

Arched Wing

Young Adult Version

Katherine Petersdorf

Katherine Petersdorf's Featherless Productions
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Arched Wing Series #1
YA Editions

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Arched Wing

Katherine Petersdorf

DEDICATION

To everyone one who believed in me,
the men who broke my heart, and to the
real Brit Boy, thank you for being a great
best friend.

To my editors: Raina Snow, Yvonne
Gillaspie, Marilyn LeBaron and Velma Leal.

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*Other Books by
Katherine Petersdorf*

Arched Wing
Broken Wing Volume 1

Dudes in Distress: He-Punzel

Partners in Crime: Devil Heels

How to Be Strong

Katherine Petersdorf

“I am choosing to be with you.”

“No you will never have a life with me.”
Falcon shook his head. “Demons cannot love so, only half of me can love you.”

“Falcon...I care about you so much,” I whispered. Instantly Falcon’s eyes and fangs returned to normal. Gently Falcon ran his frozen knuckles down my cheek. Most people pull away from chilly skin but I don’t...not anymore.

“Samantha, how can you feel that way about a demon?”

“Because you make me alive and I don’t care about your flaws. I adore you for whom you are...no if, ands, or butts.”

“I am a half demon,” Falcon reminded me.

“I don’t care.”

“I can only love you with half of my heart.”

Katherine Petersdorf

1

MY SAVIOR, BRIT BOY

They say once in a lifetime we find someone with a very strong will to live, but we can only find who they are in the moment of near death.

Katherine McHarrison

Love...isn't that just the best way to start a story? NOT!!! Who am I kidding? No one has good openings these days. Finding one is like teaching a walrus to ride a bike, and I forgot my training wheels. I guess we'll just have to get on with it then, straight to the point. Where is that...Ahah! Play! What?!? Stupid clicker! Oh the battery is in upside down. Okay...play!!! Enjoy the show...er *book* folks.

It felt like I couldn't breathe. My brain was slamming hard against the inside of my skull. *Where was I?*

I reached up, and could feel a slab of debris atop me. It was thrusting itself hard into my chest, cutting off the flow of air to my lungs.

I grasped the chunk of broken flooring that was on top of me. With one hard push, I slid backwards, the tiny rocks slicing at my flesh. When I was free of the debris' weight I could feel my abdomen expand.

It was several moments before I could force air in and out of my lungs without extreme pain. Slowly, I placed a hand to my chest in hopes of calming my heart, but there was no such luck.

I could only pretend to be rational because my body was on the edge of frantic panic. I would tell you where I am, but I don't really know. I would also like to explain to you what my present location looks like, but I am unable to see out from under the debris.

I sighed and took in a deep breath. The feeling of my chest widening and tightening with the flow of air was such a relief.

You are most likely wondering why I am here (so am I) and why I am under debris. Well it is because I am not your everyday average girl, not that you couldn't guess that already. What you do not know is that I have supernatural powers as well as some freaky woman is after those powers.

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Sometimes I wish that I was a normal girl, but my life turned topsy-turvy four years ago on my fifteenth birthday when I transformed into this super powered version of myself.

A strange woman appeared that day from out of nowhere. She dug up an old crate that turned out to be filled with my biological father's belongings. I managed to get a large notebook away from her, and upon opening that book I found it was filled with spells, information, and diary pages.

I am a blood witch, born to Wiccan and the Druid arts.

Cautiously, I sat up, causing my head to hit more debris. Dust fell from above me and covered my body. I could feel it all over my skin. That was when I realized that I was wearing only underclothing. I ran my hands down my body and then screamed out in shock.

"What am I doing wearing only a bra and a thong?!" My jaw had dropped and I was running my hands up and down my body, rechecking my attire.

"Samantha," A voice said coming from the darkness.

I froze.

I wasn't the one who said that. It had to be someone else! There must have been a person in that abyss, and they were calling out *my* name.

Well, that or, I had finally gone insane. I could have completely imagined it and needed medication. (That is unless I was already so crazy that I didn't remember if I

was already taking meds or not!) I can see myself in a year, if I live that long. *Doctor could you up my dosage two pills an hour just isn't enough!*

“Samantha,”

There it was again. Was this mystery voice an echo? Did I call out my own name and couldn't recall doing so?

“I am right here.” *Oh my god!* I responded to the voice? Why am I talking with muffled figments of my imagination? I really should have taken my meds this morning!

Getting up onto my hands and knees, I crawled forward. I coughed as more dust attacked my face.

“Ouch!” I cried out as something above me pulled my hair.

“Samantha! Samantha, are you alright? Talk to me.”

I rolled my eyes. This voice wanted me to have a conversation with it! Normally, I (not that I have ever heard the voice of an imaginary person before) would have scoffed, *I do not speak to hallucinations.* However, I didn't say that.

“Samantha!” The voice was no longer so muffled. It must have been growing closer, that, or my insanity was getting stronger. The voice was that of a British man.

Wait...earlier a British man came to save me. Could he be the same person?

“Bloody hell,” he screamed. “Samantha Speak! Speak you dim witted Apeth, so that I can follow your voice!”

(What's an Apeth?)

I held still, speechless.

“Waffle, Apeth!!”

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What the heck was that supposed to mean?

“Speak you bloody fool,”

I sucked in an angry breath and doubled my fists. “I am not a fool you jerk!” I furrowed my eye brows, and began to whimper softly. Swiftly, I coughed to cover my sobbing.

“Are you alright?” the British man had a small touch of worry in his voice.

This man must be the *Seeker* who was here to rescue me before I was trapped beneath the debris. He told me that his job was to kill witches who used dark magic just like the woman who abducted me. Hopefully, this Seeker will be like a *Charmed* one and save me, because I am so the innocent here.

“Are you alright?” he repeated.

I nodded. *Oh, duh, he can't see me!*

“I’m okay, I think. Then again, if you’re a hallucination I might be insane,” I replied.

Silence...

“Speak back!” I wondered if I insulted my own mind by calling it a hallucination.

“Yellow as a cat.” his voiced sounded sarcastic. “And you are crazy, I won’t argue the toss with you on that one, but when the witched wacked you a lamp...,”

“Wacked me a *lamp*?” I interrupted. Now it was all coming back to me. This witch had hit me over the head. I was knocked out cold. He must really be the *Seeker* who came to save me.

“So, that Witch lady?” I asked.

“Gramhach?” the voice questioned, growing closer.

“The witch?”

“Yes, she is a black Witch...,” he just stopped talking.

I couldn’t help but suck in a shaky breath. My knees were trembling wildly while I waited for him to finish his thought. Then there was a long silence.

“Hello? Um...Brit Boy?”

“My name is Falcon,” he stated. “I...well there is a slight problem.”

Problem! I screamed under my breath. My heart rate went through the roof. I felt my panic returning in full force. (Not that it had ever left.) I was certain that the *problem* was not with his name.

Hearing Falcon’s voice had helped hold back the tears, but now I was crying. My face was hot and sweaty, my stomach muscles tightened in anticipation. I needed to know what he was going to say next.

“Problem?” I stammered as I swallowed another sob.

“I cannot get under there to get you.” *His words shattered all hope.*

“But,”

“On your hands and knees,” Falcon commanded dryly.

“What! Are you some kind of sick doggy style perv? I am so not interested buddy!”

“No,” he yelled in reply. “I mean you will have to crawl to me!”

“How the hell am I supposed to do that, I can’t see?”

Falcon showed a light of some kind into my eyes. “Flashlight,” Falcon said calmly. “Crawl toward it.”

I decided it would be better to crawl toward him than stay under here. Who

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knows how long before the debris collapsed onto me?

I moved forward on my hands and knees. Shaking my head I caused my auburn hair to spill over my shoulders onto my back. I sighed, thinking that I must have looked like a porn star with my butt up in the air like this.

While I crawled to Falcon I had to try and wrinkle my nose to get spider webs off my face. *How the heck did fresh debris have spider webs anyway?* My long, curly hair was matted, dirty, and easily caught on a nail. Ripping it free was super painful. Then a mouse (well, I hope it was a mouse) rushed over my hand.

Finally, Falcon was able to reach me. I wondered what he would think of me. I mean I looked like a filthy rag doll instead of my normal self, who could sadly pass as a Kristen Stewart lookalike.

Falcon tucked the flashlight under his chin, took hold of my upper arms, and pulled me out. I cringed as my belly slid in the dirt and tiny rocks sliced at my soft flesh.

I realized it right away, the temperature of Falcon's skin. His body, or at least what I was feeling of him, was like ice. It wasn't like cold hands after being out in the snow, it was like he was dead, Falcon was just that icy. I half expected to look up and see his skin was blue and lifeless.

Nope, his face is peach just like mine.

"Keep your hair on," Falcon said gently. Somehow, I just knew that *gently* with this man meant dangerous.

Falcon held me to his body with a protective arm. With his other hand, Falcon ran his fingers down the side of my face, his icy touch caused butterflies to let loose in my tummy. *Why was this man so cold?*

“I want to go home.” More tears broke loose and ran down my face. (I really need to stop crying all the time.)

Falcon gingerly wiped the tears from my cheek with his frosty finger. I wanted so terribly to stop bawling, and not just because I couldn’t stand Falcon’s frozen hands on my face!

“I’ll get you home,” Falcon promised. “I’ll be your salvation.”

“She put a hex on my family.” I looked straight into his blue eyes.

Falcon gave me a charming smile, complete with a set of dimples. I started to stammer nervously. “I...I...,” No man had ever given *me* a smile like that. He smiled like he wanted to kiss me.

For a moment, while he grinned devilishly, I thought his eyes flashed onyx. I shook my head, and when I looked once more they were blue. *I am so losing it!*

“You what?” Falcon asked.

His smile was still charming my wits out of me. The part of my brain that made *good* and *smart* decisions vanished. Thus leaving no lights upstairs, and a for rent sign on my skull. I quickly looked back down at the ground in hopes that not seeing Falcon’s face would make it easier to ignore.

Before I had been kidnapped I made a good deal of appalling decisions. I had learned that my sister Jennifer and my

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brother Tanner were adopted and I flipped out. My mother had lied to me for many years. I knew my siblings were not my new stepfather's children. However I had always imagined my siblings were the product of one of my mother's many boyfriends over the years.

I ran away from home. I never truly meant to tell my parents that I hated them because I don't feel that way. I guess I said those words in self defense just to hurt them.

I knew my family would forgive me yet still in my childish rage I packed a duffle bag and left. Unfortunately the coat I was wearing contained my credit cards and passport. Now I have no way of getting back to the states!

"What?" Falcon pressed. I decided then and there he was totally heartless.

I closed my eyes, searching my thoughts for something to say. I couldn't just tell him the truth (mostly because I didn't want to go through all of it a second time.)

"I...well um," I mumbled. Where had all my acting skills gone? I have been in drama my whole life and the one time that improvisational method would have come in handy I was totally off the ball! "I am not..." I almost finished the thought with *going to tell you* but thankfully I caught myself. "It's just..." I didn't even have a thought that would finish that statement.

Falcon's face softened. His eyes had a loving look in them, which was quite petrifying for a man like him. Gentle just did not suit Falcon. "I understand," He said

capturing my gaze with his honor bound eyes. Once again I saw them flash onyx.

“You do?” *Oh thank God, he knows that I don't want to talk about it!* Now if only he would say...

“Yes of course, it is crystal clear now. You don't want to take a tizzy and admit that I am bloody hot!”

That is not what I wanted him to say!!!

“I do not!” I snorted.

“Yes you do!” Falcon said in such a babyish voice he sounded like a six-year old.

“Oh please!” As I spoke Falcon dropped me and aimed the flashlight toward me. I felt like I was a suspect in a Noir Movie. I just wasn't sure if he was the Mobster or the Private Eye.

“Give it a second thought.” Falcon quickly turned the flashlight upward so the light shined down on him like a glowing spot light. He was just that arrogant.

“I remember what you look like Brit Boy!” I snarled. I wanted to also mention that I hadn't seen his hard on until now but I decided such a statement would be out of place. Not to mention I shouldn't have been looking at the bulge in his snug jeans. Even if he had the light angled to showcase that part of him!

“Brit Boy?” Falcon asked in a mildly amused tone, as if he just now heard me call him that.

In truth Falcon is exceptionally attractive. Well, that is for an arrogant British Prat and do I ever admire his accent. His accent is a Noble King's English, probably upper crest.

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Falcon stepped back almost as if he was giving me a better view for examining him, which is something only someone as egocentric as him would do! I adored his shaggy toe head colored hair. His hair was the palest of pale blondes almost a white shade.

I wished I had blonde hair. Instead I'm stuck with auburn. I can't help but yearn for lemony curls, sea green eyes and well implanted breasts. Then maybe men would find me more alluring.

I'm not ugly. I'm really beautiful. I have long wavy hair, big mahogany-brown eyes, a size zero waist and C-cup breasts. I'm just not a porn star type of gorgeous and let's face it men like women who have as much plastic in them as the clear covers on Hostess foods.

I studied Falcon's flawless face. There was something so attractive about his clean cut style but at the same time I almost wanted to see him with a five o'clock shadow.

Falcon's eyes are remarkable. When I first looked into them I knew the only word to describe the color was *shatter blue*. It was like God had taken every shade of blue in the universe and shattered them into Falcon's irises.

I have to admit that Falcon's Aryan skin was just as beautiful, so were his full luscious lips-lips that I wanted to...*Samantha that is so enough!*

Truthfully the best way to describe Falcon is as a *totally hot pain in the rear end*-and not sexy-branding iron hot!

“Can we just find a way out of this...um?” I asked, hoping for a current location and route of escape.

“Dungeon,”

“Sure, dungeon...WTF? We’re in a dungeon? How the heck did we get here?”
Oh right, I fell through the floor. Light dawns on marbled head.

Falcon looked down at me. He wasn’t just glancing. His eyes were locked upon my face.

“Yes and I am not going to be a Knight in Shining Armor and save you unless...”

“What!?”

“Wicked Correct,”

He didn’t seem fazed by my glaring at him or when I stuck out my tongue. I actually wanted to kick him but I figured that would be childish.

“Unless what?” I sighed. Falcon smiled with victory, and I wanted to slap the grin right off his egotistical face.

“Unless you spill your gizzard and confess to how hot I am.”

I stepped back, baffled, and filled with skepticism as to what I just heard.

“Why you damn misogynistic, egotistical...fine! I will find my own way out, because you are not hot! In fact, you are freezing to the touch. You’re not even remotely cute!” I swiftly spun on my heel, stormed past Falcon, and stopped a few feet away. I felt around for a wall so I could navigate my way in the darkness.

“Bloody tit-head...what an aresmonger,” I heard him mutter. I watched him as he spoke, mainly because the light was on him

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so he was all I could clearly see. Falcon stood there in the dim light. His body was still as a statue. Falcon's chiseled features looked like a handcrafted and aquiline master piece. Falcon shot a dirty look, turned, and started stalking toward me.

"Wait!" Falcon took hold of my hand, and I froze in shock.

"What?!" I sneered.

"I was just tossing the joker. It's my job to help you, even if you're a slut..." Falcon set his hand on my chest, no wait, *my breast!*

I felt my eyes flare like real flames exploded in them. Before Falcon could finish his thought I slapped him across the face.

"I am not a SLUT!"

Falcon's expression was one of pure shock. He cupped his cheek where I had left my palm imprinted.

"Obviously," A muscle in Falcon's jaw twitched. He wrinkled his nose and glared down at me. "I only staked the claim that you were a slut because of your threads."

"Oh, yah?" I looked down at my body. *I guess that made sense considering what I was dressed in.*

"Your attire is exclaiming Yo-Yo knickers." Falcon continued with a big grin. "Wait, how do you American's put it...spread eagle? I mean you're in your underwear, but you do know that words VIRGIN Antwacky are stamped on your forehead in Nuclear Sub...I mean neon lights."

My heart raged in my chest. I didn't know which to be angrier at, the "Yo Yo

Knickers” comment, or the way Falcon made being a *virgin* soul so vile. Was it so obvious that I had never crossed the particular line? I can’t help not having long blonde hair, baby blue eyes, and breasts that can double as life preservers.

“Get your hand off my breast you pervert!” I screamed in fury.

When Falcon said *no*, I reached the end of my rope. I tried to push his hand off of me, but I couldn’t even get it to budge. The only victory belonged to Falcon, who gave my breast a little squeeze. I almost bit through my tongue trying to trap a moan for escaping my lips.

“So, what is it you want, to be my cherry picker or something along those lines?”

“No,” Falcon said proudly. “As a matter of fact, I will be.”

“You are an arrogant bastard!”

I went to kick Falcon in the family jewels, and would have succeeded if only he hadn’t caught my foot.

“Stop rubbing on my ankle,” I complained as I tried not to take any pleasure in the sensation of him touching me.

With one hard jerk of my leg, Falcon pulled me close to him. His hand left my breast only to rest on the small of my back, way too close to my butt. Brit Boy’s freezing fingers were rubbing gently against my skin, sending shivers down my spine.

“Are you ready?” Falcon asked. His eyes glistened with lust. Lust being an emotion that I still did not fully understand.

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Oh my God! I think I am in a Karen Moning novel complete with horror, brooding men, and the promises of erotic sex. *Save me, I don't want to catch the Fever.*

“No,” I whimpered.

“Well,” Falcon looked down at me with a devilish smile. “When you are ready we will, but until then...” Falcon lifted me up off the ground, flung me over his shoulder, and started walking off. His speed was like supersonic or, at least, faster than my reflexes. I didn't even notice what he had done until I was instinctively kicking and screaming. I knew I was not going to like this one little bit!

Katherine Petersdorf

2

DEATH TO A VIRGIN

I didn't like it one little bit! How dare Falcon toss me over his shoulder like I was a bag of potatoes?! Whether I enjoyed being held by him or not didn't change that he had no right to man handle me!

"What are you?" I slammed my fists into his back. "A caveman, are you going to beat your chest and say '*Unga Munga*'?"

To my horrific surprise, he did just that.

"You are so barbaric."

"Thank you," Falcon laughed proudly. The sensual and charismatic sound of his unearthly laughter echoed around me, spilling over me.

“Get your hand off my butt!” I pounded my fists against Falcon’s back.

“No,”

“You arrogant jackass, I’ll kill you if you don’t,” I threatened.

“You are not really in a position to give me orders,” Falcon laughed. Again the sound of his laughter filled the area with unnatural, sensual sounds.

“Stop rubbing!” I whined, trying not to buck back against him.

“I really think you are enjoying this, Apeth.”

Okay, time to change the subject.

“Where are we going?” I rolled my eyes while I spoke. My mind was getting numb from being upside down too long.

“There is a crawl space in the wall over here. I know because I am psychic, oh yes, that and I entered near it.”

I slapped at his back. *You would think he would realize I do not find his jokes all that funny!*

“Are we there yet, or even close?” I huffed. “I am tired of you, and I think that all the blood has run to my head!”

Falcon slapped my butt. “Stop complaining, or I will have to really reprimand you.”

My heart missed a beat.

“Brit Boy, why did you come back for me?” I asked bluntly.

Falcon set me down on my feet, and to my astonishment I did not scramble away.

“We are here,” Falcon took a step back, far enough away that I could no longer feel his body....*what would you call it...body cold?*

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I watched Falcon as he took in deep breaths. No, I wasn't watching him in a stalker way! Falcon's broad chest expanded as his lips parted ever so slightly...alright maybe it was in a stalker way.

Falcon was covered in dirt and sweat. He looked like he had just been in a *Die Hard* movie. Falcon's well sculpted abdominal and pectoral muscles showed through his tattered shirt. His shatter blue eyes scanned the area.

I saw his eyes flash onyx. I raised my arms protectively since now I was scared. I didn't understand why his eyes turned black. I didn't even know if I was imagining it.

I shook my head and lowered my arms. There was no way this was happening. I could not really be in a Scottish Castle. There could not possibly be a Black Witch chasing me. Oh yes, and most important, there was no way a super-hot guy was really hitting on me.

This all had to be a psychotic episode! It was my first, but still it had to be one.

Falcon looked down at the opening of the crawl space. Tiny blonde hairs brushed over his eyes. His face was complimented by a strong nose and harsh cheek bones. His skin was like ivory cream. His eyelashes were thick and gorgeous. He was perfect.

Falcon's full lips spread as he took in air. I had a glimpse of his pearly white teeth. Slowly my eyes trailed down his body and over his chest. My eyes darted down his thighs and to his thick bulge. *Wait! I shouldn't be looking there!*

I want Falcon to stay with me. Wait, be kind rewind. Why would I be thinking something like that? Someone please bring me my medication. ASAP!

“I know that is it small,” Falcon said gently.

“No it’s not,” I blurted out. I couldn’t take my eyes off the meeting of his thighs, and *it* was not small. *Oh my god!* I was ogling his goodies and he caught me!

“The crawl space,” Falcon stated. “What did you *think* I was talking about?”

How embarrassing.

“Anyway, you will have to go because I am too large to fit into this *hole*.” Falcon shifted the light so it shined from above him to spotlight his well, nether regions.

I had to roll my eyes. Oh yes, that and, of course, the flashlight was so distracting I had to look at the bulge in his pants.

“If you can make it to the main room, you will be able to open the stone door over there,” Falcon explained pointing into the darkness. I suppose at some kind of door.

“How?” I got down onto my hands and knees in front of the crawl space.

“Have you ever seen a drawbridge?” Falcon knelt next to me. I felt so uneasy by his closeness. My heartbeat sped up, and my breath became short and harsh. I shifted with nervousness as butterflies danced around in my belly. I was woozy and twitterpatted.

What is this feeling that I am getting being around someone I don’t even know? It’s even more intense than my first crush! As I thought to

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myself, my throat became raspy like after you dry swallow a pill.

“Of course,” I mustered the ability to say without sounding shaky. “I love museums and artifacts.”

Falcon rolled his eyes at me, and I wanted to roll his eyes out of his head. “Can you work a drawbridge?” He asked as if I was two years old. I didn’t get why I found the guy so attractive!

“In my sleep,” I lied. Well, it wasn’t a total lie. I could probably figure it out, I mean spin a handle, how hard can that be?

“Good luck.” Falcon slapped my butt again.

“Stop that!”

Falcon smiled and ushered me in. As soon as I was moving forward, and could not turn around, I heard him call out. “I cannot stop. I am not capable of it, Apeth!”

It didn’t take long to reach the main room. I crawled out and realized that it was the place where I had fallen. In the distance I could see the boards sticking out of the hole in the floor.

If I was all the way back where I had started I must have crawled around in circles within the wall. I smacked my forehead, because it had taken forever traveling with Falcon, but only a few minutes in the wall.

Falcon must have taken the scenic route.

The corridor was like one of those old horror movies that took place in some far off country, complete with heavy stone walls, towering roofs, and unending

passageways. It was eerie, and I wanted this to all be a dream.

Torches flickered on the massive stone walls, giving very little light to see where I was walking. Every few feet were small windows, only a few brick spaces big. The floor was carpeted with old rugs of royal purple and gold. To walk on something other than rubble felt so good to my suffering bare feet.

I took off running. I glided my hand along the wall, so, not to lose my way. The hallway seemed unending as I sprinted down it. My heart surged in my chest, and little breaths slammed together in my throat.

If this was a dream, I wanted to wake up, sooner as opposed to later. I stopped abruptly to catch my breath but instantly set out again. I knew that I couldn't stop because Falcon needed my help, even if I did dream him up.

"Brit Boy, I wish you were here to help me!"

"But he is not here," A soft voice came from behind me. Yet, the simple words seemed complicated wrapped in a feminine Scot's brogue. "You cannot save him, Lassie."

My captor! Gramhach, the black witch, had discovered me. My heart missed a few hundred beats and not in a romantic way. My body went numb, and in my head I was searching my memory. *Do I have medication, and if so, where did I leave it?* I shouted internally. *I am having another episode and I would like it to end now!*

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I knew that I had to get past the witch, without any second thoughts. "I would be wise to run, wouldn't I?" While I asked this, my mind concocted a plan. My fingers curled into a bawled fist as I finished my statement. "I am not as old as you, so I cannot possibly be as wise!"

Spinning on my heel I flung out my arm. I hit square into the opening of her hood. I stepped back and withdrew my fist. I looked down to see blood trickling over my knuckles.

"I am not wise, am I, Gramhach?"

Drawing back her hood, Gramhach stepped backward. She began to walk a semi-circle around me. Blood was still slowly seeping from her nose and down over her lips.

The lemon blonde curls of Gramhach's hair swayed over her shoulders. In fact, to my astonishment, my captor was extremely beautiful. I had never seen under Gramhach's hood before. I was taken aback that she was like Miss Universe, only no longer twenty years old.

"Lass, ye are not wise, I do agree," She hissed. "It seems you brought your lover here for me to kill as well."

"Lover?" Do you know those cartoon characters that have their jaw drop...all the way to the floor? That was me at that moment.

"Aye," The witch said.

My heart suddenly fell, because Falcon was not my lover. *Wait, a moment*, I thought to myself. *Why am I so upset? It's not like I want him to be my lover. I don't need one. I've never*

even had sex. What kind of girl does that witch take me for?

Without a second thought, I lunged forward and slid between Gramhach's legs. I stood and blindly stumbled into a sprint. My stomach stung with rug burn, and my heartbeat was like a raging river pounding fast and hard.

"*You cannot escape me, lass.*" echoed all around me.

My feet slammed on the stones with each step. Thick mats of hair slapped my back. Yet, I kept running, as well as, prayed that I wouldn't fall. I couldn't see anything that lay in my path.

Faster, *one step.* Speed up, *two steps.* More, *three steps...*

Bang!

I slammed into a stone wall. I began pounding at the stone as I snuck to my knees. I slumped over a hunk of metal and wood as I bawled.

"Brit Boy, I am so sorry," I whined.

A rumbling sound filled the room causing my words to fade. *Is that an earthquake? Does the black Witch have that kind of power?* I wondered.

"Sorry for what?" Falcon's voice stated. *Oh god, now I am hearing him again.* I could feel my soul falling into an abyss. It was like crossing your arms over your chest and backing off a cliff. Not that anyone, especially me, would know what that feels like!

"Samantha!"

"Shut up, I don't want any more illusions!"

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“I am on the other side of the wall, Ace,” Falcon said in a rather annoyed voice.

That was when I stood up. I didn’t question my mind or its crazed actions. *Hey, earlier I thought I was imagining a voice and look where it got me.* I reassured myself.

I was completely ready to wake up now, but I thought that I would just play along with my dream, because I knew it was the only way to escape.

Without hesitation, I pressed myself to the wall. I could feel the wall moving. The stones slid upward like a draw bridge or a trap door. Before I could speak, I was falling into Falcon’s strong arms. He wrapped me into a soothing hug. He laid his head against the top of my head.

“Brit Boy,” I snuggled down into his arms. Although, I don’t know why I would want to do such a thing!

Now I was safe, because Falcon was here. It was like in a TV show. I was the damsel in distress, D.I.D, I knew that no matter what monster showed up, my hero would save me and rush in to rescue me at the last moment. No matter the odds, I was sure that Falcon could slay the beasts!

“Will not save the lass,” A laugh echoed on the walls and surrounded me. My captor was growing near and my heartbeat was quickening.

“Brit Boy, she is coming,” I whimpered.

Falcon repositioned me in his arms as he spoke. “You idgit, I know that!”

“She is going to kill us.”

“I know that too!” Falcon said in a rough voice.

I heard a thousand tip taps echo down the halls. Louder? Louder. Louder!

Silence...

“She’s here,” I stated the obvious. I have a real knack for it.

“Hold on to me.” Falcon didn’t look at me directly as he spoke. I could feel him tense under my embrace. I could just barely see his facial profile. A storm of emotions were warring within his eyes. Anger and fear were filling him, and giving him that look you would expect to see in the face of a warrior just before battle.

Well, then again, maybe not. A warrior’s eyes wouldn’t flash onyx, I amended to myself with a sigh.

“Arms around my waist and your head on my back,” Falcon instructed coldly.

I was going to be sick, and not because of him. My legs felt like Jell-O. They were wobbly but unable to tumble over. Still, despite my fear, I obeyed falcon and clung to him as if clinging to dear life.

“T’will be useless, lad.” Gramhach’s voice surrounded me in an eternal echo. “See this Athame lad?”

Falcon stiffened beneath my embrace.

“This is your undoing,” She cackled.

“No, I fear it will bloody well be yours!” Falcon’s jerked forward as he snarled. My face rubbed against his back, it felt amazing to caress him.

“Anthame Bhi Lughdaich. Bileag Culaibh Brogach. Agus Leagail Bhuaipe. Inntinn Iúl,” Gramhach chanted.

“What?” Falcon began to pull my hands apart as if he was peeling me off his body.

Arched Wing

My heart was thundering in my chest. I was a tad rusty, but I did know Gaelic, because my mother had taught it to me. I said words in Gaelic before I said words in English. *Anthame Bhi Lughdaich. This anthame shall fade.* *Bileag Culaibh Brogach. A blade is behind the boy.*

My mind was racing. I knew that I was going to die, which was totally unfair, because I am the heroess of this story. I mean since when does the female lead get killed by old Gaelic spells? This is epic and not in a good way.

I turned to look behind me, without releasing Falcon. I could see the gleaming of metal just floating there in midair. I wanted to scream, but fear tore the sound from my throat. *Agus Leagail Bhuaipe.* My soul spoke to me once again. *And kill the girl!*

It was a lightning fast moment, one that seems to be ripped from my mind. It was a moment that left me laying haphazardly somewhere, clueless as to why I was aching in pain. Those types of moments would soon fill my life.

I was lying against the stone wall, and Falcon was sprawled across the ground, some distance away, with a blade in his shoulder. I was screaming at the top of my lungs only no words would come out of my mouth. I was crying too hard to see.

My vision was blurred by the tears welling in my eyes. I could barely make out the image of Falcon laying there half alive, with an aura of red surrounding him. I

shivered as I felt the evil dripping from the Athame.

“Brit Boy!” I was leaning over his body. I had run to his side. I was praying that Falcon was still alive. I needed him to be alive and for more than just my life. I was starting to realize I had a huge crush on him.

I still cannot recall all the actions that took place in that moment, the emotions were too overwhelming. I do, however, remember all of the sorrow and fear that built inside of my heart.

“Now take his power!” Gramhach laughed.

“Never,” I balled fistfuls of his tattered shirt in my hands. I leaned over him crying. I looked up to heaven and begged to take his place.

“*Goid, Goid, Fuath Uidh,*”

I grabbed the knife. I pulled with all my might until I was able to conjure the strength to rip it from his body. I was overtaken with a powerful sensation of heat. It was like pain was shooting through my veins.

My eyelids felt heavy, as if, the Sand Man had sprinkled his magical dust upon me. I was starting to get sleepy and, yet, at the same time I was wide awake.

“Aye...wait nay? I feel nothing,” Gramhach growled.

At this point my memory got seriously fuzzy. I could remember crying for Falcon’s life but there was a moment that could not have possibly happened, Falcon magically healed.

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“If Falcon is alive I will do and believe anything!” I held his limp body tight.

I sat up and leaned over his face. “Please,” I touched his cold cheek. Tears rolled down my cheeks and dripped onto Falcon’s perfect face.

Slowly Falcon began to move. I gasped and hugged his chest. I was bawling uncontrollably. I was tightening my hold on his body.

Gingerly Falcon encircled his arms around me and held me in a comforting embrace. I snuggled down into his arms. He was alive! I could believe anything was possible now.

“Brit Boy,” I wept. “I thought you were dead.”

“Don’t cry, Ace!” Falcon’s voice was stern but still held a touch of pain. I noticed it then, Falcon had been wounded deeply, yet, he wasn’t dead. Did my prayers get answered?

“How did you live through that?”

“I would never let a fisherman wench like her kill me!” Falcon scoffed.

“De Dan?” Gramhach said sounding astounded. “You are a conductor. Merely by touching the Athame you copied his and my own powers.”

Copied? I wondered. *What did she mean Copied?*

“Samantha, Watch out!”

I felt a hand over my mouth and knew that it was not Falcon. The skin was warm. My arms were forcibly pulled behind my back and I was struggling to get free.

An echoing sound of a crash filled the room. When I looked up I saw cage bars surrounding Falcon.

“Samantha!” Falcon called out once again. I found myself pushing harder to escape. I used my full body weight, trying to be heavy. Which, at one hundred and three pounds, really only hurt me.

I decided that biting was the best idea, and sunk my teeth into the person’s flesh as deep as I could. Swiftly the hand moved from my mouth and I began screaming Falcon’s name like I was yelling bloody murder.

I had to reach Falcon, convince him to escape. Falcon needed to survive, because I was not going to be his undoing such as I was for my family. Perhaps, if Falcon didn’t die he could rescue my family before it was too late.

“Men,” Gramhach stated. With her words the grip of the men loosened on me. “Let the lass a due.”

I pushed free or they allowed me to go free, I am not really sure which. Although, at the moment it didn’t matter so long as I got to say *goodbye* to my Falcon.

Wait, since when did he become my Falcon?

I ran toward Falcon. I stumbled and fell onto my hands and knees. The urge to reach his side was so strong I began to crawl. I was ready and willing to race a thousand miles to be with him. I couldn’t comprehend why.

I could feel his cold skin as he reached out for me. I hated the cage bars that separated us.

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“Brit Boy!” My voice was so shaky even I could hear the tremors in my voice.

Falcon cupped my face in his icy hand and I held onto him. I could have cared less that his touch was like winter I just wanted to touch him.

I looked into Falcon’s eyes. They were a strong shatter blue color. Not even a hint of onyx danced within his irises. I stepped back and sharply turned my head away. I averted my gaze to the ground.

I sucked in a shaky breath. At that moment, I knew Falcon was different. Something about his personality had changed.

“I promise I will save you,” Falcon whispered.

“No! Run! Save yourself!”

Falcon’s hand tightened around mine. His frosty touch was more reassuring and warm than a summer’s day, despite its low temperature.

“Never, what kind of wankshaft would that make me?” Falcon stated with a touch of annoyance in his voice.

“What the heck is a wankshaft?” I asked, but Falcon only cocked an eyebrow at me.

“No! I will not let you die!” I bawled. I couldn’t let him meet his...oh I cannot even *think* of it in English! *Je ne pourrais pas laisser ma mort de rassemblement d’amour’.*

“My lady...” A deep male’s voice bellowed in the distance.

I pulled Falcon’s hand from my face and kissed his chilly palm. He pulled mine through the bars and repeated the actions

upon me. It was amazing, the fact that even his lips were like ice.

I found myself yearning for his wintery lips to press against me for eternity. *OMG, I am starting to sound like I am in a Meg Ryan movie instead of a Harry Potter novel.*

“Now go,” I pleaded.

“Not without you!” Falcon was furious, I could hear it in his voice. He paused for a moment and then smiled. “*Je t’aime mon cerise.*”

I wanted to laugh. It was so bizarre and ridiculously funny to hear someone speak French in a British Accent. Not to mention, it was downright obscure for someone like Falcon to say ‘*I love you my cherished one*’, no matter what language he was speaking.

“*Je t’aime jadore,*” I found myself saying. *What? Why did I say that? I mean I don’t love Falcon and he is so not my beloved one!*

“Do you really want to die a virgin?” Falcon asked with sparkling eyes.

I felt my jaw drop. “Why did you have to say something snide?”

“It’s not snide,” Falcon countered with a frosty glare on his face.

“Brit Boy,” I rolled my eyes. I didn’t really understand why, of all the narcissistic jerks in the world, I wanted to save Falcon’s life. I should be protecting a sensitive guy instead!

“All I want is for you to live,” I stated. *Alright that proves it. I do need medication. I can’t believe I want to save this arrogant jack ass.* “So you can save my family.” I added for my own piece of mind.

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I pressed my palm to my lips and stole the glacial sensation of his kiss. I held my hand to my heart. I could feel his chilling essence pulsating through me. I couldn't help but wonder why I was filled with such an unfamiliar emotion.

Slowly but without hesitation I walked to Gramhach. I didn't give as much as a backward glance at Falcon. I needed to make a clean break from him. This was the only way to rescue Falcon and protect his soul.

I needed to save Falcon. Saving Falcon would be like seeing a hurt Rottweiler on the road. You can't help but save them and nurse them back to health even when you know they are going to bite you.

Gramhach lead me away and as we walked off I could hear Falcon slamming against the bars. I knew he was screaming but I could have sworn that it was my name he was saying. When I looked back over my shoulder I could have sworn I saw him crying, but that isn't possible.

Katherine Petersdorf

3
TRAPPED SOUL

Gramhach and her men led me to a dimly lit room. In the center of the room was an altar. The altar was comprised of a stone block that had a wooden surface on it. On the altar face were cuffs for the wrists and the ankles.

My eyes widened in speculation. "I'm sorry guys...I'm not into S and M." I giggled nervously.

Ancient symbols of Gaelic were carved into the stone. I didn't speak Gaelic as fluently as I would have liked but I have a knack for languages. In high school I would take college classes for the second half of

my school day. I learned mostly languages, French, Japanese, Gaelic and Latin.

Shelves lined the walls of the dimly lit room. There were jars, boxes and candles of all colors on the shelves. I could smell incense and the stench of rotting blood. I wanted to gag, this room smelt of death.

I turned my head and stared up at Gramhach. Her lemony curls bounced as she moved. Her forest green colored eyes had long strips of red flex in them. It was a red that seemed to mark some kind of dormant malice.

“Take the girl.” Gramhach pointed at me with her long aristocratic finger.

The two dark masses-which I assumed were her *men*-grabbed my arms and dragged me toward a table.

Then sharply one of the masses turned toward Gramhach. His eyes flared. “I sense the lad.”

“Talvik T’would seems you need to deal with him then.”

I wanted to scream out but I was tongue tangled in fright. All I could manage was a mangled yelp. Hopefully that sounded like a no but it probably didn’t. One of the *men* pulled me down onto the altar face.

Gramhach made her way over to me. Red flex claimed her eyes so that her pupils seemed all red and not really green at all. Yet in what little forest depths that remained I could see hidden anger and sorrow.

“It is time,” Gramhach said in a low hiss. “I will paint in blood.”

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“What?” I whimpered. I knew I was going to die but I was still hoping for it to be quick and painless. Hope being the operative word!

Gramhach set a small stone bowl next to me. She slowly ran her fingertips around the circumference of the bowl three times then immersed her hand inside. As her fingers moved within the basin, the smell of rotten blood became stronger and filled the room with its nauseating stench.

“Fuil, Mo Mo péinteàil pléigh Fuil”
Gramhach chanted in Gaelic. *Blood, I paint in Blood.* Why would she say that?

“Brit Boy,” I moaned. I couldn’t forget Falcon. He meant the world to me, already. It was so wrong that I wanted this man I barely knew. Call it love at first sight...not that love at first sight is real.

Gramhach removed her fingers from the basin and began to run them along my abdomen. I tried to pull my skin away from her cold fingers.

“Pray tell, why do you call to him who cannot help you?” Gramhach asked as more of those red flex faded from her eyes.

“I don’t want him to help me,” I said softly.

“Ye are a fool,” Gramhach said point blank. “I will pay to see, lass, there is no love, no such a thing.”

“No love?”

