



Changeling Press

SUGAR
PLUM
#7

Kitchen Witch

DAWN MONTGOMERY

Sugarplum: Kitchen Witch

Dawn Montgomery

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Sex, magic, and cookies... what a treat!

Recruiting for the Kitchen Witch Society has never been so sexy. Krista's got all the eye candy (and magic skill) she could ever hope for in the hard body of amateur chef sensation Chase Hamilton. Now if only she can get him to show her a taste of his handiwork inside the bedroom...

Dedication

To Kim: You never give up... even when we give up on ourselves.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from me to you. I hope you enjoy Chase and Krista's story. For those who are stationed away from their families this holiday season, know that we're thinking about you, and wish you a wonderful and happy reunion upon your return.

Chapter One

I'd like to lick the cream off his fingers. Sebastian, king of cats, was sunbathing in a rafter above the cooking exhibition. Her familiar was always interested in food. That's what made them such a good pair.

Krista eyed the broad expanse of Chase Hamilton's chest and licked her lips. The polo stretched enticingly across muscles that bulged nicely with his efficient movements in the studio kitchen. There were other places she wanted to lick. And cream wasn't the only thing on the menu. Her gaze slid down his strong legs and back up to the devilishly charming smile on his face.

Do you think he's what we're looking for? Bastian's amusement slid through the thought-speak.

Krista brushed a stray lock of her bright copper tresses behind her ear. He was definitely what she was looking for. Her magic needed a little sexual tune-up. No doubt tall, dark, and kickass in the kitchen would do nicely for a little holiday treat.

Bastian's chuckle echoed in her thoughts, and she shot a glare up to the rafters. With a gleam of his eyes he disappeared into the shadows. *Coward.*

It is always better to retreat and fight another day than to suffer a redhead's wrath. My mother was a calico. I know these things.

Chase put the finishing flourishes on his festive dish, and the crowd cheered. She had to admit, the sinful creation was definitely mouthwatering. Krista clapped along with the others and then smoothed a hand over her fitted jacket. It wouldn't do for her to look shabby. She was recruiting, after all.

It was time for a taste test. Time to find out if Chase Hamilton was a good candidate for the Kitchen Witch Society. She reached down into the well of her magic where it settled in her core. A light tap, an invitation, was all she needed. Feral heat uncoiled from deep within. It would turn into a raging inferno before the night was out, no doubt about it. Krista let a sigh slip from her lips at the familiar lustful ache. Christmas time was her biggest recruiting season, and she'd been tapping into her resources way too often. It would be date night with her toys again if Chase wasn't interested. Hell, for all she knew, he was taken.

Magic slipped from her in a soft caress through her skin, lingering, searching. She was a talent scout with passive magic. One touch and she'd know.

Krista made her way to the set. Her radar slid from her, questing for the taste of magic she needed. Her focus was so intent that she didn't notice the drop-dead-gorgeous brunette tilting her head flirtatiously toward Chase until the woman cut her eyes at Krista.

Chase, huh? Already on a first-name basis? This is going to be very fun.

Krista shot venomous thoughts to Sebastian but got only light humor in response.

"I would really like to discuss this. Over dinner perhaps?" Now the woman was touching his bare arm.

Krista clenched her jaw. Chase looked down at her hand on his arm and looked up. "I'm already booked for the rest of the time I'm in town." He pulled away, and Krista's eyebrows rose.

"You do know who I work for, right?" Undeterred, she slid her fingers across his shoulders to tuck under his collar. He gently extracted her fingers from his shirt. Krista couldn't help the smile that touched her lips. This woman wasn't used to being told no. "I know who you work for. I've told your representatives on several occasions that I'm not interested. My date for the evening should be here any moment."

He removed his apron, and Krista's radar went off. Well that was new. She almost always had to touch the person for her magic to react. His head lifted, and Krista

was pierced to the soul by the intensity of his expression. Magic was in his soul. He was a candidate, all right. The part of her that did this for a living was smug. The woman part of her was starstruck. Damn it.

The rugged lines of his face entranced her. Perfect for the camera. She dug her fingers into her jacket to keep from reaching out to touch him. Before she knew it, they were close enough to kiss. His lips lifted in a conspiratorial smile. He was obviously looking for a stand-in date. Maybe she could save the day.

