

BARGAIN BY STARLIGHT



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Bargain By Starlight

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Bargain By Starlight

A short story of the Eververse

By The Sisters Price

Prologue

“That’s right. She’s the one with the white blonde hair. Now Carlo, I don’t want her harmed. Clean her up, get her showered, do what you have to, and get her to the house dressed and sober.” He listened to the voice on the other end of his cell phone. “Yes the Succubus tea I procured. It will keep her lucid and far from the cravings. And don’t tell Drake what you’re doing Carlo, I mean it.” He listened once again and smiled. “And I thank you Carlo. Well shall see what happens once she gets to the House.” He hung up and sighed, settling into the oxblood chair behind the large expanse of ebony desk that dominated the room.

As the premiere pimp of Russia, Dimitri had his world at his feet. The blonde sprite would fit in perfectly, if she would play ball. He was considering doing something he had yet to do in the eons of his existence, and it scared him. He got up off the chair and walked to the window of the study, looking out into the grounds that surrounded his mansion, white with new fallen snow, as far as the eye could see. The evening was good one for change, and he knew that if what he planned happened they way he wanted it, the change he’d been looking for would become a reality.

Tonight would be the first night he would actually meet her, speak to her, not just keep an eye on her from afar, and he was nervous as hell, which was a new experience for him. As a pimp, he was used to getting his way, and as she was a working girl she would play the part well in order to get paid. The trick was to get past that façade and down to the real woman he knew was there. Would she bargain? Probably, they all did in the end, but he knew she wouldn’t be satisfied with the standard, and that’s why he wanted her.

He looked at his watch and smiled. “Just a few more hours.” He said as he turned to leave the study, crossing the hallway to his bedroom, intent on getting ready.

Chapter One

The water was freezing she knew that much. She rose up to the surface of the bath's ice-cold water screeching. Her bare skin sported goose pimples and she shivered. It was the closest to being sober she'd felt in months.

"Fuck! What you never put hot water in your baths?" She shouted, cursing his mother.

The man shrugged. "I do, but it seemed like the best thing to wake you up. I assure you, you will get used to it soon enough."

She severely doubted that but saw no point in mentioning it to him. She wouldn't be here long, and if washing a whore in cold water got him his jollies then Alli was not one to grudge him. Fuck knows that she'd been through worse just to get her cash. He'd paid her up front which was always a surprise. The men in Russia always waited until after the trick, some paid on quality, most just tried not to pay. There was ways around that though and Alli had never thought twice about holding a blade to someone's throat to get her dues.

At least this one spoke English. It was funny, she'd been in Russia for three years and she still hadn't picked up on the language. She's learned a few words, could almost even string together a few sentences and sound authentic. But she didn't really want to know what they were screaming at her as they fucked her brutally. She kind of knew anyway, all men said the same old crap, it didn't matter what language it was in.

The truth was Alli didn't care anymore. The vast emptiness inside had, over the years, festered inside and taken her over. Her body and mind alike were numbing, unfeeling. Granted most of this was chalked up to her drug abuse but Alli liked it that way. Sleepily moving through the motions, walking the walk and talking as much of the talk as she could bear. It wasn't, in her opinion a wasted life, her life was never worth much to start with. She knew exactly how much she was worth, down to the Kopek.

"I have a proposition for you my dear. I need you to do something for me."

She rolled her eyes and licked her lips. "Umm, that's already taken care of baby." She giggled as her drug induced body recovered from the shock of the water. It pulled her back into her safe zone, away from her own thoughts.

He smiled and shook his head. "Oh no love, that was for your time. This..." he pulled out a bag of brown powder. "Is for your services."

Her eyes widened then narrowed suspiciously. Her mind sobered, clearing of all thoughts but of the bag. She had to have that bag, no matter the cost. She smiled. "That's a lot of junk you got their daddy... What have you got in mind?"

The man grinned knowing that he had her full attention. "Get washed, we'll discuss it when you're clean and ready to work."

"Baby, I'm always ready."

He smirked and threw a washcloth at her. "I would hope so. Wash your hair twice." He said as he walked out leaving her to do as he asked.

Not once did her mind and thoughts leave the bag. She could sell half of it and keep the rest to herself. Hell, she could sell three quarters of it and the leftovers would sustain her for months. She licked her lips and rinsed off.

It had been too long since her last hit, the cold water had done nothing for her. She started to shiver as she made her way, naked, back to where the man had undressed her.

“I don’t suppose you’d mind giving me a little taste?” She asked him hopefully. He smiled and shook his head. “First you must earn it.” He passed her a cup of hot liquid. “Drink this it will help suppress the cravings for as long as you need to.”

“What cravings?” She took a step back. “Oh no... not me. Look pal, if you want a fucking then that’s cool, but don’t you go and preach to me. I don’t do reformed and I don’t do cults” She looked around her, taking in the lavish apartment. There were crosses and golden holy objects everywhere. “Or whatever this is.”

“This isn’t a cult and I’m not a priest, before you mention it.” He took a deep breath. “To be honest I couldn’t care less if you drowned yourself on this stuff once you earn it” He threw the bag onto the table. “But when you’re with me I expect obedience. I need you strait for one and a half days. That’s 33 hours, which isn’t all that long, if you think about it.” She shook her head but he continued. “A lot of people would kill for this offer darling. I’m sure you would too.”

She wrung her hands, considering his offer. “What have I to do?”

He smiled none too nicely and thrust the tea into her hands. “Like it matters, darling you’ll do anything I ask, for an eighth of what’s in that bag. So first of all you can sit down and drink that tea.”

She took a tentative sip of the tea and spat the vile liquid out. “God that’s nasty! What the fuck is in that?”

“Its tea. Special tea, it’ll control the shakes and withdrawal.”

“It’s not going to kill me is it?”

“If I wanted you dead I would have drowned you in the tub. Now shut up and drink the tea, I’m not brewing another cup.”

Alli sat back and drank the pungent tea. With every sip it still tasted just as bad, if not worse, however it was starting to make her feel better. By the time she was finished she felt unusually good, even the cold from the bath had left her system. She sat the empty cup down as he handed her a white dress.

“You’ll wear this I think. Put it on,” He handed her a small bag. “And comb your hair, there’s some make-up in there you can use to make yourself presentable.”

She walked back into the bathroom and slipped the dress over her head letting it flutter down her body. It fit perfectly over her, clinging to her lean frame, showing off her body beautifully. It was expensive, nothing she could ever afford by herself, not like she would have had anywhere to put it. Being a homeless Russian whore was tough and dangerous. She’d never doubted that there were easier ways to live, but she was content to carry on that way. As long as prostitution kept her well supplied she didn’t care. Nothing mattered but the drug, her drug, her friend.

She combed her white blonde hair strait, hoping that it would dry sufficiently. It had been a while since she’d had the chance to wash it with shampoo, let alone lather it in conditioner. With any luck, once dry, it would shine for days. She gently applied the make-up using her fingers; she used a very pale base to match her skin, a small pop of

color on her cheeks and dark smoky eyes. She had to use the mascara twice over her long blonde lashes, to get the darker color to look the way it should. She left her lips bare opting for a little gloss instead, and then studied her reflection in the mirror.

She didn't look half bad considering she'd been lying on the streets for a few months. Her bright blue eyes still shone as brightly as they ever had and her hair had indeed taken on an almost unearthly sheen. It was slightly longer than she preferred it, but she had no way to have it cut short of doing it herself with a knife. One of the girls used to cut it for her, but unfortunately she had died, leaving no one with the skill to cut hair.

She smiled at herself and giggled as the Alli on the other side of the mirror grinned back. She shook her head, letting her hair fly about her face then walked back out to him.

He looked at her in shock. "You would be very beautiful if you took care of yourself girl." He handed her more tea. "Are you hungry?"

She took a gulp of the now familiar stuff. "No thanks, I ate yesterday."

He rolled his eyes. "Of course you did... humor me." He said as he sat down on the huge mahogany table and began to eat. She sat silently across from him and nibbled on a piece of toast.

Two hours later saw them driving deep into the heart of Moscow. She sat quietly wringing her hands; it had been too long since her last fix, although she was showing no obvious symptoms. His tea had seemed to work, even though her mind was still screaming at her, telling her what it wanted. She was working towards the prize. This was only a moment in time; it would pass, just like all the others. At the end of it all she would be sane again, or as sane as she'd ever been. Unfortunately for her current situation, moments of sobriety passed a lot slower than her moments spent under.

"Where are we going?" She questioned, not really expecting an answer.

He stopped the car and pointed towards a brothel across the street. "You're going in there love."

"And you?"

"I'm staying out here."

Alli sighed, "Your not going to sell me, are you? Because I really hate that." She asked, panicking slightly.

The man chuckled. "No, I'm not. I'm going to take you in and arrange you some work or the night. I've called them already they should be expecting us."

Alli grinned at him. "So that's what gets you off? Watching other men fuck me? You gonna cover their bills for the night?"

His eyes glowed in the light of a passing streetcar as he glared at her. "I think we both know this is not about my "getting off" as you so eloquently put it. Show me your arms."

She swallowed hard before holding up her smooth pale arms to him, a small bruise being the only indication that there as ever any puncture wounds to see.

"Excellent, there's no mark there at all." He stated plainly as her inspected her.

"I heal real fast." She explained, grabbing her arms back. "So I go in there, work for a night, and get my drugs how?"

“You’ll phone me on this, tomorrow morning; I’ll come and collect you.” He handed her a cell phone.

She snorted, “No offence but...”

“You have no choice whore, you’ll do as I say and you’ll take what you’re given.” He cut her off.

She bit her lip and hung her head, waiting for his next instruction. She would just have to trust the strange man and deal with the consequences.

Chapter two

True to his word, once again, he'd led her to the brothel and had her immediately accepted to its ranks. Not that she'd ever had a problem getting work in the houses herself. In the past, she'd found, that the problem was leaving their employment. All the good ones threw her out and all the bad ones... well, that was half a year of her life that she didn't care to relive. She was beautiful; when her face was free of make-up she looked like a child. When she wore make-up she looked like a sex doll, and she supposed that's what she was; a living breathing sex doll, picked up, used, abused and left back in the gutter. Not that she cared, it was how she made her fix and most times it was quick and easy.

