



STEPHANI HECHT

A CHERISHED
Christmas

Warlocks, Kavan and Derik, have been lovers for years, but they've always known their third has been out there somewhere, undiscovered and just waiting to be found. When Derik becomes convinced that it's a female vampire named Cherish, Kavan scoffs at him. Cherish is shy, brainy and not the least bit sexy. Then on Christmas Eve, Derik asks for one wish, for Kavan to let them seduce the innocent vampire for just one night. As soon as Kavan gets a taste of Cherish's passion, he knows he's addicted. But will she be willing to accept a lifetime bond with both men?

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A Cherished Christmas
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A Cherished Christmas
Drone Vampire Chronicles Book Six

By

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Dedication

To Julie. Thanks for all you do.

Chapter One

If one more person told Kavan he needed to get into the Christmas spirit, he was going to commit murder. He didn't want to see one more goddamn candy cane, bell-ringing Santa or garishly decorated tree. Most of all, he didn't want to go to the holiday party the clan of Drone vampires had planned for later on that night.

Currently, he was sitting in the middle of their large cafeteria finishing up his first evening meal. Since he and his fellow warlock brethren had come to live with the vampires, they had adopted their nocturnal schedule. Even though it was evening, he'd just woke up and was in dire need of his first cup of coffee before he did something rash like place a nasty hex on the next person who whistled a carol.

Then he finally saw something that did cheer him up and bring a smile to his face--Derik. The two had been mates before they had come to live with the vampires and Kavan's heart still did a

strange flutter whenever he saw the other warlock. With short styled brown hair and warm, chocolate eyes, his clean cut, chiseled looks were at complete odds with Kavan's chin-length, shaggy blond mane and scarred face. Yet, Kavan couldn't love the guy more and counted himself lucky that he got to wake up in the warlock's arms every day.

Derik was holding two travel mugs in his hands as he navigated around the crowded tables. He caught Kavan's eye and smiled as he came up to him and handed over one of the cups.

"Please tell me this is coffee," Kavan said as he took it, feeling the blessed warmth seeping through the thermal layers.

"We've been together long enough for me to know better than to approach you this soon after waking without caffeine," Derik joked, his eyes dancing with humor.

How his man still managed to find any humor in life after all they'd gone through was a mystery to Kavan. He lifted the cup and sipped it before he gave a grimace. "What the hell is this?"

"Coffee." Derik's shit-eating grin was partially covered by the rim of his own mug.

"Yeah, I got that, but what flavor is this?" Kavan took another tentative sip. He usually took it just black and that's the way he liked it, damn it. He never got into the flavored gourmet crap like

Derik did.

“Peppermint,” Derik informed him, not even bothering to look one iota guilty. He slouched back in his chair, stretching his long, denim covered legs out as he yawned and scratched his stomach.

Kavan slowly shook his head as he looked at his lover in disbelief. Only Derik could look this comfortable while in the middle of a clan of vampires. Until recently, all the vampires and warlocks had hated each other more than the Montagues hated the Capulets. That had all changed a few months ago though when a shaky alliance had been set up. The Drones needed help in the defeating the Pure Born vampires, who looked down on their once-human brethren and wanted to annihilate their entire population. The warlocks needed protection against the Black Magic covens who were looking to take over all of magical society.

That didn’t mean everyone was one big happy family and pals though. He and Derik were getting more than their fair share of dirty and fearful looks. Kavan stewed under the glares, wishing he could just strike back, while Derik acted like he *couldn’t* care less.

That’s probably because he couldn’t care less. Derik has always been able to shrug off slurs and rejection. It was a trait that Kavan both loved and

hated about his man. He sat back and tried to take on the same attitude, acting like he didn't have a care in the world. Something that got harder when a male vampire walked by humming the *Frosty* song. "Where are all the kids?" Kavan grunted.

"They're off practicing for some play they're putting on tonight at the party."

"Of course they are." He snorted, thinking about how *darling* it was probably going to be, too. Goddess, at this rate he was going to keel over from sweetness overload before the night was up.

"What is your problem?" Derik cocked one brow.

"I just wish it was January already."

"What's up with you? Christmas might not exactly be our kind's holiday, but it's still fun to get into. You didn't even get excited over our Yule ritual a few days ago." Derik leaned forward, putting his mug on the table as he threw out a probing stare.

"That's not true," Kavan denied.

"I had to drag you to the circle and practically beg you to participate."

There was a small beat of silence and Kavan briefly thought about continuing with his lie, then he sighed as he realized it would be a wasted effort since Derik always saw right through him. Finally, he directed his gaze up so he could lock eyes with his mate. "Doesn't it bother you at all?"

Kavan asked as his breath hitched slightly in his chest.

“What, that this was the first Winter Solstice away from our old home?” Derik scoffed as he shook his head. “Hell no and it shouldn’t ruffle you either. I can’t feel bad for leaving our coven so long as Olivia is still in charge of it. When she refused to send any warlocks to help the Drones free Ethan, I wrote her and everyone else in her group off.”

There was no way Kavan could argue with that. To make Olivia’s crime all the worse, Ethan was her son and she had been willing to let him die for her own twisted goals. “I don’t regret leaving so we could save Ethan.” Kavan swallowed hard against the guilt building up in his throat. “It was the right choice and I would do things the same if I had a chance to redo them again. It’s just that I miss my younger sisters. They loved this time of year and I’m not going to be there with them.”

He wondered if his sisters missed him as much. Even though his coven was agreeing to help the Drones, only his small band of warlocks had broken all ties and gone to live with an actual vampire clan. One thing he did know for sure was how his parents had felt about the whole thing. They had made it a point to spit at his feet as he was leaving. Something told him he wouldn’t be getting a Yule, Christmas, Hanukah or Kwanza

card from them any time soon.

"Cheer up, babe," Derik soothed as he reached out to caress Kavan's arm. "Things here aren't too bad."

No, they weren't. Eric, the clan leader had taken them in, given them a spot in his ranks and even supplied them with uniforms and weapons. They could be living in much worse conditions. In fact, they *had* lived in a whole hell of a lot worse.

"There are some really, really good things here," Derik continued as his gaze shifted to the side.

Kavan groaned, knowing what his mate was looking at without having to turn around. Ever since they'd moved to the clan, Derik had been panting over some female vampire like he was a horny dog looking for a scratch for his itch. "I still don't get what you see in her," Kavan sighed as he finally gave in and stared at the female. She was smaller than most of the other vampires and thin, too. Too skinny in his opinion. Not only that, but she always had her nose poked in an eBook reader or some computer. He didn't think he'd ever seen her whole face because her equipment always blocked it.

