



Scarlet Rose

*Delicious
Darkness*

KyAnn Waters

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by

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Dedication

To my real life hero, Sean.

I thoroughly enjoyed *Delicious Darkness*. The psychic connection that Audra and Dorian had before they'd even met was fascinating. And once they did meet? Their physical and emotional bonding was electric, with sex so intense; the words fairly sizzled as I read them.

I was fascinated by Audra's spirituality, and how her white light illuminated every aspect of her life. KyAnn Waters put a unique twist on her story by including Dorian's chakra cleansing by Audra, a spiritual aspect that might have been touched on in previous stories, but something I've never read in any detail before. All in all, I found *Delicious Darkness* to be an altogether compelling and enjoyable read and am looking forward to reading more delicious fiction from Ms. Waters in the future.

Reviewer—Bella
5 Angels—Fallen Angel Reviews

Delicious Darkness is a short story with intense spiritual and metaphysical overtones, and a high concentration of sizzling sensuality. Dorian and Audra communicate their mutual fantasies through their emotions and thoughts just as strongly as through their physical contact; but their sensual intimacy is also very powerful. The ending will gratify readers with its promise of hope. Author KyAnn Waters definitely has proven to be a writer to keep an eye on in future.

Reviewer—Annie
4 Hearts—The Romance Studio

Chapter One

The hairs on the back of her neck prickled. Stomach clenched. Heartbeat escalated. Her nerves tripped, sending an intuitive message to her brain, the instinctive need to do whatever was necessary to survive danger.

The whispers echoing in her mind forced her to turn on every light. Put a match to white candles. Her hand trembled as she smudged the room, burning sage, cedar and sweetgrass to dispel negative influences. In a practice as innate as breathing, she protected herself because once again she was the hunted.

Outside the windows of her metaphysical book and gift shop, dusk had settled. With the night came her anxiety. This was *their* time. Physically and mentally powerful men not of her world, men her instincts told her were deadly under the canopy of an inky black sky.

Standing in her shop, Audra Quinn closed her eyes and visualized white light emerging from the *crown* chakra—the energy point located at the top of her head—engulfing her to the *root* chakra—the heart of her femininity.

He was coming, and she didn't have the fortitude to resist. He wasn't the first, yet he was different. As long as she could remember, she'd been their fixation. Only never before had she wanted to succumb.

Audra's gift of empathic abilities protected her from men like the one whose imminent arrival loomed closer. She had the sensation of his heavy breath on her skin. Heard his beating heart. Sensed the darkness dwelling within him. Audra had always been afraid of the dark.

Her breathing became shallow. This man was more powerful than the few who had come before. She couldn't remember her awareness ever being so palpable. Nerves quickening into frenzy, her heightened senses told her to flee. No! She didn't run anymore. She was strong enough to withstand his influence.

Yet, tonight the darkness seemed more relentless. And never before had it made her blood pump through her veins like the raging rapids of a wild river.

He was different.

She didn't need to turn around to know that he was there. He had come for her.

Standing just inside the door, he could not disguise the darkness that lurked within, not from her. Audra's powers remained focused. They had to be. Showing him weakness would increase his strength.

Hypnotic, ice-blue eyes locked onto hers, and the impact hit her in the *solar* plexus, the spiritual center. He took a step closer, and the energy moved into her *root*. The heat dampened her panties and engorged her clit. She tightened her thighs to quell the ache. Hardening into tight buds beneath her shirt, her nipples strained for the touch of his hands. She closed her eyes only to visualize with perfect clarity how it would be for his long blunt fingers to touch her heated flesh and part the swollen lips of her pussy.

A moan broke from her lips. She leaned against the counter. Blood pounded in her ears. Sweat beaded on her brow. Her legs spread of their own volition. He was there, and yet he wasn't. She could feel him pressing into her. His thrusting cock stretched her, pushed past the barrier of her innocence and claimed her as his own.

Audra's eyes flew open. *This was his intent.*

At her body's responses, she questioned her ability to shield herself. More disturbing was her uncertainty that she wanted to. Attempting composure, she cleared her throat.

"Can I help you?" It was the wrong thing to say because it was clear in her mind that he intended to help himself. To her.

The light in her small shop couldn't penetrate his aura. He moved in shadow amid the incense, crystals and new age books. He passed Egyptian statuaries, Indian incense burners and tarot cards on his way toward her. He neared the back wall with shelves stocked with Kama Sutra creams, oils and powders. The candles she'd lit burned brightly, flickered, and then extinguished, smoldering in his wake.

Her chest constricted as he stepped around the counter. Nothing between them but sexually charged kinetic energy.

His desire spiked her arousal, and her arousal increased his desire. Always before, she had been able to remain steadfast in her determination not to succumb to the temptation of the men who came from the night. Tonight she wouldn't. Every cell in her body cried out to this man...to the darkness in him.

Large and statuesque, he stood well over six feet tall. Her eyes raked up his long legs, past his thick muscled thighs encased in black denim, and rested on the swelling evidence of his hunger behind the faded fly.

Shoulder length hair, dark as the shadows from where he came, brushed the collar of his open leather jacket. He wore a tight T-shirt that made her hands twitch with the need to run over the contours of his broad, powerful shoulders. His deliciously disturbing scent, masculine and spicy, hit her senses with the impact of a tidal wave.

Butterflies filled her stomach as his hand reached out to touch her. She weakened, and her knees buckled. His blatant desire hammered into her thoughts in relentless telepathic images. Erotic images wreaking havoc on her will. She'd never encountered such a virile man. Only he wasn't just any man.

Dorian Hunt could not believe his good fortune. The woman had hair of the sun nearly white with golden highlights and eyes ringed with fire, yellow and crimson striations dancing in amber irises. Her beautiful eyes reflected her intelligence. The angle of her pointed chin showed her pride. Full lips had the slightest upward tilt and hinted at laughter. Her translucent flesh glowed. As he hoped, she was unblemished and *untouched*.

He'd searched a mere thirty-two hours for her. However, it had been nearly a week since he had mated, seven days too many.

Finding her in a quaint shop of candles and self-help paraphernalia had been fate. She surrounded herself with objects of light and protection. That didn't surprise him. Magical men from his realm who were able to shift

dimensions would've sought her out for their survival. Her energy was strong...stronger than he'd ever felt before.

However, her charms to keep him away were pale forms of security. Though waning in strength, he was still formidable. The woman would not be able to protect herself. He smiled. Intuition told him she didn't want to.

In the past five years, he had known two others with the same coloring as this woman. With a heavy heart, he acknowledged his fault in their deaths. The risk was unavoidable, but he hadn't a choice. He needed a woman of white light. Although he tried to protect the others, he'd failed. This time would be different. He would have her tonight, tomorrow and every night forward.

Basking in the golden glow of her innocence, the woman radiated goodness. She was smaller than other women of white light. He could span her waist with his hands, and her narrow hips would need to spread to accommodate his size. She would spread them. She must.

Yet, he could feel within her a hidden source of power. Never before had a woman of white light been able to resist his magic. Nonetheless, this woman struggled to keep him from her mind. He sensed her body's response. She was different, intriguing him beyond simply meeting his needs.

Dorian inhaled and pulled the intoxicating scent of her creamy cunt deep into his lungs. His tongue swelled with the craving to fuck her with his mouth. She was his mate.

He clouded her mind with images of them together. Blood pumped into his cock, making him as hard as steel. Although she responded, he was shocked to discover he was unable to pull her completely under his spell.

