



# *The Sword of Anubis*

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India shook her head. "I don't know that I can trust you, Morgan. It could mean the end of my life. Or worse. Nicolai Kesslanski might get his hands on the one thing that has the power to make him invincible. That same power is the only thing capable of destroying him. If he gets his hands on it..." She shuddered. "No. I have to protect it."

"Please, India." Morgan's eyes beseeched her.

India hesitated. "I am sorry. I cannot tell you what you want to know."

*Brittany Kingston*

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*The Sword of Anubis*

# *The Sword of Anubis*

*Brittany Kingston*



*Brittany Kingston*

*Also by Brittany Kingston:*

*Where the Night Things Are*

*Whisperings of the Soul*

*"The Music Box", Paranormal Bedtime Stories Anthology*

*Coming Soon*

*Shadow on the Crystal*

## *Dedication:*

To Tiger, Nigg and Mickey, Dixi and Rambo, C.J. and McCaffrey, Oscar and the fishy dudes, all of whom enrich my life with love and laughter every day.

# *Sword of Anubis*

Morgan de Ventana scanned the crowded Place du Carrousel, his dark eyes narrowed against the glare. The street urchins he'd paid to be his ears and eyes returned with rumors of an uprising. Paris was in the grip of a growing spirit of hatred, and violence was a tangible scent in the air.

Intimations that the Bastille would be attacked hung in whispers from every corner. Soon, blood would be shed in the streets, and Morgan wanted to be away from Paris before that happened.

A furtive movement caught his attention. It was a mere silhouette within the darkness, but it was enough. He turned the collar of his black leather coat up to hide his face. The sun descended towards the horizon, causing shadows to slink across the streets. Nicolai Kesslanski wouldn't step into the open yet.

Morgan hunched his shoulders and moved closer to the wall of the Cour des Tuileries. He cursed the inherent height that set him head and shoulders above most men. It wasn't always possible for him to be ambiguous in a crowd.

As the shadows deepened, Morgan followed Nicolai along Rue du Carrousel. He knew if he got too close, Nicolai would sense his presence, so he stayed as far back as he dared. Still, he didn't want to lose sight of him. It had been easy to track him along the winding, narrow lanes, but as the crowd thinned, it proved more difficult to remain unseen. When his quarry slipped around the corner into a major carriageway, Morgan flattened himself against the corner building to watch. He would be exposed if he tried to cross the street now.

Nicolai approached a row of carriages and paused to talk to the driver. Morgan held his breath. If Nicolai took a cab, there would be no way he could keep up on foot. He

was desperate not to lose him again. The horses tossed their heads, uneasy in the presence of the predator.

Nicolai laughed with the cab driver, then walked on, confident in his anonymity.

Morgan let his breath hiss out through his teeth and followed him along a short, narrow lane, where every doorway had steps that led down into the street and a small alcove at the top. He didn't care if anyone saw him run from alcove to alcove. It was more important that he not be seen by Nicolai.

It had been a long time since the two of them had met face to face. Last time Morgan cornered him, the ensuing battle had nearly torn The Kindred's London "safe house" from its foundations. Nicolai had almost killed him that time. Morgan had been forced to run and hide in the hope he would recover and grow strong enough to hunt him down again. Hatred burned in his soul like a beacon. If he wasn't careful, Nicolai would sense it and know he had been found.

Morgan clenched his fists against his need for revenge. He wanted to spill Nicolai Kesslanski's blood so bad he could almost smell it, but first, he needed to know what had drawn the vampire to Paris.

The vile creature skirted the triangular block. The way he stopped to read the street numbers suggested he sought a particular address.

Morgan kept to the shadows and waited.

Twilight deepened as the descending sun set fire to the cloudy sky. Some boutique owners were locking up for the evening but most of the sidewalk cafés were already deserted. Nicolai slunk into a small book shop.

Morgan braced himself in an alcove across the street and took out his spyglass. He had to hold his breath to still his hand. Nicolai never left witnesses to his evil business. Everyone inside that shop was in danger.

