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Escaping Fate

Selena Kitt

Chapter One

I have to tell you—none of us are named "Tink" or "Sugerplum," and we're nothing like you see in the movies or on TV. Don't look so surprised. Yes, I know about all things human. We don't live in some fantastical magical forest, we don't glow in the dark, and there is no such thing as "pixie dust." We live in the real world, just like you do. We're around you all of the time. You just can't see us, because we don't appear in your light spectrum. You know how only dogs can hear dog whistles? Well, it's kind of like that.

Me? Oh, I'm Sam. And this is my job. You think I'm kidding? Look, fairies don't grant magical wishes or transform wooden puppets into real boys. That's for the fairy tales—and how our names got attached to that lot, I'll never know! What's my job? It's boring, really. You don't want to hear about...

You do? All right then...

Fairies keep track of and fulfill what you humans call "fate." Ever looked it up in the dictionary? From the Latin, *fatum*, literally, "what has been spoken," from neuter of *fatus*, past participle of *fari*, "to speak."

Fari...Fairy...you see what happened there?

So, basically, I listen to *The Voice* and do its bidding. That's my job. I told you it was boring! Like today, I'm sitting on the arm of a recliner, next to Joe, here, who hasn't worked in two years. In fact, he's practically not left this recliner in two years. But today, Joe's got a job interview. How did that happen? Well, that was me. Joe used to work CAD in the auto industry. Today, he's got an interview with Boeing. He won't get the job.

Of course, he doesn't know that. The important thing is, he needs to be late to his interview.

His wife, Lynn...that's her, over there, wiping her hands on the dish towel. She's been waitressing and borrowing money from her family, trying to keep them afloat. She's thrilled he's got an interview, and is probably happier with him today than she's been in years. I can use that. Watch.

Joe's easy. Men are, you know. The power of suggestion is huge with them. All I have to do is stand on his shoulder and whisper into his ear. It's not talking, really, in case you were gonna call foul on the whole you can't see or hear us thing. You can't, trust me. It's more like I imagine breathing must be for you humans. I just kind of lean in and breathe into his ear. It might translate into something, in words, like, "Look at your wife," and check it out, Joe's turning his head! See what I mean? Easy peasy.

"Are you ready, baby?" See how she comes to stand next to the recliner like that? That was me. Look at the way she's looking at him—so hopeful. Now she's staring at the Christmas tree in the corner and thinking about how they're going to afford presents, and hoping he'll get a paycheck again before then. God, this job sucks sometimes. I hate knowing what's going to happen next. It's like knowing the ending to every book. Why read, then, you know what I'm saying?

"As I'll ever be!" See how he smiles up at her? The way his eyes move over the front of her t-shirt? Yep, me again. Ahh, here we go. Lynn isn't as easy, but for women, I don't even have to be close. It isn't breath with them, it's more like a "push." I guess you'd call it a thought, a suggestion. It isn't really, but whatever it takes for you to at least sort of understand...

See how she's straddling him? Well, we all know where this is going, now, right? If there's one thing I enjoy, it's watching humans interact this way. We fairies have no gender, you know. That whole masculine and feminine thing doesn't translate. So if you were wondering if I was a girl fairy or a boy fairy—I'm just Sam, that's all. We don't have all those interesting, fleshy parts.

I mean, look how they fumble with each other, their mouths and tongues mashing together like that. This is the only time I wonder what it must be like to be human—the look on their faces at the moment of joining...see? The way his eyes close and his mouth opens, the way her head goes back and she grips his shoulders and digs her nails in...there's something there. Something really...interesting.

"Harder, baby!" There's a raspy gasp and clutch as she rocks on him, and you can actually hear their flesh coming together, like wet music that fills the room. Me, I just sit on the back of the recliner and enjoy the ride. All the thrusting and grunting and rocking is happening so fast, I have to hold on tight. Their whispers and moans grow louder, in spite of Lynn's words, "Shhhh, the kids are napping..."

"Ohhhh God, baby! I'm gonna come!" Ahh, now this is the moment I love. How fleeting, how powerful, watching them arch and grab each other! The whole chair is shaking with the force of it, shuddering and rocking, and I'm holding on tight, that funny feeling kind of glowing in my middle as I watch.

Now's the time. It's just late enough. Hopping back onto Joe's shoulder, I breathe into his ear, just a little reminder.

"Ohhhh God, Lynn!" There, he's looking at his watch. "I'm gonna be late!"

Off she scrambles, and he's zipping up and grabbing his briefcase. That kiss and wave and the call of "Good luck!" she gives him out the door would break my heart if I had one. Damn, but he's cruising! I might have to slow him down again. The cell phone call he's making, telling them he's stuck in traffic—it isn't going to matter.

Ah, here we are—parking structure, down the elevator, out into the street. Just two blocks to walk. He's hustling, but I give him a slow down, make him look into a store window. There's a toy display, a train running through the center that says, "Santa's Express." He's thinking about his son, Peter, who asked Santa for Thomas the Tank Engine this year. Good. Peter won't get his toy, but Joe's slowed just a little. Just enough.

Here we are. The intersection du jour. How many times have I done this, I wonder? Joe's in a hurry, and I give him one last push not to wait for the light. He does the right thing, looks left, right, then left again. Off he goes, puffing across the street, between a small gap in the busy traffic.

"Whoa, little one, where are you going?" Joe grabs the child, toddling in a fat blue snowsuit into the road.

"David!" The child's mother screams, grabbing him from Joe and hugging him close. Her attention had been diverted for just a moment by the baby in the stroller on her left. "Oh my God, thank you! You saved his life!"

Yep.

Joe mumbles something and takes off toward the interview for a job he isn't going to get. The mother—her name is Anna—is still rocking and admonishing young

David. I move around them to follow Joe, but...damn, there's *The Voice* again. Looks like I'm gonna be with Anna for a while. This time of year is so damned busy!

Chapter Two

In my job, timing is everything. Sometimes I spend hours waiting for just the right moment. Like I said, it can get pretty boring. Take Anna, for example, meandering around the mall, pushing the stroller with the baby in it, and David, the kid who nearly bought the farm trying to cross the street earlier, tagging after her. It will be another hour until I'm really needed, and if *The Voice* doesn't chime in with another call, it's just me following her around until it's time. *Bo-ring!*

That's when I spot Alex over near the restrooms, sitting high up on one of those fake, lit-up tinsel candy-canes over the door.

"Hey, Sam!"

I've been spotted, too. I wave back, checking to make sure Anna is still in line for pictures with Santa and flit over to say hi.

"Whatcha got?" I take a seat. "Anything good?"

Alex grins, pointing down to the restroom, where a woman pushes open the door. That's when I notice, it says, "Men." Ahhhh...a tryst! Whose fate, I wonder? Hers? His? Or some unknown third party? We only get to find out on a need-to-know basis. We get a whole hell of a lot bigger picture than most of the humans, but we still don't have the scope of, say *The Voice*. We're pretty sure there's someone even bigger than that, but who knows?

"Wanna watch?" Alex is already buzzing downward, and I follow, checking Anna's place in line one more time before slipping through the men's room door just before it swings shut.

I love the sounds of sex—the unzipping, the fumbling, the moans and the gasps. Just watching makes my whole being vibrate. Alex notices as we perch on top of the stall, seeing the woman lift her skirt and bend over, offering the rounded flesh of her behind to the man. Look at the thing he's got to put in her! It's bigger than I am!

"Which would you rather have, do you think?" Alex gives me a nudge. "The hard thing or the soft thing?"

"It's a penis," I correct him, watching the man slide it into the woman's smooth opening. I have to really lean in to get a good angle, but I manage. "Or a vagina...although they have lots of different names for them, you know...cock...pussy..." Just saying the words gives me a sort of heat.

"I'd want a penis," Alex decides. "Almost as good as a sword. Or a wand."

We've never had wands, just so you know—another one of the many misnomers about fairies. Alex watches too much Disney.

"I think I'd want...a pussy." Our corporeal bodies are small and hairless, completely smooth and rounded. Between my legs, there is nothing but a little mound of flesh, no cleft. What would it be like, I wonder, watching the woman's face as she reaches between her legs and rubs herself there. The looks on their faces tell me almost everything I want to know.

Almost.

"Hey, then I could do that to you!" Alex gives me another nudge.

"So what's your assignment?" I have to change the subject. The moans are growing louder, the sounds of slapping flesh echos in the tiled room. It's hard to concentrate on anything else.

"He's outside." Alex stretches and flies straight upward, his wings buzzing noisily. Too high for human ears to hear, of course, although a few of them have felt the brush of a fairy's wings on occasion. "Come on."

I glance down to see the man pulling his cock out, the woman turning around and pumping it into her hand. Thick, white spurts of liquid surge onto her tongue, and I can't help but wonder what it might taste like before Alex is pulling me after him.

"Wait here." Alex is off, and I sit on the candy cane perch and make sure Anna is still in line. She is, but they're getting close to the Santa Promised Land.

A man is practically running for the bathroom, and I realize Alex has made him ill. I try to be as kind as I can, doing what needs to be done. Some of us are just too vindictive. The man straight-arms the men's room door, and practically runs into his wife, still tucking her blouse into her skirt, and the man behind her, buckling his belt.

"Karen? What are you doing here?" The man looks between his wife and her lover. This is that fateful moment. I'd know it anywhere.

"That was mean," I whisper to Alex as I flit by. "Didn't he suffer enough?" I don't look back as I head off toward Anna and the kids. It's almost time.

The kids get their pictures taken. The baby is great, but David screams in terror the whole time. Not that I blame him. The fat man in the red suit is enough to give anyone nightmares. Then it's off to home. Anna is a widow, doing the whole single-mom thing, and I don't envy her. I give the kids little pushes, helping them calm down and get settled in their car seats. Kids can see us, sometimes, but these two can't, thank goodness.

I settle myself on the dash and get to work.

"Ma'am?" Yeah, that guy in the pickup, rolling down his window and calling to Anna? That was me. "Your tire is going flat on this side."

"Oh! Thank you!" Anna gives him a wave.

Now she's off to find the gas station. Checking the time, I realize it's just a little too soon, so the first one I nudge her towards has an air pump—but the coin slot has been jammed for months. That kills about ten minutes, because she doesn't have quarters to begin with and, thanks to me, the station doesn't have any either, so she has to drive down the street to the Subway to cash out a dollar for four of them. Of course, when she gets back to the pump, that's when she realizes it's was jammed.

Okay, so I said I tried to be as kind as I could. Sometimes you just gotta do what you gotta do! Because the next gas station I nudge her towards doesn't have any air pump at all. It's just a vacuum she thought was a pump. By this time, she's practically in tears, and yeah, okay, I feel a little bad, but trust me, I know what I'm doing.