I can do this.

She smiled at him. "Sorry I'm late." Her voice was breathless.

Mischief lit his expression, and his charming smile made her knees weak. "You're right on time, as always." He set the apron down and held out his arms. It was the most natural thing to step in and let herself be surrounded by his strength. She breathed deeply, and the scent of spices, warm male, and all the memories of holidays well spent flooded her. Her passive magic was also jumping off the charts.

A soft throb began deep within her. Heat flushed her cheeks, and she was thankful for the coat that covered the peaking of her suddenly hard nipples.

She looked up. And up. He was a lot taller than she'd first thought.

"I've missed you." He gave her the lightest kiss she'd ever felt. Like the brush of wings on her lips. Her mouth opened on a sigh, and he pressed just enough to give her a taste of him. She tasted Chase... and sugar cookies.

She pulled away and raised an eyebrow. "You were tasting the goods while you were cooking."

He raised his eyebrows. "I suffer for my art."

"Excuse me." The brunette was still smiling, but there was a frigid edge to her that hadn't been there before. "Have you two been seeing each other long?"

Krista knew the game. She was looking for an in, a way to get what she wanted.

"Every day feels like the first time we've met." Chase was openly smiling now, and Krista's heart did a funny little trip.

“If you’ll excuse us, we have reservations.” He folded Krista’s hand in the crook of his arm and led the way down the stage.

Bastian.

I know. I’ll be fine. I won’t wait up.

His humor was becoming a little too human. Krista sent thoughts of mini tortures to him, and the cat equivalent of laughter slid along his thought-speak.

Chapter Two

"So what does the Kitchen Witch Society want with me?"

It was instinct that kept her from dropping her fork in shock. "You know what I am?"

He pushed his plate away and leaned forward on crossed arms. "My grandmother was a card-carrying member. I worked at her side from the time I was able to hang on to her skirt tails. She mentioned the society often."

"Right. Well, that makes it easier." Krista cleared her throat and gently set down her fork. She touched the napkin to her lips and decided to just say it. "Mr. Hamilton --"

"Chase." His gaze burned with something other than professional interest.

"Chase. I'm a recruiter for the society. We need high profile people to draw interest to our University." She opened her satchel and pulled out the proposal.

"What would I have to do?"

She shrugged a shoulder. "What you usually do. If you're content with your current sponsors, we will leave you be. If you'd like additional funding, that can be arranged. All we ask for in return is some public relations work."

"Cupcakes for charity? Celebrity cook-offs, that kind of thing?"

"If that's what you'd like, I suppose."

"I'd like to think on it." He held out his hand.

"Of course." Krista passed over the proposed contract. His fingers brushed hers, and that electric heat pulsed between them again.

That glimmer of heat came back into his gaze. "Is there anything in your job that keeps you from enjoying the company of a recruit?"

Krista couldn't keep the hitch out of her breath or still the pulse of excitement that made her clit ache. "Any relationship I have is my own and does not have any bearing on recruitment. I'm not in the habit of sleeping with any potentials."

"Potentials. I like that. Makes me feel like I'm an adolescent again." His smile was heart-stopping. "I don't sleep with recruiters. Or women I've just met, either. So I think we're both on new ground here." He gestured to the waiter and had the check paid before she could change her mind.

"Good to know I'm not walking this one alone."

He took her hand and led her from the restaurant without another word. His car was waiting outside. Damn, he moved fast! She felt warm despite the chill in the air.

In seconds she was seated and buckled in. He slid into the driver's side and turned, pulling her into his arms. His lips covered hers in a kiss that sent her libido into overdrive. Moisture pooled low in her belly, and she couldn't stop the soft moan that fell from her lips. Her magic had started to simmer, and it wouldn't take much to turn it into a raging inferno.

She tugged at his shirt, slipping her fingers against warm skin. Damn, he felt good. His kiss deepened and thoughts flew away.

He dragged himself away from her and blew out a breath. "Damn."

Krista licked her lips with a flick of her tongue to keep the taste of him. "Yeah."

He started the car and tugged on his seat belt.