He cleared his thoughts of everything except that which he needed from her, a complete bonding. He focused on merging both body and mind. She was his lifeline. In order to survive, he needed to possess her.

Flaring his nostrils, he sucked in more of the sweet smelling pheromones secreted by her skin. Her response confirmed what he already knew. She was empathic, special, and she would be his.

"I was just getting ready to close." She gripped the

edge of the counter.

Hearing the nervous pulse in her speech, he stepped closer. "Good."

His word hung in the air between them. Her eyes widened with understanding. He had to break into her thoughts. His need to lose himself in a woman of white light took precedence over everything else.

He extended his hand to her. "Allow me to escort you home."

She took a hesitant step back. "Thank you, but I can manage."

He heard the hitch in her breath. "It's late. You shouldn't walk alone in the dark."

"It isn't far."

He had to touch her. As she attempted to step around him, he reached out and wrapped his fingers around her delicate wrist. Closing his eyes, concentrating on breaking through her resistance, he filled her mind with explicit, erotic images. Those of his mouth lingering on her cleft as he tasted the nectar of her arousal. He licked from anus to clitoris driving her to release. When she vibrated with the pressure to come, Dorian filled her with his cock. Her body trembled as she reached for climax. "That's it Audra, let go," he urged.

She opened her eyes, her body still humming with unreleased sexual need. "How do you know my name?"

"I know everything about you. Please, call me Dorian. It's my name. Before this night is over, you will know me."

A sigh escaped her slightly parted lips, and he knew she'd accepted her fate.

With all the candles snuffed out by his will, shadows concealed them. Dorian laced their fingers and led her from behind the counter. Placing one arm under her knees, he lifted her in his arms and carried her to a couch in the corner of the shop, obviously a place where her customers could peruse books while enjoying a complimentary cup of coffee or tea from the urns on the sidebar along the wall.

Her arms slipped around his neck as she pressed tightly to his chest. Perplexed by her actions, he wondered if perhaps he had completely broken through her resistance. Her mind was stronger than any before her,

but then his skills and powers of persuasion were impressive.

Like Audra, his magic was his protection. However, he weakened each day without the physical connection to a woman of white light. Fucking gave him strength. So when her fingers channeled into his hair, he tightened his hold, pulled her close and gently brushed his lips against hers.

Audra knew Dorian thought he'd orchestrated the seduction. Be that as it may, in twenty-six years her blood had never boiled like this. He consumed her thoughts, but he was not controlling them. She could sense his frustration. Good. He frustrated the hell out of her.

With the first touch of his lips, her mouth opened, and his tongue snaked inside, traced her teeth and sank deep. Flavors blended. Smooth and hot strokes quickly became a tangled frenzy. He opened wider. His low groan rolled between them. She sucked his bottom lip into her mouth and nibbled. Heat from his kiss set her flesh ablaze, and she trembled in his embrace. He didn't move fast enough for her awakening desires.

"Dorian, don't be gentle." She wanted the images playing out in her mind to become reality. Right now, the scrolling visions had her bent over the back of the couch while he pounded into her from behind, the pleasure so acute the sensations bordered on pain.

For the first time in her life Audra wanted to make love, and with a man from the night no less. She wanted his cock touching the top of her core. She wanted the taste of his seed to float across her tongue. Feverish for him and his delicious kiss, she angled her head and took the kiss to profound depths.

Colors flashed behind her closed eyes. His hand stroked strong and sure up her spine. His perfect technique pulled a moan from her chest. He ate at her mouth while setting her on the couch.

She needed more.

Confusion melted away and instinct took over. Her hands were seeking, her body, in quest, arched against Dorian. Whatever initial fear she had, morphed into need. She'd never laid her hands on a man, at least not

intimately. Her skin heated where she touched him, but she wanted to feel his rippling muscles beneath her fingertips.

Dorian sat next to her on the sofa, and Audra ran her fingers up his powerfully built chest and onto his thick shoulders. She pushed his jacket off. It fell to the floor, and he reached behind his head to pull off his T-shirt.

Audra's eyes riveted to an enticing amount of black hair covering the muscular expanse of his bronzed torso. With her fingertip, she followed the trail down his corded stomach. He trembled beneath her touch. The thin strip disappeared into his jeans. Brazen in her action and feeling an elemental attraction to this stranger, she pulled at the snap of his fly.

Dorian stilled her hand, covering it with his own. "You will be bound to me."

Not if she could help it. But she would face that later. Just because he inspired complete abandon, didn't mean rational heads couldn't prevail with the morning. Tonight, however, instinct would reign. She would be his. In answer, she leaned forward and tasted his flat nipple. Quivers vibrated his stomach.

Dorian growled, stood and hauled her up. His fingers threaded through her hair. Heads tilted. Mouths mated, and his hot tongue slid boldly against hers.

They parted. His hands tore the front of her shirt open. Buttons clattered to the floor. Shoving her bra out of the way, he bent and fused his mouth to her taut nipple, sending flashes of ecstasy straight into the walls of her sex. Arching her over his arm, he took her breast into his greedy mouth. His tongue drew circles around the puckering areola, and he finished his assault by nipping at the crested peak with his teeth.

His fingers touched the crystals hanging around her neck. "Your stones are as beautiful as you."

Sitting on the couch, she spread her legs for him. "I never take them off." They were part of her protection. One stone correlated to each of her chakras and kept her balanced.

Bare chested, he knelt between her thighs on the carpet and wrapped a hand around her ankle. After slipping off her sandal, his fingers traced the curve of her

calf. He inched her skirt up her legs, caressing behind her knee. Then he gently kneaded the muscles of her thighs.

She wanted him at the juncture. Pulsing and engorged, she needed him to ease the discomfort. His eyes glazed over as she lifted her hips so he could slip her cream-coated panties down her thighs.

Where was her fear and carefully built resistance? It seemed her body was his to command and it knew his orders. Liquid warmth flowed through her core. Melting into the cushions, she waited for what came next. She'd already experienced the fantasy in her mind. The hot throbbing between her legs needed the actual soothing comfort of his velvet tongue, not just the mental imagery.

"Dorian," she whispered just as his tongue slipped between her dewy lips. Images flashed in her mind. With perfect clarity, she saw what she was to become.

Moving his face back and forth, he licked the folds of her heat-dampened pussy. Audra's hips came off the couch, thrusting into his mouth. Her thighs quivered. Muscles tightened. Sucking hard, he pulled her clit into his mouth and pressed his tongue against the nubbin then slid back and dipped into her hole to lap and taste.

"Please!" She edged ever closer to the dark abyss on the other side of this elusive precipice of total bonding. Clutching fistfuls of his hair, darkness closed in on her mind. He stole her life force with each quickening pulse of her orgasm. Then his mouth was gone, leaving her in a trembling void, wishing for more, wanting all of him inside her. She closed her legs as he stood before her.

"It is too late to go back." He unzipped his jeans and pushed them over his hips, taking his black, silk boxers with them. His large erection jutted out from a thick thatch of black hair. The crown glistened with moisture. The shaft was dark in color with a thick vein running along the underside. He reached down and cupped the wrinkled pouch hanging beneath. She licked her lips and wondered how he would fit.

"We will match," he said, reading her mind. "Have you not discovered we have already bonded?" He touched her cheek and urged her to move back on the couch.

Then, leaning over her, he braced his weight with his arms and sealed their mouths. Stroking his tongue over

hers intensified her need for him. Her own essence filled her mouth as he deepened the kiss.

