



WINNING VIRGIN PROMISES

Winning Virgin 4

Destiny Blaine

MENAGE AMOUR



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DEDICATION

For my paranormal readers. This book is dedicated to you. Without you, there wouldn't have been a Winning Virgin Book Four.

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DESTINY BLAINE

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Chapter One

Constance waltzed into the Sabbat-owned club like she owned it. She might as well act the part. The Sabbat family made Agendas their home base and when it suited her, she wore the name Sabbat almost as proudly as she held fast to her Spenser birthright.

Smiling big, she flicked her wrist, offered a wave, and provided a verbal greeting or two. The

bodyguards tripped over their own feet to hold the door open for her. They looked like bouncers, but they were in fact, Darian's men.

Constance pushed her dark curls over her shoulders before shooting one of them a wink. "Better let *him* know I'm here and make sure you tell my brother-in-law I'm lethal tonight."

The large man with ugly scars across his cheeks and chin, grinned. "I'll follow your request."

"I don't doubt it for a minute. It's why I suggested it." She wanted to curse him under her breath for valid reasons. She bet whatever cash she carried in her purse that many of the men on Darian's payroll knew of her father's precise whereabouts.

Samuel Spenser, many believed, departed the world years ago. Constance and her brothers never stopped searching and since they had unlimited resources, they never would.

Most considered the Spensers vampire royalty, at least those who understood myths and followed legends. Reality crossed somewhere in the middle.

Constance thought of herself as a member of a new race. It beat the hell out of what mortals thought. Those who believed in vampires at all feared them and with good reason. They held an extreme power, a license to kill and get away with it.

She walked through the mirrored hallway and the display of laser-crossfire, the latest in security features for the more paranoid of the Sabbats. The oldest and the most dangerous of the lot, Darian, didn't take unnecessary risks. When someone entered one of his clubs, he knew in an instant if mortals joined them or bloodsuckers were among them. Some of the poor, unsuspecting women who paraded through his doors in search of a good time instantly became bait once they walked through the check-point.

Constance stepped into the heart of Agendas and everyone recognized her. Heads turned and a few men here or there made the mistake of whistling. If Sebastian were around—her life mate—or maybe even Gabriel, the signal alone would lead to another man's death call.

She took a quick spin around the room after she crossed over the threshold because if she made an appearance there, she might as well make sure everyone in Edinburgh knew it. She copped the kind of strut to make grown men twitch and vampire elders uncomfortable in their robes, if they even wore them. At times, Constance wondered if those on the panel did anything more than sit around and play with themselves all day, a decision she reached after observing the perverse orders they often handed down to their young.

She scanned the dimly lit dance floor and noticed some recognizable faces, one in particular. After she spotted him, she didn't waste time moving toward him without so much as a break in her stride.

Darian headed up the Sabbat family and conducted most of his business from Agendas. He was the Sabbat she wanted to talk to most, but with her fast approach, she quickly observed his body language. He cautioned against the sudden advance when he turned his back and squared his shoulders. The Sabbats, much like the Spensers, never wanted their enemies to meet their women.

If the man in front of Darian was an enemy, she'd hate to see his friends. A mortal, no doubt, he looked good enough to eat and swallow with one delectable bite. Broad shoulders, tight chest, high cheekbones, lovely lips, and Constance couldn't stand it. She had to see the rest.

She hurriedly scooted around the room so she could steal an even better peek. Sure as hell, right there in front of her, her suspicions materialized. He had one fine-looking ass. Best of all, she thought as she inhaled his scent, he was mortal, as she'd suspected. Life sugar-coated in blood-red sweetness.

Darian shot her a quick glance and his face tensed. The man quickly caught on and understood there was something or someone behind him and he turned around. By the time he did, Constance had moved onto the floor and unleashed a sexy little spin with her hips and arms draping around the first Dom she saw. Fortunately, he was a regular, so she didn't put him at risk. He never paid her the first moment of attention and lucky for him, kept his hands to himself.

Evidently, Darian's dirty deals reached far beyond their immortal world and when they did, he sought his equal on the other side. She watched him from the padded rail encasing the dance floor. She tried to do it without catching the gaze of the flesh hunk negotiating with Satan—yeah, Darian held a strong resemblance to the evil down under tonight. His whole body appeared rigid as he worked his way through the throes of an unpleasant discussion. She saw his arm flex forward and at one time, he placed his hand on the mortal's shoulder.

Constance understood Darian's unspoken signal. He marked him for a dead man walking if he stepped out of line. Constance glanced around the room and watched the flash of recognition as Darian's crew moved closer. They slumped in the shadows, but lurked close enough to see their human target.

A shame, she thought, before she returned her focus to some of the other patrons. A death wish or two lingered in the air. The Doms of the club, the men who clung tight to their well earned position and the power it brought them, immediately eyed her with curiosity. Most of the regulars knew she belonged to a Sabbat, but she didn't wear a collar to indicate her taken status. Those who looked for something more significant often stared.

Some of the Doms glared with new hunger and several with dark desire. Those were the men who grabbed her attention. They were the type who deserved it, kind of like the mortal who undoubtedly held a similar interest in her. His lips curved in a saucy invitation and he gave one of his guards a quick nudge.

"Uh-oh," she muttered. "You're bled dry now, buddy."

Darian immediately turned around. Quick as lightening, he flashed his elongated teeth. If anyone saw, they might take a double take, but the gesture was private enough for Constance to understand.

She watched the man lean forward and nod in her direction. He was interested and moving toward his demise quicker by the second...definitely marked as a goner now.

Too bad, she was starting to like him, too. She decided to leave him alone. She wasn't one to form attachments with mortals. They never lived long enough to suit her and any human dealings with Darian guaranteed a shorter life expectancy.

Constance shrugged and looked away. If Darian wanted to conduct the longest business meeting in history, she wouldn't complain. She enjoyed everything about Agendas and didn't need her brother-in-law's attention in order to have a good time. From the music to the patrons who never found enough regardless of what they were after, the club offered something for everyone.

Usually, those with eclectic tastes found their thrills in Darian's clubs. With the openly viewed sex acts in semi-public rooms, the Sabbat bars were well known around the world. Additionally, Darian's staff took pride in providing the best drinks in Scotland, and thanks to wide-spread media attention on occasion,

many gained notoriety by patronizing the best club in all of Europe. Actors and actresses from around the globe frequented Agendas, but more notorious than the famous were the vampires that gathered there. The rumors around Edinburgh indicated it no longer hailed as the best kept secret.

Constance dressed the part of a seductive vixen and it was one of the reasons she enjoyed stepping out. She didn't have to go to the Sabbat clubs under false pretenses. In fact, she slipped into whatever role she wanted to play most whenever she visited.

For the night and the scene crowd, she fit in rather well. A red mini-skirt didn't deserve classification as a short dress and her lace stockings led to the black pearl suspender clips just begging for a snappy release. Her shirt, if she really had one on at all, carried the weight of her chest but barely covered it in a halter-top design. The silk felt smooth against her skin and it proved to motivate her more with the constant reminder. She knew she looked damn fine. Hot enough to draw the devil's brother out of hell and he would show his face. She was betting on it.

If Sebastian and her brothers were in town, they'd roar with rage. She dressed for the lifestyle when she left the confines of Spenser walls. With her vampire mate in the States, she decided to go on a search for answers. She knew which Sabbat brother she needed to see in order to find them.

Casually, she paced in front of the sidebar. Her fingertips ran over the smooth texture of the wood rim before her palm settled on the granite top. She stretched up and down on her tiptoes knowing if anyone watched—and they did—what her legs stopped short of showcasing. She impatiently narrowed her eyes in Darian's direction. With a smug, somewhat forced smile, she turned around to see what décor changes spruced up the place since her last visit.

Nothing stood out as different. Maybe she was the most significant improvement there, and she liked to think of herself as a different woman. A year earlier when she first entered the doors of Agendas, she was twenty-one and looking for trouble. She found it. In her opinion, it jumped out and more or less saved her from herself, but trouble was a package deal. Something she didn't realize when she first landed in bed with Sebastian Sabbat.

"Hey, Constance." One of Darian's favorite girls approached her. "How's my pet Sabbat?"

"Bored," she complained. "How are you? It's nice to see Darian is letting you work the tables."

She grinned and batted her eyelashes. Constance caught her drift. She serviced more than the front of the house customers. Poor thing probably thought she hit the big leagues when she hopped into Darian's bed.

Darian's business meeting wasn't one she'd interrupt, even though she thought about it just so she could flirt with someone with meat in his pants and blood in his veins. Since Darian turned his back to her when he first spotted her, the men he spoke to were undoubtedly dangerous—perhaps even the kind of people who would love to have a Sabbat in their arms for negotiating power. No doubt about it, the leader of the trio had a certain fascination with her.

"Tell me something," she asked Darian's new cocktail of the month. "Who's the guy with Darian?"

The gal laughed. "Did Sebastian's short chain hit a snag somewhere?"

"No! Of course not," she exclaimed, sighing in regret. "I guess I can't inquire about strangers here, huh?"

“Not when they look like him!” She turned around and enjoyed the view too. “You should see his ass.”

The ass was the problem. The main reason she inquired further in the first place.

“Listen, Constance, Darian didn’t even want *me* around them. He’ll have a fit if you go anywhere near them right now. Whoever he is, Darian and his men prepared for him several hours prior to his arrival. They frisked all of those guys coming in. If I were you, I’d disappear until they’re gone.”

Disappear? Not a chance. She realized she toyed with an impossible situation, but she couldn’t resist flirting with the forbidden. Most of Sabbath’s enemies searched for a weakness because there were very few. It would only sweeten the pot if they discovered she was the daughter of the most notorious vampire in the world. The Spencers carried clout. The Sabbats collected enemies.

After glancing at her watch, she noticed she’d waited for over thirty minutes. She decided she should’ve walked up and demanded his undivided attention. She also realized her impatience had nothing to do with Darian and everything to do with his younger brother. Sure, she wanted to talk to Darian, but she could’ve arranged a meeting place outside of Agendas or she could’ve visited the Sabbath compound. No, she was there for something more.

Her ulterior motives for the visit and the ambiance of the club invited her to stay and enjoy her new freedom. With any luck, her second reason would soon show his handsome face.

The music blared with an assorted mix of some of her favorite artists. Since she’d been marked as Sebastian’s life mate, he’d insisted she stay out of the clubs unless he had her in hand. After a joining, it was pretty much expected for the vampire brides to stay out of sight. An elder or two who mismanaged his own life apparently put such an order in place.

Constance watched a few people dance and she searched for a competent partner. One who would show her a nice time on the dance floor but looked smart enough to let her walk off without expectations. It only took her a moment to rethink those sentiments. She decided if she danced, she would do any potential partner a favor by dancing alone.

Another visual sweep around the club and a quick peep at Darian and what the hell, since she found her way there, and Sebastian’s brother didn’t seem to have time for her, why not? Maybe Darian didn’t have a free second, but she knew one brother who would find several. If Gabriel discovered her there, he’d show her some attention.

She braced her palms behind her and arched her back. Who cared anyway? Of course they’d tell Sebastian she stopped by and she partied a little. So what? She stretched her arms over her head before she made it to the crowded hub where the bodies in motion removed all inhibitions.

She stepped out to the center of the floor and let the music sway over her. If they scolded her later, she’d complain her torso and limbs simply followed rules of their own—a specific agenda, perhaps—and did they ever.

The beats of a drastic force pumped through her veins with enough inspiration. Her arms dropped to her sides and her provocative moves turned every Dom-head in the club as she ran her fingertips up and down her hips.

By the time her body jump-started every twitching dick in the room, several men headed to the private

suites for a piece of ass that would never satisfy. The piercing gazes from most of them proved it as one or two of them grabbed a prospect and started for the back wall.

Ah, yeah, she still had it. They all still wanted it.

If anything, the year she'd spent with Sebastian only prepared her for moments like these. His training helped her stay in tune with her body.

New music and retro tunes filled the area and with it came awareness. She bounced over to the rail, placed her hands on the side and worked out every twist and turn she had before she returned to the center. Seemingly, every man in the room followed her ass. She felt their eyes on her and craved even more. She wanted them to feel her even if they never touched her.

Sebastian would bite cement in half if he saw her. The music easily reminded her of him. Gerard McMann's *Cry Little Sister*—their song—blared through the speakers. She missed her mate enough to stop dancing for a moment and considered leaving the club.

Sebastian would be more than a little upset once he received word. She really didn't want to anger him because he knew how to punish her. He withheld the one thing she couldn't live without—himself. He was a remarkable lover and she was completely devoted to him with an exception. She seldom allowed herself the opportunity to think about her weakness, but Gabriel Sabbat, her secondary feeder, was definitely it.

She closed her eyes and thought of Gabriel. It felt good to allow the rare indulgence. After Gabriel came to mind, he came to veins almost as quickly and once he did, she truly burned for him. The source of a damning pain, she cursed herself and then him. That's when she realized why thoughts of him rushed in and surrounded her all at once.

She felt him there and her body tensed. She gripped her stomach before she doubled over in pain. Resisting it, fighting against it, her hand went to her neck then, too. Sebastian had been gone three days and she defiantly refused the supplements the family caretaker set out as an alternative blood source. She didn't want to drink gunk. She wanted to go with Sebastian when he traveled, so he could supply her with what she needed. Now, with another secondary source nearby, her craving for nourishment became almost unbearable.

"Where are you, lover?" she asked, whispering.

She looked up at the eyes in the sky, and realized he watched. She thought of a distant day, an earlier time, and another brother.

She once lured Sebastian away from one of their control rooms. She felt confident she had what it took to bring out his brother. She smirked and then twisted off the urge to taunt him more. Well, for a second maybe, then her natural instincts kicked her ass and she let her body unwind just for him.

* * * *

Gabriel sat back in an executive recliner glaring at the monitors. He rolled the chair forward and hit one button after another until he had her right where he wanted her, in plain focus and larger than life.

He'd been notified when she walked into the club because she wasn't supposed to be there. Sebastian made a point to let everyone know it. After he took the effort, Gabriel fully expected to see the defiant little wench. He knew his little brother's absence was reason enough for her to come looking for him, searching for him where she realized she would inevitably find him. He wondered why Sebastian didn't take Constance with him.

A seductress at heart, the little siren moved like silk sliding on butter as she floated around the room. Twice, she doubled over with a throbbing ache. He watched her curiously as he tried to figure out what to do next.

"Do you know I'm the only cure for your kind of pain, doll?" he asked aloud. "You know the stabbing sensation you feel is for me, don't you?" He scratched his chin but not his itch. The prickling up and down his spine had a name—Constance Spenser.

If Sebastian didn't leave her with viable alternatives for blood while he was away, then the scent of him would drive her mad. Constance needed him and if she wanted to drink him in, then he'd certainly hand her a straw.

For months, he'd thought of her and for the better part of the last year, he'd craved his brother's woman with a desire few men, let alone vampires, would ever understand, but he'd stayed away. Out of respect for his brother, and to make things easier for both Constance and himself, he'd remained out of touch and out of reach until now.

Darian even helped out when he sent him to the States for a few months. Gabriel missed Constance every day while he was away. Later, he vowed he wouldn't leave Edinburgh again unless she left ahead of him or beside him. The oath, he'd never break, was one he planned on discussing with Sebastian before he discovered his brother left for an undetermined amount of time.

Constance held the admiration of the elders, so Darian was notified at once since he was at the helm of the Sabbat family. Gabriel, for as long as Sebastian traveled, had to make himself available as a life source should the need arrive and apparently it showed up in record time. Constance sure looked like she needed him, and maybe even what he had in-between his legs. He hoped to hell and back that's why she came to their club.

Constance didn't know how deeply embedded her mark was left on him, but it lingered there. Every single day he had to live with her memory and it seared his soul, ruined him for another woman, and damn near destroyed him altogether.

He leaned back and ran his large palm across the back of his neck. "What now, little gem?" He shifted forward and glared at the monitor. His dick hardened to an incredible, if not painful size. "Damn it, Constance."

His eyes narrowed as she twisted her body into all sorts of maneuvers. Sexy and provocative, she tried to draw him out and he damn well recognized her charades. He'd seen her work her magic before.

Not this time, he thought. "Not now," he said. "Not yet."

At the very least, he enjoyed fooling himself for a few moments more. “Damn it to hell, woman! Why are you here? What do you want?”

He pushed himself away from his desk and moved to another wall. He flipped a switch and shades were drawn back revealing one of the studio rooms below. He watched as a Dom challenged his submissive. The suite left nothing to the imagination for those who entered there and the woman with her Master went willingly.

Dubbed appropriately as the Lover’s End, if a submissive entered the quarters below, they were quickly reminded of the fine line between pain’s more delicious pleasures. The whore below warranted the title. Gabriel had watched her with various lovers.

Waiting for the first act to unfold, he observed as the man blindfolded her. He noticed the chokehold collar on the woman’s frail neck and her tiny nubs spiked enough to inspire wanton aggression. Gabriel rubbed a slow hand over his cock and flipped the switch again. He didn’t want to watch two people he didn’t know go at it. He wanted Constance. He wanted to see *her go at him*.

Quickly, he returned to her image on the screens. Now, she was ripe for the taking. Frustration held her by the arm and led her into the dark desire she wanted to find. He saw its imprint in her expression.

She came there for him, but she feared she wouldn’t find him. Her gaze darted around the club on a frantic search. He had to hand it to her. She dressed for the occasion if she wanted to lure him out, but when he didn’t come for her, she gave it her all. Now, she had her eye on new prey—Darian.

Damn it all. She found the right button to change his mind. Her unfair and wildly aggressive catcall violently warned what happened to a vampire male who kept a pretty little pussy waiting.

Yeah, he considered Darian a true error in judgment, one he would now have to match.

* * * *

Darian danced right in behind her and his lips moved against her ear. “I’ve kept you waiting.”

“Hardly,” she hummed, facing him. Her hands flew to his chest and she worked for space between them. “Where’d your friends go?”

“My brother is away, so you’ve come to play?” He didn’t answer her question.

“I’m not dead yet, Darian.”

He nodded toward the door. “No, you’re not. But those men are grave-bound now, baby. No thanks to you, I might add.”

The handsome one, the man Darian didn’t like for some reason, turned to look back and when he did, he lingered there in the laser cross-ties, tempting her. He winked, waved, and then blew her a kiss.

“You have several lifetimes to enjoy, little gem. That’s why I’ll have to do my part to make sure you

have the best of them.”

Constance’s capacity to feel guilty diminished almost as quickly as she tried to find some level of remorse. Perhaps if she’d chosen another night to visit, the men leaving Agendas would never know the pain of a fateful bite. She doubted it. Some men were destined to die young and she believed rarely a good one died without a purpose. The demise of the bad humans occurred often because of what they represented in life and sometimes even caused.

Darian’s gaze drifted over her and she saw the lust behind his eyes. Darian was the first Sabbath to ever hold her in his arms. As a little girl, he kidnapped her and her sisters-in-law. He once cradled her close as he pointed out his younger brother. She remembered the day as if it were yesterday.

“I’m not here to play with you, Darian.” She nipped at the syllables as if she took a moment to sharpen her fangs between each word. Then she made her way to the bar once more. She motioned for a cocktail waitress who immediately brought her a scotch and water.

“Our employees are catering to your every whim, I see.” Darian noted the obvious as the glass left the server’s hands and quickly cooled Constance’s palm.

She turned up the drink and gulped down the liquid. She handed the empty glass back to the woman in front of her.

“From what my men shared with me, you’re toxic tonight. Is there a particular reason for it, sweet baby?”

“Another one,” she spat the words, ordering another drink almost before she had a chance to swallow the first one. The woman waited for Darian’s approval and he gave it with a nod.

“What do you want, Constance?” Darian didn’t play games long. His kind sentiments disappeared the second he realized they lacked enough appeal for her palate.

Darian’s brothers toyed with her, but he apparently never wanted her to think he might, which was okay with her. He remained face value and they both realized they stood on sinking soil with one another.

“I know you have my father.” Taking a matter-of-fact tone, she stated the obvious as another glass of scotch was set before her. She took the tumbler and emptied it down her throat with a gulp.

“Another,” she stated.

This time, the waitress didn’t wait for an approval, she most likely expected Darian to intervene if he decided she’d indulged enough.

“Did you come here for answers or to behave in a manner to embarrass us and your family? Drinking a man’s drink while negotiating a man’s business transaction doesn’t become you, sister-in-law.”

“You know where my father is. What will it take to get him back?” Constance glared at Darian. “Doesn’t it mean anything to you that Tabitha’s children are growing up without their grandfather?”

A change in his expression took her by surprise. So he did care if Tabitha wanted for something she didn’t have. Darian was Tabitha’s secondary, but there were unusual circumstances behind their unusual circumstances. Complications and lots of them existed under the layers.

“You know,” he began, sliding closer to her and placing his palm on her lower back, “after seeing your little bottom bounce across our dance floor, I have to wonder what the information is worth to you, assuming I’m the one who can help you find him.”

As quickly as Darian wrapped her closer, a hard swipe from behind guaranteed of one Sabbath’s arrival. Gabriel knocked his brother’s hand away from the woman he claimed to care little for beyond a service he once provided.

Constance knew better. The air changed the second he shared it with her. She breathed easier, but at the same time had to postpone turning around to face him for fear she’d simply collapse in his arms.

“He doesn’t have him,” Gabriel stated with confidence.

Before Gabriel arrived, Constance had been so lost in the conversation with Darian that she forgot an even truer purpose. She yearned for Gabriel and as luck would have it, her intimate conversation with the eldest Sabbath drew him out more than twisting her ass on their dance floor.

“Gabriel,” she said, greeting him. “I imagine you’ve been waiting for the right time to join us, as always.” Delicately chosen words fell out into the open for a cool translation just as they were delivered.

The vampire brides who chose to bed and marry their own went through a ridiculous ceremonial mating and hers involved Gabriel. The threesome she experienced with Gabriel and his brother, her mate, still haunted her whenever she thought of him.

Looking at him then, Constance realized why one night with him left her forever insatiable. Most women probably pictured Gabriel as their personal sex toy. Long blond hair draped over his shoulders. It gave him a sexy, untamed appearance, but his eyes told quite an exciting tale. He’d leave the wild if the right woman wanted him. She did.

Gabriel only gave her a quick sweep, a head to toe evaluation without a pause anywhere. Then he looked around the room as he addressed her. He seemed uninterested and completely detached. “Constance, just so you know, one of Sebastian’s men will notify him. He won’t remain in the dark about your little visit here.”

“And you think your brother scares me?” she asked defiantly. “Hardly.”

Darian studied Gabriel, his brow wrinkling with his complete fixation. Constance paid closer attention then as well. Gabriel focused on the rise and fall of her chest and his clenched fists hung at his sides. “I know what scares you, Constance.”

Another drink was placed in front of her and she quickly brought the glass to her lips only to have Gabriel snatch it from her hand. They locked in a knowing gaze as he turned up the glass this time and took the drink she only thought she wanted. She enjoyed the dominance and the way he removed her liquid temptation.

Darian laughed. “How does it feel to go from your brother’s home and care to my brother’s complete obsession? I imagine you’ve spent your entire life having a man tell you what to do. It must be hell for a woman like you.”

He focused on her breasts too before he licked his upper lip. “It is, isn’t it doll?”

“Pure hell,” Constance agreed. “About my father...”

Gabriel took a step forward and gently touched several locks of her hair, pushing it back over her shoulder as his fingertips scraped the exposed area of skin. “Trust me, if he had your father, princess, I’d tell you.”

Darian chuckled and then said, “I believe he would because you definitely have a way with him. He’s almost as bad as Sebastian.”

Constance realized Darian revealed family secrets. The pain she felt in her heart suddenly suffocated her. Gabriel’s hand on her in that one split second numbed her body and torched her heart. Locked gazes told the tale and Gabriel understood her desire. She saw the hunger lingering behind the façade.

She watched as his mouth watered and his eyes stopped moving downward long enough to study her lips. She parted them enough to allow him a quick show of tongue offering only a glimpse, in hopes of later luring him in for a more intimate inspection.

Before she thought about the consequences behind any suggestive advance, she returned to business and blurted out her desperate reasons for searching out her father on this particular night. “My mother needs him. We’ve lost too much time and we want him back.”

Darian wrapped his muscular arms around her waist and in a daring move, his lips met her neck. He deeply inhaled her scent. “Tell me what you’d do for me, assuming I can help you.”

Gabriel quickly gripped his brother’s forearm. “Remember who you’re speaking to,” he warned, adding a threat. “Sebastian may have been dumb enough to leave her unattended, but I can assure you, she’s not alone. And never forget, Darian, I’m not our little brother. I’ll take the time to look after her, but I won’t need your help to do it.” Jealousy consumed him. It left its evidence in the statement he specifically chose to ward off another brother’s fast hand.

“Thank you, Gabriel, but *let me assure you*, I didn’t come here for you,” she said dryly.

Moving in front of his brother, Gabriel had a sexy rebuttal. “Maybe not, but *come* is what you will do—and for me alone—if Sebastian fails to return.”

Chapter Two

Almonzo Spenser sat on a sidewalk with his legs extended. He looked like a large bear playing with a

few attentive cubs. He played dice with the street children of the city and taught them how to place their bets in a real game of craps. An old, kinder man once showed him the very rules he wanted to teach these youngsters now. For the moment, he killed time. Soon though, it would be time to kill. The best he could hope for was that he didn't take one of these boys or their fathers in the process.

One of the younger boys studied him carefully and his brow wrinkled all at once. "Why is your skin so blue?"

Almonzo tossed the dice against the back of a cardboard box. "I don't know. Maybe it's because it's cold out here."

"Why do you always roll a seven?" another one inquired.

"Luck," he said. Bad for some, good for others, but yes, he often rolled nothing more than sevens. In Las Vegas, if he felt a good run of them, he could break a casino. It was unexplainable, one of the true wonders of his world. Often, when he bet with the house, and later left with a large portion of casino profits, he was accused of cheating.

"Mister, where are you from?" one of the street children asked.

"Mars," he replied, smiling.

"What do peoples look like on Mars?" the youngest boy drawled as he inquired with great curiosity in his voice.

"Well," Almonzo began just as he saw Orlando and Sebastian out of the corner of his eye, "I...uh...don't recall." He stood up and they nodded. "Boys, I think it's time for me to go. Here," he tossed some money into the box and said, "Go buy some groceries for your families."

Orlando gave him a quick hand signal and Almonzo realized he was out of time. Quick actions were needed. Evidently, Orlando and Sebastian found a hot trail and it was most likely one with blood on it. Nothing else excited a vampire more.

* * * *

Pissed off hardly covered it, raging anger flowed through her neck and veins. Constance wanted blood, and anyone's plasma would do, but she wanted to bite the hell out of Gabriel for various reasons and none of them made sense. She slammed her bedroom door, walked over to her bed, and fell on it dramatically.

"Rough night?"

Startled, Constance braced herself against her elbows. "Tabitha, I didn't see you there."

"I thought you might go to Agendas tonight, so I called Darian. He said you were on your way home. I waited for you. Constance, I think we need to have a talk about Gabriel."

“Tabitha, you don’t understand,” Constance whispered. She stood up and strolled to her walk-in closet where she lost her high heels and then her sexy outfit in exchange for some comfy flannel pajamas.

Tabitha rose from the overstuffed sofa. “I don’t understand? You’re forgetting who you’re talking to here. I told Almonzo, warned him really, to either take you with them or leave Sebastian behind.”

“Almonzo and Orlando have nothing to do with this.”

“Does Sebastian?” Tabitha asked, pretending to know exactly what Constance was talking about and perhaps, to an extent, she did. Tabitha had two secondary feeder mates in the event Almonzo didn’t achieve the lifetime of the immortal vampire, but her situation differed from Constance’s.

Tabitha was born a mortal. Almonzo, or Darian—Constance never understood which really—turned Tabitha. Constance entered the world as a vampire, something pop culture would welcome since she wasn’t an ancient legend from the past—the born and bred true vampire, complete with fangs and an immediate distaste for real food.

“I love Sebastian,” she stated it without enthusiasm. She realized it and immediately regretted it.

“And what about Gabriel?”

Constance’s heart raced faster, pounding so hard against her chest, she almost blurted out a reply. Instead, she flopped down on a beanbag. She propped her legs upward on a coffee table two feet away from her. “What about him?”

“Do you love him?”

Constance gritted her teeth. “If I told you I hated him, would you believe me?”

“No.” Tabitha moved her mouth then like she wanted to say something more but decided to back up and start again. “Constance, your brother would die if he knew this, but I’m going to say it anyway. I don’t think it’s possible for us to hate our secondary mates. Maybe it’s because we realize they are a basic need for us as much as any other. We will, how should I say this, depend on them for our nourishment and even sex in the event something happens to our soul mates, our chosen mate.”

“What if our chosen mate chose us, but we didn’t choose them?” Constance asked.

Tabitha took a deep breath and let it out. “Is that what you think happened with Sebastian?”

Constance sat thoughtfully without answering her.

“You love Gabriel, don’t you?” She didn’t like the idea and it showed in her expression while sounding out in her tone.

Constance released a tortured sigh. It revealed how frustrated she felt right then. “Do you remember when I was living with Sebastian before the elders stepped in and messed everything up?”

Tabitha laughed. “Don’t take it so personally. They do it to every female around. So far, only my sister escaped their interference.”

“Yeah, it’s because Natasha has red hair.” Constance giggled and pointed toward the door. “I hear you

out there, eavesdropping, sister-in-law. You might as well join us.”

Natasha rushed in and flopped on the floor next to Constance. “Thanks for the invite. Sounds like you two are leaving me out of some kind of serious conversation. So fill me in,” she hummed, giving Constance a tight squeeze. “Is there a new lover in your bed while Sebastian is away?”

Tabitha pursed her lips and shook her head, warning Natasha away from the encouragement of such an act.

“No, there isn’t! You’re so bad, Natasha,” Constance said, amused. “Orlando would die if he only knew the real you!”

Tabitha grunted. “Oh, he knows. Trust me, he knows. Hell, I have to listen to their moaning and groaning three or four times a day.”

Constance’s jaw dropped. “No way.”

Natasha shrugged. “Sometimes we miss a day. After all, we’re not bunnies, you know.” She shook her finger at her sister. “You need more children to keep you busy. Then, you won’t have time to press an ear to my bedroom wall!”

“Where are my nephews and niece, by the way?” Constance chirped. “I heard Irisa talking on the phone earlier about a b-o-y.”

“Are you sure you’re talking about a b-o-y or is it possible she’s having a conversation with a v-a-m-p-i-r-e?” Natasha raised a brow. “She’s going to give Almonzo and her Uncle Orlando a fit. She has Orlando pacing the hall every time he hears her giggling on the phone all girly like.”

“No, he presses his ear up to the door and demands to know who she’s talking to. She’s already complained to her daddy,” Tabitha advised. “He told her to take it up with Orlando.”

“She didn’t,” Natasha informed.

“She won’t. She doesn’t want to hurt his feelings.” Tabitha turned back to Constance. “Speaking of which, is that what’s going on here with Sebastian? You don’t want to hurt him by asking him to let you spend some time with Gabriel?”

“Now come on, Tabitha. Look at her. The blush in her skin gives everything away. She wants more than time alone with Gabriel. She wants to—”

“Natasha, come on! You’re as bad as Tabitha. You two need to give it a rest. I won’t do something I’ll later regret.”

“Would you feel remorse if you spent a few hours with Gabriel?”

Constance immediately felt the pain in her gut, like a swift kick. She doubled over and tried to play it off by laughing a little bit. “No, of course not, but I know somebody who would go the extra mile and try her best to make me feel guilty.”

“But do *you* know why you should?” Tabitha acted overly-concerned. “I mean, do you understand why Almonzo and Orlando wouldn’t want you to spend very much time with Gabriel?”

“Forget the big brothers here, Tabitha. I think it’s important for Constance to understand why Sebastian isn’t comfortable with it as well.”

Constance stared out the window. She could’ve sworn she saw a flash or something and quickly remembered an earlier pain similar to the one she just had. When Gabriel was close, she doubled over with a raw hunger and a rare and sudden wantonness, much like the sensation she now experienced. Additionally, the pain in her joints and muscles was incomprehensible.

“He’s here,” she whispered.

“Who’s here?” Tabitha asked, turning toward the window. “No one is outside.”

Constance felt the stab at her gut again. “Yes, *he* is. I can feel him.”

“You’re forgetting how her senses kick in, Tabitha. She has the strongest sixth sense of any of the Spencers. It’s rare when she’s wrong. Should we leave or do you want us to stay?”