Krista clenched her hands over the seat belt across her chest and tried to control the racing of her heart. Every inch of her body was hyperaware of the male strength sitting next to her. Her lips tingled, and her pussy ached. She wanted to chalk it up to the magic she'd used, but good old-fashioned attraction was a heady mix with her normal drives.

He reached over and grabbed her hand, bringing it up to his lips for a light kiss. Her stomach twisted a little at the gentle touch. His teeth scraped against her knuckle, and she smiled at the thrill of heat his playfulness caused.

"Where are we headed?"

"My apartment." His gaze slid over to her.

"You have an apartment here?"

"Yeah, it was my grandmother's. It's not far." He put her hand on his thigh and took the wheel.

Krista slid her palm against his slacks. Tight muscle bunched under her touch and she smiled. Playing in the car was a bit too dangerous, but she loved a responsive man. She closed her thighs to ease the ache of need.

He pulled into a cute neighborhood. The apartment building was old and beautiful. Before she knew it they were parked and heading up an elevator to the third floor.

He unlocked the door and reached inside. Light flooded the hallway and spilled into a cozy living room. Her magic radar buzzed with protective spells and all manner of magical things. Sensitive nipples tingled and tightened to hard points and her heart raced. She slipped off her jacket and turned to watch him close the door.

Chase was a gorgeous man. All lean muscle and broad-shouldered goodness. He was the boy next door with a twist of mischief. And if he didn't fuck her soon, she was going to lose her mind.

He took her jacket and dropped it over the arm of the cushioned entry chair. Answering heat matched his gaze and she found herself pressed against the wall with his hands trapping her on either side. A thrill clenched her stomach and shot straight to her core.

His lips and tongue seared heat across her throat and jaw. She slid her hands up his shirt and moaned appreciatively at the hard planes of his stomach. How a man could cook like a dream and still have a hard body she'd never know, but damn, he was delicious.

Her core tightened and moisture soaked her panties.

His lips found hers, and she grinned at the playful nips he took between soul-shattering kisses. Damn, the man had talent!

Cool air brushed her stomach before she realized he had her shirt unbuttoned. She grinned and tugged on his polo, pulling it over his head and dropping it on the floor. She had a moment to sigh happily at the sight of his chiseled chest before he had her pants unbuttoned and hanging off her hips.

His hands cupped her breasts through the festive satin bra she'd chosen this morning. Her nipples hardened to sensitive peaks. His thumbs brushed over their tips, and she moaned into his mouth. Some of the urgency slid away and fell into a slow simmer.

He gave her a lingering kiss before dipping his head and taking one satin-covered nipple in his hot mouth. Moist heat covered the sensitive tip, and she slid her hands through his hair, clenching lightly to keep him against her. His hand slid into the band of her panties and down to her trimmed curls. Deft fingers slipped inside, and her core clenched around him.

"So hot." His mouth and tongue moved from one nipple to the other, leaving a chill where heat had just been. His thumb brushed her clit, and she trembled. Her magic had her at the edge of control. His fingers dipped and teased, swirling her essence around the aching bud.

Familiar tension slid down her spine, and she arched in time with his finger thrusts. "Chase..." She breathed his name and pressed hot kisses to the top of his head. His teeth bit lightly on her nipple, and his fingers hit the perfect spot and pressure to send her into a quick orgasm. Her channel clenched his fingers, and she heard soft murmurs of pleasure coming from her own lips.

Chase pressed a light kiss on her breast and rose to his full height. Her hands slid to his broad shoulders. His fingers slipped from her, and he raised them to his mouth. Krista's mouth opened in surprise when he suckled her juices from his fingers. That had to be the hottest thing she'd ever seen a man do.

"You taste delicious." His body pressed her back against the wall, and she could feel the rigid length of his erection straining against her. "I would love nothing more than to eat you up all night."

Her pussy clenched at his words. Already her magic was threatening to overflow. If she didn't get control of it, and soon, it was going to flow out and not stop until she was completely drained. It would be months before she built up enough magic to work again... and she needed the work. She wanted, no, needed, a hard fuck, and his mouth wouldn't do what she needed at the moment. She palmed the rigid length of his dick and stroked lightly through the cloth. His face tightened, and a heady groan tore from his throat. "That sounds wonderful, but I had something else in mind first."

His smile was predatory and endearing at the same time. "Did you now? Why don't you show me?"