I nudge her toward a third station, half a mile down the street. This one has an air pump, but it's out of order. Little white sign taped over the coin slot. Perfect. She's swearing, now, and little David in the backseat decides to mimic her. "Shit, shit, shit!"

Ahhh, here we are! She pulls up behind a black Saturn and gets out to wait for the air pump. She's thinking about her husband, who was killed in Iraq, how he always used to take care of things like checking the oil and filling the tires.

When the man in the Saturn goes to put the air hose back on the coil, and their eyes meet...see! Look, there it is! That's a fateful moment if I ever saw one! Sometimes my job is pretty good, for all the waiting around I do. See the smile she just gave him? She hasn't smiled like that at a man in years!

I'm getting that funny feeling in my middle again, just watching them. I hope *The Voice* doesn't send a call any time soon. I'd like to see how this one turns out!

* * * *

We don't sleep, you know. Fairies, I mean. We don't eat, either, in any traditional sense, although we do kind of rejuvenate ourselves at our spring revival, but that's a whole other story. Anyway, being up at four in the morning is nothing for us. We're up all the time. Fateful moments don't just happen during the day, you know. In fact, quite a lot of them happen just after the bars close, if you know what I mean. Busy time of "day" for us, between two and three in the morning, and during the holidays, it's ten times worse.

The good news is, I don't have to avert any accidents for drunks or their possible victims tonight. *The Voice* has sent me somewhere else. I was loathe to leave Anna and her new Beau. No, that's not a euphemism, that's his name—Beau. The way they were looking at each other, I thought for sure, if I just hung around a little longer, I'd get to see...well, anyway, I didn't.

It's four in the morning, and Henry McCormick is snoring in his bed, while his wife, Irene, is sleeping soundly in her own bed across the hall. They haven't slept in the same bed in five years, since the last kid moved out to college. I've pretty much done everything I can to amuse myself tonight, including freaking out the family dog, at least until he started barking so wildly he threatened to wake the whole house. I tried the TV, but can you believe these people don't have cable? There's absolutely nothing on regular TV at four a.m.

Henry's alarm is due to go off at four-thirty, and I could just turn it off. It would be that simple, except Irene McCormick has an internal clock that wakes her up at five, and she's bound to notice her husband isn't up and about. That still wouldn't kill enough time. I check on Henry. He's snoring loudly, his arm thrown over his head. The sheet he's got pulled over him is tented in the groin area and I settle myself gently down on the tip of his cock, chin in hand, thinking. It's a little wet on the sheet where I'm sitting and I wiggle myself there, hearing him groan. Can he feel me in his sleep? I wonder. The thought makes me shiver.

I'm still sitting there, just thinking, when Henry shifts in his sleep, snorts, and reaches for his cock. He nearly catches me, too, when he wraps his hand around the shaft, and I yelp, flying toward the ceiling just in time! He starts moving his hand up and down under the sheet, his breath coming faster in the dark. Fascinated, I float downward, giving him a little push to pull the sheet off so I can see.

"Oh God, Irene," he whispers. "Suck it, yeah!"

That decides me. It isn't gonna be easy, but I'm determined. It's actually a little easier because Irene is still sleeping, curled up and clutching her pillow. I concentrate hard, closing my eyes tight, my whole body vibrating with my effort to give her a "push." I can hear Henry pumping faster, groaning softly. For a while, I'm sure I won't be successful, and then I hear the toilet flush across the hall.

The door snicks open, and there's Irene in a white nightgown like a ghost in the doorway. She's hearing what I'm hearing, the sound of Henry masturbating and calling her name. I perch myself on the headboard, watching her creep silently across the carpet in bare feet, stopping next to the bed.

“Oh yeah, suck it, Irene!” Henry is thrusting up into his own hand, and his eyes fly open in the dark when he feels his wife’s mouth sliding down over the head of his cock.

“Oh my God! Irene!”

“Shhhhhh...” She takes him all the way into her throat and he groans. It isn’t long before he’s grabbing her hair and thrusting up hard with gasping little grunts.

“Fuck!” His hand squeezes her breast, shoving her down onto his cock. “I’m gonna come!”

I lean forward on my perch, wanting to watch, but to my surprise, Irene is swallowing and swallowing, and I don’t get to see a thing until she’s licking her lips and looking up at him. Damn! That didn’t kill nearly enough time.

I’m about to give her another little push, when she says, “I think it’s my turn, big guy.” And Henry is on her like a shot, rolling her over on the bed and lifting her nightgown, sinking his face between her legs, forcing his tongue between that fuzzy, fleshy cleft.

I guess I didn’t have to worry about time. The sun is coming up, and Henry is coming again, this time buried up inside that pink hole as Irene rocks on top of him, before either of them even think about the time. I watch it all from my perch, and find I have my hand pressed over the sexless mound between my legs when Irene gasps out, “It’s after six!”

“Shit, I’m late!” Henry reaches for the phone, still panting, and dials work. There’s no answer, of course.

“I’ll get your lunch ready.” It’s something Irene hasn’t done in years. She’s doing a lot of things today she hasn’t done in years, and the thought makes her smile.

Wrapping herself in a robe, she sets off to the kitchen, turning on the little countertop TV and humming as she takes out the bread and lunchmeat.

“Henry!” Irene’s scream brings him out of the shower, still wrapped in a towel. I’m perched on top of the TV, but neither of them sees me, their stunned faces staring at the screen.

“I would have been at work—” Henry states the obvious as they watch the factory, whose gates had opened for him every morning at six for the past fifteen years, blazing in the early morning light, thick black smoke wafting through the air above what’s left of the building after the explosion.

I give a satisfied sigh, thinking I might go back and check on Anna and Beau, when *The Voice* sends another call. No rest for the weary... off I go!

Chapter Three

I sit perched on the edge of the tub, watching the woman bathe. We don't do that, either, we fairies. We can swim, if we have to, but we're like cats in the water for the most part. And our wings take forever to dry. Still, she makes it look pleasurable. Look at the steam rising from the water's surface, where little bubbles pop over her pale skin as she shifts and sighs in the water! Almost makes me want to wade in...

"Maya?" A knock on the door makes me jump and fly high enough to nearly hit the shower curtain rod. "I'm home."

The woman smiles, her eyes still closed. "I'll be out in a minute!"

Her fingers trail over her breasts and then she cups them, feeling their weight. I perch on the edge of the tub again, careful to find a dry spot, watching one of her hands move down between her legs, parting the flesh there. That feeling in my belly begins again as she sighs and lets her knees fall open, giving me a full view of her sex. The hair there is dark and curly and opens to reveal a deep pink blush inside.

"Mmmmm yes..." Maya's fingers move in fast circles at the top of her cleft, rubbing there. I want a closer look and fly in, hovering over her mound. I've never seen one so close up, and although the water obscures my view somewhat, I can see the fleshy pink folds opening up to reveal the dark space at the bottom of her slit. *That's where he puts it.* It's a startling discovery.

"Oh yes, yes!" Maya whimpers, her fingers confirming my suspicions as she slips them deep inside. Her other hand is rubbing the little bud at the top. *The clitoris.* What must it feel like, I wonder, hovering ever closer, thankful she's lifting her hips, giving me

a fuller view. She's rocking and panting, as if this is all some great effort, rubbing herself like this. "Oh now!"

The woman's hips shoot straight up as she arches, her whole body quivering, knocking me back into the tile wall. Dizzy and unable to catch myself, I slide down the slippery surface like it's a slide, straight into the water below! I'm drowning!

"Maya?" There's another knock. Panicked, I come up sputtering, dragging myself over the side, clawing my way across the bath mat on the floor.

"I'm coming!" The woman gasps. *Ha. I guess so!* Damn, she's getting out, and my wings are soaked! I crawl out of her way, reaching behind me to wring my wings out as best I can. Great. Just great! It's going to take all day for these to completely dry! Good thing we can fly with wet wings. We can't fly *well*, but we can still fly.

"Rick?" Maya is pulling on a robe, and for a moment, she reminds me of someone I've seen recently. I can't put my finger on it. "Is Drew here?"

Drew is her brother. That much I know. I follow as best I can, rubbing myself against her discarded towel like some wet dog as she gets dressed.

"Maya, Drew's here!" It's her husband, Rick, calling up the stairs. That's my cue. How in the heck am I going to manage all of this without full use of my wings, I'd like to know!? I flop down the stairs after her, catching one of my wet and drooping wings underfoot and toppling down to the bottom with a thud. Ow!

"Drew!"

"Hey, baby sister, you ready?"

I yelp as a tennis shoe comes down on my right wing, pressing me to the floor. I don't have any feeling in them, really—they're kind of like hair or fingernails for you

humans—but I'm now trapped under someone's foot and am pretty sure I'm going to get trampled any minute now!

"This is the best Christmas present ever! Let's go!"

Ahh, there we go, I'm free! I move my wings, spreading them, attempting take-off. Ha! Not only are my wings still too wet, now I'm tangled in the laces of this enormous shoe!

"Oh hang on, Drew. Your shoe's untied."

Huge hands come down toward me, fingers like sausages rolling me from side to side as he struggles with the laces. Finally, I topple backwards, free again. I brush myself off with a sigh, finally looking up and find myself staring up into the face of the most beautiful human I've ever seen in my life.

He can see me!

The panic is a hot, bright streak through me as I struggle to stand. He's looking right at me, his eyes a little wide, his mouth curled into a small, curious smile. I'm sure of it. He can see me! I try to fly, but my wings won't work. Still too wet.

"You ready?" Maya opens the front door.

"You guys have fun!" her husband calls from somewhere in the house, but I can't take my eyes off the huge dark ones pinning me to the floor.

"Yeah, sure," the man says, standing. *He's still looking right at me!* "Let's go."

Maya goes out the door and before I know it, there's a huge hand lifting me into the air and sliding me into the soft, silky lining of a pocket!

"So is this guy as good as you?" Maya is starting the car. I'm afraid of being crushed, but the man seems very careful, even avoiding me when he fastens his seatbelt.

"No one is good as me." Oh, his voice! It's so deep and bright at the same time. A finger slips into the pocket, searching, finding my head. He pets me...*he's petting me!* *What am I, now, a dog? Is he going to take me home and put me in a mayonnaise jar with holes in the lid?* Furious, I sink my teeth into his finger and taste blood. "Eep!"

"Everything all right?"

"Fine!" The finger is gone. "Just caught myself on something in my pocket. Staple or tack or...something."

"I'm scared, Drew." The woman's voice is trembling slightly, and I remember suddenly why I'm here. I have a job to do! Wet wings or not, I need to get it done. "Do you think he can really tell me where she is?"

"Don't be scared." He's reassuring her and I'm peeking out of his pocket, trying to see how close we are. "And I don't know...I hope so."

"I've never been to a psychic...I mean, besides you..."

"I don't count." His laugh! Startled, I glance up, straining to see his face. That smile! "I'm family."