A glance revealed an elderly proprietor and a young woman behind the counter, but no customers. Morgan centered his circle of vision on Nicolai. He seemed to be engaged in an argument with the old man.

Morgan snapped the spy glass closed. He crossed the carriageway and pressed himself against the building next to the shop. He could hear Nicolai's voice raised in anger. He fought down his desire to race into the shop and confront him. He was so close that the hair on the back of his neck prickled, but he could ill afford to rush this. If he made a mistake now, Nicolai would flee and the chase would start all over again. Morgan splayed his hands against the warm stone of the building and tried to let a measure of its patient solidity seep into his bones.

"Give it to me. I know you have it."

"I have no such thing." The older man's voice trembled despite his show of bravado. "I know nothing of these matters."

"You lie!"

"No, m'sieur, you are mistaken."

"Do you take me for a fool? I will tear this place apart if I have to."

"Please, m'sieur, I beg of you, for the sake of my granddaughter, leave our shop in peace."



"Peace! I'll give you peace."

A sudden icy blast made Morgan's coat billow around him like the wings of a large bird of prey. A shadow flew from the door and was gone into the dusk. Morgan sprang into pursuit, but a scream tore through the fabric of the street clatter making him skid to a halt. He paused to glance over his shoulder at the shop. When he looked back for his quarry, the shadow had gone. He cursed his lost opportunity. Nicolai was too dangerous to lose sight of.

Morgan slipped into the book shop. The young woman was kneeling beside a prone figure.

"My Grandfather," she sobbed. "Help me, m'sieur."

Morgan crouched and gently turned the old man onto his back. Where his throat should have been was a grizzly, gaping hole. He rose and, with a fatherly arm around her shoulders, drew the young woman away from the blood that pooled on the floor.

"I am sorry, mademoiselle. There is nothing I can do."

"Did...did you see him?" The girl looked up with large, tear-filled eyes. "He...he went..." She pointed a shaking finger.

Several soldiers ran into the shop shouting, creating needless chaos. When the carnage was assessed, one of them was sent to fetch a doctor. Two gendarmes pushed their way through the soldiers and tried to clear the scene of everyone who didn't need to be there. In the confusion, Morgan guided the young woman into a chair.

The older of the two gendarmes pulled another chair across to sit beside her. Concern deepened the map of lines etched into his face. "Can you tell me what happened, ma'moiselle?"

Morgan stood behind the chair with his hands on the young woman's shoulders as she answered the questions in a voice devoid of emotion. His mind wasn't on her, the shop, or on the old man. He wondered how far away Nicolai was and how much further he'd get each moment he tarried. Had he lost him? Had all these hard months of tracking come to naught because, for one moment, he'd been distracted by a young woman's distress?

A doctor finally appeared. He performed a cursory examination of the body and pronounced the man dead of a dog attack. He took a swig from his hip flask and wove his way back out onto the street. At the gendarmes' insistence, the soldiers arranged for a hearse to carry the corpse to the mortuary.

When everybody had gone, Morgan closed the shop door and bolted it. "Can I escort you anywhere, ma'moiselle?"

She shook her head.

"Is there anyone I can fetch to stay with you?"

Again, she shook her head.

Morgan frowned. He didn't want the burden of caring for this girl, but his conscience wouldn't allow him to leave her alone after she'd witnessed such horror. "Where do you live, ma'moiselle?"

"Above."

"Are you sure there is nobody I can call? A friend, perhaps?"

Her brown grief-stricken eyes looked up at him. "There is—was—only my grandfather and I, m'sieur. Thank you for your kindness, but I will be all right." She rose to see him to the door.

Morgan admired her determination not to appear weak, but when she swayed and had to grasp the back of the chair for support, he was quick to come to her aid.

"No." She waved him away.

Morgan's frown deepened. "At least allow me to pour a drink for you."

"I will do it, m'sieur. Tea, I think. Will you join me?"