“Aye, Lass.” She stood and walked from my eyes sight. I turned my head and pulled my hands trying to move in the cuffs. I still could not see her.

“I once believed in the fable myself. I was young once,” She said in anguish.

I didn’t understand it. Gramhach was opening up to me. Perhaps she chose me because she believed I was going to die. Which she would know after all she is the one that will murder me!

Whatever the reason was, I was going to let her pour out her heart to me. If I could find some humanity inside of her I could save her soul.

“You still are.”

“Nay, but it is a compliment none the less. I found a love, he spoke of it to me and yet once he had taken my maidenhead I heard not of love again. He found a wife within a fortnight.”

“Wait?” I said cocking an eyebrow. “He only knew her two weeks before they got hitched?” I asked.

I looked away from Gramhach, trying not to let her see the sorrow on my face. I understood why she was evil. That man shattered her heart. I couldn’t blame her for wanting revenge.

“Aye,” When Gramhach returned I could see a small dagger in her hand. My heartbeat sped up. Was I going to die at Dagger point? Why couldn’t it be instant and painless?

“What was his name?”

Gramhach watched me for a moment as if studying me. She looked deep into my eyes as if she was searching to see why I was being a caring person. Compassion is one of my defining qualities. Those commercials come on about saving children

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and animals and I spend money I don't have.

"Compassionate?" Gramhach spat. "Kian McBride was his name."

"McBride: Tall, blonde and married to a Mandi?" I asked.

Gramhach looked at me in shock. "How did you...?"

"The meanest girl in school, Mariah, is his only child," I stated.

"Mariah," Gramhach said as if she was testing the word. She said the name again and this time she broke it into syllables. Then once more she said *Mariah* mulling over it. Each time she called the name her eyes become more and more forest green.

"Gramhach what is your real name...I mean your human one?" I corrected myself.

"Bonnie-Kate," She spat as if she was disgusted to have a human name at all.

Bonnie-Kate looked down at me, tears laced her eyes and pain captured her irises.

Can a demon possessed woman cry? I asked myself. *Can Bonnie-Kate still feel, underneath of the demon's clutches?*

"The child was not home," Bonnie-Kate said in affirmation. "Mariah was not home." She said Mariah gently as if she was trying not to let any harm come to the name.

She shook her head and glared down at me. "Nor Mandi," Her voice was now full of malice and hatred. Her face expressed the deepest of all kinds of loathing and a burning passion for revenge was glowing in her eyes.

“Mariah’s step mother,” Bonnie-Kate spat the word *step* out as if she were trying to vomit up a sickening taste.

“Step mother?” I asked. *Was Bonnie-Kate saying that she knew Mandi was not Mariah’s mother?* Mariah had always said she never knew her birth-mother. Was it possible that Bonnie-Kate was her mother?

I truly wanted to know about Mariah, despite her being the bitch of the school. I would do anything to get Bonnie-Kate reconnect to reality.

What could drive a person to ask a demon into their heart? What was so horrid a soul would give up freedom to hide from it? I wanted to know. I needed to understand.

Bonnie-Kate looked down at me. A subtle love was playing at the back of her eyes. She was trying to distance herself from something.

“Kian deserved what I did to him,” She reminded herself. Gramhach wasn’t really speaking toward me her words were to convince herself that she was doing the right thing. Her voice was persuasive meaning she really didn’t believe he *deserved* whatever it was she did to him.

“He ripped out my heart and ate it,” Bonnie-Kate said. A single tear rolled down her pale cheek. She wrinkled her nose and looked up to heaven.

“Why?” Bonnie-Kate shouted at the top of her lungs. Tears rolled down her cheeks and agonizing sorrow as evident in her voice.

She was no longer talking with me. Bonnie-Kate was talking to a much higher

power. I wasn't sure whether it was God, her demon or something else. I didn't matter because they weren't answering.

Bonnie-Kate stared up at the sky as if she knew someone was up there; someone who held all the answers to her every question. They were answers that Bonnie-Kate had never been able to receive and most likely never would.

"Was I wrong? Was I wrong to do the same to him?" She was bawling now. Bonnie-Kate reached up to the sky as if trying to grasp a reply.

"I tore out his heart and feasted on it." She shook her head vigorously. "I needed to devour the love he still held for me. I could feel it as his heart stopped beating in my hands." She whined.

"He was mine. He was meant to be my *first last and only*. Why should Mandi take that away from me? I never killed her even after...my daughter happened."

Bonnie-Kate began to scream bloody murder, covering her ears and vigorously shaking her head back and forth. "I cannot stop!" She shouted as she fisted balls of her hair into her hands and shook her head harder.

I'd read about witches, powers, my powers, and my family line in my father's notebook. I was raised on the tails that said I would get supernatural talents and I didn't believe. I would close my eyes and pretend I didn't feel a shattering agony down my spine when I saw creatures that were not really there. I didn't want to be able to *sense* demons and other beasts.

My stomach tightened again, the demon was pulsating through Bonnie-Kate. I could feel it crawling around trying to escape. Its malice was oozing off of her.

“I cannot stop,” Bonnie-Kate cried out. She wasn’t making a statement. She was affirming the truth. She was begging for freedom. Bonnie-Kate was shouting her plight and praying the demon would end its torturous reign over her soul.

Bonnie-Kate collapsed to the floor. Her body was taken over by a series of spasms as she shook wildly. She was screaming *I cannot stop* over and over again. Her eyes began to glow bright red and the forest depths of her human irises faded into nothingness.

She flung herself toward the alter table, pulling herself up as she fought with the demon. There was an internal tug a war unraveling in her body.

She stood, straightened out her tangled hair, smoothed her robes and smiled devilishly at me. She cocked eye brow, inclined her head and hissed. The demon had won.

Gramhach, the demon within, dipped her fingers into the stone bowl once more. When she withdrew her hand her fingers were covered in a green paste. Gramhach snarled low in her throat. It was an unearthly and malevolent sound.

She began to paint with the green paste on my almost naked body. Everywhere the paste touched me my flesh felt like it was on fire. I was burning from the inside out and screaming out at the top of my lungs. I

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called out for Falcon...I just don't know why.

“Luibh Oil Treòir Gnòthaigh” The demon inside of Bonnie-Kate hissed with sinful eyes.

“Don't speak, I see in your eyes you wish too.” Malice dripped off of her words. I blinked. It could sense I wanted to speak to her? I guess being a demon that must have lived an eternity already you learn to read expressions.

Of course I defied the sick and twist creature. “Bonnie-Kate?” I asked.

Bonnie-Kate turned to face me for a moment a scowl on her face. She shook her head, winced and looked back down at what she was doing.

“Bonnie-Kate I forgive you...in advance. I get it.”

She stopped and went as stiff as a board. “Why?”

“I guess because I am incapable of hate,” I spoke truthfully. “I don't usually admit it but I love every person in the world. Under my standoff ways I have a big heart.” I smiled. “So I love you and your soul...I want your pain to end.”

She turned away from me and averted her eyes to the ground. Her breathing was harsh and fast. I could see the demon crawling with in her. Its fangs dripped with blood, its eyes flamed like a crimson storm and it was a creature that imprinted utter evil with its look.

“Save me,” A soft innocent sounding voice chimed from within Bonnie-Kate's body.

“Bonnie?” I was praying internally as I spoke. “I hear your voice not the demon. Speak, say something, anything. This demon it doesn’t remove the pain it drowns you in and add more with each life you destroy and every heart you devour.”

I knew the truth could hurt but I knew that a sweet hearted woman was laying underneath begging for help. She had loved someone so much that she never moved on. She sired a child and had a new life growing inside of her.

Bonnie-Kate was a mother and lover...someone who had felt passion and compassion. Those that possess compassion will always be salvageable.

“Save Me,” Bonnie-Kate’s voice broke through again. Each time she spoke her eyes gained another streak of forest color.

In astonishment I watched as the demon forced Bonnie-Kate to place her hand over the candle flame. Instantly her wound healed. I looked at her face and could sense the scars of the internal battle. However they were not as clear as external marks.

“Bonnie-Kate, where is your family?” I asked.

My words must have struck a nerve. She sat looking at me and the icy look on her face said “Don’t say a word.” Her eyes glowed with red flex and every inch of crimson color did not have a reflection and was hallow.

“Dead,” She whispered.

Falcon called out my name from a distance. I heard his voice echo down the halls. I fought back the urge to answer him.

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I bit my lip almost hard enough to bring the blood.

Gramhach stood and I could see the demon inside of her. It was like a translucent image of the demon leading her humanity away and guiding her forcefully to act. She exited the room.

I stayed chained down on the altar for a few moments looking around. What about me?

“I need to get off this stupid altar!” I shouted.

“Need a little help Ace?” I didn’t need to see him to know who it was. The voice was so familiar to me already. Falcon was here to save me. Wait, I told him to run, what a jerk to ignore everything I say.

“Brit Boy,” I said twisting my head this way and that until I could finally see Falcon. Sadly that wasn’t until he was standing over me. Brit Boy had a crooked smile, not a lustful or fake smile, but a real one. I wasn’t sure what this feeling I had was, but I was alive whenever he was near.

Falcon held up and jingled a ring with a bunch of keys on it. “Let’s get you out of here.”

By the time Falcon *actually* got me out of the chains I was ready to kill him. Thirty-six, yes there were thirty-six keys on the ring. I know this because the very last one was the key that could unlock me.

“I don’t want to be the reason you’re hurt,” I whimpered. I sat up, grabbed him and let myself snuggle against his chest. I realized what I was doing and pulled away.

“Hush,” Falcon instructed as he placed a cold finger to my lips. He didn’t seem happy. I guess I had upset the *Great and Almighty Falcon* because I was stealing his glory by being the savior. I must have really knocked his pride on its butt.

See in Falcon’s word, A.K.A. *Man-Topia*, I was wearing the pants. He was the man so that was supposed to be his job.

“I don’t want the pants. I am perfectly fine with wearing dresses and skirts,” I reassured him.

“What?” Falcon asked as he cocked his eyebrow.

“Did I say that out loud?” I whimpered.

“Yes and what the heck are you talking about?”

“Oops! Um...nothing,”

Gingerly Falcon lifted me up from the altar and hugged me tight. I cuddled down into his wintery embrace.

Once again, it only took one move to toss me over his shoulder. He was like a modern day Neanderthal. Falcon was running and my face was smashing into his back. I swear I have *Jane* tattooed to my forehead.

“Hold on to me,” Falcon instructed like I wasn’t planning on doing so already.

“Hold on to what! You’re holding me!” I shrieked. I closed my eyes and fisted balls of his tattered shirt in my hands. “Don’t drop me.” I begged.

Falcon abruptly stopped running. My face slammed into his back. I let out a scream of pain because I could have sworn his spine broke my nose.

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“That hurt!” I said, placing my hand to my nose.

“What?” Falcon yelled.

“That hurt!” I repeated in an angry voice.

“No, not you Ace...them,” Falcon hissed.

“I am Talbik and this is Shandrow,” A deep male voice stated. “And the girl belongs to our master.”

“I bloody well don’t think so! She’s not your property. She is mine!” Falcon roared.

I felt anger boiling inside of me. I started pounding at Falcon’s back. “Put me down! I’ll kick their butts, then yours!”

“Can you even fight, Apeth?”

“Yes! Would you stop calling me names that I don’t understand, please?”

“Then prove it,” Falcon stated. Slowly he lowered me onto my feet. “Wait, what do you mean *that I do not understand?*”

“I’ll take the one on the right!” I doubled my fists and struck the kick ass position.

“Get him!” the masses yelled.

At that moment I would have fought as a team member with Falcon. I would have jumped into the battle, invited or not, without any question to my own safety. However I heard something that stopped me. I heard a sinister hissing voice...the voice of a demon.

“True,” Gramhach hissed. Although I knew it was the demon speaking I could still see the words leave Bonnie-Kate’s lips. “You are not wise lass.”

“Gramhach,” I said the demon’s name to make it perfectly clear I knew Bonnie-Kate was not the one doing this.

“Aye,” Gramhach bellowed. An aura of evil dripped off of Bonnie-Kate’s body. “And your Bonnie-Kate will never return.” The demon warned.

4
A PAIR OF WINGS

I had to be dreaming, that just had to be it. I mean I am facing the blazing red eyes of a demon that smells like rotting flesh and old blood!

Falcon was fighting the two large masses that were supposed to pass as *men*. I could hear Falcon's breath, it was harsh and pounding. I could feel the sweat of worry and anticipation rolling down my face. Some part of my brain told me that I was feeling Falcon's emotions but that could not be possible. Am I empathic or something?

I sighed and rolled my eyes. A demon possessed Bonnie-Kate, a sexy cold blooded

guy and evil minions. Was I in an episode of *The Vampire Diaries* and just didn't get the memo my life was on TV?

"Previously on Arched Wing"

Here I was in this Scottish Castle fighting off a demon that was within a person's heart. I was doing my best to survive and battle off my new destiny! And find out what happens next after this short commercial break.

"Bonnie-Kate," I needed her to hear past the demon's lies. I required Bonnie-Kate to hear my voice, my words and my truth instead of believing the monster. No demon would make it all fade away, that was a sheer lie.

The demon was hissing inside of her body. The demon's cool red eyes glared at me with hatred. It was bizarre that I could see and hear the demon when it was lying trapped within her body. Was I some kind of *Sidhe Seer* like on *Constantine* or in *Darkfever*?

I didn't even have time to blink before I felt the searing pain. The pain pulsed through my nerves. I felt like my body was shattering. It was unparalleled agony that crawled up my spine. My back was stinging. My eyes were watering. It felt like something was clawing at me.

Gramhach had her talons buried deep into the flesh of my chest! She was digging for my heart because I was her next victim. I would not die that way. I would not leave this world without Bonnie-Kate's salvation.

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“I know how you feel,” I sputtered in an agony laced voice. Sweat beads made their way down my neck.

“Shut up!” Gramhach hissed through Bonnie-Kate’s lips.

“This demon doesn’t mend your broken heart it only traps you with the memories for all eternity.” I was on fire. My whole being was burning with torment. It was taking all my power to fight off death. I had to for Bonnie-Kate’s sake. I was a person of compassion.

“Don’t let it...consume you,” I uttered breathlessly. My heartbeat was so fast. Blood was slowly trickling down my abdomen. I had to live. I could barely move. I had my fists clenched as tight as I could manage as if I held my life inside of them.

“I cannot make the demon leave you,” I declared. “Bonnie-Kate only you can save yourself.”

“Fool,” The demon snarled. “You are going to die!”

“Not without saving Bonnie-Kate. I cannot help but love her soul.” As I said those words I was suddenly alone, the word *love* had repelled the demon.

Wait, I reminded myself. *Mother as well as the pastor at church always said love was like acid to evil.*

I opened my eyes. I couldn’t fight to hold onto life anymore. I looked up and couldn’t believe what I was seeing now (shock, shock another hallucination like moment!) I was engulfed within a pair of wings. Soft feathers rubbed against my arms. The wings

arched around me like they were embracing me. I felt loved, warm and safe.

“What now, am I becoming an angel as I die?” I cringed. Still believe it or not, I didn’t become an angel and I didn’t die. The strangest thing happened, my wound healed. That settled things, I needed a straightjacket, prescriptions and to be locked in a small white room!

As the wings faded I could hear an Irish voice in my head. The voice was soft, feminine and sounded a lot like me. Only I’m not Irish.

Your Arched Wings...they are a symbol of the ultimate sacrifice. They are your angel heart that the saints of yore have blessed you.

“You are a liar!” I yelled at Bonnie-Kate as I pinned her down to the ground. She began swatting at me. I was struggling with my right hand to keep her arms pinned to the ground. I brought my left hand up and slapped her face. “You are a liar!” I repeated.

My heart was shattering. I could almost feel her pain. I could feel her emotions. I wasn’t sure if empathy was even possible but after the day I had been having I’d believe anything.

“You said you *loved* but that word...*loved* is a lie! Love cannot be past tense. When you love some, no matter what way you love them you never stop!” As I spoke Bonnie-Kate began to convulse. My words were attacking the demon living hidden inside of her.

“Love is forever and ever,” I warned. The red flex in her eyes were waging a

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battle to maintain control over the forest depths. Her humanity was winning out over the demon.

“Fight this demon. Do you want to burn in hell with that demon? Don’t you want to live and when you die go to a better place, if not for your sake how about for the sake of your daughter Mariah?”

“Mariah,” Bonnie-Kate said. Tears filled her eyes. I hadn’t been one hundred percent sure if Mariah was her child but now I was absolutely sure.

“Then Bonnie-Kate I can tell you how to fight the demon,” I whispered. “If you resist evil then it must flee from you.”

“Gramhach,” Bonnie-Kate said as sternly as she could manage. “I resist you. Leave me.” As she finished speaking her body began to vibrate beneath me. It was like large pulses were being shot through her body.

Suddenly I was rammed by what felt like an elephant. I went sprawling across the floor only to land with Falcon pinning me to the ground.

“Are you a bloody idiot?!” Falcon spat. “The demon will spiral out of her body and attempt to possess you.”

“Brit Boy what are you doing?”

“Killing her before that demon can escape and create havoc.” He yelled.

I brought my knee up between Falcon’s legs as hard as I could. I would not allow him to murder.

It was my first defining moment. Everything that had happened before then was trivial and unimportant. Every life I

would save and lose from this point on was because of my decision. I chose an innocent life over the lead of my mock romantic novel life.

I was choosing to do the right thing. I was choosing it over Falcon. I could not sacrifice an innocent life for him...even if I love him.

I love him? I asked myself. *I love him?*

Falcon fell with his full weight atop of me, his hands holding his groin. I began to squirm underneath of him as I tried to escape the pressure. I couldn't get any air into my lungs. I hadn't expected him to land on me. That's not how it happens in the movies!

Falcon lifted his body off of me but that didn't cause the pain in my chest to diminish. I was crawling away as fast as I could when his arctic hand wrapped around my ankle.

I opened my mouth to scream but the only sound I was able to make was little yelp. I could feel the stone floor on my belly as I began to slide backwards. I was shrieking under my breath as my heart thundered wildly in my chest. My stomach felt like a thousand butterflies were trapped inside of it. My skin felt so tight I could have sworn it was tearing off my body.

"You bitch of a traitorous Yank. You are all the same aren't you, from the revolution forward," Falcon yelled pulling me into his arms and pinning to the ground. I felt his chest against my own. Normally I would have embraced him back but at the moment

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he was attacking me, so it didn't seem fitting to love on him.

One of Falcon's hands gripped my leg and his nails...no talons, dug into my flesh. I was confused how did his nails grow into talons like that?

"I could kill you right now, if I wanted to." Falcon swore. "I could even break your bloody leg right now!" He brought his face up by my ear and whispered. "All I have done is save your life and this is how you repay me?"

I shivered as Falcon's voice softened. He continued to whisper to me. "I do not want to fight you. I don't want to hurt you. Please do not make me do this to save you. I...I need you."

I closed my eyes. He sounded like he was confessing love. Yet still, even yearning for a man to love me, I found myself needing Bonnie-Kate's life more.

"I cannot let you murder her!" I shouted.

"Just forget doing the right thing. I don't want you to die!" Falcon screamed with his doubled fists against the sides of his face. He shook his head vigorously. "Please!"

"I can't," I whispered.

I didn't want to do what I had to do. I didn't want to fight Falcon, just as he did not want to protect me. As is Falcon I am honor bound to protect people. The only difference between us is that I do not pick and choose who I will save. I didn't care about Bonnie-Kate's past the ground is level at the cross.

Falcon stood and released me. I fell to the ground. I laid there in a little incoherent

ball of anguish. I curled my body into the fetal position.

“I wish that you would rot in hell!” I screamed in fury, only I was not yelling at Falcon.

“Ladies first,” He said to me in a mocking voice.

“I...not you...him,”

“Who are you telling to go to hell then?” Falcon asked.

“My...My father,” I replied. I turned and could see Bonnie-Kate was in frantic spasms on the floor. A dark cloud of evil soaked her. My soul was filling with tremors. I couldn’t stand the malice that had overcome me. I was yearning to escape the evil of her demonic aura.

I shook my head and closed my eyes. “Whatever happens, I forgive you Falcon!” I stated softly. I was incapable of hatred.

Slowly I stood. My heart was beating fast and my head was pounding. I had to fight the evil aura in order to save Bonnie-Kate from Falcon and Falcon from Gramhach.

I fumbled forward on the floor. My eyes locked on the Athame Gramhach had dropped. I need that blade. With a weapon I could fend off Falcon and save my own life. My soul shivered at the thought of having to protect myself from Falcon because he was the one who was supposed to be saving me.

I had almost made it to the Athame when I felt Falcon’s icy body against mine once again. Suddenly the blade was sliding across the stones and slipping from my grasp. I didn’t have to look up to know that Falcon

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was the one who knocked the Athame away.

I could hear his heavy breathing over top of me. It was as if he was gasping in shock. I looked over my shoulder to see his face. Terror was in his eyes.

I followed his eyes and then saw what he saw. Bonnie-Kate was the one who had the Athame.

I do not wish to kill you, seeker, but I must for the protection of this girl.” Bonnie-Kate hissed.

“No! Don’t kill Brit Boy!” I screamed. “I...I don’t want to lose him.”

Bonnie-Kate’s forest eyes shimmered. I could see that she needed freed from her past. Then it occurred to me. If she was without red flex and held no evil aura where was the demon?

Her body was covered in open bite marks and scratches. The demon had attacked her on the outside, was it running around free?

“No more blood on my hands,” She said softly.

The Athame clinked to the floor and the sound echoed throughout the room. Bonnie-Kate’s scream followed vibrating on the walls. For what felt like eternity nothing else happened.

Then the monster stepped into view and I saw Gramhach’s *demon form*.

The demon’s true self was tall, scrawny and unfeminine. In fact no gender was defined on the monstrous being. Decomposing flesh was dripping from the

body and green muck was smearing on the demon's dead flesh.

A sickening sent of rotting blood engulfed the room oozing from the demonic being. No flesh on the beast existed without a sign of blood and decay. Its eyes danced with the red flex that once held Bonnie-Kate's forest depths hostage.

A scream was torn from my throat.

The demon pushed me backward and jabbed the Athame into my shoulder. My body went limp and I found myself lying sprawled across the stone floor once more. My body quaked in agony and fear.

I clutch the blade's hilt in my hand and let out an ear shattering scream of terror. I had to rip out the Athame. It hurts now even to just recall the memory. It is a type of suffering that most people couldn't even imagine, the exploding of all the surrounding nerves. I still pulled with all my might as I fought back the agony that was coursing through my veins.

I flung the Athame and it skittered across the ground. Gramhach hissed in disapproval. I looked up to see that those feathery wings were encircling me again. I felt the light of them like a burning righteous justice. I felt safe, loved and wrapped in a cocoon of healing compassion.

I was alive? The pain faded! I closed my eyes allowing those beautiful Arched Wings to protect me.

"How will I kill this demon?" I asked placing a hand to my heart. "Tell me heart. How will I save Falcon?" I opened my eyes

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“Love,” I whispered.

I watched in shock as a part of Gramhach’s body exploded and green goo shot out and all over everything. I was covered in the goo! The slimy substance viscously slid down my body and drizzled to the floor. *It was a vivid and repulsive memory that I would never forget.*

“Samantha!” Falcon said stepping forward. His frosty arms encircle me. I harshly pushed him away. As I did he just released me and let his arms fall to his sides.

He wasn’t forcing me and yet I still held a slight distance. I wasn’t sure which wintery touch I wanted more. Did I want to feel the cold stone to my back or to fall into his freezing embrace? Falcon leaned forward and placed his chilly lips to my forehead.

I didn’t move when he placed his large hands against the wall on either side of my head. I knew that he had tried to kill me and yet I didn’t care. I still yearned for his touch because my heart believed that he wasn’t trying to hurt me. I guess I’m a walking talking Kagome Higurashi.

Falcon began tilting his head and leaning close to me. His chilly lips were a breath away from me and I couldn’t help but shiver. His sensual exhalation on my face was drawing me in and with one swift movement he pulled me into his arms. I looked into his eyes but their onyx shade was piercing my soul.

I closed my eyes as tight as I could manage. I could feel the skin around my nose and eyebrows tensing. A thousand pleas filled my thoughts. I bit my tongue

not to say those pleas. If I was going to die at Falcon's hands I would die with pride. I was not going to allow myself to plead for life.

At that moment I needed to evade his chilling caress and escape his wintery embrace. I wanted to melt because his frozen kisses were flattering my cheeks and temples.

"What's wrong with you?" I asked, though the question was truly aimed at me. I mean here I was running from the only person strong enough to save me. Then again he was also strong enough to kill me so measured optimism was best.

"Let me explain," He said in a loving voice. My breath caught in my throat and a warning light in my brain went off. Yet I ignored the screeching siren of reason.

"Alright, explain," I demanded.

"I give you my word, I will not harm you," Falcon said gently and in that moment gently didn't seem dangerous. Then again that alarm was still blaring, telling me that I was about to learn something I did not want to. It was like my heart was telling me to run away and pretend there was no reason.

"I'm sorry," Falcon said breathlessly. "I am so sorry Samantha."

I almost died of shock. I was having a hard time believing my ears. I think he just apologized to me!

Falcon ran his icy knuckles down my cheek. His eyes shined an onyx shade. Some part of me was fighting to run and to not

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believe his words. After all he did try to crush me to death.

Those black eyes were a sign of evil. They were a sign of sheer wickedness and I could feel it. I could sense that something malice was making up a part of him and that its mark was irreversible.

I fell forward into Falcon's arms. I didn't care if he was a bad guy. Falcon was an angel to me. I knew it was obtuse to believe in a man so vice but I couldn't help falling head over heels for him. The heart is blind, unintelligent and irrational.

"I wasn't trying to hurt you," Falcon said.

I wanted to move away but I didn't. I was fighting the urge to forgive him.

"I wasn't going to kill you," Falcon said running his cold fingers down my cheek. His words were like balm to my perishing soul.

Swiftly I turned my head. I couldn't look at him. I couldn't let myself keep believing him.

"I can't," I whispered. I closed my eyes so tight my whole face wrinkled. I was shivering from head to toe. "I can't."

Falcon stopped and just held me for a long moment. He was silent but I could feel his hands trembling.

"I am not human. I know that you know that." Falcon brushed his fingers across my collar bone.

"I don't care," I whispered then gasped from his delightful touch. "I may not be ready to know what you are but I won't hate you for it."

“Seekers must see their past lives to learn from those mistakes.” Falcon kissed my forehead.

I crinkled my nose and pushed him away. “Be kind, rewind. Past lives are real? What about heaven and hell?”

“Yes. In my past life I was more evil than you could imagine. Then my past life met a woman whose powers he coveted. He fell in love with that woman. He died vowing that he would save her in his next life,” Falcon said like a teacher.

There was a sharp pain in my head. I bawled a fistful of my shirt in my hand over my heart. *Falcon was in love with someone else?* I didn’t want to hear that. I wanted to be the one he loved. I wanted to be the ONLY one he loved, now, then and forever.

“Were you able to save her?” I asked trying not to look at him. I clenched my fists tighter.

“You are her,” Falcon replied.

I gasped and looked up at Falcon. I could feel my jaw dropping. Quickly I shook my head trying not to blush.

“Okay, I get the picture,” I said with a big fake smile. “No need to ramble.”

“Do you think I am evil now?” Falcon asked. He cupped my chin and turned me to face him “Do you?”

“No,”

“But,” Falcon said shaking his finger. “I know you want to say something more.”

“You were going to kill her. Die, death, carnage,” I rebutted.

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“You say that like I was doing the wrong thing! Here I am trying to be the good guy and all you do is ridicule.” Falcon howled.

“Do I look stupid? You’re only acting like the *good guy* and being sensitive to get into my pants,” I corrected. I flicked him in the nose like I was reprimanding a dog.

“That’s not true.” Falcon rubbed his nose and scowled. “Well it’s mostly not true,” Falcon amended.

“I can take care of myself. So don’t think being a prince charming hero will grant you my big V,” I huffed. I crossed my arms over my chest and sneered up at him.

Falcon stood up. Anger was evident on his face. “I see what this is coming down to. You want to be your own Knight in Shining Armor.”

“No,” I stated rolling my eyes. “Shining armor would clash with my hair.”

“I need you,” Falcon whispered into my ear. “My human heart needs you.” Falcon’s icy breath sent shivers of delight down my spine.

My human heart needs you...human? I asked myself. “Can I just go home now and forget this place? I’d like to go back to my normal life.” I whimpered.

“I’ll take you home, but you are not allowed to forget. I will never allow you to leave me, if you try I’ll drag you back to me kicking and screaming. It took me longer than you can possibly imagine to find you.”

“You think that you can just decide that you own me?” I asked in heated anger.

I didn’t comprehend why a part of me wasn’t angry but excited. There was

something so sexy about Falcon being raw masculine dominance. Falcon was a man who was predicated by the testosterone that oozed from him as well as this overpowering brooding ego.

“When I want something I always get it,” Falcon stated in an as-a-matter-a-fact voice. He pulled me into his arms. I instinctively drew in the scent of him. Then quickly I turned my head trying not to take pleasure in his perfect aroma.

“I want you Samantha. I want you to be mine and mine alone,” Falcon affirmed.

Falcon let out a sigh and tightened his hold on me. “I love you,” He whispered again.

Why is it that a man can say love so quickly, and say it without regret or doubt? I thought to myself. When women have to dig deep, fuss over it, fret and worry if it's the right place and time to express ourselves.

“I know because you are my soul-mate. Trust me. I know it for a fact.”

“How?” I asked shooting down his cocky statement.

“I know everything,” Falcon laughed.

Bonnie-Kate let out an ear shattering scream. I looked up. Her pain had drawn me from my thoughts and back into the real world. I couldn't help but look over Falcon's shoulder toward her body.

The demon, Gramhach, was standing behind Falcon. The green goo of its flesh was dripping off of its arms and blood ran down its cheeks. I looked up at its eyes. Gramhach was weeping tears of blood.

Gramhach ripped Falcon from my arms. I felt my breath catch in my throat and fear coil in my belly. I had thought that this nightmare was over and that the demon was gone. I was rudely forced into realizing that I was no longer cocooned in safety.

I watched in horror as Gramhach began to attack Falcon. Even though I knew falcon could hold his own I was still screaming internally. I wanted to save him but there was someone else I needed to rescue. This was someone that could not save herself.

I turned to face Bonnie-Kate. She was lying in a mangled heap and I knew she was nearing death. Bonnie-Kate began to lift herself up off the ground. Her wobbling arms were barely able to hold her bodyweight. Slowly she forced herself to crawl toward me.

“Dana De Dan,” Bonnie-Kate whispered. I pulled her into my arms. She rested her head upon my lap. I could feel tears rolling down my cheeks.

“I want forgiveness,” She said to me. Her human eyes glowed with warmth and love.

“You have forgiveness,” I stated trying not to bawl.

“So do not cry for me...my time has come and I know that.”

“Bonnie...”

“Do not blame yourself Dana De Dan. I am not dying because of you. In fact if it was not for you I would be going to hell...please protect my daughter Mariah.”

I closed my eyes in fear. Bonnie-Kate drew her last breath. A tear rolled down my

cheek and splashed onto her face. She was dead.

I stood and could feel anger boiling inside of me. I could hear my heartbeat in my ears. I was alive and she was dead.

“You will pay for murdering her!” I yelled at the demon.

My heart was falling apart. I was so angry at the demon for killing and yet I could not hate the demon. I didn’t understand why I was still able to love something that was so evil.

Love is your key. Love is your power and strength. Do not try to hate the demon but instead embrace the unconditional love within your own heart. Simply love the demon and it shall fade. A voice said inside of my head. Great another imaginary person and this one has an Irish accent to boot! My day just keeps getting better and better!

“Surrender little girl,” Gramhach said cocking its head. “No matter how powerful your Arched Wings are you will not annihilate me.”

I placed a hand to my heart. It wasn’t the demon’s fault it was evil. Gramhach was trapped in a vice life.

“I forgive you for your wickedness,” I warned. “I love you.”

The demon hissed vilely, black saliva dripping from its fangs. “How can you love a demon?” It snarled.

“Easy, I have a heart of forgiveness and as the voice in my head says...love is my real power. I may be a blood witch but my compassion is my real gift.”

“Die!” The demon cried.

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“Gramhach now you must choose. Shall you scamper off and live to see another day or shall you choose utter defeat. I leave the choice to you, act now.”

“You cannot eliminate me. To slay a demon you must call on a more powerful creature, love may be acid but it is not enough to destroy me.”

“Call on a demon?” I questioned.

“Evil cannot conquer evil,” Gramhach laughed wickedly. “No demon power will assist you.”

I looked up to the heavens. I had to do the one thing I could. Love can conquer anything but I needed love with more power than my own. “I call of the power of Emmanuel the God of Love. I pray you give me the might to vanquish this evil.”

“What?” Gramhach snapped.

I lifted my hands out toward the demon, palms facing outward. “I plead the blood of love’s biggest sacrifice over you. I surround you in not only the love of the compassion I hold but that of Emmanuel, the creator of Love itself.”

The demon collapsed to the ground. “May you cry the blood of his lost soul,” the demon bellowed as it pointed to Falcon. “For cursing me with love I curse you to know love’s bitter truths”. Then slowly Gramhach’s body melted away.

“What does that mean?” I asked Falcon.

Something warm and wet glided down my cheek. I placed my fingers to my face and whipped the wetness away. Another hot tear rolled down my cheek. I whipped it away with the back of my hand. Looking

down I saw there was blood on my hand. I was now shedding tears of blood.

I passed out in shock.

∞

It must have been several hours before I woke up. I slowly sat up and looked around the room I was in. I had hoped that I would be home in my own bed and that this was all a dream.

Well a part of me did, another piece of my heart longed for it to be real. I knew that if Gramhach was just a figment of my imagination then so was Falcon.

I opened my eyes. I was not at home. I was lying in someone else's bed?

I sat up and rubbed my eyes. I looked around rapidly looking back and forth from one side of the room to another.

There was a sofa against the wall. There was a coffee maker on the sink next to a basket of spoons, instant coffee packets and sugar.

"This isn't a bedroom," I stated aloud to myself. "This is a hotel room."

I placed a hand to my head to try and stop my throbbing headache. I wasn't sure if I was in America or Scotland. I wasn't even sure if I would ever see Falcon again. I moved my hand from my temple to my heart. I wanted to see Falcon again because even if he was just a dream boy he was the walking definition of perfect. He was everything that I wanted in a man. Like pure Inuyasha.

When I was a child I created a list of a hundred things that I would seek out in a

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man and so far he had proven to fulfill each one of them, staring with his amazing eyes.

The door slid open and I almost jumped out of my skin. A rush of relief came over me when I saw that it was only Falcon. He entered wearing just a pair of faded jeans that were snug to his body. I was trapped in awe of his perfectly sculpted chest.

“What is that?” I asked pointing at his chest. “What happened to your chest?” I had noticed that upon his perfect chest were three parallel scars from his collar bone to his navel. If he hadn’t had on a shirt earlier I might have noticed his scars sooner.

“A demon put his mark upon me,” Falcon stated flatly. “Why does the scar both your?” He asked sarcastically but I could tell that he was just being defensive.

“No, why would a scar bother me?” I blushed. “I think...” I puffed my hair back with my hand. “I think it makes you look tough as brass tacks...kind of warrior sexy.” I looked down at the ground and bashfully giggled. I kicked my foot gently and bit my lower lip.

“Whatever you say, Ace,” Falcon said sarcastically.

I watched in a sleepy daze as he neared the bed. I figured since I was dreaming I might as well enjoy myself. So I reached out and groped the bulge in his pants. I’d been wondering about its size for a while anyway, since I was asleep why not?

“What are you doing?” Falcon asked being taken aback. His eyes widened. Then suddenly a lustful grin spread across his lips.

I pulled my hand away, turned from him, and pinched my arm. It hurt. "I'm not dreaming," I gasped.

Falcon cornered me between himself and bed. His presence was so intense, captivating and sultry that it overwhelmed me. He, himself was raw masculinity and he knew full well his overpowering essence. Falcon was using his brooding personality and six foot three inches of sheer muscular man to diminish my will power. He had the gift of male intimidation down to a pristinely perfected art form.

Falcon, with a lightning fast move, that left my reflexes no time to react, pushed me backward. I sprawled onto the bed as his flawless body followed me down. His right hand clasped my wrists, his thighs locked mine in place and his left hand caressed my face. I was helplessly pinned beneath him. I was vulnerable to his will.

I was in *deep shit!*

5 ENTANGLED



am in deep shit!

I closed my eyes as tight as I could. I tried to will Falcon from existence. Upon opening them again Falcon's face was even closer to mine and his chilly breath was upon my skin. I was shivering, but it wasn't from the coldness of his touch.

My stomach muscles tightened in anticipation. This locked away the butterflies in my stomach but did not stop my nervousness.

I yearned to escape his embrace. I needed to run from this overpowering feeling. I didn't like feeling alive. I was drowning in passion, even though we still weren't doing

anything...yet. I was going to trip, tumble, and fall into the abyss of love.

“Don’t let me frighten you, Samantha.”

“Why do you never call me Sam?” I asked, trying to change the subject. I thought that my name was a smoother transition than *‘Let’s talk about anything but the first thing that pops up’*.

“Sam?” Falcon mulled the term over to himself. A breathtakingly beautiful smiled curved his lips. “Sam?” He restated. “It is a bloke’s name and doesn’t do you justice.”

Oh thank you God for bestowing me with this flawless man. I thought.

“And,” Falcon continued. “If I call you Sam, I will feel like I am stealing the pants of a man.”

“Bastard, I take it all back!” I hissed.

“Take what back?” Falcon’s tone held his bewilderment. Falcon slid his arctic hand down my neck then over my shoulder. I quivered in delight.

My neck felt all fizzy like a shook up soda, trapped but ready to explode. I arched my neck to expose the tingling flesh, as I shut my eyes tight. I felt my heartbeat quickened.

I wanted Falcon. Falcon was like a bird of prey that would devour me. He was an animal that could rip out my heart and soul. *He can have them* I thought to myself.

I was willing to serve myself up to this predator of the bed chamber. I couldn’t help but hope that my whole being would come crashing down with the intensity of each peak he would give me.

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“You pole,” Falcon’s voice was like drowning in perfection because he was the absolute lack of flaw.

“Pole?” I asked in confusion. Alright he did have at least one fault, and that was that I could almost never understand half of what he was saying.

“Damn Yanks,” Falcon said shaking his head and softly laughing. “It means you choose.” He smiled down at me, his pearly teeth and dimples showing.

“Chose? Choose what?” I asked stupidly.

A devastating smile formed on his lips. Devastating because I melted like chocolate out in the sun, well at least my common sense did. That is if I had any to begin with.

“Choose how I take you,” Falcon said. His accent was even stronger than before.

“Huh?” I mumbled and looked up at Falcon. The expression on his face was one of disappointment.

“You pole. Don’t you want me to show you life?” Falcon asked.

I nodded.

Oh wait! I nodded? What is wrong with me? Why do I always nod?!? I screamed under my breath.

“That is what I thought.” Falcon stated smiling devilishly.