Constance jumped to her feet and stared outside. She placed her palm against the windowpane. “He won’t come back while you’re here. Maybe not at all.”

“Then I’ll stay,” Natasha proclaimed triumphantly. “If he can’t drop in announced like everyone else, he doesn’t have a reason to stop in at all.”

The women exchanged glances. Constance saw the concern scribbled across their faces. “I know you both love me, but could you trust me on this and let me see him if he comes back?”

“Darian said you saw him at the club.”

“You saw Darian?” Natasha immediately shot her sister a true look of disappointment. The sisters were thick as thieves, but Natasha and Orlando were thicker and Almonzo and Tabitha even tighter, so the four seldom, if ever, had secrets.

“I talked to him and he told me Constance and Gabriel saw one another.”

“What is happening to my family?” Natasha grumbled. “I used to envy you two. You know the mating ceremonies you both enjoyed made me feel like I missed out on something, but now I’m glad I don’t have a secondary mate. You two are acting like our men aren’t coming home or something. Constance runs off to find Gabriel and you...you, Tabitha...I’m actually a little surprised. The very idea of using Constance for an excuse to talk to Darian is bound to lead to a lot of trouble down the road.” She shook her head. “I’m going to bed. This has given me a headache.”

“Drama, drama.” Tabitha kissed Constance on the cheek. “I’ll leave too, but promise me you’ll take into consideration Sebastian’s feelings if Gabriel comes back for a nightcap.”

“Sure,” Constance agreed, rubbing her forehead with three fingers.

“You might want to consider Orlando and Almonzo this time. They won’t like it a bit if they find out you let Gabriel inside this house.”

Constance narrowed her eyes on Natasha and started to tell a tiny white lie.

She quickly shook her head. "Oh, no, you don't. Do not lie to me, Constance Spenser. You aren't going to flash those pretty brown eyes at me and tell me a fib now so I'll cover you later. Uh-huh. You aren't a kid with your hand in the wrong berry bowl now. You're an adult and you don't have to explain anything to me, but I will not lie to your brother for you, so make sure you know what you're doing."

"Shh!" Tabitha walked her sister out. "It's safe to say if he's a Sabbat, he's able to hear at a great distance. Don't give all of Constance's secrets away. She doesn't know how she feels about him and why should she? Sebastian gives her everything she needs. They love one another and it's more than enough. Right, Constance?"

She nodded.

"Right, Constance?"

"Sure, Tabitha. He's super." She felt guilty. "He really is. I know he is. He's awesome and..."

"Let's go," Natasha said, disgusted. She pulled at Tabitha's wrist. "She's sounding more desperate by the second."

"I do love him, you know."

"I should hope so," Tabitha reminded her. "He's your chosen life mate, like it or not, and no one comes in-between the bond you and Sebastian have. It's not even possible. You know?"

"I know, and...I'm glad."

* * * *

He didn't appear the second Tabitha and Natasha left. No, certainly not. He made her wait. She knew he was out there because the pain intensified in her neck the closer he moved.

When the agonizing rumble in her belly rocked her into an intense physical suffering, she finally tugged the terrace doors open and then curled up on her bed. She stared straight ahead. She didn't look for him when she first opened the door because she didn't have to search. She smelled his spicy cologne the second the breeze caught the floor-length curtains.

She watched as if a movie unfolded before her, the pending drama bringing forward a new leading man. Gabriel stepped through the transparent silk material.

"I knew you were out there," she whispered, rocking back and forth now. "Please..." She swallowed hard, disappointed because she couldn't deny herself. She would beg if he required it. "Can you help me?"

His eyes sparkled with the undeniable shades of lust. The color in them changed from a mix of dark pink and lavender to a soft screen of light blue before he approached her.

“You don’t have to help me, of course,” she muttered, drawing her legs closer. She watched as he unbuttoned his cotton shirt. “I...I’m...”

“You’re glad Sebastian is your mate,” he growled, his gaze meeting hers. “You’re happy he chose you.” His guttural tone stayed at an unrecognizable pitch. “He makes all of your little girl dreams come true. I get it, Constance. I heard the conversation you had with your sisters-in-law.”

He moved one button after the other through the slits in the material and watched her like she was the only female he’d ever wanted in the world. “What I want to know is what does my brother do for the woman inside of you? Hmm...there’s the question. Does he make you happy, Constance?”

She nodded. “I am, really...happy.” She also needed to touch him, but before she reached for him, she had to get her breathing under control.

“Vampires lie, Constance. A lot.” He smirked as he shrugged out of his polo. “You apparently fib to yourself more than anyone else. Hell, I feel for Sebastian. Poor bastard doesn’t have a clue, does he?” He strolled over to her bedroom door and slammed it, locked it, insinuated a lot by doing both.

“What do you mean?”

“You care for me,” he firmly suggested.

“You know I do.”

“You’re in love with me.”

“No, that’s not true.”

“I don’t believe anything that’s coming out of your mouth tonight. Perhaps you are truly ill. I didn’t believe you when I stood there on your terrace and I don’t now.” He slid next to her and put his arm around her shoulders.

Immediately, she felt better, and worse.

“I don’t love you,” she whispered as he nuzzled her cheek.

“I’m not here to argue with you,” he advised, lowering his lips to hers, but he didn’t kiss her. “I’m not here to convince you to love me more than you love Sebastian because I wouldn’t want your love even if you offered it.”

She swallowed tightly remembering in an instant how a similar proclamation tore her heart out once before. “Then why are you here?”

“Duty,” he replied, tapping at his neck before he flipped the protruding vein. “I have a responsibility and you were hurting at the club.” He took her hand in his and for a second, they held hands. He caressed her thumb roughly with his. Then, he removed his grip and left her open palm on his lower belly.

A test no doubt, to see if she’d drop her hand and stroke him. Constance avoided trials because they often resulted in errors. Instead, she moved her hand up his bare stomach and left one hand on his chest while the other gripped his shoulder.

He held her close and stared at her mouth. The tiny tips broke free and the elongated fangs fell from her mouth.

With a hiss, she fought to restrain, Gabriel's eyes widened and his upper lip curled into a wicked, well-satisfied grin. "Ah, that's what I wanted to see—appreciation."

She latched onto his neck like a hungry animal tearing away at the flesh and before she realized where she was leading them, Gabriel pinned her hand firmly against his cock. She sucked harder and his hand clasped hers against the pulsing bulge underneath his thin slacks.

"Pretty baby. Oh, Constance, that's *what I needed*. I needed you to feel me while you drink. Take me, Constance. Drink what you need." He unzipped his fly and somehow managed to keep one hand on her back holding her to him while he maneuvered his zipper and her hand at the same time.

An inner voice rose loudly in the back of her head. *Stop! Stop!* She silently battled herself to close the wound, to stop drinking his blood, and release the hold he helped her gain.

She failed.

"Ah, Constance. Stroke it. Eat me alive. I hurt for you, baby. The blood I store burns hot when I think of you."

Her pussy was an inferno. The need to dine on Gabriel's plasma stores proved irresistible, but the desire to fuck him, it scared the hell out of her. She crawled down his stomach after she swiped over his neck a few times and he growled when she reached his middle. Her tongue circled around his belly button again and again before she touched the tip of his dick with her tongue.

"Shit!" His hips jerked and he immediately switched positions flattening her back against the mattress. "Oh, no, you don't, vixen. I know how this works far better than you. Somebody is on fire now, somebody needs to come as much as they needed to eat and it's not me, sugar."

"You can't, Gabriel. I mean, I can't let you."

With one small effort, he stripped her pajama pants from her body and rubbed the ball of his hand over her pussy. His nostrils flared and he inhaled her scent. "Sweet. You always smell so sweet and pure. Even though Sebastian took it first, this tight, little snatch belongs to me, doesn't it, sweetheart?"

She rolled her neck to the side. "Gabriel...I..."

He applied pressure to her inner thighs. "Spread your legs, Constance."

"But..."

"Do it," he growled, helping her.

He slid down the bed and positioned himself in between her legs before he pushed his hands under her ass and lifted her bottom. He stared at her vagina like he observed an intimate exhibit. She saw his lips moisten when she sat up, bracing herself against the pillows.

"I've waited for a long, long time, Constance," he muttered, blowing his hot breath over her mound before lowering his head only more. Moving his hand from her bottom to her center, he pressed a finger

inside.

Her legs trembled. “Stop, Gabriel, I’ll...”

He smirked as he added another finger, then one more. “You’ll what, Constance? Will you come for me?”

Oh, yes, there was no question. She didn’t want him to stop now. She drew her legs up and reached down her body. Touching her clit, she rolled her fingers around it. He sat back and watched.

“Now this is what I call beautiful,” he said softly. “Raise those hips for me, doll.”

He watched her play with the little button she certainly knew how to find and he fucked her with three long, perfect fingers. She felt his fingernails lightly scrape against her walls before the knot in the center of each finger rubbed at her cave.

His gaze darkened and he stared at her, lust and maybe even love spilled from his eyes. He pushed his fingers deep and then slowly withdrew them one by one giving each a hook and swirl motion before leaving her.

A flood of moisture poured from her channel. “I’ll come,” she said quietly.

“I didn’t hear you. Say it again,” he demanded, leaning still closer.

“I’ll...come...in a minute. I’m going to...”

Gabriel dropped his head and opened his mouth. He licked his bottom lip at the same time he planted a tender kiss on her mound. Then, he charmed her with his smile. “Hold your cream, kitten. I plan to give you a whole lot of sugar.”

Chapter Three

“Gabriel! Please. Oh, my...Gabriel!” Her ragged breath caught in her lungs as she squeezed her legs tightly against his head. He lapped at her folds, pushing his fingers higher and then covering her warm pussy with his whole mouth.

He slurped. Good damn did he suck in her juices.

Her hips rolled forward and she humped against his face and mouth, pressing her vagina against his lips.

She kept one hand on top of his head and the other braced behind her. She rose and fell against him as he licked her center, stroked the walls, and went deep, swiping out the best of her desires.

“Shit! Let me come, damn you!”

Oh, but she was coming. The poor little thing didn't have the good sense to know. As soon as she finished one climax, he brushed his mouth against her pussy lips and dragged his tongue straight through her channel again. He wildly nibbled at her clit with nothing more than his tight lips rolling over the sensational little button.

She gripped his hair again and rode him faster. Harder and harder, she mashed her pussy against his mouth and he smiled as he ate her. Good grief, she was more insatiable than he remembered. He was as horny as a mortal man who just realized his wedding night plans crashed thanks to a runaway bride. Oh, yeah, he needed to get his cock inside of her and she might let him if he made her crazy enough.

After she rose and fell with her fourth or fifth orgasm, he slowly let her recoil. She shuddered as she lay against the pillows and he braced himself over her, glancing at the clock only a second before he caressed her forehead. “You are the most incredible...” He swallowed tightly. What the fuck was he thinking?

He moved away from her, furious with himself for getting so attached and angrier still that he almost complimented her and revealed too much information. Breathless, he stared at the ceiling and waited for her to speak first. After he chastised himself for talking too much, he reached for her hand and brought it to his lips. “I care for you, Constance.”

She rolled over and stared back at him through haunting black eyes. “You want to have sex with me. You'll say anything right now just to have your way.” She scooted to the side of the bed. He yanked her back and pinned her against the mattress.

“If that wasn't some form of sex, I don't know what is,” he growled, nipping at her ear.

“Don't.” Her eyes immediately flashed with an even temper, one the little wench obviously had some measure of control over most of the time.

“I told you how I feel. It's not anything I made up just so I can screw you. If I wanted to fuck you bad enough, I'd take it whether you allowed it or not,” he said, delivering a sudden smack across her bare pussy.

“Shit! That hurt.”

“And you like it rough, don't you, sugar? That's why Sebastian isn't the right Sabbath for you. He takes things too slow for you. He's good to you but not good enough to keep you satisfied.”

“I'm not listening to this. I want you out,” she demanded.

“Of course you do. Why wouldn't you, hmm? You fed from your secondary mate and even had your tight little pussy sipped damn near dry. Of course, if you kick me out before your lips suck this in,” he wagged his cock a few times and threaded it through his hand, “then you've escaped the ultimate of betrayals, right?”

“Get out, Gabriel.”

“Why? Nearly an hour ago, you were ready to tell your sisters-in-law all about your feelings for me. What changed?” He firmly held her chin between his thumb and two fingers.

She tried to pull away and when she couldn’t, she closed her eyes.

“You’re scared, Constance. What we have between us is enough to terrify both of us, but it doesn’t go away, does it?”

“Get out.”

“Not a chance,” he promised. “You’ll fall asleep in my arms before the sun comes up.”

“The hell I will,” she snapped, opening her eyes.

“You will or else I’ll tell dear old Marian what I did to her sweet, little daughter. I wonder what she’ll think about it?”

Constance reminded him quickly of the power her family held. “You wouldn’t dare. She’d go straight to the panel and talk to the elders herself.”

“I would.”

“I’m not screwing you,” she exclaimed.

“I don’t want to fuck you now, Constance,” he said, hoping to see a spark of fury again. He didn’t expect to see disappointment wash over her face.

“Well, I...I won’t.”

“So you won’t, but you are sleeping in my arms. Right here, today. So get the fuck comfortable with the idea.”

* * * *

She curled against him like she belonged there. It took the throes of sleep to bring out the sweetness in a holy terror, but who the hell cared? Even though he didn’t get inside of her, even though he’d have to wait for another time, this was what he’d craved. He needed Constance Spenser wrapped around him like she wanted to be there, because he believed she belonged in his bed.

He kissed her forehead a few times throughout the day and watched as she smiled through her dreams. She rubbed her cheek against his chest and cuddled closer by placing her arm across his stomach. This moment, if he never had another one, proved all others he’d forfeited in the past were worth the wait.

Around six o’clock in the evening, his phone buzzed and he grabbed it from the bedside table. He answered quickly.

“Where are you?”

“Darian, I’ll get there in a few hours. It’s not the end of the world if I’m late.”

“Where. Are. You.” Each word formed a torturous sentence, as if he labored to speak one more syllable.

“Darian, later.” Gabriel snapped the phone shut and turned around. He found the prettiest shade of black a woman ever claimed for eyes.

“Hi,” she whispered. “I thought you’d leave during the afternoon.”

“No, I’m right here.”

“You watched me sleep. I know you did. I hate it when someone watches me sleep,” she whined.

“Then you shouldn’t have slept,” he replied, focusing on her mouth, staring at her teeth. He wondered if the little hellion would want more of the blood stores he had in reserve for her. “Are you hungry?”

She closed her eyes and he chuckled when he saw her try to refrain from dropping her sharp little teeth. “I’m not going to take advantage of you.”

“You miss Sebastian and crave the blood you need to survive. There’s nothing wrong with it, you know. It’s part of our culture and my duty.”

“Duty,” she groaned. “Tell me something, honorable vampire, do all males get in bed with their seconds and tent the sheets with a stiff erection?”

Gabriel stretched his arms over his head and then decided what the hell. Let the little vixen see it for crying out loud. He stood up.

Constance stared at his cock. “Good grief.”

“You liked it the first time you saw it. Don’t act so shocked now.”

“I...I forgot how big you are.”

“Enormous, darling. It’s rather large, so big doesn’t quite justify or accurately describe it.”

He snatched his pants from a nearby chair and then stepped into them. “Are you sure you’ll stay nourished until my brother returns?” he asked, grabbing his pink shirt from the floor.

Constance clutched the sheet tightly against her chest. “You don’t want anything more than what we shared?”

Ah, hell! Yeah, he wanted more, but after he heard her talking to Tabitha and Natasha, he feared what taking her might do to her. He heard her confession and while he’d like nothing more than to fuck her all night long, Darian’s call more or less saved her, and him.

Darian wouldn’t stop with one phone call. He typically persisted until his brothers showed up at Agendas ready for work. They must’ve had a packed house there tonight, or he knew Gabriel was

with Constance and it drove him crazy. Yeah, that's where he'd put his money. He'd bet on Darian's true lunacy by now. He realized when Gabriel didn't come home, the why behind it led to Constance.

Gabriel tugged on his loafers. "Around our house, everything comes alive around five or six in the evening, or at least it did when we were younger. I bet this place hums with the exciting arrival of nightfall."

"Well, I have two nephews and a niece who usually run in here to wake me up when Sebas?"

"It's okay, Constance, I'm aware of my brother's place in your bed." He was amused. "So Sebastian likes it when the little Spenser vamps come out to play, huh?"

"Yeah, he does. He's great with all three of Tabitha and Almonzo's children." She ran her fingers across the pillow next to her. "Do you want children someday, Gabriel?"

If he'd been anywhere else, right then and there, he might have closed his eyes and savored the moment. In his mind, the way he heard Constance ask, almost sounded like an invitation. He knew better, of course, but he still thought it sounded like a solid enticement.

"Better be careful with questions like that, Constance," he growled. "If there's nothing else you need, I'll get out of here before the baby vamps rush in and tackle the wrong Sabbath. The surprise in their faces might provide a little comic relief, but I need to get going."

"Should I thank you?" Constance batted her eyelashes and humor existed there. He wanted to kiss her again simply because she asked such a loaded question.

"I don't know. It depends."

"On?"

"Well," he began, stalking closer. "Do you want me to say 'anytime' or would you prefer something along the lines of 'don't mention it' or how about," he crossed his arms and his lips curved in a smile, "the one I like best 'it was nothing.' Now there's one you'll enjoy."

Constance set her jaw and her lips formed a deliberate pout. "Nothing, huh?"

"That's right. Nothing but duty, remember?"

Constance rose to her knees and parted them the second she grabbed onto his shoulders for balance. He hooked his arm around her waist and dragged her to the edge of the mattress.

"I bet you'll still taste me," she whispered, flirting with danger. He had plenty of it rising for her in his slacks if she carried her little act too far.

"Careful, Constance. What happened between you and me last night is a one-time deal. If I ever get that far with you again, I will fuck you and so help me, if I ever get inside of you, I'm not sure I'll withdraw for anyone. Not Darian on request, the elders on a direct order, or a potential secondary...not even for Sebastian."

She moved her mouth as if she wanted to say something and he stole away the opportunity. He nipped at her lower lip playfully and then tapped her tongue with his, easing his way right into their kiss. He

leisurely lingered around her mouth and sucked her bottom lip in between his lips before he released her with a quiet whisper. "You love me."

"I loved what you did to me last night."

He captured her mouth again and gave her a hearty, lust-filled kiss. When he released her, he left her with a promise. "If you liked last night, give me one or two more and you'll petition the elders for a better placement with your second."

"A better one?"

"Damn straight and a permanent one too. In my bed."

* * * *

After Gabriel left, Natasha rushed inside and tossed a cell phone in Constance's lap. She blinked twice when she realized Constance held a sheet to her obviously naked body.

"Sorry to barge in," she chirped, glancing toward the walk-in closet and bathroom. "Uh, Sebastian tried your cell. He wants to talk to you."

Constance snatched the phone and held it to her ear with both hands. "Sebastian?"

"Constance, oh, baby, it's so good to hear your voice."

"Sebastian, I need to talk to you about something."

"No. You need to tell me what's going on there with Marian. Almonzo received word that she's having some adjustment problems. We think with Orlando and Almonzo away, things are more difficult for her. Orlando can come home."

Constance glanced at Natasha. She nervously continued to wring her hands while pacing the floor.

"I don't think Mother is the one with the adjustment problems."

Natasha stopped walking and narrowed her eyes. "Don't you dare," she mouthed.

Sebastian laughed. "Oh, I get it. Natasha?"

"Why, yes," she replied. "How'd you know?"

"Almonzo said given the fact Orlando and Natasha bump like rabbits four or five times a day, Natasha might need a secondary feeder in place just to handle things from a sexual perspective, pushing aside any more practical reason."

"When are you coming home?" She changed the subject. Most of the household knew Orlando and Natasha were over-sexed. She wanted news, not amusement.

“Constance? Do you trust me?”

“Yes, you know I trust?”

“And Orlando and Almonzo, how about them?”

“Yes...but...”

“Then believe me when I tell you, I never wanted to leave you. We know we’re onto something and we will follow this trail until we find your father. We’ll bring him home.”

“I see. And what if you don’t? What if you get tied up in some kind of underground war and in the process of trying to find him, you end up in a very similar position? What then?”

“That’s not going to happen. We have something your father didn’t have. Strength in numbers.”

“Is Darian behind this?” she snapped. “He is still behind this, isn’t he?”

“We think so.”

“Damn it! Then he’s going to have?”

“Constance, it’s more complicated than what you understand. I’ll explain everything when I see you. Stay away from Darian.”

“I want you to explain it now. Sebastian, I need...you don’t understand what it’s like. You can go out and feed whenever you need to find blood, but I can’t and I’m desperate.”

“I know you are and Tate is working to adjust supplements to keep you nourished. Please drink them, Constance. This is only for a little while.”

“I want you to send for me,” she whined.

“No, it’s not safe.”

“Then, let Gabriel or—”

“What does Gabriel have to do with this?” Anger shot through the phone lines.

Natasha, who had been standing near the window, stepped outside on the terrace without looking back. She evidently picked up on Constance’s need for privacy.

“I saw him,” she said honestly.

“I don’t have time to hear about it. I trust you, Constance. I do not trust my brothers and it’s important for you to remember two things. If I can’t trust them, you can’t either. I love you. Speak soon.”

“Wait, Sebastian?” She held the phone out and noticed where the facing on the phone read ‘call disconnected,’ but she still clutched it tight against her cheek. “Sebastian!”

Natasha walked back inside and peeled the phone away from Constance's fingers. "Did you tell him about Gabriel?"

"No."

"Did you try?" she asked, staring at the tangled sheets. "He'll know."

"Natasha, don't."

She ignored the warning. "The second he lays down on this bed, he'll sense the very acts committed here and..."

"I didn't fuck him."

"Sometimes, for a vampire, there are greater acts of betrayal," she said wearily. She stared at the splotches of blood on the pillow.

"It was his duty, nothing more."

"I see," she said softly. "He simply fed his secondary mate, right?"

"Natasha, I'm not discussing it."

"Why not?" she responded before storming forward. "Why is it that you don't want to discuss Gabriel, hmm? Is it because you think you're walking on sacred ground with him? I'm interested to know because so help me, Constance, I don't understand you. The love of your life is out there looking for your father so he can finally bring him home, and you do this. I want to know why!"

Tabitha appeared in the doorway. "Because the love of her life was here last night, right here in this room, in that very bed with her."

Chapter Four

A week later and the calls from Sebastian only came in every other day. Orlando somehow found time to call Natasha, but Sebastian and Almonzo took turns calling home. Constance wondered why. Tabitha confided her beliefs. She thought they separated and followed different trails. In her opinion, they were moving in and out of areas without cellular towers.

Constance stared up at the moon as the Spenser car moved through the streets of Edinburgh. "Fuck

transportation.” Her family and most of those they knew only used modern day transportation to keep the light of recognition from shining their way. If Sebastian wanted to see her, even though they were in the States, he could make it home in seven or eight hours. Maybe he didn’t want or need to see her. She shook off the thought as soon as she had it. She knew better. Sebastian adored her.

The car stopped in front of Agendas and Sabbath goons opened the door for her. She skipped over the front steps and worked her strut enough to leave those behind her drooling. She hit the laser area and twisted around in the lights. “I’m here!”

She looked up at the tiny cameras and by the time she started for the dance floor, she spotted the mortal man, the one Darian didn’t want near her when she stopped by Agendas earlier in the month. She avoided eye contact and made her way to a dark, cozy corner. Why not sink into the shadows until the dangerous one and his entourage left?

She sat down at the round top and slid into the middle so she could see the entire club. “I’ll have a whiskey sour,” she told the cocktail waitress before she asked. The gal wasn’t one of her favorites there. She had a thing for Gabriel and probably spent a great deal of time in his bed. Come to think of it, she despised the girl. Big boobs, tight ass, and sort of pretty, very pretty if she wanted to pay closer attention, but she didn’t. Gabriel probably gave her plenty.

“Constance Spenser, isn’t it?”

Startled, she stared at the mortal with delicious lips. Good looking didn’t adequately define him. She’d never seen any human who tempted her so much.

“Who’s asking, handsome?” she flirted.

“May I?” he asked politely before pointing to the booth.

“Sure,” she said, folding her hands under her chin. “Why not?”

“I’m Marc Dennison.”

Constance placed her hand in his. “Constance.”

He brought her hand to his lips and kissed it. “Spenser, isn’t it?”

“Sabbat,” Gabriel informed from behind him as he slid on the other side of the booth and draped a possessive arm around Constance’s shoulders.

She shuddered when his hand cupped her nape. Her pulse increased and every nerve ending tingled.

His eyes were as cold as ice. “How’s it going tonight, Marc? Having a good time?”

“Gabriel,” she whispered his name in greeting and in warning.

“Sabbat, is it?” The strange, and apparently dangerous mortal seemed all the more interested. He winked and nodded toward her. “Your club is full of surprises.”

Gabriel sneered. “It is.”

“I see.” Amused, Marc added, “So she’s yours or Darian’s?”

“Actually, I’m—”

Gabriel, pressed his lips to hers. Hungry and dominant, he kissed her with enough of a claiming to convince someone, maybe everyone, she belonged to him. When the kiss broke, Marc chuckled.

“Constance, why don’t you go find a drink. Wait for me upstairs.”

Now she wanted to smack him. She couldn’t push him away when his mouth was on hers but after he left her feeling vulnerable, she wanted to raise a hand and let it crash against his pale flesh.

The cocktail waitress, the one with green envy written all over her face, showed up with Constance’s cocktail about the time Gabriel made the suggestion.

“Gabriel,” she said.

“Lisa, your timing always sucked, lover.”

Constance stirred her drink and thanked the whore delivering it. She fluttered her eyelashes, taunting her. “Thank you, Lisa. Gabriel suggested that I find a drink and wait upstairs, but now I won’t have to, hmm?”

Lisa raised a brow,, thinned her lips, and walked away.

“Smart girl, Gabriel,” Constance chirped. “If she’d said one cross word to me, I would’ve insisted someone fire her.”

Gabriel concealed a grin, though barely and then turned his attention to Marc. “Waiting for Darian?”

“No, as a matter of fact, we met at another Sabbat club this morning. I’m enjoying the scenery.” He stared harder at Constance. “Some of the best in Edinburgh decorates your clubs.”

Constance leaned back. The man wanted a closer look and Gabriel didn’t earn the right to act so possessive. She dressed the part and what the hell. Why not let the guy indulge in simple pleasures.

She wore a preppy plaid short skirt with a slit up the side and a hook and tie top with the middle missing. The skirt pattern included cut-outs around her hipbone and the leather band holding the material against her hips only gave one impression. Any woman wearing such an outfit didn’t care if men looked. She played the part of naughty schoolgirl better than most.

“What do you want, Dennison?”

“I want, Mr. Sabbat... what you have.” He returned his focus to Constance after glaring at Gabriel longer than most mortal men dared. “If you don’t mind my saying so, I believe you’re the luckiest of the Sabbat lot. You seemed to have found the Spenser gem, have you not?”

Gabriel squeezed her knee. “Constance, disappear, doll.”

Constance sipped her drink and glanced at Gabriel, who ignored her—and what a dreadful mistake—so she studied Marc Dennison, who didn’t.

“Tell you what, rather than make your woman go upstairs, I’ll make you a trade. One dance with her and I’ll leave. Then, she can enjoy her time with you and keep the patrons here using your private rooms. One look at her and I imagine those suites are on a waiting list.”

Gabriel growled and his body went rigid. “I think...”

“It’s one dance, Gabriel. Besides,” she nodded in Lisa’s direction, “You have someone to keep you entertained.” She scooted around the table on her bottom and hit her hip against the mortal man. “I love this song, so I’m glad you asked. He won’t dance with me,” she purred, watching Gabriel.

His jaw tensed and a dreadful shade of dark red outlined his pupils. “Constance, this is not a good idea.”

“On the contrary,” Marc informed, placing his hand on her lower back, “it’s a great idea. I’ll bring her back to you in one piece, Sabbat. Give me a minute to enjoy her on the dance floor.”

Constance held her breath then and moved out of the way when she saw Gabriel leap from the table. Only, she sorely misjudged the situation. He bypassed the mortal and instead grabbed her wrist and led her straight out of the club.

* * * *

“I’m pissed off, Gabriel!” She wanted him to recognize her anger. She glared across the leather seat but he looked straight ahead, refusing to gratify her with a lustful stare.

“I don’t give a damn if you’re mad as hell. Dennison is dangerous. He’s not going to lay one hand on you when I’m around.”

“You have no right to make that kind of call.”

“The hell I don’t. I have every right and as you may have noticed, I exercised it and got you out of there.”

“Screw you, Gabriel.”

“Huh, well yeah, you should have done *that* last week. You missed one hell of a ride.”

“I’m fuming! Do you realize how possessive you looked? You looked like...like...”

“Like what? Say it, damn you. I looked like a jealous boyfriend, a lover perhaps?”

“Yes.”

“Fantastic. Mission complete. Dennison will stay the hell away from you.”

She took deep, agitated breaths. “I went to Agendas to find your brother.” She arrogantly added more. “I didn’t plan on seeing you.”

She lied, is what she did.

“Liar.” He called her on it but didn’t face her then. To look at her all but pained him and until he could touch her the way he wanted, he refused to respond in the way he guessed she would’ve liked.

She tried to straighten out her short skirt and then settled her palms on her bare waist. Damn her for looking so incredibly hot.

“What the hell were you thinking, Constance? You’re not dressed like a mated woman. You dressed for foreplay, for the lifestyle.” As soon as he said the words, the truth slammed against his chest and beat him up with rapid heartbeats. She’d dressed for him.

She slapped her hand against the seat. “Where are we going?”

“You’ll see.”

“Are you going to tell Sebastian you took me somewhere alone?”

He thought about the inquiry, how his reply could be laden with an underlying motive. How she stated the question was purposeful. She wanted to find out precisely what he had in mind for them. He knew where he wanted to take her. He understood the chemistry between them. It would ultimately lead them into forbidden territory. Some might view it as adultery. He wasn’t sure how he planned to seduce her, only that a seduction loomed. It would prove interesting to see who initiated it first tonight.

Refusing to answer was a mistake.

“Damn you, Gabriel! Look at me!” She squatted, knelt even, in front of him.

He liked her there. With her hands squarely on each knee, it would’ve been easy to lose himself in her black eyes while watching them shade with the raw emotions she tried to hide.

His hips gave a fraction and his erection bulged against the tiniest threads used by one of the Sabbath’s well-appointed seamstresses. He would’ve loved nothing more than to allow his legs to fall open and invite her wicked little fingers to explore him once more. It had been far too long since she joined with his brother. It had been far longer than he cared to admit since she wrapped her sinful little body around him for the sake of a vampire joining. He wanted to know how it felt to fuck her again, to have her slick heat covering his cock as he sank into her folds and just reveled in her milking him.

God, he missed her. He had her in his bed for a few hours, but she was etched into his mind for an eternal hell if he couldn’t taste her passion once more. Betrayal loomed, hell yeah, it called out for both of them. Sadly, he bet Constance already believed she betrayed Sebastian when he went to her at the Spenser estate.

Too bad, more guilt lurked in the shadows.

“I see you, Constance. I swear, there’s nothing about you that I miss. Damn woman, isn’t it enough?” he growled, raising her up to meet him by simply taking her upper arms in a grip she’d never break.

She swallowed hard never expecting a hungry response to still her next move. “You want me worse than you’ve ever wanted any woman. I know you do. You can deny it, but you can’t hide it—not from me.”

She licked her lower lip and as if the taste of it wasn't what she desired, she moved closer and licked his, too.

"Careful, Constance, you won't be able to stop me once I start. I warned you the last time we were together. Next time, there won't be a halting time. I'll fuck you until you can't walk, sugar." He pushed her to the side and shifted in his seat and the back door suddenly opened.

Gabriel nodded to the family's butler. "Walt," he said, walking by him without a second thought.

The old man appeared delighted to see Constance and he moved over to the car to help her out. "Constance, dear child, how are you?"

"Old enough to graduate from child to woman, don't you think?" Gabriel made the observation from the door of their family home.

Constance and Walt ignored him. She planted a kiss on his cheek. "It's good to see you, Walt."

"Will Sebastian be joining you or, err..." He shot Gabriel a knowing stare. "On the contrary, he's in the States, is he not?"

Constance liked Walt, a lot, but she didn't like him enough to provide answers to curious questions. "Walt, why aren't you at the country home?"

He rambled on about some remodeling Sebastian requested and how the noise made it impossible to tolerate. He'd decided to help out at the family estate until he returned to the country. They made simple small talk for a few more minutes as Constance and Gabriel made their way inside.