Morgan had a shot of whiskey or brandy in mind, but he nodded. In the corner, he spied a mop and bucket. No doubt the young woman was preparing to scrub the floor after the shop closed for the night. *How quickly our dull little routines of life can be destroyed*, he thought. While he waited for her to emerge from the kitchen at the rear of the shop, Morgan cleaned away the traces of Nicolai's latest victim.

The young woman reappeared and placed a laden tray on the reading table in the centre of the shop. "India," she said.

"Pardon ma'moiselle?"

"My name. India." She poured two cups of tea. "My parents had a passion for travel." She placed a cup in front of him with hands that still trembled. "It could have been worse, m'sieur. My mother had a great fondness for Timbuktu."

Morgan laughed. "I am Morgan de Ventana."

"Then you *are* a foreigner. And the man you followed here?"

Morgan regarded her. "How do you know I followed him?"

"I saw you across the street." Her expression hardened. "Who is he?"

"Nicolai Kesslanski."

India nodded as though confirming a long-held fear.

She reached for the milk jug but Morgan gripped her wrist. "You are not surprised."

"No." India pulled away from Morgan's grasp and sank onto the chair. "It is a name I know well. That man killed my parents in the most horrible way. Grandfather said he would return one day to finish what he started, m'sieur."

"Call me Morgan. Why did he kill them? What does he want?"

She stared down at the table. "How should I know?"

"You know."

India offered the milk jug to Morgan. When he declined, she poured milk into her own tea and sipped it, careful to keep her eyes averted.

"India, please, you must tell me."

"There is nothing to tell."

"Please, India, tell me what you know."

She raised her chin and looked into his eyes. "I know nothing."

Morgan shook his head. She was lying. Frustration welled up inside him. He wanted to scream. He wanted to take her by the shoulders and shake the information out of her. He ran a hand through his disheveled hair. Most of it pulled free from the tie at the back to fall across his face.

Violence would not get him what he wanted. He made a placating gesture with his hands and took a deep breath. When he spoke again, his voice was ragged with the strain of the long, hard road he'd taken to find the vampire. "Nicolai was once my father's friend. He murdered him the same way he killed your grandfather. For months I have tracked him and tried to get close enough to kill him. I almost had him in London. He must not escape again." He stared at her, willing her to see the pain and the need in his eyes. "Tell me what you know, please. I will avenge your family as well as my own."

India shook her head. "I don't know that I can trust you, Morgan. It could mean the end of my life. Or worse. Nicolai Kesslanski might get his hands on the one thing that has the power to make him invincible. That same power is the only thing capable of destroying him. If he gets his hands on it..." She shuddered. "No. I have to protect it."

"Please, India." Morgan's eyes beseeched her.

India hesitated. "I am sorry. I cannot tell you what you want to know."

Morgan stared down into the delicate cup he held. He had an almost overwhelming desire to crush it to pieces. "I understand. I am a stranger, and for all you know, I could be a friend of that animal's." He glanced into her eyes. "Please, believe that I am not. I am an honorable man, India, and I need your help to destroy the beast that Nicolai Kesslanski has become."

He sipped his cooling tea. How much should he tell her? How much violence and tragedy could she take in one evening? Why should he even care? He had his own demons to vanquish, and baring his soul to a woman simply wasn't his way. But he was convinced that she either knew, or had, something that could help him, and unless she told him, Nicolai could once more slip through his grasp.

Morgan took a deep breath and let it out slowly. "I will trust you with what I know, then I will ask that you trust me in return."

India watched him in silence.

"Nicolai was not only my father's friend. He was his partner. They worked for the Museum of Madrid as archeologists, until something happened to them on an expedition in Russia. My father returned alone and said that Nicolai was dead. He never spoke of how, and the body was not recovered."

Morgan gulped the rest of his tea down. "Three years later, Nicolai appeared at our door and demanded that my father give him an artifact he had found in Egypt. My father refused and Nicolai," he hesitated, "ripped his throat out. Two years later when my mother was on her deathbed, she whispered to me of a dagger hidden in a box beneath the floorboards of our cellar. She gave me the key and made me promise not to rest until that unspeakable evil was vanquished from this world. She told me I had to find a book in which were written the words that would give the dagger the power to send that evil monster back to the underworld where he belongs."

