he allowed her. "Y-Yes, Sir."

"Come now."

Eve felt the two men crash their bodies against her, emptying their balls of their hot load deep inside her. As her own orgasm sent an earthquake through her body like none before, she saw Nash's wall come down.

David and company looked as if they had only seconds of fight left in them.

Then Eve saw the rainbow. She smiled.

Vincorte stood behind the evil mob, glaring. "Kill them. Kill all of them."

He raised his hands, and black flames shot over his band of monsters, hitting one angel she didn't know square in the chest. He fell to the ground, writhing in pain before vanishing into the Ether prison.

The demons and ifrit pressed forward against David and his men.

Eve willed her chains to vanish, and they did.

Between sword swings, Kro pointed at her, magically dressing her. The clothes fit perfectly and felt soft and warm.

She, Nash, and Kro shot numerous multi-colored light spheres into the horde of darklings. They screamed and retreated.

“Death to the darklings!” Gideon shouted. “Behold our new Perfect Triad’s power!”

The other Alliance warriors were spurred on by his words, and they blasted several more of the archdemon’s followers to bits.

Vincorte raised his hands above his head and sent a massive ball of black flame into the very middle of the angels and jinn. Only Nash and Kro seemed unaffected by the latest evil blast. David’s wings smoldered from black smoke, but he remained on his feet with a sword in each hand. The other good guys fell to their knees, clutching their stomachs.

Eve shot all her power into Nash and Kro, and they sent thousands of missiles into the darklings’ midst.

To her left, Eve heard a crackling sound. A portal appeared.

“Not possible. This room is spelled!” Vincorte screamed.

Jared, Bradley, and Micki stepped through the opening. They joined in the fight, hurling more light spheres and blades at the evil creatures.

Vincorte scowled and walked through the door into the hallway. His hands moved in a circle, and Eve saw another portal, ringed in black fire, open. The archdemon stepped through it, followed by many of his soldiers. Before all the darklings could escape, the magical passageway shimmered and vanished.

With their master gone, the remaining darklings were easy to mop up.

When the battle ended, Micki hugged her tight.

Eve returned the squeeze. “I’m glad you’re here, cousin.”

“Me, too.”

“What took you so long?” Kro asked.

Jared smiled and held up a book. “We found where Eric hid *The Book of Timu*.”

The army cheered.

“Sir, what should I do with this darkling?” Atticus asked David, pointing at Quade, totally covered in Vincorte’s vines.

“That’s not a darkling.” Eve walked over to the jinn, hoping he might still be alive. She knelt down next to him. “This is Quade.”

“Quade!” Kro swung his sword over his head, preparing to split the jinn in two. “The traitor is dead!”

“No, Kro! He’s no traitor. He was under a spell.”

“Whose?” Nash asked.

“Parkor’s. He’s the real traitor.”

David’s face went white as all the blood drained away.

“What’s wrong, Sir?” Gideon asked.

“I can’t believe it.” David fell to the chair Vincorte had created earlier.

“So, he’s one of the Seven. Who cares? It’s a setback but not something the Alliance can’t overcome. How hard can it be to appoint a new council member? Then, we track him down and take him out.” Kro put his arm around her. “Besides, because of this incredible woman, we now have another Perfect Triad on our side.”

David put his hands up to his face. “How could I’ve been so blind?”

Nash’s eyes narrowed. “Spill it, David.”

The archangel looked like death. “Parkor showed up at the Ranch with fifty immortals from Europe offering to take Brooke back to London. I thought she would be safer there than at the Ranch. So, I turned Brooke over to him for protection.”

“No!” Eve and Micki screamed together.

Jared and Bradley took Micki in their arms, as she sobbed violently. Nash and Kro wrapped their arms around Eve.

Nash spoke first. “We’ll find Brooke, my love.”

Kro added, “We promise.”

Eve vowed to herself to do whatever it took to find her friend. She leaned into immortal lovers, and cried.