"Can I prepare a room for you?" he fired the question in Gabriel's direction, but he apparently expected Constance to answer.

"She won't stay long enough to need a guest room," Gabriel responded, waving a dismissive hand in Walt's direction.

"Now who's lying?" she asked.

Gabriel took her hand and quickly led her through the foyer. "I'm certainly not, because if you stay, little wench, you won't need your own damn room," he said through gritted teeth, leading them into the maze of the Sabbat compound.

"Let me go. You're hurting me," Constance complained.

Looking over his shoulder, only for a minute, he made sure she wasn't feeling pain. "I'm going to hurt you all right, but it's not going to be in the way you might like," he hissed. He stepped to the side before motioning her to a slanted ramp.

"Where does this lead?" she questioned.

"Trust me," he snapped.

"Trust you when you promised to hurt me? I'm no man's pawn or vampire's foolish woman."

“Sure you are.” He smacked her bottom in a condescending gesture. “You’re Sabbat property, lover. Now, move your sweet ass downstairs. I want to show you something.”

Swallowing hard, she remembered Sebastian’s warning, one she refused to heed because she cared for Gabriel, but Gabriel was a vile male, nothing like Sebastian and more like Darian than she cared to admit.

“I’m not Sabbat property.” She bit out the words before quickly adding, “I’m the daughter of Samuel Spenser and I have more Spenser blood flowing through my veins than I’ll ever have—”

“Let me remind you of the blood you’ve fed on, princess,” he bitterly cut her off, his harsh words oozing with sarcasm.

“It doesn’t mean I’m owned,” she snapped, her hand drifting along the wall in an effort to find her way out of the darkness. Her senses came alive with the knowledge of something familiar, *someone* close to her.

She sped around the corner and discovered an open basement. “Father! Are you here, Father?” she shouted out excitedly and ran smack dab into a wall. Her palms scoured over it. “He’s here! I know it.” Her hands moved fast as she tried to find a latch or lever to release the panel hiding the room beyond.

She quickly wheeled around to face Gabriel. “Do something! I know he’s here. I sense him! He’s hurt, damn you! Open this door!”

Gabriel showed no sign of visible emotion because it didn’t exist. He watched her lacking the compassion she wanted to find in him.

“What would you do to help him, Constance? Would you sell out the hope of ever finding another soul? Would you bargain with the devil for more time with him? Would you stay with me forever, even after Sebastian comes home? What would you do for me, Constance? How far would you go to save the man you call Father?”

He moved closer and locked her in place up against a wall right there at the hidden entrance. Before she realized what he’d done, his body surrounded her with a strong force.

Her palms were high above her head and mashed against the door. His chest pinned against her back comfortably with the force of chemistry confining him, securing him to her.

“*Would you love me*, Constance?” His voice dropped more than one or two octaves and he shivered as he asked it, unable to deny himself. Yes, he took the risk and made the inquiry. Now, he was vulnerable. He cursed himself mentally for straining just to hear her response.

He felt her labored breathing and her body trembled. “Open this door, Gabriel. Open it now!” She broke free of him and slapped the door with her palm a few times.

“Tell me what you’ll do for me just to find out what once waited on the other side.”

Her hand rose, and again she smacked the hard surface. “Father! Father! Are you there, Father?” She ignored the vampire beside her and cried out for her parent, panic evident in her voice.

“*Would you love me*, Constance?” he asked her again, reached around her, and felt her body limp under his more precise touch. He practiced forced restraint after the first word slipped from his mouth. He was

angry more than hungry, desperate more than lust-filled.

“Get away from me.” she whimpered.

He turned her around. His chest threatened to collapse and his lungs filled with fear, not air.
“Would...you...love...me?”

She gulped and tears welled in her eyes. “I don’t know how.”

Resigned, he whispered, “He isn’t here.” He uttered the cruelty of his revelations, “He’s gone now, but *he is alive*. Somewhere in this world, he breathes *and* he waits. I’ll help you find him if you’ll submit to me and love me once more.”

* * * *

Constance felt the power he suddenly held over her when he issued the ultimatum, one she would definitely fall victim to without reservations. She would do it for the sake of her father, because it was easier to lie to herself than to face the living truth or her ever-present reality. She longed for Gabriel more than a woman needed to crave her vampire mate’s brother. She needed him to fill a void in her life and if he didn’t do it willingly, she hoped he’d do it with a threat looming over them.

Her vocal chords tightened as if to warn her to tread softly before answering him. When she finally spoke, she didn’t give him an easy reply but instead asked him to open the door. No, actually, she demanded it. A temper-tantrum looming, Gabriel would prove himself the smartest Sabbat if he did them both a favor and showed her the damn room where her father once lived as their hostage.

Allowing her to step into the chambers where Samuel Spenser once spent a great deal of time, Gabriel stepped out of the way. “We held him here.”

She slowly turned around. “What did you say?”

“Your father. When Darian had him, he housed him here.”

“You said ‘we held him here’ and I heard you.” She felt her chin quiver and she turned toward the cage where her father undoubtedly spent his time. “These pointed arrows here, what filled them?”

“Poison, sedatives, anything new Darian wanted to try on a pawn. Your father became his test vampire.”

“And you helped him?”

“Constance, we discussed this in Las Vegas. I’m not who you think I am.”

“Are you a killer?” she questioned.

“Absolutely.”

She swallowed stiffly. “I...”

“And you think your brothers and your mate do not kill when they feed?”

“Not always, less often than most.”

“And Sebastian, he doesn’t talk to you about the difficulty he has in finding blood your body can accept?”

She narrowed her gaze on Gabriel. “What do you know?”

“I know what I see. You’re weak and sick, Constance. Maybe you don’t feel it now, but a few more days without nourishment, and your fever will spike. What then? Will you accept your secondary feeder or will you drink your supplements like a good little Spenser.”

She closed her eyes and focused on her father’s pain. “I smell him here. He almost died here? How?”

“The piercing can kill a vampire.”

“And I ask you again, are you a killer?”

“And I’ll tell you the same as only moments before. Absolutely.”

“Even our own kind?”

“Without a doubt when it serves my purpose, I will help put down a vampire, regardless of their stature.”

“Even my father?”

“I didn’t know you when we first brought him here, Constance.”

“My brothers said he hated you. Why would you help me find him now?”

He didn’t say anything. Instead, he turned away from her.

“You want me for your own.”

Still nothing.

“You weren’t lying as you rambled. You want a promise of my love?”

“I want the same thing you have with Sebastian only I want more.”

“You want more?”

“Yes,” he said. “Because, Constance, after the night we all shared together, you know and I know it exists. Opportunity did not grant a full exploration. If it did, you’d never leave my bed again.”

She swallowed back the dose of truth he spooned into her ears. She stepped into the cell where her father once stayed. She turned around in the tiny environment.

“You...did this to my father?” she whispered, the shock paralyzing her while the truth spun around her

with its infuriating evidence. "He has a family, grandchildren who would love to know him. You did this?"

"Your brothers told you, Constance. I'm not who you think I am, but at the same time, I am who you want."

"The hell you are," she snapped. "You're nothing to me, Gabriel Sabbat. Nothing at all."

She rushed by him. He caught her and then pinned her against the cold stone wall. "You are going to feed tonight, Constance."

"You'd get off on something so vile, wouldn't you?"

"I know what I see. I'm a secondary for you. It's my responsibility to take care of you and feed you. I have enough blood stores and even if I didn't, you're welcome to take what you need." He flipped his neck and her stomach roared with coarse hunger. She doubled over from the pain and instinctively, her mouth puckered.

"Get away from me," she warned. She tried to resist him but a week without plasma proved difficult. Her teeth sharpened against her gums and threatened to drop. "Sebastian will know and he'll..."

"Thank me because I served my purpose and performed my duties as your provider."

"I don't want you near me."

He flipped his skin again. "How easy you forget, darling Constance."

He must've nicked his flesh. She smelled blood and her nostrils flared.

Trying to fight off temptation, she stared at the cell where her father remained for several years against his will. She focused on the arrows, those filled with the painful drugs she didn't want to think about.

"Leave me alone," she snarled, pushing by him and then doubling over again, this time crying out in pure agony. She recognized defeat and it was barreling toward her.

He hissed, the great sound of an angry vampire filled the underground tunnels. He pushed her against the wall and held his palm to her middle, that sinfully bare belly she showed off to mere strangers when she paraded around their club.

"This is symbolic to you. The hatred you and Darian have for my father is only sweeter with me in your grip. Feeding from you here is perverse."

"Then I won't do it again, but you will take what you need right now," he growled, slapping his neck and finding the ripest vein.

Her eyes narrowed on the first spot of blood and her teeth dropped in position.

"That's right, darling. Come for it. I have what you need."

She shook her head. "No," she mumbled, still trying her best to resist him, but she lost. He held her in his trances as her mouth watered with his nectar in sight.

Her lips covered his neck. She sipped in his flavor and closed her eyes when she felt his hands weave through her hair, stroking in a gentle pattern. She sucked in his blood. The taste was oh so sweet, yet bitter because it belonged to a Sabbat. Her heart filled with resentment. She hated him for this and at the same time, still craved him.

“That’s it, princess,” he groaned. “Take me into your veins once more. Feed from me, lover.”

With sudden awareness, her body jerked. His warm fluid covered her lips and a hot, searing heat pooled in-between her legs. She cried out and sucked harder.

A new understanding formed quickly between them and while she didn’t acknowledge the obvious, his fingers suddenly penetrated the opening of her vagina. She parted her legs and allowed full access, a truer need devouring her senses. Every nerve ending alert to his touch now, she hissed against his neck and he parted her slick folds with three fingers locking into place.

“Ah, yeah, that’s my girl,” he growled. His deep voice shook with terrifying hunger. “Eat me whole, baby.” His fingers surged through her walls and hooked into her flesh with a riveting purpose. He worked her hard and gave her what she wanted, needed, and ached to find.

She came. Her body bumped against his hand as he drove into her again, and this time his lips parted as he moved his mouth to her ear.

“Say my name, princess. Call my name out loud. Let me hear you say it.”

Gabriel held her head to his neck and she devoured the nourishment he provided.

“Oh, baby, how good you feel.”

She drank but she cried, tears rolled down her cheeks until her body suddenly felt alive with the newfound energy. Then she reluctantly broke the hold she held under locked teeth, but her body still fed off of his hand.

“That’s it, Constance,” he whispered, watching her. “Come for me, sweetheart. Come only for me.”

Her hips jerked again and he scissored his fingers into her walls. “Ah, yeah, that’s it. Drench my fingers, lover.”

Her walls convulsed and her chin dropped. He tried to kiss her, but she turned her head and he fingered her harder now with a sense of pure rage building between them, but the lust gaining more momentum than the anger.

“Stop...we can’t...stop.” Breathless, she shoved him away and wiped her mouth on her arm, his blood staining her shirt.

Too late, the damage was done, the need assessed and the act committed once again.

“Get away from me!” she shouted, running for the door. It wouldn’t open. She slammed her fist into the panels. “Get me out of here, Gabriel.”

His breath at her back, he touched her hair. The spitfire of a Spenser woman held him captive when she

turned on her heels and glared at him with all of hell's fury behind her cold eyes.

"I want to leave. Now!"

He narrowed his gaze on her and she shook with rage.

"You still want me. It's why you shake there where you stand. Your fury is misdirected. It's easier to point at me and place blame than to look within yourself and see the truer reason you're enraged."

"Open. This. Door." She gritted her teeth and spat her demands.

"What now, Constance? Are you going to run back to Sebastian and tell him I seduced you? He won't believe you. Remember? He was there when we all joined in perfect harmony. I dare say he remembers the event more than even I recall. I do remember several luscious moments. Can I tell you about them?"

She raised her hand to hit him and he caught her forearm in mid-air. "Let me go!"

The pine green tint to his eyes flashed with a hint of red now. His pupils flamed through the color and changed to a brighter shade of emerald. "I remember it like it was yesterday. Weeks come and go, Constance, but the memory of your body against mine forces time to stand still. I'm not sure passing days will ever change what lingers between us."

"I want you to stop."

He released her arm, took a step away from her, and slumped against the opposite wall allowing his back to brace against it and his knees to open wide. He moved his fingers over his lips and sucked them in-between his lips.

"Ah yes, you still smell and taste like vanilla cream and honey." He closed his eyes. When he opened them, he opened them to her brewing animosity, the inner war he wanted her to wage.

"Sebastian is going to know about this," she said with no amount of uncertainty.

"I imagine he will. He'll sense it, anyway, just as he's always known how deeply I care for you."

"If you cared for me, you wouldn't hurt me. If you'd cared for me, you wouldn't have taken my father away from me."

He rubbed his chin and then on a dare, he rubbed the three fingers he'd used to drive her to orgasm across his lower lip, his tongue tasting the tips of them. "You weren't thinking about your father five minutes ago, anymore than I thought of you when I first helped Darian take him."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

He stood. "Forget it."

She stormed closer and glared at him. "No, I want to know what you meant. What do you mean you weren't thinking of me when you helped Darian?"

The past came rushing back to haunt her. After Gabriel's role in the mating ceremony, he made a point to tell her that he didn't regret the part he played in helping with her father's abduction. Were things

different now? She studied him, more hopeful now than ever before. Did Gabriel know where her father was and if he did, would he help her find him?

Too many sexual feelings were entwined with her emotions now. She had to get them under control if she wanted to find answers. She took a deep breath before she asked for his help, understanding her brothers would rather die than form an alliance with Gabriel Sabbat.

“What do you want in exchange for my father’s safe return?”

“Why is it so important to you now, Constance? Why ask for my help now?”

“My mother is...” she chose to stop before she gave an enemy something to use against them.

Gabriel smirked. “You think we don’t know what she does and with whom? Marian is on the prowl for a man, isn’t she? I wonder if she likes Sabbat men as well as her daughter and daughter-in-law.”

“Why you...” She clenched her fist but didn’t draw to strike him. He’d only stop the blow and right now, she reminded herself, probing for information mattered most.

“It’s true, Constance. Your mother is a desirable older woman who looks like she’s still in her early to mid-thirties. I imagine any number of men or vampires would love to take her to their bed. That’s what you fear most, isn’t it? Your daddy will come home to your mother and find she no longer has a need for him. That’s why there is a sudden urgency to find him.”

“We’ve always wanted to find him. We’ve never stopped looking for him.”

“No? Then why didn’t you come to me or Darian a long time ago? Why wait until Sebastian is out of town and your brothers aren’t here to guard you? Why wait until it’s almost too late?”

“It’s never too late, Gabriel, not for a vampire.”

“What you mean is it’s never too late for us. Isn’t that right, Constance?”

She gulped for air as he moved closer. It didn’t matter. The air staled and the betrayal existing there swirled all around them. He slanted his lips over hers and tilted her chin upward with a lone finger.

“What are you willing to do for me if I help you?” he asked, mumbling against her lips. He dragged her body against the ridge of his cock, careful to lock her hips against his by keeping his palms opened on the firm shape of her bottom.

She saw him mocking her and debated on the best way to handle him. She caught a silver lever out of the corner of her eye and triggered it in one swift move. He leaped for her, but she was too fast and the door leading back to the main house quickly parted. She dashed through it and he snapped her wrist to his side before she made a clean break.

Defiantly, she held her head high. “I’ll find him on my own. You and Darian kept him alive for a reason. You get off on it.”

“Constance, I don’t have your father. So help me if I did, I’d return him because I know now what lies in store for me when and if I do.”

She felt a twitch in her face, anger boiling so hot that her fiery temper boiled well within dangerous zones. She had a killer instinct, something she realized existed soon after she joined with Sebastian and his family.

“I won’t be back here, Gabriel.”

A flash of hurt and amusement, a truly bizarre expression, danced across Gabriel’s face. “I’ll have Walt make up a room for you tomorrow. I’ll even handle Sebastian. I’ll give him a call and let him know you’ve refused your supplements. He’ll allow you to stay here if he knows your life depends on it.”

“Don’t fool yourself,” she said, pointing to the dark room behind him. “What happened here won’t ever happen again.”

With a wicked grin, he somewhat agreed, “Doll, you’re right. It’s not going to stop with my fingers inside of you. Next time, and only hours exist between now and then, you can count on my cock swiping against your walls.”

“In your dreams, Gabriel.”

“Tomorrow, Constance. If not tomorrow, then the next day and certainly the one following that one, and each time I’ll leave you hungry for more. It’s my solemn promise to you.”

“Perhaps you haven’t heard. Vampires are known for telling lies and breaking their word. Your oath, a Sabbat swear, means nothing to me. *You* are nothing to me.”

“And from your lips fell the biggest lie of them all.” He patted her cheek, flashed a wink, and called out over his back as he walked away, “Soon, my little Spenser gem. Very soon.”

Chapter Five

Darian didn’t look up when Gabriel entered his office at one of their smaller club holdings. The hot spot for the older crowd never held half the appeal Agendas sported. Gabriel seldom went there unless he needed to find Darian before Agendas opened for the night.

He sank down on a plush, over-stuffed chair while Darian scribbled across a notepad. “I’ve been expecting you.”

With a grunt, Gabriel hit the remote control and turned off the music blaring through the surround sound. “I need a favor.”

“I’m under the impression what you need are sexual favors, in which case, you’re talking to the wrong brother. You’ll need to speak to the youngest and see if he’s open to sharing. If I were in his shoes, I’d tell you to fuck off,” Darian said.

A smile tilted his lips, but Darian continued to focus on his ledger sheets. He made the occasional mark or two on the pad next to his spreadsheets.

“I want you to toss Sebastian a bone and keep him away from here.”

Darian dropped his pencil and stared at Gabriel. He pushed away from the desk and crossed his arms. “Don’t you mean away from her?”

“No,” he replied, shaking his head. He even tried to look at his brother as he told him the boldface lie. “Yes. Damn it to hell, yes. I want you to do whatever it takes to keep him away from Constance.”

Darian stood up, went to the corner bar—a signature item found in all of Darian’s offices—and poured himself a drink before filling a shot glass with scotch. He handed it to Gabriel.

“What’s in it for me?” he asked.

Gabriel tossed the drink back, smacked his lips, and slammed the glass on Darian’s desk. “The one thing you want most in the world.”

“Look around, Gabriel. I have everything I want.”

“Except the very thing we both want most—someone to share it with. You lack companionship unless you pay for it or find it in a woman who thinks you might want her for some sort of uncertain future.”

“And you think you can deliver what, or more specifically *who* I want most?”

“I’m sure of it.”

“I don’t think so, Gabriel.”

“I can.”

Darian squared his shoulders and straightened his back. “The person you think I want most isn’t who you think, dear brother. Let me explain something to you. If I wanted one busty, blue-eyed blond, don’t you think I have the power to take Almonzo from Tabitha and claim her for my own?”

Gabriel’s jaw set. “Then what can I offer you? I need you to buy me some time.”

“What I want is something you will never willingly give, dear brother.”

Gabriel felt a sudden chill in the room. How he missed it, he didn’t know, but the words falling from his brother’s mouth made every nerve ending in his body jerk to attention. Just hearing Darian’s confession alerted his defense mechanisms.

“You want Constance,” he whispered.

"I want what is mine. Constance isn't mine. I don't even know that she's Sebastian's regardless of what ceremonies took place to ensure it."

"I'm her secondary," he reminded him.

A second mate to one of the most powerful women in the world, but yet after snooping around Constance's home, Gabriel had overheard a few things he couldn't change. Constance had strong feelings for him and she refused to face them. He needed time and Darian could give him some, if only he would.

He returned his focus to Darian. He tried to think like his brother and see where Darian's train of thought might lead. He wasn't sure he understood him, much less the way he explained his motives for leading the conversation sideways.

"*Secondary*," Darian shook with laughter. "Gabriel, how often does a second feeder step in as a life mate? Do you know how rare it is? Take Tabitha Spenser's case for instance. Thanks to Almonzo and the extremes he went to in order to ensure Tabitha spent very little time with me in any kind of unforeseeable future, I'd have to not only dispose of Almonzo, but also the second feeder in front of me—Richart Spenser. We both know how unlikely a vampire's demise is, much less two. With Richart, I'd stand to lose everything if I so much as tried in the first place."

Gabriel waited while Darian babbled on about Tabitha and her other secondary, Richart Spenser. "Your point?"

"There are some things even a vampire in my position cannot change. Who Constance loves, for instance, isn't something I can step in and control. Tabitha, as you may remember, once cared deeply for me, but Almonzo is her reason for existing. She looks at him and the world freezes in that one particular moment. What kind of vampire takes a second position in such a relationship?"

"Will you help me or not?"

The brothers surveyed one another as if to sum up their current standing or position with the other one.

Darian cleared his throat, poured another drink, tossed it back, and with an 'ah' sound, responded, "I don't see where you need my help."

"That's bullshit and you know it. You have Samuel Spenser and if you don't, you certainly know where he is."

"So we're back to this?"

"You have him. You're the only one who knew where he was. You and I were the only two men who had access to him prior to Sebastian's joining with Constance .

"The day we left for Las Vegas , you knew Orlando and Almonzo were on their way to break him free, and you transported him somewhere on a moment's notice. No one else could've gotten in the compound without leaving a trace. You moved him and then convinced the elders otherwise."

"Damn it!" Darian roared with anger. "You left me little choice!"

"I left you every choice!" he yelled. "I even gave you the option to step in for me, to become the second

the elders wanted Constance to have, and you denied yourself the opportunity. Why? Because business always supersedes pleasure and you had a vampire to move to safer ground.”

Darian threw his glass across the room and it shattered with the effort. “You haven’t listened to a word I’ve said.”

Gabriel studied his brother thoughtfully. “You cared for Constance .”

“I am a second, a third choice actually, for Tabitha Spenser. I’ll be damned if I’ll step into the role again.”

“You could’ve been Constance ’s second.”

“That’s bullshit and you know it! I would’ve been her third. Right behind Sebastian.”

“What the hell are you talking about?”

“ *She chose you*, Gabriel. The only reason Sebastian has her for a life partner is because he outsmarted you when it mattered most.”

“You’re insane. This isn’t about Sebastian and Constance. I’m asking for a favor and—”

“You don’t need a favor!” He screamed with another attempt to draw out recognition. “The love that woman has for you is what mortal women crave to find in storybook romances. She’s mesmerized by you and if I ever doubted it for a minute, I don’t now.”

“It may have taken our brother a year to leave her unattended, but the second he did, she ran out her front door and straight into ours. She didn’t go to Agendas for answers or to find clues about Daddy Spenser. She went there looking for you.”

“She found me and nothing spectacular came of it.”

“She’ll find you again. Sebastian isn’t due home for a few days. I spoke to him this morning and he’s meeting with the elders day after tomorrow somewhere in Phoenix .”

“And her brothers?”

“Orlando and Almonzo will attend the meeting. The only accountability she has right now is her own conscious. I’m not sure the little gem has one where you’re concerned.”

“She has one,” he regrettably reported.

“Then I suggest you help her remember why she shouldn’t when she’s around you. I don’t think you’ll have a second chance once Sebastian returns. Our conversation this morning couldn’t have been less productive. He didn’t discuss business. His only concern was Constance , and of course who she’d find herself in the company of in the event he is further detained.”

“And you won’t help me?”

“I won’t help you. To help you betrays one brother and even—”

“You’re in love with her,” he interrupted.

“No more than you, Gabriel. After all, I’ve never indulged.”

“I’m not—”

“In love with her? Ha! Are you truly arrogant enough to lie to my face or conceited enough to lie to yourself?”

“She’s Sebastian’s mate.”

“And she chose to love you from the moment she saw you. Even before the mating ceremony in Las Vegas, she begged her brothers. She wanted to keep you. Tell me something, Gabriel. Why do you really think you don’t know where Samuel Spenser is today?”

“Because I would take her to him.”

“You would indeed and I planned for it well in advance. Once Sebastian made up his mind to keep her, I realized the secondary requirement loomed. It made sense to let you take the position because at the time, Tabitha meant a great deal to me. I didn’t want to hurt her by taking her sister-in-law to bed. After Samuel was safely tucked away, I had second thoughts.”

He chuckled. “I guess when she hopped out of the limousine and asked which brother she’d have the pleasure of fucking, you changed your mind.”

“She made her choice long before she saw us standing there. I can’t imagine how Sebastian stood by and allowed you a first touch.”

With a grunt, Gabriel made his way for the door. “You want to know how *he felt*. I’m the one who watched her leave with my brother. I’m the one who left Edinburgh because to stay here meant risking everything we’ve built and exposing the family for the true animals we are.

“Sometimes, I even wanted my own brother destroyed because every night he spent next to her was another night I had to accept the fact she wasn’t with me. He had the opportunity to share her and he refused. For awhile, I hated him for it.”

Darian pursed his lips and cautiously approached Gabriel. “I know what you’re thinking. You can pull it off and you can buy yourself some time. Her brothers and Sebastian will go on a wild chase searching for Papa Spenser. Trust me, I know them. They’ll follow a twisted trail for days, maybe even weeks. She’ll need her secondary, and one night in the heat of passion, she’ll give in. You’ll feed off of her sweet little body as much as she’ll dine on your blood stores. Then what? Sebastian will return home, rage will find a direction, a true path, and when it does, it will lead straight to you.”

“You can handle this but won’t.”

“If I do this, he may never come back and when she discovers you’re the reason for it, she will never forgive you. The Spensers aren’t like us, Gabriel. They’re a different breed of vampires, but the vile nature we all share is embedded in her somewhere. Are you willing to draw it out?”

“I’m willing to risk everything just to spend a few hours with her.”

“Then when I made a choice to move Samuel Spenser without your knowledge, I made a sound decision. If you’re willing to give up one brother for her, you’ll turn on another.”

“Perhaps you’re right and now I know I have nothing to offer you in exchange. You want the same things I want.”

He slowly shook his head. “I’m not your competition, Gabriel.”

“No? Maybe not yet, but with what you’ve revealed here today, take my advice. Have one of your men move Samuel Spenser and refuse to tell you where he’s hidden. Soon, you’ll lead Constance to him yourself. It won’t matter what your own business goals are when you do it. The only thing you’ll think about is how she’s going to show her devotion and undying gratitude once you give her back what she wants most—her father.”

* * * *

Sebastian, Orlando, and Almonzo paced back and forth as they waited for the trolley at The Underground Atlanta. The wind was picking up and with their long trench-style coats, large frames, and set jaws, determined hardly described them. They looked rough, all rogue, and definitely dangerous.

Sebastian’s long, blond hair kept blowing out behind him. After enough aggravation, he finally stuffed it inside his collar. “So much for Richart’s dependability,” he remarked.

“He’ll show,” Orlando told him. “He seldom misses a good opportunity to rib Almonzo about riding his wife.”

“Shut up, Orlando. I’m hardly in the mood to talk about sharing Tabitha with Richart or reliving any distant memories.”

Orlando ran his hand over his pants as he watched a little woman in a short mini-skirt shake her strut down the sidewalk. “Damn, I forgot how forward American women can—”

A broad arm wrapped around his neck all at one time and a hiss followed. “If you noticed that woman, you’ve been without one too damn long, cousin!” Richart snapped a kiss on his cheek before he grabbed Almonzo in a tight embrace.

“So nice of you to show,” Almonzo said, slapping him on the back. He tried to make it sting.

Richart offered his hand to Sebastian. “I hear you’re the Sabbath black sheep,” he said. “I hope to God for Constance’s sake these two are right about you.” He shot him a wary smile and then shook his hand harder. “I’m Richart Spenser. Also known as one of the most charming of the Spenser lot.”

Nothing was further from the truth. A killer, cold and calculating, Richart was worse than any Sabbath. Sebastian didn’t act fooled just because the Spenser cousin pretended to like him upon first meeting.

“Nice to meet you,” Sebastian said.

Richart reached behind his head and pulled out the elastic band holding his hair in a ponytail. He shook out his shoulder-length hair and Sebastian stared at them in awe. With his hair down, never mind his similar build, he could've passed for Orlando and Almonzo's brother.

"I'm sure you've heard great things about me." He winked and then poked Almonzo in the ribs. "And since you're living under their roof from what I hear, I guess your knowledge came from one busty little brassy chic by the name of Tabitha."

Orlando slapped his brother on the back. "Ha! Brassy little chic, is it?"

"Damn good in bed is what she is," Richart replied, rubbing his chin. "How is my little woman?"

Almonzo narrowed his eyes and his cheeks flushed. "How much have you had to drink tonight?"

"Not a drop, honey," he said before searching the crowd. "But I am looking. Damn, if you didn't pick my favorite spot for finding females."

Sebastian watched the way Almonzo responded to Richart and he didn't like what he saw. Resentment lingered there whether Almonzo admitted it or not. Richart was Tabitha's secondary, right in front of Darian. By the way he acted over the assignment, he didn't take his position seriously enough for Almonzo.

"Take my advice," Orlando said. "Leave Tabitha out of conversations this time. Remember, we've been months without our women."

They all started to cross the street and Richart placed both arms around his cousins as they crossed. Sebastian walked behind them.

"Well then, cousins, why didn't you say so. First things first. We'll find some high class pussy, take a few turns with her, and then turn her for kicks. What do you say?"

"Not interested," Almonzo said.

Sebastian watched a homeless man go through a trash bin and he happened to lose a hundred dollar bill in passing. He never looked back to see the man's expression, but he hoped he picked it up instead of someone looking for their next fix. He heard the man's growling stomach when he passed and sensed his desperation.

The men rounded a corner and stepped into an awaiting limousine. The second the door closed, Richart—the man he'd heard so much about—instantly changed. His mood shifted and the dark persona he'd been warned about since he was a child surfaced.

"Your brothers have my uncle," he accused, glaring at Sebastian.

Sebastian generally felt at ease with Spensers and he typically spoke freely. He wasn't sure he wanted to do so with Richart. He didn't trust him and he knew he despised his brothers. The second he turned an accusatory eye toward him, he decided to tread with caution.

Almonzo grabbed a bottle of water from the ice chest. "We know Darian had Father before Sebastian and Constance joined. We're not sure he has him now. Are you?"

“With certainty,” he said. “Absolutely,” he added before pointing at Sebastian. “And he knows it, too.”

Orlando and Almonzo studied him. Almonzo spoke in his defense. “You’re wrong, Richart.”

“No, he’s right about one thing. I think Darian had him moved, but I also think it’s very possible that he lost him as he indicated more than once. I think his enemies could’ve gotten to Samuel.”

Richart’s lips curved in a smile. “Do you? That’s a little too convenient, isn’t it?”

“Darian and Gabriel work together. If Darian had Samuel, then Gabriel would know where he’s being held,” Sebastian said.

“And your point is?” Richart snarled. Sebastian realized Richart considered one Sabbat brother just as bad as any other.

Sebastian gritted his back teeth. His point? He had one. He damn well had one, but to voice it meant to own up to what he already suspected was going on back home. He couldn’t do it.

Orlando did it for him and he did it without any problem. “Constance’s secondary is Gabriel and he’s committed to his position with her. He would lead her or us, maybe even Sebastian straight to Father.”

“Is that right?” Richart asked, smiling. “Committed, is he?”

“Yes,” Orlando replied.

Richart chuckled. “What’s wrong, pretty boy? Is your brother sniffing a little too close to the pussy cat while you’re away?”

“Watch it, Richart,” Almonzo warned. “We’re talking about Constance here.”

“Yes and my cousin has sorry taste in men.” Richart paused. “Although, I might change my mind.” He snapped his teeth at Sebastian, and then reached for him, trying to pull him closer.

Sebastian immediately straddled him and held him by the throat against the back of the leather seat. “I am not my brother! Do you understand me? Darian may have had a lapse in judgment when he was around you but not me. I’m repulsed by the whole act you committed with him. Do you understand what I’m saying here?”

He snarled and his fangs dropped. Almonzo and Orlando immediately jumped for Sebastian.

“Let him go, Sebastian. Now!”

Richart’s eyes rolled in the back of his head and Sebastian witnessed the true nature of the man who wore the title of the Spenser lunatic. A hissing sound led to a hungry roar and Richart’s eye color changed so quickly that the shades were difficult to determine.

Sebastian released him and he realized when he did that he pushed too hard, retaliated too fast, and now he’d see for himself the one vampire so many feared. And for the first time in his adult life, Sebastian was afraid.

Chapter Six

Four weeks later...

Marian Spenser paced around her daughter's room. Back and forth, she walked the carpet around the perimeter of the room. She stared at the lifeless form sprawled across the bed while Tate tried to spoon some of the supplement into her mouth. Even in her sleepy state, she refused it.

Tabitha and Natasha stood close to the windows staring out as if they were waiting for someone, anyone at all, to appear from out of the darkness.