She was so caught up in her research, she barely took time with her appearance, just cramming one of her never-ending supply of hats over her brown curls and throwing on baggy

clothes that seemed to dwarf her small frame. The worst thing about her was her mouth constantly moving, rattling off useless information. Since she lived for her research on all paranormal creatures, she seemed to know every little detail about them. She wasn't afraid to share all that information with whoever was unfortunate enough to be around her, either. Shit, fucking her would be like doing *Wikipedia*. He could just picture her yammering away even while he was thrusting into her. *Did you know the average size of a male penis is six and a half inches? Most werewolves can climax two times during one encounter. It's not common knowledge, but one can really have sex with a poltergeist.*

"I don't see how you *can't* see how great she really is," Derik countered, still remaining as stubborn as ever with this certain subject.

"Because nothing is there." Kavan flicked a dismissive look over at the vampire. She was hunched over her reading device so far, he half-expected her to tip forward and slam her face into the table.

"Wow." Derik's face registered shock as he shook his head once in disbelief. "You really have become jaded. It's a good thing you claimed me a long time ago or else I would be sitting on the curb with all the other rejects."

"I'm not that bad," Kavan argued, then took a

sip of his coffee. He'd die before admitting it, but the peppermint flavor was actually pretty good.

"If so, then why is it that you won't even entertain the idea that maybe, just maybe Cherish could be our third? The one who will finally complete our triquetra?"

"Oh, I don't know. Could it be that she's a vampire?" Kavan asked, his voice sharp with sarcasm.

"That doesn't mean anything. Morgan and Dominic formed one with Rafe and he's a vampire," Derik was quick to point out.

The idiot must have been rehearsing this argument for days. "Rafe is also part warlock so that doesn't entirely count. You forget the whole reason for even having a triquetra is to make the warlocks and witches involved more powerful as all three share their magic. That's kind of hard to do with a vampire since they have zip in the way of powers." Even before he was halfway done with his lecture, Kavan knew it was wasted. Derik was back to staring at Cherish as he wore that stupid, dopy, lovesick expression again.

"I don't care what we've been taught a triquetra is for. I'm positive she belongs to us," Derik declared.

The words were said with such resolve that Kavan felt some of his reluctance fade. Not much, but enough for the anger and irritation to take a

backseat and compassion take over. "Has she even given you one indication that she feels the same way?" Kavan reached across the table and took Derik's hand. Even though they had been officially together for two years, he still got a warm feeling whenever they touched. He wondered if the flame would ever dim out. Goddess, he hoped not.

"That's the weird thing. She's never given me a clue on how she feels about you and me, period. I don't know if she hates us, likes us or wants us dead and tossed into the Detroit River," Derik replied morosely.

Kavan felt a stab of guilt. Cherish probably didn't give Derik the time of day because Kavan had made it pretty clear he wanted nothing to do with most of the vampires. Since it was a known fact that Derik was his lover, that probably got him painted with the same stay-away brush. Slowly, Kavan felt himself caving. How bad would it be to at least get to know Cherish better? It's not like they could be any worse off for it.

"I'll tell you what. If you actually get the balls to talk to her and she's game, I'll give it a try." Kavan slowly fanned the pad of his thumb over Derik's knuckles. The expression of pure excitement on his lover's face made Kavan's heart lurch. It always felt so damn good to make Derik happy.

"Really?" He smiled as he shot a covert glance over at Cherish. She on the other hand, was still completely engrossed in her device.

Kavan slowly shook his head as he wondered how she would react if she knew the discussion they were having about her. He gave her another once over, this time looking for pros instead of cons, and was more than a little surprised to find that the shy, bookish vampire did have a lot going for her. A hunk of her mahogany hair had slipped from her hat and it curled across her rounded cheek, almost like a lover's caress. Her brown eyes were large and he just knew they would look so good glazed over with passion. Pink lips were slightly parted as she silently mouthed the words of whatever it was she was reading and he found himself imagining how they would feel pressed against his skin. Her pert nose wrinkled slightly at something she was reading and he pondered if she had freckles or not. Damn, he hoped so because it would be so much fun to slowly count them one by one. "Fuck me," he whispered under his breath as his cock started to press painfully against his jeans.

"Didn't I tell you?" Derik smiled wickedly as he continued to stare at Cherish. "She's a hot little thing that's just waiting for someone like us to come along. Just think of the things we can teach our little bookworm."

Unbidden, an image of Cherish came to his mind, her naked, milky white limbs tangled up in dark red sheets, those long, dark tresses free and brushing around her full breasts. Her lips parted in passion just enough so the tips of her fangs were visible. Then he brought up the image of Derik between her thighs, his thick cock filling her sweet pussy as she gasped out *both* of their names.

"You know what I want for Christmas?" Derik asked, his features sharp with raw need.

"I have a pretty good idea, but tell me anyway." Kavan licked his lips as he noticed the way Derik shifted in his seat, like his cock was uncomfortably hard, too.

"I want to know how it feels to have her in between us as we fuck her at the same time. Then I want to know how it will feel to have her sink those sharp fangs of hers into me as she comes."

"Shit, Derik, you're killing me," Kavan moaned as red-hot desire shot through his already jacked up system.

"So does that mean you'll give me my wish? Derik crooned as he shifted forward in his seat so he could caress Kavan's cheek.

"How do you know she'll even agree to it?" His breath was coming in ragged pants now and it was all he could do not to spring up, tackle Derik and take him right there in front of a Clan full of vampire witnesses.

Derik moved forward even more so his large body acted as a shield. Ever so slowly, he let his hand drift down until it cupped Kavan's needy cock. Kavan hissed in pleasure, even through the thick denim of his jeans it still felt electric and it was all he could not to shout in relief and arch up.

"I'm not worried about getting Cherish to agree," Derik murmured, his lids growing heavy with sensual promise. "You always have been great at wooing anybody, be they male or female. I know you won't let me down this time."

"Seducing her is one thing. Convincing her to commit to us for an immortal lifetime is another." Kavan gasped as he felt the zipper of his jeans being pulled down. Surely Derik wasn't going to give him a hand job right here in the middle of the crowded cafeteria? Then he had his answer when Derik reached in and grabbed his cock. "Fuck, babe, we can't do this here," Kavan bit out as he strained to keep the cries of pleasure in.