No! I didn’t mean that! I didn’t mean to nod! Wait...what’s going on? I’m speaking but no words are coming out! Come on Sammie! Speak Sam speak! (What am I...a dog?)

“Ready?” Falcon asked stroking the side of my face with his freezing fingertips.

Okay Sam I mentally told myself, this time shake your head no...

I nodded.

A moment passed in which I fought with my head, as my nodding and shaking made me spin my head around in circles like I was watching a merry-go-round.

Finally I shook my head 'no' but I said "Yes."

Falcon's fingertips found my neck, and gently stroked me. I could hear my own breath as well as the muffled whimpers escaping my lips. My legs were twitching awkwardly beneath him, as I squirmed to pull away from the pleasure yet at the same time draw closer to his touch.

I closed my eyes and moved my neck to give Falcon more access to my sensitive skin. I was lost in the moment and it wasn't a Big and Rich song. Although it was a close enactment of *Save a Horse Ride a Cowboy* or at least *Save an Airplane, Ride a Falcon*.

My nerve endings coiled as Falcon leaned over me, and I could feel the wintery sensation of his breath. As well as I could hear the almost silent inhalation of air that happens when someone opens their mouth right next to you.

"What are you doing?" I asked. I sat up so fast I almost got whiplash. I stared at Falcon blankly and he just sat there staring back at me. I cocked my eyebrow when I noticed that his mouth was open, almost as if he was ready to bite me. *What is he a vampire or something?*

Falcon kissed me.

What's going on? I thought in shock. I was having a secondary relapse of thought and it

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was causing me to be unable to comprehend what was going on. Yet still my body knew what to do. Such as my arms understood they were to pull Falcon closer, and my lips had the instinctual need to spread. I was kissing him back with a fiery passion, and an untamable need to draw him close. I wanted nothing more than to pull him inside of me in whatever way possible.

Falcon's lips slid open over mine, completely wet and wild. Yet still his touch was colder than the ice of the Arctic sea. It was a chilling sensation that filled me with a fiery passion.

Brit Boy deepened his kiss. Then he slowly backed off letting his teeth gently rubbed in friction against my lips. Falcon left small love bites at the corners of my mouth. Then he returned to a kiss that was harsh, deep and soul claiming.

Falcon was milking every inch of passion from my body. He was playing his kisses sweet and intoxicating one moment and then violently erotic the next. Falcon kissed me as if there was nothing but this room, this moment, and us. He acted as though he had eternity at his fingertips.

Falcon's teeth grazed mine in such a way that it made my whole body tingle with lust, which was a new emotion that I had never felt before. I understood want, attraction and being turned on, but still I could not comprehend lust. This sensation was new and inviting. It was a dance as old as time that was burned into my DNA. My

heart was filled with a raw and powerful emotion that was like the sun.

As Falcon and I parted for air a low sexy voice broke through our panting. It was a voice like a well trained harlot would use to draw a man into her bed.

“French me,” The voice said. After a moment I realized the voice sounded like mine. I was sure it wasn’t. See, I couldn’t sound sexy even if my life depended on it.

Falcon cupped my cheeks with each of his hands, yanked my head back and kissed me. He was determined to enjoy me whether or not I had caught my breath. His kisses would be the death of me, especially if I never got to keep the inhalations that I took.

Falcon’s dominate sexual nature ripped the air from my lungs with each sizzling touch. His skin, hands, lips and even overpowering gaze were breathtaking. He was a man, knew he was a man and prided himself on his sensual persona. Falcon was a walking, talking version of a woman’s darkest and most forbidden fantasies.

I wanted Falcon to stroke my body. I yearned for him to fill me with wonders beyond my wildest dreams. I needed him to ravish me like the beast that he was and devour my innocence with each erotic thrust.

Falcon’s tongue hurriedly pressed against my lips and pushed through them. He seemed to be probing into my mouth, and without hesitation I began to suckle his tongue. A strange need had overcome me

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and I couldn't quench it. I wanted to draw him into me and get as close to him as physically possible.

That was when something occurred to me. *If I feel like this when all we are doing is kissing, what is it going to feel like when he takes my Big V? (A.K.A takes my virginity.)*

Well, then again I can't really blame myself for having such thoughts. I am being made far too horny by Falcon's erotically cold touch. I mean I have nineteen years of bottle up sexual tension waiting to get out. Falcon was about to pop the cork with a champagne flute in hand.

His mouth moved down my jaw and on to my neck. My lower muscles tightened even more. I tilted my neck up to give Falcon as much open access as I could. I needed his exquisite touch, those fluttery lips, and that slick tongue. I rubbed my flesh against his lips in a wordless request.

I let out a scream as his teeth bit deep into my neck. I was filled with desire. I was caught in a rhapsody of pleasure.

"Brit Boy!"

"Do you want me, Ace?" Falcon asked as he pulled away from my neck.

"Yes." I panted.

"How?" He asked.

"However you want." I replied without hesitation.

"Samantha?" Falcon sounded like a sixteen year old who just got home to find a new car for his birthday.

"Falcon..." I mumbled trying to call him back to me. I yearned to kiss him, give my body to him and lay within his arms

every night until the day that I died. I longed to be his lover. No I wanted more than that. I wanted to be his true love.

Falcon rolled off of me and sat up. I watched as he ran his hand through his hair and sucked in a shaky breath. I wondered what it was he was thinking as moved toward the end of the bed.

“Was it something that I said? What did I say wrong?” I asked trying to catch my breath.

“It wasn’t wrong. You did say something, though...two things,” Falcon said to me gently, and this time gently didn’t seem at all like a danger, but a sign of trust.

I sat up slowly because my heart was still racing. I was dizzy, really dizzy. Slowly I repositioned myself onto all fours and crawled toward Falcon. I kept crawling until I was sitting in his lap.

Gingerly I placed my head upon Falcon’s chest. I snuggled my body up against his. I then tilted my head up and looked at him.

“Tell me,” I said. I was willing to hear him and what he was longing for.

“You gave me your pole. No woman, especially no Yank, has ever given me that honor.” Falcon stated flatly.

I leaned forward and kissed Falcon’s cold temples. “I trust you.” I said softly. “Why else would I be here? I truly want to be with you. I mean take a look around you. I am sitting here primed and ready to hand you my virginity on a silver platter. Well more like silver sheets.”

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Falcon laughed, his perfect voice seemed unearthly and his dimples showed. I watched as his eyes lit up with life.

“And you never said my name before,” Falcon said, as his laugh vanished. He seemed breathless, like what he said had stolen his air and left him powerless.

I knew that I was smiling, because what he said was true. I hadn’t ever called him *Falcon* before, at least not aloud.

Falcon’s icy hand ran down the side of my ribs, sending tiny shivers up my spin. My heart was doing flip flops in my chest every time I felt his touch.

“Say my name again.” Falcon pleaded in a low sexy voice. His sensually spiced breath washed over my face.

“Falcon,” I whimpered into his ear. I melted into the sensations of him.

His kisses rained across my neck.

“Falcon,” My voice was getting shaky.

He trailed love-bites down my neck and onto my shoulders.

“Falcon,” I shivered in bliss.

His tongue ran against my skin.

“Falcon!” I moaned, pressing my neck against his mouth. “Wow,” I quivered.

“All you have is wow?”

“Wow pretty much covers it.”

He laughed in that deep exotic voice of his. It echoed in the room and washed over me like waves of sheer ecstasy.

“Falcon,” I giggled.

Falcon closed his eyes softly, took in a deep breath and groaned low in his throat.

I had never seen someone so turned on just by hearing their own name. Then again,

I've never actually seen anyone turned on before. Well except when I surreptitiously watched a porn movie so I'd see why all the girls at school liked sex.

"What is your full name?" I inquired. I didn't want to end up pulling a *Carrie Underwood* and wake up not knowing my last name.

"Falcon Huntington Greyson," Falcon answered.

"Samantha Katherine Morgan," I shuddered. "Then again, I have a feeling you knew that."

"As prophetic as ever I see." Falcon kissed the tip of my nose.

Is this it? Is this the reason people lust? Is this sensation the thing that makes a person become lost in the moment? Is this the reason people spontaneously fling themselves at someone. Is this the reason I am diving in headfirst?

I finally understood why Bella wasn't afraid of Edward. She loved him so much his evil side didn't matter. I felt that way for Falcon.

Falcon lifted me up bridal style. I blushed and held my arms to my chest in a protective way. I felt like a giddy girl in love. I snuggled down into Falcon's embrace. I watched as he headed toward the bathroom. *What now?* I asked myself.

Falcon sat me down and started to run the bath water. He reached under and was checking the temperature.

"I could do that part for myself," I assured him.

"We are taking one together," Falcon laughed. Falcon started to undress.

Arched Wing

“Wait,” I whimpered. “I’m so tight...and you’re so big...you’ll never f...” I stammered when he slipped off his pants and boxers.

“Don’t worry Ace. I have all the time in the world.”

“What does that mean?” I choked.

“I intend to really enjoy my time with you...when we finally do have sex you’ll be begging me to f...” Falcon said a word that almost made my face fall off. If my mother was here she would have washed his mouth out, naked or not. Nonetheless it didn’t sound derogatory on his lips but instead it sounded silken and sexy. When he said the f-word it was like an invitation to dance the most erotic, pleasing and ancient of dances in the world...sex.

I yearned to have sex with Falcon, but yet we didn’t. He told me we would one day and that I would understand sooner or later. He was neglecting to truly explain the reality of the situation to me. I wanted to know what kind of creature Falcon *really* was.

Katherine Petersdorf

6

FAMILY TIES

I awoke the next morning with my body sprawled across the bed. I was wearing just his tattered white t-shirt. The sheets were wrapped awkwardly around my legs. My feet were up on the pillows and my face was buried into the top comforter.

“What time is it?” I asked as I yawned and stretched my body out like a feline.

“Four O’clock A.M.,” Falcon quickly responded.

“Why are you up and about, so early?”

“I didn’t sleep. You have clothing in the bathroom,” Falcon stated. “Hurry up and dress we have a flight to catch and breakfast to eat.”

“Breakfast?” I asked looking around the room. I was so hungry!

“Just go get dressed,” Falcon instructed.

I stood up and headed to the bathroom.

As I entered the bathroom I was surprised to find brand new clothing with the tags still attached. *Miss Me* jeans that were low cut hip huggers. I hoped he didn’t plan to have me fight anymore because this cut was not conducive to that.

There was a Dior blouse, socks, and a...thank you God...Victoria Secret underwear set with *full bottom underwear*. No more thong-panties, I finally get real underwear.

When I came out of the bathroom Falcon was dressed. I found it a bit strange for him to be wearing a turtle neck. It must have been a British style.

“Breakfast?” I asked jumping up and down like a giddy little girl.

“Room service will be here in a moment,” Falcon answered crossing the room to my side. He grabbed my arm and yanked me close to him. The sudden movement had me in shock.

Falcon kissed me but not with the fire and passion of last night. His touch was soft and sweet. Kind of like how Darrin Stephens kisses his wife Samantha on *Bewitched*.



When we got to the JFK airport it was almost twilight. We still had a two hour drive from New York to Night’s Kill. Night’s Kill is a small town in the Catskills.

Arched Wing

I was sleeping in the lobby while Falcon got the luggage, which was all his. I felt Falcon's cold hand on my shoulder and awoke. Slowly I sat up in a sleepy daze.

"Where is the luggage?" I asked rubbing my eyes with the backs of my hands.

"It's on my back," Falcon said pointing to a backpack he was wearing.

"That's all?"

"Yes." Falcon lifted me into his arms. He carried me all the way out the doors and into the parking lot where he placed me back onto my feet.

Falcon owned an old beat up red truck. It was so unlike Falcon, I always pictured him to be more of a limo kind of man. Then again Falcon never ceased to amaze me. We climbed into the truck and he had me lay my head in his lap.

"Go back to sleep, Samantha," Falcon said gently. "I will wake you when we are in your town."

When we reached Night's Kill, Falcon gently shook my shoulder to wake me up. Slowly I opened my eyes. The sky was dark as midnight. My head still stung with jet lag.

I couldn't sit up, since I was lying in Falcon's lap. The steering wheel was over my head and my buckle was fastened awkwardly.

One of Falcon's hands was petting my shoulder and his other was on the wheel. His eyes were glued to the road ahead. Falcon seemed to be one hell of a multi-tasker.

"What road do you live on, Ace?"

“Elm Street,” I paused and then laughed. “No, not next door to Freddy but then again, with the way my life is going I think I’m in a horror movie anyway.”

I looked up at Falcon but he didn’t look back. Even though his eyes were focused on the road a smile still curved on his lips.

“Falcon, why did you move to New York State?” I asked softly.

“I had to. It was the council’s orders,” He said dryly.

“What do you mean *the council*?” I asked. I knew I was prying but I had to. He wasn’t telling me the whole truth.

“You are my mission, Ace. You are the chosen one,” Falcon reminded me.

“Chosen one?” I giggled. There was no way I was a *chosen one* I couldn’t walk five feet without tripping.

Falcon took in a sharp breath and his abdomen slowly expanded against me. What kind of answer would make him so edgy? What was the secret he was hiding from me?

“Have you ever heard of the Echelon Court?” Falcon asked. His voice was deep and brooding. He was doing it again, trying to hide something by acting tough.

God, I wish for just once I could find someone who doesn’t think I am too much of a child to allow me to know the truth. I can handle anything!

“Yes, it is a court of demons that rule over hell. I read about them in my father’s Book of Shadows. His BOS even said something about a *Tana De Dan*. Is that creature a part of the Echelon Court too?” I replied.

Arched Wing

“No, not at all, but you do know more than you are putting on,” Falcon laughed.

“I am not a child,” I hissed. “I do know stuff.”

“A De Dan is a conductor, someone who has the power to do anything imaginable by pulling strength through the conduction of magic.”

“Conduction?” I questioned.

“Yes. A De Dan can do anything imaginable because they can borrow gifts as well as create gifts by drawing magic from the elements around them. The Dana De Dan must feel love for her gifts to come out and the Tana De Dan is the same, only he must draw from hate.”

“So if I am the Dana De Dan and I am the chosen one of good, is the Tana De Dan the chosen one of evil?” I inquired.

“Yes,” Falcon said softly as he quickly glanced at me.

Falcon turned the steering wheel and I could feel the car veer left. I felt safe around Falcon because he was like a walking and talking bodyguard.

“Brit Boy, why are you asking all these questions?” I asked. My soul felt like it was flying just being near him. Falcon was my addiction. No matter what happened I would long for more of him. I would just need one more hit of his passion. I would swear I could stop but never be able to.

“I need to know where we stand.” He answered and although it should have been sexual it sounded cryptic. “Just listen and answer. That is all I really want from

you...for now.” Falcon’s voice turned lustful and a grin spread across his face.

I shivered because Falcon was so hot and not to the touch. Falcon made parts of my body quiver in ways that didn’t make sense to me. I couldn’t understand how the Little Miss Virgin that I am could ever fall in love with someone so perfect.

Falcon was like Lugh of the Long Arm. Lugh was a man so beautiful that the Irish world fell at his feet and called him a God.

“Have you ever heard of the Grimoire?” Falcon asked abruptly drawing me from my thoughts.

“No, what is it?”

Falcon’s hand tightened around my shoulder as though he were trying to protect me. I smiled with joy because I wanted him to yearn for my safety. It is a sign of love after all.

“I’m not going to leave you.” I stated. I tilted my head and looked up at his face. Without warning his shatter blue eyes flashed onyx.

I gasped and tried to sit up. I banged my head against the steering wheel. I moaned in pain as I plopped my head back into Falcon’s lap. I placed a hand to my head and bit my lip so I wouldn’t cry. Slowly I shifted my head and sat up.

Falcon looked at me for a moment as I rubbed my forehead and then he smiled and laughed. Falcon softly caressed my hair.

“Silly,” Falcon whispered. “You are so adorable.”

“You know that is what I was hoping you were going to say,” I giggled.

“Anyway, Grimoire is the German word for Book of Shadows.”

“I thought...” I began however Falcon shook his head and interrupted me.

“In the English speaking world the only known Grimoire is that of hell. All the demons came together under the rule of the devil Mephistopheles. His half demon son took control of an empty book and sealed his sheer evil into the pages. His love for a human made him want to seal away his powers. However after his love betrayed him he wanted those powers back and she sealed the Grimoire away from him. We must find Belthazar’s Grimoire because there is a spell inside of it that will make someone the new devil.”

When Falcon said the name Belthazar I felt my heart skip a beat. *Belthazar come back to me* I heard the voice in my soul say softly.

“How?” I asked closing my eyes.

“With you,” Falcon answered. “You are the reincarnation of Katherine McHarrison. You are the Dana De Dan. Either you will open the doorway to the hiding place willingly or...”

“Or what?” I asked.

“Or your soul mate, the Tana De Dan, will be scarified by evil to draw your soul to them,” Falcon responded. “It’s Magick. Capital M and ending with K.”

“Why spell it with a K?” I asked.

“Wiccans spell Magick with a capital and a K to show the difference between fairytale magic and real Magick. It is part of a witch’s belief system. Spelling Magick like the

normal way would be like spelling God with a little g in the Bible.”

“Magick to a witch, is that like Non-Hocus-Pocus stuff?” I asked.

“I take offense to that reference and so should you. Hocus Pocus is completely inaccurate and stereotypical.” Falcon hissed. I kind of wanted to say it one more time just to get another rise of him.

“Well why does it matter?” I said hoping to spark another reaction.

“I just said it is because I find the term...”

“No!” I shouted. “The Grimoire, why does the Grimoire matter?” I hoped that he wouldn’t realize I was just trying to cover up my real intentions.

Falcon turned to look at me and once against his eyes change to onyx...only this time they did not change back.

“Falcon...” I asked with slight fear. “Why do your eyes do that?”

Falcon paused for a moment and then swiftly he turned the wheel so the truck was pulled off the road. Slowly he turned off the engine and sat their silently. I longed to repeat the question but I knew that when Falcon was ready he would answer on his own.

“It is time you found out,” Falcon said softly.

“Samantha, I should have told you this sooner, but I hoped that you would never need to know. Hoped that you would never wonder because I...”

“Am married, right? I’m the seven year itch?” I asked with tears in my eyes.

Arched Wing

“Of course not...it’s just that I’m not human you idgit!”

“You already told me that part!”

“Samantha,” Falcon scoffed.

“What are you?” I asked as fear coiled in my belly.

“I am a half demon.”

“Half demon?” I was starting to feel perspiration forming at my temples. He was a *demon* and I did not sense it? Would I have to fight him too? I could not bear to fight him and I could not bear to lose him. If he had a dark side it was possible that he would be lost to it and I would not be able to handle that. I need Falcon.

I found it somewhat strange that I did not fear Falcon being a demon, the only thing that I was terrified of was no longer having Falcon in my life.

“Are you afraid?” Falcon questioned softly.

“No!” I yelled. “Well...actually yes.” I said letting my head fall. I looked down at the ground for a moment. Then I looked back up at Falcon.

“You I do not fear,” I stated. “I fear losing you.”

“I could hurt you so easily and you know it. You should fear me and my powers.” Falcon stated coldly and I could hear his voice straining to fight back exposing emotions.

“I don’t believe that,” I said as I gently touched his face.

“Believe it,” Falcon said softly. A single tear rolled down his cheek. As soon as he

realized I saw his tear he turned his head from me.

“I will break one day,” Falcon warned. “I will not be able to hold myself back forever.”

“I know that.”

“No.” Falcon turned back to face me. His tear was gone and his expression was serious. “Samantha, I don’t think that you do.”

“What is there to understand?”

“I can’t always stay in control.” Falcon’s voice was strained like on the inside he was dying to fall apart. It was like Falcon wanted nothing more than to scream. “I wouldn’t be able to handle killing you. I spent my whole life searching for someone who could love a half demon and I will not lose you to anyone, even myself.”

Falcon placed his palms to the window, curling his fingers on the glass as if trying to double his fists around it. “It wouldn’t take much.” He shuttered. “Just one wrong move, just one emotion getting too strong” Falcon’s voice began to shake. “I wouldn’t even have to try, I have unearthly strength, I could destroy you...I could be your darkest nightmare.”

“No. No matter what happens you will never be a nightmare.” I said touching his shoulder gently. Without turning Falcon harshly pushed my hand away.

“Falcon,” I whimpered. “You are a Seeker. I don’t think you could be a justice keeper of the spirit realm if you were a bad guy.”

Arched Wing

“You don’t know anything about being a Seeker then.” Falcon whispered.

“I don’t?” I asked.

“It takes evil to know evil,” Falcon said with guilt in his voice. He couldn’t look me in the eyes as he said those words. “Being a Seeker is about being the *darkness in the light and the light in the dark*. It is about being able to walk the line between good and evil that shouldn’t exist.” Falcon looked back toward me. He gingerly ran his knuckled down my cheek. “Understand?”

“Yes.” I said nodding.

“Someone who is compassionate, like you, could never be a Seeker,” Falcon stated. “Sensing powers and finding the person is one thing. However you would have to strip that person’s powers. You could never handle that part.”

“Why?” I asked. My eyes widened in curiosity.

“When a person’s powers are stripped they go insane,” Falcon said. His eyes were glazed over with guilt.

I pressed my lips to Falcon’s. I wanted to heal his heart and offer him a balm that would salvage his soul from torment. Falcon slid his cold hands into my hair and grabbed fistfuls of my curly locks and pulled me into a harder kiss.

“I...I can’t.” Falcon jerked away from me. I almost whimpered in sorrow when he started the truck back up. Falcon turned and averted his gaze at the road. He didn’t want to look at me.

“Why not?”

“Samantha, I want to...don't get me wrong. I really want to. It's just...do you really want your first time to be on the road in the middle of nowhere?”

“Wait...I just wanted to kiss,” I laughed.

“I want more. I'm a man and sorry to crush you with reality but it took everything I had not to do more to you last night. I don't think I could stop myself again.”

“Alright,” I replied. Falcon hadn't shattered my image of men. He'd said *no*, he had stopped himself. Falcon was more of a man than anyone else in the world. I yearned to sleep with Falcon I just didn't want to lose my Big V in a cramped truck cab.

Falcon slammed on the breaks and I went flying into the dashboard. Slowly I lifted my battered head and sat up to see why we had stopped. Standing in the middle of the road was a person wrapped in a blanket.

I screamed out when I laid eyes on the person...she was my sister. I didn't have to stop and look hard to tell. I knew it. Swiftly I opened the truck door and stumbled over Falcon's lap. When I hit the ground I could feel the pain of skinning my palms as I had braced my fall. However pain didn't matter. Nothing was going to stop me from saving my sister.

“No,” I cried. I knew with Falcon and I, that Jennifer would be safe from whatever or whoever did this to her. I would keep her with us and protect her even if I lost my life is the process. She was my kin whether we shared blood or not.

Arched Wing

I pulled my sister into my arms and kissed her forehead. It didn't matter that she was adopted. It didn't matter that we did not share the same blood. Jennifer is my sister.

Jennifer was the most amazing seventeen year old in the whole world. She was so sweet even if her kindness came from naïveté. Since we grew up without a father for a long time I helped to raise Jennifer. She is like a daughter to me, not just a sister.

Whatever or whomever had done this to my sister was going to pay, big time. I'm the kind of woman who could lift a car off her child or loved one because I am the ultimate mama bear.

Falcon gently placed his hand on my shoulder and his other arm around both I and Jennifer.

"Falcon," I whimpered. "You have to protect my sister Jennifer." I needed so badly for everything to be alright but the truth of the matter was that my life was falling apart. It was like someone pulled out the seams of my happiness one by one leaving me in a mangled mess of nothing.

Something inside of me told me that Jennifer was in this current state from the hex. A horrid blame loomed over me leaving my soul empty and dank.

I brush Jennifer's long hair from her face. The warm brunette locks twisting between my fingers. She was completely covered in ash and dust. Almost like she tripped and tumbled in the mud one too many time.

Jennifer's chocolate colored eyes were filled with fear. Tears slowly ran down her soot covered cheeks. She looked like *The Little Match Girl*, that sad poem about an orphan freezing to death on Christmas day.

I held Jennifer close, praying that she would stop shaking in terror. No matter the words I said I could not calm her down.

"Please, Jennie you have to tell me what happened!" I demanded.

Jennifer looked up at me. The tears on her face were darkened by the ash on her skin. "A fire," She screamed frantically. "A fire!"

7 RING OF FLAMES

I held onto Jennifer, because she was my grasp on reality. “I have to know what happened,” I whispered as I pet Jennifer’s hair.

“This little boy with a mirror came in and fire came from his hands. This woman she tried to strangle me. Then this blonde man...this,” Jennifer looked up at Falcon and began to scream.

“That’s him!” Jennifer shouted pointing at Falcon. “He’s the one that killed them. He...he ripped...let me...he let me go...told me...”

“No, Jennifer that was not me,” Falcon said gently.

“Falcon has been with me nonstop for days,” I assured her.

“But your eyes,” She yelled pointing at Falcon. “Your eyes are the same color. Your hair is the same color! Your face,”

“Jennie, he isn’t...” I started.

“Their face, they have the same face!” Jennifer yelled in hysteria.

“Jennifer,” I shook her by the shoulders.

“They’re in the fire!” Jennifer clinched her hand tightly around my wrist.

“Jennifer, who?”

“In the fire,” She repeated.

I shook my head. My world was crashing down around my ears. Now I knew what the people in Jericho felt like as the walls of the city tumbled down. My family was dying, my sister was losing her mind, and it was my fault.

Falcon looked down at me. His eyes seemed like they were laced with tears. Was he crying for me? Was he trying to carry my emotional burden, even when my blame is an agony only I can hold?

“Go Samantha.” Falcon touched my cheek gently. “Go to your family. I will protect Jennifer.”

Falcon pulled Jennifer into his embrace as I stood. I knew what I had to do. I didn’t have to fear for Jennifer’s life, because the safest place in the world is in Falcon’s arms.

I was running as fast as I could manage. I could sense something in the air, and it was making the hair on the back of my neck

Arched Wing

stand on end. An essence of evil loomed in the wind.

I could feel a sharp pain in my back again. My stomach danced with butterflies. I wanted to hold my stomach and fall to the ground. This darkness I was feeling was more malevolent than Gramhach...this was an unthinkable evil.

I knew at that moment that my fate was now carved in stone. There was no going back now. I was the Dana De Dan, the chosen one, and the world depended on me. I was trapped on a path that could lead me to a brutal slaughter. Fate is just plain twisted.

My shirt snagged on something, and ripped as I ran. I kept my head held high and didn't look back, even if you could see my entire bra again! As I got closer, I could see the smoke and it began to blur the path.

I tripped and cut my hands. Still, I got back up and whipped the blood off onto my pants as I ran. My knees and palms stung with an agonizing sensation that pulsed through my every nerve.

I was home.

My house was being consumed by the leaping flames. The flames danced viciously into the night sky. They were like waves of orange and red that swept over my life. Some of the house was still stable. There was a small opening in the wall that was not yet being attacked by fire. That opening was my ticket into the house.

The flames didn't matter. I'd rather burn alive than not save the lives of my blameless family. I placed my hand against the

scorching hot walls. I awkwardly stepped over the broken walling. I held my hand over my face as my eyes watered. The flames were making my vision blurry.

I screamed and fell to my knees when I saw the disembodied head. It was my kid brother Tanner.

I gently scooped the head up into my arms. Tears streamed down my face and onto his. I was bawling so heavily I could hardly see. I was breaking down, because it was not fair for him to be killed. He was the white sheep of our family. Tanner was really the perfect little brother and a flawless person.

Tanner wanted to be a preacher. He wanted to save the world. Tanner could only help others. Why should he be the one murdered in the cruelest way possible? It should have been me that was decapitated and burned. Tanner Morgan wanted to be a missionary in India. He loved to wear turtle PJs and watch 'TMNT' on Saturday mornings.

Slowly I looked up. Something else was in the fire moving around. I stared straight at the blurred image, concentrating so that I could see through the thick smoke.

I moved forward, and I raised my hands to my eyes to try and help them stop watering. That's when the moving figure came into sight.

Our large computer chair spun around, and that was when I saw *her*. She was a woman with shoulder length straight black hair. Her hair was shiny like silk and her bangs were a choppy fringe style. She sat

there in a leather mini skirt, and tall boots, with her piercing blue eyes locked on me.

“Oh. My. God,” I shouted.

My heart started to pound in my chest. I could sense she was a demon.

She sat there in the distance and her eyes held no reflections, as if she was penetrating into my soul. Suddenly I was filled with rage. I doubled my fists and growled. I couldn't control my heartbeat and my chest hurt from my raising blood pressure.

“What is it?” She asked standing. The woman put out her hand and clenched her fist. I felt as though my heart was being clawed apart. I fell to the floor in pain.

“Did that hurt little De Dan?” The demon woman said in an all too chipper tone of voice. It was creepy that someone that evil could sound so perky and fun.

“Don't you like how I have redecorated?” She asked stepping toward me. Her piercing blue eyes turned onyx.

I sucked in a shaky breath. Her eyes just did the same thing as Falcon's!

“Who are you?” I demanded as she neared me. I doubled my fists again in fury.

“I am Killian,” The woman said in a surprisingly cheery voice. She sounded like the dumb popular girl in Teen Movies. Her voice was the personification of prep.

“I am the upper Echelon demon of rage, Sammie Dear!” Killian giggled.

Rage, really this cheery happy go lucky girl is in charge of rage?

“No way,” I almost laughed. “There is no way the demon of rage sounds like she's a valley girl on cloud nine.”

“Oh don’t worry. Hurting people is what makes me this happy. Humans are so easy to upset.” Killian smiled. All her teeth showed through her bright red lips.

“So, shall we begin?” Killian asked me.

“Begin what?” I stammered.

“I can control you when you are angry,” She chimed.

I closed my eyes and placed my hands over my ears. *Don’t get mad*, I told myself. Not that commanding myself would make a difference. I was already full of rage.

“I killed him,” Killian stated in a sing-song voice. “Don’t you hate me? Doesn’t this just make you want revenge?”

“No,” I repeated over and over again. My voice got louder each time I made my statement. Yet, no matter how much I raised my voice, I could still hear Killian. Her words were an eternal echo beckoning me to hate.

My soul was asking to taste the forbidden fruit of furry. My soul was asking to indulge in the sweet nectar of revenge. Something was asking me to be evil and carefree. That same something was saying, that if I let go of good I could have Falcon and a normal life.

Killian continued to stand over me yelling in her chipper voice. Yet, she never touched me. As a demon she was only aloud to plant thoughts into my head. She said things that could drive me crazy.

In the Grand Order of things all humans, creatures, and demons have free will. We make the decisions and no one else can choose them for us. So, was it possible that

demons were not a loud to force you to feel an emotion, and that you simply had to experience it on your own?

I stood with a smile on my lips. She couldn't make me angry and that delighted me. I had to choose to carry the emotion myself, and I wasn't going to let outside influences control me.

Killian could control people who are angry and, I assume since she is the demon of rage, that she feeds off of that rage. I was going to have to fight fire with water. In other words, I was going to ruin rage with happiness.

Killian smiled back and walked forward. She backed me into a corner. The hot flames were getting closer to me. I needed to fight her and get away quickly. I wanted so badly to feel peace and not let furry consume me. Yet, I discovered that my emotions were not as easy to manage as I thought they were going to be. I guess my heart is like a volcano.

She leaned forward and spoke to me in a playful voice. "De Dan! De Dan! I am so happy to meet you."

"Great, now even demons know me."

Killian pressed the tip of her nose to mine. "Yes. Since I first saw you I have been craving to taste you. To taste the girl who is limitless power."

"You're going to eat me!!!" *Why is everyone that is evil also into cannibalism?!*

The Killian did something that nearly caused me to barf. She licked me! She ran her tongue down the side of my cheek, leaving a wet trail.

“Yum,” Killian chimed. Then she placed her hands on either side of my face, yanked my head forward, and kissed me. A big wet opened mouthed kiss...from a girl!

“You are so not my type!” I shouted as I pushed her away, and whipped off my mouth. “I don’t like girls that way!”

Killian smiled and stepped back. She licked her lips playfully. “We will just have to change that.” She swiftly spun on her heel and walked off into the flames.

I followed her, but I couldn’t keep up. Before I knew it, I was in the kitchen, and she had vanished. Parts of the house weren’t collapsing, and the fire seemed contained. *Wait*, I asked myself. *Why hasn’t the fire consume me, and the house yet? It seems surreal for the fire not to spread. Is some inhuman force at play?*

“Hello,” A male child’s voice said in a monotone way.

I turned and saw him standing there. *Him*, being the little boy that Jennifer mentioned. The boy didn’t seem more than eight years old. His short dark brown hair was trimmed to pull away from his face. In his hands the boy held a mirror that was almost half the size of his body. His mirror was almost like the magic mirror that Kanna carries around in *Inuyasha*.

“You must be Samantha,” The boy said. His voice was so settle and held no hint of emotion. His eyes were surreally hallow, and completely clear. I could tell which demon he was, just based on the mirror.

I had read the notebook my father left behind, the notebook was one of his Book

of Shadows (a witch's diary of life, legends, and spells). It talked not only about the Echelon Court, but also of the Demon of Insanity, whom carried a large mirror to suck out souls. That demon's name was Melzabar.

"I assume that you already know who I am, judging by your actions," Melzabar said. "Shall we begin?"

Instinctually I turned around to respond to his speaking to me. I saw him lift up the mirror. Swiftly I closed my eyes and turned away once more. My heart was pounding hard and fast. He was going to attempt to suck out my soul.

"I helped Killian, you know. I assisted her in slaughtering your family." Melzabar's hallow eyes narrowed. "And soon I shall annihilate Jennifer and Falcon."

I swallowed hard. "I don't want to hear it!" I didn't want to hear anymore words from this psychopathic culpable demon.

"Do you want to know how I am going to kill them?" Melzabar deposed in his arrogant and infuriating manner.

Despite the urge to consider Melzabar a nefarious liar, I knew in this case he wasn't. I was at fault for my family's death.

"It's enchanting, listening to your victim's agony laced screams." Melzabar smiled, but emotion entered his eyes.

Melzabar's inhuman nature was sickening. He opened his mouth and screams of pain slid from his lips. Jennifer, Falcon, Tanner, and my parents' shrieks were all too vivid. The surrealism of his powers were engulfing and drowning me.

“I am obsessed with death. I am unpolluted evil and insanity. I require your suffering. I delight in the sight of oozing blood splattering upon walls. I find utter satisfaction in leisurely slicing and torturing my prey...as I did to your kin. If I could feel passion, it would ensue within the moments I indulged in stealing human lives.”

“Shut up,” I cringed.

“They were alive,” Melzabar continued. “Your brother raised his hands to the heavens and pleaded with God to save him, however, it seems God didn’t have the urge to assist your kin. They could have survived...if only you were not the Dana De Dan. You are to blame.”

*Blame...*I could hear the word resonating in my soul. I was immensely and irrevocably the person to blame. I was guilty of these horrors, because of my powers and decisions.

My surroundings faded to that of a forest. Jennifer was crawling toward me. Snowflakes caressed her cheeks.

Frosty wind nipped at my face. Trailing Jennifer was viciously oozing blood. She yearned for salvation, and called out for my help. She raised a shaky hand. I was incapable of moving. I was powerless to save her.

“Don’t allow me to die too...” Jennifer whaled out. “Don’t let this be your fault as well. Give in to him.”

Falcon entered the scene. He was standing there and the forest faded away. The deep evergreen shadows melted away.

The beams of moonlight slid downward exposing kitchen wallpaper. Was the forest all an illusion? This demon sure picked the correct person to attack, after all, I already need medication.

“Samantha,” Falcon’s voice was lovelorn and dreamy. His eyes sparkled like they were filled to overflowing with starlight. “Save your sister. Give in and she’ll live.”

“Don’t say such things.” My heart was becoming heavier. I needed to give in. I trusted Falcon wholeheartedly. I looked back up at Falcon’s shimmering eyes as I spoke.

“It’s entirely my fault.” My mind was whirling. Blood was harshly pulsating in my veins. The muscles in my stomach tightened, and beads of sweat trickled down my face.

“Samantha you need to listen to me,” Falcon said gently.

“Please be a lie. Please don’t do this,” I bawled. “It’s all my fault?” Every time that I stated it was my fault, it felt like more and more of me was fading away. More of the strength from my body was seeping out of every pore. My heart began to stop beating. My blood stopped pumping through my veins.

“Look,” Falcon’s voice said. I looked up to see Falcon was standing there holding the demon’s mirror. “Trust me Sam.”

Sam? I shut my eyes tight once more. That was *not* Falcon! Falcon didn’t ever call me Sam. He said it didn’t do me justice. I had almost fallen for the demon’s tricks.

“Sam, what’s wrong,” Falcon’s voice said, but now I knew it was really Melzabar.

“Shut up Melzabar!” I yelled trying to move my body. “You are not Falcon!”

“Fine,” Melzabar stated in his own voice “Foolish girl, if you want to do this the hard way. I can’t wait to hear *you* scream.”

I was feeling around blindly on the counter behind me. I needed something to toss at him. If I could hit his mirror, or break his concentration I might be able to get away. If the legend in my father’s book was true, the demon and his mirror were one, damage the mirror and damage the demon.

I opened my eyes as my hand locked around what felt like a hand can-opener. I was going to need to look at his mirror to hit it.

Suddenly it felt like the breath was being ripped from my lungs. My heart started missing beat after beat. I threw the can opener at the mirror.

I could feel my nerves pulsating with agony. My head throbbed in pain. It felt like someone was ripping parts of my body out. Like my mind was leaking out of my skull. I was fading into an abyss.

I heard the sound of glass shattering. The pain suddenly stopped.

“My mirror, my heart,” Melzabar said in an emotionless voice and then vanished. I wasn’t sure if he was in pain or not.

I ran out of the house. After escaping the flames, I slipped and fell into the mud. I doubled my fists and pounded the ground. I

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was filled with rage and resentment. I felt worthless.

Softly rain began to fall. I laid there on the ground crying. I dug my nails into the dirt grabbing fistfuls of mud, pretending they were the lives of my family. I hoped, if I held on hard enough that this would all fade away...that this would all be a dream.

“I don’t understand!” I shouted to the heavens. “Why am I all alone? Why isn’t someone helping, where are the firemen?” It didn’t make sense. No one had shown up to save my family.

“If I am some kind of Chosen One why can’t I even save my family?” I shouted. I was bawling so hard my words almost seemed jumbled.

“It is because fate will always get in the way,” A voice stated. A familiar sounding voice, yet, it was also strange. “Your family had to die for you to fulfill your destiny.” The voice hissed in a malevolent tone.

Something was there, or should I say someone. I stood and walked to the edge of the ember filled ruins that was once my home. I knelt down behind a still half standing piece of wood to hide from whatever was out there. I gingerly touched the Arched Wing necklace around my neck. This necklace was all I had of my family, my heritage, and my mother. The pendant itself had been passed down in our family since the middle ages.

The antique necklace was a set of arched wings made from silver. There were tiny crystals embedded in the top of the wings.

On the back a K and a B were inscribed, a letter on each wing. I never understood the lettering, but I knew that this was a link to my family. I would never part with this necklace again.