"They're not coming," Marian said. "They aren't coming home because they cannot get here. I may lose my daughter because my sons wanted Sebastian to leave Constance behind."

Tabitha understood Marian's frustration. Days passed without word. The Spensers were a close-knit family and everyone stayed in touch. This lack of knowing weighed heavy on everyone.

The last Tabitha heard from Almonzo revealed limited information. They'd received word on where Samuel Spenser was located and knew they'd have to go underground to follow his trail somewhere in Atlanta .

Almonzo had secretly told Tabitha he suspected it was a trap, but they were prepared for it. He also told her to expect long periods of delayed contact. They felt certain if they played their cards right, they'd return home with their father.

"You look tired. Let us sit with Constance for a little while. Maybe when she's had some rest, she'll try the supplement again," Tabitha said.

Tate, the family caretaker shook his head. "She's not going to take it. After this long without nourishment, it's only going to make her sick. In all likelihood, it will prolong the inevitable." His eyes

flooded with tears. Tate loved Constance. Nicknamed the family gem, everyone in the house adored her. Tate had cared for her day in and day out since she was a small child. Tabitha gauged his concern and immediately turned to Natasha. They exchanged a knowing glance.

They knew what they had to do, but in order to do it, they needed to leave soon and they needed Marian's approval or they wanted her out of the way.

Marian stopped pacing all at one time and studied her daughter again. She set her jaw and Tabitha's eyes widened with recognition. She rushed to the bed at the same time her mother-in-law's fit of rage took hold.

"Marian! No!" Tabitha stepped forward blocking her but realizing the true strength of any Spenser far outweighed her own.

Before Tabitha could stop her, Marian shook her daughter, grabbed the supplement from Tate's trembling hands and shoved the spoon in between Constance's locked jaws. The bright red concoction dribbled from the corner of Constance's mouth.

"Stop this, please!" Natasha rushed to Constance's side. Her flaming red hair blended with Constance's coal black mane. She sheltered her with her body, stretching over her in a protective form to shield her from her mother's bizarre way of showing how desperately she wanted Constance well again.

"Tate!" Tabitha's lips formed a tight line. She glared at him. "Now!" With a stiff upper lip, Tabitha, without asking for it by name issued an order to give Marian Spenser a sedative, something she typically received when she lost control. She'd lost it frequently after the disappearance of her husband.

Marian's eyes flashed with warning and her voice changed immediately. "Don't you dare take the head of the household position with my son out of town."

Tabitha set her jaw and defiantly waited for Tate to follow her direct order. "Tate, as I've requested, please."

Marian turned on him, but she never saw the needle coming. He injected her with enough of the special sedative to send her into dreamland for several hours, generally it bought them two days which was why no one used it often. Fortunately, she seldom remembered the few hours before her injections.

Tabitha watched in horror as Marian slumped against the bed. "Is she okay?"

Tate scooped Marian's thin body in his arms and moved her on the bed beside her daughter.

"Yes," Tate answered. "I've talked to Walt. I assume you want to find Gabriel?"

Natasha brushed Constance's hair back away from her face. "Is she able to survive without his blood?"

Tabitha and Tate exchanged a quick glance. Tabitha understood more about the secondaries and their vampire culture than her sister. She quickly shook her head. "Let me go tell the children I have to take care of their aunt. You two get her ready."

"Tate, call Walt and ask him if we can bring her to the Sabbath compound. Gabriel cannot come here. When Marian wakes up and finds another Sabbath here, she'll call in Richart and—"

“Richart cannot be contacted. There’s an embedded hatred between Richart and Gabriel Sabbat,” Tate said. “It’s something to do with the joining you had with Richart and Darian.”

Tabitha flinched, realizing what motivated the indifference. During her mating ceremony, Richart and Darian had too much fun on the sidelines and Richart told everything at a party right in front of Gabriel. Later, Gabriel threatened to spear him with his own teeth and then burn his remains.

Vampires were such lovely boys when they fought for family blood or their women.

“Will Gabriel help her?” Natasha asked.

Tabitha didn’t know. What she’d heard of Gabriel was far worse than what she knew first handed about his older brother and her former lover, Darian. She shuddered to think about the consequences of this decision. Most believed Darian was far worse than Gabriel, but Tabitha wasn’t so sure and if he helped them, specifically Constance, Tabitha felt certain he’d want something in return.

“Will he help her, Tabitha?” Natasha persisted.

“Yes, I think he will,” Tabitha said. “How could he not?” She knelt beside Constance and stroked her cheek. “He’s her secondary, after all.”

“I’ll call Walt and let him know we’re on our way,” Tate said. “Walt once worked for the Spensers, you know. He cares about Constance. Sebastian and Constance spent a great deal of time at the country home.” He patted Natasha’s arm. “You know the one. It’s near the Edinburgh Castle.”

She knew it. The country cottage was where Sebastian first took Constance and it was too far out of the way to ask Gabriel to meet them there. Besides, time presented a problem. Constance needed nourishment.

“Keep trying Sebastian and call all of his casinos. Surely to God he’s keeping up with business while he’s away. Find him or leave a trail of messages. Let him know we’re taking her to Gabriel. He’ll find his way home and if he doesn’t, once Almonzo knows I’m headed for Darian’s estate, he’ll break a sweat to get here.”

* * * *

Gabriel and Darian looked like women-magnets. A busty brunette clung to Gabriel like a last orgasm and a redhead draped herself over Darian’s shoulder. A short blonde grinded on top of his lap dry humping her way into his good graces. Agendas often turned into a public sex fest even though private suites scattered the back halls of the club.

Tabitha pointed them out to Natasha. “There they are.”

“I’d know Gabriel anywhere,” Natasha shouted over the crowd. “He bears a striking resemblance to Sebastian, doesn’t he?”

Tabitha pushed her way through layers of people. Darian immediately sensed her there. Even though his

back remained to them, she saw him tilt his head in their direction. Moving closer, she saw his nostrils flare.

“That’s disgusting,” Natasha said. “He smells your scent?”

“I guess so. I’m told it happens with the mates and the secondaries, so there’s the proof.”

He quickly dismissed the women with him and snapped his fingers in front of Gabriel’s face pointing to Natasha and Tabitha in the process. She headed straight for them. Gabriel started to get up the moment they approached.

“No, please. Don’t go. I need to see you,” Tabitha said without attempting to conceal the urgency.

“Tabitha.” Darian only nodded toward her, but he looked her over from toe to brow.

“Darian, we may need you, too,” she said.

“I hope I can be of assistance. I’d love to have you indebted to me.”

Tabitha nervously studied Gabriel. She felt like she was betraying Almonzo. What an awful life partner she was for any vampire. Almonzo would have a reckless fit if he knew where she was and the company they were all about to keep.

“Hello, other one. You’re looking well.” Darian turned and addressed Natasha in much the same mannerism he used with Tabitha. Genuine appreciation wasn’t his strong suit, but for Tabitha and her sister, he found it. “Beauty runs in the family.”

Tabitha’s gaze met Gabriel’s and she saw the concern wash over him with instant recognition.

“Where is she?” Alarm certainly rang out in his voice as he backed away from the table.

“She’s at your compound. We didn’t have anywhere else to take her.”

Gabriel jumped over the side rail next to the dance floor and sprinted for the backdoor. “Let’s go! Now!” He screamed over the loud retro music and wall to wall people.

“I’m not riding with them,” Natasha announced immediately.

“Oh, for heaven’s sake, go back to the car and have the driver take you to the house. Someone needs to explain things to Marian when she wakes up.”

The girls hugged and parted ways. Tabitha followed Gabriel and Darian outside and into the Sabbat limousine.

* * * *

“She’s dying.”

Darian shifted his weight. He faced her. "What do you mean, she's dying?"

"We've tried to reach Sebastian and cannot. We had no other choice but to—"

"We don't give a damn about any of that. What do you mean she's dying?" Darian raised his voice.

Gabriel's left eye twitched, he felt both of them roll and swell something he tried to refrain from showing a complete stranger. If his eyes shaded then and he lost his will to focus on the more important matter at hand, he wouldn't be able to control his urges, and he had plenty of them, after the buxom brunette rubbed all over him earlier. The last thing he needed right now was to approach Constance with rage and lust driving him. He wanted to help her, not destroy her.

"Explain to me how it's possible for her to die exactly?" Anger continued to churn through his veins, the rage split his nerve endings into tiny particles while the fury drove a pulsing beat into his temple.

Tabitha looked from one Sabbath to the other. "Sebastian is out of town and?"

"Mrs. Spenser, I'm well aware of the fact my brother left his mate unattended. What I'd like to know is..." He tried to stop the runaway rage again, control it, and handle it within before he let it all out and he failed. "What I want to know is why you are in front of me asking for help while telling me it may be too late to save her!" He screamed at the top of his lungs and Darian did nothing to stop him. He only looked at the passing trees as the limousine sped closer to the compound.

"Stop the car," Darian said.

"No, we're going by conventional measures. After all, Mrs. Spenser seemed to think her sister-in-law wasn't in any immediate danger of death until now. She should be able to hang on for another minute or two." He touched her hair with two fingers, and thread the blonde locks through his pinched grip. "If not, someone is going to pay. Care to guess who?"

Darian shot Gabriel a warning glare. His instinctive nature would always force him to protect Tabitha regardless of whether or not he loved her.

They were minutes from the compound. This close and already Gabriel sensed her. He felt her agonizing pain the second they pulled in front of the dark house. Gabriel jumped out of the car and hurriedly passed the caretaker. "Where is she, Walt?"

"She's in your room, sir," he said, calling after him.

"Call Sebastian," he shouted over his shoulder as he took the spiral steps underground three at a time. "Tell him to get his ass home or consider her lost to him forever!"

* * * *

Tabitha froze. She feared this. She'd worried from the moment she started for Agendas. "Oh, God, he's in love with her," she whispered right then and stopped in her tracks.

Darian placed his hand on the small of her back. "Follow me, Tabitha."

"Is he? Is he...in love with her?"

Darian smirked. "I guess that's something you'd have to ask him."

Tabitha continued down the steps. Almonzo was going to kill her, but Sebastian might torture her for this. She'd delivered his lover, his life mate, right into the arms of her secondary, and someone who loved her perhaps as much as Sebastian, maybe more. She tripped on the last step and Darian caught her. "Watch yourself," he said.

"Please don't touch me," she snapped.

"I'm not interested in touching you, Tabitha. Believe me, I survived you and whatever it is we once shared. I almost didn't. Rest assured, I don't want to revisit the past, but I don't want you hurt, either."

Tabitha narrowed her gaze. "You've found someone?"

She criticized herself for sounding jealous. What was she thinking? So what if he'd found someone. She wasn't there for a social call. She shook her head then and forced a smile, "But of course you would. Why wouldn't you?"

"Tabitha, this way," Darian didn't answer her as he led her through the long and narrow hallways.

Candles were lit around the room and Gabriel stood over her. Tabitha watched from the doorway. "Don't just stare at her, do something."

"He is," Darian whispered. "She'll sense him there. Depending on the level of her unconsciousness, it may take a few minutes or half the night."

"He could at least hold her!" Tabitha rushed over to her bed and gathered Constance in her arms. "She's dying."

"And if he gets too close to her right now, Tabitha, she might go into shock. Trust me, he knows what he's doing and he's not going to let her die. Not tonight. That's one thing I can promise you."

Tabitha caught the sensual meaning behind what Darian said. His wicked grin gave everything away once she turned around to confirm it.

"No! He can't, she can't..." She glanced down to the protruding evidence in Gabriel's slacks. "She's too weak and frail."

"She'll be good as new by the time he gets through with her," Darian teased.

"Get her out of here." Gabriel took a deep breath and inhaled slowly. He released his breath and when he did, he blew so hard, his breath actually rippled over the light sheet covering her.

"What's he doing?" Tabitha asked frantically.

"I told you already, he's letting her sense him. She'll be fine, Tabitha." Darian sat down on the bed

beside her and touched Constance's cheek. He slowly caressed it.

"Oh, my God," Tabitha whispered, quite horrified by what she witnessed. Recognition beat the shit out of her right then and there. Darian and Tabitha locked gazes.

"You're..." She shook her head and closed her eyes. Surely not, could he possibly love Constance? This was far worse than anything she ever imagined. "Darian?"

He placed his fingertips over her lips. "Shh...let's wait in the study."

"No." She straightened her back and defiantly held her head high. Almonzo and Sebastian wouldn't want her to leave Constance alone. She'd watch over her and make sure Gabriel only fed her, nothing more.

Gabriel's eyes shaded with anger, bulging with the most peculiar shade of green she'd ever seen. She flinched when she realized why he seemed so vile. He didn't have Sebastian's soft and kind demeanor. Instead, he possessed a dark existence, one she knew better than to cross. Darian had a similar trait, but Richart had killer instincts like Gabriel exhibited then. Maybe Darian didn't get his hands dirty because he had a brother who did it for him.

"Let's go. Now." Darian didn't request. He made a demand, one he expected her to follow right away.

"Why are you doing this? Can't you see what he's going to do to her?"

"He's saving her from death. It's what you asked him to do."

"Then he's going to take advantage of her even though she has no idea she's even in this world?"

"Oh, please! Do you think he's that desperate?"

"Yes! I do!"

"Then you obviously turned your pretty head and missed the hot little number he ditched the second he realized Constance was in trouble. He'd chisel away at his own flesh before he'd hurt one hair on her gorgeous head. He's not desperate for sex, Tabitha. He's hurting because she's in pain. I've never seen him like this. I can't expect you to understand."

"He looks at her like he wants to...just forget it."

"She's safer with him than anyone else right now, even Sebastian."

"I doubt it."

"Don't. Whatever Gabriel feels for Constance is dangerously close to obsession. Do you have any idea what lengths a male vampire will go to in order to protect those he loves?"

"So he does love her?"

As if she needed confirmation. She'd watched the many shades of passion in the eyes of all Spensers. Gabriel's pupils were different, nearly enlarged and far more dangerous. He looked deadly one minute and then the second Constance stirred, his expression softened and his eyes returned to their natural

color. All she saw then was compassion and an unconditional love.

Chapter Seven

“Sebastian?” Constance whispered through parched lips. She lifted her chin and her brows arched. She tried to open her eyes, raise her head off of the pillow, but she couldn’t and quickly gave up after she made the first attempt.

His brother’s name packed a punch. He’d stood there for nearly three hours waiting for her senses to come alive and bring her back to him. After agonizing over her, watching her lifeless body, the best she offered was his brother’s name. He shrugged out of his fitted shirt and tossed it to the bed before stepping out of his tan pants, kicking off his shoes in the process.

“Where is he now, Constance?” he knelt down on the bed next to her and whispered against her lips. He stroked her hair away from her pale face and caressed her cheek. “Where was he when you needed him most?”

“Gab...ri...el?”

“I’m here.”

“Why?”

“You’re in my room, Constance.”

He received the reaction he wanted. Her lashes fluttered. He saw a hint of her beautiful dark chocolate eyes from under her heavy lids. “There’s my girl.”

“Gabriel...I’m not...yours.” Disappointment rang throughout the room.

He took her hand in his and kissed her fingertips. “You’re always my girl, Constance.”

“I’m so...sick.”

“You’re getting better by the second,” he sucked her fingertips in between his lips and used her fingernail to scrape a deep wound across his bare chest. Drawing blood, he moved her hand under her nose and a low catcall, barely heard by his attentive ear fell from her lips.

“Constance, listen to my voice. I need you to suck your fingers for me.”

He moved her hand to her mouth and she tried to defy him, moving her head from side to side.

“Constance, it’s important. You have to have my blood, doll.”

“I want Sebastian’s.”

“If he were here, I’d rather him see you like this than to know this kind of pain, the kind of heartache I have after seeing you suffer. I’m helpless, without any defenses, where you’re concerned.

“Help me,” she said quietly.

“Constance, baby, I’m trying my best.” He moved her fingers to her lips and with an extraordinary effort, and he considered it one only because if she kissed him, he wanted her aware of whose lips were behind the kiss. He licked around her mouth and bit his lower lip until it bled.

“No,” she said. This time with more effort, she resisted him. “I want—”

“Taste me, Constance,” he urged, kissing his way into her open mouth and feeling her dry tongue as it swiped at his mouth. His tongue licked over her incisions allowing his kiss to work into a full exploration.

He braced himself above her and watched for any sign, a showing of better awareness. Nothing. He tried again. This time, he bit both his upper and lower lip before slamming his lips over hers. She slowly sipped them, barely pulled one at a time into her mouth in order to suck.

“That’s it, sweetheart. Come back to me,” he mumbled against her mouth as he broke away from her kiss. His lips trailed over her chin and neck before he greedily kissed her again.

“Constance, you need me. Please, take me.” He lapped at her earlobe and her body trembled next to his.

Working his way over her, he held himself braced by his palms, high above her body. He let her see the scratch mark across his chest, the small scrape offering enough of a blood trail to tempt her. She closed her eyes and swallowed.

“This isn’t betrayal, Constance. This is my place as your second. You’re my responsibility and I will keep you alive whether we do this the right way, the natural way, or through transfusions.”

Her eyes opened then. “No Sabbat needles.”

“That’s what I thought,” he said pressing down on his neck, priming his vein for her bite. He watched her teeth drop below her lip and he smiled as he lowered himself over her.

“He’ll kill for me,” she said.

“I’ll die for you.”

Gabriel didn’t look for her reaction. One waited for him. He felt certain recognition plastered across her face, but he turned his neck to her and eased over her, allowing access to the best he had to give—his jugular vein pulsed with his life and hers.

She captured him beneath her teeth and he moaned in pleasure the second she snapped over him. He stroked her silken hair and felt her body ripen as she drank. Her nipples pressed against the cotton gown they had her dressed in when he found her and the transparent covering did little to conceal a perfect woman's body.

He pushed the nightdress over her chest and caressed her nipple with his open palm as she fed from him. Weighing the fullness of her breast, he held her cupped in his free hand while his other hand gripped the side of her head, his palm pressed firmly against her ear.

The coolness found in her body disintegrated as she sipped on his nectar and she moaned as her sharp little teeth sank deeper. "That's it, lover," he coaxed, feeling her leave him with a final swipe over his neck.

Maybe he should've stopped then but some things weren't possible and this classified as one of them. While her mouth covered his neck, he soothed them both by touching her. The caresses he gave her drove him into a harder, fuller erection and he needed more.

Lowering his head to her breasts, he licked over her nipple and in an instant realized she wasn't going to stop him when her hand latched onto the back of his neck. She pushed him toward her stomach. With a nibble here or there, he slid across her belly and pushed her legs apart before she changed her mind.

Shifting quickly, he positioned himself between her legs, throwing them over his back. He buried his head between her thighs and sank his tongue deep inside of her pussy. He licked her walls from side to side as he ate her. Her moist canal only made it easier for him to drive past her folds and straight into her cunt.

"This is wrong, Gabriel. It's..."

He glanced down at her hands gripping the sheets and noticed how white her knuckles were. She clutched hard and tight as her hips thrust forward. He grabbed her ass and pulled her to his lips, feasting on simple pleasures, his woman and her sweetness.

"Gabriel!" She jerked twice, butterflyed her hips, and pressed down on his head. "Oh, God, this is too good. I can't take it. I'm going to..."

He bit down on her clit and her body shook in an instant. "Oh, shit! Why now? Why!" Her fingernails scraped across his shoulders and she tried to sit up, back away, take the pleasure, and resist it all at the same time.

With more urgency, he sucked her pussy lips, lingering at the opening. He stroked her with attentiveness and focus. He let her come down from her orgasm, glide away from it altogether, and then he sipped. He licked her sweet sauce and savored each drop before he kissed her mound and towered over her again waiting, perhaps, for a little bit of praise.

* * * *

Breathless and hard, he nuzzled her jaw. "You know why. You've always known."

"I know you need to fuck me." She looked at his dick. Gabriel possessed the kind of penis a woman gladly stared at for hours at a time.

"I'm *going to* fuck you," he said, allowing his cock to hang from his underwear. "I..." He closed his eyes and rolled over on the bed next to her, closing her hand in his. He brought her knuckles to his lips and he kissed over her fingertips. "I need you, Constance. I'm wrecked without you. I...have to have you."

"I know," she whispered.

They stayed there for passing minutes. He was comfortably horny having his cock erect and the pre-cum drizzle only reminding her of what he would take, even if it wasn't offered.

After a few moments of complete silence, she shifted and repositioned herself over him. Her energy almost fully restored, she draped her legs over his torso. The imp living inside of her breaking free to deliberately devil him, she licked his nipples and then pinched them. "You saved me, so you could fuck me again. Admit it."

He grinned. "I see by sharing my blood, we've rejuvenated your winning personality and daring mood swings without a problem."

"And what about Sebastian?" she asked, realizing the question threatened to dampen the mood, maybe even kill it entirely.

"What about him? Where is he now? We've been trying to get in touch with him for days and he's not returning our calls."

Her pussy was in motion, sliding up and down his chest, she was dragging it across his body and belly hairs while grinding against his abs. "He's going to know about us."

"Yes."

"Because you're going to tell him?" She dropped her head to his cock and swiped the tip with her tongue.

"Yes, Constance." He held his dick at the base and offered her another lick. This time, she went down on his shaft. He responded with a guttural confession. "Oh, God yes, I plan to tell him."

She circled the mushroom tip and then kissed the shaft. She dared to watch him then, but at the same time, since she wanted one hundred percent honesty, she forced herself to look him eye to eye. She swiped the slit again and again until he gaped at her.

"And why will you tell him?"

"Suck my cock, Constance. We'll talk about this later." He held his dick to her lips. "Come on now baby, lock your jaws around me. Let me come." He jerked his hips forward and she moved her mouth down his penis twice before releasing him with a pop.

Again, she looked into his beautiful green eyes and asked him more. "I have to know why you'll tell him."

“He’s your mate, Constance. Your primary blood source, life partner, and your lover. He deserves to know and he will know.” He pressed on her head and raised his hips. “Suck, baby. This moment is ours, just yours and mine. Besides, he’d know whether we told him or not.”

Before she secured her lips over his dick, she wanted more answers. She lapped at the mushroom head straining to keep herself from following her instincts and devouring him.

She uncurled her tongue around the crest, fluttering across it with the smallest amount of pressure. “I’ve always known you cared for me.”

“Eat me, suck me hard, Constance. You’re killing me here.” He crooked his arm behind his head and gave her a tempting wink. “We can talk all day, pillow talk, anything you want. Right now, I need to get off and you’re the one I’ve hand-picked for the job.”

“Is that right?”

“Mmm. You better believe it,” he mumbled, holding his penis in hand before fisting it at the base, and pushing it against her lips, this time with force.

“You wanted me to need you,” she said.

“No, I wanted you to crave me,” he admitted while she continued to tease, licking the corners of her mouth before her tongue crossed over his flesh and encircled his cock once more.

“If you don’t suck, you’re going to fuck. Take your pick,” he told her.

Fuck! Fuck! She breathed in his musk, rubbed her cheek over the shaft and closed her eyes. She’d waited for this moment for so long, she thought she’d die if she didn’t fuck him. She thought he very well might see the last of her too, that is if she followed through with it. If Sebastian discovered it, he’d turn on Gabriel.

“He’s going to know I had my cock down your throat. He’ll know everything, Constance. He’s going to know I paddled your sweet behind and buried my cock deep inside your tight pussy. Do you want to know why?”

No, now she didn’t care. She’d mind her manners and her lover. She’d suck his cock and get him to shut up. She’d pushed too far and some things were better left unsaid. She dropped her jaw, opened wider to accommodate his size, and started to consume him, only plans changed as soon as he saw the sudden rush to the finish.

He grabbed her by the wrists and dragged her across his body. Cupping her neck, he stared into her eyes. “I asked you a question. Do you want to know why?”

“I know why now,” she whispered, stealing a kiss he quickly broke.

“I love you.” He mouthed the words. He didn’t say them.

She closed her eyes as he nuzzled her skin and she turned the other cheek, offering him her neck. He gripped her chin with his finger and thumb and gazed into her eyes providing a haunting reminder of what they’d shared.

“I said...”

“I read your lips and...” she closed her eyes and refused him.

“You love me too, Constance.” He spoke with certainty.

“I love fucking you, Gabriel,” she claimed with a saucy shake rubbing her body next to his again. “It’s really pretty simple with us, isn’t it?” Not really. “Why mess it up?”

A pounding knock shook the bedroom door. “Constance! Constance! Are you okay?”

Gabriel rolled over her with a grunt. “No, doll. It’s not. You and your sidekicks are notorious for complicating things and all of you have horrible timing.”

Chapter Eight

“Constance, Sebastian will kick your ass and I’m going to watch. In fact, I may spank it when he’s done.” Darian crossed his arms and waited for the rage of a vampire interrupted.

Tabitha glared at him. She threw her fist into the door again. “Constance, if you’re okay, come on out so we can leave.”

The door to the bedroom swung open and Gabriel immediately walked back to the bed gathering Constance in his arms. He left her tucked behind the sheets with only the white coverlet hiding her breasts. Darian didn’t have to guess. The tent in his brother’s pants guaranteed they interrupted something hot enough to flame hell’s fury.

Darian took a deep breath and slowly let it out. *She’s okay*, he thought. His skin heated, his own cock twitched, and he quickly turned his back to them. “I’m glad to see we left a club full of people for a false alarm.”

“Hardly,” Gabriel growled. “I stood by her bed for over three hours. I started to call for you once. A blood transfusion started to hold more appeal.”

“Eww.” Constance moved to the side of the bed. Dragging the sheet with her, she smiled at Darian. “Privacy is hard to get around here, I imagine.”

Darian narrowed his gaze. “Darling, before you and Sebastian made off like Bonnie and Clyde, I

enjoyed quite a show several years ago at Agendas. I've seen your sweet—"

"Ahem." Tabitha cleared her throat. "Constance, I'll drag these two out of here so you can get dressed. Do you need help with anything?"

"No, I'm fine."

"She's not going," Gabriel stated. He curled his arm back over his shoulder and glared at them. Constance quickly turned to face off with him.

Darian chuckled. "Get ready, little brother, she may not like the idea."

"I don't and I'm not staying."

"It's not up for debate, Constance."

Darian could breathe again. *Thank God.* "Save your energy, Constance. If he says you're not going, you're not going." Darian tried to conceal his enthusiasm. He really liked Gabriel's idea. "Besides, Walt would love to have you."

Darian and Gabriel exchanged knowing glares. "Gabriel and I are honored to have you stay with us, as well."

"I'm thrilled to know you want me, Darian, but I can't stay."

Darian's dick twitched. Yeah, oh hell yeah, he wanted her. He wanted her as much as his brother, either one of them, ever thought about wanting her. The pain of almost losing her made him hard with recognition. The close call scared him to death and made him realize Constance was the one bright spot in his extremely dark life, even if she belonged to his brother.

Darian saw more of Constance than anyone in the Sabbat family. Sebastian and Constance stayed there some, when Gabriel wasn't in town, but they mainly stayed at the Spensers or the Sabbat's country home. When he received word they were there, he always made a point to stop in for breakfast. Sebastian went out of his way to keep Constance away from Gabriel, but Darian wasn't off-limits, at least not yet.

Darian caught a glimpse of Tabitha in his peripheral vision. She studied him, everything about him. *She knows. The little vixen knows and she's jealous as hell, or maybe worried.* He wasn't entirely sure how to read her.

Constance stood. Her knees buckled. Her expression changed. Darian felt a knot in his chest when Gabriel pulled her back to bed. The color drained from her cheeks and she closed her eyes.

"As I said," he looked up at them, "she's not going anywhere."

"I'm fine," Constance groaned. "Let me rest for a few hours and then we'll go. Mother will worry."

"We had to sedate her, Constance," Tabitha told her.

Darian rubbed his chin. "Interesting."

"She's not well," Tabitha added and Darian noticed right away she was hiding something.

"Such a shame," he said. "Nothing serious, I hope."

"What do you care, Darian?" Constance snapped, squirming away from Gabriel. "I need to talk to Sebastian."

Gabriel tossed his cell phone on the bed. "Hit three. You'll see, he's not answering his calls. Any idea why?" He directed the question to Tabitha.

"You're asking me?" Tabitha inquired. "You profit most by his sudden disappearance." She immediately turned on Darian, too. "Both of you have the most to gain if Sebastian never returned home, right?"

Darian lazily stroked a two-day old beard. "Perhaps you're right. Who could say?"

"I can." Constance gaped at Darian. "If you know where he is and you're keeping him from me, Darian, so help me I will kill you myself. My father is gone and he's apparently never coming back. You took him away from us and then have the audacity to stand there in all of your Sabbath's glory and look at me like I'm your favorite flavored lollipop. I'm not sex on a pogo stick, Darian, and if you think I'd ever go to bed with you after what you've done to my family, you're mistaken."

Darian smirked, narrowing his gaze on Gabriel. *Lucky bastard had just as much to do with Samuel Spenser's original disappearance and yet she's in his bed.*

"I never see sex on a stick when I look at you, Constance."

She pulled the coverlet tight against her chest. "Good. I'm glad to hear it."

"I see an orgasmic masterpiece, a perfect creation."

* * * *

Constance woke up hours later. She didn't have an easy recollection of the last few hours. Her body felt battered and bruised for some unexplainable reason as if she'd had sex half the day. She blinked, pushed up on her elbows, and glanced around the room. Roses were everywhere.

"Good grief, it looks like a funeral parlor in here." Dragging the sheet with her, she walked over to a settee in the corner and studied the wrapped packages there. "Sebastian." She smiled as she looked at the boxes and then immediately remembered where she stood. If anything, Gabriel purchased the gifts.

At first, she hesitantly lifted the lid, but as she ripped the tissue paper back, her heart pounded into her chest with excitement. Gabriel took the time to go out and purchase something for her. She held up the short white dress and spun around the room holding it to her stomach.

"You like it, I see."

Constance wheeled around and glared at Darian. "This is from you?"

“No. The roses are from me.” He looked around the room. His brow arched. “Part of them, anyway. It appears Gabriel had the same idea. I ordered twelve dozen. He must’ve ordered the same. The dress is from him. A nice selection, I might add.”

“It is.” She tossed the dress on the bed and imagined she heard the faintest swooshing sound when it glided across the air. “Why are you in here, Darian?”

“I wanted to let you know a car is outside waiting to take you to Agendas. I’ve sent Tabitha home to explain to your mother you will remain with us until your brothers or Sebastian return home.”

“So you’re holding me here against my will?”

“No, you’re free to go wherever you want as long as our driver remains with you. In fact, if you need something from home, I’ll see to it Tabitha brings you whatever you need.”

“Almonzo won’t want her here.”

“I imagine Sebastian won’t be overly pleased with our hospitality either, but at the same time, he should’ve thought about that before leaving you behind. Gabriel and I have talked at great lengths about this. If you belonged to either one of us, Constance, you wouldn’t have stayed behind.”

“So the two of you have formed some sort of alliance, is that it? You want to take turns watching over me while assuring me again and again I’m with the wrong Sabbat?”

“Get dressed, Constance. I’ll look for you at Agendas. Tonight, we’re going to try to get in touch with Sebastian. We’d like to have you there with us.”

“Why are you going to this much trouble to take care of me when you’ve done the opposite for my father?”

“I’ve told you many times, I don’t have your father now.”

“If you do and you’re lying to me, I’ll enjoy watching my brothers rip you apart one day. In fact, I’ll insist on a front row seat. From what I understand, you enjoyed my cousin Richart. I wonder if you’ll enjoy it when he spears your heart with the very teeth he once locked around your cock.”

Darian sneered. “Oh, little gem, you sound jealous now.”

“I’m hardly envious of an act between my cousin and the likes of you.”

Darian winked. “You are always such a pleasure, Constance, but really the way you express yourself often gives everything away.” He pointed at her hard nipples pressing through the white cotton sheet. He slowly approached her, taking one step at a time as he stalked her. “I wonder...” he said as he plucked one of her nipples and then lowered his head like he might bite at one, too.

Instead, his finger brushed across it and she shivered.

“I don’t have to wonder long now, do I, Constance?” He smacked his lips and stared at her chest with hungry eyes.

“Go away, Darian.” She tugged the thin coverlet tighter and made a dash for the bathroom.

He caught her around the waist and drew her tight against his chest. He searched her eyes and his mouth looked moist as his lips parted and slanted closer to hers.

She turned her head. “I’m repulsed by you. Get away from me.”

Darian looked like she delivered a hard blow straight into his gut. “You’re repulsed by me, but yet my brothers feed you their blood? The vilest of our kind will sleep in your bed. You’re turned off by me and still turned on by him?”