"Then pull away if you don't want it," Derik taunted.

They both knew very well there was no chance in hell of that happening. Especially when he started to slowly pump his fist up and down Kavan's shaft.

Chapter Two

Kavan knew he really should stop things before they went too far, but once Derik's fingers started to work their magic on him, he knew that wasn't happening. He darted a fearful glance around to see if anyone was noticing what they were up to, but everyone was too busy getting into the Christmas spirit to pay them any mind.

"You always were the exhibitionist." Kavan softly laughed as he closed his eyes and gave himself over to the pleasure his mate was so good at delivering.

"Who are you kidding? You love this and you know it. Remember that time against the window in that high-rise?"

Kavan let out a low, long moan. Yes, he recalled that time with perfect clarity. It nearly pushed him over the edge as he remembered how he had pressed Derik's toned body against the glass as he fucked the ever-living hell out of him. Goddess, it had been so sexy the way Kavan thrust into his

hot ass as he'd had cried out in passion. "Are you trying to make me come?" Kavan groaned. Derik's hand was moving faster and it was getting harder to hold back with each passing caress.

"Let's see," Derik cocked a brow sarcastically, "I'm giving you a handjob and talking dirty. What do you think?"

"You're not really going to finish me here, are you?"

"Yes, Kavan, I am. Are you going to stop me?" Derik challenged, a slight smirk passing over his full lips. "Look at her while I'm doing this to you. I want you to imagine it's Cherish touching you this way. Maybe wrapping her lips around your beautiful cock. Sucking you in deep while I fuck her from behind."

Kavan shifted his glance over to Cherish. She was still absorbed in her work, but she was twirling that escaped curl with one finger. The move was casual, idle and he doubted she was even aware of doing it. Still it made her look all the more sexy for some reason. What was wrong with him? Five minutes ago, he was ready to write her off as a nobody and now he was starting to feel the same ball-crunching attraction Derik was for her.

Kavan jerked as he felt Derik's thumb rub against the slit of his dick, gathering the moisture to help lubricate his fingers so they could start

their wicked dance again. Kavan kept his attention focused on Cherish as he bit his bottom lip to keep from shouting in pleasure. The only thing that could have been better would be for Derik to drop down and start using his lips instead of his hand. Unfortunately, neither one was willing to push things *that* far. "She's so small, do you think she'll be able to take both of us?" Kavan frowned.

"Yes, she's a vampire so she can take a lot. Besides, we'll treat her like the treasure she is. She is precious, too. I have no doubt she's our third."

Derik gave Kavan's cock one last squeeze and that was enough to throw him over the edge. Biting back a groan, he released hot steams of semen into Derik's waiting hand.

Even as the orgasm washed over him, Kavan wondered if his lover could be right. Was it possible that Cherish was the one to complete their triquetra? It had never happened with a vampire in the mix before, but then crazier things had been happening lately.

At that moment, even as Derik continued to milk his cock, Cherish's head snapped up and Kavan found himself locked in her gaze. His heart seized in his chest as he got lost in her dark eyes. A slight flush crept up her cheeks as her lips parted in a gasp, almost as if she knew what was going on under the table. That was impossible though, since Derik had been so careful to position

his body just right to block the action.

"She's watching, isn't she?" Derik asked in a husky whisper.

So caught up in the intensity of the situation, all Kavan could do was look over at Derik and nod like some idiot.

That must have given Derik some cheap thrill because he chuckled as he brought up his cum coated hand. Slowly and deliberately, he ran his tongue over his fingers, licking them clean.

Kavan let out a ragged breath as he tore his gaze away from what Derik was doing and looked back over at Cherish. She was gapping at them, her mouth open in shock, leaving no doubt in Kavan's mind that she at least suspected what they had been up to.

He tensed, waiting to see if she would throw a look of disgust their way, but she didn't. Instead, her pretty, pink tongue darted out to lick her lips. Despite the fact he'd just gotten off, fresh desire slammed into Kavan as he saw her reaction. Oh yes, they were going to have fun seducing Miss Cherish and she looked like she was more than game for it.

Still looking at her, he gave her a lazy smile as he nonchalantly tucked his cock back in his pants and zipped up. Unable to help himself, he mouthed, *You're next*. He didn't think her eyes could have grown any bigger, but they did as she

let out a gasp so loud he could hear it, even over the din of conversation from the others in the room.

Springing to her feet so fast her chair tipped over with a loud *bang*, she nearly ran from the cafeteria. She moved so fast that you would have thought a pack of werewolves were nipping at her fine ass.

"By the way you're looking at her, I think it's pretty safe to say that you're going to give me what I want for Christmas," Derik declared, his eyes dancing with joy as he stretched back in his chair and resumed his previous relaxed position.

"I'm all on board, we just need to convince Cherish. She acts a lot more shy than any of the other vampires."

"That is unique, isn't it?" Derik took a sip of coffee. "Vampires are notorious for their heightened sex drive, yet I've never seen her take a lover, male or female. I wonder why?"

"Maybe she was waiting for us because the fates meant her to be our mate?" Kavan snorted. Since the fates had never looked down on him before, he didn't think they would all of a sudden decide to bless him now. However, as soon as he saw the hopeful, dopy expression on Derik's face, he knew the man had taken his words to heart.

"You really think so?" Derik asked, hopeful.

"No, but I'll go along with the theory if it makes

you happier," Kavan drawled.

"Remind me again why I put up with you?" Derik slowly shook his head.

"Because I give fantastic blow jobs and you love my cock up your ass."

"And here I thought it was because of your winning personality." Derik rolled his eyes.

Kavan started to laugh, but sobered when he saw a male vampire named Dante approach the table. With dark hair and a whole don't-fuck-with-me vibe, he looked the part of vampire much more than Cherish ever could. He was dressed in the Clan uniform of black cargo pants and matching long-sleeved tee. Just to add to his whole dangerous look, he had a pair of Glocks strapped to his sides and Goddess knows how many other weapons tucked away.

"Eric wants to see you in the war room ASAP," Dante announced as soon as he got to the table.

"What for?" Kavan asked as he and Derik both got to their feet.

"He wants some of us to go on patrol and make sure the city is quiet before the party tonight."

"Please, this is Detroit. It's never quiet," Derik groused as they started to follow Dante down the hall.