I turned and looked behind me. That was when I saw *him*, the man that would change my very soul. He was the man who would shake me to my very bones, who would bring my inner soul to the surface. He would allow my inner self to toy with the lukewarm line between right and wrong.

Run Samantha, run now. If you don't this man will kill you...he is the protector of our past and roadblock to our destiny. The voice inside my head said.

The man was kneeling on the ground, his elbow propped up on one knee, and his too head colored hair fell over him like a waist length cape. The wind caught his hair, causing the tresses to dance in sheer rhapsody.

The man's sharp features were perfection. He was a chiseled master piece that would have made the Greek God's envious. His eyes were like shatter blue beacons, blazing out a warning of danger and eternal damnation. Still, despite the warning, he was a siren song. I needed someone to strap me to a mast quickly!

I had to escape. It was impossible for this man to be mortal, he was *too* much of an unspoiled beauty to be human. The man had a white aura around him, like an angel adorned in moonbeams and glowing stars. Nevertheless, I could feel the fires of hell burning in his darkened heart. My sensing

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power was strong. I could sense the thick demon malice dripping from his perfect ivory velvet skin.

I spun on my heel, drew in a sharp breath, and began to run off in the opposite direction of the nefarious looking man. Within three steps I slammed into the man's hardened chest.

How had he moved so fast? (Oh yah, he's not human!) Then again, who in my life is human-Just Jennifer?

He harshly grabbed me by my waist, pick me up, and spun my body. He sat my feet on the ground and forced my back to his chest. The demon wrapped his arms around my body, trapping me in a helpless position. My fate was now resting in the man's hands, because I was incapable of stopping him, and I was unable to fight back.

Not again, I thought in anger. How many times am I going to be attacked? Do I have "please kidnap me" tattooed on my forehead? I must have just missed it this morning when I was looking in the mirror. I swear I come with a ransom note pinned to my chest, because I am the entire girl for half the work. I guess I am a regular Daphne Blake.

"Did you know that when a demon pops a woman's cherry that the girl is enthralled to him, a slave *forever*?" The man's voice was low and eerie as he whispered into my ear. His hot breath prickled my nerves to life with anxiety.

I opened my mouth to scream out.

"Go head," The man laughed. "This will just be over faster and your *Falcon Greyson*

will have to come and save you...if he's not too late already."

"Demon," I bucked my body. The steely maleness of him prodded my behind as I moved. "I smell it on you, and get your dick off of my butt!"

"Smell it on me?" His voice echoed in the night, rolling over me in a predatory, and unearthly way. He was most definitely a demon. His actions, flawless appearance, and laughter dictated that.

"Bickering, I enjoy that," The demon man said punctuating his sentence by thrusting against my ass.

He slid one of his hands down my body, running over the swell of my tiny belly. His hand slipped into my pants, clasped me between the thighs, and held firmly. No fingers perturbing out, he simply had a lock around me with his flat palm.

The demon leaned close to me, his sensually spiced breath tickling my ears and nose. Then the demon's lips curved in a smile. He spoke the most devastating words I would ever hear. His three words changed my life forever, and left me trapped on a path I couldn't deviate away from.

"I am Belthazar."

8
BELHAZAR



am Belthazar.”

His words pulsed through my body like an eternal echo. His voice was one I would never forget. He was subtle, lustful, and noble. Belthazar talked like he was mildly amused but at the same time interested. Slowly Belthazar removed his hand from between my legs.

Belthazar leaned forward and whispered into my ear. His hot breath was causing all the hair on the back of my neck to stand up. “I am so glad to finally...*meet* you little De Dan.”

The way Belthazar said *meet* made me feel like a feast in a third-world country. His pause was a threat to devour me.

“I heard Killian and Melzabar killed your family for me,” He continued. “I know all about you. I know all your hopes, fears, and darkened memories.”

Long moments passed where nothing was said. I had a thousand and one thoughts in my mind. Yet, no words could pass my lips. I could feel my heart beating against my chest in a slow steady thump. It was as if time was slowing down all around me.

I wasn't fighting back anymore. My body had gone limp in Belthazar's arms. My arms were dangling at my sides and my head had fallen back against the demon's chest.

My eyes were open but all I saw was darkness. I didn't want to face reality. I didn't want to remember anything ever again. I just wanted to forget.

Visions of the past were like looming clouds in my mind. The memories tore apart my heart as they trudged through the sky of my soul. I didn't want to remember being hurt by my father.

The sound of my family's screams echoed off into the dead night air. Their fear and terror was filling my ears. I could still see Jennifer's horrified face as she lay in my arms.

I was a walking time bomb. Everyone who got close to me got killed or worse. So

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many things are worse than death, and I am the pure example of that.

I would have liked to be numb at that time. I wished that I couldn't feel the pain of my past. I just wanted to hush the memories away and pretend they had never happened.

My body was aching to fall apart at the seams. The agony was so intense. It was stronger than the pain my stomach and shoulder. This was a soul claiming, mind searing, tormented sensation.

It was my fault. I ran from Gramhach instead of handing over my life. The hex placed on my family was the reason for their death. I was no better than a rapist or a serial killer because I was to blame for my family's pain and loss.

"Are you ready?" Belthazar asked in a low, sinister voice.

I wanted to ask '*ready for what?*' But, it felt like all the air was drawn from my lungs and my voice was missing. How was it that in a split second I could become the re-enactment of *The Little Mermaid*, with missing vocal cords included?

"Here I do stand," Belthazar began to chant. "Here I am before your demand...Within a united bound of De Dan. Do what no mortal can. Here I call upon her power...let the Dana De Dan hold eternity in an hour." His words held an emotionless rhythm that oozed a sensation of sickness into my chest. It was like thick puss trickling from my heart into my belly. I felt like my world was spinning off into nothingness.

My heart stopped.

I was cold. My body was beyond frost bitten. I was sheer emptiness. I wanted to move. I wanted to shiver then smash the demon's face in...but I couldn't. I was screaming, and yet, no sound was coming out of my mouth.

Then after a timeless moment of infinity, I could feel something again. I felt a heavy weight, like that of a thousand worlds. (Not that I've ever been crushed by a thousand worlds.) Reality around me was vanishing into a distant path, farther and farther away from me, and away from my grasp.

My powers had been awakened.

How the heck did I know that?

"Let me go!" I protested. I sounded like a cornered mouse instead of a super powered heroess. "I'll bite you if you don't!" I growled. I hadn't meant to say the second part, it simply slipped out.

Belthazar smiled and looked at me like I had just threatened to kill him at toy-sword point.

"I would rather like that Samantha, but I am sure you wouldn't like where it would get you." Belthazar hissed. A lustful grin spread across his face. His expression was promising me devastation and demise.

"I have been dying to make good on my *earlier statements*." Belthazar stated in a cocky voice.

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Now, once again, I was a D.I.D. Twice in one week! God, just stamp me blonde and pin a ransom note to my chest. Oh yah, and don't forget to wish me luck with the KNR guys.

"Why you slimy son of a..." I yelled, my mind whirling. "What the HELL...no, who the hell do you think you are?!"

"Belthazar," He stated plainly.

"Very funny, Mr. *Big Scary Demon*." I mocked. "How dare you storm into MY LIFE unannounced and take me hostage. Do you have any idea what I have been through?"

"Well actually..." Belthazar began, but I cut in before he could finish his statement.

"That was a rhetorical question you shithead!" I shouted in anger. "First of all, I was kidnapped by some insane woman who liked to eat ex-lovers. And when I say that I don't mean she liked oral sex! Then, of course, I was repeatedly sexually harassed by that British Bastard. Then I was tied down to a table..."

"Wait, the seeker tied you to a table?" The demon said, followed by a laugh. He was laughing not like it was a funny joke, but as if it was his personal approval. "Kinky."

"Shut up!" I commanded. "Beside it was Bonnie-Kate who tied me down."

"I don't really think you are in any position to give me orders."

“Want to bet!” I growled. “Secondly, I was attacked. I was stabbed! Then I had to pull some creepy-ass demon out of Bonnie-Kate. The slimy thing felt the need to torment me on top of that. Thirdly, I was drug into some hotel room and orally pleased by Brit Boy, whom I hardly know. By the way, his name really seems to turn him on.

“First of all, that last part was too much information for me...thank you. And secondly, that sounds nice, for you at least.” Belthazar joked.

“Would you close that trap of yours and let me finish, you stupid demon!”

“Sounds like something a woman would say.”

“You yellow-bellied bastard,” I shrieked, trying to kick Belthazar without success. “Anyway, I am not finished ranting at you yet, and don’t make another sex joke. So, where was I?”

“Orally pleased,” Belthazar reminded me.

“Right, then I got horrid jet lag, looked like an eighth degree bag lady and had to have a school-girl lesson on your Grimoire and its BS.”

“Anything else?”

“Yes, after all of the above, your little mirror boy tried to suck out my soul. He used a spell to look like Brit Boy, which really pisses me off, because I should not trust Falcon that much. Now you have me in an arm lock and are threatening to hurt me. So, I am not standing for you bullshit anymore! Let me go so I can kick your

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scrawny worthless demon ass.” I fought within his strong grasp.

“Are you done?”

“No! And when I am done kicking you where it hurts I am going to do it again. Do you know why?” I shouted.

“Enlighten me.”

“It’s because you are a no good, family killing, bloodthirsty mongrel!”

“Now are you done?” Belthazar groaned.

“Yes...now I am done,” I sighed. “Let’s call it the Big O and move on.”

“Do you ever let jokes Die, Samantha?” Belthazar said in a low sexy voice.

“Never.”

“Good,” The demon stated, in his *‘I am an upper being that is better than you’* voice. (He’s more stuck up than Noble British Falcon, with his King’s English.)

“I have need of you, because your pre-carnation stole something from me,” Belthazar uttered.

“Pre-carnation? Is that like a carnation flower before it blooms?”

Belthazar looked at me like I was insane. “Like reincarnation, only it’s the person who was reincarnated-the past life self,” He said in a condescending tone. “Her name was Katherine McHarrison, and I want what she took from me. I want the Arched Wing Pendant!”

“Why don’t you just rip it off my neck?”

“I can’t,” Belthazar said with anger, and disappointment in his voice.

“So, your powers are impotent against me. It’s me who has these feathery Arched

Wings, so, only I can hand over the necklace.” I was slowly deducing the truth. “So, if you just kill me then you can’t ever touch it.”

“A direct blood relation can.” Belthazar pushed me to the ground.

“I don’t have any,” I amended. “You killed her. So, tell me about McHarrison and I might just hand it over.” I bargained.

“So what do you want to know, Little De Dan?” He walked in a circle around me like I was his prey. Belthazar’s eyes glistened with longing, was he yearning for me? What could I give him? What would any demon want from me...my soul...or worse?

“Who is McHarrison? Is that something you wish to know?” Belthazar smiled lustfully at me. I felt my heart skip a beat. His piercing blue eyes made me feel like I was being devoured at that very moment.

“Do you wish to know why your heart cannot slow down in my presence?” Belthazar mocked, stepping closer to me, so close that we were a breath apart.

“You want to know why McHarrison stole my Grimoire?” Belthazar hissed. Anger boiled in the depths of his eyes. Slowly he smiled with a lustful grin once again.

I still didn’t really understand lust, but I could now identify it. It was like a cloud of anxiousness dripping off of him. He was a demon and unlike Falcon, (whom he resembles so much) Belthazar was not half human.

I wondered if Falcon being a half demon was related to Belthazar. Maybe they have

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the same father or something along those lines?

“Little De Dan?” Belthazar said, breaking my train of thought. “You could say that we are related...”

I was in shock. He’d read my mind, and here all along I thought demons couldn’t do that.

“No, I cannot read your mind, De Dan. I simply know McHarrison,” Belthazar said. He smiled showing his perfect teeth. Slowly his canine teeth came into sharp points.

Suddenly I was filled with visions that were like vivid day dreams. A woman in an old world wedding dress turned to face me. As if a montage in a movie, she was instantly running through a forest. She tripped and hit her head. Belthazar scooped her up into his arms.

Lace vales fell around a bed in my next vision, as she made passionate love to Belthazar.

“What are you doing to me?” I shook my head, and opened my eyes, forcing the visions away.

“Remembering, are you?” Belthazar asked. His canine teeth returned to normal.

“We are bone of each other’s bone. We are flesh of each other’s flesh. My soul is married to yours,” Belthazar hissed. “Kiss me.”

Before I could protest, Belthazar’s lips were against mine. His body, his lips, and his kiss were as cold as stone. My face was cupped between his icy hands. I couldn’t even push him away.

Not that I tried to push Belthazar away. My body felt like it had sparked to life in a brand new way. Almost like when Falcon kissed me. Still, Belthazar's kiss was different. No better or worse, simply *different*.

My heart was dancing to the rhythm of Belthazar's tongue. My eyes felt heavy. I was baffled to realize I was kissing the demon back. Unlike the love that flamed in my belly with Falcon, I felt something different with Belthazar. I felt a new and bizarre sensation as I was held in the demon's arms.

I love Falcon, I hungered for Falcon sexually, but based in heartfelt emotions, yet still, my body longed to be entangled with this demon.

This must be LUST.

Belthazar removed his lips from mine but held his face, still, just a breath away. I felt faint and let myself slump, forcing Belthazar to hold up my body. His kiss had milked every last strain of resistance from my heart.

"Katherine," Belthazar whispered wantonly. "Katie McHarrison." His tone was low, sensual, and alluring. Slowly he pulled his head away from mine. His eyes were a sheer and sparkling onyx shade.

Falcon's eyes flash like that too! Do all demons have that reaction, or only half demons? Could Belthazar be a half demon?

"Kat," Belthazar ran his tongue down the side of my neck. He grazed his teeth against the tendon between my neck and shoulder. I couldn't help but moan in absolute pleasure.

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“Katherine?” I said, mulling the name over in my heart. That woman in my head, she called herself Katie McHarrison.

“Katherine McHarrison left behind a prophecy that her soul would rise again. That the Tana De Dan’s soul would awaken within two bodies. That she and her two lovers would vanquish the new ruler, who will reign over hell. Katherine said her reincarnation would bring an end to the Armageddon destined for this world.” Belthazar ran a long stroke of his tongue against my cheek. I shuttered.

“You, Samantha Katherine Morgan, bear the name Katherine, are destined from the McHarrison line, and have the freckle mark of an Athame upon your side,” Belthazar retorted. “You are the chosen one.”

“No way,” I laughed. “I didn’t believe it from Falcon and I’m not going to believe it from you.”

“Katherine...” Belthazar said, as if trying to coax the inner voice from my soul. “You hid my Grimoire and betrayed me.” Belthazar’s eyes flared red. I pushed myself away from him and fell backward onto the ground.

I was breathing harshly. I pushed myself up and stood. I couldn’t let a demon like this intimidate me. I would make him pay for slaughtering my kin.

Speak for me....the voice in my soul said. Please, Samantha Lass, speak my words. I shall say them for you.

“Alright,” I said, holding a fistful of my shirt over my heart. I looked up at Belthazar, feeding her words to him. “If

you love me, then that shouldn't matter! You do not love me!"

I shook my head. I needed serious medication, because I was speaking for a weird voice in my head. This wasn't possible. I am not McHarrison! I am Samantha Morgan! I can hear her voice, but she isn't me.

"If I could kill you Katherine I would, but I am going to do worse," Belthazar yelled. "I am going to make you mine forever."

Belthazar grinned lustfully. I could still see rage blazing in his sinful eyes. Fear was bubbling inside of me. My breath was harsh and fast. I swallowed hard, trying to calm my heartbeat.

The demon began screaming in words foreign to my ears. He was hissing like a snake. He reached out for me. I swiftly turned my head and thrust my hands down in balled fists at my sides. I could feel his hand petting my cheek.

"You are so well trained." Belthazar pushed a lock of hair behind my ear. I look back at him.

"Trained?"

"You fight for your life, but not against sexual advances. You're father beating and hurting you really paid off. You do anything men want and without protest. You feel like you have to. You know that if you don't allow it to be, that they'll hurt you by forcing you. If you say 'no' to a man and cannot escape for sure, they will beat you worse than you can imagine."

Arched Wing

I gasped and shuttered. A single tear rolled down my cheek. "I can run..."

"Only if you think you'll successfully escape. Don't kid yourself, being hurt so often, so young, and by someone you trusted. You'll never recover. I like you Samantha. You are just like Katherine, because you don't fight back."

Belthazar pressed his lips to mine again. I automatically spread my lips. I yearned to find the willpower to step away. Even just a tiny particle of strength would be good right now. He was right. I was programmed to never fight back.

"I have a theory..." Belthazar traced around my nipples. They hardened to peaks underneath my blouse. "You will fight me for your life but only your life alone."

I wasn't moving. I needed to move. I need to fight. I wanted to fight. I couldn't do anything but allow it to happen. I deserved to be tormented by Belthazar. I was exactly what my father said to me.

*Sex is the only way men can show love. So, if you refuse you will be **worthless**.* Those were his words and they rang in my ears.

Fear coiled in my soul. My feet started to kick of their own volition. Instinctively my foot flew back and kicked Belthazar in the groin. Belthazar instantly hunched over groaning.

The sound Belthazar made was almost a promise of torment beyond my imagination. "You'll pay for that you little bitch." Belthazar moaned with fury in his voice.

“That’s my cue to leave,” I said with a big fake grin. I dashed off and just kept running as fast as I could.

I looked back over my shoulder as I ran. I noticed that Belthazar had finally realized that I was gone, and that I had made off with his prize. I knew that I could out run him. I had a better cursory knowledge of my town than the demon.

I would race of to Mr. Mack’s house, since before I was kidnapped our family had an “In case of Fire” escape route plan. At Mr. Mack’s I should be safe and hopefully Jennifer would lead Falcon there as well.

I hit the ground, face first.

I pushed myself up and out of the mud. I must have tripped over something while I was running. I shouldn’t have been thinking, I should have been paying attention to the path. I scanned the area and laid eyes on what I had tripped over, or should I say *whom*.

“Miss Me?” Killian said in a mocking voice. A vindictive grin spread across her face. She was still so cheery. It was repulsive that such a spiteful demon sounded like a naïve teenager.

I stood up. I clasped the Arched Wing necklace around my neck. “Give me strength,” I whispered under my breath.

“Just hand it over *Little Miss Sunshine* and then I can be on my merry way,” Killian giggled. She held out her hand and smiled.

Everyone says that it is a human’s instinct in a life or death situation to either flee the fight, or face the problem head on. We call

Arched Wing

it 'fight or flight.' Well, in all truth, I believe my instincts are eschewed because I always choose fight, even against all logic.

I once again found that I was a going to be a *stand your ground* kind of girl. The first thing I did was double my fist and punched the demon. Which, thankfully, she didn't see coming. I coughed to smother a laugh when she tumbled backwards into the mud.

"You little Bitch!" Killian growled, after she spat out a mouthful of mud. "These boots are Jimmy Choo."

"Steal another pair. Besides, it's worth it, a demon as annoying as you deserves to eat dirt."

"You'll pay for that and regret your words Little De Dan!" Killian stood.

"I think not." I wrinkled my nose as I talked.

"I am so going to kick your pretty little ass." Killian warned.

"I'm looking forward to it," I hissed, as I doubled my fists, and assumed the official *I'm gonna kick your ass position*. I looked like a boxer bouncing on their feet ready to punch.

Killian lunged at me with her talons out. I did the only thing I could think of...I ducked. She hit the top of my head and we both went tumbling backwards.

"Ouch!" I shrieked.

"I'll kill you," She threatened.

"Not if I kill you first."

"You can't kill a demon, Little De Dan!" She shook her head in unison with me. We were both trying to regain our composure and get over being so dizzy.

“Watch me.” I stood and could feel the anger welling inside of me. This fury was so much stronger than anything I had ever before felt. This was a rage that filled me so completely it felt like I was going to explode.

I needed to let the emotion out. My soul was boiling water that burned with a righteous fury. My hands even felt like they were on fire.

Killian reached out for me. Instinctually I put out my hands. The fury engulfed me and was driving me to fight. At that moment, my fingers felt like flames were lapping at them. I thrust my hands forward and shook them to try and escape the overpowering heat.

Killian went flying backwards. I looked down at my hands. They were glowing! It was a light green shade of light and flickered like a flame. *Who am I now, Starfire?*

I started breathing heavily. *I have super powers, real super powers? What is wrong with me? Where is the vat of acid and the radioactive spiders?*

Do what no human can. I awaken her power. I had been awakened.

Belthazar had awakened my dormant side. If I really am Katherine McHarrison then I am the most powerful witch that ever walked the earth. (Great, now I believe my own press clippings.) I can shoot fire from my hands and that seems pretty powerful.

I felt claws slash at my skin. I had been so lost in thought that I had not paid attention to Killian and her constant attacks.

Arched Wing

I threw out my hands again, letting the fury engulf me once more. More fire spiraled from my hands and shot out like balls of energy. Killian covered her face as each one hit her.

“Do you feel angry little De Dan?” She asked doubling her fists. Her eyes began to glow red. “I know that the power of Energy Bolts comes from the fury within.”

My heart started pounding furiously. Killian reached out and grabbed the air like she was driving her nails into someone or something. Suddenly it felt like I was being straggled.

I held my neck trying to pull off whoever had their hands around my throat. Nothing was there, yet still, I could not breathe. It felt like little daggers were driving into my skin.

“My power is to control those who are in anger. So, those Energy Bolts are useless on me McHarrison.”

Anger...she controls Anger? So, what happens if her opponent isn't mad but happy? I closed my eyes and began to list off all the positive things I had left in life to live for. And in my head I thanked her for teaching me about my powers. I thanked her for opening my eyes and forgave her for killing my family.

I released my anger. I let go of my fury and the more joy I forced myself to feel the looser her death grip got. That was until, she was no longer able to attack me.

I stood up and began to walk toward her. “Thank you Killian. Thank you for teaching me about my Energy Bolts.”

“I killed your family,” She hissed.

I was starting to feel anger. No, I warned myself, if I felt fury she would kill me just like them.

“I forgive you Killian. I forgive you and I am not angry at you anymore.” I walked closer to her.

“You killed them.” She took a step backward.

“Yes, and I am sorry for that, but if I dwell on the past I will be lost in it forever. I am just happy that I am alive.”

“My powers may no longer control you Little De Dan, but I can still fight.”

“That’s alright, it’s in your nature...I forgive you.”

I watched Killian cringe. I was winning and that made me so happy. It was cool to know that I could defeat her so easily, well almost.

Killian lunged at me suddenly. I leapt into the air but I didn’t land. What the heck....wait, I was flying!

“OMG! OMG! OMG!” I could feel the wonder of flight. Like an unbridled joy beyond all comparison. No happy thoughts were needed? *I guess Peter Pan was wrong.* Downside was when I stopped thinking about flying I fell to the ground.

“Now Die!” Killian yelled thrusting her claws at me. I didn’t have time to escape. If only I wasn’t corporeal. I wish I was like a ghost.

My wish came true.

“You deserve to be beat for destroying your family. You left them all alone,” Killian shouted, and I knew she was right.

Arched Wing

Suddenly I wasn't ghosting anymore, I was solid. A claw struck my face and I felt the blood start to trickle down.

What other powers do I have? I wanna be like Prue! So far wanting to have a power has worked for me, I've had any power that I imagined. Prue, think about Prue Halliwell.

I winced at her and my anger coiled again. Nothing happened. I waved my hand. Killian went flying backward and so did I. What the heck was that!

"I wish that I had your power Killian. Then I could destroy you once and for all."

I stood up and starting running toward Killian. I didn't care if I was mad anymore. I didn't even care if I couldn't understand my powers. I just wanted her gone. I just wanted a way to avenge my family. I was going to escape to Jennifer and Falcon.

"Die!" I yelled.

I hit Killian. My palms slammed into her body. I felt heat rushing from them. The heat was like eternal anger and hate. My heart was filling with loathing. It was a hatred for everyone and everything in this world. It was something I had never felt on my own. I wasn't able to hate on my own.

All I could feel was the burning fire of un-quenched blood thirst and rage. I was becoming like Killian. I could feel her powers. I could feel her emotions. Her gifts were pulsating through my body, and her powers clung to my very bones.

"Why you little..." Killian snarled. I lifted my hand toward the sky and watched as she rose from the ground. She was going

to pay for what she did. I had borrowed her power so I could control anyone with rage inside of them. Killian was pure rage so I could control all of her.

“Now how does it feel?” I wanted to hate her. I wanted her to suffer worse than my family, worse than eternal life in a lake of fire. I wanted her to never die, just spend the rest of time on fire inside and out. Agony and Terror were not enough for Killian. I couldn’t...her powers...it felt like they were taking over me. It felt like I was becoming a demon. Like my blood was changing.

I threw her across the ground with just the wave of my hand. I watched as she disappeared like dissolving. My hate for her had fueled the powers and I didn’t want them anymore. I didn’t want to hate like this. I didn’t want to feel like this ever again and I didn’t want to be evil. Slowly I was regaining my normal humanity. I was me again.

I took off running. I had to escape. I stepped up the pace and only a few steps from the road, I had enter on, I smacked into something hard. Arms encircled around me and lifted me from the ground. I began to kick and scream with all my might.

“Let her Bloody Go, Belthazar.” That was Falcon’s voice!

“Samantha.” I heard Falcon call out. With Falcon’s words my whole body jolted like I was being thrown from a movie car. (Not that I have ever been thrown from a car). I looked up and instead of Belthazar I saw Falcon.

Arched Wing

Why? What? How did I move so fast? I am so Lost!!!! The last three days (counting the plane ride) had been the most confusing, wild, surreal days of my life. I have seen more magic and unexplainable phenomenon in the last seventy-two hours than in the whole *Charmed* series coupled with *Supernatural*.

“Go to the car!” Falcon set me down and pushed me toward the road. I looked and saw that hidden in the shadows was his truck. It had appeared suddenly, as if from nowhere. I mean it literally was an outline, then a shadow, and finally the whole damned machine.

My brain was now hurting. I placed a hand to my head and winced. All this weird stuff was finally starting to kick in and it was doing it all at once!

“It’s a truck,” I corrected in a haze.

“Get out of here Ace, I won’t be far behind.”

“Got it,” I replied. “Just don’t die! Promise me.”

“Cross my heart and hope to never die. Now run, Apeth,” Falcon ordered.

“I’m running, I ‘m running,” I said, running in the direction of the truck. I climbed into the driver’s seat and saw my sister all bundled up in a small blanket. Falcon must have bandaged her, and then wrapped her up to keep her warm.

Jennifer looked somewhat cleaned up, I guess he washed and dealt with her wounds too.

I started the truck and back out of the driveway. As I got father from the burned

down house, I wondered if Falcon was okay. I longed so badly to turn around go back to him. I couldn't though, because I wouldn't put my sister, Jennifer, in danger.

Jennifer sat up slowly and began looking around. She was gathering her surroundings until her eyes landed on me.

"Sammie?" She asked, almost like she was hoping that I was real.

"Did it really happen?" Jennifer asked me straight out. Jennifer was always good at that, just asking bluntly. In this case I didn't know what to say. I was at a loss, I didn't know if she could handle the truth. I wasn't going to lie to her, though. Lying would only come back to bite both of us later.

"Sammie," Jennifer rasped.

"Yes," I could feel tears welling in my own eyes now. Saying that this was all real, out loud, was too much for me to bear. I had been living this crazy life for the last three days. I had *really* been kidnapped, stabbed, and attacked. My family was *really* dead. I *really* almost lost my virginity to a complete stranger.

My sister was traumatized. Now, she was drug into this world of magic along with me. I didn't want this to be real. The only reason I was willing to even accept that this was happening was because I had Falcon. Falcon was worth it.

When suddenly the truck made a thud and jumped. I looked out the back window to see Falcon and Belthazar fighting in the truck bed. *Oh my...how did they get into the truck bed? We're going around fifty miles an hour!*

Arched Wing

“Here Jennifer, take the wheel,” I stated, starting to climb over her.

“Me?” She looked skeptical.

“You are always complaining about not getting a chance to practice for your driver’s license. Why not practice now.”

“You’re kidding me right!” Jennifer shouted.

“No! I am demanding!” I said in a harsh voice. I didn’t want to push Jennifer, but our lives depended on it. If Belthazar killed Falcon, or flung him from the truck, we’d be sitting ducks. I know that Belthazar would kill Jennifer just as well as me.

“Okay, just one thing,” Jennifer said softly.

“Now what?”

“Not to be old fashioned, but don’t people usually stop for stop signs?” Jennifer cocked a disapproving eyebrow at me.

“Not today, just drive, and don’t stop for anyone or anything, got it?”

“No I don’t understand why...” Jennifer started.

“Just do it Jennie!”

“Alright,” Jennifer and I switched spots carefully. Jennifer slid into the driver’s seat and I opened the window that connected the bed and cab. I clasped the Arched Wing necklace around my neck as tight as I could. I attempted to climb through the connecting window and got stuck halfway.

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REBIRTH OF MCHARRISON



am stuck!” I called out.

“Need some lubricant?” Belthazar asked. “I could...” Falcon’s fist nailed Belthazar in the face. So, the demon was unable to finish his sickening thought. That was a *thank you God* moment.

“Bite Me, Belthazar!” I growled.

“Gladly,” Belthazar headed toward me. I watched in terror as Falcon yanked Belthazar away from me. Falcon grabbed Belthazar’s hair and pulled with all his might.

Arched Wing

Still, thinking of hair, it was petrifying how much Belthazar and Falcon looked alike. Falcon could have been his reincarnation.

Belthazar put out his hands. A ball of fire appeared in his palm. The flames of the fire ball leapt around his fingers.

“Fire Ball,” I pointed repeatedly at Belthazar.

“Thank you for stating the obvious, Apeth.” Falcon growled. He swiftly dodged the fire ball.

“It’s what I am best at.”

Falcon rolled toward me. He slammed into the back of the truck bed.

“Brit Boy,” I reached out for Falcon with fear. Was Falcon alright?

Falcon stood. He placed his hands on my shoulders and thrust me backwards. I could feel the edges of the window slicing my sides. I was screaming in pain.

Harshly I fell against the dashboard. My body was sprawled out in an awkward way. The truck swerved. I was flung face first into the seat.

“Again!” I yelled. “Why does everything have to hit my nose?”

“Its size,” Jennifer giggled playfully.

“The road!” I pointed, my eyes wide with fear.

Jennifer turned and saw the ditch. Quickly she spun the wheel and missed the ditch, but just barely.

“What was that for?!” I yelled out the window at Falcon!

“Getting you un-stuck, Apeth,”

“I despise you,” I growled. “It hurt,”

“Well, I love you, Ace!” Falcon shot back. *Oh! Sometimes Falcon rubs me the wrong way!*

I turned to Jennifer. “Try to keep the car straight.”

“What...why?” She asked.

“I am going to get on top of the truck,” I declared, trying not to shake in fear.

“What?” Jennifer clutched the steering wheel tighter.

“Don’t worry. I will be alright,” I responded.

I grabbed the handle and rolled the truck window down. I sighed and momentarily clutched the Arched Wing necklace around my neck. I was going to help my boyfriend-I mean Falcon.

I started to climb out the window. When Jennifer swerved the truck and my feet slipped. I held onto the roof as tight as I could. The road was rushing beneath my dangling feet.

“I said drive straight not sideways!”

I could see an oncoming pothole, only I didn’t see it quick enough to brace myself. I lost my grasp with one hand. My feet dangled dangerously close to the road. If I fell I would die or at the very least be seriously hurt.

Another car came zipping down the road. An incoherent scream was torn from my throat. I began to reach for the roof. I mustered all my courage and forced my

Arched Wing

body to leap up. I grasped the roof. The car rushed by as I yanked myself up.

“Falcon!” I called out, and then, suddenly a tree branch waked me in the face. Once again, my nose was stinging!

I began to slide from the top of the truck and down the windshield. I was shrieking at the top of my lungs. I could even hear Jennifer screaming, which figured, since she could obviously see me lying in front of her. We both knew I was going to fall off the top of the truck!

“Falcon!” I called out once more. “I am going to fall. I am going to fall under the truck!”

“Samantha!” I heard Falcon yell.

“Don’t you dare,” I heard Belthazar hiss.

“Falcon!” I shouted. “If I live through this I want you to be my boyfriend!”

“What?” I heard Falcon ask. I began to stand up. Suddenly the truck jolted and went sliding back and forth under my feet.

Wait, I can fly. *You must feel flight*, I told myself. *Feel flight*.

I lifted off the top of the truck and into the air.

“Falcon,” I fell into the bed of the truck. My whole body ached from the impact. Then, all of a sudden, I was sliding out of the truck bed. I was going backwards out of the truck!

I hit pavement.

Does that mean I am dead? Wait, I am still alive? I hit the ground at eighty miles an hour. Did my powers save me?

A warm hand was on my shoulder. This couldn't be Falcon or Belthazar, because they both have cold skin.

A mysterious man in a long dark cloak stood over me. It just seemed that my day was getting better! Once again, I reacted instead of acting.

The mystery man's midnight curls poked out of the hood and rustled in the wind. He slowly bent down. Gently he lifted me up off the ground set me on my feet.

"Mistress Dana De Dan" The mystery man said. His voice was low and sexy. He almost sounded like Falcon, only minus the accent.

I looked up. He had *shatter blue* eyes! What the heck is going on? Is everyone I meet a copy of Falcon? Did I miss a new fashion trend?

"Get up," The mystery man demanded coldly. His testosterone spiced breath washing over my face. "Fight this demon."

"Who are you?" I asked trying to pull the cloak from his head. He titled, maneuvered, and stepped back so that I was unable to reach his head. He was a good half a foot or more taller than me.

"Falcon!" I shouted out. I needed Falcon! I was lost, alone, mystified, and distraught.

"I will see you again, Ms. Morgan." The mysterious man said in an eerie voice. Then the man vanished into thin air.

My mouth fell open. He was gone and I was holding the back of the truck. Was it all just a vision? Was I losing my mind?

Falcon was suddenly pulling me into the back of the truck. Although, it felt like I was

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being pulled up by two people. Did Falcon and Belthazar worked together for me? Slowly I fell into Falcon's embrace.

"Samantha," I heard Belthazar say. His voice made my heartbeat speed up. I blushed and shook my head. I looked up at Belthazar, he was standing behind Falcon. Yet, even so close to his prey, he was not attempting to fight with Falcon. What was going on? Why wasn't he taking this chance to attack?

"You sifted," Belthazar said with a sense of pride. He was proud of me?

"Sifted?" I asked Falcon.

"Like teleporting, blinking, or orbing. Whatever you wish to call it, it is relocating from one place to another." Falcon answered.

"Are you okay *My* Katherine?" Belthazar interrupted.

"Your? Your!" I screamed. "Let's get two things straight here Belthazar!" I pushed myself up and out of Falcon's arms. "I am not Katherine and I am NOT yours."

The truck hit a bump and I lost my balance. Belthazar reached out and caught me before I fell off the edge of the truck again. His touch was so exhilarating that I blushed. I felt shaky around him. It had to be fear, or something, because there was no way I liked this demon!

"Not? Not!" Belthazar mocked. "Let's get two things straight here Samantha, you are Katherine McHarrison, and you ARE mine."

"She is not yours Belthazar." Falcon stood up. "You had your chance with her in

her past life. Now she is Samantha and that means that now she is MINE!”

Falcon pulled me back into his arms. He kissed my forehead swiftly then pushed me toward the back of the truck near the cab. I tripped and fell into the wall of the truck bed. He was making my decisions for me! What if I had wanted to fight?

“What happened?” I watched the two men fist fight as I awaited an answer, but neither of them answered me. I guess the only ways to get attention around here is to fall out of a truck or die!

I watched the two men brawling. Falcon leapt up to kick Belthazar and missed. Belthazar moved with lightning fast reflexes, he had dodged the strike of Falcon’s foot, and swiftly grabbed Falcon’s ankle. With a harsh thrust Belthazar sent Falcon sprawling backward out of the truck bed.

“Brit Boy!” I stood and rushed after him. Just before my feet left the truck bed, Belthazar seized my arm. He jerked me to his body and embraced me in a possessive way.

“Please don’t Samantha,” Belthazar whispered into my ear.

“Brit Boy!” I shouted again. Tears streamed down my face. I didn’t want to lose my soul mate. I couldn’t bear to spend eternity trapped in a lovelorn state of longing.

I flung my body weight forward, almost knocking myself and Belthazar from the truck bed. Belthazar step back so we were no longer close to falling.

Arched Wing

“Where do you think you are going *Katherine?*” Belthazar’s voice was angry. “I own you.”

“Why does everyone want to own me?” I shrieked. “And stop calling me *Katherine!* If you want this body then you have to want me because I AM NOT KATHERINE! I am my own person!”

“Sam...” Belthazar’s tongue darted across my earlobe and my whole body shivered from head to toe in exquisite delight. Once again, my resistance dwindled. Belthazar knew my Achilles’ heel and was toying with me. He knew full well I couldn’t tell a man ‘no’.

“Bastard!” I pushed Belthazar causing him to topple over in surprise.

“You don’t fight men sexually.” Disbelief was written on his face.

“And if I was the one you were planning to sleep with I wouldn’t have, but you are trying to get hot and heavy with *Katherine McHarrison.*”

Samantha! Samantha you must hurry and find Falcon and Druskin before T’ntch returns to claim her eternity long vendetta. Katherine warned.

“T’ntch? Druskin?” I asked aloud. “What vendetta, when will she return?”

“T’ntch is still alive?” Belthazar asked standing. “We can’t allow that.”

I love you, Katherine whispered.

“Katherine has something to say to you. She says ‘*I love you.*’ She also said I must find Falcon and someone named Druskin before a woman named T’ntch is able to complete her vendetta.”

Samantha...

“Shut up!” I held fistfuls of my hair near my temples as I shook my head vigorously. I wanted to shake her voice away. “I don’t want to be you! I don’t want to hear you!”

“Good,” Belthazar laughed. “You do not hold her persona in your soul. You hold simply the shell of the soul itself. Katherine could not kill T’ntch because she chose to love me over the world. She was never the true Dana De Dan but I feel you are. So thus, I want *you*, Samantha.”

“I love you,” I titled my head a tiny bit. My face softened and a smile curved my lips. I was going to repel him, because I didn’t want to hear another word about destiny. I was like her and I couldn’t imagine myself choosing the world over Falcon.

Belthazar’s onyx eyes faded back to a piercing shatter blue. A single tear rolled down his pale cheek.

“I...” Belthazar was unable to say it back to me. Anger boiled in the depths of his eyes.

“Love...go on say...oh wait, you can’t.” I shot.

“I hate you!”

“Samantha!” Falcon shouted.

“Falcon,” I cooed. Falcon was back. I needed him to save me. I needed him to love me. I simply need Falcon.

Belthazar vanished.

Arched Wing

“My love,” Falcon said pulling me into his arms. I fell awkwardly against him. “Are you alright?”

“I think so,” I nuzzled him with my nose.

“Good, I wouldn’t want my *girlfriend* to be hurt.” Falcon said kissing my cheek.

“Falcon what are we going to do?” I asked.

“I’m still working on that.”