Chapter Three

Before she could move, he had her up in his arms and on the way to a bedroom. Well, this was new. She held on for dear life, afraid he'd drop her. He grinned down at her while setting her gently on the bed.

He shucked his clothes, and she shimmied out of hers. Bare skin touched bare skin, and she thrilled at the sensation. Her lips touched his chin, his cheek, everywhere she could taste.

She heard the familiar crinkle of a foil wrapper and smiled, scraping her teeth against his throat.

He groaned, but she could feel hesitation in his movements. "I don't want you to think..."

She tugged his head down for a hard kiss. "No, prepared is good." She bit his lip. "I like prepared."

He grinned and kissed her back. Pressure rode her hard. His fingers played along her moist flesh, sending her core into a throbbing need that had her moaning. Fingers thrust inside. He flicked his fingers, and she arched, a moan ripping from her throat. His palm pressed against her clit and rubbed it just the right way to send her into a spiral of pleasure.

Magic swelled within her. It spilled out around her, opening her senses to the magic in the apartment. To Chase's magic.

His fingers withdrew, and the thick head of his dick pressed for entry. She rocked her hips to draw him closer, desperate to be filled. Needing to end this madness before the magic drained her completely.

The first thrust stole her breath with the intensity. One hand gripped her leg behind the knee and pushed until she could barely move. A mischievous smile touched his lips before he began a slow, torturous pace.

"What?" Krista moaned and tried to maneuver so she could ease the ache.

"Where are you going?" His palms held her tight, and he rotated his hips in a way that had him hitting just the right spot.

She moaned and arched against his hold.

"You like that?"

She couldn't speak, just scraped her teeth against his shoulder. He groaned and hit that spot again and again. Pleasure sparked behind her closed eyelids, and her magic locked in with her orgasm, riding it like a tide, seeking release. The pressure became intense, and she needed it to break over.

"Harder." Her voice was breathless.

He moaned and began thrusting harder, deeper. Exactly what she needed. Her fingers dug into his back, and she rode through the torrent. He leaned back and flicked her nipple with his tongue before taking it into his hot mouth. Teeth gently nipped and his tongue rolled around the sensitive tip. She arched into his mouth and held his head against her. The rich scent of sex permeated the air.

The pressure built inside until she couldn't stop her cries. Couldn't stop the need to clench her fist in his hair and dig her fingers into his back. She tasted their need in the air. His mouth pulled from her breast with a loud pop and then covered hers. Unfettered magic rushed through her body and spilled into his. Krista couldn't stop it. Her surprise was whisked away by the incredible pleasure every touch gave her. His rhythm unraveled, and he pounded into her. The sounds of wet flesh reached her ears. Pleasure peaked through her, and she tumbled over into ecstasy. He swallowed her cries with every stroke of his tongue, riding her through the crests of her orgasm.

His teeth nipped at her lip, and she moaned softly. Something was changing in her magic. It was... flowing back into her. It never did that. Pleasure was building again, and she couldn't keep her mind together. Another orgasm hit, and she felt his

ragged breath on her lips. His muscles bunched and he came with a loud groan. Krista pressed her face against his throat and ran her lips along the skin. Her body shivered from the intensity.

She felt the light brush of lips on her hair. He gently withdrew from her quivering flesh before moving away to the bathroom for a moment. Krista put her hand on the pillow and inhaled the masculine scent of Chase. He was amazing, and she could see into his soul. Part of his magic seemed to touch her.

He slid back into bed and folded her into his arms.

She laid her head against his shoulder. His leg shifted against hers, and she lifted her leg to settle his thigh between hers. Her palm brushed against the light fur on his chest. The erratic beat of his heart settled her. At least she wasn't the only one affected.

She rubbed her cheek against his skin. Would sex between them always be like that? She didn't even know what had happened. A part of him seemed to have collected in the heart of her magic. It tasted unlike any magic she'd ever known.

"Is sex always like this with you?"

She jerked her head up to look at him. Startled. "Like what?"

Chase ran a light hand down her spine, leaving a tide of shivers in its wake. "This connected. I feel like I have some of your magic in me."

Krista raised her eyebrows. No one had ever felt her magic. It was passive. Unnoticeable.