The house's premier Madam was showing her around, talking in fluent Russian. Alli smirked, not understanding half of it. She knew the rules though; she didn't need them explained to her in English. The plump over-done woman was telling her that if she was caught stealing or using drugs then she would be out on her ear; most likely after the other one was cut off. She smiled and nodded as the woman expected when she turned around. Alli rolled her eyes as soon as she, once again, had the woman's back to stare at and god awful perfume to breath in. She led Alli up the stairs and into what seemed to be an attic loft.

The woman explained something about sharing and mentioned the time before walking off again. Alli frowned wondering if she should follow before deciding it was best not too. Sometimes it was better to leave crazy Russian women alone. She pulled a flask out of her bag and poured some more of the tea out. For all its vileness, she was getting used to it. She sat down on one of the beds in the cramped heated room and fell asleep, only to be woken some time later by screaming.

She jumped awake as the busty madam came in screeching something about lateness. Alli stood immediately and ran to her only to be slapped hard and dragged down the stairs. She tripped trying to catch up with the determined woman. Half way down the twisty narrow stairs Alli called for a called to the woman to stop. She halted so abruptly that Alli ran into the back of her.

The woman glared at her and swore loudly and furiously before dragging her back down the stairs. At the bottom of the stairs she received another harsh slap, the sound cracking through the halls. The woman said something to her in Russian then smoothed down her dress and practically threw her into one of the rooms before she could recover.

She blinked back spots, damn could that woman slap. She took in her surroundings for the first time; she was in a room full of girls like her. Well, not like her but they were all whores, of all shapes and sizes. She checked her face in the mirror and winced as the bright red welt made itself apparent. It would calm soon, however until then it would look pretty nasty on her pale flesh. She looked around curiously; clearly no one had noticed her, what must have been a spectacular, arrival.

The girls were all lined up and Alli shrugged and sat on the seat next to the line, not really wanting to be part of whatever she'd been thrown into. She yawned flexing her jaw, it really hurt and her head was a little light. She sighed, what had she gotten herself

into. This must have been how the clients chose their girls, she supposed that it made sense but the system of line-ups reminded her far too heavily of jail or high school gym. Neither being a particularly pleasant experience.

A man stopped in front of her and she concentrated on his shoes hoping he lost interest eventually. After about a minute of staring at his very expensive suede shoes he cleared his throat and asked her, her name. His voice was slick soft silk but demanding all the same.

She raised her face up to his and answered him in Russian. "Anything you want to make it daddy." She smiled and swallowed hard. The man was perfect, and in no way needed to visit a place like this. His suit was impeccable, black and obviously designer though she couldn't tell which one, with a pale blue shirt under it, and a silk tie with a diamond the size of a dime as a tie tack. He was high class, and she knew it. His soft brown hair was spiked at the front with sharp contrasting blond highlights; it added the illusion of movement and texture to him. Alli wondered briefly if it would be as soft to touch as it looked, to her it looked like silk. Dragging her gaze and mind from his soft lush hair she met his eyes. They were a healthy mix of forest green and soft blue, all intermixing on a bed of cerulean, which flashed with mirth and something darker as she met them.

He smirked sexily and cocked his head to the side. She licked her lower lip as he spoke something to her in Russian. He had formed it in a question but she had never heard the words before, she certainly wasn't being asked any of the usual questions. She blinked up at him, it was clear that he demanded an answer. She just didn't have foreknowledge to answer it.

She smiled apologetically. "I'm sorry. I don't understand; my Russian is pretty crappy."

The man smiled at her. "Sincerest apologies. I merely asked if your hair and eyes were naturally like that."

"Oh... well, yes they are." She beamed up at him.

"Perfect."

She frowned, "Perfect?" She looked around her at all the scowling women.

He winked at her and motioned to the Madame. "I'll take this one."

The Madame scowled deeply but nodded in agreement and even managed a smile for him. She then turned to Alli, and glared threateningly at her. Alli licked her lips and stood quickly, if anything to avoid another vicious slap. She grinned at the sexy stranger, "So, where too Daddy?"

He crooked a finger and beckoned her to follow. "Do you have a coat?" he asked absently as he walked to the front door.

She followed him, "Not really, there are some lovely ones on that rack over there. I'm sure they'll more than do."

He shrugged and offered her his, holding it out for her to put on.

She smiled and took it, letting him help her on with it. "Thank you. Are we going very far?" She asked eyeing the door.

"Let me worry about the details ok? I can assure you, you will not be harmed, and I think you may rather enjoy this."

Yeah, cuz I haven't heard that hundreds of times before. She raised an eyebrow skeptically, but held her professional smile firmly in place. She nodded, licking her lips. "Lead the way daddy."

He turned to her and smiled. 'Call me Dimitri, ok? The daddy business is for bottom of the barrel hookers, and you just aren't one of them.'

She chuckled and shook her head. *If only you knew.* "You got it, Dimitri." She smiled genuinely at him.

He led her to the car and opened the door for her, and helped her in. "Do you feel like dinner?"

She shrugged and smiled, "That would be great." She took a seat in the car.

Chapter three

They drove through the quiet city, its lights the only thing buzzing around them. Dimitri was happy that things were going according to plan. She was sober, and lucid, the tea helped immensely, and she did look quite fetching in the dress she was wearing, as he thought she would. The only thing he had not thought of was the coat, and he realized that as he didn't really need one to live in the harsh Russian winters, he didn't concern himself much with the fact that mortals and humans did. She was beautiful, and ripe for what he had in store for her. They had made it to a silent area of the city, to a small square where the snow was piling in drifts. The car stopped. She looked curiously out the window keeping silent.

"Its pretty is it not?" he asked pleasantly, trying to help her relax.

She nodded, "Yes, it's beautiful. Where are we? If you don't mind me asking."

"An old part of the City. Few tourists, its one of my favorites."

"I've never been here before, its lovely in the snow."

"The entire country is lovely in snow, it's why I love it so much." he smiled at her.

"Yeah it is." She turned to him and smiled. "So Dimitri, you mentioned dinner?"

Dimitri smiled and motioned to the small light across the square. "It's a perfect and intimate restaurant, somewhere we can talk, get to know each other."

"Know each other? Darling, you really don't have to get know me... you know that right?"

"And what if I wish to?"

The slight beauty shrugged, "It's your time D. We can do anything you wish."

He smiled at her. "Your mine for the next 12 hours, if not longer Sweetheart, So shall we?"

She beamed at him. "Anything you want Dimitri." and held out her hand to him.

He took it and led her into the building, making sure she stayed close the entire time. The restaurant was small, and dark, with candles lit at the tables, and a very discreet looking waiter in the corner. This was a place lovers went to. He smiled as they took their seats near the fireplace, their view to the square unobstructed. He ordered wine and then looked at her. "What do you wish to eat?"

She looked down at the menu, "Umm, I'm not sure; I'll just have whatever your having."

He smiled and ordered for them when the waiter came and then looked at her. "I have to confess something."

She blinked. "Really? What would that be?" She cocked her head to the side curiously.

"I went to the brothel specifically looking for you."

"For me?" She asked, surprise clear in her voice.

He winked. "For you."

She laughed, "Sure you did. Well, I'm sure you were looking for someone, Dimitri."

"And I was looking for you. You think it was chance that the gentleman picked you up last night and got you all dolled up, and sent you to the brothel?" he asked in a serious tone.

She raised her eyebrow. "Oh."

He smiled at her. "Exactly. So you were chosen and taken to the brothel."

He watched her face transform as a frown graced her perfect features. "But why."

"Because I have been watching you, and I liked what I saw." *And I like what I see now. Lucid, sexy, and sober. God your perfect.*

She laughed, "Watching me? You sure you've got the right girl... Dimitri?"

He nodded. "You think all those high profile clients you have had recently have been plucked out of the air?"

"Umm... high profile? You really have been watching the wrong person."

He chuckled. "Drake? Austin? Carlo? I know for a fact they have been coming to you." He smiled and thought of his three associates, Carlo, the man who picked her up, Austin, the guy who saw her most often, on his insistence, and Drake, his second in command who he was still kicking himself for sending to her. He wasn't the kinda guy he should have sent but he realized that too late.

Her face twisted into a sneer. "Drake?"

"He's in my employ, but let's not talk about him right now. I have a proposition for you." he nodded to the waiter as he brought them their entrees and then looked at her.

"A proposition... boy have I heard that already today. I'm still getting paid, right?"

He smiled. "Always to the point with you, I like that. Yes you still are. I would never make a woman spend time with me for nothing."

"No. I just... there was cold water and everything." She explained, clearly unimpressed with the memory.

He smiled. "Cold? Hmmm well if my offer interests you, then the cold wont bother you anymore pet."

"What proposition, and why? Why me?"

"I told you, I have been watching you, and I like what I see. You have it in you to be so much more. I want to help you achieve that."

"Yeah right..." She cleared her throat. "Look, this may be some kind of joke to you, but I just don't find it funny."

Her words sobered him. "No joke intended honey. I'm deadly serious."

"In what?"

"Your a rare find darling, anywhere, you have a light inside you that shines through what you put your body through." he gave her a knowing look. "You captivate me, and have for a long while. I don't offer to people who aren't worthy dear, and I find you above worthy."

"Worthy? My god, what was in that tea?"

He laughed. "Look you haven't touched your dinner pet, if you're not up to eating..."

"I'm not so hungry, I don't eat so well... sorry."

Dimitri nodded and stood. "Walk with me through the square then?" he asked, a tinge of hope in his voice.

She smiled, "Yeah, ok." and took his hand.

The check paid, they left, walking out into the night, the jacket firmly around her shoulders. They walked together, her hand in his, Dimitri in nothing but his suit jacket and shirt.

"Aren't you cold? It's like five below out here"

His smile reached his eyes. She was getting suspicious. "Nope. Never, I tend to get irritable in warmer climates so I stay to what reminds me of home."

"Home?" She asked curiously, as if not understanding the concept.

"I haven't been forthcoming, and I was hoping you would put two and two together and figure out what I am."

"Ummm, sorry, for being slow."

"Quite alright. I just had thought... Anyway, Look let me ask you a question." he said evading hers. "If you had a chance to do it all over again, from this point, and do it right, would you?"

That frown was back, making her face scrunching up adorably. "I don't think I can redo it all..."

"Fair enough. How about most of it?"

"Yeah, sure. I'd change it all, I suppose, but where that'd leave me I don't know."