∞

“Isabelle?” I asked Falcon, as I laid my head on his shoulder. I was enjoying snuggling close to him.

I looked out the truck windshield at the winding road. It had been a week since Belthazar attacked. The custody of my younger sister, Jennifer Morgan, had been left to me since I was nineteen and the only living relative. My mother willed everything to me. Only, since we had a fire, everything she left burned up. Not that it would matter much longer. Jennifer would turn eighteen within a week.

“My sister, Isabelle, is actually twenty. Come to think of it she is not *really* my sister. She is more like...well, she is my family. Her mother died and I took her in.”

“Do you have a big family?” I pulled Jennifer a little closer to me. She was sleeping with her head lying in my lap. Her body was sprawled across the passenger seat. I, on the other hand, was happy to sit in the middle seat. I was snuggled up against Falcon as close as I could get.

“Not really,” Falcon answered. “But my family did get a little bigger. I have you now.”

“What were you like? When you were a kid, I mean?”

“I don’t remember. It was a while ago,” Falcon answered.

“You are only twenty-one,” I reminded Falcon.

“Yes...however, half demons live a rather long time. I age...um, slowly,” Falcon said in a shifty way. It was like he was hiding some of the truth. Something he seemed to do often.

There was always a layer of sorrow under his suave exterior. I wondered what he was holding back. What tragedies were dancing in his eyes that made him so honor bound? What was it like to be a demon walking the line between right and wrong? What would it be like to know you could never be fully good...never love fully?

“I see,” I stated. “So, you are probably a generation or more ahead of Isabelle?”

“Something along those lines, my father...” Falcon said changing the subject. “He died when I was only a little boy. I never really got to know him.”

Falcon checked the rearview mirror in a fidgety way. His eyes narrowed and he sneered then turned and looked back at the main road. I looked out the back window hoping see whatever he saw. A black shadow shot across the road. It must have been some kind of animal.

Arched Wing

“I have another sibling, one who is really my sibling by blood,” Falcon said softly, so softly that I almost didn’t hear him.

“Oh?” I thought I might have heard him wrong.

“Yes, a twin,” Falcon didn’t say what kind of twin. I wondered if his twin was identical or fraternal. For all I knew his twin could have been a chick.

“No,” Falcon whispered breathlessly. “He is not a girl.”

Falcon was pretty much silent the duration of the ride from that point on. He just stared at the road. To break the unbearable silence I turned on the radio. It took a few minutes of flipping through rap filled stations before I found a channel I liked.

I do have a diverse palette for music. I can enjoy head bopping music like ‘*Bubbly Song*’, to Carried Underwood, all the way to Shine Down. However, I hate rap. I am a strong believer in only listening to music I can clearly understand all the words to. So, that kills Nirvana and Grunge bands too.

I quietly sang along with the radio. The mix station played a variety of old and new songs. Falcon slowly became interested again. He would occasionally watch me and smile. Yet, still, he didn’t say a word.

When Taylor Swift’s song ‘*Tears Drops on my Guitar*’ came on I almost jumped out of my seat. I loved the song more than almost any other song in the world.

“Drew looks at me,” I started singing along. I watched Falcon as I tried to sing the beautiful lyrics to him. Falcon went stiff

as a board. Quickly he switched off the radio. All the muscles in his face went tight. Falcon was glaring out at the road.

“Falcon,” I wondered what I had done to offend him. (Was my singing really all that bad?)

Falcon shook his head. “You sing beautifully, honest.”

10

THE FEAR OF A WOMAN

Falcon's home was beautiful. It was a large, gorgeous, two story manor. I gapped in awe at the stone walls made from colossal handmade bricks.

Falcon opened the truck door and slowly I shook Jennifer awake. A part of me almost envied her nap because she did not have to endure the tuck ride here. I had stayed awake so that I could talk with Falcon. Maybe even we could have made out a plan for losing my virginity. However, that obviously did not happen!

I scanned the area taking in all my surroundings. Cobblestone paths lead to the

manor's doorway. Crisp green grass was lined with fresh flowers encompassed the walkway to the doors.

"OMG," Jennifer was touching everything in reach. She looked like an escapee from the loony-bin when she started to pet the walkways.

Falcon waited as Jennifer ran ahead. Jennifer was examining his yard with childish wonder. While for me, all I could do was look at Falcon.

Falcon was about six foot three inches tall. He was also as beautiful as men come. Falcon was a hero far too divine to be real. So, why would he want me?

I always think that in romances, when two men are fighting for one woman, what makes her so special? What does she have that I don't? Was she really in love?

Love is meant to hurt. When you love someone it should feel like you're dying because you need them so much. When they leave the room you feel as if a limb is missing. I love Falcon like that.

Falcon is the air that I breathe and I don't know why. I guess that's how it should be. You should never love someone because of their traits. People change and those who love with conditions are the ones who can't make it work. I love Falcon, without conditions and without reason.

Falcon's shaggy toe head hair was caught by the wind and loose tresses rustled over his eyes. In the sunlight I could see his shatter blue eyes glistening like diamonds.

I averted my gaze downward at the ground and blushed. *Falcon is a diamond, I*

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thought placing a hand over my heart. *A rare and perfect gem...and he is mine.*

Falcon shook his head vigorously causing his hair to whirl about. Then once again his eyes flashed onyx. I still didn't fathom what triggered the flash, other than him being a half demon. Still I didn't fear his demon half.

"Come on, I want to see the inside!" Jennifer begged as she tugged at Falcon's arm.

"Shall we?" Falcon offered his hand to me.

I smiled and rested my hand on his shoulder. Falcon shrugged my hand off of him and quickly caught it. I was constantly surprised at his odd abilities.

Promptly Falcon laced our fingers together. I looked up at his face hoping he was smiling too, but he wasn't look at me. He was fighting his demonic urges again.

I finally understood, in that moment, why Falcon and I didn't have sex in the hotel room. Falcon did not want to go that far because he feared his demon side could kill me. Come to think of it, I wouldn't want to kill someone while having sex. That would be creepy. Oh yes, and I would never be able to have sex again!

Falcon did not look at me or angle his head toward me in anyway. "I love you." Falcon sounded like he meant it but I couldn't really tell.

"Ditto," I whispered back. Still, Falcon gave me no eye contact.

What was going on? If Falcon really loved me why did he have such a hard time

showing it? Then again it wasn't fair that he could say the L.O.V.E. word when I couldn't.

When Falcon, Jennifer, and myself entered, I was taken aback. The elegance was breathtaking. Beautiful staircases, long narrow halls, and marbled flooring! It was like the castle in *Beauty and the Beast*. The good old fashion Disney cartoon one, of course.

From around the corner a drop dead, gorgeous woman entered. She was wearing a chic mini-dress that made her look like a model for Dior.

I gasped and blushed. A beautiful woman like this was in Falcon's life! How could he even look at a girl like me? I averted my gaze for a moment and look down at the ground. I may be beautiful, but I'm not *that* beautiful. I couldn't win the hearts of millions of men!

I looked back up slowly. I was still blushing.

The girl's dress was an empire waist seam that hugged tightly below her small chest. She was exposing pale cleavage, at least what little she had.

I wrinkled my nose. I was pointing out her small chest to myself. I was being jealous! How could I be jealous? She was probably Isabelle.

The girl's shoulder length toe head curls danced wildly as she walked. Her bangs swept just above her shatter blue eyes. She even had a small clef in her chin. She looked like an angel with perfect round features and all.

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Isabelle had high cheek bones, a strong nose, and shatter blue eyes. There was no doubt she was related to Falcon, even if she wasn't his *real* sister.

"Afty, it is a pleasure to make your acquaintances." The woman extended her hand toward me. Her long polished fingernails sparkled in the light. She was walking perfection.

If England was littered with women like her, why would Falcon ever lower himself to someone like me? She made Kayden Kross look like a Plain Jane gal instead of a famous nude model. I shook her hand. She was warm.

"I am Isabelle. I don't mind if you call me by my proper name. If you like, though, you can call me Belle." Isabelle's voice was cheerful and yet seductive. She sounded like what you would expect the perfect woman to sound like. She had this soft feminine purr like Melinda Clarke. Isabelle sounded sexy, unlike me. I could not sound sexy even if my life depended on it. Seduction was not in my nature.

I smiled, because even though Isabelle was ten times sexier than me, I still knew right off the bat that I was going to like her. "Alright I will call you Belle but only if you call me Sam or Sammie in exchange."

"I am Jennie!" My sister interjected grabbing Isabelle's hand and pulling her away from shaking hands with me. Jennifer is like that, she is just so sweet and child like it is overwhelming. She is an eager person with a little bit too sunny of a disposition. I love that about Jennie.

Isabelle led us into the living room. I sat down on the sofa next to Falcon. I had to fight the urge to reach out and grab his hand. I just wanted to touch him.

I averted my gaze from Falcon. I didn't want to come off too clingy. I looked up and saw Jennifer and Isabelle sit down on the sofa across from Falcon and myself.

"Well then, shall we just get to the point? No sense in making an acid house out of such an important matter?" She asked in her cheery British accent.

"Isabelle," Falcon said to his sister, but his eyes were still glued to my face. "I would prefer to tell Samantha this news by myself."

Isabelle nodded and smiled, but annoyance was dancing in her eyes. She turned toward my sister. "Jennifer, would you care to join me on a tour of our manor?" She offered taking hold of my sister's hand.

"You bet!" Jennifer leapt from her seat and almost knocked Isabelle over. As the two of them walked out of the room I expected him to kiss me, since for the first time in days we were alone.

"Samantha," Falcon said in a strained voice.

I leaned nearer to Falcon, closed my eyes, and wet my lips. Still, he didn't kiss me.

"You are in grave danger," Falcon said.

I opened my eyes to see him doubling his fists, pulling fistfuls of his jeans into his hands. He was fighting his demonic urges again. I, on the other hand, wished he would just give in and pull me beneath him.

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I wanted him to fill me, complete me, and make me shiver with sheer erotic delight.

I touched Falcon's hand gently. I could feel the sensation of him cover me. Falcon jerked away from me, pulling back emotionally as well. I could not comprehend why I cared for him, because I knew he could devour me in a second. I knew if his demonic rage would broke that he would have no troubling hurting me. Yet, I was had fallen for Falcon, and I trusted he would never lose control. I loved Falcon forever, half evil or not.

"I'm in danger, from you?" I asked. My heart was beating slowly.

"Yes and no. I am not the only one." Falcon stood and turned his back on me. He doubled his fists at his sides. I could see him fighting the urge to hit something.

"We all want you, Samantha, and that blasted mirror," Falcon stated, his voice was like a warning but his words were empty. "You cannot even trust me. I could hurt you without any trouble. You can only trust Dru."

"Drew...as in the name Andrew? I don't know a..."

"No. D.R.U., not Andrew! Dru is my identical twin brother," As Falcon said that I fell out of my seat.

"Twin!" I sputtered. "As in there is another Falcon? That is one too many perfect men!"

"Yes, however, I wouldn't stake the claim perfection to him. After all he isn't me."

"Did I say that aloud?" My eyes widened and a blush spread across my face.

“He’s more like you, pure hearted and all that hogwash.”

“Falcon, what is really going on?” I pulled away from him and crossed my arms over my chest.

“It is better you do not know,” Falcon said in a condescending voice.

“I am not a child!” I growled. “Do not treat me like a little girl! I can handle it without freaking out. If I can fight a demon and have my heart almost ripped out then I can fight you for the truth.” I gathered my anger creating an energy ball within the palm of my hand.

“No you cannot!” Falcon’s eyes become pitch black, like hallow voids. His canine teeth grew into fangs before I could gasp. He reached *through* my energy ball to grab me. “Belthazar is not your worst enemy.”

I screamed, but no sound came from my lips. I was falling into the agony, not of physical pain, but emotional. How could the man I trusted hurt me like this?

Falcon’s eyes were like an abyss of evil. His glance was an eternal, soul claiming, hatred lying beneath the surface. Falcon’s fangs looked sharp and I could sense the blood thirst growing in his heart.

“I am not human! I am not demon either! I am a worthless half breed!” Falcon let my wrist go and turned. Falcon doubled his fists in rage. “Samantha don’t you get it? You can give up your destiny and leave me. Be normal.”

“No!” I answered firmly. I understood now what was going on with Falcon. “I will not be your little guilt trip,” I stated flatly.

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“I am *choosing this!* I am choosing to be a hero. I am choosing to be with you.”

I watched as the full impact of my words hit Falcon. He seemed shocked.

“I want to be normal,” I continued. “However, I cannot be normal. Just like I could not let you kill Bonnie-Kate I cannot allow you to do this to yourself...to us. So, tell me what I need to know to stop Belthazar and save the world.”

Falcon pushed me and I went sprawling backwards onto the sofa with a bang. Pain surged up my spine.

It didn’t matter to me. I would love Falcon even if his demon side killed me. I would not allow my fear of being hurt to stop me from loving him. Falcon would never break, I knew it.

“I am Belthazar!” Falcon shouted. Fury burned in his words. “We are one in the same. I was created from him when he tore out his human heart. My immortal soul bares his mark of demonic powers. That makes me him.”

I shook my head. I was spinning off into another world. I was lost. I was hurt. I was betrayed. Falcon was Belthazar. How could that be? Is that why they looked so much alike?

“I know Belthazar’s every move. We are connected at the soul, such as I am with my twin brother,” Falcon yelled. I was not sure if it was in anger or pain.

“You knew about my family?”

“I could not have saved them.” A single tear rolled down his cheek. “They had to

die for you to be awakened, since your mother bound your powers.”

Quickly Falcon snarled and turned away. I could never understand why men thought that showing sorrow would make them appear weak. If Falcon could cry in front of me I would actually find him stronger, because it takes more strength to cry than to get angry.

“Falcon,” I reached for him but he pulled away from me swiftly. Still, I was persistent and the second time I touched him. He allowed my hand to rest on him but he remained tensed.

“Shut the Bloody Hell up and listen!” Falcon seethed.

I couldn’t help it, I pulled my hand back. For the first time I felt fear toward Falcon. Seeing a grown man yell was like watching my birthfather all over again. I hate men yelling. I want somebody even tempered and passive. I want someone who will treat me well. Then again, I would probably fight falling for a good guy because I would not know what to do with him.

“Katherine loved Belthazar.” Falcon shook his head, I wasn’t sure if it was in disapproval or sorrow. “She wouldn’t leave his side no matter what. That was until she was tricked into seeing him as the enemy of mankind. He longed for Katherine’s love and tracked her down. He wanted to forgive her. However, he was too late, she had already lost her life.”

“Falcon,” I looked up at him with conviction in my eyes. “I am not Katherine. I am a different person.”

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“No you will never have a life with me.” Falcon shook his head. “Demons cannot love so, only half of me can love you.”

“Don’t be like...”

“Shut up!” Falcon punched at the sofa. “Katherine stole Belthazar’s Grimoire to save this worthless world. She turned the Mirror Hallow into the Mirror of Destiny. She made his dark object into something good. She betrayed him.”

“Where is the mirror?” I asked, hoping to change the subject. I just wanted Falcon to relax. I needed him to be happy and at peace.

“On your family’s land in Toledo Washington, it has to be because you spent your first five years there.”

“Falcon...I care about you so much,” I whispered. Instantly Falcon’s eyes and fangs returned to normal. Gently Falcon ran his frozen knuckles down my cheek. Most people pull away from chilly skin but I don’t...not anymore.

“Samantha, how can you feel that way about a demon?”

“Because you make me alive and I don’t care about your flaws. I adore you for whom you are...no if, ands, or butts.”

“I am a half demon,” Falcon reminded me.

“I don’t care.”

“I am Belthazar,” Falcon restated.

“I still want you,” I countered.

“I have a large ego.”

“I like ego-centric men,” I retorted.

“I can only love you with half of my heart.”

“Half is better than none.”

“I will always be evil,” Falcon warned.

“I don’t think you are evil.” I gently touched his chest.

Falcon cupped my face, yanked my head back, and entangled my lips in a soul claiming kiss. This wasn’t a peck on the lips, this was pure heat. His touch was raw and unapologetic. He was running the pads of his thumb down my neck. Butterflies filled my belly.

Falcon was dominating, a demon, and he was a living battle field. Falcon’s kiss was not walking the thin line between lukewarm attraction and a full blow passion. His kiss was shattering that line and telling the politically correct world to go to hell. His kiss was the sheer intensity that ripped the virtue of my soul out like a pirate stealing innocence.

Falcon was a man and knew it full well. He didn’t fear lust the way that I did. In fact, Falcon embraced his sensual side. Just for one moment, it didn’t feel like he was restraining his demon side.

Falcon’s tongue slid in and out of my mouth mocking the rhythm of sex. Though his lips were as cold as the arctic sea I felt filled with pure warmth. I guess in life even when you’re living in a cult classic you can never escape romance.

I guess I understood now what happened to Bonnie-Kate. She loved a man who didn’t love her back. It was like Falcon and I, since he was only able to love me with half of his heart. The question was...would Falcon devour my heart?

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My heart leapt and my ears began to ring. It was happening again, something that I could remember from my childhood. My mother use to call it premonitions but I always thought I was just a crazy freak with vivid day dreams.

It was the middle of the night. Multiple screams were filling the air. As my vision sunk from the sky, my eyes fell onto Falcon.

He was standing hunched over something, his eyes were pitch-black and his hair fell to his waist in tightly wound toe head curls. Falcon was shirtless with cuts all over his chest. He was drenched in blood...blood that was not his own.

As my vision moved further forward I saw the body he was hunched over. The body was that of a dead woman...a woman I knew...

The body was mine.

"I never meant to kill you," Falcon whispered as he kissed my dead lips. It was very Romeo and Juliet.

Why had Falcon killed me?

As I came back to reality, I pulled away from Falcon and looked into his eyes. *If I stayed with him my destiny was the same as McHarrison's...to die because of love.* I didn't care.



I would never forget that day, because it was even more powerful than that of Bonnie-Kate kidnapping me. It was October thirty-first and the day that I meant Falcon's Twin brother.

I stepped out into the crisp autumn air. I could hear the wind rustling the trees and

feel the breeze tousle my hair across my shoulders. I pulled my coat closer around my body to hide from the sharp nips of chilled air.

Leaves crushed under my feet as I walked. Children ran up and down the high school pumpkin patch. The kids were picking out their future jack-o-lanterns or pumpkin pie subjects, while their older siblings kept a watchful eye on them.

Teenagers rushed back and forth as they showed off their fake injuries and half-done costumes. Kids bounced up and down happily as they exchanged candy from their Halloween paper bags and plastic pumpkins.

Halloween is my all-time favorite holiday. It isn't getting dressed up that I love the most. My mother had a dress up play room for my siblings and me, so I always got to be a fairy princess with a tiara. I love the traditions behind Halloween the most.

In general, I also adore autumn because it is my most beloved season. Summer is wonderful and fun but fall is better. The colors of autumn are so beautiful, the temperature is just right. It's the only season when a cardigan and camisole is all you need to wear.

In a way, it was awkward to be in Night's Kill High School again. I graduated last year, a year earlier than I should have. I was born in August just a few days before school started so I wasn't able to enter school until a year later than most students.

This school held way too many memories for me. Most of my memories were not

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pleasant. Still, it was high school and it isn't pleasant for anyone.

"Will two hours be long enough?" Falcon asked, and his accent was stronger than before. Oh god, did I love his accent. His voice was like perfection. It was the kind of voice that cocooned my soul and made me feel protected.

"Alright," Falcon turned to walk away. "Ace..." He stopped and turned to face me again.

I looked up at his face. His shatter blue eyes shimmered in the October light.

"You understand right? We have to go to Washington." Falcon smiled.

I looked away from Falcon. That worthless mirror had crossed his mind, hell it was probably on his mind all the time! After our *conversation* about him being a half demon all he had been able to do was talk about the Mirror of Destiny. I felt like I had gained a PHD in Mirror-ology over night. It was epic and not in a good way.

I kept thinking to myself how much I wished Falcon would want more than the Mirror of Destiny and the Grimoire. Did he only care about the power he could have? Would I even find a man who would love me instead of loving just my powers?

"For the mirror?" I asked as I kept my real intentions covert. I wanted to know if he was concentrating on finding the Mirror of Destiny or if he was interest in being with me.

"Of Course..." Falcon stated before sniffing. I guess even half demons get

runny noses. "Not." He finished and smiled lustfully.

"Alright, I have to go now," I said. "I will call you when I am all done."

Quickly I kissed Falcon's chilly lips. I turned and began to walk away. After a few moments I had an afterthought and turned to face Falcon.

"Brit Boy," I called out. "Thank you for the new cell phone!"

"You're welcome." Falcon climbed into his truck.

I pulled open the school door, but I didn't get a chance to enter the building because a well manicured hand was in my way, pushing the door shut again.

Mariah was standing there tapping her foot like she was some kind of God. I thought that after I graduated high school I would finally be done with this girl. I graduated a year early to escape this place.

"Well, well, well...if it isn't *Little Last American Virgin*. Found yourself a man? Tapped that yet?" It was the catty sound of Mariah McBride. She was Bonnie-Kate's daughter, not to mention the most popular-mean-evil-backstabbing-sluty-bitch girl in high school.

"Go to hell, McBride," I hissed. I was trying my best to ignore Mariah. I tried to open the door again but she pushed it shut with a forceful hand and held it that way.

I clenched my fist. I was going to be sick! I couldn't stand Mariah McBride and her *Clones*. I hated that her friends followed her around like brain-dead zombies.

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Rochelle, clone one, was the meanest backstabber in the whole school. Kaia, clone two, was the slut of the school. She slept with every man she could. Sean, clone three, was alright. She was cute and the dumbest girl in the world, so, she wasn't really mean natured. However, as a group they were downright evil in carnet!

It wasn't fair that Mariah McBride was popular and perfect. I mean she was a bombshell with a figure that girls would starve themselves to get. She had shoulder length lemon colored curls that normal teens spent way too much money on in salons. Plus Mariah had the perfect forest green eyes to match her tawny tanned skin.

"Well?" Mariah asked, awaiting my answer to her previous question.

"Yes," I growled sarcastically. "You're right." I wasn't going to let her break me down again. I am more emotionally secure than that! "Good-bye McBride."

I pushed past Mariah and entered the building. Slowly I stopped and looked over my shoulder. I watched students bustle by. I held the door handle like it was a life line. This had been my life until very recently. Now, I was an adult. I had a destiny. I wasn't sure if I was afraid of having a new life or not.

I pulled the door open and entered the building. As the door closed behind me it began snowing. It was just that kind of day.

Katherine Petersdorf

11

STRANGER DANGER

“Wow! It’s sticking!” I said aloud. I was talking to myself, would someone please get me those meds ASAP.

I slid my new cell phone out of my pocket. I was admiring the phone’s bright pink color and little white daises on it.

I knelt down in the snow. My body was at a weird angel so that neither my knees nor my butt touched the ground. It was difficult to maintain the stance.

Oddly enough I hated the cold and yet, I really loved the snow. It’s like winter wonderfulness. Well, to be perfectly honest, I only love the snow for the first forty-eight

hours. Then I spend the rest of winter complaining that it is freezing outside. After that, when the rain starts, I love to stomp around in the slush puddles.

In the Catskills it snows from October until March. However, I am now going to Washington State. Unless there happens to be a freak snow storm all I have to face, weather wise, is endless rain.

Washington, I thought to myself. I loved growing up in Washington. Truthfully it wasn't until my freshman year of high school that my family moved to New York State.

When I was five years old a fire forced my family to leave our land. We moved into a house that belonged to my aunt in Tumwater, Washington. Tumwater is the suburbs of the capitol city, so, it's rather big. It was different for me because Toledo, my birth town that we left, is a super small town.

I flipped open the bright pink cell phone and held down the speed dial button for Falcon's phone. I wanted nothing more, at that moment, than to call Falcon. I needed to hear my man's voice. I shivered and placed the phone to my ear.

Ring. Ring.

"Afty, Ace," Falcon answered. God his voice was up lifting. He was the cure to the Mariah and too much paper work blues.

"Brit Boy," I cooed. "It's snowing."

It never ceases to amaze me how good I am at stating the obvious. I should find a job that requires that special talent.

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“I know, but what I don’t know is why you announce it like snow is as rare as hen’s teeth?” Falcon laughed.

“Hen’s don’t have teeth.” I corrected in a playful voice.

“Spot on. Then again chickens don’t have *fingers*. Yet, all American diners serve them. Is that right as rain?”

“Olay,” I clutched the phone tighter as I laughed.

“It’s *touché*.” Falcon corrected me.

“Meaning to touch...” I said in a lustful way. Boy I was having a Christopher Atkins, in *The Pirate Movie*, flashback.

“I am down at the mall.” Falcon’s tone was sweet, as if he were saying that he would rather be here with me.

“Wait! Why the mall? I mean the mall is like in the next town. At least a good twenty minutes from Night’s Kill. What are you doing so far away?”

“I am purchasing supplies for *our* move.” Falcon answered.

“I like that word.”

“Which word?” Falcon asked.

“*Our*,” I whispered in my imitation of a sultry voice. Although, I am pretty sure I didn’t sound sexy. I couldn’t sound sexy even if I tried.

“So do I Ace, so do I. I am on my way.” After saying those words Falcon hung up. I flipped my phone closed. Swiftly I slid the cell phone back into my pocket.

“Twenty minutes,” I sighed. “What am I going to do to pass the time?”

I slowly tipped my head back and held out my hands. I let the snowflakes hit my

face. Playfully I stuck out my tongue. I was entangled in the sensation of the snow melting on impact.

“Adorable isn’t it?” An unfamiliar voice asked. The voice’s accent was the thick Irish brogue of a man.

I drew my tongue back into my mouth and turned to face the direction the voice was coming from. I had learned in the last two weeks that strangers brought trouble. I finally understood the need for the term *Stranger Danger*.

“Samantha Morgan, I presume?” The man stepped into view. It was never good what a stranger knew your name. I had discovered those kind of strangers were usually the ones who planned to kidnap you, strap you to a table, and try to rip out your heart. *So, remember children trust no one, not even those you know and keep in mind stranger danger is there for a reason.*

There were two of them. Two tall, brooding men and they were complete opposites in appearance. The first man, whom said my name, was much older than the second. He must have been at least in his early fifties. His silver hair was slicked back and his build was muscular. The man’s sharp features did not complement his Irish, ivory skin or his pale green eyes and freckles.

The second man appeared to be in his mid-twenties. His midnight colored hair was swept up in a ponytail that fell down his back. His side cut bangs framed his eyes and complemented his ivory skin.

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The man's eyes were the most interesting color I had ever seen. Almost like a hazel shade. Yet, instead of a green and brown mixture, his eyes were a strange combination of gray and gold.

Although, the second man's build was as large as the first man's he seemed much less like a walking Arnold Schwarzenegger.

"My name is Patrick O'Neal," The first man stated. "And this is my associate Zanders Smith." Patrick pointed to the second man as he said '*Zanders Smith*'. I could tell right away that Zanders was not Irish.

"We would like to talk to you Ms. Morgan," Zanders said in a professional tone.

I wasn't going to fall for that tone of voice. They were most likely demons or witch hunters. Then again, with my luck, they're working for the CIA and are planning to ship me off to Roswell for dissection. Although, it would figure, I mean I'm already a freak with supernatural powers so why don't we just add alien to the mix!

"Don't worry. I am not the CIA or a witch hunter," Zanders stated. His voice was holding a touch of warning.

I froze.

He read my mind?

"Yes...I did. I can borrow powers Ms. Morgan, just as you are able to," Zanders stated coldly. "I borrowed your ability to read minds."

"Who are you really?" I was shaking in fear.

“Let’s cut to the chase shall we...McHarrison,”

I took off running.

I sprinted down slick pavement, rushing off as far in the opposite direction of Zanders and Patrick as possible. I maneuvered around ice patches as best as I could. This was a horrid time for Falcon to be so far away! They probably planned it.

Every few steps I would miss maneuver and my foot would glide over ice. I was constantly on the verge of tripping and sliding in the slush. I felt like I was standing on a cliff and could see the pebbles under my feet going off the edge.

“Change,” Zanders shouted with a commanding voice. I didn’t see who he was referring to, so, like an idiot I looked back over my shoulder. That was horrible mistake.

I hit the ice with my foot and lost my balance. Suddenly I went skidding across the iced road. I was praying that a car would not drive up and go flying through the intersection. I would get hit for sure.

My legs had given from beneath me. Agony shot up through my knees as my jeans ripped from the sharp rocks on the ground.

The rubble on the cement sliced into my gloves, skinning my palms. I could feel warm blood trickling down my cold hands. Then my chest hit the ground. My partially healed wounds in my shoulder and stomach began to throb.

My nerve endings stung with a burning sensation. It was as if someone had lit a

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match and pumped a fire into an IV, and that IV was strapped to me. My face skid across the road as well. I felt the tearing around my eyebrow. Every tiny blood vessel around my eye socket exploded simultaneously. I could have sworn that my face going to peel off.

That was when I felt *it*. Something so bizarre that at first I wasn't sure *it* was really happening. A hawk began to attack me. (What am I in "*My Side of the Mountain*" now?!?) I mean I know that I am living in the Catskills, but this is going a little too far.

The pecking hurt horribly. It was like someone was jabbing a knife into my flesh. I imagined I was being attacked by a band of serial killers with sharp butter-knives.

I began to swat at the horrid bird like a wild woman. My arms were flying out randomly. My eyes were closed tight. The hawk's pecking was so fast that I couldn't determine where the bird was. It took me several moments of struggling to knock the beast away from me. My body was shaking in agony. My heart was beating like an African drum.

I watched in awe as the hawk almost instantaneously morphed into Patrick. His outstretched wings began to molt off. Yet, no feathers fell to the ground. Patrick's long feather tips become skinny horizontal pillars as they transformed into fingers. The build of his body stretched out like an impersonation of Mr. Fantastic. The way his head flattened and then became plump at the sides was like watching someone blow up a balloon. His beak took

on different nasal forms as he slowly returned to his normal state.

“What are you!?” I stammered.

“I am a changeling.” Patrick stood. “And you are a roaring spit fire lassie.”

“Wait a second, Lassie, like I’m a dog?”

“Ogle later, sedate now!” Zanders entered the scene.

“Sedate!” I shivered and embraced myself. “What do you mean *sedate*?”

“I think that is a pretty obvious and self-explanatory statement,” Zanders laughed in a sarcastic voice.

A gun shot.

Zanders fell down onto the ground holding his knee. Blood oozed down Zanders’ leg. I felt like I was going to be sick and not because of the blood.

“Dru!” Zanders hissed looking past me.

Dru is my twin. I remembered Falcon’s words at that moment.

“You are a Dirty Cheater!” I knew the voice. I knew that the voice had to belong to Dru simply because he sounded just like Falcon, only minus the British accent. In fact, Dru held no accent what so ever.

I looked over my shoulder. I felt my heart skip a beat when I laid eyes on *him*. Dru was so breath taking. He was as extremely beautiful as his brother Falcon.

Dru stood there. His well-built frame was like that of a Scottish Highlander, his figure resembling that of *Mel* in *Brave Heart*. Dru’s sharp features were like a chiseled master piece. His pale skin was smooth and creamy. His jaw was lined with a five

o'clock shadow. His lashes were full and black.

He was walking perfection, just like his brother. Dru's midnight colored hair fell to his shoulders in thick shaggy curls. His shatter blue eyes sparkled in the light. He was so handsome. Both of the brothers were like walking lookalikes of Ian Somerholder.

Dru pulled out what seemed to be a leather wallet. Quickly he flipped it open to reveal a badge. The way he performed this task made me think he was going to be FBI like *Booth* on *"Bones"*.

The badge itself was unfamiliar to me. It was a large golden circle with an unfinished pyramid craved within it. Where the peak of the pyramid should have been was a half opened eye. The eye was staring straight out. In front of the pyramid were an axe and pick crossed in a large x.

"I, Druskin Allen McKain, by the order of the Cruciform Cross, here by arrest you in the name of the Cardinal of Rome." Dru stated in a rehearsed and emotionless way.

"My I say something." I interjected. However, no one seemed to hear me.

"That will never happen, Templar," Zanders laughed. "Your only choices now are to either arrest me or save the Dana De Dan."

"I have something to say!" Yet still, they didn't seem to hear me.

"Get over yourself Zanders," Dru huffed. "You're not that powerful."

"Hello!" I yelled. Still I was being ignored by them.

“You will never get me to give up,” Zanders stated.

Slowly I raised my hand.

“Yes, Ms Morgan?” Patrick looked at me with hatred in his eyes.

“Um...don’t I get a voice in this at all?” I could feel my bottom lip quivering in the puppy dog pout. “I’d rather Dru arrest you two and then save me.”

“Dare to dream, Ms. Morgan,” Patrick hissed.

“I will!” I looked over my shoulder at Patrick. He stood there, his eyes glowing demonically. I sucked in a shaky breath and I could hear my heartbeat in my ears. I was being filled with a sensation of pain and it felt like my stomach was going to explode from all the fear.

Patrick’s evil was so intense. His evil was death gripping and malevolent to such a large point that my sense were attacking me. I could see *it* then. There was a demon on Patrick.

The large demon reeked of decomposing flesh. The demon had gaps of its facial scales missing to expose its oozing rotten interior. Black water dripped off the beast and blood drizzled from its empty eye sockets.

The face of the demon was that of a crocodile. Its fangs were razor blades. The huge monster drug itself around on two stubby front legs, lugging its obese legless stomach around.

“Oh. My. God.” My blood was turning into ice. My heartbeat slowed down. All around me the sounds of the world faded away. Slowly time stopped.

Arched Wing

The world around me was frozen.

Snowflakes halted in midair. Trees leaves sat in a half rustled fashion. Instinctively I stood there, just gapping in wonder. It was almost like divine intervention. I think God himself stopped time just to save me.

“Falcon,” I was praying that Falcon would hear me, even though I knew my calling was in vain.

“Ms. Morgan.”

I turned. The voice was one I knew and I was hoping beyond hope it was Falcon and not Dru.

“Ms. Morgan.” The voice was Dru’s.

“You are not Falcon!”

“Obviously,”

“Die!” Zanders shouted.

The snowflakes began to hit my face again. The frosty wind nipped at my nose once more. The world was back to normal.

“You go die instead!” I yelled. “I am not the D.I.D. anymore. I am not going to break for you! I do not need to be saved!” Anger was boiling inside of me. I could have easily just let Dru save me but I was pissed off. I was going to act instead of react, which I rarely do.

How dare they? I yelled internally.

I doubled my fists and held them against my chest. I wanted them to stop considering me weak! I am not an innocent girl that needs saving! I will never be a victim again! I will never be that little girl whose dad beat her. I don’t want to hide in the closet with the monsters!

“I am going to save myself.” I tossed my head back as I yelled.

I doubled my fists at my side trying to fight back the tears. My heart felt like it was going to burst through my chest. I was shaking my head harshly. I was wrinkling my nose and closing my eyes as tight as I could. I was not going to cry! Damn it, I was not going to cry!

Rage was coursing through my veins like a rushing river carves the side of a mountain. I was a fire. I was a pot of boiling water. I was a firework lit and ready to explode. I curled my left hand into a fist. I looked up and glared at Patrick and Zanders. I was going to use an energy ball against them.

“Stop, don’t do it!” Dru’s voice was harsh, yet, filled with worry. Still, his words were like whispers to me. No matter what he said I refused to hear him. I didn’t want to be told what to do. I wanted to make this choice on my own.

No longer would I be a damsel in need of saving. I would from that moment on simply be a girl who was torn by the gifts bestowed upon her. Powers were to be a beacon of light. I didn’t have strength for the sole purpose of saving the world, I realized, I have these powers to also save me.

I placed a hand to my heart. It was hurting because I was scared. These powers were meant to give me the strength to stand up for others, as well as, myself. I know that I seem strong but the truth is I am weak. On the inside my heart is like a porcelain doll. I will never let someone into my heart. I will never let someone shatter the

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fragmented remains that are left of my battered soul.

“Get the hell away from me!” I shouted.

That was when it happened. I was now lying on the ground at least three feet away from my original location. Dru was sprawled on top of me. He was cutting off my air flow with the weight of his body. *What is this guy like two hundred plus pounds of muscle or something?*

I looked up to see that Dru’s shoulder was oozing blood down onto my body. *Great! Just great! I sliced up my new Y.M.I jeans. Slashed open my cashmere gloves. I ripped my U.G.G Australia boots. Now, to top it all off, Dru is bleeding onto my white Betsy Johnson blouse. Damn!*

“What happened?” I pushed at Dru, I needed to breathe.

It had just been another one of those soul-shaking feeling. I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that I was about to be entangled in another fight sequence. It seemed like my life was being turned into a *Bruce Willis* movie. I even had the guns, gore, and life stakes. Just call me *Die Hard*.

Patrick’s face was now looming over me. Patrick’s large hands were grasping Dru’s arms. With lightning fast speed Patrick ripped Dru from atop me. He sent Dru sprawling cross the ground.

“Dru!” I sat up. Patrick was storming toward Dru. Dru was still lying on the ground struggling to stand. I watched in horror as fate unraveled before my eyes.

“Ms. Morgan!” Dru called out as he tried to block Patrick’s assault. “Take this!” Dru

slid a small vile like bottle from his pocket. Then Dru rolled the vile toward me.

I couldn't even think about the vile as I watched Dru try to duck another one of Patrick's punches.

"Take it now!" Dru shouted.

I stepped forward and picked up the vile from the ground. "It's full of water?" I asked aloud. "What good is water going to do me against an evil changeling and his psycho serial killer friend?"

I turned when I suddenly felt a warm hand on my shoulder. I look up, my face turned shock white, as I laid eyes on Zanders. He held in his hand a fully loaded syringe.

You know my flight or fight instinct is strong. Well, it happened to kick in again, at full force. Before I had a chance to think my fist was doubled. I began to embed my fist into Zanders' cheek. I drew my arm back to punch him once more when he caught my fist.

Zanders forced my arm to twist against my will as he slammed my wrist against my back. My heart was thumping wildly in my chest. My eyes were burning from the tears of pain. Zanders pressed his body weight against me. I began to collapse to the snow covered ground.

I could hear glass shattering. I felt shards of broken glass jabbing into my palm. The sudden impact had caused the bottle to shatter. Agony was now shooting through my left palm. I sat up. Slowly I uncurled my fingers. I pulled out the pieces of glass. I was shivering in pain.

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“It is time,” Zanders stated. I could see him from the corner of my eye. “This may sting a little.” He warned, the needle was nearing my flesh.

I began to frantically kick and scream. I was squirming in every way possible trying to escape the needle. At least that was until my foot met his groin with one hard thrust.

“Damn you bitch!” Zanders released me and fell backwards onto the snow covered ground.

I stood up quickly and took off running. It was clear to me that I had to get to Dru. I needed to save him from Patrick so he could save me.

I was face first on the ground. I rolled over and saw Zanders kneeling over me.

Suddenly Zanders laid down over me. Zanders’ full body was now atop my chest. I could hardly breathe because the pressure of his weight was crushing me.

“Falcon!” I screamed out, even though I knew that Falcon was not here and could not save me. I still wanted my Falcon. I still depended upon Falcon, because within the last two weeks I had become bound to him. Falcon was my savior, my hero, and my beacon of light. Falcon was the answer to my love’s salvation.