"I don't really know, Chase. You're the only person in this world who's ever felt my magic."

He chuckled. "I felt your magic the moment you walked into the studio kitchen today, sweetheart. It was like a beacon."

She leaned up and looked him in the eyes. Sincerity and humor gazed back at her from a disheveled Chase Hamilton. Sex looked good on him. "I've never tripped anyone's magic radar before. Your magic is unlike anything I've ever seen."

"Is this the part where you try to convince me to join your program?"

"I'd really like to get you into the winter program. The basic classes are easy to get through. Honing your magic wouldn't take long at all."

Something like regret flashed across his face. His stomach muscles tightened under her palm. "I can't."

Krista's mouth fell open. "Why not?"

He tucked a stray lock of hair behind her ear. "I'm a purely seasonal cook. I can't cook worth a damn two days after Christmas."

Krista tilted her head and considered his words. "What do you mean you can't cook?"

He ran his fingers along her shoulder and down her back in slow, soothing caresses. "When my grandmother passed, she took her legacy with her. I had her recipes but none of the magic." He absently pressed a kiss against her forehead. Krista smiled and tucked her face against his throat at his sweet touches.

"You have magic, though. I've felt it." She shivered delicately at the ghost tingles of her last orgasm. His magic had set her off like nothing else had in years.

"Yeah." He pulled the sheet up until it covered her. "That's kind of a blessing and a curse. A Faerie that my grandmother had befriended showed up a few years after she'd passed on. She was pretty upset that my grandmother had gone, and we were both reminiscing about her cooking."

A Faerie? Well, she'd definitely heard stranger stories in recruitment.

"What did she do?"

"She cast a spell or whatever it is that they do. For Christmas, I can cook like my grandmother. I just have to make her a box of tea cookies and some other confections."

"Do you leave it out with a glass of milk on Christmas Eve too?"

"Actually, yeah." He sounded embarrassed.

Krista didn't know what to think. Two days after Christmas would be soon enough to prove his story. She was, however, a practical witch. "Then you'll be a seasonal sensation. Easy enough."

"That simple, huh? You guys don't care where I get the juice from?"

That brought a frown to her face. "Juice?"

"Yeah, magic. Or whatever you guys call it."

She laughed. "I like that. Juice." She would think of that every time she had to search for a new candidate. Sadness clenched her heart and squeezed. She swallowed against the sudden lump in her throat. They barely knew each other, but she wanted to get to know him. In every way.

A familiar cat cry jerked her out of her thoughts.

"What was that?"

Krista put a palm over her eyes and groaned. "That's Sebastian."

"You have a cat?" He sounded too amused for his own good. "It's good to see we're not busting stereotypes."

Actually, I have the witch. You humans get it so wrong every time.

Chase jerked as though struck. "Am I hearing things?"

Krista lowered her hand and looked up at Chase. "You heard him?"

Of course he heard me. You two bonded. Now I own both of you. Only Bastian could come off so high-handed. He was probably grooming himself while he made his regal pronunciation.

I happen to need a bath after the lengths I had to travel to find you.

"What does he mean by bonded? And where is he?"

On your snow-covered balcony. I would love to enter, if you don't mind.

"Right." Chase got up, and Krista immediately missed his warmth. She wrapped the sheet tighter around her chest and watched him stride across the bedroom. The man had a very nice ass.

Bastian needed to answer a question, though. *What is this bonding thing you're going on about?* Krista knew her magic had changed, but she didn't know why. She'd heard of magic exchanges before, but that usually meant a perfect match.

Ask the Faerie. I just know you're both mine now. The door opened and closed, sending a chilled breeze through the room. Bastian made a *rowl* of approval and stalked off to search the house.

Chase walked back into the bedroom with a look of complete shock on his face. She couldn't help but laugh.

"The cat talks to me, and you laugh? I'm not exactly used to this kind of thing."

Krista's laugh dropped to a chuckle, and she drew in a breath. "You look exactly the same way I felt the first time he talked to me." She held out her arms and let the sheet fall to her waist. Chase's eyes lit up, and she could see arousal stirring his dick. "Come here, let's get you warm."

"What does bonded mean?" He was gorgeous, and oddly enough, not distressed by Bastian's arrogant assumptions.