Audra pulled back, breathless. “Dorian, I can’t wait. I can’t wait.” She had waited her whole life for the one man who completed her. Because she believed someday he *would* come, she turned away all others. Somehow she had known she would recognize him empathically. She narrowed her eyes on Dorian. Everything in her said this man of darkness was her spiritual mate.

The glorious head of his cock on the swollen flesh between her legs made her impatient. He lubricated his shaft by pressing into her an inch, pulling out and sinking again. Her body stretched, encouraging deeper penetration. Her breath caught in her throat.

“Oh, yes!” It seemed as if he would split her apart, but she relished the discomfort, recognizing an intrinsic need that would finally be satisfied.

“Relax, love,” Dorian whispered, kissing her brow.

Audra took a long steady breath and willed her internal muscles to accept the intrusion.

“Perfect.”

She sucked in sharply as he fully buried his shaft. “Dorian.”

She couldn’t have predicted the mating of minds at the first full thrust. Like a shattered mirror, she saw fragment images of his past, intense sorrow, fear—she squeezed her eyes closed tightly—horror, but also exquisite pleasure. Emotions and memories merged yet didn’t form a complete picture. She focused only on the pleasure and the unfamiliar sensation of his heavy sack nestled against her rear. Yet, the painful pieces clutched at her heart. Tears welled in her eyes.

“Easy.” Dorian’s kiss soothed and cleared her mind. Fear of the unknown dissipated, and intense heat radiated between them. The discomfort lessened as he slowly withdrew from her body and reentered. Their joined bodies fused together and crested with the ebb and flow of a building wave. The walls of her sex gloved his cock, and the barriers within her mind collapsed. Too late, she felt as he felt. His emotions were now hers. And with the overwhelming pleasure came devastating loss.

Her hands clung to his tapered back. Tears fell from

her eyes again. Now, she understood the pain he endured in coming to her. His soul was black, and joining with her filled him with light, made him strong again. He needed her to survive.

Audra clutched him tighter.

Long steady strokes slowly brought her to the pinnacle of climax. She wrapped her legs around his hips, arched her back and sucked him deep.

Muscles bunched on his forearms as Dorian leveraged himself to watch his shaft, slick with Audra's pearly cream, slide into her pussy. His lungs expanded. Blood flowed swiftly through his veins. His cock grew harder. As he rammed into her sweet cunt, he anchored himself to this world.

Mating with a woman of white light breathed new life into his being, replenished his strength. However, mating with Audra heightened his experience. She cleansed his soul. Her mewling spurred him to thrust harder, faster. He wanted her to break apart in his arms. Every cell, every strand of DNA shifted frequency. But unlike before, where he simply renewed his strength, Audra changed *him*.

Numbed with the intoxicating taste of her on his tongue and the sweet scent of her arousal filling his nose, like a drug his body tuned to hers and became dependant. He didn't have control, not of her and not of himself. Their frenzied mating didn't quench his desire. Whatever hidden strength existing within this woman overpowered and consumed the darkness to fill him with light. Stars exploded behind his eyes in a blinding radiance. With certainty, he understood that to lose her, he would cease to exist.

In an irrevocable act of possession, he clenched the muscles in his ass and surged a final time. Hot seed spurted from his cock. Waves of release bathed her womb, drained his energy and left him limp.

Slipping from her sheath, he stretched out, lying against the back of the sofa. He pulled her into the circle of his arms. "Understand, you are under my protection. To leave me now would end your life."

Chapter Two

“I want to understand. Who are you?” Audra nestled into Dorian’s arms as they spooned on the couch. Her body still vibrated with the desire to mate again. If it weren’t for the tormented images she’d seen in her mind while he was buried full hilt inside her, she’d reach out and stroke the hardening flesh pressing into the curve of her rear.

His hand moved from her hip and spread her cheeks to nestle his cock. Her head swam with indecision.

“You already know, but I will explain so you completely comprehend our bond. You give me life.” He rocked his hips against her.

The heavy pulse between her legs echoed in her ears. Focusing on his voice became increasingly difficult. She gave him life, but what of the changes happening within her? “What are you?”

“Just a man, but I am not from your realm.”

Audra heard the smile in his voice and hoped it didn’t stem from arrogance. Getting naked with a man based on instinct might seem like loose morals, but her virgin status should be proof enough tonight was different.

“When I entered your shop, my presence was not unexpected. I could see it in your eyes.”

“I knew what you wanted.” What she still didn’t understand is why she gave it to him. Her magical charms hadn’t been effective against his strength. Normally, she could keep the darkness at bay with smudge sticks and crystals.

Tonight they amplified his appeal. Chakra points within her hummed with awareness. More than knowing he had come for her, she had waited with bated breath anticipating his arrival. Ignorant of what form he would take, she had only known he would be different. And although at first afraid, it had been impossible to fight the natural desire building within her being.

“Tell me where you come from.”

He chuckled. “We share the same world only on another frequency. Haven’t you ever shifted dimensions?”

She shook her head. Perhaps she hadn’t because instead of exploring her potential, she chose to use her gifts for protection. “I wouldn’t even know how.”

“You are a magical woman of white light in a world filled with goodness.” His fingers absently stroked her side as his voice washed over her. “My world is one of darkness. Audra, you couldn’t understand the dichotomy of our existence.”

“You could explain it to me. Not every woman is an empath. Is it the same for you?”

He shrugged. “I’m stronger than most with my gifts. Which is probably why you’ve haven’t been used before.”

She stiffened. “You won’t use me either.”

Dorian tightened his hold. “You know I didn’t mean that in a disparaging way. Simply, that without a joining I wouldn’t be able to remain in your dimension.”

She relaxed again, taking comfort in his warmth. “So why are you here?”

“I was young and naïve when I swore my loyalty to our overlord. At the time, I thought my purpose noble, to be the right hand of my leader. Once I discovered the truth, I was bound to my duties. He is cruel, ruling with tyranny...and I am his general.”

She closed her eyes. His soul was indeed black, and she had experienced a mere glimpse of what he was.

“You have special talents,” he continued. “Mine were never used for principled reasons. When I could no longer live with myself, I committed the ultimate act of perfidy. I used my magic to escape.”

“And the others like you, that are here, have they escaped for the same reason?”

“No, some are rogue. They aren’t any better than the overlord. They just refuse to do his bidding.” He gently kissed her shoulder. “But some are like me,” he said softly. “We know your kind. We seek a mating in order to remain in your world. Once a woman of white light reaches maturity, she becomes an anchor.”

Audra turned her head and glanced at Dorian. “Until you, I protected myself. Tonight, there was something

different in my response.”

“Yes. I felt it, too.” His hand possessively wrapped around her waist and pulled her closer. “With the white light in you, I remain strong and powerful. A link exists between us like I’ve never experienced before. As long as we’re together, you’ll be safe and I’ll remain in your world. But know this Audra, I am a traitor. Bounty hunters seek me as a reward. Their only objective is to return me to the overlord. Dead or alive. However, dead I will be much easier to manage.”

Thoughts of Dorian’s death constricted her chest. Already the connection altered her way of thinking. “Tell me about your world. Is it different from mine?”

“Your sun is bright, and your world is filled with light. Where I come from, a shadow looms over us. The sun never reaches the soil. Not everyone has the gift of magic. For those who don’t, it is a very oppressive life.” He grew quiet and held Audra tighter. “I could no longer exist as I did. The acts I participated in ate at my insides like a disease. Although I prefer night to day, I have changed. Five years ago, I used my magic to escape. As long as I mate with a woman of white light, I am too strong for the bounty hunters. Should I fail to mate, within one lunar cycle, I would be unable to defend myself.” He tangled his hand in her hair and then let it slip from between his fingers. “I would not be able to protect you.”