"Now come on, don't be like that. Even the kobolds and ghouls like to drink eggnog and celebrate," Dante snarked, his fangs making an

appearance as he flashed them a grin. A young looking, male vampire who was walking by, stopped short to give them a look of astonishment.

"Really? I didn't know ghouls could eat anything but decaying flesh?" the male asked, his brow creased in confusion. Since some of the vampires had just recently been changed, they didn't know the ins and outs of the paranormal world. It made them very gullible, which could be a lot of fun to exploit at times.

"Oh yeah, they love it," Kavan replied with an evil grin.

"It's a fact," Dante agreed. "You just need to stick it in the blender with some body parts, hit puree and you're good to go."

"No way! You guys are just fucking with me," the vampire protested.

There was a bit of doubt lingering on his features that let Kavan know he believed it somewhat.

"It's true, dude. Just like there's a sea serpent named Snuggles who lives in the Detroit River," Derik added, not even glancing the vampire's way as they continued to walk.

"You are all so full of it," the vampire snarled, showing a bit of fang.

When Dante flashed his in return, the guy backed up so fast he bumped into a wall.

"That's just cruel you know," Kavan drawled as

they approached the war room.

“Who? Me for lying or Derik for telling the truth?” Dante’s eyes gleamed wickedly.

“I guess you have a point. Now he’s not going to know what to believe anymore,” Kavan chuckled. In his time living with the Drones, he’d noticed that one of the games they liked to play at was ribbing the newly turned or fledglings as they were called. It was harmless fun to help ease them into their new, sometimes scary world.

They all found seats and waited for the meeting to start. Kavan knew he was going to have a hard time focusing though. Ever since Derik had put the erotic suggestion of taking Cherish into his head, it was all he could think of. Despite the fact that Derik had eased his tension some, Kavan’s cock was already painfully hard again.

Damned thing was he knew the only way to sate it was to be with Derik – and Cherish.

* * * *

Hell! She was late—again. Holding her hat in place with one hand, Cherish ran as fast as she could down the hallway. The Clan leader, Eric, was going to have her hide for this for sure. She dodged a group of vampires as she silently cursed the two warlocks. If it hadn’t been for them, she wouldn’t have got distracted and flustered in the

first place.

When she'd first got up, she'd had everything under control for once. She'd left her laptop and papers in her room so she wouldn't get caught up in her research and lose track of time. She'd been doing pretty good, too, despite the fact she was reading a pretty racy book on her eBook reader. Even though the story was good, she'd managed to keep an eye on the clock.

Then she'd caught Kavan and Derik staring at her and she'd become a bundle of nerves. It didn't help matters that they were almost having sex right in the middle of the cafeteria. Even though Derik was hiding most of the action with his body, all she had to do was look at Kavan's face to know what was going on.

Not that it disgusted her. Far from it. As she watched the warlock's face grow tight with passion, as his penetrating gaze bore into her, she'd almost come right with him. It was like he was giving her a private, erotic performance.

She'd been so worked up and confused by what she'd seen that she'd lost track of time as she worked it over in her brain, trying to analyze it. Were they just playing with the poor, nerdy wallflower or was it possible that the passion she'd seen in Kavan's expression really was for her?

Rounding the corner, she shook her head. No,

guys like that were not interested in her type. And guys like Kavan and Derik *really* didn't, it was a well-known fact they were a tight couple. So there was no way they could be interested in any female, period. Unless of course they were bisexual like Rafe and Dominic. They were together, but they also had a female as a mate, too. Maybe Kavan and Derik were looking for the same arrangement.

"Even if they were, what makes you think they'd want plain, flat chested you," she scoffed under her breath as she darted into the room and slid into a chair at the back of the room.

She breathed a sigh of relief as she noticed the meeting hadn't started yet. That sigh became lodged in her chest as she spotted Derik and Kavan, two rows ahead. As if sensing her presence, they both turned around and looked at her. She tried to breathe, but couldn't as she found herself caught in both their gazes. Tingles ran up her spine and to her horror, she felt herself grow wet and her womb clenched in desire.

Kavan leaned over and whispered something in Derik's ear. They both gave each other a slight nod before getting up and...

Oh God...walked over to her! Her heart started to hammer as she froze like some idiot in the glare of a spotlight. Even though she was torn between staying or running away again like a chicken, she

couldn't help but admire them. Derik was more sophisticated with his neatly cut hair and chiseled features where as Kavan looked more wild with his shaggy hair. A light scar running along his jaw added to his rugged appeal and Cherish wondered, not for the first time, how he'd gotten it. They moved in on her, taking the seats on either side so she was surrounded by them.

Cherish didn't move, trying to act like it was everyday she found herself the meat in a hunk sandwich. It was hard though, each time she inhaled, she breathed in their warm, spicy combined scents. It made her nipples grow hard as goose bumps broke out over her body. *Please, please, please don't let them notice how turned on I am. Just let me get through this without embarrassing myself.*

"You could have come over to our table."

Kavan's low voice rumbled into her ear, making her jump in surprise. "What?" she cringed as soon as that eloquent response popped out of her mouth.

"If you wanted to watch Derik stroke my cock, you should have come over to our table. The view was much better."

"I...didn't...what I mean to say..." she stammered, horrified that she'd been caught gawking at them. She felt one step below the dirty old man who peeked into bedroom windows.

"That's okay, beautiful," Derik crooned into her other ear. "You didn't do anything wrong. The whole show was for your benefit. We wanted you to watch."

"It was?" she squeaked as she darted a nervous glance side to side to see if anyone had overheard. Thankfully everyone was too busy in their own conversations to pay them any heed. "What do you think, it's some kind of game to play with the computer nerd or something?"

"Cherish, when we look at you all we see is a very beautiful woman who we would like to get to know a lot better." Kavan chuckled softly.

The vibrations from his chest carried over into her arm.

"A whole lot better," Derik clarified.

The tip of his finger ran along the back of her hand. Cherish knew she should jerk away from his touch. She should stand up and walk away before they could continue with their cruel game. All movement was impossible though because it felt way too good to be in between them. "I don't think you two are funny at all," she tried to make her voice harsh and failed when it came out all shaky and breathy instead.

"Why can't you believe that we can possibly want you that way?" Kavan quizzed.

His knuckles lightly caressed her cheek. She shivered in response and had to resist the urge to

lean into his touch. Despite her misgivings, she was so turned on right now, her panties were getting soaked. "Because nobody ever has before," she admitted, closing her eyes against the pain and humiliation.