"Well...adopted family..." Maya reaches over and squeezes his hand.

"Family's family." He squeezes her hand back. "Up here on the left."

Almost there. I give her a little "push," and the car turns right, heading down a side street.

"Uh, Maya?"

"I know, I just...need to stop to pick up a prescription."

"Now!?"

"I'll be right back." The car door closes behind her.

The fingers dig into the pocket again, pinching me gently and pulling me out into the light. "Well, little one...we're alone at last..."

No doubt about it, now. If he's talking to me, he can obviously see me. "You need to let me go."

"I won't keep you." He holds me up in his palm and I shake my wings, giving another attempt to fly. Still too wet! "What are you doing here?"

"Your sister." I nod toward where she had disappeared into the drug store. "She's about to find her birth mother."

His eyes widen, and then he smiles. *That smile!* I wave my wings, willing them to dry faster.

"Thank you, little one..." I think I can see his tears!

Rolling my eyes, I shake the water off my wings and am satisfied to see him wince. "My name is Sam. And it's just my job."

"I know." He is cocking his head back and forth, like he's studying me. "I know what you do."

Frowning, I stand up on his palm, pulling the edges of my wings up high. "Most humans don't know...can't see us."

Drew nods, his eyes smiling at me. "I'm a little different than...most humans."

"Will you let me go, now, please?" My wings are buzzing slightly, and I can feel them, almost ready. A few more minutes and I'll be able to fly.

"Yes." Drew rolls down the window, and Maya is practically running toward the car, skidding into the side and hanging onto the lip of the open window.

"Oh my God, Drew!" She waves a piece of paper in his face. "You're not going to believe this!" She goes on, telling him about the woman she met inside, the conversation about birth mothers, the unbelievable coincidence...but he's looking at me, still standing in his palm, that same smile on his face.

"I believe you." He's almost laughing at her enthusiasm. "Get in the car before you freeze!"

"What are you doing?" she asks suddenly, noticing his palm out, and of course, she can't see me standing in it. I strain hard, getting my wings to work, and hover above Drew's hand. He drops it to his lap, looking at me.

"So who is she?" he asks as she slides into the driver's side.

"Her name is Irene McCormick," Maya's voice is hoarse and coming in gasps. "She lives in town, Drew! Right here in town!"

The startled look on my face must be obvious. The Voice had instructed me to bring her here, but I had no idea her birth mother was the same woman whose husband I'd saved from the factory fire the day before. Drew cocks his head at me, and we look at each other for a moment longer. I feel like I could drown in those eyes. I've never had human eyes on me, never like this.

"Roll up that window, it's freezing!" Maya shivers.

"Thank you," he mouths, giving me an imperceptible nod.

"You're welcome." I flit out the window and into the night.

Chapter Four

"Alex, have you ever had a human see you?"

"Hell no... I sure hope this one can't!" This time it's the woman, Karen, the one who'd been discovered with her lover in the men's room. She's loading up the counter at Neiman Marcus. We can watch her from our perch up on the candy cane.

"Have you?" I press. It's been a slow day. *The Voice* has been oddly quiet for me since the other night when I was 'discovered' by the man. *Drew*. Okay, I admit it. I can't stop thinking about him. I think it's just I've never really been seen by a human before, like that. Kids, sure, dogs sometimes...but never like that.

"There are people who can see us." Alex shrugs. "I haven't run into any myself, but I know they exist. They're just really rare. Most of them are either what the humans call crazy...or just plain weird. Why do you ask?"

The woman at the counter is handing over her credit card to pay for the boatload of stuff she's buying. How's she going to get all of that back to her car?

"What do you mean, crazy or weird?"

Alex gives me a look. "You know...crazy, cuckoo, loony, the ones they lock up in little rubber rooms...or the weird ones, like people who can see the future, psychics, that sort...and only the real ones, not the fakes."

Now it makes sense! Drew's sister had mentioned him being a psychic. He must be one of the real ones.

"So why do you ask?" Alex nudges me, and I glance down at the woman, who is pulling a different card out of her wallet and handing it to the cashier.

"Someone saw me." I bite my lip at the memory. I can still feel the kind of heated tingle that went through me in that moment. I've watched humans throughout my whole existence...what made this one so different? I could only imagine it was the fact he could see me. "A man...he...seemed to know what I was, what we do."

"Ha, serves you right!" Alex puts chin in hand and leans an elbow on a knee.

I glower. "What's that supposed to mean?"

"Not you..." Alex points to the woman at the counter. "Her."

Watching, I see her handing over yet another little plastic card to the cashier. Her face is flushed, her eyes wide, confused, even a little scared.

"Karma, baby." Alex grins, head shaking. "Ain't it a bitch?"

I can hear the woman now, her voice growing louder, panicked. "That's not possible! I have ten thousand dollars on this card!"

"Did you do that?" I watch as the woman slings her purse over her shoulder and walks stiffly out of the store.

"Nope, that wasn't me." Alex flies off and I follow. We're going after her. She's got a cell phone in her hand now, and she's talking frantically to someone. "So what about this guy who saw you? Did he do anything? Say anything?"

I shrug. "He...put me in his pocket."

Alex's eyes widen. "Was he going to try to keep you?"

"I don't know." We're almost to the woman's car now. It's snowing pretty hard and I have to keep my wings moving to keep them from getting wet. "But he didn't. I guess he just wanted to talk to me?"

"He talked to you?" Alex makes a beeline for the BMW as soon as the woman opens her door. I follow, sitting on the dash.

"He... thanked me..." I can still see Drew's face, the way he cocked his head and smiled when he looked at me.

"James! It's me!" The woman is crying, and it's the first time I really notice. She's got the phone crooked as she starts the car. "He's cancelled my credit cards, and I just called the bank—there's nothing in my account! Nothing! Call me. Please. As soon as you get this message."

"Did you do that?" I ask Alex, grabbing on to the edge of the dash as the woman backs quickly out of the parking space.

"Wasn't me." Alex shrugs. "So what did this guy thank you for?"

I explain what happened the other night, my assignment and its impact on Drew. Alex listens, nodding, and then grins at me.

"You've got a crush."

Rolling my eyes, I snort. "Shut up. I do not."

"Hang on." Alex closes his eyes. The woman has stopped her car at the side of the road and she's got her head resting on her steering wheel, her eyes closed, too. Suddenly, her head comes up, and she pulls out into traffic in a hurry. "Now, that was me."

"Where are we going?"

Alex waves his hand. "Doesn't matter. Listen, I've got an idea."

Leaning in toward me, eyes bright, almost mischievous—Alex's ideas are never a good thing. The last one got us both in big trouble with *The Voice*, and I spent two months aligning the fate of earthworms.

"Never mind!" I grip the dashboard again as the woman makes a sharp right, the tires squealing on the wet pavement. "Pretend I didn't say anything."

"Christmas is next week..." Alex reminds me. "You get one request."

I frown, crossing my arms and looking out the window. Every year on what you humans call Christmas Eve, we're allowed to ask one thing of *The Voice* for ourselves. Fairies don't need much. We usually ask for some time off, since we don't get any breaks the rest of the year, aside from the revival. I've never really asked for anything personal before.

"What are you suggesting?"

The woman pulls her car up to an enormous gate and rolls down her window to punch in some numbers on a keypad. The gate swings slowly open and she noses the BMW's hood forward until the car is clear and she can speed up again along the asphalt drive.

"You know you want to." Alex grins. "I've seen the way you watch them. Think about it. One night as a human. You said you wanted to be a girl...so you're a girl, he's a guy..."

Jaw dropped, I feel a slow, heated tingle at the thought—I can't say it hasn't occurred to me, that I haven't thought about it...even fantasized a little. But to ask *The Voice* for something so...?!

The woman is getting out of the car, and Alex follows. I barely make it out before she swings the door shut. The house...feh! This isn't a house, it's a palace! Who lives here? I wonder. Is this her house? Must be—she's taking out a key to open the door.

"James?" The woman's voice is trembling slightly as she glances around the foyer. The ceiling is high, an enormous chandelier hanging there. Alex flies up and perches on one of the arms, watching. It's a good vantage point, I think, as I settle in to watch, too.

"Karen!" Ah, there he is, the guy from the men's room the other day—her lover, not her husband. "What are you doing here?"

She's crying, reaching for him, clinging to his shirt. He frowns over her head, patting her back as she sobs. "I left you a message...he's taken everything...he's going to divorce me..."

"You play, you pay." Alex sighs, swinging his legs and leaning forward.

Not always, I think, frowning. Fate was often cruel and seemed to make no sense at all. Even when we fairies get a bigger picture, it usually isn't big enough. Someone always seems to be on the bottom, when someone else is on top, like some big wheel of fortune that just keeps spinning.

Speaking of top and bottom, the woman is kissing him, her hand rubbing between his legs. He's saying something, but I can't hear him. I think he's trying to tell her 'no,' but she isn't listening. Instead, she's sinking to the floor, unzipping his pants and taking out his cock. It's only half the size it was the other day, I notice, but when she puts it into her mouth, it seems to grow.

She's got her hand up under her skirt, and I know she must be rubbing herself. It makes me remember watching the woman in the tub, and then being seen by her brother...

Drew.

Why am I so fascinated by this part of being human? I wonder. Alex is as bored as ever, waiting for it to be over, but me, I'm on the edge of my seat, feeling warm and flushed as I watch them fumble their way over to the huge spiral staircase.

"Karen, please...we—" The man can't speak because she's kissing him, pushing him back onto the stairs and kneeling between his legs again to take him into her mouth. The look on his face is pure bliss, and I can tell he's given in. His hands are working on her blouse, pulling it out of her skirt so he can unhook her bra and free her breasts.

She moans around his cock as he fingers her nipples, sucking him faster, making wet, sloppy noises. The harder she sucks him, the more he kneads her flesh in his hands, and this seems to make her even more eager. It's like some upward spiral and watching makes me dizzy.

"Lick me," she purrs, pulling her skirt up and putting a high heel on either side of him on the stairs.

He's rubbing her pussy through her panties and then he pulls them aside, burying his face between her legs. I feel a deep ache in my belly, low and throbbing, like I want something, but I don't know what it is, and the image that keeps coming back to me is that man's eyes, the way he looked at me. I got that same tingly kind of feeling then, too...

She's holding onto the railing, her head going back, her hips rocking as he works his tongue and fingers into her flesh. Her other hand is cupping her breast, tugging at her nipple, and she puts one of her legs up over his shoulder and I can't even see his face anymore. But I can hear him, the soft noises of her wetness and his tongue.

"Look at you," Alex whispers, like they can hear us. "You want it so bad you're trembling all over..."

It's true, but I refuse to look at him. Besides, I want to watch...