“Gabriel is nothing like you,” she snapped.

“True. He’s worse.”

Constance snatched the dress off of the bed and started for the bathroom. “Get out, Darian.”

He pursed his lips and grabbed her wrist. “No, I don’t think so. First, I want you to see something.” He tugged her close behind him by snapping her wrist and pulling her with each step.

“Let me go, Darian!” Her feet made a pitter-patter sound much like a child’s as he tugged her across the tile floor.

“No, little gem. I think it’s time you see something for yourself. You twist your little body around here like we’re dogs in heat just waiting for the chance to service you. Maybe we’re part to blame, but here’s what happens when a dog doesn’t get his due.”

They stopped right outside two double doors leading to a suite she’d never been allowed to enter before. Darian turned the brass levers and released the door showcasing a complete array of sexual equipment. It looked like a workout gym for the sexually deprived.

“Holy shit! Darian!” Gabriel screamed out as he buried his cock inside a woman’s jaws and he pushed another one away from him. “Damn you! Constance, get out of here!”

She held her heart and jumped back, stepping out of the room at once. Flabbergasted by what she saw, a sharp pain ripped through her gut. Her hands trembled as Darian caught her and held her there.

Gabriel didn’t stop pumping his cock between the busty blonde’s lips, but he screamed for Darian to leave again. “Damn you, Darian. Get her the hell out of here!”

He held onto the woman’s ears and stood as he shifted his hips and glared into Constance’s eyes.

“Fine, you want to watch. Go ahead.” He rolled his eyes upward and when he looked at her head on again, the emerald green of his eyes were outlined in bright red, a vampire’s fury.

Tears streamed down her face then and she tried to run away again, but the hissing between the Sabbath men stopped her. She turned around once more and watched the sight in front of her.

Gabriel pushed himself deep into the throat of his willing participant and then withdrew before he came. He narrowed his eyes and stomped forward in pursuit of Constance.

She flew down the hallway with her sheet flowing out behind her. She rushed into Gabriel's room and locked the door. Quickly, she looked around for her belongings trying to ascertain what she needed to grab before she made a mad dash for the bathroom. Oh, God, she wanted to wash him off of her. The smell of him still filled her senses and yet he left her bed and headed for some kind of perverse room at the end of the corridor.

She thought he cared about her. He said he even loved her. What was she thinking? Delusions! She saw what she wanted to see in Gabriel and what she wanted more than anything right then and there was to find Sebastian. He'd never treat her like this. He'd never leave her bed and head for another. He wouldn't do the kind of things she witnessed Gabriel doing with another.

No, he'd never betray her the way she'd so willingly betrayed him for another and for what purpose? To find the man she wanted most in the world with his twelve-inch cock down some busty bimbo's throat.

"Skank!" She opened the door and screamed out down the hallway. "She's a whore, Gabriel! A paid Sabbat whore!"

"And you're not?" Darian's gaze narrowed when he entered the room. "You were just in his bed all night long. What do you think Sebastian is going to think about it, hmm?"

"He's my secondary provider. I could die without his blood."

"Or you could've sipped on the supplements your caretaker provided for you. Tate even asked Walt to provide some, as well. We sent them over for you and you refused them."

"You knew I wouldn't drink them. You planned this from the beginning. Oh, my God. You know."

"I know what, Constance?" Darian stepped away from her and then yelled back at her. "What do I know? Damn you!"

She gulped as she saw Gabriel strolling down the hall taking his time to zip up his pants. "You did this! Both of you! The two of you took him away from me because you knew I'd come here. You," she shook her finger at Darian, "you realized Tabitha would turn to you for help when I didn't drink the supplements. You planned this!"

"I wish I did," Darian said thoughtfully. "After all, if I'd orchestrated this whole thing, Constance, you would've been in my bed tonight rather than returning to his."

Chapter Nine

Sebastian woke up in agony. He stared at the ten by ten cell and blinked a few times to be sure he wasn't imagining something straight out of a horror film.

"Wake up, loverboy." Richart sat outside of the cage. He held something in his hand, but Sebastian couldn't see it.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"Ah, you ask a question that Sabbats alone can answer."

"I don't have Samuel Spenser. I'm looking for him just like Orlando and Almonzo." Where were they? What had they done? Had they sold him out to their deranged cousin?

He made the mistake of touching the bars. Immediately, Richart pressed a button and Sebastian was shocked. The electrical current kept his hands precisely where he placed them.

"Damn...you....Rich...art." His words vibrated with the electricity.

"Ah, yes, and about that. See, I'm not the nice Spenser, in case you haven't heard. Samuel Spenser means a lot to me. His family is the only family I claim."

"What have you done with Orlando and Almonzo?" he asked when Richart pressed another button and he fell to the concrete floor.

"We ran from them, of course. Don't worry about them. You have bigger concerns now."

"Like?" He didn't know how he could have another one outside of being held against his will by a true nutcase.

Richart grinned and pressed another key. A large screen dropped into Sebastian's cage. He pressed one more and a drawer appeared in the far wall with a table of some sort. A bowl of popcorn and a coke was in the center of it.

"I hope you enjoy the show. First clips are from Agendas. Second ones are...well, I think you'll figure it out."

Sebastian stared at the screen and watched as Constance stood gaping at a mortal man's ass. A man he knew all too well. Marc Dennison had his woman's full attention and he later grabbed it again if the next clip told an even more disturbing tale.

* * * *

Constance entered The Kilt Room, one of the upscale Sabbat club holdings located a few miles from the Edinburgh Castle. She recognized one of the men at the door when she started up the front steps. It didn't register why until she caught a whiff of his cologne. The expensive brand was recognizable because Sebastian and Darian often wore it and they gave it as gifts to their closest friends.

She stopped short of entering the pub. Slowly, she turned to face the handsome young man standing to her right. His wavy hair hung right below his brow and his deep voice sounded vaguely familiar. She studied him for a moment longer than she might have if she'd been at Agendas. Whenever she entered Agendas, the cameras rolled and stayed on her until she left. Here, she felt like she stood a chance of enjoying herself simply because the pub didn't have the high tech security like the other Sabbat properties.

"Constance Spenser, isn't it?" Constance realized the second he took her hand and kissed it, the lips of a vampire scraped over her skin.

"Yes, I'm Constance Spenser."

"Ah, not going by Sabbat now? I heard Sebastian is out of town. Funny, Gabriel and Darian didn't mention I'd see you here tonight."

"Probably because I didn't tell them I planned to visit. Who are you? I didn't catch your name." She curled a few strands of hair around her forefinger, deliberately trying her best to flirt.

"You don't remember me?"

"No, you look somewhat familiar, but I don't recall your name. Have we met before?"

"We have. I met you once at Agendas," he remarked.

"I see. I must've had a few drinks. I remember your face but not your name. You still haven't offered it." She batted her eyelashes.

"I'm Milosh, a close friend of the Sabbats."

"I see." She hesitated before she walked inside the club. "It's good to see you again." *I hope.* She didn't know why, but she felt like there was something she needed to remember about this Milosh character.

"Miss Spenser?"

"Yes," she said before she turned around.

"If you don't mind my saying so, the Sabbat clubs, particularly The Kilt Room, are not a place for a woman without a date. If you aren't opposed to company tonight, I'd like to offer my arm." He held it out immediately.

"If it's the only limb you're presenting, then I'd love to have some company."

He chuckled. "I like a woman who doesn't have a problem speaking her mind."

"As long as you remember I'm not just any woman, but a Sabbat mate, I think we'll get along fine."

Milosh's gaze drifted over her in an instant. A flash of recognition and surprise entered his eyes. Vampires typically did not reveal certain things about themselves. The word mate, carefully chosen, assured him that she knew she shared the same air with one of her own.

Constance strode through the club and immediately saw why the recent upgrades had everyone in Edinburgh up in arms. The cocktail waitresses wore collars and their leather bodice outfits only covered a thin layer of red transparent material. With fine straps of cloth gathering over the shoulders in a halter formation, the servers working there left nothing to the imagination. Everything worn barely covered body parts.

Milosh led her to a private alcove and immediately held his hand out for her to sit down behind the circular booth. Constance tossed her purse on top of the tabletop and set the security code for their area, so no one could cross over the threshold of their suite once they left the area. Quickly, she grabbed Milosh by the forearm.

“If you’re a Sabbat friend, then I’m sure Sebastian won’t mind if you dance with me.”

“And what about Gabriel? Will he mind?”

Constance shot him a double dare glare. “What do you know about Gabriel?”

“He’s your secondary mate and many assume he’s already stepped in since Sebastian isn’t around. I know Gabriel better than most. I don’t want to cross any boundaries with him.”

Oh, but he would and he’d cross enough of them for word to travel fast because as soon as Constance tossed her purse to the table, she turned and caught one of Darian’s men stretching his neck to watch her. She was spotted and since her instincts were seldom wrong, she planned to use Milosh to draw out Gabriel. He deserved whatever she dished.

She twisted her body and shook her hips as she moved toward the dance floor. Once there, Milosh wrapped his arms around her waist and Constance playfully tossed her hair to the side, allowing full access to the nape of her neck. What vampire, especially one like the male in front of her, wouldn’t notice the temptation? Better still, Darian’s men were now everywhere.

Milosh gave the man with the scar a scowl and he wrapped Constance around the waist, swaying with her as he moved her to the edge of the parquet flooring. He directed her with his predetermined movements and led her through a maze of people. Before Constance realized it, she’d seriously underestimated this Milosh character.

Within seconds, a metal door parted and then closed behind them. With a snap, he locked it.

“Someone is brave,” she said. “Do you have a death wish?”

“Not at all, only a need to finally sate some long-standing desires.”

“I get the impression you think we have some sort of unfinished business.”

“It’s a shame you don’t remember how much.” He sneered. “I’m generally pursued by our kind.”

Constance placed her hand on the panel release and tried to get out. The door didn’t open.

“It’s locked and coded like everything else in the remodeled clubs. You can escape, of course. I’m not holding you against your will.”

“Then release the door.”

“Leave on your own. I understand you have plenty of powers you rarely use and unless of course you’re too weak, it shouldn’t present a problem for you.”

Constance spun around and looked at some of the equipment scattered about. Everything there screamed too much sex and very little appeal.

“I’d like to leave,” she said.

“I don’t think so.” He pointed to the door. “But as I told you, if you want to go, then go. I don’t think you have the strength.”

It was a test. One she’d fail and he apparently knew it.

“I thought you and Sebastian were friends. For what you said, you’re close with all of the Sabbats. In case you’ve forgotten—”

“I’m well aware of the consequences I’d face if someone was around to save you, but as you can see, no one is stepping inside our quarters ready to volunteer for the job.”

“What do you want?”

“What should’ve belonged to me in the first place if Sebastian hadn’t ruined everything the first night we met. I want the same thing I wanted then, Constance.”

“Which is?”

Milosh ran his hand across the flat surface of the bar and shot her a wicked smile. “You.”

“Me?” She tossed her hair back over her shoulders. “What on earth do you want with me? Do you realize what can happen to you just by admitting something so bizarre?”

“I know everything the Sabbats are capable of and I fully intend to stay below their radar once we leave here tonight.”

“Leave here? With you?” She grinned. “You’re mad, a raging lunatic, no doubt.”

Milosh ran an open palm over the front of his slacks. “I’m horny and have been for nearly a year. No other woman can solve my problem. I can fuck and fuck, take one woman after another to my bed and no one satisfies me. Not long ago, I saw you and Sebastian out and soon realized why I had such a problem.” He stroked himself a few times and then finished his statement. “I only have eyes for you.”

“I appreciate the compliment, but I don’t think Sebastian will find the humor in your forthcoming confession.”

“Probably not,” Milosh agreed. “We won’t stick around and find out.”

Constance pursed her lips. She tried to remember anything she could about Milosh and still came up empty-handed. She raked her brain and nothing registered at all. She needed to buy time. With her brothers and Sebastian out of town, the last thing she wanted to do was disappear right now. Gabriel and Darian wouldn’t look for her. They didn’t have a reason to concern themselves with her whereabouts.

Did they?

“So you’ve decided you want me and you’re going to use one of the private rooms in a Sabbath club for what purpose? I’m not following your ingenious game plan here.”

“I’m taking you out of the country as soon as my plane is ready, we’re going to leave Edinburgh behind.”

“Your plane or the Sabbath jet?”

“What difference does it make?” he snapped.

“A lot, as a matter of fact. I’m willing to bet you’re using Sabbath resources to take me out of Edinburgh. Would you like to know what Sebastian will do to you when he finds out? When he discovers you not only took his mate but were arrogant enough to use his family’s resources to do it, count on sudden death.”

“I can’t die, at least not without a lot of effort. I’m not sure Sebastian will feel like you’re worth that kind of trouble. A vampire’s destruction can take a lot of planning and a mastermind behind it. Do you think Sebastian will take the time?”

Constance took a gamble. “Maybe not but Darian will.”

Milosh immediately looked pale.

“Oh, so you fear Darian but not Sebastian?”

“He won’t waste a minute to save you.”

She realized her eyes must’ve revealed too much. Perhaps they flickered with too much knowledge.

“I’m impressed. I have to admire a woman who wants to try and pull out all of the stops. Darian isn’t a problem, but nice try.”

“You expect me to believe Darian is behind your charades? Hardly, Milosh.” After what she’d witnessed from Darian earlier, he wasn’t ready to harm her. He sent roses and went out of his way to make her notice him. “He’s not interested in moving me to another country unless of course he now considers his own bed a new global experience.”

Milosh latched onto his bottom teeth and restrained a full hiss before he moved over to the bar, poured two scotch and waters, then handed one off to her.

“Here. Drink it.”

She took it from him and gulped it down. She didn’t even question it.

“Constance, I think it’s important you remember our first meeting. Initially, I saw you at Agendas. You walked into the club dressed as sex in a short skirt. We danced, made out, and had a hell of a good time. We were headed places if you know what I mean.”

“Headed places?”

“Yeah, bed. The only place a woman like you belongs.”

“I don’t remember going to bed with you or anyone else other than Sebastian and—”

“Oh, darling, I know who else took you there.”

“I don’t remember anything significant between you and me.”

“That’s too bad, Constance. Really, it is.”

She suddenly felt light headed and the room spun and it swirled faster and faster. “You think you’re going to end up in bed with me now?”

Milosh stalked forward. “Constance, you can count on it this time, lover.”

She tried to grab onto something as her knees buckled under her body. “I need to sit down.” She immediately recognized a unique euphoric feeling. Her legs turned to jelly and her torso felt detached from the rest of her body. As if one Milosh wasn’t enough, she now saw four or five of them. His mouth moved too much and suddenly she didn’t hear anything more than a hollow rumble in the distance.

“You’re going to lose consciousness, Constance. You gulped a concoction designed for some of the Sabbat favorites. I slipped you a date rape drug, one you’ve enjoyed in the past.”

Constance sat down on the round sofa. She glanced up to the observation room, something the Sabbats were notorious for having in all of their clubs.

“You... Sebastian... this...” She couldn’t form sentences. Speaking at all presented unnecessary challenges.

“Oh, what a shame Sebastian told you. Too bad he only told you enough to inform you but not enough to save you. I guess some vamps never learn and some vampires never care.”

Constance heard a loud noise as the glass above them shattered into a thousand pieces. Hissing sounds filled the room. Constance tried to focus on the dropping forms. She didn’t understand what kind of commotion swirled around them. Her head spun, her vision continued to blur. She saw bodies tangle and a scuffle unfold. Screams and cursing were followed by threats and oaths. Then, she saw a flash of light and bodies tumbling everywhere. *Gabriel.*

Soon, familiar arms wrapped around her body, moved her to a soft landing, and disappeared again. She fought to resist the poison flooding her veins but soon realized the battle ahead was one she’d already lost.

* * * *

“I’ve been expecting you.” Samuel Spenser stood in the center of a scarcely decorated room. Several chairs lined the wall and a cot with a few sheets and a couple of pillows occupied the center floor space.

The Spenser patriarch turned around to face Darian the minute the door closed behind him. Two very powerful vampires from different eras kept their distance, yet due to modern day circumstances, one woman—Constance Spenser— forever bound them together. They both realized it.

“Have you missed our time together?”

“No, but the suspense is killing me,” Samuel said.

“Something keeps you guessing?”

“I’ve heard my sons and Sebastian are on the road.” He deliberately steered the conversation in a way to push Darian off balance. “I imagine my daughter is under Gabriel’s care by now. The elders will soon order her placement if they haven’t already. She cannot survive without her mate.”

“Marian’s survived without her mate. I imagine your daughter has her mother’s strengths, and her weaknesses.”

Samuel narrowed his gaze on Darian. A sphere of electric shock currents followed him wherever he moved in the room. Another one of Darian’s experiments assured Samuel didn’t step out of line. Darian held a small device in the palm of his hand and with a little pressure to the remote unit, Samuel’s body endured massive waves of electric current. Most of the time, Darian used various forms of cruel punishment. It helped him control his prisoner.

One mention of Samuel’s life mate and he dashed forward. Darian hit the trigger and watched as Samuel’s body shook violently with the surge of electricity.

He released the pressure by removing his finger from the button. “You should know better than to approach me.”

Slumped to the ground, Samuel sneered. “I would expect Marian to find another mate after all these years, but I take great pleasure in knowing my daughter hasn’t chosen you for her bed partner while Sebastian is away.”

“And it doesn’t bother you that her secondary mate, the very brother who helped me secure you in the first place, is now days away from stepping into his role as her secondary life mate?”

“She won’t care for anyone like she cares for Sebastian,” he said.

Darian cleared his throat. “I beg your pardon?”

“If Sebastian hasn’t been destroyed by force and unnatural causes, and there isn’t proof of it, Constance won’t take another mate with similar affection. Even if she did, she knows you tore her family apart. She won’t go to bed with the opposition.”

“Oh, no?” Darian laughed. “But she already has. You’re forgetting when she bent over for one Sabbat, she more or less jumped into bed with all of us. Naturally, I wouldn’t expect her father to understand the kind of daughter he failed to raise, but I do expect you to understand this.

“Since Constance means so much to my brother, I feel it is necessary for placement of two secondary mates. If Sebastian doesn’t return soon, I plan to carry through with a petition for consideration.”

“Which is?” Samuel grumbled.

“I think it’s necessary for the elders to understand the kind of danger your daughter faces without Sebastian for protection. Since no one expected Sebastian to disappear and leave Constance without a mate, it is safe to assume the same could indeed happen to Gabriel. I’ll make a strong case. The elders will see things my way. They always do.”

Samuel Spenser glared at Darian. “What is it that you really want from my family, Darian? Haven’t you taken enough?”

“No, I haven’t, but soon, everything will find its place. I’ll have everything I want.”

Samuel hissed and Darian lightly tapped the switch in his palm to remind him who controlled their current conversation and Samuel’s present predicament.

“Don’t anger me, Spenser. If you do, Marian will know pain and heartache before I ever allow you to return to your beloved home.”

“But I will return.” Samuel’s statement sounded more like a question.

“Of course you will. If Constance is willing to bargain and if she’s agreeable, you may even go home before your sons and my brother make it back to Edinburgh. I imagine she’ll like my proposal. I can almost see her now rushing for my bed, eager to negotiate all the terms.” He smacked his lips and watched his prey fall victim to fury once more.

Chapter Ten

Constance took a deep breath and tried to imagine where she was before she opened her eyes. She revisited past memories. She was at Agendas. She remembered seeing Sebastian at the club while she danced with a young vampire. The music, something from a hot new band, blared in the distance. It surrounded her, only it didn’t.

Sebastian’s wanton gaze followed her everywhere. He stood motionless and she remembered feeling lost in his trance while she tried to dance away from her partner.

Within minutes of meeting Milosh, he’d tempted her with all sorts of naughty pleasures. It was her twenty-first birthday. She didn’t think Milosh was dangerous, but she remembered feeling light-headed, euphoric.

Sebastian saved her from Milosh after he drugged her. He then took her to the Sabbath summer cottage. He stayed with her all night and he didn't take advantage of her, or at least, she never thought of it if he did. Then, she became his mate, his chosen mate. It must've been fate. *They were meant to be*.

Her heart rate increased and she spiraled into another memory, a recent one. The same evil vampire who drugged her at Agendas over a year ago worked for Darian at The Kilt Room. He slipped her the drug again. Why didn't she recognize him?

She squeezed her eyes tighter. She wanted to curse her very existence for acting out so irresponsibly. For some reason, she didn't remember Milosh until he gave her another dose of Darian's club drug.

She wrapped her arms around her nude form and smiled. Gabriel had saved her. She remembered feeling him in the room with her. Milosh gave her a drink of toxic fluid and everything rushed back—clouded memories and poor judgment. Soon, she felt the rumble in her gut, the perverse need she had for nourishment. Whenever Gabriel was around, she felt sick unless his hands touched her, his veins fed her. It was more like hunger pangs. Her need for him caused a burning ache and maybe it would never go away.

She remembered looking up at the observation suites fully expecting to see Gabriel, and maybe even Darian, but by the time they crashed through the glass to save her, they were already too late. Her mind was lost and her body, controlled.

"This feeling only lasts for a little while," she explained with a grin before sliding her hand over her belly. She remembered that about Darian's drug. She had to ride out some pretty intense moments, powerful cravings, but real nonetheless.

"I'll feel better, back to normal in a little while," she muttered. "Recklessness...so hot..." Her hand drifted. The dark, unexplainable lust returned. Darian's drug was in her veins. He might as well exist there, too.

A cool breeze surrounded her, but her temperature rose. She was hot and sweat beads dripped from her body. "Only a little while," she whispered again.

"We hope not, Constance, you've already given us quite a show." A man's voice, one she faintly recognized, spoke to her in a raspy, deep tone.

She opened her eyes and gulped in immediate fear. She stared through some sort of plastic container straight into Marc Dennison's lust-filled glare.

She looked up and then down, rubbernecked it all the way around, as much as she possibly could. She was in some kind of tube, maybe it was Plexiglas, hanging face down from some sort of lowered ceiling. She gasped. "Oh, God! Where am I?"

"Don't panic," he told her.

"Where am I?" she cried out again. "Please, let me out of here." She felt the chill against her flesh. She quickly crossed her arms over her chest realizing the mortal had already enjoyed his share of thrills by having her on display.

She stretched her neck again and saw several containers much like the one she was locked in, only they

were empty. "Where's Darian?" she asked.

"Ah, so I see you're familiar with your brother-in-law's business," Marc said. "The last shipment just left. Soon, we'll anticipate the arrival of more products.

He meant girls, beautiful mortal women, primed for shipment.

She swallowed hard. Maybe Darian had been behind some of this Milosh stuff after all. She knew she was in one of his warehouses. Sebastian once told her about the human trafficking Darian profited from most. Darian transported the girls in containers, so he could showcase them at some sort of slave auction. Were they planning to sell her?

"I hope you know you can't do this to me. I'm too strong. You can't make this work," she said.

"Actually, Constance, you're not as strong as you might believe now, but don't worry. No one is going to sell you."

Her body started to react to the drug. She squeezed her legs tightly together and tried to ignore the slow burn between her thighs. She remembered her talks with Sebastian and how he cautiously guarded what he told her about Darian's dangerous blend and how she reacted to it. She didn't have any recollection of it. Sebastian had told her a lot about their time together, but most of it she didn't remember, until now.

"Get me out of here," she pleaded. She tried to jiggle the small opening at the top of the container. "I mean it! I want out."

She jerked her hips forward. "Damn it," she muttered. She rubbed her palm over her mound and resisted the sudden, splendid urges to pleasure herself.

Darian's drug was taking over. She fought it, resisted it for now, but she knew in her heart of hearts, she'd lose in the end. The potion was a mind-altering drug that brought on intense physical demands. She'd have to come, by her own hand or the hand, tongue, or cock of an eager male.

"Constance, listen to my voice," Marc Dennison advised, walking the floor under her. "I'm not going to hurt you. Do you understand me? You can say yes or no, now."

"Gabriel will kill you!"

Marc acted amused. "You threatened Milosh with Sebastian and later Darian. But you've threatened me with the meanest of the litter. Are you afraid?"

"No, I'm locked up against my will on a daily basis. Why would I fear this?" She screamed at the top of her lungs, "Let me out of here!"

The container moved in a swinging motion. She placed her palms on the sides and looked all around her. When the movement ceased, Marc stood directly under the area where her pussy pressed against the shell. He looked up and licked his lips. "I'll enjoy punishing you, Constance. Do you know why?"

She didn't care. The familiar drug-induced lust washed over her at one time. Her body responded to the intimate fire again and it was worse than the first time. She remembered that about the drug. With each new episode, the need deepened.

Marc Dennison undoubtedly realized it. He nodded to a technician in the corner, a man in a white lab coat. A lever was pulled and Constance's container was lowered to the ground. It then rotated upward. She was on her back, the cool glass behind her. Constance stared at her abductor.

Marc stood over her. "I like the upside down Constance better. Your Sabbath fellows would enjoy it, too. With your breasts pressed against the panels, your nipples protrude perfectly forward, pointed just enough to form a man's favored shape. You're stunning, Constance. It's the only word for you."

"He'll look for me. Gabriel," she said, pausing after she clarified, "won't stop until he finds me."

"Gabriel had his hands full with Milosh. Your brother-in-law, or should I say *lover*, never saw me."

"You work with Milosh?"

"No. I saw him move you to the back rooms and followed you. I thought you were in trouble and wanted to help."

"Lust is painful," she blurted out. She glared at him, trying to tempt him but reminded herself it was only the beginning of the drug's cycle. The burn twirling between her legs didn't last, but it existed and it tempted of things to come.

"Your body should react remarkably to the time-release formula. You shouldn't feel tremendous pain, at least not yet. I've read up on Darian's products and I understand you are familiar with this one. Someone let our technician know that you were actually the first female vampire drugged."

"I'll lose my memory."

He chuckled. "I could only hope for such luck. If you did, I'd act accordingly, just like Sebastian. From what I've heard, he took full advantage. In fact, from what I understand, you are with the wrong Sabbath today because of your unfortunate experience. See, I know a lot about you, Miss Spenser."

"Sabbat," she said. "It's Sabbath now." *What does he mean, I'm with the wrong Sabbath today?*

"Oh, so vampires take on their mate's names?"

"What do you want?" she asked.

"I want to take advantage of the opportunity. Darian has created a flawless formula for my needs, really. This new capsule he has is quite extraordinary. It eases a woman into her fits of desire and by the time a full dose is rampant in a woman's veins, there's nothing she won't do for the right man, or men, in her bed."

"You want me?"

"Yes, Constance, I do."

"Then you have a funny way of showing it. I... I don't like confining spaces."

"Don't worry, darling. I won't keep you confined to your tomb for long."

"Tomb?" she asked.

“Would you prefer casket?”

“No, I’d like to go home.”

Her body felt warm again. This time, she felt wetter, hotter than before. Her womb clenched and her nipples throbbed.

“Feel free to touch yourself, Constance. I’m going to require it, actually.”

“Get me out of here,” she demanded, though her requests proved useless.

His brows gathered. “Are you in pain?”

She was on fire.

“Are you uncomfortable?”

“I need blood.”

His smile widened. “I know. I overheard Darian talking to a beautiful blonde-haired woman at Agendas before I received a call about your whereabouts. They’re concerned about you, by the way. Should I call someone and let them know you’re okay?”

“Why sure, why don’t you do that?” she snapped a reply, managed a smile, and then narrowed her eyes on the idiot in front of her. She tried to push on the compartment holding her. “Why won’t you let me out of here?”

“I know you think I’m holding you against your will, but I’m not, Constance. In fact, I can call Darian. He’ll know exactly why I have you. He will reassure you that when you’re with me, you’re perfectly safe.”

She panicked when she thought about Darian. No, Darian wouldn’t agree at all. He first tried to keep her away from Dennison altogether. He tried to tell her to stay away and instead, she probably lured him in with her fascination for him. Then, she thought of Gabriel. He thought so little of Marc Dennison that he dragged her kicking and screaming from the club just to get her away from him.

Darian trusted few people. He only associated with mortals he needed. Constance’s mind churned. “If you know so much about Darian’s formulas, then that can only mean—”

“I help him design them. You’re very perceptive.”

Damn it! Everything made perfect sense now. Of course Darian and Gabriel wouldn’t want her around Marc. “Then you know about the drugs he’s working on for the mortal mates? Darian once took blood from Tabitha. Do you know about it?”

“You ask a lot of questions,” he replied, studying her. “I’ll answer some of them later, but first let me ask you a few. How do you feel right now? I’m interested. It’s important to my research and the further development of the product.”

Hot. Horny. Never mind excited and unexplainably calm given her current situation and surroundings.

Perhaps the man who held her captive still intrigued her, or did she actually feel something else for him? Maybe it was an illusion. Either way, fuck him and his pompous attitude. She'd hit an all-time low before she'd explain anything for the further development of drugs.

"I want to talk to Darian."

"So we're back to Darian?"

"Will you let me talk to Gabriel?"

"No. But Sebastian or Darian aren't out of the question."

"You must know Sebastian is out of the country and Darian is...Are you working with Darian now?" The sudden thought occurred to her right before her legs tingled, her thighs parted, and her inner heat drew her finger all at once. She was hot and so completely sure she'd come the second her fingers sank between her folds. She resisted when she saw Marc's lips moisten.

His eyes flickered with knowledge. "I work with Darian on certain projects. I'm not sure he'd like this one."

"Then call Gabriel." *Please, God, call him*. She needed him now more than ever before. He'd know what to do and hell's fury, she'd eat him alive if she made it to his bed with Darian's drug pumping through her veins.

"Gabriel is also the one Sabbat I don't want to provoke or anger."

"Why?"

"Because, lover, from what I understand, no thanks to you, Gabriel Spenser is a very dangerous vampire."

"And it's my fault?"

"It is," he replied with a twinkle in his eyes. "Can I ask something, Constance?"

"Yes, if you'll do something for me."

"Were you ever a submissive, Constance?"

"No, not really. It's all fun and games."

He ran his finger over the length of the transparent crate as he walked around her. "I don't play games, Constance."

"You are now."

"Oh, no, I'm working you, lover. I want you to trust me when you turn me."

"Turn you?"

"Yes, it's why I brought you here."

"I..." She was horny as hell now and as she squirmed in her own skin, she noticed how Marc's expression changed. His cock pressing against his zipper allowed her to see how serious he was about sleeping with a vampire. Good damn, the man had plenty to notice.

Instinctively, her gaze fell to his bulge again. Before she met Sebastian, she'd always dreamed of one day falling in love with a mortal man and turning him. She'd know that they shared some sort of unique connection, something very special. Marc was the kind of man she'd wanted back in those days. He was fit, handsome, and sexy redefined, a dark and dangerous mortal who, with her help, would become a powerful vampire.

"I..." She tried speaking again.

"You what?" He placed both hands on top of the encasement. "Tell me what's on your mind." He tilted his head, lifting his nose to the air. "I smell your arousal, lover. You want to turn me. The idea of it turns you on."

"I can't do it now."

"Why not?" He stared at her chest. "I'd love it if you did. We'd enjoy each other immensely."

That was part of the problem. She didn't want to enjoy anyone other than Sebastian and Gabriel and no thanks to Gabriel, she wasn't even sure she wanted her mate. She refused to allow another male, especially a mortal, the opportunity to complicate things more.

"I need to talk to Gabriel."

He opened the case and stared into her shell. He reached for her but then didn't touch her. "I'll phone Darian."

Escape was unlikely. She couldn't run if she wanted to at this point and she knew it. She wasn't even sure she wanted to leave. She certainly had time to kill and since Marc wanted something from her, she didn't fear him.

Besides, she'd heard about Darian's new time-released date rape drug and if her desires were more intense than the first time when she'd been drugged, then she had a significant problem on her hands. She had to stay right where she was with someone who understood what to expect. The best she could hope for was that the man in front of her didn't take full advantage or if he did, she didn't kill him for it.

Constance sat up in an awkward position. He pulled her out of her tube and straight onto his lap. She felt strangely comfortable there and realized again, why. She was controlled by the drug.

Marc shifted his weight and when he did, her legs fell to either side of his large legs. Her pussy mashed against his black slacks and he jerked his leg a few times, bouncing it up and down toying with her.

It brought about a sensation she couldn't deny. She needed to get off and she was going to do it with Marc Dennison's help—a mortal man she had to consider turning if she let everything get out of hand.

"I feel your heat, Constance," he whispered in her ear. "Are you wet for me? Do you need me?"

"More than you can imagine," she said softly. Her gums throbbed with the threat of fangs and she fought

to conceal the pointed tips.

“Marc, I’m hungry,” she whimpered, rolling her head and exposing her own neck.