“Five years?” Somehow, she’d thought she was as unique to him as he was to her. Knowing he had other women to keep him strong and anchor him to her world caused a streak of insecurity. “So you’re involved with other woman?”

“I have mated with two others.”

She stopped her own contemplations and concentrated on what he said. Two women, how would he have time for her?

The thought tightened her stomach. Jealousy was a new emotion for her, especially after only knowing Dorian for an hour. She didn’t like thinking about him tasting another woman’s lips, let alone sliding his enormous cock between another’s legs. He spoke of a bonding. Perhaps it was time she bonded him to her. “Where are the other women?”

“The bounty hunters murdered them in hopes of denying me the ability to maintain my strength. They will attempt to kill you, too. If they succeed, my life will be over. They will either kill me here or take me back for a public execution.” He touched her cheek. “The other women of white light were not with me when they met their deaths. Otherwise, I would have protected them. That was my error. You and I will not separate but remain together at all times.”

She sat up and pushed away from him. “I’ve known you for an hour. I’m not about to give you my life.”

“I will protect you,” he stated as if her outburst held no relevance to their ultimate conclusion.

“I can protect myself. I’ve been doing a fine job of it until tonight.” She ran her fingers through her hair combing it back behind her ears. “How can you protect me? If these bounty hunters have killed your other women, how do you expect to protect me? You can’t be with me every moment of every day.”

A shadow crossed his features, and it struck her then how unnaturally easy it was for her to see in the darkened room. Part of why she feared the dark stemmed from her inability to see. She preferred bright open spaces.

Dorian had already begun to change her. Her life force dimmed with each connection they created. The bonding seemed to be in his favor. How much more would he take? She didn’t want to be a lifeline of convenience. She hadn’t waited her whole life for him only to get nothing in return. She wanted a piece of his soul as surely as he had taken part of hers.

Two other women had bonded their souls to him. She would not be a third. Either they risked equally, or she would use every last ounce of willpower and walk away.

He let her slip from his arms. “I know it is difficult to believe.”

“No, it isn’t difficult at all. I trust my instincts, and I trust my visions. I know you are what you claim. I also see into your soul. Dorian, it frightens me...more than the dark.” She turned away and gathered her clothing. “You need me. That isn’t the same as wanting.”

“You question my desire for you?” She glanced at his

thickening cock. Arousal didn't appear to be a problem. His superior attitude most assuredly was.

"You didn't steal my free will tonight." She splayed her arms. "I knew what was happening. I sensed your frustration as much as your lust when you first entered the shop. I allowed you in because I wanted you more than I feared you. I've never felt like this before. But I could've said no." She finished dressing. "I'm saying no now." She tied the front tails of her shirt together to cover her breasts.

"Impossible." Growling, he ran his fingers through his wavy hair then fisted them at his sides. "You don't know the cruelty they are capable of inflicting. You are mine to protect. Do not deny it. At least empathically, you understood the risk."

"The only thing I've ever been able to count on is my ability to read emotion. I allowed you to get close to me because I knew I could love you." She sat next to him. "You said I would know you by morning. I know you now. We were one when we—" She stumbled on the words made love. "*Bonded*. I heard your thoughts. I know you felt the connection between us with the same intensity as I did. Did you experience the same link with the other women? Don't deny *you* don't understand."

The damn mental merger grew stronger. Even now, the intense need to be with him again shivered beneath her words. She didn't want to hear about strong connections, about the bonding he had done with other women. However, pretending not to have already established the link wasn't fooling either one of them.

"No. I planted images in their minds but never truly knew how they felt. You found a way in. That has never happened."

"We're unique."

"And the connection only grows stronger."

She shook her head. "The only thing you know of me is that I'm a woman of white light. I'm so much more, and until you see that, I won't be bound to you."

"You've seen how we are together. You can't resist." He pulled her into his embrace.

"I don't want to resist. I mean, I still want to be with you. I just won't let you control me." She turned in his

arms and wrapped her small hand around his cock. Soft and hard, like silk over steel beneath her fingertips. “Our attraction is mutual.” Her finger traced over the slit in the crown, drawing out a bead of nectar. “But it’s more than just the physical need for sex. You need to discover what special gift you have to offer me. We have time.”

An eternity.

“Dorian, we don’t need to know everything tonight. Respect that I make my own decisions, and I’ll accept that you feel the need to control your surroundings.” She looked directly into his eyes. “Not me.” Audra needed him to understand that his desire was no greater than hers. “And I won’t endanger myself. I’ll be your lifeline.”

If she could only ask him to be hers.

Instead, she brushed his lips with hers. “I experienced numerous erotic images, yet we’ve fulfilled only one.” His erection swelled another inch in her hand. Tentatively, she stroked the smooth skin of the shaft, milking him with gentle pressure.

Dropping to her knees, she ran her tongue around the thick ridge of his cock’s head before tracing the engorged purple vein from the base to the top. Finally closing her mouth over him, she sucked him to the back of her throat.

When Dorian groaned and thrust his hips upwards, she released her suction to lick the bead of pre-cum from the tip, as if licking a melting ice cream cone.

“My need for you is great.” He dislodged her mouth from his shaft and stood to make quick work of removing the clothes she had just put back on. “I don’t want to hurt you.”

“You won’t.” She licked her lips. “Please, Dorian. Don’t make me beg...and don’t be so gentle.”

He chuckled and moved to stand behind her. His hands on her shoulders urged her to her knees. She went to all fours. “Widen your legs,” he demanded as he knelt. “Do you remember this?” He slammed into her hot, slick, channel.

“Oh, yes,” she whimpered. “Harder.” He filled her mind with tenderness contrary to the aggression of his thrusts. She pulled her bottom lip into her mouth and worried it between her teeth.

I don't want to hurt you.

"You won't." *Just fuck me.* They were making love, but she wouldn't use the word love, not to Dorian, not until he felt it.

I am.

Dorian didn't break from his rhythm.

"Harder." She needed more. Emotions swelled within, and she had to have the physical connection to drive the feelings of love from her mind. All she wanted to see in her visions was his muscular form bending her to his will. When he crammed her full of his immense cock, he drove out all thought. Pleasure reigned.

"Yes, I'll tell you." She cried out. "Yes. Right there."

Dorian's fingers dug into her hips, lifting her, allowing him deeper penetration.

"Oh fuck, oh fuck, oh fuck!"

He laughed in her thoughts. *I wouldn't have thought you a woman to use such language. Feel what it does to my cock. Say it again.*

"Ah, fuck." Each hard, aggressive thrust banging against the top of her core triggered a scream. Red light radiated through the room as her *root* chakra emitted waves of sexual energy.

He held onto her hips as wet skin slapped together. Long strokes slid inside until his entire shaft was sheathed in her soaked pussy. He pulled back, then filled her again. She bit into the seat cushion of the couch as her head thrashed. "Dorian," she wailed as her mind clouded, no longer aware of anything but the messages and images transmitted by her lover. His heartbeat matched hers. Thoughts became one. He claimed her with each slick pump of his cock.

"Dorian, I need you." Her voice trembled. Another orgasm built in her core. Close to shattering into a millions sparkling pieces, she whispered, "Don't stop fucking me."

"Every hour if you will let me," he promised.