She held up the sheet, and he climbed in, lying against her. His body was chilled so she curled up against his length and caressed his shaft with light fingers. He wrapped his arm around her and tucked her against his body.

She hesitated to explain, unsure where to begin. "My magic changed when we had sex."

"How so?" His hand traced the line of her back. A shiver echoed his touch. She caressed the head of his dick and felt it grow hard under her fingers.

"Well, normally when I orgasm, my magic releases, and I'm exhausted. One will do me in, usually." She felt her cheeks burn.

Lips brushed her forehead. "And now?"

"This time, with you, it flowed out of me like always but seemed to fall into you and then back into me again. It was like a recharge. I had three orgasms and never felt the slightest drain of my magic."

His dick twitched under her hand, and she slid her palm down to cup his balls, massaging them lightly. The catch and quick release of his breath told her he liked it. Her body was coming out of its languor.

"Is my magic the same?"

Krista bit her lip and stopped her caresses. Now would be a good time to tell him how she worked. Hopefully he wouldn't treat her like she was crazy. "My magic is tied

to my sex drive. If I use it again so soon after the last time, I'm not going to be able to control myself, Chase. I usually give my magic juice overnight to return to normal."

He rolled them over so that she was underneath him. His thigh slid between hers, and she moaned when he pressed against her sensitive pussy. "Out of control is not a problem for me." He nuzzled her neck and scraped his teeth against her skin.

She arched her neck to give him better access and moaned in appreciation when his mouth worked its own kind of magic. Damn, he had some serious talent.

Krista opened up her magic radar. It instantly surrounded Chase. It was different. It tasted like... like hers.

He gasped, and she felt his dick twitch against her stomach. "That feels like it has a hold of my dick."

The questing tapped into her core, and her body woke with a voracious hunger. She spread her legs and slid against his thigh. His fingers slipped between them. Two fingers slid into her, and he stroked deep.

Krista arched against him, but it wasn't enough. She needed. His lips latched onto one of her nipples and sucked it to a hard point before moving to the other one. She couldn't stop the magic from pouring into him any more than she could stop time or her body's hunger.

"It's too much." She heard the frustration in his voice. Knew what he meant.

"Sex." She was panting between the delicious flicks of his talented fingers. "Your magic is tied to sex. It tastes like mine."

"Really?" A grin split his face, and the fire in his eyes burned with heat. His thumb pressed against her clit, and she writhed under his touch. Orgasm stayed just out of reach. "How do I ease this pressure?"

"Orgasm releases the magic." She trembled under his touch. If he didn't do something soon, she was going to lose her mind. "Please, Chase. I can't..." She dug her nails into his back and took his mouth in a ravenous kiss that washed away any thoughts she might have had of control.

He put his forearms under her thighs and pushed her back, trapping her while he pounded into her moist depths. Every thrust hit a sweet spot within that had her toes curling and her muscles tensing.

Her magic unleashed, wrapping them both in another whirlwind of ecstasy. She couldn't hold back the fury, and it swept them over the edge. In that moment, his heart was an open book to hers. Part of his soul touched hers. Their magic mixed to form something completely new and beautiful.

He brushed a thumb across her cheek, and Krista was surprised to feel tears. The deep emotion in his eyes reflected in her heart. His lips touched hers tenderly, a light brush of skin. That sexy dimple appeared with a grin.

"What?"

"I guess you're stuck with me now."

She brushed a stray lock of hair away from his forehead and smiled back. "Why is that?"

"Well, if I need sex for my magic to work, then you've got to give me a ready supply of it in order to keep up the Kitchen Witch Society's public relations position."

Krista's heart tightened, and she ran her fingers down his cheek. "When you put it that way..." She trailed the finger down his arm.

He grabbed her hand and pulled it in for a soft kiss on each knuckle and then her wrist. "I can't wait to get started."

Krista laughed. He was going to be quite a handful.

Chapter Four

A small spark of light flickered on the ledge of Chase's balcony then formed into the ethereal Faerie who'd visited this same home for decades.

An ache of sadness welled up in her as the Faerie touched the French doors. They fell open without a whisper, and she stepped in to the welcoming warmth of Analise's -- the Faerie caught herself -- Chase's home. Analise was no longer of this world.