## Chapter 19

*Just as demonic hosts are ordered by rank, so are the hosts of Light. The first sphere that walk in the Heights are the Seryphims, Cherybims, and Ophaynims. The second sphere that walk in the Ether are the Dominions, Virtues, and Thronos. The third sphere rulers that walk among the world are the Archangels and Archjinn. The last sphere that walks among men are the angels and the jinn.*

*The Book of Timu* : Verse 3—Chapter 27

\* \* \* \*

Midnight.

Few were present at the ancient monument located a little more than three kilometers west of Amesbury. It was one of the most famous sites in the world and the place of coronation for every Alliance ruler of Europe for the past five thousand years—Stonehenge.

Nash hated pageantry. The white gowns everyone wore seemed so archaic. How had David and the others talked him into this? Actually, it was Eve and Kronos who had pushed him over the edge.

He looked around at the participants. Five of the highest nobles in the Alliance stood in a circle around him: Jezzel, Gravian, David, Ramon, and Mavin. Samson's second-in-command stood with them, completing the quorum.

"We welcome the candidate's witnesses." Gravian motioned to the others behind the inner circle. "The Alliance's first Perfect Triad."

Arm-in-arm, Jared, Micki, and Bradley stepped closer. Micki's eyes were still red. No luck trying to find Brooke or the missing bloodliner. David had only agreed to attend the ceremony at Gravian's request on the condition that the full weight and power of the Council would be used to find Brooke.

"Has the candidate chosen those to aid him in his new role?"

Nash smiled. "I have. My brother-in-arms and friend, Kronos."

Kronos stepped beside him.

"And my eternal love, Eve." She walked up to his other side and grabbed his hand.

"Do you, Kronos, renew your vow to the Alliance and agree to council and serve Nash throughout eternity?"

"I do."

"And do you, Eve, promise to honor and love Nash throughout eternity?"

"I do."

Gravian turned to the others in the inner circle. "To elevate a jinn to archjinn is a rare occasion, indeed. And tonight, we do not just do that but more. We elevate not only jinn to archjinn, but jinn to Supreme Ruler of Europe to become one of the Seven. Such a thing has not occurred in a very long time. Consider your choice carefully."

Nash felt Eve trembling beside him. He squeezed her hand.

Gravian continued, "Who among you has brought us this candidate?"

David stated loudly, "I have."

"An elector vouches for Nash, the jinn. May I have your decisions?"

"Yes," Jezzel said.

"Yes," Ramon agreed, followed by the same from Mavin and Samson's second-in-command.

Gravian smiled. "Elector, do you remain confident in your nominee?"

David nodded. "Yes."

The ancient immortal put his hands on Nash's shoulders. "Please kneel."

Nash took to his knees.

Gravian continued, "As you renew your vow to the Alliance, so do we all."

In unison, all present said, "I swear my eternal allegiance to the Alliance and to its leaders in the council of Seven. I swear to protect mortal and immortal from the Dark."

"Will you, Nash, solemnly promise and swear to govern your continent according to the laws and edicts of the council of Seven?"

"I solemnly promise to do so."

"Will you temper all your judgments with mercy?"

"I will."

"By the authority of the council, and as its oldest member, I, Gravian, ruler of Asia, acknowledge you, Nash, as archjinn and Supreme Ruler of Europe. Rise, Lord Nash."

Nash rose, feeling the weight of his new role.

The tiny band applauded.

"Come here, buddy." Kronos pulled him into a bear hug then stepped back grinning like a madman. "You're gonna do awesome."

"With your help." Nash turned to Eve. Tears streamed down her cheeks. "Sweetheart, what's wrong?"

She fell into his chest. "I'm so happy."

"Me, too, little one. I love you."

**THE END**

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### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

A military brat to the core, Kris Cook never put down deep roots in any particular geographic location. Until Texas. Why? Kris loves the sun.

A voracious reader, Kris loves many genres of fiction but this writer's favorite books are romances that are edgy, sexy, with rich characters and unique challenges. Kris' influences include JR Ward, Lora Leigh, and Shayla Black.

Kris has won and placed in several writing contests in the past couple of years.

Kris' motto: I like cooking up really hot books for my readers. The hotter, the better.

For news, info and upcoming releases, be sure to stop by [www.KrisCook.net](http://www.KrisCook.net)

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