India gasped. "The sword of Anubis."

Morgan stared at her. "You know of it?"

## *The Sword of Anubis*

India nodded. "My grandfather spoke of a dagger said to be made from the tip of the sword of Anubis, Egyptian God of the underworld. He searched for it for most of his life, hoping it would not fall into the wrong hands."

Morgan put his hand inside his shirt and took the dagger from a leather sheath hidden against his body. He placed it on the table.

India picked the dagger up and turned it over in her hands. Her fingers traced the ivory hilt that was carved into a likeness of Anubis. She handed it back to Morgan.

He slid the dagger back into its holster. "India, did Nicolai come here for this dagger?"

"No." She sat for a moment, worrying her lower lip with her teeth. She took a deep breath and rose from the table. "Come with me."

Morgan followed her through the kitchen and up a narrow flight of stairs to the living quarters.

In her grandfather's small office, India walked over to a painting on the wall. "My grandmother," she said as she removed it. She took a letter opener from the desktop and slit the wall paper. She peeled it down to reveal a compartment beneath, then took a tiny key from the chain around her neck and unlocked it.

Morgan watched as she opened the secret door and removed a heavy package wrapped in oil skin.

India placed the package on the desk and unwrapped it. She stood aside to allow Morgan to see. "The Book of Whispers."

Morgan ran his hands over the well-preserved binding. There was a likeness of Anubis tooled into the leather and Egyptian hieroglyphs underneath it. He opened the cover and looked at the ancient scripture. "This is what Nicolai killed your grandfather for?"

"Yes." She turned to a page halfway through the book and pointed to a hand-painted illumination of the dagger. "Your father was killed for the dagger, and my father and grandfather for this book. Together, these artifacts have great power."

Morgan stared at the hieroglyphs he couldn't read.

India gave Morgan a sad smile. She ran her finger along the text and translated, "Oh vilest of the undead, with these words, I cast you into the underworld."

India continued in the ancient language of Egypt, and Morgan could almost hear the whispered voice of Anubis himself. The leather sheath heated up beneath his shirt to the point where he removed the dagger to prevent it from burning him. Holding its ivory handle, he watched the metal blade take on a dull red glow before it brightened to white hot. A golden aura appeared around them. When India stopped speaking, the aura disappeared and the metal cooled. Morgan touched it. It was just an ordinary blade again.

India closed the book and rewrapped it. "My father and grandfather made certain I knew how to read it." She looked up into Morgan's face. "Nicolai suspects the book is here. I am certain he will return for it." She shuddered.

"But he doesn't know I have the blade." Morgan drew her into his arms and rested his chin against her head. "And he doesn't know I have tracked him down. I will not

leave you unprotected, India. Together we will find a way to send him into the underworld." The book acted as a barrier of propriety between them, making him feel safe from the intimacy of their contact. He drew back so he could look down into her eyes. "You believe me, do you not?"

"I do. I only wish I was as confident as you of defeating him."

Morgan pulled India close, comforting her and finding comfort in her nearness. It had been two years since he'd been in the arms of a woman, and he liked the way India's tall, willowy body fit against his own. Her warmth ignited feelings he'd suppressed—more out of necessity than any desire for celibacy. Unbidden passion now stirred and hardened in his groin.

India had never been held by a man. How was she supposed to feel? What was she supposed to do? No-one had ever told her it would feel this good. Parts of her body tingled with needs she'd only ever heard whispered about. When his manhood hardened against her, she pulled away from his embrace, her face aflame to match his heat. She stepped back to straighten her skirt.

With a husky laugh, Morgan drew her into his arms again and kissed her lips. He didn't know why he did it, but he felt he had to. He released her, watching for a sign that she was displeased with him. She blushed, but didn't move away.

India smiled and shyly touched her fingertips to her lips. "It grows late, Morgan. Will you stay for a meal?"

"I would like that."