Audra's hips bucked, and her arms trembled as every cell strained for the impending release. Joining with him now, she not only felt her own orgasm but his as well. Her mind screamed, and he chuckled. She sucked in sharply when her limbs began to vibrate. "I'll die."

“I won’t let you.” Then he exploded. Hot cum shot from his cock as he continued to pound into her quivering channel.

Audra felt both orgasms simultaneously. Her body shook violently. Cream oozed from her pussy. The walls of her sex pulsed around Dorian’s cock. He plunged into her fully until his balls nestled against her rear, and then he stilled.

She closed her eyes as a tear slipped down her cheek. It was too late. She was bound to him.

Chapter Three

“Let me walk you home.” Dorian pulled on his jeans. “I wish you would trust me. You have nothing to fear if we are together. However, if those who seek to destroy me find you unprotected—”

“You don’t need to worry,” she interrupted. “You’ve made your need for my survival perfectly clear.” She stood nose to chest with him. “Just because my body responds to you...” And it did. Standing next to him caused her flesh to tingle. Her nipples tightened with the image of him fastening his mouth to breast. “...don’t think for a minute that my mind has deserted me.”

No, it was there in full glorious color. Fighting the temptation to act on the visions he created, she flipped her hair over her shoulder and tried to appear indifferent to him. So they were bound together. Needing his body didn’t equate to needing his protection.

“I know what’s in your mind.” He should. He was there, in her mind. It was futile to deny that they already had a stronger bond than previously experienced with his two prior relationships. Whatever special abilities Audra had bound Dorian as tightly to her as she was to him.

Protecting her was not about self-preservation. Rather, he could not bear to see her harmed. If he could not convince her to let him stay, he would use the shadows of the night to conceal himself from her. During the day, he could create his own darkness as a shield. However, it would take an enormous amount of concentration to keep her from sensing his presence.

“I’d like to stay with you tonight.” He had no doubt the bounty hunters had already discovered his whereabouts. It would not take long for them to realize Audra was his source of strength. Then they would come for her. Spending the night and mating with her would ensure his ability to fight in the morning.

He had won and lost a battle two nights ago. His chest tightened with the loss of Kiera and before her Renee. He'd survived, but another woman of white light died. After luring her away, the bounty hunters had destroyed her mind with their magic, and he hadn't found her in time. Still, he offered no excuses. Another ray of light snuffed out because of him.

This time, he would sacrifice himself before he let Audra meet the same fate as Kiera and Renee.

Dorian watched her move around the shop securing her business for the night. She placed stones of protection along the windowsills. After she turned the key of the till, she placed green stones on the money drawer.

"I should tell you to go home." She turned and looked at him over her shoulder. "Where is home for you?"

Home didn't exist. Since shifting into her realm five years ago, he hadn't had one. He could not stay in any one place for very long without risking detection. Such was life as a defector. So he moved around, returning first to Renee and then for the past year to Kiera—and only to mate. This was his mistake. He couldn't protect Audra if he wasn't with her. Therefore, his home would be with her. All he had to do now was convince her. It would be so much easier if she weren't so stubborn. He would find a way to settle down and love her for eternity. "Home is where you are."

As the general in his overlord's army, he had wielded the might and magic of his ruler's fists. His life's existence was one of servitude until his desertion. Afterward, shock waves rolled through the ranks. Others followed. The overlord would mount his head on a pike to demonstrate what punishment comes from betrayal if he ever caught him.

Dorian couldn't let that happen. He saw only one future with Audra, a safe, long life. For the first time, he had experienced the bonding as strongly as the woman of white light. Unfamiliar pressure weighed on his chest. No longer one-sided, he now understood the power of the connection.

"Dorian, are you listening to me?" Audra stood by the door with her arms akimbo. "I'm locking up. Will I see you tomorrow?"

At least she entertained the idea of accepting him. Offering to see him tomorrow was a small step in the right direction, but he needed much more. He shook his head and crossed the room to stand before her.

"I wish to spend tonight with you." He drew his finger down her cheek. "Would you deny yourself?" His thumb caressed her trembling bottom lip. When her tongue darted out and flicked against his thumbnail, he had his answer.

Their eyes met. "Why is it I don't want to say no to you when I've said no to everyone else?" She leaned her cheek into the palm of his large hand. Startling was the contrast between her pale hair and his dark skin.

"You say yes to me, but not to my protection."

Audra sighed. Exasperating as he was delectable. Anchored for life or should she run for her very survival? She wanted him, for tonight. And with a heavy heart, she acknowledged forever.

She understood his fear for her safety. She'd been afraid of the dark since she was a child because even then she understood something different about herself.

"Come on," she said and took his hand. Immediately, she began to share his thoughts. "I wish you would stop."

He chuckled, and her mind cleared.

"Thank you," she said. "If we're going to get along at all, then you need to quit *thinking* me what to do. I'm not going to do as I'm told." She turned and locked the door. "I never have."

Dorian's breathing changed as soon as they stepped onto the walkway. His eyes searched the darkness, peering from one end of the street to the other. He put his nose to the air, closed his eyes and inhaled deeply. "How far is it to your home?" His ice-blue eyes darkened until they were nearly as black as his pupils. "How far?" he repeated in a strained voice.

"Close." She started past the front window of her store, and Dorian stepped in behind her. "I feel them, too. I knew you were coming to me. I could hear your heartbeat, feel your breath on the back of my neck." She looked over her shoulder at him. "It wasn't unpleasant." She couldn't contain the smile tugging on her lips. And

then her smile faltered. “This is very different. Who are they?”

“Bounty hunters. And we need to get out of here—now.” He put his hands on her shoulders. “I won’t let them hurt you.”

Audra closed her eyes. With the touch of his hands and the conviction behind his words, she empathized with the burden of guilt he carried. He took responsibility for the deaths of his previous mates. She also understood that it wasn’t his fault.

“I know.” She took his hand and led him around the side of the building. A flight of wooden steps led to her apartment above the shop. “This is my home.”

The sound of his heavy, booted footfalls followed her up the stairs. After unlocking the door, she held it open and waited for him to step inside. She closed the door then leaned against it. “Should I be afraid?”

Normally when she entered her house, she circled the room turning on lights. Dorian’s presence changed that. She wanted him to be comfortable. A growing part of her wanted this to be his home. Now that she’d tasted his delicious darkness, she wanted more.

Who would have thought her sexual appetite would be so gluttonous? Before tonight, she was a virgin, but with the images planted in her mind, all she could think about was getting Dorian to ease the insistent ache between her legs. Maybe the heightened awareness that something dark and dangerous lurked in the shadows created this hunger. Whatever the reason, she was insatiable.

Dorian prowled the perimeter of the room, pulling back the sheer curtains of the large picture windows and squinting into the night. The front portion of the loft was a living room containing a couch and rocking chair. A braided oval rug covered the floor, and Chinese paper lanterns hung from the ceiling over the corner tables. Geodes, split down the middle, sparkled and glittered on a shelf between the two front windows facing the street.

“They’re coming for you, aren’t they?” Audra walked to the center of the room.

Dorian leaned against the wall where he could watch out the window and still give her his attention. “No, my

love. They're coming for you."

She sat on the couch and sandwiched her hands between her knees. "Am I your love?" She didn't want to meet his eyes. How could she love him after what, three hours tops? Was it possible for this man to know love in such a short amount of time? Did it matter? She knew she loved him. "Did you love the two women before me?" She looked up and found him staring intently, straight into her eyes. Her stomach dropped into her knees. "Don't answer." She didn't want to know the truth if he saw her as nothing more than a means to survival.