As I looked over my shoulder Zanders was lifting the syringe. He was taunting me by having it within my eyesight. My heart missed a beat and not in a romantic way.

“Stop it!” I yelled as I began to buck wildly beneath of him. “I am not weak. I am not a D.I.D. I am not some redheaded weakling!”

“Bravo Ms. Morgan, Bravo,” Zanders laughed evilly. “You should win an Oscar for that performance.”

“Go to hell!” I clenched my doubled fists as tight as I could manage.

“Your voice radiates a sense of confidence. However, your body is filled with fear. I can smell the terror on your skin...what a luscious and inviting scent it is indeed.”

“No.” I thrust my hands against Zanders’ bare chest where his shirt was torn up. I tried with all my might to force the creep off of me. I had no intentions of letting him sedate and kill me!

His eyes lit up like a deer in the headlights. I could feel his body convulsed atop me. That was until Zanders collapsed beside me. I watched in amazement as his body continued to shake uncontrollably.

“WTF?!” I shrieked. “How is this possible?” I watched as Zanders dropped the syringe. It rolled away from his hand. I looked closer at Zanders’ chest. I saw that my left palm print was seared into his skin.

“H...Holy Wah...Water,” Zanders sputtered, falling into unconsciousness. I left him lying there in the snow.

“Holy Water?” I thought aloud. “Wait...that was what was in the bottle? Oh my God, that means that it is on my hand!”

Quickly I walked over to the syringe. With one harsh stomp of my foot I smashed the syringe into small pieces. I wasn’t going to give him another chance to attack me with it.

Arched Wing

At that moment, it occurred to me that if I was able to take out Zanders with holy water then I could do the same thing to Patrick. Evil is always the same.

“Dru...” I ran toward Patrick and Dru.

As I neared them, Patrick leapt into the air. Patrick’s long coat clad arms melted away into the onyx wings of a raven. Swiftly his sharp features morphed into the long beak. He spread his wings and flew off.

“Dru!” I screamed. “Dru get up!” I reached down and tried to help him up off the ground. Quickly he batted my arm away.

“Do I look like I need to be saved?” Dru slowly struggled to his feet. Then he turned away from me as he spoke. “Follow me, we do not have much time, Ms. Morgan.”

“What? Wait!” I shouted as Dru began to walk off at a fast pace.

“If we wait Patrick will have a chance to follow us. My holy water will only last for a short time.” Dru didn’t look at me as he spoke.

I felt my eyes widened. Quickly I raced off after Dru. “Wait! Wait for me!”

“Of course...” Dru stopped briefly, allowing me time to reach his side. Swiftly he grasped my hand and began to drag me along behind him.

“It is my job to protect you, Ms Morgan, as well as, to train you to save our world,” Dru stated.

“So, then why are you being such a jerk?!” I almost tripped as I spoke, but luckily Dru braced me with his other hand.

“Be careful,” Dru instructed dryly.
“Remember the snow is slick.”

“You didn’t answer my question, Dru.”

“I’m just doing my job. I am not my brother,” Dru stated.

“So, you’re being cold to me because I am your job? Wait, do you even see me as a human being?” I wrinkled my nose. His foul attitude was shortening my love of the snow from forty-eight hours to less than ten seconds.

I knew that when Patrick and Zanders attacked my anger was like a pot of shimmering water but now my fury was boiling over. Dru and I spent several minutes, probably fifteen or twenty, walking through the snow. My toes were beginning to get frost bite. I really should have worn snow boots.

“We are here.” Dru abruptly came to a halt. He halted so abruptly, in fact, that I smacked right into his firm back.

“What...where are-” I looked up and saw where we were.

“Why did you choose a school bus?” I questioned. What the heck was this *Templar* up to now?

Dru slowly released my hand. Then he turned to face me. “Oh course...” Dru said as if I was too undereducated to understand simple logic. And *of course* his tone of voice pissed me off.

“Of course what?” I really didn’t understand what he was talking about. I also knew that if I acted as if I knew then I would seem stupid later on.

Arched Wing

“High school will let out in a matter of minutes. We can just drive out with all the other buses.” Dru pointed at the other buses that were parked a short distance away, aligned and ready to leave.

“Correct me if I am wrong, wait on second thought... don’t correct me.” Dru would have corrected me just to show off. “Just explain it to me. If we steal a bus won’t there be a missing one? If there is a missing one won’t we get caught?”

“No, Ms. Morgan, this bus is an old spare. The schools only use this bus in case of a main bus breaking down.”

“So, no one is going to miss it?” I was trying to make sure that Dru had thought this dumb plan of his all the way through. I mean I didn’t want to go to jail.

“Most likely not, I do not get caught for anything Ms. Morgan. I do know that there is a slight probability that someone’s bus could break down. Although, there are at least two other spares. So, we should be fine.” Dru smiled showing his pearly white teeth as well as his dimples. He was just as breathtakingly beautiful as Falcon which made sense seeing as they were identical twins.

I almost smiled back. However, I rethought my actions. If Dru wasn’t going to show me any emotion because I was his *assignment* then I would have to extend him the same *courtesy*.

I watched in amazement as Dru rose his hands, swept them across the space between him and the bus doors and the

doors opened. I was taken aback by how quickly he'd been able to access his magic.

"Epic, can I do that too?" I couldn't help the reaction of jumping up and down and pointing at the doors like a giddy little girl.

Dru smiled. "Adorable," He muttered. "You can do anything you can imagine."

Dru stepped onto the bus. Then he reached out to take my hand. Honestly I only allowed him to help me up onto the bus because it made him feel better. Well, maybe it was truthfully because he was as cute as Falcon. Still, there was no way I would have admitted to that being the reason.

"So, a demon called me a *conductor*. What did she mean by that?" I asked, mumbling internally about the fact that everyone knew so much more about my own life than I did! That was just stalker creepy.

"As a Dana De Dan you have the gift to pull Magick from anything and everything. De Dans can do any Magick imaginable because they can conduct power to enhance their gifts," Dru tutored. "Although, I must admit there are only three true all powerful beings, besides God that is. However, he is a God so that doesn't really count."

"God is real? Have you met him?"

"I've never met him. I've met some of his Angels. I've also met demons and the devil."

"Oh, why not God?"

"You cannot meet God until you reach your final judgment. I'm still in the reincarnation loop." Dru averted his gaze from me.

Arched Wing

“Well then, just die and you’ll get to meet him.” I growled. I tripped as I stepped forward, my shoes were slick with snow. I went sprawling awkwardly into Dru’s arms.

“Hah, Hah,” Dru laughed pushing me off of him. I stepped back with a grim look on my face. “Very funny, Ms. Morgan.”

“Anyway,” Dru continued pushing a lock of his hair behind his ear. “So, those three beings are the Dana De Dan and the two twin brothers that form the soul of the Tana De Dan.”

“De Dan’s are conductors right, well Zanders borrowed my powers is that the same?” I pulled the handle and the bus doors shut.

“No, borrowing is different. He cannot make a power stronger he can only shortly borrow a power. The power will be the same strength and type for the whole duration of him borrowing it and will dissipate after a short while.” Dru snapped his fingers. A small GPS like machine appeared within his hand.

“How did you do that?” I asked, my eyes going wide with wonder. I was amazed by magic and I knew now that it was real. So, if it is real can I stop looking over my shoulder for people dressed in white carrying straightjackets?

I grabbed Dru’s arm and started jumping up and down like an excited child. “Tell me! Tell me! Tell me!”

“*Calling*: the ability to call out mentally or verbally for something and have it come to you.” Dru stepped closer and took my hand. Gently he slid the ripped glove off of

me. "It will work better your first time if there is nothing blocking the Magickal flow."

The second that Dru's flesh touched mine I felt my heart skip a beat. He was warm. I looked up into his eyes. I couldn't resist touching his skin once more. I ran my fingers across his palm. Dru's eyes lit up and he smiled. It wasn't a lustful grin or a corky sarcastic smile. His face was soft, his dimples showed, and there wasn't a look of pride to him. I wasn't sure what emotion was mixed in with his grin.

"Here, hold your hand like this." Dru ran his fingers across my hand to flatten out my palm. As he moved his hand I curved up my fingers so they brushed against his wrist. When I touched him, he pulled his hand away.

"I'm sorry." I blushed.

"Ms. Morgan, why are you blushing?" Dru asked with a sinful grin on his face.

"I'm not, it's just really chilly. Let's get on with this Calling thing," I stammered.

"Keep your hand held out then call out for this." He held up the GPS thing. "Think it to you and call it to you."

"I don't know what it is called." I retorted flatly.

"Give it any name you want, the name is not the part that matters."

"Okay," I straightened my back, lifted my head up, and closed my eyes. "GPS thingy."

I opened my eyes. The GPS thing flew out of Dru's hand and across the bus toward me. In my momentary shock I ducked instead of trying to catch it.

Arched Wing

“Yours just appeared!” I whined. “Why didn’t mine?”

“Stop,” Dru commanded, holding up his hand. The GPS thingy held still in midair.

“Wow!”

“Not all powers are created equally, Ms. Morgan.” Dru snapped his fingers. Once again the GPS thingy appeared within his hand, luckily before it could crash into the bus wall.

“Not bad for a first try.” Dru smiled at me. “I couldn’t move my first object so far so quickly.”

“Really?” I asked.

“Yes,” Dru said in a soft voice. His voice being gentle was really a change. “Now, let’s get this bus started. I can see the other buses are starting leave now.”

As much as I enjoyed learning more about my powers I could not stand Dru. I had just met him and I already wanted to pop his head off. My emotions toward him being so strong really gave me a bad feeling.

Katherine Petersdorf

12

ONCE UPON A TIME



ou really should lie down,” I muttered sarcastically under my breath, repeating Dru’s words from just moment’s ago. “Who does he think he is, and how dare he tell me what to do?”

I rolled over and looked out the window. Dru was crazy to think I would lay down anywhere near him. That was why I chose the back of the bus.

It is almost impossible for me to believe that Dru and Falcon are related, in a non-looks way! I mean Falcon is way better than Dru. Falcon holds me. Falcon treats me

better...okay not really, but that's not the point.

I miss Falcon. It's strange to me that I barely know Falcon and yet, I am so gone and away in love with him. When I close my eyes I can see his smiling face. I can still feel his icy touch. I can still smell his testosterone laced sent. I can still hear his beautiful voice.

"Ms. Morgan?"

"Falcon," I was overflowing with joy until I turned and saw who said my name. "What do you want Dru? Wait! Oh my God! Who's driving this bus?"

"Calm Down." Dru placed his hand on my shoulder. "The *GPS Thingy*, as you called it, is a computer system that can override and control any automobile. It's kind of like having an auto-plight. It is magically enchanted."

"Don't scare me like that!" I yelled, standing up. Dru's hand slid off my shoulder. "I thought we were going to crash!" Slowly I sat back down. "What do you want Dru?"

"To talk." Dru slid into the seat across from me.

"Talk about what?" As much as I secretly loved his touch I just as strongly disliked Dru altogether. Everything he did and said made me a raging fire ball. At least Falcon doesn't tick me off...all the time.

"We need to talk about the truth. There isn't much time because at sun down it will be too late." Dru sounded so cryptic I wanted to knock some happy go lucky phrases into his head. Quick, someone get

me a sledge hammer because I have some merry thoughts to implant!

“What? What do you mean it will be too late?” I asked.

“Are you going to listen or just question me the whole time?”

“I’m listening.” I rolled my eyes.

“Once, long ago, in the thirteen hundreds there was a beautiful woman named Katherine McHarrison.” Dru said like a narrator. “She was trapped in an arranged marriage. However, she didn’t love the man. So thus she fled the chapel while no one was watching over her.”

“Dru, is this like some kind of fairytale?” I crossed my arms.

“Just listen, alright? It would do you some good if you would stop acting like a spoiled brat all the time! Why don’t you act instead of react for once?”

I am so totally going to kill this guy! I thought to myself.

“I heard that.” Dru smiled while he spoke, and then flicked me in the nose like I was being a bad puppy. *Was he flirting with me? He couldn’t possibly be!*

“On with my story,” Dru stated “Katherine was lost and alone when an evil half demon named Belthazar found her. He realized at once her powers and that she was a virgin soul. He planned to sacrifice her to become a full fledge demon.”

“He was a half demon, but he looked like a pretty whole one to me?”

“He is a full demon now.” Dru retorted.

“So did he kill Katherine to become one?” I asked.

“Just listen to the story will you!”

Dru glared at me intently. I smiled an awkward grin and used a wave of my hand to usher him to finish the story.

“Thank you.” Dru rolled his eyes at me. “Belthazar took Katherine to his lair that held his treasured book of shadows. A book that Mephistopheles would kill to have since it contains the secrets of all evil.”

“Could you please hurry this story along?” I leaned back, stretched, and yawned. “I hate exposition.”

“Try and stay awake, alright?” Dru smiled playfully. I guess he wasn’t such a bad guy after all.

“Anyway...” Dru continued “Belthazar discovered Katherine was the Dana De Dan, the chosen one who would reset the balance of power between good and evil on earth as well as in hell. Once the Dana De Dan was found a demoness named T’ntch attacked to steal the Grimoire and kill the Dana De Dan to secure a chance at the throne of hell.”

“What a bitch.”

“I agree...I mean, hush, and listen.” Dru corrected himself. I giggled.

“Go on.”

“Katherine was pregnant. To become the ruler of hell T’ntch had to kill all blood relatives of Mephistopheles, the current king. They must be direct, the children or grandchildren of the current devil, anything further in the bloodline is not a problem. Katherine gave birth to her child and hushed her away to a nomadic Scottish family. That child is your ancestor.”

“I’m related to the devil?”

“Yes, sort of, if you go back far enough technically you, Falcon and I are all related.”

“Uh, yuck!”

“No, it’s been long enough that you don’t really share blood with us!”

“How are we related?”

“Listen to the story and you’ll find out.”

Dru shook his finger at me. “The demoness T’ntch told Mephistopheles of his son’s lover. Being the devil, Mephistopheles used a type of mind control, called compulsion, to trick outer humans into pinning the lovers against one another. Katherine realized T’ntch’s evils and sealed away the Grimoire, however, T’ntch had no idea of Katherine’s actions until it was too late to reverse them. T’ntch had Katherine captured by the British, who questioned Katherine about witches in a local village. When Katherine refused to accuse innocent women and have them put to death she in turn was burned at the stake.”

“What about you and Falcon?” I crossed my arms in a protective way and averted my eyes from Dru’s face.

“She knew that only her soul could unseal the Grimoire,” Dru explained. “She used the last of her powers to force a piece of her soul into the mirror of destiny. Then she was reincarnated as you, only Katherine’s persona didn’t meld with your own. Belthazar couldn’t deal with the pain of her loss. He went on a killing spree of murdering and torturing all those who crossed his path, no matter their age or gender.”

“That’s not an answer to my question.”

“He ripped out his own soul, but to reincarnate his soul he needed a body that shared blood with his own. He found a woman and tricked her into his bed chambers and once she conceived he forced his soul into her womb.”

“So, Falcon is Belthazar, soul and all?” I asked.

“We both are.” Dru turned his head partially away from me. Yet, I could still see the shame on his face. “Belthazar’s soul longed for completion. It was once part of a being with two sides. So, to be a soul of two personas it was reborn as a set of identical twin boys.”

“But you and Falcon have different hair colors.” I reminded. “Identical twins are just that, *Identical!*”

“I wasn’t finished.” Dru shook his head. “You really need to learn not to interrupt you little brat.”

“Brat, couldn’t you come up with a better insult?”

“You’re doing it again.” Dru smiled and shook his finger at me. He was acting like a parent disciplining a two year old. “Since identical twins share a soul they are within two bodies. That was what completed Belthazar’s soul’s need for dual personas. Yet, still, Belthazar needed his demonic power to get the book back. So, upon the twins he placed his mark, the mark of Belthazar.”

“Mark?”

“This mark is a sign, that at the age of seven, one of the twins would become

Arched Wing

Belthazar. The mark would rest on the brother who was most open to evil. When we turned seven I yearned to save my brother so I asked to be Belthazar. I knew the suffering Falcon would endure.” Dru winced. Torment was evident on his face and regret danced in his eyes.

“Why is Falcon a demon then?” I rebuffed.

“Evil cannot live within unconditional love.” Dru grimaced. “I was willing to give my life and soul for Falcon. And greater love has no man than he who would give up his life for another.”

“So, the love you held cursed Falcon?” I blubbered, wiping the tears with the back of my hand. I sniffled and looked up at Dru. “Is that what Gramhach meant?”

“Love is the strongest power in the world and the harshest curse. Love hurts to endure. I signed my will and heart away to protect Falcon. I vowed to stay by his side forever as his whipping boy. I swore I would find a way to remove the mark and allow us to shed our immortality, because Falcon is my kin. He is the only person I’ve had since we were orphaned as toddlers.”

“Immortality, what are you...both of you?” I fell backwards into my seat. I attempted to crawl away from Dru. I was flabbergasted by his words. I shook my head and let go of the frenzy building inside of me. I wouldn’t fear them...I needed them.

“We are both Belthazar...in a way. Belthazar was a half demon who forced his soul into reincarnation. Being a half demon

soul, the soul was reincarnated as an immortal, since Belthazar was immortal.”

“Why aren’t you forever a baby then?”

“Immortality isn’t what humans think of it as. We were like any other mortal witches until our twenty first birthdays, the day we felt like adults for the first time.”

“That explains so much!” I leapt forward again. Stoically I straightened my spine. “Falcon was stabbed but lived through it.”

“Yes.” Dru must have found my ability to state the obvious annoying. I could see the annoyance in his eyes.

“When were you born?” I knew I liked older men but I wanted to know how much older. Seriously, Falcon could be old enough to be my grandfather!

“Thirteen twenty-six A.D.,” Dru retorted.

“Thirteen twenty-six?” I stammered. *Falcon isn’t just old enough to be my grandfather he’s older than America itself!*

“There is one more thing,” Dru cryptically added.

“What are you going to spring on me now?” I shook my head. “Will I faint?”

“Maybe,” He laughed. Dru tossed his head back and the charismatic sound rolled through the bus.

“Then just be blunt and spit it out. I want to get this passing out thing over with.”

“Every half demon has three days, in a row, each season, or one night each month, depending on their power level, in which they lose all demonic power, in other words, they become full humans. It is their time of vulnerability. Falcon is power, his comes once every season.”

Arched Wing

“When?” I shook my head once more. “When?”

“Tonight, sundown,” Dru replied. “First he will be a witch and not a demon and then on the last day a full powerless mortal. Don’t worry though, I don’t bear the demonic mark, I’m not a half demon so it won’t happen to me. I’ll protect him.”

13
A HUMAN HEART

“**A** cave?” I questioned between heavy breaths. *I could not believe that I was already hyperventilating. I mean give me a break. Dru and I have only hiked two miles and I am already losing my breath? What happened to the thirteen year old hyperactive Sam?*

“Yes,” Dru said “And assuming that you are going to want an explanation, just like you wanted one for *Why the Bus*, *Why the Hike*, *Why the Woods* and all those other six million questions you asked...”

“You bet!” I gasped for more air.

“It is an easy place to Skry for since caves are located on maps. I want Falcon to be

Arched Wing

able to find us.” Dru shook his head as he spoke. I wanted to pop his ego centric head off! He was acting like I was a kid!

“Skry?” I asked.

“Yes. Skrying is a way of locating or seeing something or someone. There are many different ways to Skry. If you name it there is a way to Skry with it.” Dru stated pride fully.

“Chicken Liver,”

“Excuse me?” Dru turned around to face me.

“Chicken Liver...how does one Skry with that?” I asked, overjoyed in the fact that I stumped the *Almighty Dru McKain*.

“If it is fresh you can cut it open and use the interior liquids and blood like water in a Skrying bowl, or in this case, a Skrying *bowel*.”

I almost choked. *Is he trying to be funny, because he is failing miserably!*

As we entered the cave I could feel my patience wearing thin, not that it wasn't already. “Dru?”

“Yes,” He sighed. He seemed just as annoyed with me as I was with him.

“How did you know all that about McHarrison and Belthazar?”

“Belthazar placed me within his memories and allowed me to live it.”

“You can relive someone's memories?” I questioned, stepping closer. “Hey, Dru, I am talking to you!” I growled when he didn't answer me. Quickly I grabbed Dru's shoulder and yanked him around to face me.

Dru smiled down at me. I felt a shiver run down my spine and not a cold one either. I placed a hand to my stomach to try and stop the butterflies.

“You are a stubborn one, aren’t you Sam?” Dru chuckled softly.

“Did you just call me Sam?” I was in pure shock.

“Of course not, I called you Ms. Morgan, as I always do.”

I averted my gaze and wrinkled my nose. He was lying!

“Ms. Morgan,” Dru was almost laughing as he spoke. “Why are you blushing?”

“Huh? What?” I looked up at Dru.

Sometimes reality is infuriating. I cannot believe I blushed! My cheeks turned red in a wordless betrayal of how I really felt.

Wait? How do I feel for him? I thought to myself. I mean I can’t stand Dru...does that mean I really like him? Not a chance! There is no way I feel anything like that for this little weasel!

“Would you like to learn how to Skry...with fire that is?” Dru extended his hand toward me.

“Sure, but why are you holding out your hand?” I asked sarcastically. I could not believe that Dru wanted to guide me around like I was two years old and not nineteen.

“It’s getting dark. I am pretty sure that twilight is going to make it hard for you to see clearly. I thought I would help you walk. I mean since you’ve tripped at least fifteen times so far walking on perfectly flat ground in full sunlight.” Dru explained. His voice said, *‘I am more holy than thou.’*

Arched Wing

“Not a chance!” I pushed his hand away. I couldn’t believe he was calling me a klutz. I am so not one, I am totally graceful.

“See I can walk on my own,” I scoffed. I squared my shoulders and walked pride fully through the darkness. That was until my foot caught on something and I landed face first in the dirt.

“Again with my nose!” If I kept knocking my nose into everything, pretty soon, I was going to need a plastic surgeon to reshape it!

“Are you alright Klutz Brain?” Dru helped me to my feet. “Sure you don’t want to walk with me? It is fine if you don’t want to. Besides you would probably just knock us both down.”

“Oh! You little prick!” I screamed. “Just lead me to the place where we will start the fire and show me how to Skry! I want Falcon and get a chance to leave you as soon as I possibly can!”

“Alright Klutz Brain, don’t get testy.”

“Stop calling me that!”

“Klutz Brain,” Dru snorted as he tried not to laugh. He was acting like a little kid. I guess it’s true what they say, men never grow up.

“This way,” Dru took my hand and lifted me up into his arms.

I held on to him for a couple of minutes. I was counting under my breath and hoping beyond all hope that we would get wherever we were going faster. I wanted Dru to put me down! I really didn’t want him to be touching me.

“Here we are.” Dru sat me down. Automatically I moved as far away from him as I could without getting lost in the darkness.

With the wave of his hand, Dru made the cave lit up. Every cave wall was lined with torches and before me appeared a fire pit filled with blazing flames.

“What happened?” I asked in awe.

“Magick,” Dru said, grinning. “One day, with of course the proper training, you will be able to do many more amazing things. You have more powers than you can imagine.”

“I don’t want them.”

“What do you mean, Ms. Morgan?”

Tears began to roll down my cheeks. I closed my eyes tight and doubled my fists to fight back the sorrow.

“Ms. Morgan?” Dru sounded gentle and, just like his brother, gentle seemed to mean dangerous. “Once the Grimoire is re-sealed away you can return to having a normal life.”

“No! I can never go back!” I whined. “Falcon is a half demon and no matter what happens to Mephistopheles and hell there will always be demons after Falcon and I...I can never be normal again.”

“Ms...” Dru started but I interrupted him.

“Every time I try to enjoy a simple moment I will have to save someone! I don’t want to put innocent lives before my own needs anymore! Not if it means I will lose Falcon!” I had my fists doubled at my sides.

Arched Wing

“But you will Ms. Morgan.”

“I will what?”

“When push comes to shove...you will choose the world. You have a pure heart of unconditional love. That love is why you are the chosen one.” Dru stated softly. “Besides we all want to be normal.”

“Do you...do you want to be normal?” I asked.

“Yes. I want a life, kids, marriage and normality. I am just completely incapable of having it.” Dru replied.

“Why?”

“I am immortal, remember? My soul mate is not. I decided a long time ago that I would push her away because I will outlive her. Everyone except for Falcon that enters my life I must watch die.” Dru said in sorrow.

“Did it work? Did you push her away?”

“It worked. She hates me.” Dru turned away from me to look into the fire. “Shall we Skry now?” He asked trying to change the subject.

“How do you know she hates you?”

“Actions speak louder than words.”

Dru seemed so hurt. He was acting tough like a typical male but I could tell deep down he was lost in sorrow. I could feel his emotional pain with my empathic powers.

I just wanted to hold Dru tight. I just yearned to make Dru's world better. I longed to make his soul mate love him back. I couldn't imagine what it was like to be so alone. I couldn't even fathom what it would be like if Falcon didn't love me...even if he only can with half of his heart.

Before I could stop myself I leaned down and wrapped my arms around him. I laid my head upon Dru's shoulder. Dru reached up and grabbed my hand and held it tight. He wasn't going to admit he was sad but like he said *actions speak louder than words*.

"She loves you." I whispered. "If she is your soul mate she loves you. She just doesn't know it yet." I said closing my eyes trying not to cry but tears still escaped.

"Now why are you crying?" Dru asked.

"I am crying for you," I whimpered. "I understand."

I released Dru and crawled in front of him. I looked deep into the fire. I hoped that if I sat directly in front of Dru he'd be able to help me channel my magic.

"I want to see Falcon," I stated to the flames.

Suddenly the flames flickered wildly. I fell backward covering my eyes with the back of my hand. Dru moved just enough so that I fell into his chest instead of hitting the ground. I clenched my eyes tight for a moment then slowly opened them.

The golden colors of the flames faded into an image like a projector system. I blinked a couple of times then sat up. I reached out toward the fire. Dru wrapped his arms around my Waist.

"Don't touch."

"Falcon!" I shouted. Dru released me and I leaned toward the flames. "Hey wait, I am seeing his back and I see myself in the background."

"That is because you are seeing me you bloody twit." I heard from behind me.

My heart skipped a beat when I heard his voice. Within seconds I was on my feet running toward Falcon, but to my surprise, he was not headed for me.

“How dare you leave me you wanker?!” Falcon leaped at Dru. I watched as Falcon knocked Dru to the ground and began punching him violently.

“What were you thinking abandoning me all these years?!” Falcon smashed Dru’s face with his fist.

“I never wanted to...I had to. I had no other options! I had to be able to protect Ms. Morgan.” Dru softly the turned his head to dodge a punch.

Falcon raised his gaze to me. “Samantha?” He rose and walked toward me. Swiftly he pulled me into his arms. “Are you alright, my love?”

I brushed my hand against his velvety ivory skin. “Gee, thank you for rushing to *my* side.” Sarcasm was evident in my voice. I snuggled down into Falcon’s embrace. “I missed you Brit Boy.”

“What happened?” Falcon held me back and examined my bandage body.

“These two men...” I began to say, but then I was rudely interrupted by Dru.

“Zanders Smith,” Dru completed my sentence, “and Patrick O’Neal.”

“Right,” I huffed. “They were after me.”

“As well as me,” Falcon sternly said. “We need to divide and conquer,”

“Yes.” Dru pounded his fist into the open palm of his other hand. He was acting like he was some macho wrestler trying to say *Bring it on*.

“Druskin, take Samantha.” Falcon pushed me out of his arms and toward Dru. I fumbled and fell against Dru’s chest.

“What!” I tried to force myself from Dru’s iron grip. “Why do I have to go with Dru instead of you?”

“Because, Apeth, if we don’t separate Zanders and Patrick will not separate either,” Falcon explained.

“Zanders Smith has a personal vendetta against you, Falcon. So, you will probably have to face—”Dru started.

“Patrick,” I said softly. I closed my eyes. I could see the future unfolding as if it were a vivid dream.

“I see the future.” I reached out a single hand trying touch the image I was seeing.

“Tell us,” Falcon said softly.

“It is cold where you are Falcon. You are with a woman. She has spirally black curls and is wearing a cape. As you walk she points out the way.” I flung my arm out pointing in the same way the woman I saw was pointing.

“She tells you future events. Patrick appears. She throws a fire ball at him. Patrick calls her *Mah-Z-nah*,” I said the words slowly, trying to make the syllables sound just as I heard them. “Mazeena turns to you Falcon and says she is the link between you and me. She helps me while you are off searching for something called *The Seven Demon Scrolls*. She vanishes. She was an astral projection.”

I opened my eyes.

“Then we three must go to the seer Mazeena,” Falcon instructed.

Arched Wing

“What happened to divide and conquer?” I inquired.

“No longer needed,” Falcon replied.

I smiled and then turned to look at Falcon. “Oh my god!”

Falcon was lying on the ground shaking back and forth uncontrollably. His body was convulsing like a person being electrocuted.

“What is going on” I panicked pushing past Dru.

“No!” Dru shouted, but it was too late. When I touched Falcon an intense and blinding light surrounded him. I went flying across the cave.

“Samantha.” Dru called, and instantly I was lying within his warm arms. He must have used his power to bring me to him. I guess he isn’t all that bad. *Wait, yes he is! What am I thinking?*

“What happened?” I muttered with my hand to my head.

“I called for you, but then again, you probably already knew that.” Dru answered.

“No, idiot, I mean to FALCON!” I yelled.

“It is nightfall. He is becoming a human.”

Falcon’s toe head blonde hair turned into a midnight shade. His onyx eyes faded to a pure shatter blue. I could see it now more than ever. I could see that Falcon and Dru were identical twins.

“Falcon,” I stuttered. I extended my shaky hand. I reached out toward him. I couldn’t breathe. I felt like I was dying. I place my other hand to my heart. I curled

my fingers trying to pull the pain out of my chest.

I started to run toward Falcon. Dru reached out and grabbed my arm. I looked over my shoulder and started to bawl. I was begging Dru to let me go.

Dru pulled me closed and forced my back to his chest. He wrapped his arms around me and held me back. I was clawing at his arms. I was biting him. I was kicking. I was screaming.

Still he held me tighter. I turned and looked up at him. There were tears on his face. He was silently crying.

“Don’t worry.” Dru said softly. “I will protect him but right now...I have to protect you.”

“Thank you for making this so easy.” Patrick grinned as he appeared from the shadows.

“What the hell!” I screamed.

“I followed you here as a small ant, there was no way you could have known that I was with you...and now I can get what I came for!” Patrick hissed his statement with sheer hatred.

“Don’t touch him!” I screamed as I kicked wildly. Patrick smiled and stepped closer with no fear laced in his eyes.

“You lost your ace in the whole when he lost his powers.” Patrick laughed.

“Take me instead!” I pleaded.

“With Falcon as the sacrifice I do not need you. His death shall open the gateway like T’ntch foretold,” Patrick laughed.

“Zanders.”

Slowly Falcon stood up. “Go to Hell.”

Arched Wing

Zanders appeared.

“How did he do that?” I was getting fed up with magical people butting in. I would like to live my life instead of being a slave to other’s actions!

“A borrowed power most likely.” Dru quickly replied into my ear. I haplessly pushed Dru away from my face.

“Get her out of here,” Falcon stipulated dryly. “I still have powers, I’m sure this Apeth, Zanders, didn’t plan on that.”

“Come on.” Dru ordered.

“Not a chance.” I frantically kicked and screamed. I wasn’t going to allow Dru to confiscate me.

“Calm down.” Dru’s sultry breath brushed against my ear. He swiftly kissed cheek and carried me out the cave.

I had been screaming when Dru took off running but now no sound was leaving my lips. The wind whipped against my face. I was drowning in the overwhelming sensation of his speed.

Dru was running at least as fast as the speed of sound. I had clenched my lips tightly so not to vomit, because that wasn’t allowed on this rollercoaster. Dru wouldn’t take getting doused in bile well.

Dru reached the bus. He set me onto my feet. I fumbled around trying to find my feet and stand straight. I was dizzily tottering back and forth, reaching out for the bus to offer me balance. When Dru suddenly yanked me into his arms and held me tightly.

I blatantly allowed my head to fall against his chest. I was breathing harshly and

standing motionless. After regaining my composure I surged backward and out of Dru's arms. I almost toppled over but he grasped my arm and held me in place.

"Epic!" I interjected, breathlessly. "If you could run that fast I don't understand why you didn't just rush off like that earlier?"

"I wasn't in a hurry," Dru said while panting. Then he tried to laugh through exasperated breaths. "It takes a great deal of energy."

"I can tell," I added, taking in little puffs of air. "Also what's up with that kiss on the cheek?" I queried.

Suddenly Dru placed his hands on either side of my head. He was pinning me to the bus. I looked up at him in fear. My hands stayed clenched in fists at my sides. I was too surprised to even move.

"Look Ms. Morgan. Falcon may have the mark of Belthazar but I have the curse of Belthazar's human heart. I was born knowing, remembering, and yearning for my soul mate."

"You told me your soul mate doesn't love you. Besides that, what does she have to do with me?"

"You...well..." Dru stammered. "You look just like her."

"So this is pity niceness?" I huffed in resentment.

"No. My soul mate, the body of hers I remember is a dead and you are not." Dru brushed his nose against my cheek. I shuttered.

"You said she doesn't...wait...I don't get it anymore." I was trying to express how

Arched Wing

baffled I was. Dru was either not an articulate person or he was a devilish liar.

“One day you’ll understand.” Dru kissed me.

I should have fought him. I should have thrust him away...but I didn’t. I encircled my arms around Dru’s neck. I was holding him tight. I was yearning for his embrace. I was out of my mind! I was falling for him.

I spread my lips, let Dru’s tongue slide into my mouth, and kissed back. My heart was yearning for this. It felt just like kissing Falcon only a tad bit different. Dru was warm, his hair was long enough to brush my face, and he was able to feel emotions back. He could love me and that made me want him all the more.

All the more-wait I don’t want Dru in anyway and never have!

“Wait!” I pushed Dru away from me. “I...what do you think Falcon would say?” I was shaking, but not in fear. I wasn’t sure what emotion was washing over me.

“Speaking of Falcon, get in the bus,” Dru commanded.

“What does the bus have to do with Falcon? Why should I do what you say? Why can’t I just march back up there and kick ass?”

“I am going to go help Falcon. Just stay here because I want to know you are safe.” Dru instructed coldly as he pointed at the bus.

Dru then took off running. Within the blink of an eye Dru was gone. That was a really awesome power, being able to run at the speed of sound.

I pulled the bus doors open and then shut them behind me. I had a sickening feeling in my chest. I placed a hand to my heart trying to get over the ill feeling when I heard footsteps at the back of the bus. Quickly I turned and looked over my shoulder.

“Who is there?”

I heard footsteps at the front of the bus. Quickly I turned and looked straight at the entrance of the bus.

“Falcon...Dru...is that you? Hello.”

I heard the steps at the back of the bus again. Slowly I turned around and looked at the back of the bus. I watched the area at the back of the bus as I walked toward the last seat.

“Hello?” I asked in fear.

When I looked around the corner into the last seat no one was there. I sighed in relief and turned around. Suddenly I was face to face with a woman that I didn't know. Her long curly red hair spiraled around her face and her huge black eyes sparkled.

She had black eyes not red? She was an upper level demon!

“Hello,” She said smiling.

14

LET'S MAKE A DEAL

“Who are you?” I stammered.
“My name is Odette,” She responded. “Take a seat.”
Odette pushed me backwards so that I went sprawling onto the bus seat. I went to scream but she placed her hand over my mouth.

“I wouldn’t if I were you. I don’t want you to alert McKain to my presence.” Slowly she removed her hand from over my mouth and then pushed locks of ruby red hair from her face. “Now little De Dan, we are going to play let’s make a deal.”

“Why would I make a deal with a demon?” I asked as I looked at her raven colored eyes.

“Oh? You can see what I am? How adorable” placed a finger to her lips “Let me see.” She moved her finger and pointed it at me. “You would make a deal with me because I am in charge of Patrick and Zanders. However, I am willing to grant you Falcon’s life if you open the door to the Grimoire for me.”

“Why would you want to return Belthazar’s book to him?”

“I don’t. Inside of the Grimoire is a spell that can make a new demon become the devil. I want the book for myself,” Odette giggled. “Silly Girl, demons are self-serving. I would never do something that helped another demon.”

“Why should I believe that you will spare Falcon?”

“If you open the mirror’s gateway I will not need to kill Falcon...at least for now,” Odette explained.

“So, how would this work? Falcon and Dru will never let me do this.”

“Simple. We will play like it is still going to happen. My men will still capture Falcon and then at the last minute you will enter the chamber room and open the mirror instead of me killing your beloved,” Odette stated. “Falcon will endure more pain than you can imagine.”

“Pain?” I asked.

“Oh, do you hear that?” Odette put a hand to her ear.

“Hear What?”

Arched Wing

“It sounds like Dru and Falcon are running this way. They will be here in a matter of moments.”

“You have a deal,” I spat.

“Goody.” Odette chimed and then vanished.

“Samantha?” Falcon asked as I turned around to look at him. Odette was right...Falcon and Dru were here in a matter of moments. Well, it was more like a matter of seconds.

“I am fine,” I responded. I was a little shaken.

“Who was that woman?” Falcon looked at Dru as though Dru had the answer.

“I am not sure but she did look familiar,” Dru replied.

“Falcon you’re hurt!” I rushed over to Falcon’s side. I pushed past Dru, he was in my way again.

“No I am fine,” Falcon said. I didn’t believe him.

Falcon wasn’t self-healing. I quickly grabbed the first aid kit from the front of the bus. I forced Falcon to sit down while I worked at his wounds. It only took a few seconds for Dru and Falcon to dive right back into their conversation about the seer Mazeena.

“Diamonds?” I opened the bus’ first aid kit.

“Yes. We will need diamonds to call her spirit.” Falcon winced as I rubbed the alcohol swab across his cut arm. Falcon was injured by Zanders and Patrick when they showed up in the cave.

Isabelle and Jennifer were safe in a hotel waiting for the next flight to Washington. While here I toiled searching for a way to escape without Odette's detection.

"We will also need a body for Mazeena to be housed in." Dru crossed his arms over his chest. "Preferably before any more of Patrick's goons locate Ms. Morgan."

"I can't believe you left her alone." Falcon glared at his brother.

"I saved you old chap so why don't you just can it." Dru inclined his head and returned the evil eye look at Falcon.

"Hold still." I yanked Falcon's closer, he was moving as he talked.

"It must be a soulless body or she will burn in out in a day or two." Falcon leaned forward as he spoke and then turned toward me. "Ace, my wounds will heal you know."

"Not quickly. You are moral now. Deal, I do," I hissed.

Dru laughed. "At least you are not totally powerless Fal, not yet anyway. You have seventy-two hours until your twenty-four hours of sheer humanity kicks in. We have to get you to a sanctified area before that time arises."

"I don't need your protection! I am able to fight," Falcon argued.