She's coming, her face caught in that twisted look between pleasure and pain, and then she's sliding down his body, jerking his cock in her hand and easing him into her pussy. I can't decide which I like better—the look on a man's face when he first slides into that tight, hot tunnel...or the look on his face when he comes.

I still can't decide, as they rock together on the stairs, his hands gripping her ass where her black panties are riding up the crack. She hasn't taken them off, just pulled them aside. He's thrusting up hard, grunting, and she grabs onto the railing for balance with one hand, lifting her blouse with the other so he can suck one of her nipples into his mouth.

They don't speak to each other, but it feels like they are—the whole room feels charged with whatever language it is they're communicating with—the wet slap of their bodies, the groans and grunts and sighs, they say it all. Faster and harder, more and more, the spiral just keeps spinning up toward some impossible peak.

"All you have to do is ask." Alex is whispering, close, tempting me. "You know you want to..."

"Shhh..." I wave at him, watching as the man shoves himself up inside of her with one great, tremendous thrust, his body stiff and quivering like an arrow just shot from a bow. There's that look on his face, the one that makes me feel weak just to see it. She collapses onto him, panting, and their bodies begin the slow unfolding which seems to happen after sex.

"Sir, you have a call on your cell—" The voice precedes the figure walking into the room by a moment, and the uniformed man stops in the doorway, eyes wide.

"Oh...I'm...so sorry..."

"It's okay, Joe!" The man pushes the woman off his lap. She fumbles with her clothes, tugging her skirt down, pulling her blouse together to cover herself. "I'll take it."

The uniformed man hands the phone over, and James puts it to his ear. "Yes?"

"Hey!" I nudge Alex, pointing. "That's Joe! I was assigned to him just the other day! He saved a little kid on his way to a job interview..."

James is still zipping up his pants, the phone crooked against his ear. Karen turns her back, hooks her bra, and begins tucking her blouse into her skirt.

"That's great, honey!" James exclaims. "Listen, I'm gonna give the phone back to Joe, you give him all your flight information and we'll pick you up!"

Karen's eyes are wide and she sits on the stairs, looking between the two men.

"Oh, sorry...I just hired him. Lucas quit and I needed someone fast. Don't worry, he came highly recommended..."

Alex leans over, grinning, and says, "That was me."

Maybe *The Voice* knows what it's doing after all, I think, as Joe takes the phone and begins nodding and writing in a notepad he's removed from his vest pocket.

"James—" Karen's voice pleads. She's clutching at him again, but his eyes are sad.

"I tried to tell you, but you didn't give me a chance." He holds her wrists and presses them down to her sides. "My wife is coming home early, for Christmas. I'm sorry..."

The woman's face twists and then falls. She doesn't say anything, she just runs out the huge front door, leaving it open. I fly down and see her fumbling with the door handle of the car, tears streaming down her face.

"Well, my work here is done." Alex sighs, joining me as we fly out into the still-falling snow. "So... tell me...what are you going to ask for?"

I roll my eyes and flit upward. "World peace." I stick my tongue out and ignore the laughter. "See you around, Alex."

The Voice has finally sent me another call. Maybe burying myself in my work will keep my mind off...things.

Chapter Five

Cats are the worst. It's the wings. They love to play with the damned wings. I can't count how many times, out of nowhere, I've become some feline's personal play toy. You'd think I'd been rolling in catnip, the way they come after me!

One minute, I'm just sitting here minding my own business—okay, so I'm minding someone else's business—perched on the footboard and watching the show, and the next minute—*wham!* Now I'm rolling around on the bed with Anna and her new Beau, except they're having a good old time, and I'm trying to save myself from Fluffy's claws!

"Beau, put him out," Anna begs.

Brilliant idea! The damned cat's got my wing pinned and he's about to pounce on my head! I'm flopping like a landed fish and the cat's tail is swishing like mad when Beau grabs him by the scruff of the neck. Just in time! I stick my tongue out at the cat and shake off my wings while he hisses and spits and sails out the door.

"Where were we?" Beau climbs back into bed and dives under the covers, making Anna giggle wildly at first, until she begins to moan.

Damned comforter! I give her a little "push," and she kicks off the covers, revealing the spread of her hips under his hands and the swell of her breasts with their hard, dark nipples. His face is buried between her legs, and he's making those noises, like he's eating something sinfully delicious.

Anna is rolling her hips, her eyes closed, her fingers gripping his head, guiding his tongue. The cat's mewling on the other side of the door, but they're both oblivious, of course. I've got that funny feeling in my belly again, and I'm thinking about what Alex said the other day. I haven't gotten up the nerve to go back...to the man who could see

me. Okay, so I flew by his window and peeked in, but it was dark, and I couldn't see anything.

"Beau, yes, oh God!" She gasps and squirms, spreading her thighs wider and pressing up against his mouth in fast, rhythmic thrusts. Her head goes back and forth, side to side, and she's making this noise in her throat, not unlike the cat outside of the door. When her body stiffens and threatens to buck right out of his hands, he grips her ass, his mouth fastened tight between her legs, his eyes dark and full of lust as she shudders and quakes.

"Oh God, oh God, oh God," she breathes as he kisses his way up her belly. She clutches him tight, reaching between them to find his cock. I can't see well enough, now, and I float down toward the mattress, moving off to the side so I can watch them join together. She strokes him, squeezing, and I watch his face—that look of bliss as she slides him between her pussy lips, guiding him inside.

Their eyes meet, and there it is, that low communication, something passing between them, unsaid but completely understood. It hasn't even been long, a few weeks since they met, but they are deeply connected in this moment. Is it possible, I wonder, watching them move, their hips rocking in a slow-building rhythm. Is it possible to feel it so quickly, to have an instant feeling of euphoria with someone you hardly knew?

The cat's scratching at the door now, still mewling like mad, but they're kissing, completely oblivious to anything but one another, whispering things, urging each other on. His thrusts become deeper, faster, and her nails dig into the flesh of his back, making him arch into her.

“Don’t stop,” she moans. “Oh baby, please, I’m so close...”

Her words seem to spur him onward, driving him deep into her flesh, the look on his face caught somewhere between pleasure and pain. He looks as if he’s trying to hold onto something, to hold back, as she writhes underneath him.

“Please!” She pleads, her hand slipping between them and rubbing herself as they rock. “Oh, Beau, make me come!”

He groans, and I can see something in his face, a surrender, a giving into something bigger than him, bigger than both of them. Shuddering, he breathes her name, giving one final thrust. She gasps, arching up to meet him, and I see that look on her face, too, as they come together. It looks like such delicious agony, and I find myself moving in even closer, lost in the moment with them as they smile and kiss and rub their slick bellies together.

“Mommy!”

The door flies open and they quickly separate, covering themselves, as David leaps onto the bed, my second near-miss of the night. I fly quickly up, vacating the spot he situates himself into just in time to miss being squished under his little limbs.

“What is it, baby?” Anna’s eyes are apologizing to Beau as she snuggles him down between them, but Beau’s eyes are kind and understanding.

“I had a dream,” David says, only it comes out *‘dweam.’*

“What was it about, big guy?” Beau’s big hand ruffles his hair, and David looks askance at him for a moment.

“A fairy. “

Startled, I nearly fall off my perch on the footboard, trying to sense if the kid has any idea at all that I'm present. He doesn't seem to, but I can't be sure. Climbing over the edge of the footboard, I hover there, watching them between the slats.

"Like Tinkerbelle?" Anna smooths his dark hair away from his forehead. He's a sweet kid, great big brown eyes. Gonna grow up to be quite a heartbreaker, I think with a smile, watching him roll his eyes at his mother.

"No, a *real* fairy," he insists. Fairy is *faiwy* in David-speak. "She was pretty and she kissed me."

Beau chuckles. "Sounds like a good dream, kiddo."

"But she went away, and I was sad..." David's eyes are big as he looks between the two of them. "And then there was a scary monster who wanted to eat my eyes!"

The grown-ups' eyes meet as they both try not to smile. "It was just a dream, baby." Anna kisses the top of his head. "Let's get you back to bed."

He rests his head on her shoulder as she carries him out of the room and I see Beau, leaning up on his elbow to watch her retreating form, his eyes soft and full of warmth. I'm pretty sure David hasn't seen me, although he might sense my presence. That feels good to me somehow, like some sort of connection.

By the time Anna snuggles back in, the banished cat curling up at the foot of their bed, I've slipped out of the room to peek in on David. He's sleeping, his thumb tucked into his little rosebud mouth. My assignment doesn't start until the morning and I decide to spend the night in a cat-free zone, curling up on the boy's pillow to watch him sleep.

Chapter Six

“Good morning, David!”

I can’t believe it! It’s Drew—and he’s looking right at me! I’m hovering over David’s shoulder as he bounds into the little preschool classroom but I stop short the minute I’m seen.

“I dreamed about a fairy!” David sits at a table and slaps a white piece of paper down there.

“I bet you did.” Drew smiles right at me as I fly quickly into the corner of the room, near the window.

“I’ll draw her for you!” David waves impatiently at his mother as she kisses him goodbye, takes his coat and wishes him a good day. The baby wiggles in a carrier on her back, grinning and grabbing her hair.

Drew winks at Anna, giving her a smile. “I can’t wait to see it, David. Good morning, Chloe.”

A young girl sucks on a long strand of blonde hair, edging her way around the table to look at what David is drawing. She stands there, quiet, watching the picture take shape. Drew leaves them as more children filter in and wanders over toward the window where I’m trying to hide behind the blinds.

“Hi there, Sam...” His voice is almost a whisper. “I thought I might see you again.”

I shrug, watching the door. The woman I’m waiting for should be here any moment now, and then I can disappear. His eyes on me feel like a heat and it’s hard to look at him...and hard not to.

"You don't have to be afraid," he murmurs, taking a seat at the large desk at the back of the room. "Come on down... I won't hurt you."

I roll my eyes, crossing my arms, trying to appear nonchalant. "I'm not afraid."

"Then come on down here." He pats the surface of the desk in front of him, leaning back in his chair and looking over his shoulder at me.

Cautiously, I let myself settle gently onto the desk in front of him. It's so strange, to have human eyes looking right at me.

"Who are you here for today?" He glances around to make sure no one is watching him. It would look, of course, like he was talking to himself, if someone was, but no one appears to be paying attention as they hang up coats and change from boots to sneakers.

"It's not human business." I sniff, turning my back to him, looking at the doorway again. I can almost feel his eyes on me. His interest is intoxicating.

He chuckles, and I feel his finger poking me gently in the back. "I told you...I'm not like most humans."

Glancing back at him, I frown. He sure seems to know a lot about fairies and what we do! "You'll see."

Ah, there she is! The woman helps her daughter out of her coat, hanging it on a hook and shooing her into the crowd of kids. She's making her way toward Drew's desk, thanks to me.