He smiled. "And how do you feel about me? I mean I haven't been a complete asshole have I?"

"No, not yet."

"Again, fair enough." the look he gave her was softly pleading, as if begging her to not say no. Dimitri licked his lips and sighed. "I want you, as a companion."

"I get that but why? Why me?" She shook her head and took a step backwards.

"Who the fuck are you? If you like and want me so much, why the fuck send that prick Drake after me..."

The part of the conversation I hoped to avoid. "I'll admit; it was probably the wrong thing to do to send Drake, but... I can make up for that. You ask who I am, I'll tell you. Prince Dimitri, Third son to King Leviathan, Ruler of the Conglacio lands in the Afterverse. I'm a Royal Demon." he stood and waited for her to run, a very pained look on his face.

She blinked and gently touched his shoulder. "I knew a royal demon once, he wasn't like you."

The words made him look up. "Who?"

She shrugged, "Does it matter? I met him in Wales, he took me into one of his houses and when I outlived his use he brought me here and told me that I'd die on the streets. That was 3 years ago," She grinned viciously. "Clearly he was wrong."

Dimitri was appalled. "What that fuck?" then he knew. "A Celo." the statement seethed with anger. *A fucking Celo had his hands on her? Those bastards are not worth the illusions they create! And they fucking touched her!* The thought was enough to make his eyes burn blue.

Her head silently bobbed up and down. "I had to cut their brand off my thigh."

The words that came out of his mouth at her admission were nothing if not colorful. It was indeed rare for him to speak such in front of a lady, especially a lady he was courting. "I guarantee you my race is *nothing* like those good for nothing charlatans." his eyes flashed solid blue again then went back to his normal human appearance. "And your right, they are nothing like me. I can give you a life again, not take what's left of the

one you have and use it to my own ends. I'm offering you a fresh start pet, no strings attached, save one."

The blond wisps of hair moved as her head shook. "I don't understand, speak in laymen's terms. What are you offering, and what do you want for it?"

"I'm offering you a life, free from worry, with everything you could want, or need. I'm offering power, and freedom, a home, money, a stable place to work if you so wish it."

"Why didn't you just say that in the first place? I accept."

Her compliance to what he was offering filled him with gladness, but to be fair he'd have to make sure she understand just what she was giving up. His amused look said it all. "Without hearing my terms?"

"Well, I suppose I should hear them first."

He smiled. "Wise decision. I would indeed ask you clean up, and I mean completely, you're too precious for the poisons to consume you. Is that acceptable?"

The horror on her face once she realized what he was talking about was complete. "No! Well, I... I, I don't think I can... It's not possible..."

In two steps he was within reaching distance, and the feel of her face in his hand sent him reeling. "It is possible and it's a condition. Let me ask you, you have been sober about eighteen hours now correct? How do you feel?"

Her big blue eyes blinked, "I feel... Ok, I guess."

"And the longer you stay away the better you will feel. I can't have you all stoned to hell and back with any sort of power now can I?"

The lights from the square played in her locks as her head shook once more. "I guess not... But why me? There are dozens of girl out there... and if it had to be me, then why now? Why not last year when those cops threw me in jail? Why not last week when those two perverts..." She trailed off angrily. "Why now?"

"Because now is when I found you. Look I don't offer this every day, and I don't offer to just anyone. You are special. So do we agree to term one?" his voice went down to a barely audible whisper with the wind around them. "Say yes sweet one, and we can continue."

"I can try... but I've been on it over half my life, I can't really remember not having it."

"That was that life, the one I'm offering is a new one." he came close to kissing her and then pulled back and sighed. "Second, we have the little issue of bargaining your soul to me, in exchange for power, and everything I have said so far, and trust me pet, you will be very powerful."

Her body looked small in his coat as she shrugged, "Have it. I just don't care anymore, you'll have to check and see if I even have one."

He smirked. "You do pet, believe me. Well you agree to a bargain?" A book appeared in his left hand and he flipped it open randomly and smiled. "Now darling, say that you bargain your soul to me for a new life, complete with everything you never had. Say it and well be done with the first part."

She sighed and rolled her eyes, "I bargain my soul to you for a new life and all the crap you just said."

He smiled, and then frowned. "Seems we need a name here pet." the snow had begun to fall around then, the flakes catching in her white blonde hair, and her eyelashes.

He smirked. "New Life, New name don't you think?" he looked around and put his hand out, a few flakes landing in his palm and sitting, not melting. In the entire world nothing had ever stuck out at him as clear as this. He smiled. "I think I'll Call you Snow. Someone as beautiful and unique as you, well she deserves a name of equal beauty, and nothing, in my eyes, is more beautiful than Snow." he moved closed to her once again. "Do you approve?" he asked as he was once again inches from her lips.

Her grin was infectious as she looked up into his eyes. "Perfect."

They kissed as the snowflakes that hit the pages of the book moved together and burned the name into the page, a slight sheen to the letters. The deal was sealed, and he wasn't more relieved. He pulled back and smiled. "Welcome to your new life Snow. We have some work to do, but my dear lovely, you are now mine." *Mine, mine, mine.*

Finally.

Chapter four

Her kiss was welcoming and deep. "I may be yours but we still have a few hours, official time left." She pulled him down to her, so she could whisper in his ear, "So tell me please... how you managed to find me?"

A sexy smirk graced his lips. "Your purity called to me pet, and that's all you need know. The next question is mine. The mansion or an apartment? The choice is yours."

She laughed. *Pure? Oh fuck no.* "Apartment... I don't want to live on your lap all the time."

He smiled and produced a key from his pocket, handing it to her. "You'll never live on my lap Snow," *Gods I could just see that.* He thought as he spoke, his cock getting hard at the possibility of her on his lap. The highly erotic things he was thinking were never betrayed on his face as he continued to speak to her. "And everything is your choice. If you choose to work that's up to you, if not, that's fine too." Though he would rather her just be with him, spending time together, that would come later.

"I like work... It keeps me busy. But just exactly how pure do you think I am?"

"You'll understand what I mean one day pet. If you wish to work, then good. I have the perfect job for you."

Her smile was wide as she licked her lips. "Oh yeah?"

"Indeed. I run all the houses in Russia. The one you were sent to is one of mine. I want you to oversee a few of them for me. I sense a lot in you Snow, loyalty, ruthlessness, and determination. And I'm rarely wrong pet."

She frowned. "Ok... Do I get to slap that crazy woman back? Cuz that hurt, a lot."

"Anise is a good woman, but yes, if she's going to respect you, and take orders from you, you will have to."

Snow grinned happily, "That's all I ask. That damn woman has a hand of steel. So? I'm not going to get that bag of junk at all then... even to hold? I could sell it for a lot of money..."

He shook his head. "Money is not an issue love. We deal in sex and fantasy, not in drugs and the ruining of youth. You'll have everything you wish love, including money. By morning you'll have five accounts with your name on them, and every major credit card." he kissed her again. "I meant it when I said I'll take care of you."

She frowned, "Ok, so no saying bye to the good stuff. So..." She kissed him, "What now?"

He gave her a very heated glance. "Honestly?"

Her body shivered under its intensity and grinned, "Yeah Honestly."

"I think we should get you some power."

"And how would we go about doing that?" her body language was enough to show any man that she knew what he was talking about.

His growl echoed around the square. "I need to fill you up with power."

She took a sharp breath as her lower muscles clenched delightfully. She licked her lips and swallowed hard. "Well that does sound like fun."

"This isn't because I have you for the next few hours, and not because you won't say no, it's because I want you, want to feel your perfect body writhing while I take you Snow, I want you because you do this to me." he took her small hand and placed it on his erection. "Don't say yes because you feel you have to, say yes because you want this."

She watched his lips move as he talked, they were so soft and she would do anything to have them on her again. Licking, nipping and teasing her with their smoothness. He was cool to the touch as well, but as an ice demon, she supposed that was normal for him. She wanted everything that he was offering her and more, a way out, a way to end the numbness. A chance to feel.

She stepped into him, and looked dolefully up at him through her lashes. "Dimitri, you have me forever, not just the next few hours. And I do want this..." She squeezed him gently, her hand expertly massaging him through his pants.

The look he gave her said it all. "No, *you* have *you* forever Snow; you are in control of your life. So shall we retire to the apartment? Or to my mansion?"

"I'm easy, as long as the end result is the same... maybe the apartment. You could show me around?"

They turned and walked back to the car at a moderate pace. "If we make it to the Apartment. And yes, I would love to show you around."

Her giggle as she linked her arm in his was enough to floor him, and she knew it. She knew the effect she was having on him. "So, you're a prince... Is there like a castle?"

"Indeed, the Ice Palace in the Afterverse. It's beautiful." he said wistfully.

The astonishment on her face was apparent. "I was only kidding, but really? Shit! I bet it is pretty, all shiny and sparkles."

"It's the most beautiful place in the Afterverse. One day, I'll take you there and show you."

She nodded as they reached the car. "I'd love that."

He helped her into the car and got in next to her and hit the intercom. "Rocco, please take us to the apartment." he turned to her and licked his lips, his eyes diverted from her body, staring at her face. "You're not a whore Snow. You're a very opportunistic woman."

She smiled sadly; it was the nicest way she'd ever heard it said. Unfortunately she knew exactly what she was. "Pretty to think so, ain't it?" She laughed, "I've done things that would make most whores shiver and blush." She shrugged and took a deep breath. "Dimitri..." She shook her head. "I don't deserve all this. I'm moody and temperamental and unpredictable... I'm not all here... or there, or wherever the hell I'm supposed to be, I ain't."

He didn't look at her as she spoke, his gaze trained out the window on the streets they were almost silently driving through. "You need something I wish to give you Snow, a chance. You are sexy and wild and you're exactly what I have been looking for, for a very, very long time."

Her laugh was hearty. "Yeah, you haven't seen me when I'm menstrual... wild is one way of putting it, homicidal is another. Well, don't say I didn't warn you. It's out of my hands now, you had your chance."

"I'm counting on your urges love." he pulled her into his lap. "And I'm hoping mine aren't too demanding."

They kissed. "Oh, I think I'll manage."

He pulled her into a crushing kiss, letting his mouth go cold as he did. She groaned into him as she turned to straddle him. Her dress rode up her thighs. He pulled away and looked down at her and smiled. "We are here Pet... Shall we go inside?"