"Good." Her brow furrowed. "I will have to get used to eating alone now that Grandfather is..." India let the words trail off into a sigh. She took a deep breath and started down the stairs. "There will be funeral arrangements to make tomorrow." She sighed again.

"I wish there was more I could do."

"Oh no, Morgan. You have been most kind." India walked through the kitchen and out into the book shop. Although she hadn't lit the lamps, the glow from the street light outside was sufficient to see by. She hugged the precious book close to her chest. "I must put this somewhere safe first."

"I will keep it safe." Nicolai Kesslanski stepped from the shadows. "Give it to me."

"No!" India jumped back. "How did you get in?"

Nicolai advanced, holding his hand out for the book.

Morgan pulled India into his arms for protection.

Surprised, Nicolai halted. "Morgan de Ventana, how nice to see you again."

"The pleasure is all mine, Nicolai." As he pushed India behind him, he whispered, "Read the words."

India opened the book to the place marked by a ribbon. She had rehearsed this moment over and over in her mind. Her shaking fingers traced the hieroglyphs. This was not how she'd pictured the scenario would go. In her imagination, she had always been much bolder.

## *The Sword of Anubis*

Morgan glanced back at the page. It was too dark to read the scripture, but he could still make out the illumination of the dagger. He prayed that India knew the words by heart.

Hoping to take Nicolai by surprise, Morgan launched himself at the vampire and knocked him to the floor. "Say the words," he yelled over his shoulder.

Nicolai managed to pull his knees up to his chest. With a thrust of his legs, he sent Morgan flying backwards against one of the heavy bookshelves. It swayed, then toppled, coming to rest against the next row of shelves.

Books rained down on Morgan. He put his arms over his head for protection, expecting the bookcase to land on him. When it didn't, he scrambled out, pulling the dagger from its sheath.

Nicolai turned to stare at India. The open tome was balanced on one hand and her other hand rested on the exposed page; her eyes were closed. Nicolai recognized the words she spoke. "Stop!"

India faltered. She glanced up.

"Read!" yelled Morgan. He grabbed Nicolai from behind and threw him to the floor.

India squeezed her eyes shut and chanted the scripture out loud. Shadows seethed around the shop. A deep whisper echoed the words she spoke. The dagger in Morgan's hand glowed white hot, and an eerie gold luminescence enveloped them.

Enraged, Nicolai flew at Morgan. He tore the scarf knotted around his neck to expose the flesh beneath.

Morgan struggled, fighting to keep his throat out of reach. He only had to hold out long enough for the words to work their magic. He gauged his moment to plunge the dagger into Nicolai's chest, but the vampire was quicker.

Nicolai caught Morgan's wrist in an iron-like grip. He wrenched Morgan around by the arm and threw him against the shop counter where he lay stunned. Sneering, Nicolai lunged for him, but somehow, Morgan found the strength to roll out of reach at the last moment.

The dagger threw off sparks. If he didn't use it now, the moment would pass.

India chanted the words. Her voice gained strength as her desperation grew. The deep whisper also strengthened. No longer just echoing her words, the unseen presence now led the incantation.

Although Morgan feared for India's life, he knew she wouldn't falter. His own strength had all but drained from him, and he was sure he wouldn't last much longer.

A tall shadow detached itself from the gathering darkness. The strong, resonant voice that had joined India's belonged to the materializing form.

The shadow of Anubis fell over Nicolai Kesslanski. As he turned, horror blanched his already pallid features.

Morgan seized this opportunity. He summoned what strength he had left and plunged the dagger into the middle of Nicolai's back.

There was an awful moment of silence. The last word was spoken. Blue fire flared from the dagger and the vampire screamed in terror. He twisted and flailed, trying to clutch at the ivory hilt in futile desperation.

Anubis waved his hand. Blackness deeper than night descended over them all.

When the unnatural darkness lifted, Nicolai Kesslanski was gone.

Morgan reached for India and clung to her.

Anubis turned toward them, his canine eyes glowing gold. He retrieved the dagger from the floor and sheathed it in a holster slung around his hip. Without a word, he held out his hands.

India laid the open book in his paw-like hands and looked up into his face with great reverence.