“I’m counting on it, lover.”

“I could...kill you,” she whispered as his lips slanted over hers.

“And that excites you all the more, doesn’t it, Constance?”

He was right. It terrified her because it thrilled her on many levels. If she turned him, the challenge of keeping him alive long enough to survive her bite would prove significant.

Somewhere deep in her mind, she knew this was wrong. This wasn’t something Sebastian would accept and Gabriel— *Oh, God, Gabriel*. What would he think of it? She gulped another breath as Marc’s hands wandered over her hips.

“Open your legs for me, Constance. Let me finger your pussy. Let me feel the heat of a vampire.”

“I could destroy you, really kill you. It’s more difficult for the females to turn their male mates.” And Constance’s hunger placed him in a volatile position. “And I have a mate,” she whispered. She had two of them, she quietly reminded herself.

“No, you’ll turn me. I don’t fear death with you. I seek life. It’s the only thing I’ll ever ask of you.” He positioned her over his cock and unzipped his pants. He eased her down in front of him so her hair draped over his legs and thighs. “Turn around, lover.”

His hands twirled through her hair, pulling at it playfully as he massaged her scalp with his fingertips. He worked through her tangled locks, bunching it in his closed fists. “Turn around and suck my cock, little vixen.”

She gulped at his size. He smelled manly, human, and like the sweetest musk she’d ever smelled in her life. Her hunger alive, she doubled over then. She parted her lips and licked the tip. “You taste so real.”

He chuckled, pressed on her head, and allowed his hips to spread more. “Show me you appreciate a mortal man’s blood.”

A hiss from a mating call cut through even the darkest of sexual tension as Gabriel and Darian stormed through the warehouse. They headed straight for Marc Dennison and it wasn’t pretty. The anger on Darian’s face was as vile as anything she’d ever seen before, but Gabriel had a killer existence. He wanted blood. He wanted Marc’s blood and he wanted it now. Constance didn’t stay coherent long enough to watch.

* * * *

“Do something!” Gabriel shouted at Walt when he entered the compound with Constance in his arms.

Walt's gentle eyes were wide in surprise. "Who gave her the drug?"

"Milosh... I don't know his last name. Darian knew him."

"Knew him?" Walt shook his head, "Never mind. I've been trying to locate Sebastian for you. Her brothers finally checked in. Sebastian was held captive, but they believe they can get a call through to him." Walt followed him for a second. "What's going on?"

"I've got to talk to Sebastian," he said. "This is bad. Get Darian. Tell him he'd better not harm one hair on his chemist's head until I'm sure our girl is okay. Got it?"

"I understand." He probably choked on the girl comment to. Who the hell cared? She was his girl. Damn it to hell! Yes, Constance was his. She'd always been his. They chose each other. They loved one another. They were mates, real mates. Sebastian might as well accept it.

Gabriel carried Constance to his room and carefully placed her on his bed. He'd just left her side when his phone vibrated to indicate an incoming call.

"Gabriel Sabbat."

A long silence separated the caller from Gabriel.

"Hello? Gabriel Sabbat. Speak or I'm hanging up."

Constance stirred. Gabriel loosened his tie and sat down on the bed. The second he sat down next to her, she draped her arms around his shoulders. Her round breasts pressed against his back and she kissed the nape of his neck.

"Knock it off a minute, Constance," he said, forgetting at first, but remembering at once, he had the phone to his ear.

"It's Sebastian. Constance is with you?"

"Nice of you to finally call," Gabriel snapped. "She's here, no thanks to you. She ran into Milosh at The Kilt Room tonight. I can't get into it, but from what I've seen so far, I'm in for a long night."

"Is she okay?" Sebastian asked, concern lacing his voice for various reasons, no doubt.

"Why don't you define okay, Sebastian? At this point, I have nothing to say to you. For a male who cares so much about his woman, you've left her for the wolves and they've come for her, in packs, by the way."

"Put her on the phone."

Gabriel slapped the phone on the bed. "Straighten your ass up, Constance. It's Sebastian. He wants to talk to you." After he placed the phone on the bed, he stripped down to his boxers, and slid in-between the sheets. He should've told her to tell Sebastian he was lying next to her with cock in hand.

* * * *

“Sebastian,” Constance slurred. “Is it really you?” She held the phone tight against her ear. Her back was against the mattress and her fingers trailed over her stomach, reaching for something other than fabric. She pinched the material and gathered her dress in tight handfuls in an effort to move it over her hips.

“It’s me.”

“Sebastian. I’m so sorry,” her voice broke, “Milosh...he...gave...me the drug before I...realized who...”

“What were you doing at The Kilt Room, Constance?”

“I wanted to go out, get away from Gabriel and Darian.” She thought back to her reasons for going to The Kilt Room. Her jealous rage sent her there. Her reason for it nothing more than immaturity and now she’d pay. She didn’t like the way the drug made her feel, the way it made her need sex more than blood or her next breath. It made her too vulnerable.

“I’ve talked to Tabitha. I know you have to stay with Gabriel until I get home, but I don’t like it. I’m doing this for you, Constance. I’m trying to find your father, so I can bring him home. You didn’t try with the supplements. Other vampire mates do fine with them. I know why *you* didn’t. It’s *him*, isn’t it?”

Yes, it was him. *Gabriel*. It was always him. *Gabriel*. Maybe it would always be him.

“Why haven’t you called?”

“There were...complications. I’m with Richart.”

“Richart?”

“Yes,” he said.

“Why?”

“He’s holding me while he decides what involvements Sabbats have with your father’s disappearance.”

“That’s absurd. Put him on the phone.”

While she might have liked to talk to her cousin and give him an earful, it wouldn’t happen. Her body was completely wet and burning hot with the fluids seeping from her channel. Flames of desire set her pussy on fire. The only thing that mattered now was sex. She moved her finger frantically over the dress trying to grab her hem and yank it high above her hips.

Gabriel stared at her in disbelief. “Sweet mother fucker.” He moved closer to her then and she continued to clutch the phone.

She swallowed tightly, and tried to concentrate. “Sebastian, where are my brothers?”

“They’re close to finding your father. Everything will work out, Constance.”

Sure it would if Richart wasn't involved. Constance didn't trust her cousin. If anyone with the last name of Sabbath held her father and kept him, Sebastian was a destroyed vampire. Richart would make sure he terminated his existence.

"I need you. I...the drug, Sebastian. I'm..." she was breathless. Her heart raced. Her need was there all right and she wasn't sure it existed all because of Darian's potion. No, it was something more. Gabriel owned her heart, he had her soul and she had one. Certainly, she had one now because Gabriel gave it to her. He made her feel alive. His blood ran through her veins. She loved him, craved and needed him. She also loved Sebastian. Guilt reared its ugly head and shook her.

"Sebastian?" She stared at Gabriel. "Did you hear me? I need you."

Gabriel looked at her in disbelief. She saw the hurt flashing a warning through his eyes.

"Constance, I know. Listen to me. I want you to do something for me. Are you alone?"

"Yes," she pressed her finger to her lips to alert Gabriel. Now, she'd regressed to telling bold lies.

"Touch yourself. Do it, baby. Imagine I'm there."

Constance closed her eyes. With Gabriel there, focusing on Sebastian or the way he wanted to guide her might prove impossible. Her sexual existence centered and relied on him when he'd been with her, but now things were different. She'd had time to explore her feelings and she knew who she needed, understood who she couldn't survive another day without.

"Sebastian, you don't understand."

"I am trying to help you."

"No! You aren't. I need sex. I have to come." With Gabriel! She cleared her throat and added more. "You really don't understand."

"Damn it, Constance! I know all about this drug. I'll never forget what I saw when Milosh gave it to you the first time. Now, listen to me, are you listening?"

"Uh-huh," she moaned, the sounds slipping from her chest indicated a need for sensational pleasure. She dipped her fingers into her pussy.

"Constance?"

"Oh, God, Sebastian. You can't possibly know what I'm going through. I have to find something to fuck."

The words she chose then, 'something to fuck,' must've hit a little too close to home. "I need you to put Gabriel on the phone. And don't lie to me again, Constance. I know he's sitting right there with you."

Constance pressed her thumb through her panties. "I need you here with me, Sebastian. I can't do this without you. It's too hot, so fucking hot." She spread her legs wide and slipped her fingers underneath her panties. Within seconds, she had her knees up and her fingers moving in and out of her vagina.

She rolled her head to the side. "Sebastian. I need...oh, God, how I need to...orgasm."

“Constance, fight this right now. Just for a few minutes. Remember, the urges always pass.”

“Sebastian! I can’t. You have to do something! I’m going to die if I don’t have someone here to fuck me.”

Darian walked in right as she twisted her wrist and fucked herself harder with plunging fingers, moving into a squatted position in the center of the bed. Her hand reached, her fingers worked, and her juices gathered.

“Damn. If this isn’t the best show in Edinburgh.” Darian nearly salivated as his grin widened and his gaze dropped to her mound.

She saw Gabriel shake his head in warning. Fuck them, she thought. They’d dreamt of this and now they could stand by and watch her finger herself. She didn’t care.

“Put Gabriel back on the phone,” he demanded, his voice cracking. “Now, Constance. I’m out of time.”

“Why?” she whined.

“Honey, listen to me. You’re going to have a tough night ahead and there’s nothing I can do for you. I can’t exactly leave where I am right now, so I really need you to put Gabriel on the phone now!”

“Mmmm, Sebastian.” Her fingers sped up to a newfound pace and her womb clenched with anticipation. She fell against the mattress again. “I’m going to come.”

“The hell you are.” Gabriel grabbed her hand, tossed it over her shoulder and held her wrist there. She gyrated against thin air now.

She rolled her hips and bit down on her lip. “Please! Gabriel.”

“If you come, I’ll have the pleasure of driving you there and we’ll do it without an audience.”

Darian stared at her pussy. He stalked forward.

She gave him a wicked grin. “Eat me. Do it.” She wanted someone to sign on for the challenge. She didn’t care who was up for it just as long as someone with a wet tongue and some element of skill stretched out between her legs. She wanted the sucking effect, the one where a willing participant licked her from one crazy orgasm straight into another.

Laughing, she raised her eyebrows as the drug’s power left her body limp but still damp and unsatisfied. She rolled to her side. “He wants to talk to you again.” She hit the speaker phone option, took a deep breath, and waited.

“She has you on speaker phone,” Darian said, unable to tear his gaze away from Constance.

Gabriel yanked a sheet over her and placed his palm against her belly on top of the material.

“You’re there, too?” Sebastian was angry and restrained fury threatened to choke him by the second. Anyone could hear it in his voice.

“Sebastian, I’m willing to bet this little number can provide the best lap dance in Edinburgh when she’s like this.”

“Listen, you sorry asshole, your pawn is the one who drugged her the first time and if it happened again, it’s safe to say you put him up to it. Somebody better tell him to fucking run because what you’ve done to Samuel Spenser will pale in comparison to what I’ll do when I find him.”

“I have him,” Gabriel said. “He’s in holding under the compound where Spenser spent his first days with us.”

Darian looked at Constance and then Gabriel. “You brought him here?”

“Damn straight I did. I plan to dispose of him.” Gabriel didn’t show any sign of emotion. “And I plan to do it slowly.”

“The hell you will,” Sebastian said. “You’ll wait until I get there.”

“Speaking of which,” Darian rubbed his chin, “just when do you plan to join us again? See, we’ve had a bit of a problem with your chosen mate. Now, things are certainly more complicated since she’s here in your brother’s bed.”

“Darian, get out of there. You’re not going to see Constance at her...her...”

“Best?” Darian suggested. “You know what we’re seeing. I imagine as her mate, it’s like a slow kill for you. It’s perhaps the truest killing of a vampire, isn’t it, little brother?”

“Darian, this is the only warning I’ll give you. If you lay one hand on her, I swear it will be the last woman you touch.”

“So Gabriel gets to step in and service the little vixen, but I can’t watch or join in because her mate, my long lost brother, tells us it’s not something he can handle? Sorry, kid brother, this is a show I won’t miss.”

“Gabriel?” Sebastian growled out his brother’s name. “You’re her mate. I know what must happen. I don’t want to hear about it, but I want your word that Darian won’t lay a hand on her while she’s like this.”

“If she’d been in my bed and stayed there until you returned, we wouldn’t have to worry about what tomorrow holds, now would we, Sebastian?”

“Sebastian?” Constance’s drowsy state would soon disappear. Somewhere deep inside, she understood the cycles of Darian’s club drug because her body endured such a high dose of the junk before.

“I’m here, Constance.”

“I want him. I’ve always wanted him.”

“Darian?” Gabriel teased, wanting his brother to hear her specific requests.

“No, you!”

The liquid fire rolled through her body again and she twisted under the sheets. Gabriel kept his palm firm against her belly.

“No, Constance.”

“Sebastian, damn you!” she screamed. “Where are you when I need you? Where have you been? Why haven’t you been here for me? It’s been months, Sebastian. Months!” Tears burned her cheeks as they streamed down her face. “I wanted to be true. I wanted to wait for you,” she whimpered, spreading her legs and reaching for Gabriel’s free hand.

“I can’t get there.” His quiet voice stilled the room and Darian grabbed the phone from the bed. Anger bulging through his veins now, Constance saw the defined outline of them in his neck. His eyes turned several colors at one time.

“I know you have some handcuffs around here. Fasten her to the bed and meet me downstairs, now.” Darian sneered as he held the phone close to his ear and disappeared behind the bedroom door.

“Don’t do it, Gabriel. Please stay. I have to have somebody help me. You don’t understand what I’m going through.”

“I have some idea,” he said. “I helped test the product, remember?”

She swallowed hard and searched his face for further explanation. “Test it?”

“You got it. Girls, women I mean, just like you. Plenty of them found their way to my bed night after night begging me to fuck them. Many of them said they’d sell their souls for one night of pleasure, anything to take away desire’s pain.”

Constance shut her eyes. “You can make fun of me if you want. Desire like this *is* painful. It’s hot and...it’s indescribable.”

His lips covered hers and he whispered against them, “Constance, I know all about it, lover. But remember one thing, sex kitten, I’m not my brother.

“If I take you tonight like this, I’ll fuck you so hard you’ll never consider the possibility of leaving me out of your bed again. You’ll want me more than you’ve ever craved any other.” His lips latched onto hers with a heated, fiery kiss. His tongue weaved through her mouth and she framed his face with her hands.

Using her moment of weakness to his advantage, Gabriel covered one of her wrists with his palm and snapped a cuff over her thin arm before using a pulley to latch it to the bedpost. He repeated the process.

She looked at one and then the other. She acted uninterested in the cuffs. Her head rolled to the side and her hips pumped into thin air. “Then why won’t you fuck me?”

He captured his lip under his teeth and studied her before he jerked a toy from the bedside table. Removing it from the box, he tapped her mound with the tip.

“You want to play, don’t you, baby?”

“Yes.”

“What are you willing to do, Constance? Hmm? Are you willing to let me have my way with you until Sebastian returns? Are you? Are you willing to feed off of me every day for the rest of your life and take me as your mate just as you’ve accepted Sebastian? Think about what you are asking because I will never walk away again after seeing you like this. If I have you while you’re desperate for my affection, Sebastian will share you from here forward.”

Darian appeared again. “Damn it, Gabriel! Quit fucking around. We have a bigger problem than Constance’s insatiable appetite for Sabbat men.”

Gabriel’s lopsided smile drove Constance insane and when he shot her one, she expected pure devilment behind it. He didn’t disappoint now. He tapped her pussy with his middle finger allowing it to sink in between her folds before he pushed the vibrator into her vagina. He walked away with his finger in-between his lips.

“Oh, yeah, this is sweet honey, Constance. This kind of flavor can satisfy a man’s hunger for several lifetimes.”

* * * *

Sebastian remembered everything about Constance the day he saved her from Milosh. His friend, also known as one of Darian’s trusted associates, drugged her at Agendas on her twenty-first birthday. He’d watched from an observatory as he’d prepared her. Milosh planned to do wicked things to her then. What did he do to his beautiful woman when he wasn’t around to protect her?

“He’s right here, Sebastian.” Darian, for some reason, sounded as concerned as Sebastian felt. Darian picked Constance out for him when they were children. The equation didn’t include Gabriel in the mix, but the elders chose his brother for her secondary mate. Evidently, they found some measure of amusement in placing his brother in a ceremony involving the joining of the most powerful clans of vampires. Enemies, the Spencers and Sabbats were now forced to get along, at least on some level.

Apparently, Richard Spenser didn’t give a damn. He saw why Darian and Richard were once perversely drawn to one another. They were remarkably similar.

Darian held all of the cards. Sebastian realized his brother still held Samuel Spenser in hiding. Richard evidently possessed strong evidence suggesting it.

“How could you let something like this happen?” Sebastian bit out the accusation.

“Where are you?” Gabriel replied, ignoring the blame placed and certainly refusing to carry it.

“I’m asking you directly. I hold you accountable. How could you let Milosh get to her again?”

“Sebastian, in case you haven’t noticed, I’m not Constance’s keeper.”

“You knew I was out of town. After I couldn’t return home, I assumed—”

“You assumed I’d step in as her secondary mate? I tried. Believe me, I did. She doesn’t exactly make it

easy on any of us. After we almost lost her, we told her she'd have to stay with us."

"What do you mean, you almost lost her?"

"She wouldn't take her supplements and Tabitha brought her here in pretty bad shape," Darian informed. "I requested, demanded really, that she stay here until you returned home. Tabitha didn't take the time to tell you everything when you spoke to her?"

Sebastian changed the subject. "How the hell did she end up at The Kilt Room?"

"Who knows, maybe she went looking for Milosh," Gabriel suggested.

"I don't think so," Darian intervened. "Milosh's appointment there is new. He only received news of the transfer a few days ago when Constance wasn't anything more than a sleeping angel."

"Angel is it?" Sebastian felt a stab straight through his heart. He flipped his long hair over his shoulders. "Listen to me. I cannot get back there for some time. We're in a bit of a predicament here."

"How so?" Darian's enthusiasm poured through the phone. Just as quickly, it turned to concern. "Are you in some sort of trouble you can't get out of, Sebastian?"

"Not exactly," he said. "Richart Spenser likes my company. Darian, I need the truth now. It's important. Do you have Samuel Spenser?"

"I don't think so," Darian deadpanned. "No, I don't. Not this time."

"Darian! Do you or don't you have Samuel Spenser. As your brother, this is important."

"He doesn't have him," Gabriel said all too quickly.

"And you know this how?"

"Because I'd know. I helped with the first disappearance. After we lost him, we never found him, Sebastian. We told you the truth. Darian doesn't have him and we don't know where he is. Believe me, right now, if I knew, I'd use it to my advantage."

"You're not going to need an advantage, Gabriel." Sebastian was heart-sick. "You and I both know it."

"I'm curious, Sebastian. Can you explain what you mean by that exactly?" Darian probed.

"Damn you, Darian. Thanks to the products you've created, there's nothing to stop him now. She's willing, I'm sure of it. She's dying to fuck now more than ever before. He's going to step in and take the secondary mate position and the two of you want to taunt me with details. I don't need them. I have enough problems here with Richart!"

"I am going to her, Sebastian, not for spite or lust, but because I care for her." Gabriel hesitated. "And after I do, you and I will talk when you return."

"Just keep her well." He shut off the communication and glared at Orlando. "This is worse than I imagined. You have to convince Richart to let me go."

“Constance?”

“Yes, Darian and Gabriel turned their backs and your little sister took off to The Kilt Room in search of trouble.”

“Safe to assume she found it?”

“She did,” he said, pausing, “With Milosh, the man who pumped her full of drugs once before.”

Orlando slammed his fist against a nearby table. “And exactly whose care is she in now?”

“Gabriel is with her,” he sneered and then reluctantly added, “and Darian.”

Orlando’s hiss filled the room. “Your initial actions led my sister into the depths of darkness. I suggest you fix this because I am not as sold on your relationship with Constance as my father and brother.”

Sebastian studied Orlando. “I’ve more or less accepted Gabriel will step in as the secondary mate for Constance until I return. Now, I have to wait and see if he measures up to his own solemn promises. He once said if she belonged to him, he’d refuse to share her with another. I hope he still feels the same way. I don’t want Darian touching her.”

Chapter Eleven

Gabriel started back to his room with Darian on his heels. Both of them held their hands in front of their tented pants and Gabriel stopped right outside of his suite.

He felt possessive of the woman waiting for him on the other side of his bedroom door. Slowly, with absolute calculation, he turned to face Darian.

“I’m not letting you touch her. Show’s over, Darian. I covered for you with Sebastian because I’m buying you some time. While I entertain Constance, you’re going to decide whether or not you want to give her back the only thing you can offer her in the first place—her father.”

Darian’s empty gaze narrowed. “Step aside, Gabriel. I’m not leaving you alone with her like this.”

“You don’t have a choice. I will call the elders and tell them myself. You have Samuel Spenser. I don’t know where or how you’ve managed to keep him hidden in plain sight, which I’m assuming you’ve done

once again, but you have him. So go to him and discuss what he wants us to do. When he returns, he's going to find his daughter surrounded by his enemies. I'm assuming the group of his adversaries will include you. She doesn't seem repulsed by you and never really did, if you want to know the truth.

"I imagine my fears are realized. I'll find Constance in my bed but sharing it with another Sabbat. She is quite taken with you these days and since she's head-strong, I don't know if I can stop it.

"Find out if Samuel Spenser wants to make a deal with you, and with us. If not, dispose of him once and for all. It's the only way we can all move on and you won't have the opportunity to do it with Constance unless this is completely behind us."

"And what makes you think she's ready to fully accept *you* now?"

"You have to ask?" Gabriel smiled. "She already has. You suspected it so don't act surprised. From the moment I was chosen as her second, she accepted me. Right now, no thanks to you, she'll beg, and I'm not in any position," he moved his hands and stared at his stretched zipper, "to bargain with right and wrong."

"Sebastian didn't okay this."

"He did in so many words, but even if he didn't, do you really think I give a damn?"

"You have no loyalty?"

"None when it comes to Constance. Besides, Sebastian isn't going to tell me to fuck his beautiful mate, but he expects me to protect her. It comes at a price, one he's fully prepared to pay." Gabriel stepped inside his suite, latched and locked the door, and caught his breath the moment he saw her.

"Gabriel," she whispered his name, trying to pull herself up using the chains linked to the hand-cuffs.

Without a doubt, Constance Spenser lay on his bed more beautiful than he ever imagined. Her legs parted, and at her opening, her juices glistened. Her nipples puckered and her full, moist lips were ready for his kisses.

"Constance, you've been very naughty, haven't you?" He sniffed the air and closed his eyes. "You've come apart in my bed, climaxed without me, haven't you?"

She nodded. "I'm hurting for sex. It's the drug," she complained.

"It's me you're aching for, Constance. Only me. It has nothing to do with Darian's concoctions or anything else."

He undressed in front of her. He took his time kicking off his expensive loafers before he removed his belt and swatted her ass with a quick snap of his wrist.

"Ouch! Stop!"

"I only popped you once, doll. More will follow before the night is over. I wanted you to remain under the sheet, but no, you wiggled free, and exposed yourself." He smacked her hip again with his belt before he tossed it to the side. He unzipped his pants and stepped away from them shrugging out of a fitted shirt at the same time. His boxers concealed nothing. The front flap allowed full exposure. His dick sprang free

and told tales of an arousal only Constance understood.

“You’re going to fuck me and Sebastian is going to kill you,” she acknowledged her fears.

“Sebastian gave his permission. Why wouldn’t he? If he wanted you as much as you claim you want him, he’d be here now. He’d get to experience this version of his little hellcat, but he isn’t here. He knew the consequences.”

“He’s witnessed it before,” she said softly.

The vibrator hummed against her opening. Gabriel removed it staring in disbelief. Her juices saturated the toy. He tossed it to the side, still within his reach.

“Do you know how I’ve waited for this day, Constance?” His main concern was getting inside of her. He pushed down his boxers and headed straight for their bed, the one he planned to share with her from that moment forward.

“Why wait?” The drug ran through her veins again and he didn’t have to wonder about timing or what she wanted when her hips jerked forward, her legs pushed her pelvis up for his pleasure, her need. “Please, Gabriel. Don’t make me go through this by myself.”

Gabriel sat down next to her. His cock in hand, he threaded it through his fingers. With his free hand, he pushed her dress around her waist. She’d somehow wiggled free of the top portion. His fingers twisted her round, hard nipples.

“I want you to want me, Constance. Not in a drug-induced state but always. What is it going to take for you to promise me a forever like you’ve given Sebastian?”

“Oh, God, Gabriel.” She swallowed hard. “It hurts! Please stop. Give me your fingers! I need...your cock!”

He added pressure to the nipple he pinched, rolling the little gem into a heated button of lust. It wasn’t normal and it sure as hell wasn’t politically correct. A woman under the control of a wicked substance designed to make her crave a man’s penis and the pleasure found in it was absurd. Ignoring Constance while it had her in its grasp was insane, almost a sin. .

The drug satisfied many customers and had only one noticeable drawback. Most women, with the exception of vampires, found sex only fulfilling with Darian’s drug after the first dose. It provided unlimited business for Darian and led many mortals into his clubs on a search for it.

Gabriel leaned over her. “I want you, Constance.”

“Then take me. I’m yours. But you have to fuck me right now. You can’t wait.”

“I’m not my brother.”

“You told me. I know. I remember and I’m glad.”

His mouth hovered over hers. “Tell me what you remember, Constance. I want to know what you recall about our time together.” He licked her bottom lip, nipping his way into their kiss. Her mouth reached for him. He backed away long enough to ask again. This time, demanding an answer.

“What do you remember?” He stopped touching her and stood. Glowering, he tempted her with his cock by pumping it faster into his hand.

“No, Gabriel. Please. Please. I have to feel you. Don’t do it without me.”

“Don’t do what, Constance ? Don’t come without you?”

She nodded. “That’s right.”

“Tell me about your thoughts and memories of our time together. Tell me how you ached for me, because I know.” He leaned over her again and stroked her mound with a careful touch, his fingertips only grazing the skin.

She rose to her toes in a lame attempt to grind against his hand. “Gabriel!”

“I know you’ve burned for me just as you do right now.”

Her eyes opened and tears welled at the corners of them. “I have,” she whispered. “Help me, Gabriel. I have and it’s wrong, but I can’t lie to you.”

He cupped her cheek and lowered himself to her. “You’ll never lie to me will you, sweet gem?”

She shook her head. “You own me and...” Her hips moved forward, arching for his sex, calling for it in a move only her body could make. She spread her legs with a butterfly motion in her hips.

“And what, Constance ?”

He watched as the blush in her skin faded and realized the cycles spinning into her body now allowed her time to relax and regroup. He wondered if she’d back away now from their conversation, now when the heat of her passion didn’t claim her as violently as before. The cycles changing, the time release formula hiding under a façade of sweetness.

She closed her eyes and the tears streamed from the corners of them. “I crave you like no other, Gabriel. I remember everything like it was yesterday.” She nodded toward his cock. “It’s a disease I have.”

“Disease, huh?” He chuckled. “I’ve heard this called a lot of things but never a disease.” He stroked himself harder. She wanted it and he wanted her to have it, but right now, he planned to make her long for it, every solid inch of it.

“You’re a sickness. You’re something I can’t have and want without some measure of guilt and consequences, but I want you all the same, maybe all the more. Nobody makes me feel like you do.” She gasped. Was that entirely true? Hadn’t she felt some sort of unexplainable heat with the mortal? Where was Marc now? Did she dare ask?

A glimmer of something flashed in Gabriel’s eyes. Did he know she’d thought of another while lying in his bed, waiting for his arms? It didn’t matter. Marc tempted her, but Gabriel, he was her life source.

“I’m crazy for you, Gabriel. I hurt when you hurt. I feel your pain like you’re my second skin, an additional limb I can’t see but I feel all the same.”

God help him, he wanted inside of her now. Did she even know what she was saying? How she invited him? Did she deliberately make him hard so he'd translate with ripe interpretations, those benefiting him most?

"Be careful, Constance," he warned. "I want nothing more than to fuck you and if you let me know you want the same in or out of your right mind, I'll do it."

"What's stopping you?"

"You." He knelt beside her and eased his way into her mouth again. This time, he planned to stay awhile. He unhooked the cuffs as he kissed her and soon she framed his face with her hands drawing him closer. She sighed once the restraints were gone and he drank it in sip by sip.

He deepened their kiss gliding over her tongue until she responded with a vacuum effect. Slipping in and out of his mouth, she sucked his tongue and his body responded with immediate urgency. He rubbed his cock over her hip and held her. Bracing for her next demands, he kissed her as she undoubtedly needed him to kiss her. He bit and licked at her with a hungry mouth, a demanding kiss, a charge forward that guaranteed no one broke it, no one turned away. Only, she finally did.

"Hot, it's so hot in here." She sat up and tugged her dress over her slender shoulders. Her breasts bounced free of the inlaid cups holding her in place, and she spilled into his waiting mouth. He sucked her nipples and bit playfully at the little nubs, kissing his way from one breast to the next.

Sliding down his belly, she caught his cock in between her lips and sucked him straight to the back of her mouth. The suction took him inch by agonizing inch.

"Oh, God, Constance. That's it, baby. Give me a slow blow job, sweetheart."

She mumbled against his shaft, pulling him deeper. Her hands moved over his thighs, and she kept her teeth in check and sucked him closer to her throat, holding him slightly away from her tonsils.

She released him with a pop. Gabriel ran his thumb across her nipples until they tightened under his touch.

"That's it, baby? You're not going to let me come in your throat?" He grinned because he knew.

He realized her body succumbed to another round of uncontrollable desires and he had just the thing to take care of her. With a slight shift, it hung proudly at her entrance. So she was drugged, so what? Wouldn't they eventually get to this place, anyway? Sure they would.

Sebastian did the honorable thing in this same predicament, but he wasn't his brother and how honorable was Sebastian in the end? Since Gabriel and Constance had an undeniable attraction to one another, he wondered.

Gabriel sneered at all high-principled practices. This wasn't about doing the right thing. *Fuck noble*. He was a vampire and about as trustworthy and upright as a mortal businessman involved with insider trading. When rewards proved great, a magnanimous mate very seldom finished first. He knew from experience. He'd waited longer than he first anticipated and once promised himself if opportunity knocked, he'd drink it in, and gulp he did.

* * * *

“Spread your legs for me, doll.” He licked at her entrance, saturating her folds.

“Gabriel, you have to let me come.”

“Wider, Constance, spread those hips for me, sweetheart. That’s good.” He dipped his head and her hand knotted around his long blond mane. A few times, when she used it to pull him one way or the other, he snapped his hand over hers and eased the grip she held over him.

She realized why he wanted her pussy in his mouth first. He wanted to make her crazy, then he’d fuck her. But he would fuck her.

With a fist of his hair, she moved against his lips, screaming almost instantly as a gush of heat filled her cave. “Lick, Gabriel. Good God, that’s so hot.”

She locked gazes with him as her body jerked against his welcoming mouth. He rotated his chin over her mound. “You don’t take long, do you?” He smiled the knowing Sabbath smile. She’d seen it before. Sebastian and Gabriel were a lot alike in many ways.

“I’m still horny, Gabriel. I need your cock inside of me. I don’t know what you’re holding back for, but... Oh God!”

Gabriel only lingered for a second before he slammed into her. He hammered past her folds with a force so strong she swore the instant he crossed over her flesh. He stroked her walls with a tempo backed by the crudest of intentions. Grabbing her wrists, he yanked her from the bed pulling her over him, encouraging her to keep the lead.

“That’s it, Constance. Take me. Make me yours again,” he whispered, nicking her skin. She came alive in his arms as her body swayed over him like loving him was worth the wait. Her walls convulsed against his cock.

“Gabriel, feed me. I’m so hungry for you.”

He rubbed his neck and pushed himself deeper. She’d never seen anything more tempting than his neck, the vein he prepped for her bulged with his life and her energy stores. She swallowed hard as her pussy gripped his shaft.

“That’s it, Constance. Milk it, sweetheart. Oh, yeah that’s it, really sweet, doll.”

His cock only ignited her flames as the drug whipped violently through her veins again, challenging her into a euphoric and uplifting mood. He held her against his chest, pumping his seed closer to the tip, ready to spill, guaranteed to sate but waiting for the right time.

“Gabriel,” breathless she said, “Let me sit up.”

“Shhh... be still, Constance. Let me have you right here. I want to feel you take me.” He caressed her

back, a gentle gesture, slow and easy. Then, out of nowhere, he rolled over her and fucked out his control and made up for the time where separation ruled supreme.