"Why don't you two just whip them out and measure," I groaned in an annoyed way. "Or just be mean and not whiny little girls."

"Samantha," Falcon hissed. "That hurts."

"I have to pull the ace bandage that tight to stop the blood flow! Or do you want to bleed out?"

Arched Wing

I was feeling deeply worried about Falcon. As a human, not only did his emotions run higher but his body wasn't instantly healing. Sure he wasn't entirely human, however, he wasn't immortal. My Falcon could die. My Falcon was bleeding. I could lose him.

"Samantha?" Falcon asked gently.

"Yes?"

"Why are you crying?"

"She's crying because she is a wimpy scatter brain," Dru laughed.

I hadn't even realized I was tearing up. Now I cannot even tell when I am bawling. I really do need medication!

"So," I whipped my eyes. "How many diamonds do we need?"

"Six hundred and one," Dru answered swiftly.

"That will be expensive," I rebutted.

"We will steal them." Falcon brushed my hair from my face.

"Steal, we're going to rob a jewelry store?" I asked in disbelief. "No way, I am so not doing that at all!"

"Yes." Dru flipped on the auto drive, turned on his heel, and smiled. He crossed the bus and took a seat next to Falcon and I. "With magic of course."

"Magic or no, it's still illegal," I complained. I didn't want to save the world only to end up rotting in jail!

"I know that," Falcon added peevishly. "Samantha, it is our only option. Even with perfect credit and the council's money I am unable to afford them. Don't worry we will

return them after midnight when we raise Mazeena”

“Falcon, why don’t you just spell them or something? Like compel them to just hand them over?” I inquired. He looked like Ian Somerholder, so it would only be fair if he held some of Damon Salvatore’s powers too!

“Sorry, I do not have that power and we need Mazeena, so we have too.” Falcon seemed miserable. He wasn’t enjoying being human I could tell.

“Then we also need a body, any will do for now,” Dru added.

“Mazeena is picky, she will only enter a body with powers or that is beautiful,” Falcon explained. “We’ll also need a place to stash Ms. Morgan...a hotel should do fine. Don’t worry Ms. Morgan we’ll pay for the hotel.”

“A suite...that way Ms. Morgan can have her own room.” Dru grinned at me. He was just trying my patience now!

“I’m fine with you having your own room. I’d rather share a bed with Falcon.”

“Let’s just get going,” Falcon and Dru said in unison.

I rolled my eyes.

∞

“Rain.” I tipped my head back and let the little drops hit my face. I held out my hands to feel the droplets in my open palms.

I loved the rain. I missed the rain like a wife misses a solidier husband. Swiftly I

Arched Wing

dropped my hands and turned to look at Dru.

“You made me look so stuffy and snobby,” I huffed at Dru. “This is Seattle not Pairs.” I tapped my fingers against his nose like I was reprimanding a dog.

“Shut up Ms. Morgan.”

“Aut, Aut Ah,” I corrected. “Mrs. McKain.”

“We are not pretending to be married until we enter the store.”

“Dru?” I asked.

“What?”

“Why are you blushing?” It was nice to finally spring that question on *him* for once.

“Why else?” Dru shrugged. “I am embarrassed that people will think I actually was dumb enough to marry someone like you. You’re flat chested and blonde at heart.”

“Go to hell.” I bared my teeth.

“You first!”

“Whatever!” I crossed my arms over my chest.

“We’re here,” Dru confirmed.

“Where...hell?”

“No, the diamond store idiot,” Dru leaned over me and his hot breath made my skin tingle. He pinned a brooch to my dress, slide his hand slowly over my breasts, and started fidgeting his fingers. I gasped and looked up at him.

“Do you like it?” Dru asked softly into my ear?

“I don’t dislike it,” I muttered. “I would like it more if you would move your fingers

up and down.” I sighed. His touch felt good, even though I wished it didn’t.

Dru moved his hand off my breast and stepped back. “I meant the brooch Ms. Morgan. Do you like the brooch?”

“Oh.” I blushed.

Dru leaned forward and whispered into my ear. “I was securing the camera wire in it not playing with your breast.”

“I...I...” I stammered as Dru pulled away. “I love it. It is beautiful.” I looked down at the brooch. It was a butterfly with brilliant sapphires in it. “But you didn’t need to spend so much money on me.”

“I wanted to. Now...” Dru said looking at me with a lustful grin. “About my fingers?”

“Forget it. You killed the mood,” I growled. “My knockers are not as interesting as a camera to you. I am insulted.”

“Knockers?” Dru laughed. “They aren’t big enough to be *knockers*.”

“How dare you!” I covered my breasts protectively.

Dru stepped forward and wrapped his arms around my waist then grabbed my butt. Swiftly he pressed his body to mine and backed me against the store wall. He was more like Falcon than I thought he was.

“I don’t care about their size.” Dru nudged my neck.

I bit my lip not to make a noise. I was afraid I would moan. Just Dru’s breath was enough to make the flesh on my neck tingle in ecstasy.

“Why?” I whimpered.

Arched Wing

“I am more of a leg and ass man...and yours are perfect,” Dru said with lust in his eyes.

“Which one is perfect, my legs or my ass?”

“Both,” Dru said before he kissed me.

I was letting it happen again. I was letting Dru kiss me. I wasn't fighting back and worse of all I was enjoying it.

He moved his hands from my backside and laced his fingers into mine. Dru then pinned my hands against the wall. I was helpless. I was unable to move. I was unable to fight back...not that I had tried to.

I don't want to fight back. I heard the words inside of my head and heart. McHarrison was talking to me again. *I love my soul mate.*

“Stop!” I shook my head. “Stop talking! I don't want to hear this!”

“What's wrong?” Dru pulled away from me.

“Nothing,” I said putting my hand to my head. “My head...it hurts...that's all.”

“Sam?” Dru brushed my hair away from my face. “I could get you some Aspirin and a drink for you to take it with.”

“No,” I said quietly and looked up at him. “But there is something you can for me.”

“Anything, just name it, Sam.”

“Keep doing that.”

“Doing what?” Dru ran his knuckles tentatively against my cheek.

“Calling me Sam, I don't want to be just your job. I want to be your friend.”

“You were never just my job.”

“But you said...”

Dru placed a finger to my lips. “I know. I say that whenever I first meet a person I have to save. But Sam, *you* are my family.”

“Your family?”

“Yes. You and Falcon are my family...all I have.” Dru placed his hand to the door of the diamond store. “Get into character.”

“Okay then I’ll get into the love vibe mood.” I shook my hands in what I thought was a psychedelic way.

Dru laughed as he opened the door for me.

“Thank you darling,” I said with a purr in my voice like Julie Newmar.

Dru cocked an eyebrow at me. “You pick out anything you want, money is not an object.”

The shop attendant looked up. “Well big is in this year. Let me show you a selection.”

I grinned. My heart was beating so fast it was mind-boggling. Dru was being nice to me!

He was holding my hand and to my astonishment his palm was sweaty. I always thought that men only got sweaty palms when they were nervous because they liked someone. *Does that mean Dru likes me that way?*

“What do you think of this one Cerise?” Dru held up a stunning ring with a nineteen twenty’s pear cut. It was what Femme Fatal would have worn to her wedding-if she was the marrying type of character.

“My heart...is....not sold,” I lied. I wasn’t a person who liked diamonds.

Arched Wing

Nevertheless, my heart was sprung into pure infatuation with the ring. I was in utter love.

“I can see the lie written on your face.” Dru brushed my hair from my shoulder as he spoke into my ear. His sultry breath kissed my skin and sent tiny shivers of delight down my spine.

“That’s because I love it,” I replied in a hushed voice.

I hadn’t meant to but when I turned my nose grazed against his lips. A blush shot across my face. Dru’s finger slid under my chin and he tilted my head up so we were looking eye to eye. He lowered his head slowly and pressed his hot lips against mine. Spasms of pleasure shook in my body.

I knew it was Taboo to want both Falcon and Dru so I fought against my urges. Nonetheless, I yearned to be entangled with both men. Give me a break though, I am American and we are taught to believe in surplus and to avoid all moderation. I guess I just want a surplus of men.

“Keep shopping,” Dru reminded me, his lips still passively against mine. Then he ran his hand down my chest and pressed his palm to the brooch. “Turn when you look around.”

“I will, but I don’t want to. This is wrong, so wrong,” I nodded.

I spent the rest of the afternoon going into all the diamond stores in the mall as well as checking mall entrances.

Afterward I went back to the hotel Dru and Falcon had procured. Dru told me he was going to watch over me until Midnight

or whenever Falcon got back...whichever came first. Then he was going to go off and rob the diamond store.

On the other hand, Dru made two huge mistakes that night. One, He let me go into the other room alone and Two, he told me where Falcon was going.

∞

How dare Falcon leave me behind! I thought to myself as I quietly followed him. Without his demonic hearing Falcon was just as unaware of me as a normal person would be. I had to know what he was up to now.

Falcon rounded the corner and entered the stair way. Slowly I watched from the window then ascended and followed him in. I listened as he walked up the stairway. I bet if anyone going back and forth from the emergency room was watching they would think I was stalking. Luckily none of the specialty rooms were open to visitors and the nurses were short staffed at this hour.

After about four flights of stairs Falcon entered a room in the patient wing. I sat on the floor outside of the room and watched from the corner of my eye. When he was done, doing whatever it was he was going do, I was going to give that man a piece of my mind. He had forsaken me and ditched me with Dru again! What an ass...and I do mean both of them!

Falcon placed his hand onto the chest of a rather large set man. The man was burley, with rounded features and a full mustache. He looked like Super Mario only African

American. The man lay motionless in the bed.

“I am sorry old boy.” Falcon brushed his knuckles against the man’s face. “This is for my Samantha’s sake. I know you don’t know her but that doesn’t matter to me.”

I almost gasped. He was doing something for me without telling me!

“Who are you Sir?” A woman’s voice asked. I turned and looked into the room some more. A middle aged woman from the other patient’s bed sat up. She had pulled back the curtains and was looking at Falcon.

“You’re boots are muddy and you are not in scrubs. You are not a doctor.”

“Go back to sleep. It is fine.”

“No!” She shouted. “I have been here a week. I know he has no family but a little boy. Who are you? How did you get in?” She screamed.

“Go back to sleep.”

“No,” The woman screamed at Falcon. “Get out or I will call in a nurse.”

Falcon was at the woman’s side in the blink of an eye but it was too late. I could see the light above the door flash red. The woman had pushed the *Nurse Call* button.

“Help!” The woman was frantic.

“I am truly sorry.” Falcon’s eyes were laced with tears so much so I could see the glisten of the droplets across the room.

Falcon snapped her neck. The woman fell to the ground motionless. I couldn’t help it, screaming that is. The sound just came out. Falcon had killed someone. He took the life of an innocent human being

right before my eyes. Swiftly Falcon turned around and in the blink of an eye crossed the room and started to choke me.

“I am sorry that I...Samantha?” Falcon thankfully realized who I was before he broke *my* neck too! “I thought I left you with Druskin?”

“You d...d...did.”

“Oh...” Falcon released me so I could breathe. “Hurry we have to get him out of here before the nurse...”

I heard screaming. It was a loud high pitched screaming voice. So high pitched I almost expected to hear the word *witch* out of her mouth. She would have made one hell of a town crier.

“Move,” Falcon said harshly and then pushed me to the floor. I watched as he descended on the woman like a lion on a running zebra. His finger nails grew to long tips which he then used to rip at the woman’s chest. Falcon’s hand dug down so low I could no longer see it through her skin.

I wanted to scream. I wanted to run away. I couldn’t believe that Falcon was such a monster. How could he kill so easily and when he was a human at that?

“Help,” The woman sputtered reaching for me. I felt like my heart was breaking. I couldn’t help her. I couldn’t save her. If I did assist the woman she would tell on Falcon. I had to choose him.

“I am truly sorry.” Falcon ripped the heart from her chest. Quickly he dropped the bloody organ at her feet.

Arched Wing

I was crying. I was evil now, truly evil. I chose the man I loved over an innocent woman. It was just as bad as if I had killed her.

“I am sorry that you had to see that. Now do not move. I do not want you to leave behind evidence. Stay outside of the room,” Falcon dictated.

I nodded. That was all I could do, nod. My heart was beating so fast I could hear it ringing in my ears. My soul felt like it was falling. The image of my perfect man was crashing into a thousand little pieces.

I could kill you without blinking... Falcon had told me once. I knew now that it was true. Yet still in my fear and panic I still could not resist Falcon. I would love him no matter what kind of monster he was. Even if Falcon ruthlessly killed me I could not hate him. I would stand forever at his side.

Falcon ran the water in the skin and washed the blood from his hands. Swiftly he turned and said “Let’s get him and get out of here.”

I shuttered. I was in for it when we met up with Dru again...I should have stayed with Dru.

∞

Falcon and I finally arrived at the ceremony site. Which was really just a big field clearing in the middle of the forest! Come on that is so lame. I almost expected a giant castle. Oh wait, been there done that.

“What the hell were you thinking?!” Dru yelled.

“Druskin,” Falcon hissed “Calm down.”

“Do you have any idea what this little bitch did?” Dru asked in a rather angry and degrading voice. “She told me she was going to take a shower, turned on the water and crawled out the bathroom window!”

“Why didn’t you just shower with her?” Falcon seemed so blasé about me just hopping into a shower with some other guy.

“She didn’t want me to. I am not her boyfriend, like you, so I am not good enough,” Dru growled. For a moment he almost sounded jealous.

“Here,” Dru pulled the hotel sticky pad out of his pocket. He had drug that stupid note all the way down to the field we were going to raise Mazeena at? Boy does he have issues. I wish men would just let it go when you out smart them.

“Gone to stalk Falcon be back later you stupid jerk...love Sammie,” Falcon read. “Actually that is kind of funny.” Falcon looked up at Dru.

“Let’s raise Mazeena already.” I turned around. Dru had really stolen all the diamonds we looked at. The gemstones were lying in the shape of a pentagram in the field. “That is so epic” I added.

“Drag him to the center,” Dru said to Falcon. “Here let me help you.” The two men drug the massive man into the center of the pentagram then placed all the knocked over diamonds back in place.

“What are the diamonds for? Are they a gift?” I stepped between the two brothers.

Arched Wing

“They are to trap her soul,” Dru answered.

“She is an over the top kind of person,” Falcon laughed. “The opposite of Antwacky”

“So is it a spell?” I asked.

“Well...almost.” Falcon kissed my cheek.

“Don’t try and seduce her into doing it!” Dru huffed. “Sam you’re going to be Mazeena’s master because you are human and mortal and we are not.” Dru blurted out. “See was that so hard, Falcon?”

“I was getting to that,” Falcon seethed.

“Not fast enough,” Dru growled. “Zanders and Patrick could show up at any moment and I want to make sure Sam is safe.”

I smiled. Dru was still calling me Sam. He heard my words and that is not something men do often.

“What happened to Ms. Morgan?” Falcon asked.

“She asked me to call her Sam.”

“Alright,” Falcon said in a blasé voice. “Finally.”

Finally! Who did Falcon think he was! “Dru kissed me.” I stated. I was testing a theory. I wondered if Falcon would just ignore his brother touching me. “Twice.”

“So,” Falcon said passively. I was about ready to kill Falcon.

“We share a soul,” Falcon stated. “We are the same person so we share everything, even women.”

At that moment I could have sworn my face fell off! Falcon was going to share me with Dru! What kind of sick twisted world

was this? Just because they are twins does not mean they are the same person in my eyes. I would still feel like I was cheating on Falcon!

“Moving on,” Dru said, averting his gaze to the ground. “Discuss Mazeena. Cut Sam’s hand and let’s get this over with.”

“Cut my hand?” I swallowed a gasp. I didn’t want to cut myself, I’m not emo!

“It will only hurt a little bit,” Falcon promised. “Just a tiny bit of blood then put your hand at the tip of the single pentagram point.” Falcon said trying to hand me the knife.

“No. You cut me. I can’t do it.”

Falcon took my hand into his and uncurled my fingers. Quickly Falcon made a tiny sliced in my palm. I bit my lip not to scream. It did hurt and more than a little bit! Falcon pressed my hand down to the point of the star and jumped backward.

Bright lights danced around me. I could feel a cold wind engulfing me. Inside of the pentagram of diamonds a ball of white light bounced back and forth as if it was trying to escape. Then it fell as a feather would onto the chest of the man and sunk down inside of him.

The man gasped and sat up. He coked his head, scanned the area and then looked at me with a calculating gaze.

“Girlfriend, you must be my new master. I am like so happy to meet you Sugar,” The man said. It seemed so wrong for a man to talk like a southern belle drama queen but look like a buff police man!

Arched Wing

“Maz...Maz...Maz,” I said trying to get the word *Mazeena* to come out of my mouth.

“Maz,” Mazeena stated, smiling. “I like that. Call me Maz, Master Sugar. This body will do. Let’s see.”

He stood up and placed a hand to his head. “This man was a Seattle Cop. His family died in a fire. Sad day,”

I averted my eyes. I knew what the man must be going through.

“Maz, you’re talking like a girl.”

“Oh that’s because I am, or I was. My body, before it was destroyed was female. I’m the personification of a girl. Master Sugar what is your name?”

“Samantha. Sam.”

“Sam? Sammie Sugar? I like that. I’ll keep it,” Mazeena said from inside the man’s body. “Sammie Sugar, tell me what you want me to do. I am yours until the day you die and reach reincarnation.”

“Until I die,” I muttered in confusion.

“Yep, and unlike a Genie you can’t set me free,” Mazeena giggled. Seeing a man’s body giggled was actually kind of funny.

I turned and glared at the two brothers. “Did you forget to mention something?”

Both Falcon and Dru shrugged in unison.

This was just too epic and not in a good way!

Katherine Petersdorf

15
WINGERS

“I will need a new body soon, Sammie Sugar.” Mazeena stepped in front of me, walking backwards to match each of my steps forward.

“Sammie.” Jennifer rounded the corner. Isabelle and Jennifer had taken a late plan from the JFK airport. So they made it to Seattle after we had.

“Jennie.” I rushed over to my sister and pulled her into a huge hug. It had only been a few days but I missed her so much!

“Isabelle,” Dru and Falcon said. I turned to watch them greet their sister.

Falcon noogied Isabelle's hair while she tried to bat him away and Dru wrapped his arms around her shoulder and laughed.

I smiled. I liked seeing them like that. They seemed happy and carefree.

"What?" Dru asked looking at me.

"I just wish you two could be less brooding and more carefree sometimes. You seem happy."

"You make me happy too," The brothers said in unison.

Falcon and Dru both stepped on either side of me with predatory looks on their faces. They exchanged glances with one another and nodded. Then without a warning they both sprang at me and began tickling me.

I was giggling and flinging my arms wildly. I was saying stop in a playful way. My legs were fidgety and I was losing my balance. I almost fell backward laughing so hard.

"See we can be happy with you." Dru stated.

"Happiest we have ever been," Falcon added.

Then Falcon and Dru both leaned closer to me. Falcon kissed my left cheek as Dru kissed my right cheek. A blush shot across my face and I giggled nervously.

Suddenly I heard someone scream out in pain. I turned and looked over my shoulder. My hand instinctively balled into a fist at my side.

"I smell blood," Dru stated.

Arched Wing

“Isabelle. Quickly use your teleporting power and get Jennifer out of here,” Falcon demanded.

I grabbed Falcon’s hand and almost half hid my body behind his. I turned behind me to check on my sister but Isabelle and Jennifer had already vanished.

“Be ready to fight Ace,” Falcon instructed me.

People started rushing toward us in a mob. I wrapped my body around Falcon. He encircled his arms around me and I could feel his body tense. He was getting ready for the impact.

Bodies started slamming into me. I was getting poked and prodded in every way possible. I was just glad I had Falcon because if I didn’t I would have been trampled.

“Up in the rafters...” Falcon whispered. “Dru look up.”

“What are you doing?” I closed my eyes as tight as I could.

“I am talking with Dru. We can always hear one another no matter the distance.”

I was almost jealous. I wished Falcon could always hear my voice no matter what.

Falcon slid his arms under my legs, lifted me up bridal style, pressed my body to his and started running.

“Hold on tight,” He told me, like I wasn’t going to.

I wrapped my arms around his shoulders and looked up. Falcon kicked hard enough to open a closed door and entered the baggage check room. He plopped me down onto a large piece of luggage.

“Falcon...?” I asked. “What are you doing?”

“Stay here, you will be safer away from the crowd.” Falcon replied and then ran out of the room slamming the door shut behind him.

“Little Girl,” A male voice hissed.

“Not even thirty seconds and I’m already in danger again, great!”

“You look yummy. Too bad I have to capture you instead of having you for dinner.”

“Dinner?” I was in terror as I turned to face the man.

“I am a member of Deborah’s cannibal coven, in the service of Patrick.” The man looked like any other man. He was average height, weight, and had brown hair and eyes. He even had a neutral olive skin tone.

“A Cannibal Coven?” I awkwardly climbed off the luggage.

“It doesn’t matter.” The man grabbed my throat. I instantly clench my hands around his wrists. I attempted to pull him off of me.

“Let’s get going shall we?” The man hissed.

I brought my knee up between his legs. The man released me and fell to the ground cupping his groin. The growling sound he made was like a wild beast. I took off running out of the room. I didn’t want to be around when he got back up. He sounded like he was going to rip me apart.

“Falcon! Dru!” I rushed down the hall. That was when something grabbed my ankle. The top half of my body hit the

Arched Wing

ground first. My arms sprawled out awkwardly.

“Not gonna happen pretty little girl,” A different man said. I went to push myself up onto all fours but the man grabbed my arms and forced my body back down to the ground. He held his weight atop of me.

“Patrick wants us to bring you to him so that he can lure that half demon boy of yours,” The man hissed.

I tried to buck my body but the man was too heavy. My back started to sting. A sharp pain shot down my spine. It was the pain I felt as a Sidhe seer! I was sensing a demon? The man was possessed! If he was filled with a demon I could have him off of me in a second by following the rules of demon-kind.

“I resist you!” I shouted.

The man was on the other side of the room. I stood and started running. I grew up in church. Resist the devil and he must flee!

“Bitch!” A third man hissed.

“I resist you.”

The man fell to the ground holding his throat. I jumped over him and kept running.

“Falcon!” I was shouting. That was when I ran into something different, a beautiful woman.

“I resist you!” Nothing happened.

“I resist you!” I repeated.

“Save it,” She chimed. “I am not a demon and I am not possessed.”

The woman placed her palm to my forehead. It felt like my brain was on fire.

Slowly I passed out to the ground. Everything went black.

∞

I wrinkled my nose. Something smelled downright horrible. Slowly I turned my head from the smell and opened my eyes. I could feel cold metal around my wrists. I started to look back and forth taking in my surrounds. I was in a classroom handcuffed to a chair.

“Where am I?” I asked myself aloud.

“Looks like it worked,” A female voice snarled from behind me. I turned and looked over my shoulder toward the voice.

I watched the woman walk around to face me. Her short straight platinum blonde hair was cut frigidly around her face. Her piercing blue eyes were striking and her face was perfectly round. She was breathtakingly beautiful and she looked like Jennifer Sky in *Cleopatra Twenty-five, Twenty-five*.

“Who are you? Where am I?” I asked.

“In a high school here in Seattle,” The woman spat. “My name is Christian MacRaye.” She stood and walked over to the door. She looked down the hallway each way before shutting the door and locking it.

“Is someone after you?” I asked. “You look shifty. Do you work for Zanders and Patrick? Are you supernatural too? Are you planning to kill me? Are you...”

“Shut up,” Christian hissed. “I don’t have time for this.” Christian pulled up a chair. She flipped the chair around backward and

sat. Christian leaned over the back of the chair and looked at me intently.

“Now listen to me Samantha.” Her voice was so quiet. “I cannot repeat myself or talk loudly. Just listen.”

I nodded.

“Good. I am the Templar Knight partner of Druskin McKain.” Christian spread her legs so that a leg fell on each side of the chair. She reached up underneath her skirt. I heard the sound of Velcro unlatching. Christian pulled out her Templar badge that was just like Dru’s.

“You can trust me.” She put the badge back into I supposes a holster on her inner thigh. “As of now Patrick and Zanders are unaware of me. I am here to protect you. There is a group of kidnapped witches from a college conference for The State College. Each of them has magical powers or a magical background. She killed the rest of the people attending. I need you to help those witches rally against the cannibal coven holding them hostage. Their powers will come in handy when we face off with Odette.”

“We will save Falcon.” It was not a question, it was a statement. We would save Falcon and I will spend forever with the man I love!

“No, we will do more than that. I know about your deal and I happen to agree with you. I can’t let Dru’s brother die it would devastate my partner. Once she casts the spell to become the new devil we will have a chance to kill her but we need other witches to help us. There is not enough power

between Falcon, Dru, Isabelle, You and Myself.”

“What about you?”

“I am going to toss you in with the others in the school gym. I will get a hold of Dru and feed the brothers your location. You must help me save these souls. My mission may be you but I can’t let the innocent die.”

“Alright,” I affirmed.

“I am sorry,” Christian said softly. “This is going to hurt.”

“What is?” I asked.

Christian stood and punched me in the face so hard that the chair tipped and hit the ground. I screamed out in pain.

“You worthless witch, how dare you speak back?”

“Valerie?” Zanders asked, stepping into the room. Christian obviously lied about her name to one of us. Still I trusted her. Dru was right about what he said in the bus, I don’t act I react. I had to follow the path I was on and just deal with it. I had to trust Christian, I had no other options.

“Get this bitch out of here.” Christian crossed her arms over her shoulders and tossed her head back. She headed toward the wall and exited the room...only not like a human would.

Christian turned translucent, like a non-corporeal ghost and walked through the wall. What was she Danny Phantom?

“Samantha.” Zanders un-cuffed my hands. “Don’t be stupid and try to fight me. I will hurt you.”

Arched Wing

“Yes,” I stuttered. “You would. You’re that kind of man.”

“No.” Zanders brushed a lock of hair from my face. I shivered and not in delight. “I just want revenge.”

Zanders yanked me up off the ground and started to drag me off by my arm. We exited the room and headed down the hallway.

“You want revenge?” I cocked an eye brow.

“Yes.” He turned his head causing his ponytail of midnight hair and sway across his back. “Falcon killed my brother.”

“Why?”

“Six hundred and twenty years ago my brother became a threat to your life and to Cassiopeia, Falcon’s lover at the time.”

“Six hundred and twenty years?” I stammered. “You are immortal?”

“I will be only until Odette kills all of the blood relatives of Mephistopheles. Then I am free of working for her.”

“You don’t want to be evil, do you?”

Zanders turned on his heel. “Don’t say such things.” He cupped my chin in his hand and tilted my head to look up at him. I was really hating being so short around all these tall men. It made me feel helpless.

“I can never be good again.” Zanders pushed me into the school gym and cornered me against the wall. He placed his right hand on the wall next to my head and put the other on my hip.

“Nothing would give me more pleasure than to take something that belongs to Falcon.” Zanders leaned in a breath from

my lips. "But Falcon would kill me if I touched you."

Zanders yanked me from the wall and sent me skidding across the gym floor. I looked up. A group of people were hiding over by the bleachers.

I pushed myself up off the ground and stood. I turned around and glared at Zanders. "You worthless asshole"

Zanders started talking but I missed what he said because Christian walked through the wall and entered the room. She doubled her fist and moved in back and forth near her face like she was going to punch herself. Then she pointed and her chest and nodded. She wanted me to hit her?

"You are a stupid bitch!" I yelled at Christian, acting like I hated her. I was going to put all my drama class lessons to use and help Christian save these lost souls.

I doubled my fists and punched at Christian. She caught my fist and thrust me backwards onto the floor.

"Tell the men to stand outside and guard the doors instead of staying in here. I don't want her to fight and get hurt-we need her," Christian growled.

"Yes," Zanders murmured. "Yes Commander."

Zanders, Christian and a few brawly men left through the gym doors. Christian was the last out; as she exited she looked over her shoulder and winked at me.

I slowly stood up and crossed my arms over my chest protectively. I wasn't sure what to do next.

Arched Wing

“Miss,” A little girl said walking over to me. “Are you Sammie Morgan?” She asked in a sugary sweet voice.

“Yes.”

“Sammie Sugar!” She wrapped her arms around me.

“Maz?” I was in shock. “What happened to the old man you were in?”

“I had to ditch the body before it burned out. He still had a soul.”

I freaked out. “So some guy in Acoma is lying in a random place now?!”

“No, no darling. I used my powers to cure him. His story was so epic and in a really bad way, if you catch my drift.” Mazeena smiled and nodded enthusiastically.

I nodded to agree and she continued talking. “The cop he caught a bad guy but the judge let him walk. The evil man burnt down the cop’s home. My body was only able to save one of his three children. I thought it wasn’t fair for the kid to lose his dad and his whole family. So I fixed the prob., isn’t that rad? I was totally bugging about how I was going to handle the sitch. Then you showed up Master Sugar! I was crying just to know his sad day story. It was crushing my whole world!”

“I thought demons were self-serving?” I reminded Mazeena.

“I use to be a fully-fledged demon. I was evil and heartless beyond all imagining and then an Angel of Mercy attacked me.” Mazeena bobbed her head as she talked, it was kind of funny to watch.

“Angel of Mercy?”

“Angels of Mercy are the justice keepers of the spirit realm. The Angel of Mercy, she, ripped out my demon mind and trapped it inside of a human soul. As I bounded with more and more humans I gained a conscience.” She said smiling, then turned and pointed at a group of people huddled in the back corner. “These are the *Wingers*, people who possess wings on their souls.”

“I don’t understand.”

“Come.” Maz pulled on my arm. She was still just as much of a childish drama queen as always, only it suited her more in the body of this little girl. The child she was couldn’t be more than eight years old.

I followed Mazeena over to the group of people. I sat down next to them. There weren’t very many people left and they looked really tired but they were awake.

“You missed it. There were many people but the ones that were not magical were killed right here in this school in the performing arts center.” Mazeena said softly. “These people were the only ones with powers. They had to use tranquilizer darts on them since they have powers.”

“Why were you not affected?”

“It is because I am a spirit. Nothing can kill, sedate or harm a body while I am in it. However the *Wingers* are not so lucky.”

“*Wingers*, why do you keep calling the witches *Wingers*?” I asked Maz.

A witch with powers will have wings on their soul. On the other hand the Dana De Dan is the only witch with *Arched Wings*,” Mazeena clarified.

Arched Wing

“Arched Wings?” I placed my hand to the Arched Wing necklace around my neck.

“Yes,” Mazeena affirmed. “All other soul wings extend like bird wings, for the sides. The Dana De Dan has wings like an angel that extend from her back and arch around her like the gates of heaven.

“You are all witches?” I looked at the group of people.

“Witches are strong. We can fight off these people. Trust me. Tell me, who are you? Why are you here? You must be powerful if Zanders sensed something worth keeping.”

“I don’t know about that,” A soft voice said from the back of the group. A girl was sitting in the corner with her knees up so they covered her chest. She seemed guarded and shy natured. She had straight shoulder length chocolate colored hair. Long fringe bangs fell to eyebrow length playing up her lime colored eyes. She had a beautiful oval face with tiny freckles around her nose. She was the most adorable book worm type.

“I am just a Seer,” She stated softly. “I can see demons and the future...what help could I be?”

“Seeing future attacks,” A young man near to the shy girl stated.

“That’s the spirit!” I straightened my back and pounding my first into my open palm. “My name is Samantha Morgan.”

“Samantha Morgan?” The shy girl stated as if mulling over my name. “You must be the *Dana De Dan* that those people are looking for.”

“Yes, I can help you. Let’s make an attack plan so that we can get out of here.

We need to form a group. Destroy this evil. Who are all of you? What are your powers? We don't have much time."

"I am Jane Heart," The shy girl stated. "I am a Seer. I just want to go back to normal. I'll help however I can. I foresaw this day...it will lead to the end of the world." She said cryptically.

"Is there anyone else in for busting out?"

Mazeena smiled and raised her hand jumping up and down. "I am."

"Anyone else?" I asked, in a slightly annoyed way.

"I will," A young woman interjected. The woman was rather tall, probably five foot ten inches. She had super short ruby red hair and gray colored eyes. The woman was dressed in overhauls and looked like the personification of a tomboy mechanic.

"My name is Amy Maxwell and I am a Technopath," The tomboy girl said smiling.

"Count me in," An older man, probably in his late twenties added. "I am Jarred Walters. I can create shields and block all powers." He stated prideful followed by a cocky laugh. His short jet black hair brushed over his jungle green eyes.

"I can take on any asshole," A buff man offered. He looked like a bad boy biker with his long black hair cut like Bret Michaels, of the band Poison, back in the eighties. Well, expect Bret wasn't African American and Frederick was.

"I am Frederick Heinburger. I can talk to and control animals."

Well that power works, he looks like an animal to me.

Arched Wing

“We’ll help too,” Two girls that looked like sisters said in unison. They were like Mary-Kate and Ashley in how they were almost twins.

“I am Melody Kevins.” The first girl pushed her long straight hair from her face. “I have flight *and* super speed.”

“I am Kerri Kevins.” The second girl’s shoulder length curly hair spilled over her shoulders. “I can start fires.”

“It can’t hurt,” A younger girl said. She looked like a little teenager. “I am Molly O’Shannery and I can call things to me.” She said in a cute voice. Her short pin-tight black curls framed her soft face and complimented her ebony skin.

“And I’m James,” The final member of the group added. “James Talbot and I have super strength.” He didn’t look strong. He was more like the son on *Sky High*. He was a tall but thin African American teenager with a soft angelic look.

“Alright, so it is going to be a fight to the...” I started when suddenly the gym doors flung open. Once again fate stepped in leaving me forced into a new situation. Just once I would like to make my own choices instead of others pushing me into doing what they want.

“Ms. Morgan,” An Irish voice hissed, and I recognized the voice. I turned to see Patrick enter the room carrying the body of a sleeping woman. He tossed the body to the ground. “Come see what I have brought for you.”

I stood and rushed over toward the woman. I didn’t know what was going on

but I wasn't going to let another person get hurt. I leaned over the girl and saw her face.

"Mariah!" I shouted. "Mariah!"

"I saw her when I was waiting for you outside your high school. Who would have thought Zanders would find her. She was magical and has the same gift as him. I can really use her but..."

Patrick thrust me backward and knelt over Mariah. He lifted an Athame over her heart. "Too bad I am going to kill her...unless you are willing to call for Falcon and get this over with quickly."

"Never!" I hissed. "I will kill you."

That was when Zanders grabbed me from behind and pinned my arms behind my back. I was still thankfully able to move my hands just enough to using calling.

"You are so quick to save someone who made your life so bad, then?"

"It doesn't matter who she was!"

"She only resented you because she could sense your powers. She didn't know she was a witch and disliked the sensation of magic that you gave her," Patrick stated. "She will not be missed."

"No!" I repeated over and over again at the top of my lungs. I had to do something. I had to stop him. Patrick and Zanders were not going to just kill Mariah they were going to kill everyone! I didn't want any more innocent blood to be shed.

"Knife," I called, then twisted my wrist, and pointed at Patrick. The knife flew out of Patrick's hand and up toward his face.

Patrick fell to the ground holding his hand over his eye. Blood trickled down off

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the knife that was embedded into his right eye. He was screaming out in pain.

“O’Neal!” Zanders called out and released me.

“Wall!” I flung my arm toward the wall. I could use my calling power like Prue Halliwell instead of getting it to appear like Dru had. I guess I’m not Paige Matthews. Oh well, I’ll just be more kick ass.

Zanders went flying backwards into the wall across the room.

“Everyone now!” I shouted. That was when more people came through the doors, a large group of about fifteen cannibal coven members. I should have known!

16

MY OWN TWO FEET

“Bitch!” Zanders pinned me against the wall. He held my wrists so tight I couldn’t move my hands. I wasn’t able to use my powers since I channel them through my hands.

“Get your bloody hands off her!” I heard. My heart missed a beat because that was Falcon’s voice! I watched in horror as Falcon ripped Zanders off of me.

“Sedate her!” Patrick commanded in an angered voice. He sat their coddling his eye. “Sedate Samantha like you did the others!”

“Why does everyone want to sedate me?”

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“Four of the people don’t wish to help.” Maz pointed to a group of people in the corner who had not stated their names earlier. I smiled at Mazeena. It was going to take time to get use to her. She was always so cheery and unabashed by anything. Considering at the moment she was a child her personality just seem out of place.

“We have to at least get them out as well,” I stated.

“How should we do that Sammie Sugar?” Mazeena asked.

“I’m not sure. We’ll deal with that as we go.” I turned to face the group of Wingers. “Everyone together!” I shouted.

“Dru and Falcon will have a bus outside waiting.” Mazeena’s eyes were pure white and she had her hand to her head.

“Do you see it Maz?”

“Yes.” Mazeena smiled. “Dru will be saving you in a second, so duck.”

“Duck?” I dropped down to the ground. I felt someone’s hand fly over my head the force causing my hair to whirl up.

“Stay away from her!” Dru punched the man whom had just attacked me. The man fell to the ground.

“Sam there is a bus out...”

“I know,” I stated to Dru. “Mazeena told me.”

I dashed off in a different direction from the doors and toward Mariah. I kicked off my shoes and went sliding purposefully across the gym floor. I toppled and landed on Mariah.

I began to slap Mariah's face trying to awaken her. However, I did take some gratification in hitting the bitchy girl.

"Mariah!" I shouted. "Mariah!"

"She's out cold." Jane knelt next to me. "You are brave to want to die for her as well as those who wouldn't join you."

"I'll clear this place out." Kerri stepped into view with an expression of brusque need and apprehension in her eyes. "If you're not afraid Sam why should I be?" She smiled at me and winked. "So everyone make a b-line for the doors."

Kerri-Anne stood and threw out her hands. "Die!" she growled low in her throat. Flames sparked to life around the gym floor. She wiggled her fingers and the fire mimicked the motion of her movements.

"Let's split." Dru lifted Mariah's body up and tossed her over his shoulder. Her head slammed against his massive back.

Kerri snapped her fingers and the flames shot up high enough to touch the ceiling. Kerri-Anne turned and followed us out.

"Samantha." Christian walked through the wall of fire. She returned to a corporeal state. "Wait."

I turned, extend my hand and smiled at her. "Hurry Chris,"

"I love Druskin...and I don't want him to love you," She hissed. "Just a warning"

I kept my hand extended toward her. "Let's face that tomorrow and just escape today."

Christian smiled and took my hand. We ran out of the building and boarded the bus.

∞

“Safe House?” I opened the kitchen cupboard. “Some home, this is just an old boarding house.” I looked into the cupboard. There was still some canned food on the shelves, but it was hand canned and the dates were all from the nineteen eighties.

“Is this even good to eat?” Jennifer held up a jar of canned black berries. “It is older than me.”

“Back to the Demon Scrolls!” I slammed a can of *Tab* soda onto the table.

“Tab?” Kerri made a disgusted face. “Do they even sale Tab anymore? This place is so dank, ancient. I want to go back to my condo.”

“They’ll find us there Kerri-Anne.” Melody placed her hand on her sister’s shoulder. “Besides we have to save the world.”