"Oh, Mr. Sullivan!" She waves her diamond-covered fingers. "I wondered..." She leans in now, her voice dropping conspiratorially. "I have a Christmas dinner to donate...turkey and a ham, all the fixins'...do you happen to know a family?"

Drew smiles, looking at me. "I have a feeling I'm going to."

"Is that a yes?" She cocks her head at him, puzzled.

He nods, standing, his finger brushing my wings lightly. "Yes. I'm sure of it."

"Wonderful!" she exclaims. "It's in the car. I was going to donate it to the church, but I just...had a feeling you might know someone."

"Thank you." He gives her a wink. "You'll make some family very happy this holiday."

She beams, giving him a waggling finger wave as she heads toward the door. "I'll have my driver bring it in!"

"So, who is it?" Drew sits again and looks at me.

I nod toward David, realizing fate seems to be running itself, and I don't even have to do a thing. "Go ask him."

"David?" He raises his eyebrows at me, but steps around the desk and goes to squat down beside the little brown-eyed boy, who is still drawing his fairy dream-vision. "Hey guy... that's a great picture."

"Thanks," David says, only it comes out, 'Sanks.' "Chloe likes it. I'm going to give it to her when I'm done."

Drew smiles at him and then at me. I'm sitting on the edge of his desk, knees up, chin in hand, watching it all play out, like dominos falling in a line.

"You like Chloe, huh?" Drew winks at him.

David shrugs. "She's nice. I feel bad for her, Mr. Drew. Her daddy lost his job and she says Santa isn't going to come to her house." Chloe is sitting at another table, quietly putting together a puzzle and still sucking on that long strand of hair.

“Oh I don’t know.” Drew looks at me, as if I’m the one his words were meant for.
“Santa is magic after all. Maybe he’ll hear her Christmas wish.”

David studied his face carefully. “Really?”

Drew’s eyes are still on me, and I squirm a little on the desk. “He knows just what people need, Santa does. And he has all of his little elves to help make those Christmas wishes come true.”

“Chloe, you forgot your mittens!” Chloe’s mother tucks mittens into the pocket of the girl’s coat and I’m surprised, although I shouldn’t be, that it’s Lynn, Joe’s wife, who had been so worried a few weeks ago about her husband not having a job this Christmas. Lynn waves to her daughter, who gives her a wan smile and waves back as her mother heads out the door. It looks as if the family is going to have Christmas dinner, at any rate.

“You know, David...” Drew’s voice drops a little, but not too low I can’t hear him.
“Another name for an elf... is a fairy...?”

“Really?” David looks at his picture.

“And sometimes, I think Santa’s elves—or fairies—work all year round, giving gifts to the people who need them.” Drew’s eyes met mine. “Isn’t that a nice thought?”

David nods, coloring his fairy’s hair yellow. “I like fairies.”

“Excuse me.” We all look up at the sound of the voice, seeing the man in the uniform and cap standing there with a huge box of food. “Where should I put this?”

Again, I shouldn’t be surprised, considering what I do for a living, but there’s Joe, carrying out his new job, delivering a donated Christmas dinner which, unbeknownst to him, is going to end up on his very own holiday table.

“Right here on the desk, thanks.” Drew stands and points.

I slide out of the way as Joe sets the heavy box down. His daughter has spotted him and comes to give him a big hug. It's clear Drew has never met Chloe's father before, and his eyes widen as the dominos fall into place for him, too.

“Have a good holiday.” Joe gives his daughter another quick squeeze and waving before he heads out the door.

“You, too!” Drew returns the wave and turns back to look at me. His eyes hold a depth of knowing which calls to me, and I feel like I want to drown there. There's that funny feeling in my belly, again. There's something familiar about this moment, something so familiar...almost as if...

“Fate.” He says the word under his breath as he sits at his desk, putting his palm near me on the desk. “You never know just what's going to happen next, do you?”

“Sometimes.” I turn to face him fully, my wings fluttering slightly, brushing over his hand as I settle myself.

“Someone knows.” Drew puts his chin on his fist and contemplates me. “Who do you think *The Voice* is, Sam?”

I stare at him, everything inside of me going quiet. *How does he know about The Voice?*

His fingers brush my wings, a sweet caress, and he smiles. “Tell me, little one... what are you going to ask for this year?”

I stare at him, our eyes locked, something caught between us which seems very familiar to me. I gaze at him in breathless wonder...

How does he know?

* * * *

"I don't get how he knows so much about us," I whisper to Alex as we stand in line. Christmas Eve requisitions are usually handled easily enough, through regular communication with *The Voice*, but those fairies who have unusual or complicated requests have to get clearance through the F.A.B.—the Fey Advisory Board.

"Everything's gone so corporate," Alex sighs, ignoring my comment about Drew as the line edges around the corner of a cubicle. The F.A.B. has set up shop in a high-rise office and simply uses the facility after hours, when humans go home for the night. It's still decorated from the holiday party, funny tinsel garland hung with paperclips from the drop-ceiling tiles. Of course, this office has been empty since noon today, when everyone shut down their computers and went home to be with their families on Christmas Eve.

"Maybe I should just ask for a vacation." The door opens and another fairy goes in. "We could go to Hawaii again. That was fun."

Alex shoves me forward. "Yeah, those enormous bugs were a blast. Forget it. You're asking to be human for a day and that's final."

The fairy in the front of the line turns to us with wide eyes. "A human request? They don't grant those, you know."

"Shhh!" Alex frowns. "They do so!"

We all know fairy requests to become human aren't granted very often, and the odds are against me. Like I need to be reminded.

“Well, good luck to you, then.” The door opens again and the fairy disappears. We’re next. Well, I’m next. Alex is really just here for moral support—already having received approval for a vacation request. Australia’s nice this time of year.

“Go on!” Alex nudges me toward the open door. Inside, I face a line of fairies, six of them in a row perched on the edge of the large oak desk. This is the F.A.B. I’ve only ever had to consult with them once before, when I asked to have someone’s fate altered. We all go through it, getting so attached, wanting to change things for someone. They gave me two months off work that time, instead.

“Samariel Azuran...” The fairy on the end nods to me. “Your request has been reviewed and provisionally granted.”

I stare at them, open-mouthed.

Just like that?

Okay, seriously, I never thought they would say yes, not in a million years! I can’t believe it. I stare down the line of them, trying to find the reason on their faces. They almost never allow a fairy to turn human!

“Provisionally?” I gulp.

“You realize becoming mortal for any length of time leaves you subject to all the possible consequences, including the possibility of injury or death?”

Nodding, I say, “Yes.” Of course I know that. But what can happen in twenty-four hours? Never mind what I *want* to happen in that space of time. Remembering the image of Drew smiling at me makes me feel suddenly weak and dizzy.

“We are granting your request, but want to warn you—anything that happens while you are human will be irreversible and irrevocable. You will be subject to both the laws of the humans and those of the Fey.”

I nod again. Okay, I get it. I feel like I’m watching one of those human drug commercials, where they list all the possible side effects at the end.

“Do you have any questions for us, Sam?”

Hesitating, I shake my head, and then ask, “How does it work? Do I...transform? Will I...?”

The fairy on the end shows a glimmer of a smile and then waves at me, a dismissal, and I’m floating...it feels like floating, not like flying at all. *What’s happening to me?* I have time to wonder before the world goes dark all around me.

Chapter Seven

“Sam?”

The world feels far away, or I’m far away from the world, I’m not sure which. The voice is calling me, but it’s not *The Voice*...in fact, the gentle sort of presence of *The Voice* is gone altogether, and in its place is a strange, empty void.

“Sam? Are you okay?”

I feel a hand in mine, squeezing. “Alex?”

“No...” Lips brush my forehead. “It’s Drew.”

I open my eyes to him, looking down at me from above. Where am I? *Who* am I?

“They said yes.” The voice coming from my mouth startles me so much I touch my throat in wonder.

Drew chuckles. “I noticed. I don’t often come home to naked women sleeping on my couch.”

Naked? Woman? *Sleeping*? I feel something covering me, though, something light and soft. He must have covered me... I find myself wondering how it all happened. Why here? Did someone put me here? Did I just appear? Appear... what do I look like?

“Do I look like me?” I touch my face, feeling the softness of the skin there. “Do I...am I...?”

Drew’s eyes are on mine, those hot, dark eyes. “You’re beautiful.”

“Am I really human?” I feel my belly, flat and smooth, the skin taut, as I move my hand upward, encountering the swell of a breast. Startled, I move my hand downward, past my navel, pausing there in a moment in confusion—no fairy has ever had a navel!

Curious, I explore lower, encountering a wedge of wiry hair covering a soft mound of flesh. "I'm...a woman...!"

"Yes." Drew's eyes move over the form my body makes under the covering. "All woman, I'd say..."

Something warm rises in my cheeks, some sort of heat, and I'm not sure if it's my response to his words, or to finding the moist cleft between my legs, my finger parting the flesh there.

"The air... it's so cold..."

Drew pulls the blanket up to my chin. "It takes getting used to."

I shake my head, smiling. "Inside my body, I mean...when I..." Taking a deep breath, I feel my middle filling with coolness, and yet I exhale heat over my lips.

"Oh, breathing!" He laughs. "That's breathing."

"And there's a funny feeling here." I take his hand and press it between my bare breasts. "Do you hear it? I think I can hear it."

"That's your heart beating." His hand is warm and large under mine. I still feel so small next to him. I press his hand to the rhythmic beating there, and then slowly move it over the swell of my breast. His eyes meet mine, searching.

"I want this." I cup my flesh with his hand.

He nods, moving his hand from my breast to touch my cheek. "I know. Patience, little one."

Sitting, the blanket pooling in my lap, I frown at him. "You don't understand. I don't have a lot of time. How long have I slept?"

“It’s still Christmas Eve,” he assures me, brushing something soft and feathery from my forehead, and I realize it must be human hair. “We have time... I promise...”

“Oh!” My belly lurches and I put my hand down to still it. Something is gnawing there, tenacious, and I gasp. “Something’s inside me! It’s trying to get out! It hurts!”

Drew’s eyebrows raise and then he smiles. “You’re just hungry.”

“Hungry,” I repeat, incredulous. “This is hungry? I don’t like it.”

Smiling, he stands and holds out his hand. “Let’s go get you something to eat. I think you’ll like that.”

I recognize most of the things he takes out of the refrigerator. Alex and I have talked at length about the things humans eat and what it might be like to taste food.

“This is cheese.” He cuts off a yellow strip and holds it out to me. His eyes move down my naked body for a moment before skipping away again, searching through the pile of food on the counter. “You should probably get some protein in you to start with...”

Taste! What a marvelous thing this is! The texture changes in my mouth as the cheese almost melts over my tongue. Instead of quieting it, though, it makes the growling in my belly even more intense. I grab the hunk of yellow-orange stuff and the knife he used to cut it, determined to get more.