And that's when his ability to hold back was lost.

"I own you, Constance. I own this body. You! Not Sebastian. Me!" He screamed as she bucked against him, her pelvis grinding against his cock as he held her hips and blasted her with the powerful thrusts of a man's desires, and a vampire's needs. He turned his neck to the side, so she never lost sight of the vein he wanted her to claim.

She clawed her way toward her own orgasm, scraping his flesh with her sharp nails but allowing him the opportunity to rip into her walls with a cock any woman would want registered. Oh, but she already possessed pride in ownership. She owned him, and just like he said, she belonged to him.

She never wanted to watch while another woman's mouth pleased him. Worse still, she never wanted to experience another man's cock, unless he was nearby, guiding her forward, and provoking the kind of orgasms he alone inspired.

Constance only wanted Gabriel. She still cared for Sebastian, but it was different with them and one thing she knew for certain, Gabriel would never leave her. He was far too obsessed and the chemistry between them wasn't something they'd ever contain again.

* * * *

She rolled over on her back and stared at the ceiling the next evening. Gabriel studied her from a distance. He allowed his burgundy silk robe to casually open at the front and he kept the ties loose, so if she wanted a good look at him, she'd have it.

"Did you sleep well?"

"Somewhat, I guess."

"Do you know where you are?"

"You don't have to worry, Gabriel. I know who you are and where we are. Better still, I know who I am."

"That's a relief. Sebastian called this afternoon to remind us of your last experience. Seems you forgot where you belong and—"

"And Sebastian used it against me. The rest left vampire legacies forever changed."

"Meaning?"

"I didn't have a choice in the matter, but I accepted it."

"Somewhat willingly from what I can tell."

She grabbed the sheets and started to jump up with them in tow but quickly changed her mind and dropped them. She used her strut well as she crossed the room toward the closet. Her breasts bounced with each step and her hips swayed enough to bring his cock to hand.

“Hmm...that’s sweet.”

She turned around and stared at him. “About last night...”

He rolled his head and let her see the love bites she left him with at some point during their lovemaking. She narrowed her gaze on him. “I drank plenty, I guess.”

“You’re going to tell me you don’t remember now?”

“I remember. It’s a damn shame. I woke up without recollection of my first time with Sebastian. Later, it all came back to me, with the exception of Milosh and how I found Sebastian in the first place. With you, it’s different. I can’t explain it.” She reached in the closet and found a plain navy silk robe.

“Can’t explain it or won’t acknowledge it?”

“I think I’ve always belonged to you,” she confessed. “Is that right, Gabriel?”

He looked down and when he returned his gaze to her, it was through thick eyelashes. “If you want to discuss this, we can. Otherwise, don’t dress yet. I’m not through loving you.” His voice changed when he croaked out the request. He wrapped his cock tighter. “Come here.”

“Gabriel, I think you should know, I love Sebastian.”

He focused on his dick. Pulling the thick purplish stalk through his hand over and over, he grunted when he slowed down the tug. “Never doubted it for a second.”

“I think you deserve my honesty.”

“You love me more.”

“I don’t.”

“You do, Constance. You all but admitted it last night and I believe you. Honest to God, I do.”

“Gabriel, knock it off. I’m trying to have a serious conversation here and you need to understand. Once Sebastian comes home, I’ll—”

“You’ll do nothing. You’re mine. I made it clear to you last night and you didn’t have a problem with it. Now if you do, get over it. You’re not going back to Sebastian *at all*. If he wants to join us here, then so be it, but I’m sending Walt for your things. Obviously, I can’t bounce between houses like my brother. You and I will make a few concessions, but we’ll manage and we’ll deal with Sebastian when he comes home.”

“I can’t let you hurt him,” she said.

“Hurt him? Hell, he’s my kid brother. I’m not going to hurt him. You might, but I’m just going to tell him

how poorly he handled his relationship with you.”

He stood, took her in his arms, and kissed her before she thought of anything to say or translated his underlying meanings. Yes, he might just keep Constance in bed and revisit heaven again and again because once Sebastian returned, they’d all face his wrath and he’d raise a lot of hell. Gabriel understood. He’d raise it too if he were in his brother’s place. Only, he’d never find himself there because he’d never leave Constance or her well being to chance.

He almost felt sorry for his younger brother. Then again, he didn’t. There were a few things they all needed to discuss once Sebastian returned. For starters, Constance was *his* chosen mate. Sebastian earned her hand by default and if Gabriel had known it, his brother wouldn’t have had the opportunity to shut him out.

Pulling her with him, Gabriel sat on the edge of the bed. She sat on his knee and draped her arm over his shoulder.

“I need you, Constance. No one else can do the things for me that you can.”

“Need me?”

“I think so, yes.”

“When did you decide this, Gabriel? I mean, let’s revisit the past. You wanted to do it last night. I should’ve taken you down that road because there’s a lot you apparently don’t remember.”

Before she had the opportunity to slip away from him, he bridled her emotions by revealing some of his once hidden feelings. “I think you’re the most beautiful woman in the world. I believe if anyone deserved a life filled with unending days, you earned yours because of your beauty and class. You stop hearts, traffic, and vampires cease to think straight when you’re in the room. Wars are fought and battles have been won in the past by strong women like you, Constance. But never, there has *never been a woman* even in a position of strength who can measure up or compare to you.”

He felt her body change as she listened to him. Her palm was soft against his skin, but her eyes flickered with what he wanted to find more. She accepted him and without a doubt, Constance Spenser was in love with him.

“Love me, Gabriel,” she whispered against his neck. “I need you to love me.” She kissed his earlobe and trailed over his veins in search of another feeding. The woman was insatiable, like nothing he’d ever known or experienced.

“I adore you, Constance.” He pulled her back and held her face in his hands. “You know how dear you are to me, don’t you?”

She trembled, leaned down and tried to capture a kiss.

“No, not yet.” He licked her lips and then asked again, changing his earlier questioning. “Do you know how much I love you?”

The love word caused her heart to leap and spin, her head and mind followed suit. All of her organs either ticked or pulsed with new life. “Then swear to me you’ll never take another woman for as long as I draw air.”

The silence whipped through the room. He released her face and then glanced over at the door suddenly feeling the presence of his older brother.

Darian had made his way inside their chambers and now stood there staring at them with yearning in his eyes. "I've petitioned the elders for your first position and if it is granted, you will take her as your mate and will go through another ceremony with me in place as a second."

"When hell freezes over, Darian." Gabriel cradled her against his chest and yanked a blanket around them. "Haven't you heard of knocking?"

"Ever heard of locking?"

"I locked it last night," he said. "I imagine Walt gave you a key."

"I have a mate and a secondary," Constance reminded them. "Besides, I don't know what you're babbling about. My relationships shouldn't concern you yet, and, Darian, I would never have you in my bed."

"Get dressed," he ordered, grabbing a robe, and tossing it her way. "You may change your mind."

* * * *

Richart stared at his hostage. "Will your brothers make a fair trade?"

"What do you think?" Sebastian snapped.

"I think they have my uncle. Of course they may be a little more concerned with fucking my cousin than freeing their brother. I think—"

"I don't give a damn what you think, Richart."

Richart hissed. "You might. Maybe not today or tomorrow, but soon enough, you will care more about what's on my mind than you'll ever verbally admit. See, I don't have a hard time finding my uncle on my own. I'd gladly go on the search alone but my aunt apparently needs him home now."

"He's been away a long time," Sebastian said wearily.

"You and Almonzo have told me how unstable she is, but the truth is I think she's getting her second wind. She's healing and soon she'll prepare for a mate. A hunt will begin. She'll place her entire family at risk. The females are volatile when they hunt and they make mistakes. Often, it costs everyone, exposes the families, and fuels problems for decades. We can't afford Marian's search for a replacement, can we?"

"I am not your enemy!"

"You are not my friend!" Richart reminded.

"No, but Darian was for a short time, wasn't he?" He snickered and Richart stepped up to the cage.

With a deliberate sneer, he ran his hand over the bulge in his pants. "Don't poke fun, Sebastian. I have a thing for blond-haired, pretty boys and if I decide I want your lips around my dick, I will fuck your mouth until you have my cum drizzling down the back of your throat."

Sebastian winced. "And how will you explain *that* to your cousin?"

"Need, lust...all the same ways she's going to explain fucking Gabriel to you. I can almost hear her now. She'll cry, tell you she's sorry, explain it as a basic need she didn't know how to refuse, but nonetheless, I heard you on the phone last night and I heard the lust ringing out in Gabriel's voice. He wants her and yesterday, I'm willing to bet, he took full advantage of Darian's wicked potion. She's fucked, Sebastian, and you know what, on second thought, so are you."

He loosened his belt and dropped his zipper. Before he removed his pants, Almonzo stepped out from the darkness.

"That's enough, Richart."

Sebastian glared at him. "You've allowed your cousin the opportunity to slow us down."

"Perhaps, but I had to make sure you weren't involved with Gabriel and Darian. Richart knows Father is at a Sabbat compound."

Sebastian turned his back to them. "Which one?"

"It's one here in the States."

Sebastian wheeled around and glared at Richart. "And you were going to let this animal do whatever he could to beat the truth out of me and for what? To see if I could love a woman but abuse her father? Do you trust me so little, Almonzo?"

"You are, as Orlando has reminded me again and again, first and foremost, a Sabbat."

"Who loves a Spenser!" he cried out. "For God's sake, you've killed enough time here to give my brothers a chance to move him again if they have him. Get me out of here."

Richart exchanged a glance with Almonzo and he nodded. Richart pressed a panel release with his palm, keyed in a code, and stepped back. Sebastian walked out and stood in front of them.

"I should leave you to the task of finding him yourself now," he said. "I never expected tests and silly diversions."

"You'd do the same in our shoes," Almonzo stated.

If Sebastian wanted to hear a sense of regret, any kind of remorse, he was staring at the wrong vampire. Almonzo Spenser thought most things through and he undoubtedly planned for Sebastian to spend time with Richart to ensure he was in fact loyal to Spensers.

"Do you have any idea where he is?" Sebastian asked Richart. "How do you know he's in the States?"

"I know," Richart said. "And our sources believe you can lead us straight to him."

Chapter Twelve

Constance raced up the steps. She needed to find a phone and call Tabitha and Natasha, so they wouldn't worry about her. She rounded the corner and found a guest waiting in the foyer.

She stopped her pursuit of cellular communication in lieu of pursuing a mortal.

His lips tilted in a smile. "Constance, it's good to see you back to yourself."

"I assumed your family, if you have one, were put to the task of funeral arrangements today."

He laughed. "Ah, you thought Darian and Gabriel would dispose of me, did you?"

"I thought, after we were found in such a compromising position, it was a necessity, something Gabriel and Darian would find impossible to avoid."

"Are you that important to them, Miss Spenser?"

"Sabbat," she reminded.

"And, yes, she is," Gabriel said, walking across the tile. He wrapped his right arm around her and pulled her securely against his side. He peered down at her. His dimple twitched with far too much satisfaction.

"Constance, why don't you go upstairs and find something to keep you busy while I entertain Mr. Dennison?"

"Sure, darling," she quipped. "Did you leave my vibrator on the bed or just the handcuffs?"

Marc chuckled. "Ah, the woman knows how to get a man's attention."

"And keep it," Gabriel warned. "Constance, make off like a little fox and find something to do."

"I have something to do."

"Sure you do," Gabriel said. "Just *not him*."

Constance slowly licked her lower lip and allowed herself the rare mortal indulgence. She thought of Marc's recent request, how he wanted her to turn him. He sure went to drastic measures when he tried to make it happen.

“Constance!” Darian called from the steps. “Do what you’re told and go to Gabriel’s room.”

A flicker of knowledge came with the statement. “So you’re Gabriel’s woman now?” He moved closer, touched her cheek, and then withdrew on Gabriel’s hissed warning. “You’re a lucky man, Sabbat. Damn fortunate.”

Constance turned to leave, but something caught her attention. She saw a sudden flash, a metallic light or a tiny reflection. It took a second, but she realized it was a blade. “Wait!”

It was too late.

Marc made the slice, a straight incision straight across his throat. It was a deadly dare. A death call, a forced hand, and one he’d lose.

“Darian!” she screeched, dropping to her knees as Marc’s body slumped to the floor.

“Shit!” Gabriel tugged her away from him. “No, Constance! You can’t! Damn it to hell! I said no!”

“Gabriel! Marc! Darian!” she screamed as he bled out gurgling a plea he’d never find enough life again to speak.

She clawed forward, her teeth dropped, her incisors already guiding her to take the bite. She had to get to him, turn him, trap him in their world as he left behind the one he threw down at their feet.

Gabriel held her harder.

“No!” she cried out. “It’s a waste!” She watched as the blood drained from his body and he continued to gurgle, waiting for her to turn him, spare him a mortal man’s death.

“Damn it, Darian! Get him out of here!” Gabriel tugged at Constance’s body, but she held fast and fought harder. Her hissing was uncontrollable, her desire forcing her forward, her fangs snapping, grabbing at his flesh and ripping at his forearm when she made the only contact she could find.

“No! Don’t let him die!” She continued to fight them. “I want to turn him! He belongs to us now!”

Darian grabbed Gabriel. “Damn you, Gabriel! I have to have him. Our work isn’t complete. Let her go. She has to turn him!”

The chaos spun throughout the room. Walt rushed in with blankets. “He is dying. Sixty seconds. Decide.”

“Turn him!” Darian yelled. This time, he almost pulled her from Gabriel, but Gabriel had more strength. He slammed against her body, pinning her to the floor.

“Then find someone else,” Gabriel snapped over his shoulder.

Constance jerked under him and her eyes rolled in the back of her head. The scent of blood filled the room and she fought for blood more than the opportunity to turn a mortal man into a vampire.

“Constance! No! I can’t let you do this! No!”

Gabriel's growl was incredible. Her hunger was exigent.

"She has to turn him, damn you!" Darian held him back. "We need him."

"Let me go," she begged.

"Constance, please don't do this," Gabriel warned. "If you turn him, you are lost to me forever."

Darian stood back. He played a card in a deck now stacked against their family. "You'll regret this, Gabriel." He glared at his brother with a better understanding.

"Gabriel?" She read his expression.

He rolled his shoulders back and with undeniable arrogance, he held his head high. His eyes were cold as ice. "There's no turning back from this. If you turn him, he becomes your responsibility. I will not share my bed or my woman with a mortal mate."

Constance crawled over to him. She held his head in her lap cradling him as she rocked back and forth craving his neck, desiring his body, and needing him. He blinked his eyes, perhaps he realized he lost the biggest gamble of his life.

Her belly rumbled. Her fangs remained well below her lower lips, and her eyes filled with tears. She couldn't desire a mortal man like she craved Gabriel. She gasped as she realized she'd have to let him go, but at the same time, she wanted his blood. She wanted to sip in his nectar and carry a piece of him away with her. But one taste and she would turn him. One sip and it wouldn't be enough.

"What are you waiting on?" Darian screamed. "Turn him, damn you! We need him! Our family has to have him working for us!"

"Need him?" Gabriel's tone changed. "He'll destroy us when he crosses over. Once she turns him, Darian, you will no longer control him. He'll use the powers you've already given him, the knowledge he has that you don't possess and he will bring our family down!"

Constance watched as the truth stung Darian. She realized Gabriel's words held enough meaning to slap him with a good, stout dose of hard reality.

Another gurgling sound and Marc's hand slapped against Constance's thigh. She looked at him one final time and inhaled his scent. A flavor she'd never taste. The mortal blood she'd never drink. She stood up and walked away. And she didn't look back for fear she might change her mind.

* * * *

"You did it for Darian more than me," he told her as they waited for the car.

"I don't know what you're talking about," she said.

“You were attracted to Marc. I saw it at the club the night I pulled you out of there. You stopped because you need to believe I told you the truth. You would’ve turned him and he would’ve turned on us.”

“I was attracted to him,” she admitted. “But never in love with him. I stopped because you asked me to stop.”

“Because you’re in love?” he asked.

“With you?”

He smiled. “Yes.”

“No,” she said with a wicked smile. “But I sure do enjoy fucking you.”

“You do, do you?” He grinned and took her hand. “I’m glad to know it.”

A comfortable silence passed and Constance thought of Marc Dennison. He was a true waste of a good potential vampire, but what did she really know about him other than the fact that he was just as vile as a mortal as Darian was as a vampire. Did she want a man like Marc Dennison for keeps?

No, she didn’t.

She would have gladly drained his blood, turned him, but then what? He would have bored her and she wouldn’t have found him appealing enough to keep for a mate. He would die without her or a suitable mate to keep him fed.

Mortal mates had their certain charms, but they came with a lot of baggage. Most of the time, it was more than the females wanted to carry around. The females were spoiled. The vampire males made them feel like no other woman existed in the world but their mates. She’d been told before that the mortals, while exciting at first, soon lost their sexual appeal.

Gabriel moved her hand over his cock. “You’ll never be sorry.”

“I hope not.” And she wasn’t talking about Marc. He was a casualty, something the Sabbats might feel in a business loss, but on a personal level, she faced something far more significant in terms of losses and gains.

Darian walked up with Walt on his heels. Walt looked troubled, but he didn’t say anything but farewell. No one said another word until they were well on their way to the airport.

* * * *

Natasha and Tabitha sat on Constance’s bed and stared at one another. They’d been in her room for several hours waiting for her to call. They both loved her like a sister and when she wasn’t around, they missed her.

Irisa walked by with her phone in hand chatting to one of her mortal friends. She poked her head in, looked around—for Constance no doubt—and then continued down the hall.

“Oh, I so know what you’re talking about,” she said trying to act all grown up. “It’s really sick here, too. Aunt Constance and Uncle Sebastian stay in their room for days and days screwing. And Uncle Orlando and Aunt?”

“Irisa!” Tabitha called out for her. “*Aunt Natasha* can hear every word, young lady, and watch your mouth. I’ll tell your father.”

She heard her daughter’s pace change and her voice dropped out of earshot.

“Soon, we’ll have another lovely lady to worry about.” Natasha smiled and touched her sister’s hand. “Then we’ll understand what Marian is going through.”

“I know what you’re going to say,” Tabitha protested before Natasha told her what she suspected. “Marian can’t know. Almonzo said to tell her we don’t know where she is. She’ll suspect it anyway, but the elders don’t need Marian disturbing them with a pending war between families.”

“If Irisa was making poor choices, would you want to know?”

Tabitha narrowed her gaze. “You and I both know each circumstance is different. Constance is capable of taking care of herself. I don’t know, but for some reason, I feel like she’s safer there with Darian and Gabriel while Sebastian is away.”

“And you happen to think she’s happier there too, don’t you?” Natasha asked.

“She’s in love with him, Natasha.”

“And you think she’s going to come right back to Sebastian when he returns.”

“She will because Orlando and Almonzo won’t give her another choice,” Tabitha told her. “She is obligated to her mate and as head of the family, Almonzo will force her hand on it.”

“And he’ll lose her?” Natasha asked.

“She will leave with Gabriel and she’ll never return,” Tabitha said. “They’re bound too tight now. I sensed it when I talked to her earlier. She’s distant. She’s more like...them.”

“You mean the Sabbats?”

“No, I mean Darian and Gabriel. She’s nothing like Sebastian.”

Chapter Thirteen

Vampires often celebrated after a kill. Since the kill wasn't theirs to claim, they were distant, thoughtful, pissed.

Gabriel kept his arm around her as they drove to the airport. "I guess a vampire in love can only stand by and take so much."

It was the first words spoken and at least twenty minutes into the journey before someone dared to speak. The animosity still lingered from the Marc episode and left a threat of even more unpleasant discussions.

Darian glared at him. "Do you know how much time and energy Marc and I put into the special blood typing project?"

He meant the hush-hush project that would allow him to destroy vampires with a dose of one of the mated vampire's blood. Using mortal blood, a vampire would face sudden death with the right chemicals to make it tainted.

"Darian, there will be other scientists with just as much information. You'll put your current plans on hold and find someone just as capable."

"It's more than capabilities that I have to find in a business partner and you know it."

"You planned to dispose of him anyway," Gabriel said. "And you wanted to do it soon. All of your men knew who he was. They knew because you marked him as a human target."

"I marked him only because I wanted my guards to keep an eye on him when he was around Constance! He wanted her for himself!"

"And you told her to turn him! Are you mad?"

"Why didn't you do it?" Darian narrowed his gaze and tapped his chin. "I've tried to think of a hundred good reasons why a smart woman like you would let a spectacular mind like Marc Dennison's go to waste."

"I didn't want the responsibility," she said flippantly.

"What do you know about responsibility?" Darian's rage reappeared. "We needed him!"

"And you heard Gabriel." She remained calm. "I will not go against him, ever. Don't expect it and don't ask for me to betray him. I trust him."

Darian's left eye twitched. "Do you trust him more than Sebastian?"

She wouldn't answer the question. Instead, she offered something for consideration. "What if he was right? What if I'd turned him? In a sense, he becomes a Spenser and he would hold more loyalties to my family than yours. What if he'd turned on you, Darian? I couldn't take it if he turned on the Sabbats or..."

Her true motive revealed, Darian splayed his legs open, squared his shoulders against the leather seat and spread his arms wide. His long limbs stretched over the back of the seat. "You didn't want to help a man who had the potential to take down your family."

"Darian, Gabriel was right. He could destroy all of us."

"Gabriel was right?" he asked.

"Yes, I think so."

"He didn't want to share you with him. That's what this is really about, Constance. It's not business. It's personal!"

"And when isn't it personal with your business? Huh? Tell me, Darian, because from where I'm sitting, it's always personal. You didn't get the woman you wanted, so you started trafficking women. You couldn't get to your enemies, so you invented a way to destroy them using the blood of a woman you once claimed to love. You can't find the kind of sex to please and sate you for a lifetime, so you bring forth a date rape drug more potent than the last mix. I should kill you myself!"

"And would your reasons be personal or strictly business in practice?" he asked her with a wink. "I'm betting both." He sneered at Gabriel. "It was personal, Gabriel, and you know it."

"You're damn straight it was personal, but I didn't slice his throat. He tempted his own death and it backfired!" Gabriel yelled. "It's over, done. *It is finished*. Not another word about it, Darian. We have two of the drugs started. Hire another chemist to take over the experiments and someone else can test the new formula for the other drug."

"The other drug?" Constance looked at him. "You're in on the drug experimentation still today?"

Darian tapped his chin. "This part always amazes me. If love is blind, it is also deaf and dumb. Constance," Darian began, "do you realize how many innovative ideas Gabriel has? He is the genius behind the madness, in other words. You do know this? Surely you've seen this more appealing side to my brother, haven't you?"

Gabriel and Darian smirked at one another, Darian, because he undoubtedly knew without any hints to the contrary that Constance deliberately turned a blind-eye to any of Gabriel's wrong doing.

Gabriel smiled because he had Constance back in his bed and sure, she was smart enough to know the man she took there. She didn't care.

The phone rang. She reached into her purse and stared at 'Sebastian' on the ID.

"Sebastian," she whispered. "Where are you?"

"Constance, I've talked to Walt. You need to get away from Gabriel. Is Darian with you?" He sounded frantic.

“Yes,” she said, scooting away from Gabriel while making an attempt to have a somewhat private conversation in the confines of a limousine. “Why?”

“Constance, you have to trust me.”

“Trust you when you left me behind to die?” she accused.

“To die? Is that really what you think?”

“I almost died and you didn’t come home.”

“You could’ve drank the supplements, damn you! The reason you didn’t is because you wanted to call on Gabriel and so you have, but now the fun and games are over. I need you away from him!”

“This isn’t a game, Sebastian. I needed you home and you didn’t come for me.”

“Damn it, Constance ! They’ve petitioned the elders for something that is unheard of in our culture! Do you understand?”

“I can’t...talk about this over the phone,” she said.

“Listen to me, Constance. I love you. Do you hear me? I love you. I’m coming home to you. We’re close to finding your father.”

“I think you’re overreacting.” She glanced up at the Sabbats. They avoided eye contact with her. “We’re meeting some of the elders in the States, Atlanta , I think. There are some new developments, Sebastian. I hope when all of the terms are set in motion, you’ll find a way to accept them, but this isn’t about a petition for a mate release. I do care for you. Always keep that in mind, okay?”

“You care for me?” He sounded distressed. “You love me!”

Without looking at either one of the other Sabbats, she closed the phone and disconnected the call. She then handed the phone to Gabriel. “I don’t want to talk to him until this is over.”

Gabriel took it from her scraping his fingers over hers when she handed it off to him. “I’ll handle it.”

Darian and Gabriel exchanged glances. Darian reached over and lifted her chin. He watched for some sort of reaction he undoubtedly expected to receive. “You’re more like us than you care to admit. You protected your family today and we’re your family, Constance. Whether I agree with the way you handled Marc or not, I think the reason you chose not to turn him was a call you made with our best interests in mind. You wanted to protect Gabriel, me, yourself, and Sebastian. You showed great strength. You are so much like me and Gabriel, it’s frightening.”

“I’m nothing like you, or even Gabriel.”

Gabriel groaned. “You are. What you’re doing to Sebastian is clawing his heart out and, little vixen, you don’t even care.” He moved his lips to her ear. “Do you know why?”

She swallowed tightly. She realized why. God help her, she knew precisely why. It was more than what they were offering her, more than sacrificing herself for her father’s safe return. She did it for her own

reasons...because she was addicted to one male, the only vampire who'd ever made her feel like a complete woman. She chose the unthinkable because she never wanted to spend another day or night without Gabriel Sabbat walking her through life.

Darian smiled. "She loves you. I see it in her eyes."

"Shut up, Darian. What would you know about love, huh?" She spat the words at him and never regretted the harsh tone she used until she saw how it hurt him.

He grabbed a pair of sunglasses from his front pocket. "I know nothing about love, Constance. The chance your sister-in-law once gave me only ruined me from believing that it exists, but I know plenty about lust."

"I imagine so," she remarked, crossing her legs in front of him. "And what do you want from me with the exchange we're about to negotiate?"

"I'll let you know when the time is right," Darian told her.

"I want to know now."

"Constance," Gabriel warned. "Soon. He'll tell you soon enough."

"No." She swiped Gabriel's hand away as suddenly as he reached for her. "Since you've petitioned the elders for my release from Sebastian, Gabriel's appointment to a first position, and your own involvement, there's more to it. I want to understand what it is you want. If you've gone to this much trouble, you want more than a one-time deal with me, Darian."

Gabriel took a deep breath and as he let it out, it unraveled with too many truths at one time. "He wants more, yes. He wants you, in ways I imagine will destroy Sebastian, and your father. He wants you, Constance because he wants his equal. Darian decided a long time ago there were only two women who suited him. One, he doesn't want now and the other one is..."

"Me," she stated the obvious before returning her focus to Darian.

"And I want you to want me back, little gem, or else I don't think this arrangement will work. Do you understand?"

She released a wicked laugh. "I do. I've known you wanted me for quite some time. What I don't understand is why you believe you can make a woman accept you when she is repulsed by you?"

"You're repulsed by me? You're sure about that?"

"I'm positive," she said.

Gabriel reached in the icebox and tugged a bottle of beer from the ice. He tossed the cap at Darian and took a swig. "Wanna prove her wrong?"

"No, Gabriel," she muttered.

"Why not, Constance? I think it's a good idea. If my brother here is willing to trade out something you want for something he needs, the least we can do is find out if the two of you have anything to work with."

Don't you agree?"

"We don't," she promised. "I'll have to work on it once I hear the terms of the contract he's proposing."

Darian sneered. "Such a businesswoman. I told you, Constance. You're a Sabbat through and through."

"Yes, I am," she firmly stated. "But I'm not like you."

"I'm glad to know you're open to negotiating all terms. I am the best at negotiating what I want and right now," his hand went to his belt, "I want you."

She looked at the passing road signs. If she had to guess, they were fifteen minutes from the airport. She heard the drop of Darian's zipper and she moved closer to Gabriel.

He draped his arm casually around her shoulder. "Come here, Constance."

She faced him then, with her legs on either side of his body. She felt the hard ridge of his cock under her heat. He pressed against her and moaned his approval.

Gabriel dragged her body up and back, from one side to the next, making certain she felt his length. "You like teasing men who can't have you, don't you, Constance?"

He nipped at her lip as his hands went to her thighs. He glanced down at his hard length pressing against his slacks.

"We've already covered this. You can have me," she whispered as she dropped her lips to his. She moved her legs around his waist and locked them behind Gabriel's back. "He can't."

Gabriel kissed her and jerked her against him as she ground against his cock. Her short skirt hiked, and his pants drenched from her moist center. He'd have to change clothes before he got out at the airport, but he didn't care. For what he had in mind, she could rub her pussy anywhere she wanted and he'd gladly change or wear her scent as a new fragrance.

"You two don't mind me." Darian reached around them and pulled out a bottle of water from the cooler. He moved beside them to have a closer view.

Gabriel pushed up her shirt and Darian's gaze fell to her chest.

"You like to watch, I bet," she said to Darian. "I bet you watch a lot. God only knows what kind of woman would ever let you participate."

Darian smirked. "Oh, I can think of a few. Your sister-in-law didn't object."

The second he mentioned Tabitha, she froze. She remembered overhearing Tabitha's conversations with Natasha. She was a child but not so young that she didn't remember some of it. Tabitha enjoyed fucking Darian. She thought he was raunchy and all the sexier for it.

Gabriel ran his finger down the front of her folds. "Damn you, Constance. I told you when we travel, I want panties on this pussy, not some thin thong."

"I forgot," she purred.

“I bet.” He snapped the string band and handed them to Darian.

Darian twirled them around his head and took a deep breath. “Oh, yeah, she’s ready, isn’t she?”

Gabriel smacked his lips. “You’d better believe it.” He moved his fingers inside of her with a rapid pace and Constance grabbed onto his shoulders. She moved up and down against his palm. He slid his fingers into her one by one and then twirled them together and withdrew.

Darian patted his dick. “You’re beautiful, Constance. I could stroke my cock watching the two of you fuck. Would you enjoy watching *me*, Constance?”

Darian was handsome. A large man with a perfect build, Constance always found herself drawn to him in an odd sort of way. She resisted any urge to find him attractive, or at least she thought she managed it well. She tried to avoid thinking of him in a more carnal sense.

Oh, yeah, Tabitha’s warning came back in a flash. She realized this side of Darian existed and she also knew from others, not only Tabitha—that many women believed he was a remarkable lover. Seeing his dick swell against his trousers, she understood why some females were attracted to him. He was well endowed, just like her other Sabbat men.

Gabriel pursed his lips. “I told you I don’t share *willingly*, remember? There’s an order coming down soon that will require me to share you with Darian and Sebastian. It’s going to benefit you most, Constance, but I want you comfortable with Darian first,” he said, framing her face and making a solemn promise. “If you aren’t, then I will stop it. Even if it means losing my second position with you.”

“Don’t say that,” she whispered. She couldn’t think it. She’d never allow him to consider it. She had Gabriel back in her life and she wanted him to stay there.

Gabriel bit at her neck and drew blood. “Constance,” he whispered, “Doll, you wouldn’t have let it go this far if you didn’t plan on fucking Darian, too.” His fingers pumped into her taking her to the brink of an orgasm but then pulling away before he allowed her to enjoy it.

“No.” She breathed. “I want you. I’ll fuck you in front of Darian. I’ll do anything you want, but I can’t. He is Tabitha’s secondary. I...can’t do this.” She reminded herself that her sister-in-law could have hidden feelings for Darian. She tried to think about the ultimate betrayal. Sebastian would never forgive her for this.

“You knew, Constance.” Gabriel kissed her again before he shifted her from his lap onto Darian’s, only she didn’t straddle Darian. She sat across his lap with her legs stretched where Gabriel once sat. He moved across from them on the other long leather seat.

Darian smiled at her. “When you were younger, I held you in my arms and became mesmerized by your dark eyes then,” he confessed.

She tried to push him away. “That’s sick!”

“No, it’s not, Constance. Let him finish.” Gabriel nursed his beer. “You finally need to hear the truth.”

She knew the truth. Too many people had dropped hints since Sebastian went away. A true mate wouldn’t have been able to stay away this long. He was able to do it because he wasn’t her *fated mate*.

“I picked you out for Sebastian,” he told her what she’d heard him tell her a dozen times. “But the truth is, the elders wanted you for me.”

“What?” She was dumb-founded. She expected him to say she belonged to Gabriel.

“It’s complicated.” He moved her hair away from her face and studied her eyes. “If you’ll do what I tell you to do, I’ll reward you by telling you everything you want to know. I will deny you nothing. Do we have a deal?”

Constance snapped her head and glared at Gabriel. “You knew this is how he’d play things, didn’t you?”