“Save the world, sounds lame. I just signed up to kick some demon ass.” Frederick flicked ash from his cigarette into a glass candle holder. “No one smoke here? There aren’t any ash trays in this dump.”

“It is fine, it is better than some of the foster homes I’ve been in.” Molly spooned a black berry out of the jar with her fingers. I guess Jennifer deemed them edible. Molly offered the jar to James.

“I just want to avenge my folks. No crime in that, dig?” James shook his head and declined the jar of black berries.

“Demon scrolls!” I shouted, glaring at Falcon, who had brought up the confounded idea. He wanted to find something called *Demon Scrolls* to save the world.

“Please let’s focus and get through with this. I would like to be alone.” Jane shoved her hands in her pockets. “I don’t want to risk contact with someone and getting another vision.”

“Your premonitions are a gift,” Jarred stated to her.

“What would make you know or understand? Who are you to talk?”

“I train seers because I can block powers” Jarred raised his eyebrows in a disapproving way.

“I think we need to set up a plan of outright attack,” Isabelle stated.

“I agree,” Christian added. She then tossed her hand gun down onto the table.

“You have a gun!” Amy shouted. “What if the cops showed up?”

“Shut up.” Christian rolled her eyes.

“ENOUGH!” I leapt to my feet my feet in fury. “THE DEMON SCROLLS!”

Everyone turned and looked at me in shock.

“Isabelle, take lead and prepare the group for battle.” Falcon said. Isabelle ushered the other into the dining hall room. Jennifer followed with a sad look on her face. Jennifer snatched the jar of black berries on her way out.

“Alright, the demon scrolls are seven scrolls, each with a piece of a spell to make a half demon a full demon with full demon

powers,” Falcon stated. “I know someone can lead us to them.”

“Why do you want them? You wanted to be human!” I seethed. Had Falcon lied to me?

“Samantha, I need the power. I need to be able to save you.” Falcon stated brushing my hair away from my eyes with his fingers.

“I can’t let you do this.”

“I have to. Ace, why don’t you come with me?” Falcon smiled lustfully.

“Alright, I’ll come with you. Dru and I can protect you.” I stated. I’d learned by now that no matter where Falcon went he was going to bring his brother. After spending time separated from Dru, Falcon wasn’t going to leave his brother’s side.

“You are Dru seem to be getting rather close,” Falcon hinted. At least I think he was hinting at something.

“I’ll never be as close to him as I am to you.” touched Falcon’s face. “I adore you.”

I stood and walked out of the room. Falcon was getting jealous of his brother. I don’t love Dru...at least I don’t think I do.

Dru is annoying. He makes me mad all the time. He treats me like a child. Dru is too good at heart and I bet he is a nerd. Watch he probably does math in his sleep.

Besides all that, Christian loves Dru. Why would I get between the two of them? I mean she could really kick my ass.

I headed up the stairs and into my bedroom of the safe house. I flopped down onto the bed and rolled onto my back. I stared up at the ceiling to try and distract

myself from Falcon because I knew he was following me.

Falcon was close behind me. He quickly entered the room.

“Samantha,” Falcon said softly. “I will do what I must do to protect you!”

“Right,” I yelled leaping up from the bed and doubling my fists on my sides. “You get to choose what happens to you! You have no idea what it is like to never have a say in your own life!”

“Where is this coming from?” Falcon cocked his eyebrow and inclined his head. “That wasn’t what we were talking about.”

“Actually it is. You get to say what you will and won’t do. No one commands your actions. On the other hand my life happens to me!”

“That’s alright, you’re a woman.” Falcon’s old world views on women were starting to claw at my last nerve.

“It’s like I’m a player two and everyone else gets to be player one! I want to press the buttons and I want to pick the characters!” I wrinkled my nose as hot tears rolled down my face. I whipped the tears away with the back of my hand and sniffled.

“What?” Falcon asked with sheer confusion painted on his face.

“I...” I started to explain then dismissed the notion. I held out my arms wordlessly asking for an embrace. “Just shut up and make love to me!”

“What?” Falcon repeated. He was bewildered by me and my statement which was totally usual. “Wait.” He corrected. “I mean sure...yes...let’s have sex.”

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“Men...no matter how confused they are sex they always understand.” I giggled grabbing fistfuls of Falcon’s shirt. “Now kiss me.”

I pulled Falcon down by his shirt and pressed my lips to his heatedly. I was ready to have sex with him. I wanted to have sex with Falcon and nothing in this world was going to stop me now.

Falcon grabbed my shoulders and thrust me against the bedroom wall. He dropped his head and lowered his lips toward mine. I shivered.

Falcon’s big strong hands held my wrists against the wall. He pressed his lips to mine heatedly. His tongue probed into my mouth claiming me in a soul shatteringly erotic kiss. His tongue glided hot and slick in a motion mimicking sex.

I opened my mouth wider and rubbed my own tongue against his. Tiny spasms of delight coiled in my lower stomach.

Then like flipping a switch Falcon’s mouth closed. His lips were gentle against my face. He left tiny love bites at the corners of my mouth and suckled my lower lip gently. He was teasing me, making me plead and beg for the harsh man again.

“Please...” I whimpered.

Falcon stopped kissing me and released my hands. He gripped the bottom of my shirt and yanked it up. His fingers slid inside of my bra.

Falcon pushed my shirt up, unsnapped my bra clasp and pulled all the clothing on the top half of my body off. He tossed the clothing to the floor and pressed his head

between my breasts. He began to brush his shadow beard across my skin. Delicious shivers shot up my spine and butterflies coiled in my belly.

He left scorching love bites and kissed down my breast and on the soft undersides. Falcon's passion was devouring me.

That hot slick tongue fluttered against my neck. I was arching my neck against him, rubbing in a wordless and primal request. I was on fire with lust and need. I was burning with passion and wanton thirst. He was the water that could drown me and quench my soul as he ravaged the innocent from my body.

Falcon gently trailed kisses back and forth on my neck. He drew the soft tendon running between my jaw and shoulder into his mouth and gently bit. I shivered and moaned. Falcon's teeth grazed against my flesh. I whimpered trying to force my pleas for an orgasm to leave my lips.

Then he bit deep into my skin. I was screaming out in ecstasy. My world was unraveling from the overwhelming and soul branding love-bites he left upon me. He wasn't a vampire but he could sure bite like one. What was it that Anne Rice said...a bite is the most erotic thing in creation?

Falcon's finger tips, which in his human form were warm-thank you god-glied down my sides. A pleasure and tickling sensation shot up my spine.

I attempted to grab fistfuls of his shirt and then yank it over his head. However it didn't quite work out the way that I planned. Falcon tossed his head back and

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let out an unearthly laugh. His unnatural voice caressed my ears.

That night...it was magical.

∞

“How much further?” I huffed in exasperation. “I need a break, see I’m panting.”

“Oh Boy-O Apeth, you are a weak duckling aren’t you?”

“No, just tired. I spent all last night having sex with you. Should I just be perky and awake?”

“Like a sex-ergizer bunny.” Falcon chuckled.

“Funny!”

“We will be at the hut and cabin in no time.” Falcon He wrapped his arm around me and kissed my forehead.

“Too bad, I was thinking of getting naked right here.”

“Not tired anymore?”

“Whatever.” I rolled my eyes.

Falcon wouldn’t change his mind about the demon scrolls, no matter what I said. I even tried the sex manipulation later last night and it didn’t work. Women lie, men have a mind of their own!

Falcon and I were hiking out into the mountains to a hut and cabin of a Native American Shaman who could manipulate time and space. Apparently this shaman had a specialty of opening and finding alternate realities. Eerie gift if you ask me, but to each their own.

I didn't at all like the idea of Falcon becoming a full demon, despite the fact I saw the future in which he was hunting demon scrolls with Mazeena.

I was told I wasn't allowed to go with Falcon on his trip. He needed Dru and Isabelle to train me. He planned that Dru, Isabelle and I were going to hold down the fort with the Wingers team. However I would rather be with Falcon having adventures and making wild kinky love in epic places. I wanted to travel the world, chase the wind, taste life and taste all of Falcon repeatedly.

"There it is Master Sugar!" Mazeena pointed wildly. This was the third body Mazeena had inhabited since I met her. I, as her ruling master, did not permit her to burn out bodies because that would kill the person she had taken over. So as the person approached burn out time she would find a nearby beautiful person willing to except a demon. Then Mazeena would discard the current body and enter the newly found person.

To make it easier on myself I simply began numbering her forms in my head. When she was able to find a truly soulless body it could become her permanent one. That would end the counting and the confusion. This time, as Mazeena Three, she was a beautiful teenage girl probably thirteen or fourteen.

"Good," I puffed my hair from my eyes with a tired breath.

"Sky Howi," Falcon rapped on the door of the hut. "Please be here and not at the

main house.” Falcon added in an almost inaudible voice.

“Enter,” a husky and overly sexed feminine voice purred. She sounded like a woman welcoming back a lover! Falcon, Mazeena Three and I entered the hut.

A beautiful young woman was standing at a table with her back to us. Her slim olive toned body glistened with sweat and her clothing was loosely draped exposing her flesh.

I was getting sick of so many gorgeous and divine looking women surrounding my Falcon. What if he became tempted?

The woman’s long oak colored braids bounced over her shoulders as she whipped her head around to face us. She gave us a scrutinizing glare with her hawk black eyes. Not a demon’s kind of black but still as sinful and sheer evil as any human can get.

I already didn’t like her. Something in my heart was screaming don’t trust her and I almost always trust each person I meet.

“Your hair is different. Are you Falcon?” She asked. “Kista Katah.” Is what it sounded like she said to him?

Falcon nodded, shook his fist and then clapped three times. It was bizarre.

“Falcon!” She shouted rushing across the room. I stepped back almost being knocked over by the bounding girl. She wrapped her arms around my man and kissed him! What the hell!

Katherine Petersdorf

17

THE SKY HAS SECRETS

“Excuse me.” I pushed Sky back. I forced my way between them, turned and hugged Falcon. All the while I was glaring evilly at that worthless slut!

“Who are you?” She looked at me like I was the most annoying thing in the world when she was the one trying to mess with another woman’s man!

“I am so sorry. Sky this is my fiancée Samantha, Samantha this is Sky Howi the head shaman of this tribe,” Falcon introduced.

I smiled with jealousy burning in my eyes. I didn't even care that I wasn't really his fiancée, yet.

"We came here about the Demon Scrolls, so why not just get down to that subject." I already didn't like this boyfriend stealing little bitch!

"What does this little redhead have that I don't?" Sky pointed at me. "I obviously am more powerful and beautiful." She added with a sly look on her face.

"More powerful, you can just shove that." More powerful than the Dana De Dan, I think not!

"She better stop Falcon or my lips will stay sealed and you'll never get the scrolls." Sky smiled at me with evil victory.

"Go outside." Falcon instructed me.

I glared up at Falcon then turn and stormed out of the hut. If he was willing to make me leave for Sky what else would he do for her help? I was pissed! I gave that man my virginity and now he was tossing me out of my dairy-air like wet tissue paper.

I looked up at the sky. "Dru!" I yelled. "Come out now."

"Sam?" Dru stepped from behind a large tree.

"You were right. Falcon wants to be a demon more than even I realized."

"He is going to be mad when he finds out you asked me to follow you two." Dru walked the space between us, pulled me into his arms and cupped my face up to look at him. His eyes sparkled with sorrow.

"I don't want to lose my brother," Dru stated with sorrow in his eyes. Sometimes

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they seemed closer than the supernatural brother-which is creepy because Dean and Sam were so close sometimes it comes off gay.

“You know don’t you?” I asked.

“Yes,” Dru sighed. “It was right. He is better at the training part anyway.”

“Cherry’s his flavor of choice?” I giggled. “Guess he’ll have to deal with peach now.”

“Often does.” Dru kissed my cheek. “Let’s go into town.”

“You mean the mini mart meant to pass as a town.” I laughed pushing myself from his arms. I took his hand and started leading him down the trail.

“What for?”

“Snacks I guess. Maybe it is because there is nothing else to do. Falcon won’t let you back in until Sky okays it anyway.”

I huffed and shook my head. “I don’t want to talk about Falcon. Let’s talk about something else. Tell me about your favorite band or something that doesn’t have to do with magic.”

“Anything you like.” Dru smiled. “My favorite band is the High Orchestra for the London Opera in the eighteen fifties.”

“Recently, I mean recently.” I chimed. I just wanted to forget about how much of a jerk Falcon was being. I just wanted to make my own decision.

∞

I sucked in an anxious breath. “Why,” I whimpered to myself.

Falcon had come crashing in and lost his mind when he found me with Dru. He was angry that I hadn't listened to him, had brought Dru along and ran off. Also to make matters worse Sky started making cracks about how I wanted Dru more, which is so not true! At the moment I didn't want either of them. Falcon was dragging me along behind him, literally, just leading me by the wrist.

We stopped in a forest area near Sky's home. Falcon pushed me down onto the ground. His eyes seemed hallow and angry. I wasn't sure what it was that he wanted.

"Falcon...what, what are we doing out here?"

Falcon knelt down before me. His eyes were laced with tears. I brushed his midnight black hair from his face, seeing him with black hair was still bizarre.

"Samantha, there is something I want to ask you. It's something I have been thinking about for a while now." Falcon said softly.

"What..." I asked gasping for breath. Was he about to break up with me? Maybe he was going to tell me that he never wanted anything but my powers. Oh my god, worst case he could regret having sex with me and take back loving me.

"After this...you'll stay in Sky's Library," Falcon stated. "She'll leave you alone then." He promised.

I raised my eyebrow in frustration. "That's not a question! What sick joke is this?"

Falcon placed a finger to my lips for a brief moment. "Samantha Katherine

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Morgan...” He reached into his pocket. “Will you marry me?” He held up a wedding engagement ring.

It was breath taking. The ring was a silver band with three pink diamonds in a heart shape cut. I loved it. I wanted it.

I knew that when a man popped the question if it was right I wouldn’t be able to hear myself think over my heart. My heart was going to be screaming yes, and the voice of reason would vanish.

I placed a hand to my heart. “I hear it...my heart...is yelling yes.”

After that Falcon ditched me in Sky’s Library but I had something she didn’t. I had him forever and for always. I guess I picked the Edward after all, the monster fighting not to hurt people who would be bound to me forever.

However, some good did come of the library ditching. I found some of Falcon’s diaries from when he was working with Sky. I had a chance to read a few of them and found some priceless information.

I shoved all of the books that were Falcon’s or that seemed of importance into my backpack to take back with me. I didn’t care if Sky found out I already knew I hated her. She spent the rest of the day kissing on Falcon and whenever I stepped in Sky swore she wouldn’t help if I didn’t behave. Falcon of course, wanting the Demon Scrolls, obeyed like a lost puppy. I was forced to spend the day in Dru’s arms which was not to my fancy!

Sky had a main house and it was more like a small cabin. The wooded walls,

classic porch and tiny abode held the forest dweller quality of an old world Native American. I wondered if she was immortal too.

The brothers were outside watching the stars and talking. I was not invited to their conversation which pissed me off all the more seeing as I was the topic. Falcon had bluntly told Dru he wished to discuss what Dru needed to teach me and do with me while he was away. Falcon had the intention of *Demon Scroll Searching* with Sky and leaving me behind with Dru!

I was at the end of my rope and my knot was frayed. I didn't enjoy having people plan and dictate my life for me. I wasn't going to stand for anymore insipid orders.

"Master Sugar," Mazeena four whispered into my ear. "Are you eavesdropping?"

Mazeena three was almost ready to burn out so she had to ditch the body. There was a town at the bottom of this mountain trail it was an Indian reservation town. Mazeena popped in and stole the most convenient body to her dismay.

At the moment her fourth body was that of a young Native American high school age boy with long dark hair and handsome eyes. He was real candy but yet I couldn't look at him because I knew a woman was in him.

"Yes."

All of a sudden an epiphany stuck me. I moved my finger from the hushing potion over my lips and grasped Mazeena four's shoulders. "I have a plan...follow me."

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I stood and we surreptitiously snuck off of the porch and into the forest a few yards away. The moonbeams of midnight danced across the ground and the trees towered over me. Rain pattered gently against the ground.

“Maz are you able to astral project to anywhere you wish or any person even if you don’t know where they are?” I asked.

“Yes.” Maz nodded and smiled. “Where do you wish me to go?”

“Go to Odette’s throne room in hell, or her lair, whichever one Odette is at. I want you to listen in on her plans.” I grabbed Mazeena Four’s arms and forced Mazeena to look me in the eyes. “Don’t speak unless you can speak WITHOUT sounding like yourself.” I warned. “You are too perky to be one of Odette’s demons. Don’t betray me and let her know I am watching her.”

“Aye, Aye Captain Sammie Sugar.” Mazeena saluted me and then slumped to the ground. The body of Mazeena Four was sleeping softly. It was adorable.

I knelt down, brush hair from his face and whispered into his ear. “I will be watching the brothers when you get back.”

I spun on my heel, straightened my spine and walked back as stealthily as I could. I knelt on the ground and covertly peered around the corner at the two brothers.

Falcon and Dru sat on the front steps of the cabin and stared up at the stars.

“I don’t think we should leave tonight Fal, I think we should fight for you.” Dru didn’t look at Falcon. Instead Dru tipped

his head back and looked up at the moon. "I have to protect you."

"Protect me." Falcon hissed turning to face Dru. "Like you did when we were children?"

"Falcon..." Dru's face sparkled in the moonlight. His skin was glowing like he was crying. "Falcon I don't know what you want me to say."

"Say something. Say anything...anything that will fix this." Falcon growled leaping to his feet. His beautiful midnight hair shook in the breeze. His piercing shatter blue eyes looked as if they could devour your very soul.

Dru didn't stand up, he stayed sitting as he stared up at the sky. Almost as if he was pretending Falcon wasn't there. I couldn't bear to look at Dru when he was so sad.

Falcon turned and pinned Dru to the stairs of the porch. He held Dru's throat tightly with anger in his eyes.

Dru didn't fight back. The brothers stayed like that for a few moments. Falcon then released Dru and stood. Falcon started to walk off.

Dru sat up, held his neck and a single tear rolled down his cheek. "I love you." He said to Falcon's back.

"I wish I could love you back." Falcon didn't turn around. "You are all I have. Don't let Odette taking me hurt Samantha. Don't let Samantha come between us..."

"You are all I have." Dru finished Falcon's thought.

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“She isn’t immortal. We have to share not fight.” Falcon shook his head. “Protect her.” He walked into the cabin.

18

MIRROR OF DESTINY

I wondered what they were going to say, Falcon and Dru that was. I pondered it, mulled over it, and even obsessed. Every ticking second I walked down the hill it was playing on my mind. Every overwhelming minute while I trotted away I felt wrong. This making your own choices thing was a lot harder than it seems. How did Elle Woods do it...and in six inch stiletto heels no less?

I had done it though. I had made my way down the hill, hiked through the forest alone and climbed into a little cab and left. I went to the small town at the end of embankment that lead into the forest and

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ultimately to Sky's. It had been a reservation for her tribe. There wasn't much there, a smoke shop and mini mart gas station was pretty much all. I called a taxi from a pay phone. Being a taxi from another town it cost a fortune.

I wasn't sure where Odette's lair was but I had to find a way to get there. I was sure Isabelle would know how to find it. She was magical after all and if she didn't know Christian would because she worked for Odette.

Also the prospect of me possibly dying would defiantly enthrall Christian into helping me. She would logically think the following. A.) Help me get there equals B.) My death from Odette equals C.) Without me she would have Dru wrapped around her finger. So if A equals B and B equals C then A equals C. Simple logical she would help me.

I climbed out of the car and paid the man with my cash. I whimpered at the high cost as I headed for the safe house.

I opened the door and stormed into the house. I hadn't expected to see what I saw next. I had always thought about Isabelle as a chipper and happy person. A girl who was meek hearted but it turns out she isn't.

"I will not obey you." Christian seethed as she glared at Isabelle.

Isabelle smiled, inclined her head and brushed her hair from her face. "You will." she warned. Her voice wasn't a threat it was a promise of the most ultimate demise for disobedience. Chris would regret every bitter word that rolled off her lips.

Isabelle doubled her fist, straightened her back and smashed Christian in the face. Chris fell backwards toppling to the floor. She whipped the blood from her lips and nose.

Isabelle's eyes glinted. "Don't mess with me Chris. You think that being able to become non-corporal will save you? Remember that I've been training my whole life to kick the new devil's arse. I can take you out in a heartbeat and you wouldn't last more than a few seconds. Now get up and get out. Don't come back until you learn to take my orders."

"Belle?" I stammered as I lowered my head and shrugged my shoulders.

"Sammie," Isabelle replied in a chipper voice. She must have been slightly psychopathic because she could flip the switch on emotions in a second. "Why are you not with Falcon and Dru?" She asked in passing then pulled me into a big hug.

"How do I get into Odette's lair?"

"Sammie...I..."

"I sent Mazeena to Odette's throne room in hell and she listened in for me. Odette wasn't going to kill Falcon to open the doorway. She was going to do it so I would open the door to the Grimoire. She lied to me."

Isabelle nodded in agreement. She looked at me like I should have known a demon was lying to me.

"At this moment we have precious little time." I continued. "Odette is releasing the cannibal coven members. In every province or state of every single country she has a

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demon stationed with a coven of cult members ready to descend onto this world. We must act now.” I warned.

I pushed a few loose hairs from my eyes, yanked out my ponytail and let my fair fall down. I massaged my scalp as I talked. I was trying to calm my nerves. “We need a plan. I have a plan. Christian.” I turned to her. “Get over yourself and gather everyone.” I returned to facing Isabelle. “Let’s talk future sister.” I smiled.

One hour later all of the Wingers, including myself, were gathered around a long table in the main dining area. Since the safe house use to be a boarding house it had a rather large dining hall.

Every room in the safe house was lavished with beautiful antique furnishing, expensive drapery, well sanded hard wood floors and beautiful classical art work. The décor was simply stunning.

“We have an idea of what should happen on the Odette front and we also have a plan.” Isabelle stated. All of us looked up at her with baited breath.

“We must insure the safety of this local town, since I Skryed and have seen the coven members exiting from here. Odette planned to start with this little remote town because the police force locally would not be enough.” Christian explained. Chris had changed her mind and decided to help. She said something about it being what Dru would wish her to do then she glared at me with evil eyes.

I turned coolly and squared my shoulders to seem more commanding. “Jane, since

you have the power to see the future you can locate the people in this town.”

Jane frowned and dropped her head.

“I understand you hate your gift.” I added in a sweet voice. “This is important. That is only reason I must ask.” I wanted to comfort her but I knew if I touched her that her power would ignite a vision and she would be angered.

“Yes Miss.” She nodded.

“Jarred will take you, he can shield the people as well as you from attacks.” I instructed smoothly. I was rather enjoying being a large and in charge kick ass bitch. Somehow I was so much more like my old self without the brothers around, probably because they coddled and brooded over me.

“Then Molly and James,” Isabelle fastened her hair back into a ponytail as she spoke. “Will set up a protection wall for the house”

“How?” Molly interjected.

“Simply put Molly, while holding James, you can call forth heavy objects and build a wall by channeling James’ super strength. Your calling will become super strong from him.”

“Then how will we enter back into the safe house?” Melody asked with big doe eyes.

“We have underground tunnels. I will lead you out of them so you will know the way.” Isabelle stated. “The tunnels are warded with protection runes, Gaelic words literally meaning *I resist you*. Thus no demons can pass through.”

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“What about me?” Jennifer asked with a frightened face. I reached over to my sister, whom sat next to me and held her hand protectively.

“Amy will stay behind to protect you and Mariah.” Isabelle answered.

Mariah was currently upstairs and had locked herself into the attic. When the Wingers and I told her about what was going on she practically lost her mind. I understood though. It’s not easy to learn about magic. Even I freaked out and I grew up being told about the supernatural.

“Frederick and Kerri-Anne will act as cover for Isabelle and I.” I stated. I turned toward Melody. “I am sorry Melody but your power is not complemented to your sisters. I have a much more important task for you.”

“Really?” She asked. Melody smiled and her eyes glittered. I knew the look. It was the same look I had when I realized Falcon like me and that I was worth something to a man.

In high school I was always the second choice, the unpopular girl and backup plan. Melody had expressed the same problem that she was always second best. Only Melody was the backup for her luscious sister. It was uplifting to make someone the first choice when they rarely were.

“Christian will hold onto you and cause the two of you to ghost non-corporeal. Melody, you will use super speed coupled with Chris’ power to pass through all the walls and switch off the alarms that Odette has installed.” Isabelle answered for me.

“Odette is going to pay.” I pounded my fist into my open palm. “Let’s rock this bitch!”

∞

Odette’s *Lair* had shown up, while Skrying, as an old butchery on a cattle and poultry ranch. The ranch was abandoned and had been left for sale by owner for ten years.

Originally when we discovered the location I found it too odd of a place for Odette to really be. I remember what Falcon had told me about the Mirror of Destiny so I made other plans. However I needed to keep the part of my plan secret...at least for the time being.

The actions of my Wingers team would dictate the outcome of my own strategies. I needed them to keep protecting the people of this town and kill off as many coven members as possible.

Kerri-Anne stepped forward. She counted the cannibal coven members below and then slowly raised her hands to the sky. Kerri closed her eyes and spread her fingers. As she wiggled her fingers flames leapt around the coven members. Each piece of fire followed her movements. Kerri was smiling and laughing as she attacked the men below.

The frightened coven members began to rush off. Kerri-Anne, being able to only control the fire as a massive whole, was unable to stop every escaping member.

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There were just too many sporadic men being as flighty as hunted deer.

That was where Frederick came into the picture. He flicked this cigarette causing ash to fall to the ground, took another long drag and dropped it. He crushed the sickening tobacco under the heel of his cowboy boot.

Frederick turned and flipped his dirty blonde hair of his shoulder. "Let's hit full force." He snarled.

He closed his eyes, pushed out his chest and tipped back his head. A humming sound echoed from his body. It was a noise engulfing the whole area around us.

Animals of all sorts came leaping for the forest and attacked the escapee cannibal coven members. Bears were ripping people to shreds and devouring them. Squirrels were clawing at the face of frantic people. Even the birds joined in. A flock of crows swooped in, gathered over head of a few members and let their dropping fly in union.

Now it was time for Melody and Christian to step up. Christian held onto Melody's back and made the two of them non-corporal. Then Melody took off running. The two vanished in the blink of an eye.

"I hope this plan of yours works." Isabelle said to me.

"I know that it will." I stated. "So long as the Skrying was correct, Belthazar should be in there looking for Odette as we speak."

“This plan seems to be foolish yet it is utterly a brilliant plan. I never would have thought of it.”

“Thank you.” I smiled. “I feel bad about having to tell the Wingers only half of the story.”

“Don’t” Isabelle touched my shoulder. “You do what you have to. Besides it’s nice to see you have a back bone for a change. Don’t let my brothers push you around too much.” She laughed. “I don’t”

Isabelle’s cell phone rang. She flipped it open and answered. “Good Melody.” She replied and flipped it closed.

“The alarms are all off now and they’ve exited the building safely. Now it’s time for act two of three.” Isabelle held out her hand. “Are you ready to teleport?”

“Sure.” I said anxiously. I wasn’t sure if I liked the idea of relocation because it sounded like it would make me woozy.

I cautiously took Isabelle’s hand and closed my eyes. It felt like the world was spinning off and my mind was going numb. I opened my eyes and I was standing in a new location.

“That was wild.” I mumbled.

“We’re here.” She stated and released my hand.

I turned sharply and stared into the darkness. “Belthazar...” I toyed. “I know you’re there.” I smiled wantonly. I wanted to see him again for more than just his help. He was downright sexy. Now that I’d tasted the forbidden fruit of sex I constantly wanted more.

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“Hello Katherine.” Belthazar stepped from the black and into view.

I stormed toward him with anger in my eyes and slapped him right across the face. He cupped his cheek and a look of utter shock claimed his face.

“Listen here you little demon worm.” I seethed. “You are going to take me to where Odette really is. Take me to the mirror of destiny.” I grinned lustfully and added “Stop calling me Katherine.”

“That must be the real Samantha poking her head up.” Belthazar laughed. His unearthly voice rolled off the walls and engulfed me. His brooding presence was beyond arousing.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” I scoffed.

I knew exactly what he was talking about, not that I would openly admit it to him. When Katherine started talking with in me I lost my own voice. Her words overpowered me and her persona came into full force. I went from a girl who acted, participated in her own life and was strong to being a weakling who reacted to life. I had become her.

“Unlike you, Samantha, Kat was meek. She was subservient and never stood up for herself only others.”

“Point!?” I gritted my teeth.

“You were always strong. You dressed in little boy’s suit sets and claimed you would rule the world. Somewhere along the way Katherine stepped in and you lost yourself.” Belthazar pushed his hair from his face.

“Make a deal with me.” I commanded dryly.

“Anything I wish for is the exchange?” Belthazar asked with a lustful grin. His gaze ranked up and down my body. “Now that you are no longer an innocent maiden?”

“No. In returned I will give you the spell to reinstate your powers from the book, without having the book, to their full former glory. Not me.” I crossed my arms over my chest. “And with the second spell I will removed from the Grimoire I am going to rip out Katherine’s persona. I want her to stop bossing me, controlling me, talking in my head and making me weak. I will give her to you. I don’t want Katherine in any way!”

“Deal,” Belthazar grabbed me by the arm and vanished. This caused us both to teleport the demonic way. I was braced for the bizarre sensation this time.

We were standing deep in the forest near the safe house. I was glad Falcon had told me about the Mirror of Destiny when we first met Isabelle. Knowing what I did was going to make my plan work ten times better.

Odette turned and starting clapping. “Look who is finally here.”

Belthazar had simply sifted in and deposited me in the forest with Odette. He didn’t bother assisting me since he wasn’t sure of my success. Not that he could help me, he would hinder my plans anyway.

“So Odette...” I walked a semi-circle around her using the mocking and intimidation techniques Gramhach had

used on me. “Or should I say *T’ntch*. I found some of Falcon’s old diaries at Sky’s hut.”

Odette glared harshly.

“So let’s get down to business shall we. Our deal is off. Now that I know you are nearly human. You can’t even hurt me, not like a demon could.” I laughed. “So you want to become the second devil and then plan to kill us all.”

“Bitch!” Odette reached out for me...and her hand went through me.

Odette’s eye flew wide as she discovered my body was non-corporeal. She attempted to grab me two more times before huffing with disappointment.

“Yes.” I grinned. “I can borrow powers...remember. See right now I am an astral projection, so there is nothing you can do to me. Oh and that reminds me I have one more surprise, for the moment. I worked out this little projection trick with Mazeena. I can project and still use my solid body at the same time.”

“Where are you now?” Odette questioned.

The astral project form of me dissipated. I cocked my head, smiled and tapped Odette on the shoulder. “I’m behind you.” I chimed.

Swiftly Odette turn around doubling her fist but I had predicted her reaction. I thrust a wooded stake into her heart using the force of my full body weight.

Odette fell to the ground with a harsh thud. She attempted to pull at the deeply lodged stake.

“Dead to your demon soul is like being dead to human life. This means you are like a vampire.” I knelt next to her body. “This stake isn’t dipped in holy water so you aren’t going to die instantly. How long will it take to die, huh? A week or maybe a month, am I correct? Then tell me do you wish me to watch you suffer?”

“Go to hell.”

“Sorry, it’s the other way around.” A vindictive grin lit my face. I watched her convulsing body with joy in my eyes. I was going to make her pay for attempting to destroy the world. I couldn’t kill her, not yet. I needed someone to seal their soul to the Grimoire to destroy the book. I needed her to become the second devil.

“So let’s play that little game you love. *Let’s make a deal* my way you little bitch.” I laughed.

“So here it is.” I explained. “I cannot touch the Grimoire and I cannot destroy it unless someone is soul bound and connected to it. So I’ll give you the Grimoire and let you save yourself...if...in return you give me the pages I need from the book, now! I can touch pages just not the whole damned thing.” I growled.

“Deal,”

I helped Odette from the ground and placed my hand to my Arched Wing necklace. “Lead me.” I pleaded with the necklace.

I heard *step left two steps, forward three steps* and so on for a good five or ten minutes. I followed the instructions the necklace spoke and then it stopped. I reached out

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and my hands touched the air. It was hard like something was there.

Shimmering light engulfed me and suddenly it appeared...the Mirror of Destiny. It was large like the Mirror in Snow White except this mirror was more archaic looking with Celtic runes, knot work and well sanded wood frames.

I placed my hand to the glass, it shimmered beneath my palm and we entered. It was creepy walking through it like it wasn't there.

Inside of the mirror was like a set from a barbaric movie with high stones, endless passages and dark looming sky. The Grimoire, this almighty book, wasn't sitting propped on a pedestal. Instead it was lying on a stone haplessly. Like Katherine had simply tossed it into the mirror, or someone had messed with the mirror between my past and present life.

Inside of the mirror was more than just the Grimoire. There was a blade, a shield and many other objects. I guess this was Katherine's storage unit.

The Grimoire was a leather-bound book. It held an array of page types from stones chiseled and hard bound to parchment.

I pushed Odette toward the book. "The spell to remove a past life persona, find it now." I hissed. "I have more than one stake." I warned.

Odette held her hands out over the book and chanted in words unknown to me. As she spoke the book flew up and the pages flipped without her touching them. Suddenly the pages stopped and she tore

out a piece of parchment that was hand quelled.

I held the paper and looked at it. At the bottom were signed Belthazar and Katherine McHarrison. They had written spells together?

I was going to need a third item now, McHarrison's life in Belthazar's eyes. A book of shadows, such as the Grimoire, holds not only spells but diary pages so the story of their love was within the book.

"The spell to restore Belthazar's powers," I stated.

Odette repeated her actions and gave me a stone tablet with Gaelic carvings.

"The diary pages of Belthazar and Katherine McHarrison." I demanded.

Odette pulled out a stack of parchment pages. I turned on my heel and exited the mirror leaving Odette behind.

"Master Sugar!" Mazeena five said bouncing up and down. She was a young teen girl that was a ravishing beauty. She changed bodies far too much for my taste. I really hoped she could find a soulless one soon so she would stay one person and not burn out people's life energy.

"I'll take those." Mazeena offered putting out her arms. "I also searched all around. I found Lords Falcon and Dru."

"Lords," I asked.

"Yes, the man of my Master's fancy. It's a title of respect from the time I originated in. So I call them both it. Anyway, they are sleeping under a tree nearby. Someone warded them. See, over there." Mazeena

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pointed at a tree. "I am so epic it's totally banging."

"Yes. Banging" I agreed. I handed off the papers and watched Mazeena vanish.

I turned and headed toward the tree. Tonight had been a rough night and I was ready to wake my men and go home! I wanted to curl up in Falcon's tight embrace and enjoy a night of heavy love making.

I rushed to Falcon's side. I knelt next to him and began to shake him when I felt a warm hand on my shoulder.

I looked up. "Sky?" I asked. "Are you here to help ups?" I was hopeful for the help. I couldn't drag one, let alone both, of the sedated men.

"No." Sky said flatly. "I am here to screw you over and keep you out of Odette's path." She smiled evilly. "Oh yah and I forgot I'm also going to steal Falcon from you."

I couldn't control my eyes. They forcibly fluttered shut. She had cast a spell on me...I think.

∞

After what I am sure was some time my eyes fluttered open again. My head was pounding like a sledgehammer. I blinked and cringed.

Darkness surrounded and engulfed me. Something soft was laying over me wrapped around my whole body. Was I trapped somewhere? I shivered, I could be buried alive I know Sky hates me that much.

I could hardly breathe. I was hot and clammy, where was the string for a dead

ringer when you needed one! I screamed out in fear and sat up quickly.

I had been under blankets? I touched the soft pulled cotton fabric. These were *my* blankets from the house that was burned down. I surveyed the area.

The room was two stories tall with a half room width second story. The room itself was really large and painted a soft pink color. The walls were covered in posters and pink scrapbooked pictures. I blinked a few times. I didn't know this room. It wasn't mine, despite having my bedding and teddy bear because I didn't own such a big house or such exquisite furnishings.

"Sammie, are you awake yet?"

I froze. My heart was shattering. I had heard my *mother's* voice.

My mother entered the room. The door crinkled against the carpet. I looked up at her with tears in my eyes. My heart sank. Was this heaven? It wasn't possible for this to anything else because my mother was dead. I saw her body in those flames while I fought Melzabar. I was still blaming myself for her death. This must be a dream!

"Get dressed sweetheart." Mother said softly as she drew back the curtains. Rays of light poured across the large room. It was an amazing two level room, the kind that all girls dream about.

I sat up and rubbed my eyes. "Dressed for what?" I asked.

My mother hadn't come to wake me in the mornings since I was in high school. What...was this some weird new world? Did I just not graduate a year early in this

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place and was still in high school at nineteen. It was the day after school registration so I wasn't old enough to start kindergarten for a whole other year. I was older than all my classmates because of it.

"Why...am I going to go to school?" I asked.

"Because you aren't sick anymore," She giggled. She was still dressed like I remembered her and smelled like I remembered her. She had on a floral apron and smelled like white-chocolate and caramel brownies.

"Sick?" I mumbled the question. I pinched myself because I knew this had to be a dream, only the pinch hurt. I wasn't dreaming and I wasn't in heaven? So where was I?

"Yes sweet heart. You've been taking medication for the flu for a good three days." My mother replied.

My jaw dropped and my eyes flew wide. I was flipping out now. I grabbed fistfuls of my hair and shook my head trying to escape the words. Then locks of my hair fell down in front of my eyes and I really lost it.

"I'm blonde!" I shouted. "What happened to my auburn hair?"

"You're the head cheerleader sweetie. You dyed it freshman year...remember? It's unheard of to have a warm haired leader." My mother shut the door behind her. I ran my hands down my body and into my lap. I knew now that Falcon and magic were not a dream. I still have Falcon's diary.

Head cheerleader, blonde and still in high school? What is going on! Where am I?

Katherine Petersdorf

TO BE CONTINUED

In the next installment

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katherine Petersdorf, a young but talented author, is the prodigy of hard work, dedication, and a fighting spirit. She not only writes multiple books a year, but attend college at the University of Wyoming and owns a small, Indie film production company. She graduated high school in 2009 with her A.A. and two great internships under her belt. She currently lives part of the year in Olympia, Washington and the other part in Laramie, Wyoming. She is from Toledo, Washington originally just like Sam Morgan.

Katherine Petersdorf is a young author best known for her independence in writing. She is a novelist who lives right on the edge, one who isn't afraid to break the rules, shock the audience, and cross over into the most taboo of subjects. For anyone who wants a book that takes the most unexpected turns, rips you from the throws of mundane life, and that writes its own rules of conduct, then Katherine Petersdorf's works are the stories for you. Her work is not meant for the faint of heart, her novels often contain graphic violence, heavy magic, taboo subjects, steamy erotic love scenes, uncensored language, and unbridled adult situations. Her characters will shock you, her stories will enthrall you, and her plot lines will always keep you begging for more. Her unmistakable added pinch of humor is the unforgettable spoon full of sugar to make the arsenic good down. Feel the fast pace, and get entangled in the suspense, and temptation of a Katherine Petersdorf novel today.