“Whoa, there!” He takes the knife from me, holding it high. “Sharp. Dangerous. Remember that.”

I shrug, taking a bite off the end of the whole block of cheese, moaning in pleasure at the sensation against my tongue. He watches me, amused, as I take another bite and then another, my mouth stuffed. The ache in my belly lessens every time I swallow.

“Okay, so you like cheese.” He laughs, picking up a round thing and beginning to remove its skin. “Let’s see if you like fruit.”

“What’s that?” I put the cheese down and reach for a similar round thing on the counter. It’s orange and cold and heavy in my hand. Drew grabs it just before I’m about to take a bite.

“You don’t eat that outer part.” He shows me the round globe, nude now, its white, stringy flesh showing inside. “Like this.” He pulls it apart, sectioning off a piece and holding it up to my mouth. “Open.” He slips a wedge of the fruit into my eager mouth, and I gasp when it bursts against my tongue, releasing sweetness and light.

“Ohhh more!” I reach for the rest, taking it from his hands and biting off another sweet wedge, chewing happily.

“Well, oranges are a hit,” he observes as I give up on sectioning off wedges and just bite into the fruit, the cold, delicious juice dripping down my chin. I close my eyes, sucking on the sweet flesh, moaning softly. I realize I sound like every woman I’ve ever heard having sex. If I’d known food was so good...!

“This is wonderful!” I lick at my fingers and the juice running down my hand and arm.

“Yes.” His eyes follow the juice dribbling down my throat toward my breasts. “It sure is...”

“Sticky!” I laugh, showing him how my fingers don’t want to part.

“How’s your belly?” He watches me suck the pads of my fingers, looking for more of that sweetness. “Better?”

I nod. “That ache is gone.”

“Good. Let’s get you clean, now.”

My eyes widen and I know exactly what he’s thinking. “No baths!”

I put up a huge protest, but he ends up dragging me into the bathroom and barricading the door while the tub is running.

“Sam, trust me,” he says as I pace back and forth, looking over my shoulder at the rising water. “You’ll like it.”

“Fairies hate water,” I remind him as he gently gathers my hair and puts it up on top of my head with some sort of clip.

“You’re not a fairy anymore.” His breath is warm against the back of my neck and then I feel his lips brushing there. It makes me shiver.

For the first time, I notice the mirror over the sink and step forward to take a look. My hair is long and yellow, just like in David’s picture, piled up in curls on top of my head now. I look the same and different all at once, my features rounder, but just as delicate. My eyes are blue and bright, my mouth a pink study in surprise.

“I told you.” Drew’s hands move over my shoulders and down my arms. “You’re beautiful.”

“Am I?” I feel his hands move to the curve of my waist, turning me toward the tub. “Please, I can’t get in there! My wings!” I stop, looking over my shoulder and glancing in the mirror. *My wings! They’re gone!* Just smooth pale flesh stretching over two nubs suggesting where they might once have been.

“In.” Drew directs me, and I step gingerly into the water. “Sit.”

I groan as I sink into the tub, my limbs relaxing the moment they touch the warmth. “This is nice!”

He smiles, rubbing soap over a cloth. "I thought you might like it."

"Ohhhh, Drew," I moan softly as he begins to rub the cloth over my skin.

"That's...so..." He cleans my chin and throat, but doesn't stop there. The wet cloth moves down my chest, trailing wet, soapy warmth over my breasts and belly. I don't want him to stop rubbing there, but he makes me lean forward so he can scrub my back.

"Stand." He rinses me, using cupfuls of water, before asking me to get out of the tub. The weight of what's happened is starting to hit me, and I can see it in his eyes, too, as he sits and pulls me between his knees, drying me gently with a towel.

"I want..." My voice trembles and I don't know how to make it stop. I've watched it happen so many times, and when I made the request, I was sure I knew just what I was doing, but now...

"You don't have to ask." He stands and pulls me into the circle of his arms, and the moment his mouth meets mine, I'm lost. There's never been anything in the world as good as the feeling of his lips parting, his tongue touching mine. His hands move slowly down to the small of my back, pressing my body against his, and the long, lean feel of him against my softness is intoxicating.

"More!" I murmur against his mouth, my hands curling into fists against the back of his shirt, pulling and tugging, trying to find some way to remove it without breaking contact.

"Bed." He pulls me with him, the shock of the cold air making me gasp as he tugs me through the door and into his bedroom. I reach for him, fitting my mouth to his,

wanting more of this kissing thing. He obliges, kissing me down onto the bed as he fumbles with the buttons on his shirt.

When his bare skin touches mine, I break the kiss, staring at him in wonder. Then I tear at his shirt, yanking it off, and tug in frustration at his trousers. I feel him chuckling as he kisses my throat—oh that’s delightful! The little shivery sensations it sends through me make my breath come faster.

“Easy.” He takes my eager hands in his and presses them above my head, his mouth feathering kisses around mine. “Let me...okay?”

I nod. I don’t know what I’m doing anyway... I might as well... *Oh for the love of everything magical, what is he doing!?* His mouth leaves wet trails down over my breasts. I stare at him, fascinated, as he takes the nipple between his lips, sucking gently. Whimpering, I can’t help but arch my back at the sensation. And I thought *kissing* felt good!

“Please!” I grab his head, the body I’m in squirming and wiggling and writhing all on its own, trying to get more or trying to get away, I’m not sure which. “Oh please!”

His mouth is soft but relentless, licking and flicking over the hardening surface of my nipple. It is tiny and pink and appears even smaller as it hardens under his tongue, the skin around it pursing and pressing it upward, as if asking for more. When his hand moves down my belly, I jump, my eyes widening. There’s some sort of tension between my legs, an ache, a little like my heartbeat, which is coming faster in my ears.

“What—?” I can’t finish the sentence. I can’t think let alone speak. His fingers rub over the fuzzy mound between my thighs, parting the wet flesh. That ache seems to

grow, and I'm wiggling again, his mouth still working on my breast, his fingers slipping in between that slippery seam.

"Oh!" The word is surprised out of my throat as he begins to make circles with his finger over and over. I know what the spot is, I know its name and location, but even knowing the way I've seen women respond when it's touched, I never expected this! I'm moaning and spreading my legs and grinding up against his hand like I can't control myself—and I can't!

He kisses his way down, down, past that impossible navel, over the downy hair between my legs. I can barely breathe, my whole body trembling in anticipation. It doesn't matter how many times I've seen humans do this, seeing isn't doing. I've never experienced anything like it, and the moment his tongue touches that spot, I'm lost.

I'm saying things, but I don't know what the words are, moaning and rocking my hips up against his mouth. My hands reach for something to hang onto, because I feel like I'm floating, gripping the sheet in my fists and pulling hard. He's making noises, too, and those just make it even better, the vibration in his throat sending delicious heat through my body.

I feel like I could let him do this forever, lost in the rising sensation, feeling something swelling in my middle. And then something happens. Something changes. My breath is coming so fast I can't keep up. It's like this body is ahead of me and it knows just where it's going. Grabbing his head, I press him hard between my thighs, feeling something wonderful cresting there.

"Oooooohhhhhhhhh!" I gasp and moan, the sensation beyond sensation, spreading outward in hot, pulsing waves, extending past the borders of my flesh,

moving in delicious, shuddering waves. I can't stop it and don't want to. I want it to last and last, his face pressed between my thighs, making those sweet noises.

When he kisses his way back up my belly, I'm breathless and wet, the air cool over my skin. The weight and heat of his body covering mine dispels that in an instant, and there's something stiff and insistent pressing between my legs. I know what it is, of course, but nothing could have prepared me for the feel of it.

"Easy." His hand reaches between us, guiding himself. There's a wonderful moment when he's finding the right spot, slipping the head up and down, making me moan and clutch at him. "I'll be gentle..."

Huge! He feels enormous as he eases his flesh into mine, letting out a pent-up breath in my ear. There's no pain, just that feeling of fullness, being spread wide. I hold him tight, my eyes wide, and he looks at me and smiles.

"Easy," he whispers again, touching his lips to mine, just briefly. "Let go...relax..." I take a deep, shuddering breath, and feel the gentle swell and pulse of him inside of me. Reaching my hand down, I feel where we're joined together.

"This is sex?" I look at him in wonder.

"Almost." He smiles, beginning to move inside of me, slow, short, gentle thrusts, moving his hips in easy circles. "This...is sex..."

"Ohhh." I close my eyes and smile, wrapping my legs around his waist. "I like sex."

I feel his breath coming faster against my cheek. "I thought you might."

We rock together, our eyes locking, and I feel it, that connection. It's rising and warm, like the sensation in my belly. I recognize it now, and I want more. His eyes half-

close as I watch, his breath coming faster as he thrusts deeper, harder, making the bed shift beneath us.

“Look at me,” I beg him, and he does, our breath coming together, our bodies coming together, the thick pulse between our legs driving us onward. There’s a moment it’s so intense I can’t look anymore, I have to hide, and then he bites his lip, groaning and driving in deep.

“I’m gonna come!” And he is, and I am, too, the hot waves of pleasure rippling through us both at once, as if we’re one thing, and I wonder for a moment if we are. When he collapses onto me, I cradle him, kissing his sweaty brow. I’m smiling so big. I can’t help it.

“Thank you,” I murmur as he rolls next to me, covering us both with a sheet.

His smile is sweet, but a little sad, as if he knows this is just temporary, that I will be gone soon. “No...thank you, little one.”

Part of me doesn’t ever want to leave, but I know I can’t stay. I’m not meant to be human. My body feels like it’s singing or humming, and I like it. I also feel something else...as if I’m floating or drifting again.

“Drew...” His hand caresses my hair, making me smile “I can’t keep my eyes open...what is this?”

He chuckles, pulling me close and kissing the tip of my nose. “You’re just sleepy.”

“I don’t like sleepy.” I yawn. It doesn’t seem to matter, though, because having a body is very demanding. It wants what it wants, and I don’t seem to have much control. My eyes close and I drift away.

* * * *

"Drew?" The bed is empty, but there's a warm spot where he was. The clock on the night says it's just after midnight.

"Hey, Sam."

The voice comes from above my head and I gasp, sitting up to see Alex perched on the headboard. "What are *you* doing here?"

Alex flits down to the mattress, eyes sweeping over my nude form before I pull up the sheet. "They sure gave you a nice body, didn't they?"

"Shh!" I glance toward the door, worried Drew might hear.

"Oh, he's not coming back, don't worry."

I frown. "What do you mean he's not coming back? Where is he?" I make my voice louder and call toward the door, "Drew!"

"Didn't you wonder why they granted your wish so easily, Sam?"

None of this is making sense, but I don't like it, not one bit. "What are you talking about? Alex, did you do something to him?"

"No!" Alex looks at me, aghast. "*You* did. You turned him back."