Dorian turned back to the window. "They won't come tonight," he said with his back to her. "More than a week ago they took my mate. When I found her, she was dead. I evaded the bounty hunters, but I have been running since. They hope to find me weakened."

"Instead, you've found me."

"Yes. They will try to draw you away from me. You must not go." He crossed the room and sat next to her on the couch. "They will attempt to weaken your mind with their magic, poison you against me and then use you as bait. In the end, nothing you say or do will matter. They will kill you." He took her hand and put it over his heart. Heat burned the palm of her hand and traveled up her arm.

"The others were important to me. But there is something different about you, Audra. I feel as though I am the one at a disadvantage."

"You shouldn't. I can't put pictures in your mind. Nor can I make you believe me when I say you're here because I want to be with you. *I* decided. You simply revealed what I'm missing in my life. I'll make you strong," she assured him and took his hand.

Surprised at her own willingness to feed his appetite, Audra studied him, knowing he could read the hungry gleam in her eyes. More shocking was the voraciousness in how she wanted him.

Salivating at the pure male objective, she stood and led him to the bed draped with white muslin at the far side of the open loft. She left his side for a moment, while she lit white candles on the altar in the corner. Once the incense began to burn, she returned to him.

Unlike tonight at the shop, in her home she wouldn't mold to his whims. Surrounded by magical charms, talismans and her altar, she controlled her mental faculties...and her body.

"I will make both of us strong." She lifted his T-shirt exposing his magnificent chest once more. Without the barrier of his shirt, the scent of his skin was strong and heated her blood. Her mouth watered. Flicking her tongue over his flat nipple, she savored the taste of his mysterious essence. Before letting her mind link with his, she glanced at the window then returned her focus to Dorian. "Are you sure they won't come tonight?"

"Yes."

Audra intended to awaken his mind and heart with meditation and take him where he could feel the effects of her white light. His palatable darkness remained buried deep inside her. She wanted to offer him her gift. Having bounty hunters from some unknown realm breaking down the door would end any chance for him to understand the contrast between her brightness and his shadows.

Wrapping her hand around the back of his neck, she brought his face to hers and fused their lips. She sucked his tongue into her open mouth. Hot and wet, the dark cavernous depths of his kiss created flaring arcs of desire between them. She moaned in her throat as she slowly drew away. "You'll need to be naked." She spoke against his lips and at the same time popped the snap on his jeans. "When I get back, I'd like you to be waiting in the center of the bed."

"Where are you going?" His voice quivered with either fear or need.

She kissed the worry lines from his expression and stepped away. "Nowhere." She pointed to the bed. "Naked, Dorian." She shimmied and slipped her skirt over her hips. "And in the center of the bed." Opening her shirt, she let it drift off her shoulders and fall to the floor.

Dorian's shoulders relaxed, and a soft grin played across his lips. He shucked his pants, and Audra smiled. Full and pulsing, his strained erection surged upwards. He stalked toward her, and she raised an eyebrow, stopping him. Obviously more intuitive than he acknowledged, he took two steps backward until his knees

bumped the footboard. Never taking his eyes from her, he scooted onto the bed. Then he leaned back on the fluffy pillows, laced his fingers behind his head and waited for her.

Audra was naked when she sat on the bed beside him. “Put your arms to your side and close your eyes,” she whispered. Shadows danced on the walls in the flickering candlelight. Dorian closed his eyes. “Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.”

She smiled again, watching him adjust his frame in attempt to get comfortable. Moving to the top of the bed behind him, she put her back to the wall and knelt with his head between her knees. Running her fingers through his hair, she focused her energy.

Placing her palms flat on the top of his head, she slowly unlocked the portal of wisdom. The *crown* charka, the center of consciousness, mastered all the other chakras. Once opened, Dorian would feel the blending of white and dark. It would balance him. Just as she was beginning to understand, he had completed her.

The intensity in which she focused was unlike any time before. While joined with Dorian, she had undergone a metamorphosis. He became a permanent part of her. Now she would try to open him to accept her.

After pressing slow circles into his temples with her thumbs, she then traced his thick, black brows. Once opened, the *third eye* charka brought awareness to time, light and intuition. Brilliant indigo-hued energy flowed over her hands.

She followed the ridge of his nose, noting the slight curve and bump. With his military career, she assumed he'd probably broken it at some point. Since she didn't want him to speak, she didn't ask. Whisker-covered, hollow cheeks, led her to his full lips. Unable to resist, she leaned over and gently touched his mouth with hers.

“Audra, you're killing me.” He arched his head farther back and sucked in a deep breath through his nose. “Could you sit forward a few inches so I can taste the delicious flavor of your cream?”

“Not yet.”

“You're wet for me.”

And getting wetter. Heat flowed from her fingertips,

into her blood and pooled in the center of her sex.

Audra moved to his side. Taking the Kama Sutra massage oil from the bedside table, she poured a generous amount into her palm. She rubbed her hands to warm the oil and placed them on his chest, over his *heart* chakra. Green energy radiated from his body.

“For love, balance and harmony,” she said. With slow circles, she worked her way to his *throat*. Her fingers stimulated the area causing the chakra to emit pale blue energy. “For communication.”

His chest expanded as she moved over his *solar plexus* chakra. Her fingers tingled. “Energy, both spiritual and physical, is centered here.”

Yellow energy nearly consumed the colors of the chakras she had already opened. He was so much more than he presented. When she touched him, she understood his self-imposed banishment. He was a man born into the wrong realm. In her light, he would become more than a pawn in an overlord’s army. Magic, dark and white, would be his to command.

She hesitated before moving to the *sacral* chakra, the heart of his sexuality. It wasn’t just his enormous cock stretching toward her hands but the visions she’d have tapping into that part of his psyche.

“Don’t stop now, Audra.” His voice was smooth and even. The colors of his chakras became brighter. His response was at odds with the clamoring in her chest. The tension in her muscles increased as her hands stroked over crisp, chest hair. The lack of moisture in her mouth made it difficult to swallow. She took several deep, steadying breaths to clear her mind, focusing only on her objective—to balance Dorian and create another bond between them.

Her adept hands belied the nervous trembling in her core. After massaging circles into the flat, muscled area of his lower abdomen, she turned her hand over and gave his shaft several loving strokes. The flame of desire scorched her palm as much as the feral growl coming from his lips, pulled taut against bared teeth.

She cupped his heavy sac before sliding beneath to his *root* chakra. Red energy exploded from his body as the energy point that grounded him to her realm was blown

open with her touch. Her body vibrated with his energy. “Your will to survive is the strongest.”

Dorian sat up, engulfing her in his aura, and Audra found it difficult to focus. A rainbow of colors radiated from his body. Light streamed from his fingertips as he reached to touch her face. She closed her eyes as liquid heat poured into her melting core.

Never had Dorian seen colors so vivid and intense. Audra had opened him to receive her white light. A gift.

Five years of taking, believing he was in control of his destiny. “Thank you.” He pulled her against his chest and ran his hand down her narrow back. So small but full of strength. “Let me make love to you?” No longer would it be a simple mating to increase his power. It was not about his survival but theirs.

Putting her on her back, he braced between her thighs and slipped the head of his cock into the damp folds of her pussy. “Look at me,” he whispered. When she did, he inched a fraction deeper. Flames of passion dances in her irises. “I am bound to you.”

The walls of her sex clamped around his shaft when he fully thrust into her. Audra shifted her hips, and he sank deeper until he was completely buried inside her. For the first time, all was right. He was home.