"That's because they're all too stupid to see the treasure that's right before their eyes. I would feel bad for them, but their loss is our gain."

She froze as Kavan feathered the softest of kisses to the shell of her ear. "Like I'm going to fall for that," she scoffed. "Who put you up to this?" She may be turned on as hell, but she'd be damned if she let them play her for a fool.

"Does this feel real enough for you," Kavan growled. Taking her hand, he brought it to his crotch.

A strangled gasp passed her lips when she felt how hard and large he was. "Oh my," she whispered, back to one syllable words. Worried that they'd be seen, she tried to jerk her hand back, but Kavan kept a firm grip on her wrist. She looked into his eyes and asked, "So you and Derik want to play out a fantasy with a female and I just was the lucky one you picked for a night of fun?"

"It's much more than that, Cherish," Derik looped his fingers around one of her stray curls and brought it to his nose, inhaling. "We don't just want a taste. We want to keep you."

Chapter Three

Several hours later as Cherish walked up and down the streets of Detroit, she kept playing that sentence over in her head, *We want to keep you*. Going by the stone cold serious expression on Derik's face when he said that, he meant it, too.

She had wanted to argue with them about it right away, but Eric had come in and started the meeting. There was no way to discuss it after either because then they had been divided into teams to go out. Even though Derik and Kavan had made sure to get on her team, there still wasn't a chance to have a moment of privacy since there were a half dozen other vampires in their group.

All that time they were patrolling their section of the city, she wanted desperately to ask them what they had been thinking about when they'd come onto her earlier, but forced herself to hold back. Instead, she entertained herself by casting overt glances at the males as they walked on either

side of her, kind of like they were acting like her own personal body guards. They had both changed before going out and were now wearing the Drone uniform. It looked damn fine on them, too.

"Why are you patrolling? You usually stay back in the van and monitor everything," Kavan said, breaking the long silence between them.

"The ranks are spread so thin since Eric wanted to give the the mated vampires the night off, I volunteered to pick up some of the slack," she replied with a shrug. "Truthfully, it feels nice being out on the prowl for once instead of being in the back of the stuffy van."

"It's nice seeing you out," Kavan replied, his gaze raked her.

Warm heat enveloped her body. Knowing her uniform fit her more snugly than her casual clothes, he was probably getting his first real view of how small she was. "Are you disappointed?" she couldn't help asking.

"Shit, female. You really don't have any idea how hot you are? You are the most delectable thing I've ever seen." He licked his lips as he eyed her up hungrily. "I'm going to have to kiss Derik for bringing that fact to my attention."

Cherish felt a blush come over her cheeks as she looked over at the rest of the group. The only one who seemed to be listening was Derik, but that

didn't mean anything since vampires had a heightened sense of hearing. "I think I might like seeing that," she finally admitted in a low voice. In fact, she would like to watch the two warlocks do a lot more than just kiss. She wondered if that was wrong of her until she saw the satisfied grin spread out over Kavan's face.

"Would you now? I guess we'll have to see what we can do to make that Christmas wish come true, won't we, Derik?"

"For sure, we can't let our girl down," Derik shot back.

Even though it was night, she could still see his eyes grow stormy with desire. "You guys are wrong," Cherish felt compelled to point out, even though her body was weak with desire. "I can't belong to you. I'm a vampire and you're warlocks."

"Thanks for the biology lesson. That will save us from having to go to Doc's for a DNA workup," Kavan cracked.

"Stop, you know what I mean," she hissed as she shot another furtive glance at the rest of the team. "I know I can't be part of a triquetra so you don't need to use that to try to lure me into bed."

"We don't care what history or modern society says. You belong to us," Derik declared in a firm voice.

"And what if I don't want to be owned by two

bossy, overbearing warlocks? Did that ever occur to you two numbskulls?" she snapped, her temper rising and making her forget to lower her tone. Before she even had time to draw in a breath, let alone fight, Derik swooped in and pinned her to a nearby building. Slanting his mouth over hers, he captured her lips in a possessive, demanding kiss. At first, she stiffened and started to struggle, but then she felt his tongue softly caress the outline of her mouth and she was lost. Opening up, she allowed him to taste her.

Oh, this was too nice to stop. The hell with the audience. Right now, the whole clan could have been watching and she still would have been powerless to push him away. Twining her hands around his neck, she returned the kiss, thrusting her tongue out to meet his. The hard length of his erection pressed against her belly and a warm pool of desire spread through her as she realized he was just as big as Kavan. Derik flicked his tongue over one of her fangs and she let out a gasp of pleasure, the feeling as intense as if he'd touched one of her erogenous zones. Her incisors grew in response, out of need for both sex and blood. How long had it been since she'd drank straight from the vein? She'd been living for so long off the bagged stuff, she'd nearly forgot how good it felt to have fresh, warm blood coating her mouth.

"See, your body knows who it belongs to," Kavan observed as he walked over to her side and lightly stroked her neck.

She whimpered into Derik's mouth. The communicator in her ear crackled to life and she was dimly aware of Eric's voice demanding a status report. She didn't care though. All that mattered was getting both warlocks closer to her. She even reached out and grabbed Kavan's arm so she could touch them at the same time. It wasn't until one of the vampires let out a sharp whistle that she snapped out of it and that was only because Derik pulled back.

"Team Echo, what is your status?" Eric's angry voice snapped over the com.

Cherish couldn't find her voice.

One of the team members, a male named Micah, answered, "Besides Cherish getting mauled, we're just dandy," he sang in a sarcastic voice.

"What do you mean *mauled*? Are you under attack?"

"Nah, just the warlocks and Cherish getting frisky," Micah said with a cheeky grin.

"At least someone is seeing some action tonight," Eric replied dryly. "Since it's so dead out, everyone can come back in."

Derik gave her one more lingering kiss before he stepped back.

Cherish was still so overcome with lust it took her a few seconds to realize she was free to move and that was only because she was disappointed at the loss of his warmth. She cast a glance over at Kavan, torn between wary and expectant, as she wondered if he was going to take Derik's place. Instead, he just gave her a soft smile as he caressed her cheek again.

"Later," he promised in a husky voice.

Cherish brought her fingers to her lips, which were tingling, both from the kiss Derik had just laid on her and the anticipation of getting the same treatment from Kavan. Then maybe they could move on to more sexy activities. Ones that involved all three of them getting naked and tangled in the sheets.