My mouth forms the word, but something in me already knows. "Back?"

"He was fey, once." Alex shrugs. "That's why he could see us, why he knew so much."

I wrap the sheet around myself fully, standing and opening the bedroom door. "Drew!" I know it's futile, but I can't seem to help it. I turn back to Alex but something is wrong with my eyes. I can't see him very well. I realize my cheeks are wet and wipe them with my hands. Tears. I'm crying!

"You knew this, didn't you?" The realization sits me down again, but I miss the bed and collapse onto the floor beside it. "You...knew..."

"I'm sorry..." Alex's voice is gentle as he comes settling down on the edge of the bed near my head. Alex looks so different to me, now... so tiny. *How can I see fairies? I'm human, they should be invisible to me...shouldn't they?*

"I don't understand." I feel helpless and confused.

Alex sighs. I can feel a little hand, trying to pat mine. It tickles. "I'm wasn't supposed to tell you. I'm not even supposed to be here."

Gritting my teeth, I grab and squeeze Alex hard in my hand. The body is soft and squishy to me, quite easily breakable, and the squealing and beating of wings compels me to let go, but I've got too good a hold. "Listen, pipsqueak, you better start talking!"

"The moment you became human, you were subject to a human fate!" Alex gasps, eyes wide. "You have a destiny!"

I let him go and the fairy flies up toward the ceiling, glaring at me. "Sheesh, not even human for a day and you've already gone all Brobdingnagian on me..."

"Wh—what?"

"Sorry, been spending too much time reading on vacation, I guess." Alex gives me an apologetic smile. "Listen, Sam, this isn't as bad as it sounds."

I crawl up onto the bed—the bed that, just a few hours ago, Drew and I had sex in, fell asleep in. Where is he? What's happened to him?

"You switched places." Alex settles on the footboard. There's a distance between us, and I feel sorry for having yelled. "He became fey and you became human. You've

assumed his life, and he's taken yours. And...you'll stay human until your destiny is fulfilled, just like he did."

"His destiny?"

"You were his destiny." Alex shrugs. "Just like you're David's."

I don't know, maybe human brains just don't work as quickly as fey ones, because I can't quite seem to grasp what's being said. "David... who?"

"It's not really him they're interested in, actually." Alex's voice drops, as if someone might hear. "It's your child."

"Child?!" I squeak. "What...child?"

"Yours and David's." Alex gives me a look like I'm crazy.

"David?" Even as I say it, I know. I don't know how, but I know. "Not that...little boy...?!"

Alex nods, grinning. "That's the one."

"He's three years old!" I gasp, my eyes wide.

"Yeah well...he won't be, in about fifteen years..." Alex waggles his eyebrows. "And by then you'll be in your mid-thirties, in human years. I bet you'll teach him a trick or two..."

"This makes no sense!" I bury my head in my hands.

Alex has dared to come closer again. "It does... to *The Voice*..."

The Voice. Fate. Is this really my fate?

"How long am I going to be human?" I ask. "Can you tell me that much?"

"As long as it takes, I guess..." Alex shrugs.

I pull the sheet over my head and collapse back on the bed, trying to hide. This can't be happening. I asked to be human for a day—just one day!

"I don't know anything about being human!" I complain to Alex, pulling the sheet down again. Alex is hovering over me, face concerned, even a little sad. "How can I do this?!"

Alex smiles. "Well...I'll be here to help..."

I roll my eyes, staring up at the ceiling. "Great. I'm so comforted."

"Is it any comfort to know your child will some day save the world?" Alex asks, arms folded and glaring at me.

I sigh. "Frankly...no."

All that time I'd longed to be human and now I'd give anything to be a fairy again. How long am I going to stay this way? I wonder. And now Alex tells me I'm supposed to have a child—with a man who is essentially now just a child himself! Will I raise that child? And what is *he* destined to do? How long will I be here? Fifteen years, twenty, thirty? A lifetime?!

"Alex!" I sit up, clutching the sheet to my chest. "Am I mortal? Am I going to die?"

Alex sighs. "I don't know. You know *The Voice* only tells us so much..."

"Fate sucks!" I'm glaring.

"Don't shoot the messenger," Alex says, hands out, palms up, in a warding-off gesture. "Remember?"

"Yes, I remember." I stand up, wrapping the sheet around me again.

"Where are you going?"

I glance back from the door. "I'm hungry. If I'm going to have to spend the next who-knows-how-long as a human, I'm going to do everything pleasurable I can think of until I get the chance to change back..."

Alex laughs. "Now you sound like the Sam I know."

I'm not the Sam Alex knew. I'm not even the Sam I knew. I'm human now, subject to all of the fates and foibles and follies of the human race. I stand at the sink and peel another orange, and it's like eating liquid sunshine as I watch the snow fall outside.

"Hey, Alex..." I glance over. Alex is just sitting on top of the toaster, watching me with that concerned look again. "Guess who *The Voice* is?"

Alex perks up, wings fluttering. "Do you really know?"

I nod, chewing on an orange section. "Santa Claus. Old St. Nick. Or just 'Old Nick', depending on which end of fate you're on, huh?"

"That's not funny!" Alex frowns, trying to figure out if I'm kidding.

"I'm not laughing." I sigh. "Merry Christmas and ho-ho-ho and careful what you ask for, right?"

Alex gives me a sad look. "I guess so."

"Goodnight, Alex." I head toward the bedroom. I already miss Drew in the bed, even in the brief time we shared together. I wonder if I'm ever going to see him again. I have a feeling I might, even just in fey form. And how in the heck is the world going to arrange itself so that little boy and I cross paths again in twenty years? I can't even believe it. It seems impossible.

There's something about the human condition, about not knowing what's going to be around the next corner, that's both exciting and a little scary. If nothing else, being human is going to be an experience. That's what I wanted, right? An experience. Right. Merry Christmas and ho-ho-ho. Please, be careful what you ask for during the holiday season, would you? Take it from me. I know what I'm talking about.

The End

ABOUT SELENA KITT



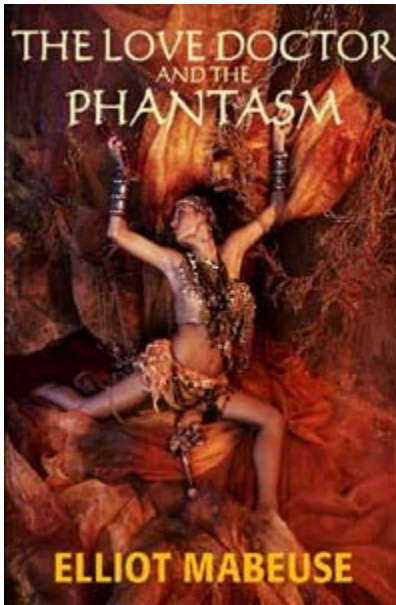
Like any feline, Selena Kitt loves the things that make her purr—and wants nothing more than to make others purr right along with her! Pleasure is her middle name, whether it's a short cat nap stretched out in the sun or a long kitty bath. She makes it a priority to explore all the delightful distractions she can find, and follow her vivid and often racy imagination wherever it wants to lead her.

This sassy, outrageous author lives with her husband and children in the rural Midwest, all of whom she thinks are the cat's meow. Her writing embodies everything from the spicy to the scandalous, but watch out—this kitty also has sharp claws and her stories often include intriguing edges and twists that take readers to new, thought-provoking depths.

When she isn't pawing away at her keyboard, she loves spending her time belly dancing, attending drum circles, gathering in women's groups, and taking beautiful pictures of everything in her world.

Her e-publishing credits include: [*Rosie's Promise*](#) published by Samhain and *Torrid Teasers* #49 published by [Whiskey Creek Press](#) featuring two short stories, *French Lessons* and *I'll Be Your Superman* in 2008. Her stories and poems are in the following anthologies: [Coming Together: For The Cure](#), [Coming Together: Under Fire](#) and [Coming Together Volume 1](#) and [Volume 3](#). Two stories, *Sacred Spots* and *Happy Accident*, will soon be published by [Phaze Publishing](#), as well as her novels *Christmas Stalking*, *Blind Date*, *The Surrender of Persephone* and *The Song of Orpheus*. She has also been published online in [The Shadow Sacrament: a journal of sex and spirituality](#), [The Erotic Woman](#), and her story, *Connections*, was one of the runners-up for the [2006 Rauxa Prize](#), given annually to an erotic short story of "exceptional literary quality," out of over 1,000 nominees, where awards are judged by a select jury and all entries are read "blind" (without author's name available.) She can be reached on her website at www.selenakitt.com or email selena@selenakitt.com

If you enjoyed [ESCAPING FATE](#), you might also enjoy:



THE LOVE DOCTOR AND THE PHANTASM

In Renaissance Florence, the ripe and lovely Lady Elena Testarosa has been felled by a crude enchantment, compelled to offer her body and soul to the evil Antonio Castiglione as his love slave. Her family has one chance, to hire Griego Robinetti, the mysterious and roguish Love Doctor, to remove the spell. But to do this Robinetti will have to make her his own slave and set free her female Phantasm—the sexual beast that dwells within every woman—taking her to heights of love and depths of depraved debauchery such as no woman has ever known.

Told with charm, wit, aching beauty and incandescent passion, *The Love Doctor and the Phantasm* is a costume drama of love, magic and sex like nothing you've ever read, told by Elliot Mabeuse, Doctor of Erotica.

EXCERPT from THE LOVE DOCTOR AND THE PHANTASM:

Griego was busy. From the fireplace he took the grate pole—an iron rod about six feet long—and quickly suspended this from the center of the canopy of the bed so that it hung parallel over the tied Elena, yet it could teeter up and down. Then, seizing more rope, he tied one end to the pole, and led the other down and tied it to the two dildos in her ass and her pussy. He kept one hand on the free end of the pole so it didn't move until he was done, then he leaned down to look at Elena, who was by now almost oblivious to everything around her, sweat pouring off her face.

She wasn't oblivious to this, an old trick called the Spanish Donkey. When he pulled down on the end of the rod, the rope pulled up on the dildos and lifted her hips off the bed.

"Oh. My. GOD!"

Milk spurted four inches from her tits. Her hips were a foot off the bed, her legs hung slack, trembling, and the ropes holding her ankles went taut as fiddle strings.

"You're opening!" he yelled excitedly. The letters began to move on her skin, spinning lazily, sliding around as if agitated. "God of Abraham, you're opening!" He shook the rod slightly to vibrate the dildos. "Come out, you whore! You slut! Come on, you gorgeous cock-sucker!"

"No! No! Jesus Christ! Saints in Heaven!"

"You're opening even more!"

The letters swirled faster, making whirlwind patterns of fire, the Shin like a three-bladed knife, the Vauv like a drill the Ayin like a twisted man doing a demented dance.

"Griego no! It hurts! You're killing me!"