Anubis closed the book with loving care. He bowed his head then stepped back into the shadows.

Morgan ran to the counter and fumbled to light the table lamps. The smell of warm kerosene pervaded the shop as the amber glow of the lanterns chased the shadows away.

India threw her arms around Morgan's neck and kissed him on the lips. "It is done, Morgan. It is over at last."

Morgan returned the kiss, still unable to think clearly.

They both jumped when the lock on the shop door burst apart. The door swung open and wind swirled in from the night.

Standing before them, with a ghastly grin on his face, was India's grandfather. The hole in his throat was now bloodless but still agape, revealing ragged bone and dangling sinews.

"What shall we have for supper, Indi?"

## *About the Author*

Author, artist and Gypsy stone reader, Brittany Kingston has won countless competitions for poetry and short stories in several genres, most of which have appeared in publications both online and in print. Her articles on the art of writing have been published in magazines and ezines all over the world. When she's not chasing cattle all over Glenloth or creating elemental spiritual artworks in ink, Brittany Kingston immerses herself in her science fiction writing and follows her alien characters through countless adventures all over the multiverse. Her poetry anthologies *Where the Night Things Are* and *Whisperings of the Soul* are currently available from Eternal Press, along with her short story "The Music Box", which is included in the *Paranormal Bedtime Stories* Anthology.

You can find Brittany online at <http://www.freewebs.com/brittanykingston>.

Her official blog site is <http://authorsmind.blogspot.com>.



*Coming soon from Eternal Press*

# *Shadow on the Crystal*

*by Brittany Kingston*

For years Whisper has hunted his arch enemy, the vampire Santez de Aragon. Whisper intends to kill the vile murderer and put an end to his evil ways once and for all.

Katherine Browning finds herself attracted to the tall, handsome Gypsy, who wards off the unwelcome attentions of her brother's tutor. But soon she discovers that Whisper is not what he appears to be.

Whisper tightened his grip on his sword. "I will never be like you."

Santez circled their tight arena. "You are me. Do not deny you lust for blood the same way I do. You crave it. You take it wherever you can. You can't get enough of it." His eyes, like embers, ignited when his gaze came to rest on the frightened face of the girl. "So much the sweeter when virginal, no?" His stare challenged Whisper. "Deny that you want to drink her blood. Deny that you want it so bad you can already taste it."

Whisper glanced at Katherine. The haunted gaze that caught at the edge of his vision sent a chill up his spine.

"Deny it!"

"Whisper?" Katherine took a step backwards.

Santez laughed. "Tell her what you are, gypsy."

"Enough, Santez! Your quarrel is with me." He lunged forward swinging the sword, but Santez moved quicker. By the time the six-span blade had completed its arc, Whisper found Santez between himself and Katherine.

Nothing would have pleased Santez more than to have seized the girl and taken her right in front of Whisper, but the gypsy demanded all his concentration, and the girl slipped beyond his reach. He snarled, half crouching, ready to spring. "I should have made you wholly a vampire when I had the chance."

"You were never strong enough, Santez. My will was stronger than yours then, and it is even stronger now. Try me."

"No." Santez's voice was a low growl; his instinct for blood was overtaking his reason. He fought it. He had to keep control. "I no longer desire your company for eternity. I shall rip your throat out and feast on your heart tonight."

*Available now from Eternal Press*

# *In Blood Covenant*

*by L. A. Wilson*

Lorne Jagger meets a spellbinding stranger in an inn—Señor Altair Salvar, a vampire from the terrible days of the Spanish Inquisition. Mesmerized by Altair's charismatic power, Jagger begins a strange relationship with him, a battle of wills between human and immortal—a battle for immortality, or a trip into obsession and dark desires?

For when Jagger learns the true nature of the Spaniard, he becomes obsessed with the desire to be made *nosferatu*, an obsession that drags his wife and friends down with him into a place of murder and lies. And yet there is something far more profound to this vampire than Jagger could ever know—until he discovers the true meaning of the words *In Blood Covenant*.