Cherish gave herself an internal head slap. What was going on? Usually she would never think about letting her libido rule her actions yet the thought of crawling into the sack with not one, but two warlocks seemed so appealing. This was so unlike her. Usually, she was content to settle down in her own bed with just her books and laptop for companions. Yet, that seemed so dull and lifeless in comparison to Derik and Kavan.

Did she dare risk being hurt and rejected once again for just one night's pleasure? There was no doubt in her mind that was all the guys wanted, too. Warlocks and vampires generally didn't mix

and these two were raised in one of the strictest magical covens. There was no way possible they would ever even consider bedding the same vampire twice let alone commit to a long-term relationship with one.

“Cher! You ready?” Micah called, his earlier amusement now replaced with annoyance.

Not that she blamed him for being in a rush to get home. It was cold outside and everyone was anxious to go to the party. She had been planning on not going, but as she peeked a sideways gaze at the warlocks, she wondered if maybe she’d been too hasty in that decision. “Yeah right,” she replied to Micah, her voice absent. “We should get back in before Eric worries.”

She set off down the street, all too aware of how Derik and Kavan walked on either side of her, the heat from their strong bodies making hers tingle in the most delicious way. The entire walk back to the Clan dwelling, both men continually let their hands brush against her back, arms and sometimes her cheeks. It made her feel both weak with desire and—possessed, which was odd, since they weren’t mated by any stretch of the imagination.

Oh, but to be claimed by these two. To have them make love to her at the same time. To watch them make love to each other. She licked her suddenly dry lips as she imagined how the

combined flavors of their blood would taste. Instantly, her fangs grew large again so anybody who bothered to look at her would know immediately what she was thinking. A warm flush came over her face. *Frick, I need to feed soon so I stop embarrassing myself all the time.*

Kavan seemed to catch on to her inner conflict because he turned and gave her a lazy smile.

Her toes curled and her heart raced. Damn, she needed to do more than feed, she needed to get laid bad. They approached the large, abandoned warehouse that had been converted into a combined dwelling and training facility. Ever since they had rebelled against the Pure Born run government and taken refuge in the werewolf-controlled city of Detroit, the Clan had been calling it home. Even though it seemed crowded and at times, it was hard to get privacy, Cherish loved it here. It was the best home she'd ever had.

"What were you like when you were human? Did you have a family you had to leave behind?" Derik asked, almost as if reading her thoughts.

"No," Cherish gave a nonchalant shrug she really didn't feel as she opened the door. "My parents died when I was young and after that I bounced from foster home to foster home."

"It sounds awful lonely." Derik frowned, clearly troubled at her suffering.

It did odd things to her insides to know he

cared. They walked inside and stood to the side so they could continue talking. Strangely, she felt comfortable discussing this with them, even though she'd never told anyone else about her childhood.

"Somehow I don't think what I went through could even begin to compare with the suffering you guys endured after your coven sent you to be trained by the Nine." Cherish shivered as she thought about the dark coven. The Nine had such a notorious and evil reputation that even other warlocks and witches who practiced dark magic feared them. She could only imagine how hard it must have been for the small group of white magic teens who were sent there to train.

"At least we had each other." Derik cast a look of pure love over at Kavan who was listening in to their conversation in stoic silence.

"But it still had to be horrific. I've heard some of the tales and seen how they scarred Ethan, inside and out. You were right there with him through the whole thing. Did your parents know where you were going when your coven leader, Olivia, packed you off?"

Derik and Kavan both exchanged pained expressions.

She felt guilty for even asking and opened her mouth to pull back the question.

Kavan answered, "Are you kidding? They were

proud that we had the *honor* of being chosen to be the coven's new weapon against our enemies. They sent us there knowing full well we were going to be abused and corrupted and they didn't give a damn. All that mattered is that we came back powerful enough to make everyone as fearful of our coven as they were the Nine."

Cherish wanted to weep at the bitterness in his voice. Then she wanted to wrap her arms around both the warlocks and hold them forever. To let them know that there was tenderness and love in the world. Most of all she wanted to take away all the hurt and betrayal she saw lingering in their eyes. Moving closer to Kavan, she reached up and lightly traced his scar.

He stiffened, but didn't pull away.

"Is that how you go this?" She allowed her body to press fully against him.

"He got it trying to protect me," Derik answered in a broken voice.

Standing on tiptoe, Cherish ran her lips softly along the path of it, ending at his jaw. Moving just a little more, she put her mouth close to Kavan's ear and whispered, "I like it. It makes you look like the sexy warrior you are."

Kavan let out a low growl before he wrapped one arm around her waist.

She was pulled so tight against his body that she seemed to mold into his hard frame.

"I hate it that he's always right."

"Who?" She tilted her head up to look at him. Their lips were inches apart and every time he breathed out, she caught the sweet scent of peppermint, almost like he'd been eating some of the Christmas candy that was lying out all over the place.

"Derik. He said you belonged to us and I didn't believe him until tonight. He was so right though. You belong to us, Cherish, and we belong to you." Kavan gazed down at her, his expression so primal and possessive.

She forgot to breath. "That's impossible," she gasped, even as her stomach lurched with hope. "Vampires can't be part of a triquetra." It seemed like she'd repeated that argument a million times over, yet even she was beginning to have trouble believing it.

Kavan bent down those final few inches to kiss her, cutting off any further discussion. He was every bit as good at it as Derik was, too. She didn't even play shy this time, instantly opening up to him as he swept inside to lick and tease her mouth and fangs. When Derik came up behind her and pressed his strong chest against her back, she moaned into Kavan's mouth.

"Your logic may deny this all it wants, my sweet vampire," Derik crooned into her ear as he pulled off her hat and ran his fingers through her

long hair. "But your body knows it's true."

Her mouth was too occupied to argue, but she didn't think she could have, even if it were possible. Not with the emotions swirling inside her. Sandwiched between the two men, she felt so protected and...well as sappy as it sounded, cherished. For the first time ever in her human or vampire life, it seemed like she actually mattered to someone for something other than her brains or tech savvy. It made her feel sexual and powerful.

Completely ignoring the gasps of surprise from the other vampires in the room, Cherish kissed Kavan back with a hunger that she knew only her warlocks could answer. A shiver went down her spine when she felt Derik's lips nuzzling her neck. Two sets of hands started to roam her body, working around her body to touch her ass, waist and ribs. She was so into the moment that when Kavan pulled back, she actually let out a whimper of disappointment.