He dropped the rod. Elena pulled at her bonds like a mad woman and stretched enough slack to plant her feet on the mattress and pump her hips up at the doubly impaling dildos. She truly did look like a sexual animal, her hair in her face, biting her lips and then licking them, her breasts squirting milk that ran down her throat and stomach, which rolled and heaved with her movements.

But most amazing was that her body was becoming translucent and Griego saw light coming through it. This was the female animal coming out, so sexual, so carnal, that the mere sight of her beauty and desirability tore a raw growl from his throat. She

was a glowing sculpture of such perfection that he grabbed his cock and squeezed it to keep himself from ejaculating at the mere sight of her. Elena looked down at herself with wonder. Miracle after miracle. She now glowed like a candle.

He ripped the bonds loose from her feet and hands, straddled her chest, knelt on her gushing tits and looked at her. Elena looked back at him, not believing this was what he wanted.

With her body lit up like a torch with spells and magic, did he really want to put his cock in her mouth?

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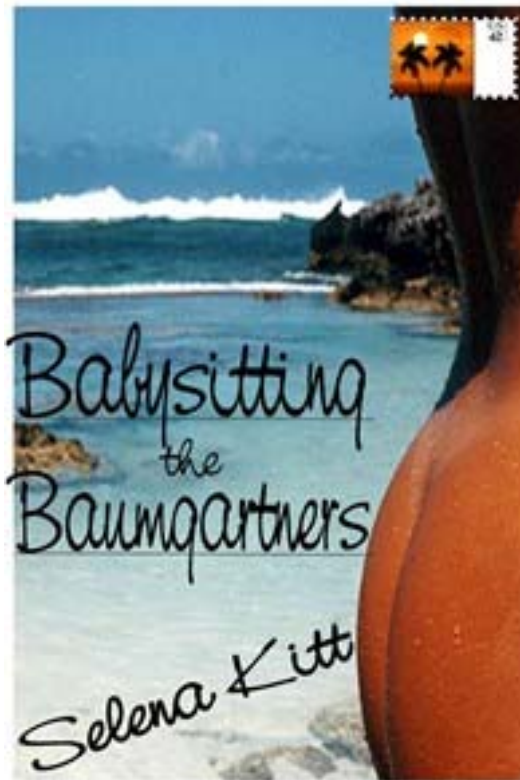


NAUGHTY BITS

By Selena Kitt

David has been brightening up his gray Surrey, England days with the porn collection hidden in his parents' shed, but when he find that his older sister, Dawn has discovered his magazine collection, things really begin to heat up. Their parents insist that their just-graduated son look for a job, but their daughter has the week off and is determined to work on her tan. Distracted David finds himself increasingly tempted by his seductive older sister, who makes it very clear what she wants. Her teasing ways slowly break down the taboo barrier between brother and sister until they both give in to their lust... but what are they going to do about the feelings that have developed between them in the meantime...?

Warning: This title contains incest and anal sex.



BABYSITTING THE BAUMGARTNERS

By Selena Kitt

Ronnie—or as Mrs. Baumgartner insists on calling her, Veronica—has been babysitting for the Baumgartners since she was fifteen years old and has practically become another member of the family. Now a college freshman, Ronnie jumps at the chance to work on her tan in the Florida Keys with “Doc” and “Mrs. B” under the pretense of babysitting the kids. Ronnie isn’t the only one with ulterior motives, though, and she discovers that the Baumgartners have wayward plans for their young babysitter. This wicked hot sun and sand coming of age story will seduce you as quickly as the Baumgartners seduce innocent Ronnie and leave everyone yearning for more!

Warning: This title contains MFF threesome, lesbian, and anal sex.

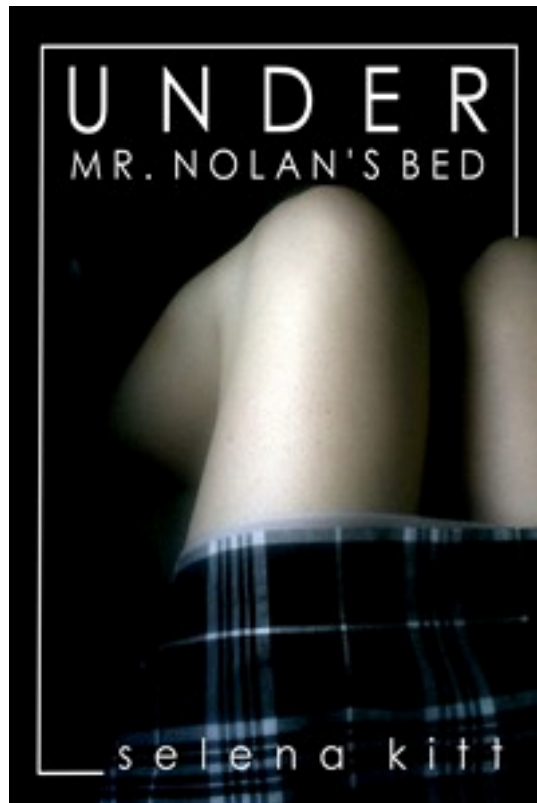


BLUEBEARD'S WIFE

By Selena Kitt

Tara's husband has never shared a fantasy with her, or even masturbated—that she knows of. However, this curious wife discovers a phone bill full of phone calls to sex lines and realizes her husband has been living a double life! Instead of getting mad, Tara's curiosity leads her to begin listening in on John's steamy conversations in hopes of finding out what he really wants in the bedroom. After several failed attempts at bringing fantasy to reality, however, a frustrated Tara turns to her much more adventurous best friend, Kelly, for help. A quick psychology 101 diagnosis from Dr. Kelly marks John as having a classic "madonna/whore" complex, and she quickly sets about making plans to rectify this situation. Tara goes along for the ride, hoping that Kelly may have the answer to bridging the seemingly ever-growing gap in her marriage...

Warning: This title contains a MFF threesome, a daddy/daughter role play between consenting adults, strong language, minor drug use and F/F sex.



UNDER MR. NOLAN'S BED

By Selena Kitt

Leah and Erica have been best friends and have gone to the same Catholic school since just about forever. Leah spends so much time with the Nolan's—just Erica and her handsome father, now, since Erica's mother died—that she's practically part of the family. When the girls find something naughty under Mr. Nolan's bed, their strict, repressive upbringing makes it all the more exciting as they begin their sexual experimentation. Leah's exploration presses deeper, and eventually she finds herself torn between her best friend and her best friend's father—but even she couldn't have predicted the shocking and bittersweet outcome of their affair.

Warning: This title contains a threesome, lesbian sex and incest.



THE SYBIAN CLUB

By Selena Kitt

Tasha convinces her husband, Max, to buy her a the ultimate female pleasure machine – a Sybian – but he only agrees if she can come up with a business plan to pay for it. Determined to keep her promise, she creates The Sybian Club and begins bringing women to the basement room set up just for her new toy. It becomes so popular, she has to enlist the help of new friend, Ashley, to keep up with the demand, and the women enjoy an exciting ride as the business thrives. But Tasha has developed feelings for Ashley, and doesn't know how to tell her husband that she wants to add more to their sex life than just a new toy...

Warning: This title contains a threesome, lesbian and anal sex.



STARVING ARTIST

By Selena Kitt

Ellie is living the life of a true starving artist in a small efficiency apartment in dangerous downtown Detroit, but more dangerous than her surroundings are the men to whom she pays rent. Denied help by her prosecutor father, who believes his daughter is wasting her life in art school, Ellie finds herself in a precarious position and surrenders helplessly to her predicament. However, a strange twist of fate gives Ellie a chance at revenge. Will she take it?

Warning: This title contains graphic language, nonconsensual and anal sex.



ON CHERRY HILL

By Selena Kitt

Midwife Anne gets pulled over in the middle of the night on Cherry Hill Road. She's on her way to a birth, but her urgency doesn't sway the unsympathetic officer. When the cop discovers something suspicious on Anne's driving record and insists she get out of the car, she knows she's in real trouble. When he cuffs her and bends her over the hood, things go beyond trouble...

But the surprising outcome of this tale gives both Anne and the reader a jolt they never could have anticipated...

Warning: This title contains graphic language and nonconsensual sex.



TICKLED PINK

By Selena Kitt

Who says sex can't be fun - or funny? You'll find more than enough amusing mishaps and uproarious situations to tickle your funny bone—and more!—in this delightfully wicked and delightfully sexy anthology from Selena Kitt.

Warning: This title contains graphic language and sex.



PAPERBACK ROMANCE

by Selena Kitt

Maya's heart yearns for romance and adventure, so that's what she writes about - but James Reardon, her college creative writing professor, insists she's wasting both time and talent. Determined to prove him wrong, Maya stumbles onto the fact that her professor's been keeping secrets - not the least of which is his attraction to her. Faced with a choice, she will have to decide whether or not to reveal his secret to the world—and her own desire for a man nearly twice her age.

Warning: This title contains graphic language and sex.



TAKEN

By Selena Kitt

Lizzy’s friendship with her older boss, Sarah, turns into something deeper and much more exciting one rainy day after work, and Lizzy finds herself drawn into a world she never knew existed. Sarah has a dominant streak, and as she leads Lizzy into the role of a submissive, the two women become closer than they ever thought possible. But while Sarah, hurt too many times, wears a ring, and tells guys she’s “taken,” Lizzy knows she secretly longs for a man. Determined to find one for them both to share, Lizzy is just about to give up when a dark, handsome, virile answer shows up right under her nose. Lizzy may think she and Sarah are going to seduce David—but she underestimates their handsome co-worker, and David turns the tables on them both. But will he be able to tame the untameable Sarah?

Warnings: This title contains graphic language and sex, a m/f/f threesome and mild bdsm elements.



MERCY

by Selena Kitt

Mercy was a typical lesbian in life - at least, that's what her beloved, dearly departed Dee always said - but she's definitely not a typical vampire. Mercy, known as Mary in her former life, is now secretly in love with Angie, her roommate, whose profession as a hospice nurse has taken Mercy on an unusual path in her journey as the undead. Like her acquired name, comes as a dark angel of mercy, delivering eternal life to the dying—but will Mercy's mission of compassion serve to save the one woman she loves most in the world?

Warning: This title contains graphic language, sex and elements of horror.



SILENT NIGHT

By Selena Kitt

Justine has left Bruce for another man, left him all alone with their young daughter - while he slowly goes insane. His building, impotent rage leads to sudden, unexpected brutality. But how far will he go?

Warning: This title contains graphic language, infidelity, sex and shocking, horrific elements.



[A TWISTED BARD'S TALE](#)

By Selena Kitt

Did you ever wonder what started the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues? Check out this naughty version of Romeo and Juliet - you'll be surprised and delighted by this twisted Bard's tale!

Warning: This title contains graphic language and lesbian sex.