She pulled back from him and covered her disappointment with a grin. "Yeah... lets." She climbed off him let him help her up to the apartment, all the while keeping silent. The place was in an upscale part of town, again somewhere that she'd never been. He led her to the door and showed her in. It was tastefully decorated, if not a little bare. She could tell that nobody had lived here; it wasn't a home as such but more of a sleepover destination. Even at that it was still way better than what she was used to, it was perfect. She walked around silently, looking around but not touching anything.

"Well pet, what do you think?"

She grinned and continued to prowl, "It's beautiful."

"And it's yours. Change the decor if you wish love, everything goes on account. I'll handle it all. It's your place now."

All hers, she could hardly believe it. Again she got the feeling that this was all some sick joke. But she ignored it this time, instead of voicing her opinion. She licked her lips and walked over to him, "Thank you." She stopped within reach and smiled up at him.

"I'm glad you like it. My place is out of the city, but you'll have access to the mansion as well."

She nodded taking it all in. "Excellent."

"So?" he made his need a question, and she heard him loud and clear.

Her body reacted and she whimpered slightly, biting her lip. "So, where's the bedroom? I think I can skip the tour until a little later."

He smiled and crooked his finger and walked off down the hall.

Minutes later they were standing in the bedroom. "So, do you stay here often?"

His head moved from side to side.. "No, I was here a few weeks ago for a few days, I had clients coming in that got delayed, but I stayed at the mansion a good portion of the time.

"So... will you stay here often?"

He looked surprised. "If you want me to. Snow, I want you to know that sex with me isn't required for this arrangement."

"I know. You've said that already."

The blush that creped up his face was startling against his skin. "I just wanted it to be clear. I'll never force you to do something you don't want to do."

She chuckled, "Well, it's a good thing I want to do a lot of things then." She said as she chewed on her bottom lip.

"Yeah? Like what?"

Snow rose up on her tiptoes, gently brushing her lips against his soft ones. "Well, that's up to you to find out then, isn't it?"

He groaned. "You are intoxicating you know that pet?"

She giggled, and made quick work of shimmying out of her dress leaving herself completely naked. She sat back on the bed, the blue silk sheets framing her small body. "Sorry, nobody's ever said that. It's always, intoxicated."

"Never again Pet." he kissed her and crawled up on the bed. "Your beyond fetching you know that? Your skin is perfect, not a mark or blemish, your legs are sexy and long and I would kill to see you stalk around in five inch heels and nothing else..."

"Well, that can be arranged, I sure." Their lips met, and he nipped at her bottom lip.

She growled softly, and then grinned lustfully at him. Her eyes darkened as her nimble hands slipped under his shirt, expertly exploring his body.

Chapter five

He smirked and kissed her long and deep as she explored, getting him undressed. His kiss was explosive, doing so much more to her than any kiss rightfully should. She relaxed into him, letting her hands and body work him as he worked her. Soon she had his shirt off and was kissing and nipping down his neck and shoulders. His pants were half undone and halfway down his thighs.

He groaned, his hands on either side of her, letting her get the feel of him, letting her explore. He wasn't going to rush this. "Fucking sweet hell, that's it darling... "

She shivered nibbling on his sweet flesh. "You taste so fucking good D." She whispered to him as she pulled his pants the rest of the way, leaving him as naked as she was. She giggled and pressed herself against his cool flesh.

He groaned and flipped them over, giving her the position of power. "Like what you see Pet?" *Fucking hell I like what I see. Could you be more perfect?*

She grinned down at him, "Ummm, very much so..." She licked her lips.

His hands spanned her little waist and he noted the stark difference in their skin tone. She felt so good on top of him. His left hand sliding down and resting where her body met with his on his stomach, just above his groin. His fingers fluttered softly as they stroked her clit. "Gods you're so soft."

Her body bucked deliciously onto him, she was soaking. Just for him, that rarely happened to her, he could tell from her actions. It was amazingly sexy. She swung her hand behind her, grasping him tightly and pumping him a few times, getting a feel for him. He watched her worry her lip gently, "And so are you." She clenched her muscular thighs around him.

"Soft am I? You sure?" he picked her up by her tiny waist and settled her back on his erection, slipping her down easily, but forcefully. "Is that soft?" he groaned. "You're so wet."

Her whimpers echoed on the walls. "Oh Fuck!" She swallowed hard as her body began to ride him slowly, adjusting to his size. "Umm, not like that... hard like steel, but soft like silk. Makes me wanna wrap my lips around it, see how soft it really is."

"Later" he said to her statement, closing his eyes and letting go.

She giggled throwing back her head and riding him faster, her hand slowly squeezing his balls.

"Fucking hell baby! That's it... take it, take it all..." his body went cold as he bucked up against her.

She took it all, moaning wildly. He eyes were part shut as she rode him harder and harder. She started to slam herself down on his hard length, making sure he scraped against all her sweet spots. The sound of flesh slapping against flesh echoed around the huge bedroom mingling with the reverb from her whimpers. She swallowed hard, "Oh god... Dimitri, fuck... I'm so close baby." She panted as shook around him, her pace faltering slightly.

At her words he flipped them over in a swift motion and pounded her against the bed, nipping and biting her shoulders and neck, panting. "Ummm that's it come for me

snow.” His whispers were throaty as he pounded her, his mouth latching on a pert nipple as she arched under him.

“Fuck, Dimitri!” She screamed, coming hard around his hard cock as her legs wrapped around him, pulling him deeper into her convulsing body.

He groaned and breathed in her scent, so sweet, so damn pure; he followed her over and nipped at her skin. “Gods baby, you’re fucking incredible.”

“Ummm, speak for yourself D.” She panted, “I don’t think I’ve ever come so hard.”

He growled and kissed her, effectively silencing her. When he pulled away he smirked at her, he let his hands play idly on her gently curved stomach. “You are more than I could hope for Snow.”

She raised an eyebrow but decided not to argue with him, he was the boss, and she didn’t want to waste the energy. He knew what he wanted, and if he believed it then who was she to say otherwise. She decided to change the subject. “So... what exactly did you mean when you said that you’ll be counting on my urges?” She said blinking up at him with her clear blue eyes.

He was on his side and propped his head up with his hand and smiled before she could blink. “I think you’ll see soon enough. You have a very brutal nature pet, and I think that’s something you should be happy to exercise.”

Her eyes widened a fraction before she schooled her face to be blank. “Oh... and just how long have you been watching me?” She asked delicately.

“Long enough my sweet, long enough. So what shall we do come morning?”

Her movements were graceful. “Anything you want, I get the distinct feeling that my daily routine is going to change... a lot.” She answered frowning, she had no idea how she was going to give it up, she’d truly only considered it once and that had been many years ago. Even at that she’d only lasted a month before she was sucked back in.

He pulled her to him and cuddled her. “Shopping? The mansion?” he asked as he kissed her shoulder, his eyes closing.

She settled into him contentedly. “Shopping? Like for stuff?”

“Clothes, furniture, shoes, and I think perhaps a little time at the spa for you love. Anything you want.”

Ok, I think we can manage that. Can we get that evil woman with that hand?” she grinned excitedly. “Ooh, ooh, and the bastard with the cold water...” Her eyes narrowed maliciously. “I’ll show him cold water.” She grumbled.

He laughed at her exuberance. “In time yes, and don’t hate Carlo, he’s a pretty good guy. Now, about that power.” He turned her and kissed her soundly, his hand roaming from her naked breasts and back down her tummy, then disappearing between her half parted legs. He hissed. “Still wet for me pet?”

She gasped, spreading her legs further for him. “Ummm, it looks like it.”

He smirked and got to his knees and shimmied off the bed, grabbing her hips and pulling her to the edge. He smiled down at her and licked his lips. “Truth be told, I have never made a power bargain before Snow. Mostly it’s for the bare necessities, and you’re not that kinda girl. I want you powerful, but I fear I might overdo this.”

She whimpered, just watching him looking at her from that position got her off. It was true, what he’d said was true, she was soaking. She never got like this and up until

today she could have counted on one hand how many orgasms she'd ever had. She licked her lips. "Meaning?"

"Meaning I don't want to hurt you, not that you'll feel it yet, the orgasm is going to be mind numbing." He winked at her and grabbed her thighs in both his hands and pulled her to the edge of the bed, so that his tip was teasing her entrance. "Shall we give it a go darling?"

Her body clenched tightly at his words, and she smiled. "Ready as I'll ever be."

He leaned forward and as he kissed her slipped into her heat.

She moaned as he filled her tightly. "Ummm, god that feels so good."

He looked at her, his eyes going pure blue, and licked his lips, his skin paling out. "Gods you're amazing." He worked her slowly, letting her passion build, nipping and sucking at her tender skin.

Her hands clasped at his back pulling him urgently into her. He was so thick, and he filled her up so wonderfully.

His body stepped up the pace, pistoning in and out of her, and he looked at her again, his eyes still pure blue, his body growing colder.

She clawed at him deeper, moaning at the cold sensation coming from his body.

He growled and nipped at her. Standing straight again and fucking her harder, his hands on her hips, guiding her towards the release he needed her to have.

The change of positions floored her, or would have if she'd been standing. The words 'mind blowing' filtered through her head before all coherent thought became impossible. She screamed loudly as the orgasm hit her. White spots danced on the edge of her vision, as the first wave hit her. Her body moved and bucked of its own accord, leaving her nothing but to moan like the whore she was.

He growled and pushed his magic into her, filling her with the cold of the Conglacio, the perfect crisp of the Afterverse winter. The air in the room dropped, frost covering everything, including them, his power filtered back to him and he repeated the exchange with each powerful thrust of his body into hers.

She screamed loudly as wave after continuous wave of orgasm hit her, each becoming more violent as the next. She took in a rasping breath trying to save herself from suffocation as he changed her body. She could feel it; she could feel everything. It kept on coming each, adding to the intensity.

He was relentless, plunging into her again and again, when he hit his own breaking point. He came hard for her, his body dropping to subzero temperatures as he did, bending over to place his lips on hers, breathing the cold breath of his race into her, the final piece of the conversion puzzle.

She sobbed into his mouth, her body shaking deeply. Everything went numb, and when she breathed out everything went dark as she slipped into blackness.

Chapter six

Dimitri woke to the sounds of cars passing in the slushy street below the apartment's master bedrooms window. He looked over and smiled at his new companion, sleeping, he was sure, better and more comfortable than she had in years, if ever. She was bewitching, and perfect, and now she was all his.