"Go get ready for the Christmas party," Kavan ordered as he ran the pad of his thumb across her bottom lip. "Derik and I will meet you there."

"Promise?" she asked, wincing when she realized how needy she sounded.

Derik was still pressed to her back and he chuckled against the skin of her neck. "Are you kidding?" he quipped, giving her one last kiss before stepping away. "Nothing short of death

could keep us away.”

“Then later we’re going to bring you back to our room and take care of all your needs,” Kavan promised, his gray eyes growing stormy with desire.

“And we do mean *every* need,” Derik added as he ran his hand along the curve of her ass.

It took all her control not to thrust back into his touch. They both walked away, leaving her standing there, dumbly. Letting out a deep breath, she reached out to the wall to steady herself because her legs felt like putty. Gradually her sex infused mind began to work again. Party? Tonight? Oh crap, she had nothing nice to wear. While that usually wouldn’t have mattered one bit to her, suddenly it was important that she looked good for Kavan and Derik.

Luck was with her because the one vampire who would have an outfit made for seduction just happened to be walking by. A slutty female named Raven who went through male partners faster than Paris Hilton went through pets. “Raven, I need a favor!” Cherish yelled as she ran to catch up with her.

Chapter Four

Derik took a big swig of punch, not even tasting it as he watched the doorway for Cherish. While he wanted to pace to help relive his nerves, it was so crowded in the cafeteria that he had to settle for clenching and unclenching his free hand.

"Relax, babe. She'll show," Kavan soothed as he ran a hand down Derik's back.

They had both showered and changed into jeans and dressier button up shirts, Kavan's green, Derik's black. Around them the vampires were laughing and talking loudly as they celebrated, all of them completely unaware of the stress plaguing Derik.

"What if she changed her mind about us?" Derik asked as he continued to look across the room, in hopes of seeing the small vampire.

"Then we'll have to go find her and remind her why she wants us." Kavan gave a slow, seductive smile.

Usually seeing his man grin like that made Derik's cock rock hard, but right now, he was so

nervous, nothing else mattered but seeing Cherish. She entered the room.

Derik sucked in a breath as he heard Kavan let out a soft moan. She was dressed in a short, slinky, black dress that showed more than it covered. The dark fabric looked heavenly against her milky skin and her breasts were pushed up just right so the perfect amount of cleavage showed. Her long hair was free from her usual hat, the dark curls piled on top of her head in an elegant up do, making her neck look so long and lickable that his mouth actually started to water.

Derik groaned as he noticed what was on her feet—high black stiletto heels. Nothing about a woman could turn him on faster than heels. They made Cherish's legs look a mile high and his cock snapped to attention as he imagined wrapping those limbs around his waist while he thrust into her tight pussy.

He and Kavan moved quickly across the room and to her side. When she saw them, no words were spoken by any of them. Instead, she smiled and held out both hands. He took one, Kavan the other and they moved on either side of her.

"Why me?" she asked softly. "You could have any female you wanted. Probably any guy, too. So what can you possibly gain by taking on the Clan nerd?"

Derik gapped. Didn't she realize how beautiful

she was? How wonderful on the inside and out? "We want you because you're Cherish. I can't think of anyone who I could possibly love besides you and Kavan."

"He's right," Kavan added. "You're the third part of our souls and we were lost without you. Now that that we found you, you'll never be alone again. Not as long as we draw breath."

"Wow, you guys really mean that don't you?" she gasped, her brown eyes growing wide in shock.

Derik dipped his head down and gave her the briefest of kisses. The sweet intoxicating taste of her lips made him weak kneed in passion and it was all he could do not to bury his nose in the crook of her neck so he could inhale her warm scent.

"Do you want to go get something to eat?" Kavan suggested.

Cherish nervously ran the tip of her tongue over her red lips as she surveyed the crowd. "You know I am hungry, but not for the food or drink here," she said in a seductive tone.

That was all Derik needed to hear. Still holding her hand, he led both Cherish and Kavan back to their room. If they saw anyone along the way, it didn't register because his mind was focused totally on his mates. Once they got to the door, it took him a couple of tries to get the key in the lock

because he shook so badly. Finally, he got the door open and pulled her into the room.

Kavan shut the door behind them, plunging the room into darkness until Derik muttered an incantation and several candles lit up, the flames illuminating the room.

Cherish let out a low whistle of appreciation. "That's a pretty neat trick there. It's going to come in handy, having two warlocks around to do my bidding."

"You should see us do windows," Derik joked as he tugged her by the hand so she was closer. Growing serious, he gazed down at her. "Just remember, you're running the show. You tell us how you want it, slow, fast, soft, hard or even if you want to stop all together. We won't ever force you to do something you don't want to."

"I know that. I trust both of you."

She released his hand and then trailed her fingers down to his cock.

Giving a gentle squeeze, she cooed, "I don't think I'll be asking you to stop anytime soon."

Kavan let go of Cherish's other hand so he could put his hands on her shoulders.

Giving a low hum of pleasure, she closed her eyes and tilted her head back.

The movement made her breasts press against the tiny dress and Derik was unable to resist. Leaning down, he ran his tongue along the tops of

the soft mounds. "Cherish, are you wearing a bra?" he asked between licks.

"I'm not wearing any underwear," she panted as she thrust her chest forward in a silent plea for more.

"Not even panties?" Kavan gasped.

"Nothing."

"Fuck, female, are you trying to drive us mad?" Derik groaned. The thought of her naked flesh being so close, separated by only that slip of a dress, almost made him come in his pants.

From the corner of his eye, he saw Kavan's arm shift. When Cherish let out a cry of pleasure, Derik knew the man was testing to see if she was telling the truth.

"Damn, she's already so wet for us." Kavan said.

"Is she now?" Derik smiled against her flesh.

"Yes, taste her." Kavan held up his wet fingers.

Derik took them into his mouth, groaning in pleasure at the sweetness of their female's honey. He couldn't wait to go down on her so he could lap it up from her pussy.

A rasping sound filled the room as Kavan slowly unzipped her.

Derik slid the straps off her shoulders and pushed the dress down so it pooled at her feet. For a second, both men stopped as they took in the glory of her naked body. Her breasts were small,

but still perfectly shaped, the nipples a dusky pink. Her body was toned and tight, showing all the hours she put in at the training room and her legs seemed to go on forever even though she was short. In other words, she was perfection.