Her four hundred fifty-seventh birthday was fast approaching and time was starting to catch up to her. Magic didn't come quite as strongly as it used to. It would soon be time to leave this realm. Her only worry was Chase. The last time they'd sat beside the fire, Analise had made her promise to keep and protect her only grandson.

Cookies were set out on the coffee table with a note. She couldn't bring herself to read it just yet. This binding yourself to a human thing just drained the life right out of you.

A questing magic presence touched her magical aura, and the Faerie smiled. "I can feel you, little human. I won't bite."

The questing continued, but non-invasively. It was like it touched her power and surrounded it. Protected it. The Faerie turned to the newcomer.

Dark copper hair tumbled down away from a lovely face. The eyes, however, were her most arresting feature. They held love. Deep love. This was interesting.

"I wanted to see you before you left. I know it's not my place, but I have some questions about your magic and Chase."

The Faerie fluttered her wings lightly -- creating a small breeze that wafted the curtains in the air. "I will give you no magic."

The girl's face lit with surprise, then irritation. "I'm not interested in your magic. It's Chase. His magic has... changed." The pause was difficult for the girl. And by the burn of her cheeks, the Faerie thought it might be a bit embarrassing as well.

She flicked a wrist, and her wings disappeared. With a small flourish, she sat on the couch and delicately took a tea cookie in hand. "I'm guessing his change has something to do with you?"

"Yes. When we had sex" -- she cleared her throat, and the pink of her embarrassment spread to her ears -- "we somehow exchanged magic, and his magic tastes different. It feels different."

If his magic was different, she would know by taste. She bit a small chunk of the delicate cookie and chewed thoughtfully. Blissful deliciousness exploded on her tongue. The Faerie felt a strange weight lifting off her shoulders. She swallowed the wonderful confection. "You're right. It is different."

"You're smiling. Does that mean I didn't mess up his juice?"

The Faerie genuinely smiled at that. She could remember the first time the boy had called magic *juice*. It was a blink in time. "No, you didn't. Actually, you seem to have enhanced it. I gave him his grandmother's magic essence, what bit she left in her handwritten recipe cards. It was a transfer and was always meant to be temporary. Whatever it is that you've done seems to have taken that magic and allowed it to become his own." She took another bite and sighed in bliss.

"What does this mean for his Christmas magic?"

"It could mean anything. If you're feeding him magic, then he'll likely continue to cook well throughout the year."

"That's why you come here every year, isn't it?"

The Faerie was impressed with the lady's perception. "Yes. I recharge him for the next year. I give him a tiny kernel of magic, and it grows throughout the year. I can't give much, you know. Even that little bit could get me into trouble." She finished the tea cookie and smiled. "I just missed his grandmother's cooking so much. He was so sad, and it broke my heart. I missed his laughter."

"Do you ever watch him?"

"All the time. I have cable." She laughed at the surprise on the lady's face. "I'm a Faerie, not a cave dweller. It gives me a time reference when I return to the world."

"Huh. I guess that makes sense."

"Go back to him. He deserves all the happiness in the world." The Faerie closed the cookie tin and clutched it to her chest. A strange lump lodged in her throat. "It may be a while before I return. Now that he has you, I can go rest awhile, and recharge my own batteries."

"We'll keep cookies out for you."

The Faerie smiled. "I would like that. I lose track of time in my realm, though. It may be a very long time before I come back."

"Then our children will do the same."

Her wings released, and the Faerie glided to the lady. She placed one hand on the lady's abdomen and felt the true love in her soul. The future opened up before her, and she saw the love and happiness among a family. A beautiful future. She truly could go rest. Finally. "Blessings on you, Krista Carpenter. I look forward to seeing what you both bring to the world when I return."

With that, she disappeared.

Krista placed her palm over the warmth still radiating from the Faerie's touch.

"Hey, you." Warm arms surrounded her from behind, wrapping around her in a tight embrace.

She smiled and turned in his arms. The warmth from the Faerie's touch spread over her. Chase looked adorable in all his sleep-tousled glory. Her heart kicked up a notch when she realized how much he'd come to mean to her in such a short time. His hands slid up her back and cupped her face. "You're standing under the mistletoe, honey."