When Drake had pointed her out after she had come to Russia, she was another lost soul, a piece of perfection that had fallen into the abyss of degradation. They kept tabs on her, as they did with all the new arrivals in their territory, watching to see how well they fared on their own, how they survived, and most of all, if they were worthy of the special conversation him and her had had the night before. There had been hundreds, thousands even in the past years, but never had he wanted one for himself. The bargain was always the same, a life, and a new beginning in exchange for their soul. It was rare he or Drake ever gave out more than the lowest form of powers, making the woman an Icio, able to withstand the rigors and harsh climate of Russia. Occasionally, when a girl showed promise, he would grant Glacies powers, but it was very rare.

After four years of surviving everything the world and fate had thrown at her, he had finally approached her. He had been watching her personally for the past year, watching her slowly kill herself with the poisons, and that was when he decided to make the offer to her. She would either take it, or she wouldn't, and he was very happy with the evenings result.

With his little pet though, he knew that he'd gone above and beyond with the power. She would be classified as a Glacies to other true demons, but he just knew she would be a tad bit more powerful, but he wasn't sure why. She would be a wonderful companion, and enforcer. He watched the sleeping winter sprite. Her hair had gotten paler, her skin, had a subtle translucence that made her otherworldly. She was beautiful, and sexy and deadly.

In the past four years she had taken care of her own messes, one a john that overdosed with her, and three, including those perverts she spoke of the night before, she killed with the efficiency of a seasoned killer, even though she was as high as a kite. No remorse, no attack of conscience when she came down. She did what she needed to do in order to save herself, and for that, for her strength, he decided to make sure she would never be a victim again.

He turned his body to hers and cuddled her as he had done after she had passed out, too power drunk to do much of anything else. She was ice cold, and had his power not been what it was, he would have thought her dead. The fact that she was so cold, confirmed that she had taken what he gave her and it was now a part of her entire being. He had slept in comfort knowing that she would indeed wake to a new life and embrace it. She was nothing if not a survivor.

He kissed her shoulder with his now warm lips and felt her stir.

She moaned, turning sleepily. "Umm, Dimitri?"

"Who else Pet? Sleep well?"

"Yeah, I did thanks."

His lips brushed her shoulder and a sigh escaped his mouth. “And how do you feel?”

She seemed to think about it. “I feel great. I really do.”

He hugged her small body closer to his and smiled. She would be just fine. “Hungry?”

She nodded “Yeah, I am... I haven’t been truly hungry in years.”

He turned her and kissed her. “Good pet, cuz I’m fucking starving. So why don’t we get showered and dressed, and well go for a big breakfast? I could go for strawberry crepes.”

“Ok, that sounds like fun.”

He loathed letting her go, but as the duties of the day were calling them, he figured it best. He got off the bed and grabbed a black silk robe and handed it to her. “Relax, you don’t have to get out of bed, enjoy it. I’ll be back in a few minutes.” He walked towards the bathroom and left the door open as he got in the shower, the water regulated quickly and soon steam was pouring out of the bathroom. For a Conglacio, Dimitri liked his showers hot.

A quick call to Sparta Day spa when he got out, booking her for a pedicure and a manicure, as well as a salt scrub and haircut and half the preparation work of the day would be done. The salt scrub would help get the impurities that the Succubus tea has missed, and would allow her to start her new life with no ties to her previous one.

The shower was relaxing and all too soon it was over, but in truth he wanted to get back to her. He walked out with a midnight blue towel around his waist to see her sitting up on the bed wearing the robe, watching him.

Her smile was beautiful when she turned it to him. “Have a good shower?” She asked him, still smiling.

He had dreamed of seeing that exact face for so long now. A year of more, her visage had plagued and graced his dreams, both beckoning to him and pleading with him. He could love her so easily, and he knew he was already heading down that path. “Would have been better had I had some company Pet, but we got forever for that, don’t we?” he smirked as he stalked closer to the sleigh bed. “Showers free if you want? And yes Pet, I did leave hot water... don’t worry, go and enjoy it, I have a few calls to make.”

“Excellent, but first I have a question, if you don’t mind.”

“Anything, love.”

“Well... I know you’re a demon, and now technically speaking so am I. But what’s with the ice?” She held out her hand and frowned concentrating on it and an ice cube sized piece of ice formed on her palm. “Is that supposed to happen?”

He smiled nodding his head. “Yeah, yeah that’s part of it. Once you learn control you’ll be able to make other kinds of shapes.” He said nonchalantly, not letting his surprise at exactly how focused she already was show on his face. He had indeed chosen well with her.

“Ok. I’ll see you in a little while” She stood and kissed him, then walked off in the direction of the shower.

He smirked and dried off, relaxing on the bed nude. His cell phone was on the side table and he grabbed it and called Sparta, then Carlo, to let him know that Snow wouldn’t be calling him this evening, then called his answering machine at the mansion. There was a message from his father, asking about a trinket he agreed to get for his

fathers mistress, and a short message from Sandor, the Madame of his holdings in Marrakech. As he hung up, Snow appeared from the bathroom, wet and unbelievably sexy. "You look completely relaxed." His smile was lazy as he laid his cell on the table once more.

She grinned, "I do? I feel kinda wired."

"Oh?"

She nodded. "Yup, like I drank a gallon of coffee. So, you mentioned food?"

"Um wired? Lots of energy? Ready for the day?" his stomach grumbled and he grinned. "And yeah I was thinking lots of food. I made an appointment for you at Sparta, manicure, pedicure, haircut and salt scrub, along with a full body massage, if that's ok with you?"

"Yeah, ready for the day. Ok, that sounds... like a learning experience."

Her response to his plans for the day made him smile. She was eager, and it pleased him. He rose from the bed and went to her, taking her chin in his hands and kissed her tenderly. "So food, shopping, then the Spa, maybe dinner with me afterwards?" he moved to the door to her right and opened it, revealing a closet with suits in it. He came out with a dress bag.

"Dinner sounds great." She answered, grinning at him.

He exited the closet with a dress bag in his hand. "I had hoped I could get you to wear this today." He opened the bag and pilled out a short Japanese style dress in midnight blue with delicate silver dragons sewn into the hem. He had bought it on impulse almost a year ago, seeing it and picturing her in it automatically.

"Ooh, I like... can I?" She looked up at him with childlike glee, adoration clear in her eyes.

"I would adore seeing you in it. I hope I got the right size." He gave her the dress bag and went back into the closet. "There's matching under things in the bag as well." He came out half dressed himself, with a pair of blue brocade slippers in his left hand. He smiled at her.

She squealed excitedly and opened the bag and started to dress. "I do like these."

He loved how she was reacting. When he had seen the dress he knew it would be perfect on her, all because of her eyes. He had hoped she would like it, and her reaction filled him with gladness. Odds are no one had ever bought her such a dress and that saddened him, as he thought back on the life she was living before him. It would all change for her now; she would be adored, and cherished. He turned and finished getting dressed, only to come back out of the room to see her standing there in the dress and shoes, grinning at him.

"So, what do you think? You like?"

"Stunning, absolutely stunning." He said as he looked her over and licked his lips, his body reacting to her instantly. *Fuck if this can't happen all the time. She was meant to be mine wasn't she?*

She giggled. "Thanks, it fits perfectly."

Yeah, he could see that. The dress hugged her slight curves perfectly, the length just far enough down her thighs not to be risqué. She looked regal, and beyond sexy. He looked down to her tiny feet in the slippers and then let his gaze crawl up her body till it hit her eyes. He showed her in his stare exactly what he was feeling, and none of it was anything but x-rated. "Well I think we should go to eat don't you? Otherwise I'm going

to attack you right here, and the days plans will never happen.” He winked and went to the mirror, to fix his tie.

Chapter seven

She stepped out of the limo that he'd sent for her. It had been just over a week since Dimitri had first picked her up, just over eight days since she'd last shot up. She felt good though, she kept drinking the tea. The tea was good; it kept her on the right track, the track that she'd promised Dimitri that she'd stick to. It was hard, but D had been keeping her busy with various things and tasks.

Her nails and toes were painted to perfection and she was getting used to being pampered. She felt good about herself, confident even. Ever since that first day at the salon, she'd gotten along well with everyone. She was even getting used to her new name, much preferring it to her previous hated one. She was Snow, and it suited her.

Dimitri had great taste in clothes and designer fashion, and Snow loved shopping with him. She could spend hours trying on different items, buying anything she desired. When she thought on it, she considered that what she gave up was a fair trade. Plus dinners and nights more than made up for any loss she may have felt. The man was insatiable, and fantastic in bed.

She loved spending time with him, even if it was doing something as mundane as his accounts, which she had picked up pretty fast. Snow had always had a head for numbers; it was how she'd picked up on the currency differences so fast, money was important and always had to be accounted for. Even housework was fun, when she would wash dishes he was never far behind her, nuzzling her gently, breathing in her scent. She could slowly feel herself becoming so much more than what she'd left behind. He was bettering her, his presence and goodness filling her, healing her almost. He made her smile and laugh, made her forget about all the pain and humiliation that she had locked away from the world for so long.

She used her key to get into his mansion. The place was huge, and she knew it had nothing to do with overcompensation for anything. She wasn't really sure why he lived in the huge empty house all alone. She understood that he would want to have room for the occasional guest, and plenty of room for more than one but the mansion had thirty odd large double rooms and twenty odd small ones. The only people to regularly visit was herself, the cleaning woman and the score of whores, his employees, that he offered the lobby to in order to stop them freezing over night. It just didn't make much sense to her for him to have such a big place. She made a mental note to ask him about it. Which was another reason Dimitri was great, he always listened to her. He sometimes even patiently answered her, if the question was worth answering.

He had a surprise for her, or so had told her on the phone and she was greatly excited to discover what it was. She called out his name, knowing he would answer her quickly.

His arms came from behind her and wrapped around her waist as he nibbled on her neck. "You got here quickly. Did you hold a knife to Sebastian's throat so he'd get here faster?" he chuckled and bit down softly.

She giggled and pressed against him. "Umm, well I do like surprises. But no, I sat in the front seat and scowled at him."

"Just as deadly." he hugged her closer and then walked around her to look her in the eye. "So? You want your present?"