Chapter Four

Audra stretched, flinching from the wonderful ache between her legs. Dorian loved her many times throughout the night, intensifying the bond between them. She could feel his blood pump with renewed life every time he plunged into her body.

Slipping from under the covers, she was careful not to wake him. A rumble from her stomach reminded her she hadn't eaten last night. She smiled. She had feasted, just not on food.

Strewn about clothing littered the floor. Audra rummaged about until she found her skirt. She pulled on a tank top and then tiptoed barefoot across the room. Quietly, she unlocked the door and stepped carefully to keep the stairs from groaning. For a brief moment, she closed her eyes and relished the crisp chill in the air. She opened them and witnessed the fingers of dawn just starting to crest the horizon. Pale light cast a silvery glow, making the most beautiful morning.

Once inside the shop, she found a Sharpie marker and wrote a note to her customers. *Closed for Inventory*. She wore a big smile, taping the paper to the door.

About to step away from the front window, she stilled. The hairs on the back of her neck prickled. A stench filled her nose, and the taste of bile rose into her throat. Something dark and evil neared.

The bounty hunters!

Scrambling across the room, she pulled white candles from the shelf. Her fingers trembled, causing her to fumble with the match as she tipped a candle. Air sucked from the room. The match wouldn't light. Striking again, sulfur ignited. The strong odor filled her nostrils. Then a flame of protection grew as she touched the fire to the wick.

She didn't have much time. Chest constricting, heart rate escalating, breathing shallow—they were close—she

thought of Dorian asleep above. He would blame himself if something happened to her. She trusted in her strength, yet this was his war. She was a pawn. He would not be happy if she faced the bounty hunters alone, regardless of the outcome.

Wrapping her hand around the crystals she wore around her neck, she filled her mind with Dorian and called him to her. Then she went back to protecting herself. Making a circle of white candles on the floor, she sat in the center, relaxed her tense muscles and began her meditation.

Dorian woke with a start. The sheets were cool. He listened to the quietness of the apartment for a moment. Clearly, Audra had left. His stomach tightened with the familiar sensation. Had the bounty hunters gotten to her? Her mind was too strong for their influence. After all, she was too strong for his.

He dressed in a hurry. Then like a punch in the gut, he smelled the stench. His heart slammed in his chest. Sprinting across the room, he threw open the door. He took the stairs in three steps, flew around the corner of the building...and came face to face with two bounty hunters. They worked and traveled in large packs. The others must have Audra.

As if answering his question, one of them said, "Your mate is inside."

Black rage boiled inside him. He clenched his hands into fists, closed his eyes and called his magic. Concentrating on the two before him, Dorian focused his anger and summoned the specter of death.

Feral screams rent the air as the two bounty hunters clutched their chests and fell to the ground gasping for breath. He stepped over their flailing bodies, approached the door and paused at the sign proclaiming it *Closed for Inventory*.

Turning the handle, he opened the door and went inside. The room appeared eerily dark. Stifling. Like a black hole, devoid of natural light. Considering the bright morning sun outside the front windows, the interior of the store resembled the middle of the night. The contrast bothered him. Since meeting Audra, he'd become used to

the radiance that surrounded her.

He sensed fear, only it wasn't coming from Audra. His breath caught in his throat. His gaze found her sitting with her eyes closed in the center of the room in a circle of white candles. Their light surrounded her, radiating out of the top of her head and spreading out around her. She emitted the strongest source of illumination in the room, an ethereal beauty with a pack of bounty hunters lurking, salivating in the shadows.

"Leave her." Dorian's voice sounded hollow, echoing in the room.

Audra's eyes opened wide and focused on a distant point as if she looked right through him. Her hair fell back behind her shoulders, and yet there was no wind in the room. Her skin was translucent. Nonetheless, he saw the blush beneath the surface. He took responsibility for her blush as much as for her being in this situation.

She looked small and fragile, yet powerfully determined. In that instance, he realized he truly loved her. Using his magic, he invaded her thoughts in the hope he could make her understand that he did love her and that he would take their bond back with him when he returned to his realm.

In order to insure her safety, he would return. His life was not worth risking hers night after night. What kind of existence would it be? Always watching over his shoulder and fearing for her safety was no way to live. For him or her. Five years of running ended tonight.

"I will return. She has no value to you now. Let her go."

"If you no longer want her, then we will have her." A bounty hunter attempted to reach into the circle of light.

"No," Dorian growled, advancing into the pack of hunters. With arms raised, black waves of energy poured from his fingertips. Except for a small sphere of white light, darkness closed in on the room. He glanced at Audra and flinched at the terror reflected in her eyes. Their bonding. She could feel his magic, watched as it consumed his soul. It hurt her, and yet he could not stop.

Dorian wrapped his hands around the throat of one of the men sent to capture him. Like snakes, ribbons of black energy wound around the hunter's neck. Dorian's

magic tightened on his command, squeezing until it cut off the man's ability to breathe.

The gasping hunter fell to the ground. The other bounty hunters circled him. Moving side to side, they positioned for a combined attack.

Dorian faced Audra, and his breathing eased. He remembered what it felt like when her hands touched his body and opened his chakras. When her white light banished his darkness.

Rage, anger and hatred for what he was, all he had done in his life and what he was doing now began to morph into what he had hoped to become with her at his side. Without the threat of the bounty hunters, they would have been happy. He had finally met a woman who could be more than a mate. She had found and freed his heart.

And he had brought this battle into her life.

Dorian lowered his arms and stopped fighting. If he was to die, he wanted Audra to be proud of him. He would die using his special talents for noble reasons, saving the woman he loved.

Audra sat immobile as Dorian's aura shifted. At first, it was barely noticeable. The darkness faded and color encroached, not white but lighter than she'd seen him project before. Gradually, his aura became one with hers. In that moment, she realized what he had done. She could weep with happiness. He had bound himself to her.

Yet, delight wasn't lasting. With the binding came the realization that because he loved her, he refused to put her at risk. He planned to leave her.

She'd been alone and lonely, and she refused to let him leave her now. She'd wanted him when he first walked into her shop, and she wanted him now. He claimed he never used his power for noble reasons, and if she had any control over the situation, he wasn't going to start now.

Closing her eyes, she concentrated on Dorian. She could hear the taunting words he spoke to the bounty hunters. She pushed the men from her mind and forced herself not to think about Dorian leaving. Instead, she focused on how wonderful he made her feel.

For the first time in her life, she was complete. Admittedly, she didn't comprehend the demands of being bound to Dorian. However, they had merged their minds, bodies and their hearts. She reveled in the delicious darkness he brought into her world. She wasn't afraid anymore.

Linked to him, she felt his magic fade. He was giving up the fight.

The hunters surrounded him, smelling their victory. Believing they had cornered their bounty, the anticipation of the capture charged the air. She sensed the darkness filling the room. It wasn't the comforting ambiguity of Dorian but hate and rage emanating from the bounty hunters. They readied themselves for the attack. Dorian dropped his arms, acknowledging defeat.

"Noooo," she cried and reached out with her own magic.

White light exploded from her body. Blinding. Hot. Her reaction obliterated the shadows and dispersed the darkness. She was euphoric, feeling almost...ethereal. Her thoughts ended and instinct abounded. Allowing her aura to expand, she wrapped Dorian in its comforting light. The air vibrated with her energy.

Dorian finally witnessed the true power of a woman of white light. Audra transformed.