Jagger stood paralysed in Altair's arms, feeling the pain of the bite now dulling to a throbbing ache, everything changing inside him as Altair's teeth penetrated the nerves that carried the messages of pain to his mind, messages speaking deeper to his now altered consciousness.

He felt the bite course through his entire body, down every pathway of nerves and flesh. He did not struggle against this penetrating sensation; he fell into it, suddenly lived in it, swallowed, devoured. Dying?

He heard Altair's deep moan of pleasure, felt his hand stroking through his hair, all of him taken, embraced by a power beyond knowing as the vampire stripped away everything that remained of normal life within him. He found life in this moment close to death, and he slumped in a strange peace, releasing all of his pain into Altair's mouth.

*Brittany Kingston*

*Available now from Eternal Press*

# *The Vampire Family*

*by Kristin Battestella*

Antonio Welshire was sadistic even before Mestiphles turned him into a vampire. Over the centuries, the patriarch has had his favorites—his tormented wife Elizabeth and her exotic sister Ann, just to name a few. Victoria's whims rival that of her father's, but daughter Samantha spends the decades looking for an end to her macabre existence.

Not all of Antonio's dark children want to be part of the Vampire Family. They've survived coven wars and persecutions, but can they survive each other?

"Catherine?" Antonio's shadowy figure stood at her door. The tiny flame shortened in a clump of wax as the maid looked up.

"Yes, sir?" She set down her quill. "You sound different, sir. Are you ill?"

"Yes." He stepped toward her. "I need your help."

The dim light shined in his face. He couldn't see. His eyes felt bloodshot, and his hands seemed pale as the candle flickered. He put his hands on Catherine's arms. She felt warm to his cold touch. Sharp teeth cut the inside of his lips.

Antonio's voice trembled. His hands shook. "I need your help."

"Of course, sir." She put her arms on his, but Antonio shook and felt the muscles of his forearm clench. "What can I do? Here, sit down."

His arms came around her waist. Antonio heard her blood rush and saw her face flush. He put his head down on her chest. She trembled, but held Antonio's head.

"Such overwhelming!" He spoke more to himself than Catherine. His words and hot breath were muffled against her. "Now I know what Mestiphles meant. I know what to do. I need to do it. I have to have it!"

"I'll get some water." Catherine was about to get up, but Antonio clenched his hands tighter around her.

"No," he said hoarsely. His nails dug into her sides, and she winced. Antonio relaxed

*The Sword of Anubis*

his grip, and she allowed his hands to roam. He unlaced her dressing gown. His hands stopped shaking, and bewitched, Catherine gave him total control. He pulled the loosened gown off her shoulders and swept Catherine to her feet in one swift motion. Yes, he knew she was captivated and paralyzed. He could be so frightening, yet masculine and desirable. Antonio put his head to her neck and bit the pumping jugular.

She flinched, but her blood flowed into Antonio's mouth. The short life drain was ecstatic, but soon grew empty. Her life was now in him.

Antonio let Catherine's limp body fall to the bed. He had her, and now he wanted more.

*Brittany Kingston*

*Available now from Eternal Press*

# *Where The Night Things Are*

*by Brittany Kingston*

Fun poems that explore all things dark and spooky. For those of you who love a good horror story, ghost tale or just a little paranormal creepiness, enjoy these poems about things that go bump in the night...

## *Gargoyles Watch*

When skies grow dark  
and cobble stones gleam  
in the circles of brilliance  
around street lamps,  
gargoyles blink  
grey, stony eyes  
and stretch day-cramped  
muscles.

*The Sword of Anubis*

Unseen by all  
who scurry below,  
they watch  
with creaking smiles  
as day dwellers  
leave streets, alleys  
and lanes  
empty.

When all but the  
night creatures have  
scuttled away, they unfold  
lichen-clothed wings  
and glide from their  
watch posts to gather  
on rooftops to  
talk.

Empty eyes know  
the sins of the city, and  
stone hearts are heavy  
as stiff lips speak  
in moss-toned voices of  
wrongs that need righting  
and plights of  
despair.