She met his lips in a soft and tender kiss. His tongue teased her lips and teeth gently nipped at the sensitive flesh. Arousal slowly stirred in her body, lazy after their exchange of magic earlier. He gently cupped her face and ended the kiss. "How was I

lucky enough to have you in my life?" Heat simmered in his gaze, but she could feel the sincerity of his question.

I can't believe I've now got two cheesy humans instead of one.

Krista laughed. "Don't let Sebastian fool you. He's just as interested in sappy movies as the rest of us."

The cat harrumphed.

"I think I just might love you, Krista Carpenter."

She held his palm against her face and turned to press a light kiss against it. "I think that might just be a good thing, Chase Hamilton." She scraped her teeth against the palm and watched a smoldering heat enter his gaze.

"I think I want to give you another kiss. That mistletoe seems to be some pretty potent stuff." His grin was wicked. "You're wearing entirely too many clothes."

Krista's breath caught, and she met his grin with one of her own. "Really?" She had on one of his T-shirts and nothing else.

His hands slid under the cloth and caressed bare skin. A tingling ache began deep in her core. He tugged the shirt up and over her head. Cool air tightened the nipples his thumbs brushed over. She slid her fingers through his silky hair and pulled him in for a searing kiss.

He pushed her gently against the doorframe and kissed her softly across her chin and throat. His hands warmed a path down her sides to her thighs. A hand cupped her sex, and she smiled against his soft hair. "I thought you were going to kiss me. I didn't realize that meant ravishing under the mistletoe."

He chuckled against the curve of her breast. "I don't think there's a limit to the number of kisses under the mistletoe." His tongue slid against a particularly sensitive spot on her hip, and she moaned in appreciation. Teeth scraped in that same area and liquid heat pooled deep within. His fingers slid into her wet heat and pulled out to swirl her slick essence around her aching clit.

Tension flared down her spine. A soft cry escaped when his fingers slid back inside for a flick of sensation.

"I love that sound." His breath blew across her mound, and she gripped his shoulders to stop the trembling in her limbs.

"What sound?" She had no idea what he was talking about. Every nerve was focused on the way his lips hovered just out of reach.

His fingers spread her wide, and a tongue swiped against the sensitive folds. Krista's grip tightened, and she tried to keep her knees from buckling.

He moaned appreciatively and looked up at her. His smile was wicked but there was something warm and amazing in his eyes. Something that drove away the chill of the night air. He held out his hands and tilted his head.

She slid her hands into his and let him tug her down to the carpeted floor.

His mouth and tongue immediately suckled and licked at her pussy. Between decadent sips of her body, he murmured sweet words and encouraged her to let go. Krista fisted the plush carpet, and her hips rocked toward his mouth.

One hand held her still while the other hand began tormenting her with slow thrusts of thick fingers. Tremors of raw pleasure shot through her at every touch of his skillful fingers and tongue. Tension coiled and built deep in her core, and she couldn't stop the small needy sounds that escaped her lips. The sounds of enthusiastic lapping touched her ears.

His talented mouth continued its torment. Lips closed over her aching clit and suckled while his fingers continued their flicks of decadent pleasure. His tongue attacked her aching bud and she arched. Fire raced down her spine, and she exploded in sweet ecstasy, trembling against him as her core clenched around his amazingly talented fingers.

He slid his fingers from her body with a soft caress of her moist flesh. He pressed reverent kisses up her body to her lips. She tasted her own cream and his unique flavor on her tongue. A dry chuckle erupted from her throat. "I think I like this mistletoe."

He grinned back at her and brushed her damp hair from her brow. "Merry Christmas, Krista."

"Merry Christmas, Chase." She wrapped her arms around his neck. "Now let's go back to bed. I have all kinds of wicked presents in mind for you."

His smile was just as wicked as the one she knew touched her lips. "The gift that keeps on giving, huh?"

She let her magic wrap around him. "All year long, if I have my way."

Good grief. Get a room already.

They laughed.

Dawn Montgomery

Dawn writes to give her mind a break from the voices clambering to tell their stories. She travels the world at the behest of the evil day job and keeps her nights for dark, lustful fantasies in and out of strange hotels and cities. You can learn more about Dawn by visiting her website at www.dawnmontgomery.com, and can reach her through her contact page.