"Yes, yes, I do... Is it wearable? Or a fur? Ooh, is it mink? Can I eat it?" She smirked excitedly. "Is it really for you?" She licked her lips sexily.

He laughed and shook his head. "No twenty questions love. Come." he walked her into the room he was in and pointed to the Doberman puppy sitting on the divan yawning. "Surprise Snowy."

Her gas was audible as she looked to him. "It's a puppy..." She giggled then frowned. "It is the puppy, right?"

"Last I checked that's what a puppy looks like." he grinned and motioned her over to it. "Go on Pet, make friends."

They kissed and then gently, she picked the sleepy puppy up. "Hey there baby," The puppy licked her nose, and she nuzzled him, holding him firmly against her chest. "Oh you're a pretty little boy then. All sleepy, my precious little baby." The pup nuzzled her chin, licking the bare skin on her neck. She giggled, "That's tickly little one, and do you have a name?" She aimed the question at Dimitri.

Her exuberance was infectious and the smile that graced his face was wide and goofy. "He's yours; I thought it appropriate for you to name him."

"Well, I think we should name him soot. He looks like he's been up a chimney." She giggled. "We used to have greyhounds and one was always..." she trailed off frowning, not quite sure what had brought up the memory. She never thought of the past, ever. "We'll call you Soot, little one." She kissed his soft fur, brushing her lips against him.

Dimitri smiled at her. "Soot then. He's got a bed in my room, and I have one other surprise. You ready?"

She grinned gratefully, "Yup..."

They went up the grand staircase to the second floor and down the hall past his bedroom, stopping at a door on the other side of the hall. He stopped and looked at her. "I hope you like. I got it I'm my head that you needed your own closets here and I got carried away." he opened the door and turned on the lights to show her a large bedroom with a huge mahogany canopy bed. The room was done in pearly whites and iridescent blues, the walls swathed in silk wallpaper. The carpet was plush, thick, soft and the color of midnight. He smiled at her.

"It's beautiful." Snow gasped, still holding the sleeping puppy to her as she walked around the room, turning to take it all in. The fact that he had went to all the bother just for her, she was honored. Nobody had ever cared about her as much as he had. "Oh Dimitri its perfect."

"It doesn't mean you have to sleep in here, but I thought you'd want your own place here." he looked at her sheepishly. "But I'm glad you like it."

"Oh I love it; you spoil me too much..."

"Think nothing of it. I'm glad you like the little one."

"Oh, he's perfect, and he'll be such a big boy. You can tell. Where did you get him?"

"Actually a client of Sandor's is a breeder. He was going to kill him, seems the little thing is a runt."

She growled, "Well he's better off with us then. The runt is always the one with the character."

"That's what I said." he moved closer to her and kissed her, the puppy grabbing onto his finger and gnawing. He chuckled. "Lets get this little one something to eat, and then the night is up to you Pet. What would you like to do?"

She leaned into him holding the now very awake puppy closer to her. "We should stay in; maybe share a bottle of wine? Play with soot?"

He smiled. "I haven't heard a better idea in weeks."

"Oh, I'm sure you have, you just need to think about it." She giggled and kissed his nose, gently nuzzling him.

His hand patted her ass and smiled. "Not now... we have a little one to take care of." he growled and nipped her bottom lip as they walked back to the grand staircase.

Chapter eight

She choked as she was spitting the dregs of nausea into the water, thankful that she had cleaned the toilet the day before. She had been sick the past few days running and had no idea why. Well she had a small idea, more of a niggling at the back of her head. She felt different, just slightly, and she had stopped taking clients more than five weeks ago. She flushed the toilet and brushed her teeth, before taking the test.

Recently she'd been feeling cold, something that she hadn't felt since her change. Something that she didn't think she would ever feel again. No matter what she did or wore, she could never get warm. She should have mentioned it to Dimitri, but the feeling was coming from inside of her, from her belly, no her womb. She needed to make sure that it was what she suspected. She needed to know before she told him

She did the test just like the box said. She covered it up and had to wait for 5 minutes. She sat in the lounge and picked up a magazine, flicking through it. Her mind raced over the possibilities; she'd always been so careful, no matter her drug addled state. You couldn't catch anything off a demon, they just didn't carry diseases like humans did, and she herself was clean. She hadn't stopped to consider the other side of the coin.

She was pregnant; she knew it. She didn't need a test to tell her. Just the thought brought dread to her, what if D didn't want it, she didn't even know if she wanted it. She'd be a mother, somebody's mother. The thought didn't completely repulse her. She giggled and smiled. They would be a family, of sorts, they would be happy. Her happily ever after.

Dimitri was wonderful, the best someone like her could ever have hoped for. The very thought of him made her smile, he always made her smile. Nothing he asked her to do was ever a bother. She had fallen for him, she knew, but how could she not? Her life had become a fairy tale, sure it was one with demons and whores, but it didn't matter. She had Dimitri now, and she loved him.

She was sure he loved her too; he'd worked his way into her heart. He was the first person she wanted to talk to in the morning and last thing at night. In his arms and his alone she felt completely at piece. She'd always had trouble sleeping in a bed, mostly because she knew that was when she was most vulnerable, when they came to get you. She'd never been strong enough to get past the childhood fears, mostly because they had been proved correct so many times before. Sleep had always eluded her, even in her most drug addled states. In Dimitri's arms she knew she was safe, nothing would ever touch her. With him sleep always came, she drifted off peacefully. If she ever had a chance of happiness then it would be with him, they would be a family together.

She stood to check the test, when the doorbell rang. She opened it to see Drake holding a red rose. She hated Drake. He was beautiful and sexy as hell, right up until he opened his mouth. She hadn't seen him since she'd turned straight; he'd always been rough and brutal. His suave looks would make a girl cry before he'd even touched her. He was tall, about six foot two and had a cock the size of his forearm, including his fist. His dark hair always shone so brightly and his eyes, the color of dried blood and coffee grounds, always held a keen intelligence that he rarely showed.

“Flower for the lady?” He smiled sexily handing her the rose.

She scowled taking it from him. “Thanks.”

He walked by her and into the apartment. “It’s nice; he’s changed it all around since the last whore he made his pet. Of course,” He pointed vaguely to a spot on the wall. “If you know what to look for you can still see the stains.”

Snow frowned staring at the wall, her mind refusing to process his words. “Stains?”

Drake nodded. “Yeah, where her brains ended up, it’s not important.” He waved her off then stopped looking around the room. “The TV used to be there, but that was when he had Colette living here.” He looked around more. “Memories of love made him change it I guess. Or maybe he didn’t want the perfect memory sullied.” He looked her up and down. “She’s a sweet one is little Cole, has all our hearts I guess. She’s so pure and untouched. For a pimp our D has surprisingly delicate taste, it’s a wonder he ever gets it up to test out those whores of his.” He said thoughtfully.

The words began to make sense to her. “What happened to her?”

Drake shrugged. “He let her go, like I said, he loved her. I suppose he didn’t want to spoil her purity..., which is why he’s got no problem fucking you. You’re already spoiled.” He laughed. “And boy are you spoiled, see the stories I’ve been told about you... It’s just plain disgusting.”

She bit back tears, her hand covering her belly protectively. Her child, Dimitri’s child, an unwanted by product of his lust for impure flesh. She felt sick again and it had nothing to do with the pregnancy, well almost nothing. Ignoring the taste of bile in her mouth she answered him. “I get it. And I know what I’ve done, thank you. I’d very much appreciate it if you left now.”

Drake smirked, sitting down on the sofa. “Well ain’t you all fancy, what you’re clean for a month and all of a sudden you’re Queen Mary?” He shrugged off his coat. “You do know that’s your purpose right? You’re a not-so-good replacement for something pure and dear to his heart. He loves her, with every fiber of his being, kinda sad if you put it like that though. I mean, he might be fucking you physically, but deep down, in his head, it’s her he sees.”

The tears spilled over onto her cheeks, she turned from him to wipe them. He stood and took her shoulders in his firm grasp, turning her to him.

“Are you surprised? You hardly expected marriage and kids, whore. After all, he’s a demon prince, and you... well, you know what you are.”

Snow sobbed silently, taking in a deep breath. She gazed intently at his shoes, avoiding eye all contact with him as she tried desperately to block out his cruel words, not to think about it. But he was right, she was just a whore, she herself had even warned Dimitri about her habits. She was unworthy of him, and now she knew that was why he stayed with her. Spoiled meat, he wouldn’t ever have to worry about the effect he was having on her purity, he never wanted her redemption, her self esteem. Just as long as he wasn’t the one who ruined her he’d be more than happy to pick up the broken pieces and keep them for play.

Drake laughed hard, continuing. “You really though that you might have a chance... well, fuck me. You think he’d let you kiss his kids with that mouth, whore? Come on... seriously, we all know where it’s been. It disgusts me that he even kisses you.” He lifted her chin up so that she as forced to meet his eyes. “I know you Snow, I

know all about you. You're nothing. You're a whore, of the sickest form. You don't do it because you have to... you do it because you want to; you enjoy having them touch you, forcing themselves on you."

She tried to shake her head, defend herself, but his grip stayed painfully firm. He shushed her, "It's ok Snowdrop, I don't mind." He laughed cruelly. "I don't care who you fuck and why, but Dimitri... well he's cut from a different cloth than you and I."

She swallowed hard and pulled herself away from him with a snap. She stumbled backwards, falling on the floor. Her tears ran salty hot tracks down her face as she all curled up protectively. "I don't, its not..."

"I know it's not Snowdrop." He said as he sat down next to her stroking her hair like a child. "It must be tough. You know having that hope taken away... you'll always be a whore Snow. Nothing else, never anything else but a disgusting, used whore." She sobbed wildly and he pulled her into his lap. "The drugs numbed that realization, didn't they sweetheart? Made you feel better?"

Her whole body shook, she was sure that she was going to be sick again. He turned her on him, his hand slipping under her white silk dress to her thigh. He lightly slapped her face with the other hand.

"Now I asked you a question. You may be a whore, but I know the prince has been teaching you manners. I really hate repeating myself; did it make you feel better?"

Her cheek stung and she tasted blood. Snow glared at him through her tears and his grip on her thigh tightened. "Yes." She gasped.

"Then why did you stop?"

"He asked me too... it was part of the bargain."

He smiled, seemingly pleased with her answer. "I do like you... maybe when he's finished with you he'll give me your leash. I think that would be fun."