Derik snapped out of his stupor long enough to lead her to the bed. Since he and Kavan shared the room, it had a nice king size bed and it was more than enough room for the three of them. He laid her down on it and stretched out over her as Kavan went to the nightstand and got a vial of oil.

Made from a blend of special essential oils and amped up with a bit of magic, when rubbed on the body, it left behind an intense warm, tingling sensation. Derik sat up so Kavan could slowly pour it over Cherish. He started at her neck and made a long, thin line down the center of her breasts, to her stomach and finally the juncture of her thighs.

"Oh my God," she cried, writhing around on the red sheets. "What is that?"

"Magic," Kavan replied wickedly as he started to slowly take off his clothes.

"It almost feels like it's alive on me," she moaned as she slowly rolled her hips up.

"If you like that, then you're going to love it when we rub it on our cocks before we put them in you." Derik got off the bed so he could strip, too. Once he and Kavan were both naked, they

climbed onto the bed with her.

Derik went to her side so he could start sucking on her breasts while Kavan settled between her milky thighs. Cherish let out a strangled cry as they started to use their tongues on her.

"It's so much," she cried out, her face flush with passion as she rolled her hips up to Kavan's face.

"Do you want us to stop?" Derik asked even as his cock protested. It was so hard that it was painful and it was all he could do not to reach down and fist it to relieve some of the pressure.

"You do and I'll go all fang on you," she threatened with a low snarl as she flashed her sharp, long incisors.

Derik's dick throbbed even more at the thought of her using them on him. He'd heard that if the vampire knew what they were doing, that being bit by one was a sexual thrill beyond comparison. "Fuck, sweetie. I hope you do bite me." He leaned down and took her breast back in his mouth. He looked down, loving the sight of Kavan eating her out, his lids closed as his tongue lapped at her pussy. The warlock's hand moved in between her legs as he started to add his fingers to the action.

Cherish let out a strangled cry as she fisted her hands in Derik's hair.

"Stick your fingers in her ass. Get her ready to take both of us," he ordered Kavan. He knew his lover had obeyed when Cherish let out a loud

gasp of surprise.

"Oh damn, Derik. You should feel her. She's so tight," Kavan moaned as he slowly fucked her ass with his fingers.

After just a few moments, Cherish's body grew stiff and she let out a long, keening wail as she came. Derik moved up to catch her lips in a kiss as Kavan continued to tease her pussy with his lips. It wasn't until she was shuddering that they pulled back.

Derik wrapped his arms around her waist and rolled over so she was on top, her legs straddling his hips. Lifting her up slightly, he slowly lowered her onto his cock. They both moaned in unison as her moist heat bathed his erection. Some of the oil from her body got on him and he could feel the tingly affects travel all through him, the heat adding to the arousal already shooting through his system.

"That's it, baby," Kavan crooned as he took some of the oil and rubbed it on his cock. "Take all of him in."

Getting behind Cherish, Kavan put his hand in the center of her back and slowly pushed her torso down so she was lying against Derik's chest, his cock still nestled in her snug pussy. Knowing what was coming next, Derik rubbed her back and whispered soothing words in her ear as Kavan slowly eased his cock into her ass.

Derik bit his bottom lip to stop from crying out in pleasure as he felt the pressure of Kavan's cock sliding against the thin membrane of flesh separating them. After what seemed like forever, Kavan was all the way inside her. They both stilled to give her time to adjust to the double penetration.

"Are you okay?" Derik asked. She was so small he worried about hurting her, vampire strength or not.

"Yes, it hurt at first, but now it feels so good." She dug her nails into his shoulder as she wiggled against them.

"Don't move like that, baby," Kavan pleaded, beads of sweat building up on his brow. "I'm trying to stay in control here and you're making it hard."

"I don't want it easy." She wiggled again. "I want you to fuck me hard, both of you."

The men groaned as they gave into her demands, finding a rhythm that was fast and hard. The sensation of her pussy, made even more tight because Kavan's cock was in her ass, was so intense that Derik knew he wouldn't last long. When Cherish's tongue darted out and licked his neck, he was certain he was a goner. Sure enough, she hissed softly before her fangs sank into his neck.

Derik yelled as the hardest orgasm of his life

slammed into him. He gave her one last thrust of his cock and shot off into her hot pussy, even as her lips continued to work on his neck as she fed from him. After a couple of seconds, both she and Kavan came, too, Cherish letting out the sweetest of cries as she found her release.

Just as he had his orgasm, Kavan opened his eyes so he locked gazes with Derik. Even though they had never shared a lover before, Derik had never felt closer to the man than now. Mouthing, *I love you*, he reached up to lightly cup the warlock's jaw.

Once they had all caught their breath, Cherish slowly licked Derik's bite wounds closed as Kavan rolled off them. She looked down at Derik shyly.

"I didn't hurt you did I?" she asked as she ran her tongue over her lips, catching the lingering droplets of blood.

"No, it felt so damn good that from now on I insist you only feed from me or Kavan," he reassured as he ran his hand down her back.

"You don't have to do that." She blushed.

"Yes, we do," Kavan said as he reached one hand over to caress Cherish's arm. "We love you and it's our honor to take care of you."

Cherish's body grew tense as her mouth opened and closed several times. She stammered, "You guys don't have to say that just because we had sex."

Derik turned over so she was on her back in between them. "It's no line, Cherish. We do love you. Do you think it's possible that someday you could return the feeling, even though we're warlocks?"

Cherish's eyes grew moist with emotion.

His heart hammered in fear.

She said, "I already love both of you. With all my soul. I think I'm the luckiest female in the world to get both of you as all mine."

Derik released a pent up breath he hadn't realized he was holding.

Kavan leaned down to give her a kiss.

"We'll make sure you never regret giving us your heart, Cherish. It's the best gift we could have ever received and we'll treat it like the treasure it is." He leaned down to give her a kiss of his own before titling his mouth up to meet Kavan's lips. Derik thrust his tongue out, savoring the taste of Cherish's honey that still lingered in the man's mouth.

"Merry Christmas," Kavan said once they pulled back.

Derik smiled as he looked at the two loves of his life. Yes, it was a Merry Christmas. The best he could ever remember because for the first time in his life he felt complete. Wrapping his arms around both of them, he closed his eyes and fell asleep, a smile on his face.

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