Charged with energy, her pale hair of the sun shifted and danced. Sparks of light emitted from her *crown* chakra, fell over her still form and expanded out into the room, decimating and abolishing everything dark and ugly in its path. Illuminated in Audra's pure white light, nothing evil could exist.

His breathing hitched as the bounty hunters evaporated. His heart thundered in his chest and nearly burst from the powerful emanation. Rocketing into his core, his own chakra centers blasted open. He staggered back a step and stumbled to his knees. Instead of black, a variety of color flared from his fingertips.

Then the air stilled. Natural light from the rising sun permeated the room. The stench dissipated. Dorian lifted his head. Shimmering with tears, and alight with fire, Audra's eyes visually caressed him.

He broke the connection and looked around the room. The bounty hunters were gone, eradicated by the white light. Audra had saved his life.

“How?” he asked. “Why wasn’t I destroyed along with them?”

“When we made love last night, my powers were awakened. Having been a virgin, I didn’t fully understand what would happen. I underwent a transformation because you left your darkness inside of me. Just as once your chakras were open, you became receptive to my white light.”

She gave him a warm smile. “You won’t have to worry about the lunar cycle anymore,” she said. “Nor will you have to look over your shoulder. Bounty hunters have no power over you. We are complete.”

She stood and stepped over the candles scattered on the floor. Ribbons of wax crisscrossed the polished wood. Stopping in front of Dorian where he knelt on the floor, she lightly palmed his cheek. “You were bound to me. We were as one.”

Dorian pulled her off balance and into his arms. His mouth covered hers. Kissing, touching and assuring that he held flesh and blood. He lifted his head. “I am humbled.”

“Don’t you feel weak, Dorian?” She touched his face, drawing her fingers across his cheek. “I’m going to take you home and make you strong again.”

“What about the inventory?”

“Two hands, ten fingers, one tongue, two lips.”

Her eyes raked over him, causing his body to heat. Blood pumped through his veins. The need to bury himself inside her warmth had to be slaked. Now.

He took her hand and visualized her lying on the bed upstairs. He then filled her mind with images, her legs over his shoulders, his mouth sliding over her swollen clit. He envisioned plunging his tongue into her channel and burying his face in her mound as she rode her climax.

“Don’t think it, Dorian. Do it.”

Unable to wait, he freed his cock and shoved her skirt up her thighs. Audra straddled his lap and impaled herself on his shaft. Wet, slick heat surrounded him. He grasped her hip. “Ride me.”

Nails sank into his shoulders. Internal muscles tightened. Hips gyrated while she slid up and down onto his thickness. Nipple points grazed his chest, sending more blood to his groin. Sensations similar to drunkenness clouded his mind in a euphoric haze.

Leaning her back, he pulled off her top and fastened his mouth to one cherried tip. She clutched his head at the ears and held him to her breast. Dorian sucked one nipple, then tasted his way to the other.

Scents of the shop mingled with the heavy aroma of their lovemaking. He kissed his way to her neck and licked the pulse point beating there. Honeyed cream flowed from her cunt. Her thighs trembled. Sharp little pants blew warm and moist. His angel teetered on the precipice of orgasm, ready to milk his cock dry.

“I love you. Now come for me.” He squeezed his ass, thrust his hips and pressed hard into the top of her channel.

Audra crashed with her orgasm. All her muscles tightened. The pressure brought Dorian’s release. With a jolt, his balls drew tight against his body. His cock swelled to greater length within her velvet sheath. He stretched his neck, clamped his teeth and violently erupted. Rivers of cum spurted from his shaft. Each ejaculation left him both totally spent and surging with energy. His cock continued to contract. Heavy breaths flared his nostril as he inhaled the scent of their sex. Rivulets of sweat trickled down his back. He’d never experienced a bonding such as this.

Dorian wrapped his arms around her ribs and her arms circled his neck.

Sweet lips brushed the shell of his ear. “And I love you.”

Chapter Five

“I’m hungry.” Lying naked on a couple of oriental rugs on the floor of her shop, having never made it up to the apartment, Audra rolled onto her stomach and stretched.

Dorian’s large bronzed hand ran the curve of her spine until resting on her rear. “I’ve never been as sated as I am right now.”

She leaned over and nipped his shoulder. “Making love gives you strength. I get hungry. Or it might have something to do with transforming into a pulsing body of white light, vaporizing a group of bounty hunters and saving my soul mate before breakfast.” She sat up and pulled on her tank top. “Eggs and toast. Mmm.” She stood, stepped into her skirt and looked down at Dorian.

Warm liquid coursed through her body. He was beautiful now. Recognizing the colors of his aura, colors that blended with hers. A combination of light and dark, as was she.

Often in the past, the fingers of something dark and unknown clawed at her subconscious. Until yesterday, performing her ritual of protection and keeping the lights on pushed away the feelings of unease. Dorian was the first man of darkness to reach past her barriers. First her intuition and then his aura, both confirmed him as her spiritual mate.

Night no longer would hold fear, only the mysteries of discovering Dorian. And tasting his delicious kisses. Thinking of delicious, she remembered she was hungry. “Dorian.”

He was still lying face down on the rugs. She straddled his hips. Squatting, she sat on his butt and put her hands on his lower back. Their thoughts clashed. Her intention was not to seduce him into making love to her again. However, his thoughts were not on food. Not wearing any panties, he’d much prefer her to leverage up

on her knees and allow him to turn over. In her mind, she could see him guiding her slowly back down, silky and smooth, the head of his cock sliding into her.

With a smile, she thought of French toast and sausage. Her lips twitched when he glanced over his shoulder. "Wouldn't you rather go upstairs for breakfast?" she asked and scooted off his back.

Dorian sat up and ran his fingers through his tangled hair. "Yes, because after breakfast I'll have you back in bed." She watched him tug on his jeans, carefully zipping up over the straining bulge of his erection.

They left the shop and walked around the building to the stairs leading to her apartment.

Audra paused where Dorian had risked his life for her. "What will you do now? Will more hunters come for you?"

He put his hands on her shoulders, leaned in and kissed her forehead. "Perhaps in time. Never again will I run. This is home."

Emotions welled within her heart and tears threatened behind her eyes. She swallowed the lump in her throat. "I'll be here for you."

"You asked if I loved before. The mates I took before you were not with me of their own free will. I never spoke words of love. I could never love them because I used my magic to bind them to me. As I tried to do with you. I regret that their lives were lost. I shall carry the burden with me. In my heart, I knew they were not my mate. I suppose my fear kept me from searching for you. I didn't want to chance not finding a woman of white light before the end of the lunar cycle. I have much to atone for."

Once again her desire smoldered deep in her core. She closed her eyes and let him transmit directly into her mind what he wasn't able to express in words.

He touched her cheek, his calloused fingertip trailing down the side of her face, and then lifted her chin. "I need you." He smiled, linked their fingers, and walked around the corner to the stairs to their home. "Together we can help others who have escaped from the darkness and evil of my realm. Teach those of the dark to open themselves to the power of white light through their chakras. Will you help me?"

“I hope you don’t expect me to sleep with them all,” she said sassily.

“Meditation, love. Only meditation.”

Audra paused at the threshold of the apartment. Sunlight slashed across Dorian’s face. Her breath caught. Colors radiated from his aura.

He was beautiful...and complete.

This was her present and her future. Nights filled with Dorian and days devoted to her shop. She’d keep him strong. And in return, he’d keep her safe.

“What’s wrong?” He shifted his glance from the right to the left. “Do you sense something?” He sniffed the air.

“I love you.”

“And you, beautiful angel with eyes of fire...are my life.”