She shuddered, and pushed away from him. The last place she wanted to be was in Drake's care; she'd rather be back on the streets.

"You know, I think that you should make yourself feel better. I mean if that's all your worth anyway, there's no point in pretending to be something your not." He pulled something out of his pocket and placed it in her hand. "After all it is owed to you, do with it what you will." He stood, and she curled up in a ball holding the weighty bag in her small hand.

"You know Snow, if I were you; I'd run. He won't come after you, he really doesn't care. Stay out of Russia, Germany's good, he has very few contacts there. I'll be seeing you whore."

He left the apartment without saying another word, leaving her to wallow in her own pain. At least he was gone and for that she was grateful. Her heart was broken, her body numb once again. Drake had ripped her out of her; she tried to picture this girl that Dimitri loved so much more than her. Snow hated the unknown pure girl, for whom she was only a replacement. The girl who could give Dimitri the pure wonderful children he deserved, who could kiss them lovingly and be the mother Snow knew she would never be, the girl that Dimitri truly wanted. She clutched the bag to her, her only life line in a sea of pain. She hated herself; her whole existence was pitiful. It always had been; she didn't want to be sober. She couldn't bare it. The memories, being used, abused... she couldn't deal with it. He didn't want her or need her. She was nothing but employee of

the month. Her heart broke and she knew just how to fix it. Her hands shook as she took her first taste in months, the forgotten test left unchecked and far from her mind.

Chapter nine

Dimitri hadn't heard from Snow in two days. She wasn't working, not really. She was, as far as he knew, just dealing with the main house's appointments, and making sure the girls got to their meetings and parties on time. He wasn't surprised that she took to administrative work so quickly; she was a dominant, and damn good at keeping the girls in line. Since he put her in charge the income of the house had doubled, and the clientele had become more upscale. The girls were now starting to take care of themselves without being told, and they were starting to respect themselves, something he knew only came with time.

Out of the house of twelve girls, there was at least two he could send right now down to Sandor in Marrakech or to Whitney in London, both his most prestigious and high-end houses. The clients weren't simply johns there; they were businessmen, baby boomers, decorated military heroes, politicians and Sheiks. That was where the real money was made.

If he didn't care so much for keeping Snow around him, he would have sent her to Sandor already, knowing that she would fetch quite a price in Marrakech, but Snow wasn't a working girl anymore. She had prestige, and backing, and more importantly, she had his adoration and affection. She was far beyond what he had hoped for in a companion and lover, and she was so innocent with her childlike ways, the fact that she adored him as well was a complete turn on.

He checked himself in the mirror of his bedroom one last time and smiled, knowing that she liked him in the shade of blue he was wearing. She told him time and time again that cerulean brought out his eyes, so he only wore it for her. He made sure he had the bouquet of Shasta Daises he had picked up for her, her favorite, before blinking to the apartment, where Nora, Snows second at the main house, had told him she was, apparently a bit under the weather.

He steeled himself for what he would find. No one in their employ besides Sandor and Drake knew that Snow had bargained, so no one knew that Snow couldn't get sick, not conventionally anyway. Her excuse could mean only one thing, and he was hoping to god he was wrong.

When she had agreed to his terms that night, he knew it would be hard for her, he knew he'd have to give her a reason to stay away. And he had thought he had. They spent almost all their time together, much to his delight, and she had come so damn far. If he lost her to the poisons he'd never forgive himself. He'd been so careful with keeping her away from it, and keeping her occupied. He thought she had kicked it; he had hoped so. She was too precious to him, and was rapidly becoming the center of his world.

He blinked into the apartment and didn't noticed much out of place in the kitchen or living room, but as he rounded the corner to the hallway that led to the bedroom and bathroom, he felt the cold. "Oh fuck." He breathed as he entered the room, quickly moving towards the bathroom and the epicenter or the temperature disturbance.

Snow was there, against the sidewall of the Jacuzzi tub, eyes closed, dress half off, dried puke and the mirror from the bedroom and credit card next to her. The cold was

coming from her. Power leaked with a half demon or new demon when they were intoxicated, and that was his second reason for making the deal of not drugs with her before the bargain. He sighed. "Snow? Fuck baby can you hear me?"

She moaned and rolled over, her head hitting the floor with a loud crack. She muttered something unintelligible, and then shivered.

"Oh Fuck! Don't do this to me Snow I fucking mean it!" he shook his head and gingerly picked her up, turning the water on full blast heat, knowing that now that her powers were cold related, the opposite would work on her, and in less time. He growled and put her in the shower stall, the five heads surrounding her pumping out heat very quickly.

Losing her now would kill him. Seeing her in this state was somehow different then when he'd watched her before, now he knew what she was like without it killing her slowly. She needed to come back to him, needed to want to be with him. She wasn't moving as they were under the spray and that twisting feeling of despair was wrapping around his gut. Nothing mattered, nothing but waking her up. *Please baby, please pick us, and pick me.*

That was when a whimper and gasp escaped her mouth as she bolted upright like lightning hit her. "Fucking, killing me!" She screamed in a voice that cracked.

"There you are baby... ease down... come on..." he pulled her into his arms and held her cooling her, knowing the heat was already burning the poison out of her body.

She tried to twist away from him, tears running down her face. "No! Want!" She said as struggled to get out of the stall.

He growled and held her firmly by the shoulder, his eyes changing color. "Snow! Focus! Baby, eyes on me come on." He turned on the water on again, not as hot and held her in it, cradling her in his arms. *Please baby don't do this to us...*

She sobbed still fighting him. "Lemme go."

"If I let you go Snow," he said in an even tone, "that's it. No more apartment, no more job, no more me. Please baby, you chose me before you knew me... Choose right again."

She shook her head and sobbed, "No, I want you... but can't have you... ever."

"You have me Pet, you have me, and I'm here." He held her closer. "Baby please, ease down." *Please don't let me use her.*

She shook her head and stopped fighting him. "It's not fair."

"Ease down Love, please... Snow, please." He felt her slump on him. "Baby, you better be awake."

She sighed and clung to him. "I'm awake. Awake and cold... and burning, why is it so warm?"

He chuckled. "I needed to wake you up Snow, and for an ice demon, heat does it. You need bed darling, to heal." He started to feel better. She was coherent, and she was making sense, and best of all, was not asking for the junk. She chose him, chose what they had.

She sighed again. "I'll live."

"You will Darlin, come on." He picked her up and carried her to the bedroom, and stripped her down throwing her dress and underwear into the wastebasket. She stopped shivering, obviously from the heat burning the poison out, once he pulled the silk sheets up to her shoulders. He was wet as well, and stripped off the suit he had chosen

especially for her, and looked at her. “Don’t move.” He went to the closet and grabbed his robe then come back and sat next to her, needing some questions answered before she slipped into a healing sleep. “Where did you get it?” he asked quietly. “Why did you do it?”

She shook her head and turned her back to him. “What does it matter?” She answered from her ball like position.

“It matters to me Snow. I’m not getting into it with you, Just tell me who.”

“It was Drake.” She whispered almost inaudibly.

He shook his head as she confirmed his suspicions. Drake had been actively counseling him about giving “the Whore” as he called her, up. He didn’t think much of it, chalking it up to Drake feeling the need to protect him, but now, well now they would have to have a very, very long talk about respect. “Its ok baby...Is there anything else in the apartment other than what’s in the bathroom? Don’t lie to me Snow; I won’t be so understanding again.”

“No, that’s it all.” She answered shaking her head and sobbing again.

“Ok pet, sleep, don’t worry, I’ll be here when you wake up.”

She nodded her understanding but continued to cry, wrapping herself up in a tighter ball.

Dimitri moved closer to her and kissed her on the head then went around her and held her, letting her cry, feeling her temperature regulate as she drifted off to sleep. He blinked off the bed and into the bathroom and cleaned up, flushing the rest of her stash and getting the clothes from the wastebasket and taking them out to the hall and sending it down to the garbage incinerator along with the mirror and credit card. He could always get her more. He walked back in to see her sleeping peacefully and got dressed in one of the suits he kept in her apartment, and then went to the living room to make a call he wasn’t excited about having. Drake picked up on the second ring.

“Good morning.” He answered cheerfully.

Dimitri sighed and tried to relax. The last thing he needed was to wake Snow up. “Where are you?”

“Over at Sandy’s, can you believe the things that girl can do with a fork and a can of coke. It’s uncanny. So what can I do for you today?”

He bit back the laugh; he wasn’t going to let Drake get to him. “Don’t even think about leaving.” He hung up and grabbed his sunglasses and blinked to Sandor’s veranda.

Chapter ten

Dimitri looked in to see Sandor get out of bed and leave through the main suite doors, which was just as well, Dimitri didn't want to burst her bubble. The Strigo princess thought the sun rose and set in Drake's pants for other reasons than what was on the surface of his volatile and callous associate, and as she was indeed a sad and reserved creature, he didn't wanna ruin the illusion for her. He watched Drake come around the thick opaque curtains, wearing nothing but a pair of black silk pants. He pulled his sunglasses off. "You have some fucking nerve." he said quietly.

Drake raised an eyebrow, "What now?"

"Who the fuck do you think you are Drake? Honestly?" he turned and shot an ice shard at Drake, catching him just above the knee. "Memory coming back to you now, you fucking dickhead?"

The ice demon growled his hand clutching at his bloody knee. "What the fuck was that for?! Seriously, that's damn sore."

"That was a warning shot. Start talking you fucking prick or the next one takes out a major organ."

"Talking about what? Fuck D!"

He shot another at him, taking him in the shoulder. "Fuck, my aim is off. Drake, last chance, next one goes for your eye"

Drake cried out and fell to the floor clasp at the shoulder. "You son of a bitch! Tell me what you want to know! Shit, guessing games are too hard for a demon of my limited intelligence."

"Limited intelligence my ass you fucking jack off. This is me you're talking to. Your mind is just as calculating as Cash's. Why did you give it to her?"

"Her? Oh the Whore... I was doing you a favor D; it didn't even take long to break her. No loyalty to you or her promise, what-so-ever."

"That's none of your fucking business!"

He sat up, his hand still pressed to his shoulder to stanch the bleeding. "It is my business. That's what I do; I guard you... even from yourself."

"Fuck off Drake. You guard me from things when we are *not* topside. So, fucking can it! If we were home, you'd be put the fucking death for harming a Royal concubine! And the only reason why I'm not killing you, you prick, is because of Sandor." Well that, and as much as he hated to admit it, Drake was his best friend, and he needed him.

Drake blinked and his face went blank. "Oh, very well then, if that's the way it is..."

"Don't give me your shit Drake. She is mine, a fully bargained mine, I'm not letting this transgression slip..." he let his voice trail off. "Stay the fuck away from her Drake, I fucking mean it."

"Understood, but for what its worth I didn't hurt her. But I would to protect you... Cash would agree; she's not right for you. She'll give in to it soon enough, with or without my help. Don't get too attached."

Didn't hurt her? What the fuck is he talking about! He gave her the shit! He thought but kept his emotions carefully guarded. He would have to watch things from now on. "Just stay the fuck away from her." he blinked out without another word, ending up back at the apartment. Drake would heal yes, and rapidly, but he would think twice before doing anything again. Dimitri realized it was the first time he'd ever attacked someone, and he knew the reason why, as he walked into the bedroom and saw her sleeping peacefully. He smiled, happy she was still there. She had made a choice this night, and happily, it was him. He walked out of the bedroom to living room and settled in to wait for her to wake.

Chapter eleven

Snow's head was killing her. She couldn't quite remember what exactly it was that had happened but she knew it was bad. She felt hazy as if someone had sandblasted their way through her head. Slowly the memories of the past few days filtered through her. Her conversation with Drake, the drugs, the baby. *Oh god*. The cold feeling was gone.

Her stomach flipped and she ran to the toilet barely making it in time. She threw up thick, yellow bile, violently into the white bowl. The hot tears streamed down her face; whether it was from the force or Drake's stinging words she wasn't sure. She sobbed hard; she couldn't have done it, not now. Not ever. The thought of bringing a child into the world terrified her. She wouldn't even have known how to raise it, she was never shown how, and she refused to be like her parents. Not like that mattered now, it was gone

She sobbed hard; she felt empty, and she supposed that now she was. It was for the best, she couldn't possibly have hoped to raise a child into sane adulthood. A demon one at that. She hated herself but she knew she was right; her life was no place for a child

She felt him come up behind her and gently lift her hair out of the way. His cold hands rested on the back of her neck, cooling her instantly. She wanted lean into him, but she couldn't, it was fake, it was all-fake. She could live with fake; it wasn't like she'd been picky in the past.

He waited until she'd finished before her spoke, "I was hoping you would wake soon. Are you ok?"

She sighed, "I'll live, I guess. Are you?"

"I'm fine." he handed her a towel and smiled. "After that I'm sure you wanna brush your teeth." He chuckled. "Are you hungry?"

"No I'm ok, thank you." She answered shaking her head and sitting up. She took some mouthwash from him in a cup, swished and spit in the toilet.

His arms wrapped around her waist and hugged her. "You sure you're ok?"

She nodded solemnly, against him. "I'll be ok, I'm just a little shaken." She said quietly.

"Understandable. Look I don't want to talk about it if you don't baby. And Drake won't be around for a bit, he needs to heal up."

"Do you mind terribly if I don't like him?"

"Baby *I* don't like him."

She nodded again, her face still buried in his shirt. "Ok." Her silent tears soaked through to his skin.

"No tears baby, no tears. Come on." he picked her up and carried her to the bedroom, laying her down on the bed and turning the light on. The room was full of the inviting smell of Shasta daisies and yellow roses.

She smiled weakly, "How's the pup?"

"Sooty is fine. He's in the kitchen eating." they heard the little pup's nails clattering on the ebony wood floors as it found its way to them.

The puppy jumped clumsily onto the bed, and began to lick her face. She petted him lightly, feeling his velvety fur against her hands. She stared at the corner of the bed, avoiding making eye contact with Dimitri. "I think that I maybe need a little time off, if that's ok?"

"Understandable baby. Would that time off involve me?" he asked quietly, the puppy coming over and gnawing on his hand.

She shook her head. "No, I could never deny you, if you still want me." She swallowed back bitter tears.

He smiled. "I never said I didn't want you did I? Your too precious to me not to want." he moved closer to her and ran his knuckles softly along her jaw. "You so beautiful you know that?"

"No," She said quietly. "I'm used and damaged and spoiled." She started to cry again. "I'm also bad company."

He sighed and kissed her forehead. "Please don't cry love. Your fantastic, and sexy and beautiful, and your mine." he cuddled her to him. "So where would you like to go for this impromptu vacation? Somewhere warm? Somewhere cold?"

They sat in a perfect embrace. "Anywhere, I was thinking of just staying here."

"Then here is where we shall stay Baby, me, you and the dog." he kissed her on the cheek and cuddled her closer. "For as long as you need."

She nodded, cuddling him back, trying to decide whether to tell him about the baby or not. She sighed, "Dimitri, I don't want to live here by myself anymore."

"Then you won't have to Baby. What would you wish? Me here or you with me full time at the mansion?"

She winced slightly as he called her baby, but quickly covered it. "The mansion, I think."

"Anything you want Snow, and Soot will like it more, there's more room for him, and he's got a backyard."

She smiled and nodded, "Yeah, I think he will." The sigh that came out of her was a sad one. "I'm sorry."

"Its ok love, its ok. We all make mistakes." he held her close and sighed. "The trick is to not repeat those mistakes."

Her perfect and silky hair twirled as her head moved side to side. "No, it just made me feel worse. I feel really crappy."

"And you will for a while. The toxins...." he sighed. "I could arrange a Spa day for you, if you wish? It will make you feel better."

"No, thank you. I don't really think it'll help, it's just my head that's a little messed up." She smiled. "Not much change there then, but give me a few days and I'll be right as rain... whatever the hell that means. It's just a little shock."

He nodded. "Anything you wish love."

"Vodka?" She asked hopefully.

A sexy smirk was evident on his face. "I think food first love, then I'll make you a cocktail and everything will be as it should be."

"I'm still not hungry... it would just come strait back up. But it we're being healthy I suppose I could go for some tea." She again smiled weakly, trying to find some way to tell him.

"And I know just the thing pet. Stay here while I get it ok?"

She nodded, "Okey-dokey."

He kissed her gently then smiled again, the relief on his face was clear to read. His smile and action warmed her again, filling her up. Snow remembered the way he held her in the hot shower even though it was clearly hurting her, the suit he'd had on was clearly for her, just the perfect color for him. His voice had been so scared; he hadn't wanted to lose her. She was even sure that she'd heard him pray softly, and for a demon to pray to god for help. It had truly pained him to see her in such a state, to even conceive of losing her. He needed her, whether she was just some stand in replacement or the love of his life, Snow didn't care. He was with her and she needed him as much as he needed her. He completed her and she loved him unquestionably.

Epilogue

Dimitri looked out the windows in the bedroom he now shared on a daily basis with Snow, watching the woman of his heart and her black puppy, now four months old, playing in her namesake. Things had gotten better for them once she told him about losing the baby, and while he was sad about the situation, it was for the best, neither of them was ready for that in their lives.

She had been completely clean since that fateful day, and he had kept Drake far enough away, dealing with the houses outside of Russia and staying with Sandor. Sandor, he knew, was tickled to have her lover around. Dimitri didn't care much either way, but if it kept Snow happy and from backsliding, he wasn't going to change it. He knew that one day soon she would have to confront Drake, and if she got up the courage to do so, Drake wouldn't stand a chance. He might be a full demon, but Drake didn't possess the power or the focus Snow did. It would be interesting to see him cowed, especially from the woman that he hated so vehemently. He just hoped she would do it before things got out of hand.

It was in their both best interest not to talk about the situation that took place at the apartment. For her, he was giving her another clean slate, and for him, well he didn't wanna know why she did it, word for word, or he would kill Drake, and as much as that was probably the best thing, he didn't want to bring it to that. Things were good now and they were going to stay that way.

Dimitri smiled as she looked up to the window and waved. He opened it and laughed, watching the dog tackle Snow to the ground, and lick her face. "I think Sooty wins Pet." He said from the window, feeling the biting wind hit his face, caressing like a lover. They were happy here, in the frozen wasteland of the north, two people who beat the odds. He grinned and closed the window as she crooked her finger at him, and blinked down to her. One moment he was in the bedroom, the next, using the mystical Ley lines under the mansion, he was standing at her side. He fell to his knees as he put his hand out to help her up and she instead pulled him down. His suit was ruined, he knew, but it didn't matter, the delight in her face was more than enough to stave off any anger.

The possibility of losing her was enough to get him to examine what he felt for her. He went up against his best friend for her, and that was something he never thought he'd do. If that wasn't love, he wasn't sure what was. He'd been holding back telling her since he'd figured it out, but seeing her out there, enjoying the life they had carved out of the ruins of what they were before, all he wanted was for her to know.

Snow pulled him down to her, capturing his lips in a kiss. He smiled when it ended, the puppy sitting next to them and whining. "I think he might be cold love. We should take him in." he said and ruffled the puppies fur. She smiled and nodded at him, then let him help her up. He pulled her into his arms as the snow began to fall; just like the night she bargained to him and kissed her sweetly. "I love you Snowy." He said as he nuzzled her neck, the snow clinging to their hair, un-melting.

“I love you too Dimitri.” She giggled and cuddled to him. He smiled at his beautiful companion and reached down, lifting her from under her thighs and picking her up, as she wrapped her legs around his waist. He laughed and kissed her, looked down to the pup and motioned to the house. The dog ran ahead and barked, and Dimitri, carrying Snow, followed slowly, a lazy smile on his face.

About the Authors

Stella and Audra Price are multi-published, award winning authors of the Eververse books, including many not yet in print. They have opened the minds and hearts of readers and reviewers alike with their tales of Were-snakes, Satyrs, Djinn, Unicorns, Fallen Angels and Demons, and live daily in the Eververse.

Sisters, they are bi-continental, and spend the bulk of their time bringing their books to life. They are currently working on the next few books in the Eververse series simultaneously.

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Tease Publishing Titles

Eververse Series:

Sugar and Sin

Silk and Steel

Frost and Flame

Masquerade

Leather and Moonshine

Smoke and Mirrors

Wishes and Dreams

Redemption

Starlight and Midnight

Lord and Lady

Dragon Elementals Series:

Fire in His Eyes

Deep Water

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Twilight Skies