He shrugged.

“And you, the male who claims to need me more than blood and air are okay with this?”

“Not okay with it necessarily, Constance, but accepting of it. Because of the history you have with Darian, he can’t stay away from you any more than I can. It’s not possible. Why do you think he’s always around?”

In other words, the elders gave him no other choice and maybe even physically, it wasn’t possible. Since the business required them to keep the elders happy, she imagined any argument was a lost cause if they’d discussed mate replacement but something else lingered, too. An idea that one or both of them belonged to her already, frightened her.

“Deal or no deal?” Darian pinched her nipple and a shard of excitement tempted her to ask for more details.

“I’ll do anything you ask and tell you anything you want to know.” Darian winked. “All you have to do is ask and you’ll have it.”

“Will you give me information about my father?”

“I’ll deny you nothing.”

“I want to know about the elders, too. Why would I belong to you and then end up with Sebastian or Gabriel?”

“I can tell you all of it but we play by my rules.”

“Meaning, what?”

“You know what I need, Constance.” He took her hand in his and moved it over his dick. He mashed it firmly against his size. “I will let you have the information you want so I can get what I want. See, I’m a businessman.”

“So we’re trading information for sexual favors?”

“If you want to look at it like a trade, then it is.”

“So if I asked you, for instance, where my father is, what would you want in return?”

“For that information, I’ll charge you a kiss.”

“Just a kiss?”

“That’s right.”

Her mouth puckered and she sarcastically widened her eyes and waited for him to plant one on her. Gabriel laughed, took a drink of his beer, and then yanked her away from Darian.

“He wants one like this, baby,” he said, licking his lips and then hers, placing her mouth and their kiss under his guided control.

Gabriel kissed her until she felt the heat rising again. His long tongue uncurled into her mouth and he swept into her mouth with a loving reminder of how hot things could get between them. He sipped at her tongue and then insinuated the sex act, no, the fucking act. He emulated their passion and the way they liked to go at it best.

Her womb clenched and her legs felt like rubber limbs. She squeezed them together to keep the moisture in her pussy from leaking onto her skin.

He broke the kiss. “I smell your arousal, Constance. You want to play Darian’s game. Admit it.”

“I’ll admit nothing,” she said.

“I’ve chartered a jet to the States. We’ll have plenty of time to play, Constance.”

Constance looked around for her panties and saw the shredded evidence in Darian’s coat pocket. She reached for them and he grabbed her hand. “These are mine now and if you want them back, we’ll discuss it on the plane. Try to get yourself together and look presentable enough to stroll through security. We don’t need red flags.”

Gabriel’s lips curved in a warm smile. “With this body, she’ll set off all sorts of alarms. They’ll swear when she goes through security that she is nothing more than a bolt of radioactive heat.”

“You think you’re so cute when you’re horny,” she said.

“No, I only think *harder* if I’m horny.” He pointed at Darian. “You can’t start your games until I bend her over and fuck some good sense into her. I’ll leave her wanting for you, though. I know just how to do it.”

Constance’s mouth formed a tight line. “You can’t make me sleep with Darian.”

“Sure he can,” Darian said. “I’m willing to bet he’s the one Sabbath you’ll do anything for and I’m betting big here. If anyone can keep your pretty little pussy in check, Gabriel can. I can’t wait to watch and see how he does it.”

Chapter Fourteen

They boarded the Sabbath plane and Darian pulled the pilot off to the side and they spoke to one another in French. Gabriel grinned as he led Constance into the hull of the cabin.

If his brother wanted to kill time talking about the fuselage, he wouldn't object. Why would he? It only meant a few more minutes alone with Constance and anytime alone with her was a few minutes more than Darian had or ever would have.

They passed by the wet bar and Gabriel grabbed a bottle of chilled wine and two glasses. Again, his brother could fend for himself. He was romancing Constance and right now, nothing mattered more.

"Come on." He squeezed her fingers and held the wine bottle and glasses in one hand allowing it to swing with his pace. "I plan to love you all the way to Atlanta."

"You do?" She pushed him into the galley and jumped up on the mini-bar there. "Then prove it."

He set the wine and glasses to the side and grabbed her around the neck. "Can't wait four or five more steps?"

"No," she said, working to unhook his belt.

He bit at her lips as she released him.

"I'm horny, Gabriel. You have exactly what I want right here," she mumbled, kissing him with an open mouth while stroking him.

"Then fuck me, lover. I want to feel that sweet pussy."

She didn't wait for foreplay. Enough of it existed in the car. She gripped him around the waist and locked her legs behind him. His long cock was positioned at her entrance and all he had to do was glide forward.

"You're the devil's daughter," he told her before screwing himself into her tight walls. "Always hungry, aren't you, darling?"

"Uh-huh, you're right. I am." She laughed wickedly and then her voice changed, dropping into a seductive plea. "Fuck me, Gabriel. I want you to fuck me hard."

His gait changed with her request. If she wanted a hard ride versus a slow screw, he didn't have a problem with it. He'd fuck her anyway she wanted it and since he didn't get enough the first time, he was

ready for a fuck-a-thon.

She rolled up on the balls of her hands, bracing herself for him while keeping her hands next to her hips. Her legs drew him closer as she pressed herself against his groin and then pulled herself back.

Using her hips and inner thighs, and that butterfly motion he loved, he sank between her thighs, and he stroked. Oh damn, how he fucked her, and he planned to keep stroking for as long as he was welcome.

“Damn, you’re wet.” He watched her as her little neck stretched. “Wanna kiss me?”

“Yes, kiss me, Gabriel.”

He shook his head. “No way, let’s just fuck. We don’t have to smooch to screw. Look down now, Constance. Watch my cock, baby.”

She was lost. The erotic expression of uncontrollable lust lashed at their bodies. He kept his pace, not so much at a grind but at a thrashing fuck, with a slow push thrown in-between the occasional thrust fest. She came fast and hard screaming his name as she clawed at him.

“Gabriel!” She ground against him, gripping his forearms, guiding him faster. Beads of sweat poured from her brow. “Come with me. Come now!”

He hammered her pussy with a few hard strokes and he waited until he felt her warm juices pool around his shaft before he started his favorite way to fuck her—a slow enjoyable screw. “That’s it, baby. Milk it. Wait for me. Let me get you off again.”

She shook her head as he gave her one thrust backed up by another. He pushed himself deep inside her cunt and felt her tight space give when he plunged an inch deeper.

“Oh, Constance, that’s good. So good, baby.”

Gabriel fucked her still slower. He wanted her to orgasm again, but felt the company there. Darian’s pilot chat was over and he’d join them soon. He was listening, waiting, maybe even watching.

The little vixen dropped her teeth and went for his neck. Gabriel pulled her head back and looked at her with her elongated fangs and shaded eyes. She was more beautiful than any woman in the world and all he wanted to do was love her from one lifetime straight into another.

“Ah, yeah, you know what I want. Fuck me, baby. That’s it. Bite me and fuck me, sugar.”

Her teeth dropped to his vein and he pounded into her sweet pussy. “Ah, yeah, Constance. It’s hot, baby, burning hot for you. Suck me dry, lover. I have plenty. God, yeah, this is good.”

Gabriel pumped his seed into her while she drank from his vein and when it was over, she collapsed against the wall behind her. His cock still stroking at her, he pushed in and pulled out slow and easy with a lot of forethought given to each and every stroke.

“Good?” he asked knowingly.

“Terrific.”

They were locked in a gaze of understanding. He felt a confession coming on and he knew Darian would hear it. He saw it. He felt it in the way she continued to grip his shaft with her tight little snatch. Her gaze held him, captivated him, and damn near captured him for a thousand lifetimes all over again.

"I love you. I love you more than anyone I've ever loved in my life."

He wanted to love her all over again just for the sentiments. He pushed himself into her tight cave once more and then reluctantly left her, but he only deserted her when he sensed another brother.

He never wanted Sebastian to hear those words. Darian, sure, but not Sebastian.

"Constance," he warned, but it was too late.

Sebastian stepped into plain sight with tears in his eyes and anger burning just as bright. "What a homecoming," he stated, glaring at his brother and his life mate before walking into the main cabin.

* * * *

Gabriel started for his brother. "Wait for me in the back. There's a comfortable suite there."

She caught his arm. "No, Gabriel. I did this. You don't have to protect me."

"I will protect you," he told her. "Wait for me, for us...back in the back."

Wait for us? What the hell did he think they were all going to do? Fuck out their differences?

"No, I want to go to him."

"Why?" Jealousy washed across his face. "Do you still love him, too?"

"You know I care for him." And the second she saw him, she felt something more than compassion, she felt the love again. Not as strong as what she once imagined they shared, but there nonetheless.

"Do you love him?"

"I...I..."

"I'd love to hear this, too," Sebastian reappeared with a drink in his hand. Darian stood right behind him.

"What the hell are you doing here?" Darian asked. "It's good to see you, of course but a surprise, as you can probably imagine."

"Yeah, you know what, Darian, I can. I can almost see it now." He raised his hand across the open air in front of him and moved it like he wanted them to envision it all right there with him.

Sebastian didn't turn to look at Darian. He focused completely on Constance. "I was already on my way back from the States when I heard the three of you were planning a trip. I wanted Constance to stay

in Edinburgh . I guess she had some kind of party planned for the two of you though, huh?”

Maybe he didn't want a hug from her but too bad. Regardless of what he'd heard or witnessed with his own eyes, she wanted to comfort him. She threw her arms around his waist and held him close. “Don't be mad, Sebastian. Please don't be mad. I've missed you. I really did. You have to believe me. It's just so much time passed and I'm weak. I'm always weak. Tell me you believe me.”

Gabriel grabbed her arm. “Is this the way you're going to play this, Constance ? Be very, very careful, sugar. If you take the high road now, you'll regret it when you travel it all alone and the day will come.”

“Sebastian?” she asked. “Do you believe me?” She ignored Gabriel and it killed her to do it, but she owed Sebastian something, some kind of explanation.

“Believe a liar?” He scowled. “I don't believe a word any of you have to say.”

He pushed by Darian and went to the main area. Grabbing a bottle of scotch from the bar, he didn't bother pouring it into a glass. Instead, he drank from the bottle.

They joined him. Cautiously, they chose where to sit. Darian and Gabriel sat on chairs facing him and Constance sat next to him.

Gabriel's eyes narrowed and she watched a twitch in his upper left cheek. She tried to reach for Sebastian, but he smacked her hand away.

“You aren't going to make me feel guilty about this,” she said.

“I never thought you'd have one inch of regret,” he replied. He didn't look at her. “Are you fucking her too, Darian?”

“No,” he said.

“Constance?” He glared at Gabriel.

“No, Sebastian, I haven't slept with Darian.”

“Yet.” Gabriel winked. “But it would've happened on this flight if—”

Sebastian let out a loud moan and then looked away. “Oh, it's going to happen. I'm not here to beg my mate to keep her loyalties in mind and I sure don't plan to stop whatever the three of you have in motion.”

“Sebastian.” She reached for him.

“Shut up, Constance . I don't want to hear one excuse. I was with your cousin and your brothers. I endured torture from that lunatic Richart. The maniac held me in a cage, darling. He did it because your brothers put me to a test of loyalties while their sister—God love her adulteress heart—was doing her dead level best to make herself available to my brothers. What are you, darling, some sort of family whore?”

“I'm not going to listen to this.” Darian stood up and went to the bar. He poured a shot. Vodka, scotch, who really cared?

“Tell me something, Constance. Whose cock pleases you most?”

“That’s enough!” Gabriel flew across the plane and grabbed Sebastian by the throat. “You will never speak to her that way again. Do you understand?”

Sebastian didn’t fight him. He didn’t act like he cared if Gabriel placed a dagger in his heart or if Darian used him for the next vampire test subject. He looked positively defeated.

“I guess she’s chosen you.”

“She belonged to me, Sebastian,” Gabriel informed. “She’s always belonged to me.”

“Since when?” Sebastian demanded. “She was in my arms first, and you dare to tell me she belongs to you?”

“No,” Gabriel corrected. “You forgot, brother. She was in Darian’s first. The elders might have chosen her for him if things between us hadn’t been so powerful. Darian was her chosen, I was her fated, and you became her mate because a chain of events made it impossible to avoid. I’m not saying what you feel for her isn’t real. It is. Only, Sebastian—”

“It’s not the kind of love the two of you share, right?” he snapped.

“It’s not the same.” He shook Sebastian by his shirt. He balled the material into his fists and held him tight. “It’s different. Is it better? I don’t know. Is it more powerful or more significant than what the two of you share? I have no idea. Why don’t you ask her. All I know is I can’t stay away from her. It’s destroying me, Sebastian. I can share her if it’s the only way I can have her, but I don’t think I can survive without her.”

“Good grief! This is like a fucking soap opera. So the two of you have decided you have some kind of rare and special connection that no one will ever understand except the two of you, right?” He shot Constance a sideways glance.

“Don’t answer him. She belongs to Gabriel, Sebastian. It’s true. I’ve watched them together. It’s the real thing. It’s a lot like what I imagine Tabitha shares with Almonzo. It’s something deeper than any of us can understand until we have it.”

“Shut the fuck up, Darian. What do you know?”

“I know I lost out to one brother and then another. I let her go because of you, Sebastian. Because I didn’t take Gabriel into consideration when I explained to the panel that I realized she was perfect for you. I wanted to change the future by defying history. I wanted her paired with you, but the truth is, she belonged to me when I held her in my arms!”

“You didn’t want her with Gabriel. What changed? Huh? Business must have dropped considerably. Darian, don’t you have anything for Gabriel to do? Need my woman to keep him occupied, maybe even out of trouble? What changed? Damn you!” Sebastian screamed. “You couldn’t stand to think of Gabriel doing anything more than running the businesses. God help you if he’d found Constance that night with Milosh.”

“If he’d found her, we wouldn’t stand here today discussing her and Gabriel. You wouldn’t have had the

first opportunity, Sebastian.”

“That’s a fucking lie!”

“You were in love with her from the moment your eyes met as a boy, Sebastian. But remember, that was as a boy and the elders can change their minds at any time, even within the first five years of a joined union. I didn’t cause this mess.”

“No, but you and Gabriel better damn well figure out how to fix it.” He grabbed Constance’s wrist. “And you’d better find a solution before we land.”

He started down the hall with Constance close behind him. “I want a few hours alone with Constance. Based on the sentiments the two of you shared earlier, Gabriel, I imagine my cock stroking her now will drive you to the brink of madness.” He stopped walking and pushed her in front of him. “I plan to fuck her until she remembers the love we shared, and she will remember.”

Constance didn’t glance behind her. Even though Gabriel left her in Sebastian’s arms once before, he would not make the same mistake twice. He wasn’t a mate who shared easily and after facing the truth about his place with her, he wasn’t willing to share at all unless he participated or maybe watched.

Chapter Fifteen

“Where are my brothers?” she asked when he shut the door to the bedroom.

“They’re waiting in Atlanta,” he replied. “Along with Richart. I’m sure Darian will enjoy seeing him.”

“Sebastian, don’t do this.”

“What am I doing exactly, Constance?” He stormed over to the bed and sat on the edge. Slowly, he unbuttoned his shirt. “I’m trying to practice a little patience and I’m trying to figure out why I’m hurt when I expected this from the beginning.”

“Don’t you dare point an accusing finger at me. You left me!”

“I didn’t leave you, Constance. Grow the fuck up. I left to help you and your family find *your father* .

What a fucking mistake that was. I discovered along the way that even the act of helping is often put to the test. Your brothers and Richart tested me, locked me up, and kept me from contacting you.” He chuckled. Then he roared with laughter.

“What’s so funny?”

“They are. Think about it. Here they were testing me, trying my loyalty, trying to keep me bound to the Spensers and in the process, they handed their little sister over to the two Sabbats they hate most in the world. It’s funny how things work out, huh?”

He stood, dropped his pants, and then stalked forward. His boxers concealed very little. His hard cock pressed against the buttons.

“Now I’m home, Constance, and all I’ve dreamed about is holding you.” He slapped his mouth over hers and latched onto a dry kiss. A kiss she didn’t open her mouth to receive.

He pulled back, swallowed, and then walked away. “I expected that, too.” This time when he returned to the bed, he jerked the blankets away, sank to the mattress, and placed his head in his hands.

“Sebastian.” Her heart slowed to a steady beat and her stomach flipped at the same time. Gabriel waited right outside the door.

“I want to know what it feels like *not* to love you anymore,” he admitted. “All the way home, I told myself over and over again why I should just let you go. You’re selfish, Constance. You’ve always been so spoiled. I’m sure I added to the long list of those who gave you everything you wanted, but hey, Gabriel has the means to do it. Who knows, maybe he’ll pick up where I left off. And Darian, well we both already know he will take care of you. He still looks at you like you’re a child.”

“Darian doesn’t see me as a child.”

“I see you as a woman who’s betrayed me with my brothers.”

“You don’t want me anymore?” she asked.

“What do you expect, Constance?”

“I don’t know.”

“I heard you tell my brother you loved him!”

“I do love him, Sebastian, and I think I have feelings for Darian, too. Nothing like what I have for you but feelings for him, and Sebastian they aren’t going to go away.”

“What the hell does that mean, Constance? They won’t go away?”

“They’re getting stronger, the chemistry between us is harder and harder to resist.”

“And with Gabriel? Do you really love him more than anyone you’ve ever loved?”

“It’s just...” She heard noise on the other side of the door. Either the lies stopped before they started or else she’d go through one hell right after another and take those she loved most with her.

“I love him, Sebastian. The love I have for you is different, but real. I love Gabriel and I know it’s because he is...very important to me and I believe I know why. He’s my life mate. He’s who I’m supposed to have.”

“What the fuck do you mean the lover you’re supposed to have? You’re mine, Constance. You belong to me! Damn it!” He buried his face in his hands and then looked up all at once. “Tell me something, Constance. Do you think Darian or Gabriel would’ve gone to another country with your brothers to search for your father?”

Tears welled in the corner of her eyes, but they didn’t spill. “No,” she answered truthfully and the door open behind her. She didn’t turn to look at them. She sensed them both at her back.

“No, they wouldn’t search for a man they are ultimately responsible for moving from one continent to the next. How absurd!”

“They wouldn’t leave me either, Sebastian,” she whispered.

“Because they are too possessive, Constance ! Because sex is very important to them. It has nothing to do with love!”

“It has everything to do with love,” she told him.

Darian moved in front of her. “You believe I love you?”

She swallowed stiffly.

“Well? Do you?” Darian asked.

“I know you care for me. I saw it at Agendas the night Dennison was there with his men. You were guarded, and very protective.”

Darian narrowed his gaze and then wrapped her in his arms. “I care for you,” he whispered.

“Don’t, Darian,” she warned. “Now isn’t the time.”

“Now is the time,” he said, holding her body against his. “I’m taking you to bed, Constance. It’s long overdue and my reasons are unexplainable, but I think we’ll find a lot of answers in Atlanta.”

* * * *

Gabriel convinced Sebastian to step out of the room with him. Seething glares and hissing threatened to keep them apart.

“You want to stay with us now, I take it?” Sebastian asked.

“Sure, that’s exactly what I had in mind. Right after Samuel Spenser returns to the lovely Marian. I’m

sure they'll welcome me and then Darian. What do you think? Do we look like we'll fit in well? How do you think Tabitha and Constance will get along with Tabitha's second living right down the hall? We could really fuck up the Spenser's perfect little world, huh?"

"You could've kept your distance," Sebastian accused.

"I tried. So help me, Sebastian, I tried."

"You didn't try hard enough!"

"I didn't fuck her when I fed her, damn you! I resisted her several times and I did it in your name, damn you!"

Sebastian glared at him. "I'm going back in that room and then I'm going to fuck her straight out of my system. God help you if you don't want her because I'm walking away afterward. When we get to Atlanta, I'll tell her brothers to enjoy the hell out of the new arrangement. After what they allowed Richart to do, I'll take great joy in watching them digest the new developments in Constance's love life."

* * * *

Darian's lips covered hers for a fate-changing kiss. He took his time kissing her. And surprisingly still, he was a gentleman. He gripped her shoulders and kissed her softly. A one-word description came to mind—sweet. Darian Sabbath kissed her like he'd plotted the perfect delivery for a few dozen lifetimes.

She closed her eyes and he kissed her lids before backing away again. "I am in love with you, Constance Spenser. I don't know when it happened. I don't care when it happened. I only know I feel for you in a way I never expected."

"You love me?" She tried to process it.

"I love you."

She touched her lips with her fingertips. "And you want me?"

Darian cupped her neck in a clasp. "If my lips are on you, all sorts of intentions are on my mind and, Constance, they aren't honorable. I know I should feel ashamed of myself. I held you as a child and yet here I am in front of you. I'm a man in love with a woman who should, by all accounts, remain forever off limits to me and yet, I can't explain it. I only know that I will do whatever it takes to keep you safe."

"What about Tabitha?" She searched his eyes when she said her name. She saw a flicker of something, compassion maybe, but nothing close to love.

"I—I can't tell you I'll love you in return," she said.

"I'm not asking for your love right now, Constance. But I will promise you a safe return for your father if you'll open your heart to me."

“Darian—”

“Constance, I know more about what you’re going through right now than Sebastian or Gabriel. The elders will explain it when we meet with them in Atlanta, and you will see your father there, as well.”

“Father?” Constance’s pulse raced. “Darian, please don’t lie to me. Father is going to meet us in Atlanta?”

“Yes. I’ve made arrangements for his release.”

The truth slapped her then. She narrowed her eyes and the tears drifted over her cheeks. “So you had him? Why would you do this?”

“I can’t give you the answers you want. Not right now.”

“The hell you can’t! I’ve lost years with my father, Darian. Years I’ll never have back and you don’t care. You think...what...you can kiss me and make it better?”

“That’s precisely what he thinks,” Sebastian said, walking into the bedroom. At least he seemed to have a lighter mood, she thought. Sebastian and Gabriel inched forward. Sebastian, still in his boxers looked like the boxers were a gross inconvenience. He’d step out of them any minute.

Gabriel, as always, had a smug look. He licked his lips and stared at her breasts. She felt every nerve ending in her body come alive right along with the bulge in Gabriel’s slacks. They were going to share her. No question about it. Even if it was only one delicious night, Constance Spenser-Sabbat would know what it was like to love two Sabbat men again, and maybe even three. Depending on Darian’s terms, she’d bet on all three.

Chapter Sixteen

Constance freshened up in the powder room and then reluctantly stepped back into the bedroom. There in the center of the bed, three glorious men waited for her, but she wasn't fooled by their appearance or their need for her.

Sebastian started to say something and she held up her hand. "Please give me a minute." She knew the warning he wanted to give her right then carried a lot of persuasion. He didn't want her to sleep with Darian, but it really didn't matter now. She'd connected the dots and read far more into her future than any of them knew existed there. Once they landed in Atlanta, they would discover a lot about themselves and each other.

What would her father think? And Almonzo and Orlando, were they aware of the changes made on her behalf? She looked from one man to the next. Gabriel and Sebastian, while physically similar, were different by truer comparison.

Gabriel would kill for her or die for her, as he so eloquently put it, but Sebastian defended her family and wanted desperately to fit well with them. Whatever happened while he traveled with her brothers certainly changed him. He was colder, much harder than before. Or did she do that to him? Did her feelings for Gabriel change Sebastian? Possibly.

She locked gazes with Darian. He had a tight grip around his cock. He worked himself through his hand. "Constance, come here, sweetheart."

They had a deal. The devil wanted her to pay in full, no doubt, before they arrived in Atlanta. Her father would be there, waiting with his arms wide open. Sebastian had confirmed it before she rushed off to the powder room, turned on the water so no one would hear her and cried into her palms. She would see her father, a man she hadn't seen in years. Only first, she'd fuck the vampire who took him away in the first place.

Nothing made sense. The feelings she had for Darian, while unexplainable, would soon find more depth, more meaning. Having sex with him wouldn't change things necessarily, but she would develop a significant bond with him, just like the one she had with Sebastian and Gabriel.

Sebastian took her hand and brought her to the bed with them. He tugged her into a bed chamber of hell because she knew once they all made love to her, he'd have another image he couldn't shake and yet she was too far into the act to turn back now.

"You look beautiful," Sebastian said before he slid the thin barely-there slip over her shoulders and dropped his mouth to her neck. He traced the curve of her shoulder with his tongue before he nipped his way to her ear. "I want you to love all of us for now, without reservations. Something is changing soon, I feel it. Do you?" He cupped her head and held her away long enough to look into her eyes.

She quickly nodded.

"Good girl," he said.

"Will it change us?"

"Constance," he replied with a frown. "All of us are forever changed by the love we have for you."

She didn't know why everyone acted so agreeable now, but she'd go with it. This was her time, their moment. She had the three men she wanted to love in her bed. Now, all she had to do was love them,

and she knew precisely how she wanted to do it.

* * * *

Samuel Spenser stood in the center of a hotel room with Richart. "You've gone out of your way to make this happen, Richart. I appreciate everything you've done to help me and my family."

Richart smiled at his Uncle Samuel. "I'm glad to help."

"Have you heard from Constance and Sebastian? I understand they're traveling to the States to meet us."

"They'll arrive around the same time as Orlando and Almonzo. The elders should be here within the hour." He grabbed a bottle of water from a nearby mini-fridge.

"Is there something you aren't telling me?" he asked.

"No, sir. I've told you everything I'm allowed to tell you. Darian worked out a deal with Constance and the elders arranged for your final release."

Samuel dropped his head. "Does Sebastian know?"

Richart tilted his head to the right. He narrowed his eyes on his uncle and tried to pretend he didn't have any further information. Samuel Spenser saw through it.

"Damn it to hell! Tell me what she's done in order to make this happen!"

"This is something you need to address with your family, Uncle Samuel."

"Don't you dare call me Uncle Samuel and then tell me to find the answers I need in my family. You are my family, boy! As much as anyone else. Now, tell me what the hell Constance had to do in order to arrange my release."

"The elders have appointed her three life mates of equal consideration and there's nothing you can do to change their minds."

Samuel walked to the window and looked out over the city. "No, they wouldn't do this."

"They've already coded the final decision."

"What do you mean? They can't do this without talking to the head of the family."

"Almonzo talked to them and they denied him. He tried to ask for an assembly meeting but it was denied also. She has three life mates of equal consideration and she'll most likely feel some level of loyalty to all three by the time she arrives here. Almonzo wanted to prepare you." Richart looked around the room and grabbed the remote. He flopped down on the bed, and shrugged. "At least, as her father, you don't have to worry about who she's in bed with."

Samuel narrowed his gaze on his nephew.

“A lot of father’s fear their daughters will end up sleeping around with the wrong men. You don’t have to worry with wonder. You can, with absolute certainty, rest assured, your daughter is sleeping with the worst of our kind.”

“Then you have to figure out how to destroy them one by one.”

* * * *

Once Constance’s gown fell away, Sebastian kissed her. He didn’t linger at her mouth long. He had prettier lips to please and he wanted his mouth preparing her for a fire hotter than anything she’d ever known in her lifetime.

The second she was in his arms again, he forgot about vendettas and he cursed himself for thinking he could walk away from her. When he held her, he was home. The closest thing to heaven a vampire without a real soul would ever find, he found in Constance.

Her hands played in his hair as he inched across her belly. Gabriel ran his tongue across his lips and dropped his head to nuzzle her breasts.

“I adore her tits,” he said, playfully biting at one. “Look at her nipples. Good damn, they’re so hard.” He sucked a puckered bead into his mouth and Darian knelt beside her tilting her chin upward.

She stared at his cock before she took the engorged head in between her lips. She didn’t take him fast. She wanted a slow and rare indulgence while she familiarized herself with his body, and the way he tasted as he drifted across her tongue.

Sebastian parted her legs with his shoulders. He pressed his palms against her inner thighs and cupped her bottom, bringing her mound to his mouth.

“Touch your clit, Constance,” Gabriel told her.

Her fingers dipped a little too far and Sebastian’s hand covered hers as he helped her find the little button they wanted her to manipulate with her own hand.

Darian rolled back on the balls of his feet and stared down the length of her body, pulling his cock through his fisted hand. “That’s sexy, Constance. Roll it for me, doll.”

She rubbed her clit in a circular motion and Gabriel licked at her breasts more. “Good girl, Constance. You’re our good little bad girl.”

“That’s it.” Sebastian kissed her fingers and she withdrew them. Darian pressed his cock to her lips again and she assaulted his salty slit first. Licking it once more, she savored his musky taste better than fine wine. All of the Sabbat men tasted like the sweet cream to the palate.

Sebastian blew hot air over her opening and licked here and there in the process. She'd made love to him enough to know he probably had his hand against his shaft, holding back, deliberately talking himself down because he was excited. It had been far too long and if she knew anything about him, she knew this. He wanted to fuck without the foreplay.

Gabriel pressed his long, meaty cock against Constance's hip and Constance sucked Darian's cock to her throat.

"Oh, sweet gem, that's good, baby. Too good." He bunched his thighs and thrust into her mouth enjoying the blow job she damn well knew how to deliver.

Sebastian glanced up. She saw the knowing exchange between brothers and Gabriel gave a well spoken confirmation. "She can suck a man's cock better than a trained whore."

"But she's going to train," Sebastian slapped her bare pussy.

Darian held his shaft in hand and made her stretch her neck forward before he fed his cock to her again. "And regardless of who she chooses, when she's in our bed, she'll be our whore." He smacked his lips and winked. "You like tasting my cock, don't you, doll?"

Darian pulled her hair into a makeshift ponytail and helped her bob up and down over his shaft. "What do you think, Constance? Would you like being our whore behind closed doors?"

She loved the idea. She mumbled against his penis and slid her mouth up and down his cock. His hooded eyes stayed focused on her and his pre-cum lifted her spirits when a small squirt of it gave her a much better taste.

Sebastian sucked her pussy lips before he lavished them with his tongue. After a light show of teeth, and a quick nibble here and there, her center burned for a deeper, more meaningful touch. With a smack to her hip, Gabriel straddled her torso and rubbed his cock over her breasts. He waited and watched as Darian rode into her mouth with a runaway need to come. His pace changed swiftly to prove it and his expression became fiercely aggressive. He pounded into her mouth with his balls slapping at her chin.

Gabriel reached behind him and gave her pussy a playful slap while Sebastian licked his way straight into her walls. She jerked with the excitement, and craved another mind-boggling sting, and the hot reminder of the men who controlled her pleasure. They wanted her to know they were all ready to lead.

Darian grabbed her hand and showed her where to caress him. "Stroke here, baby. Rub those fingers over my balls."

She locked her jaws around his dick and sucked with a better focus. She wanted to draw his seed out, call out the climax she wanted him to take. Rolling her hips hard and fast toward Sebastian, she moaned out in pleasure.

Gabriel watched her. "That's it, baby. Fuck him with that mouth, Constance. Damn you're beautiful sucking cock. Doesn't she look pretty, Darian?"

Darian fed her his dick and slid across her tongue one last time before he slid all the way out. "Damn it!"

He lifted her from the bed and Sebastian shook his head. "Damn you, Darian. You could've warned me."

Darian sat down on the mattress and pulled her on top of him. "There's lube in the bedside table. Want it?" He watched her for a reaction.

He asked, in so many words, whether or not she'd let them all fuck her at once. She reached for it as Darian fingered her center.

"Damn you're tight, little gem. I can't wait to get my cock buried here." He pushed her up with his palm and the move allowed for leverage and he placed one arm behind her back and fucked her hard with his fingers. Forcing her to straddle his open palm, she rode his fingers and her excitement drizzled over his thick knuckles.

"Come for me, Constance," he muttered, working her body the way he wanted, encouraging her to take what he had to give.

She tossed the lube at Gabriel and her hair fell into her face as she grabbed onto Gabriel's shoulder and rode Darian's fingers even harder. She looked down her body and watched his fingers disappear into her walls.

She squeezed her legs tighter and trapped his hand inside of her as she screamed out her pleasure, rocking forward with an unbelievable climax. "I'm coming. God, yeah, this is good."

Her juices saturated his hand. "This is so good," Darian he said, bringing his fingers to his lips.

Gabriel squirted the lubricant into his hand and his middle finger disappeared in between her round cheeks. He rotated the pad of it around her outer ring, the forbidden hole he wanted to claim. He knew the man who wanted the task of fucking her there and it wasn't Sebastian. Darian waited for it. He wanted her prepped and ready to ride but first, Gabriel indulged in the way she stretched for him.

He placed his palm to her belly and penetrated her small forbidden entrance with manual stimulation feeling the heat still dripping from her orgasm, he wanted to lick her sweet pussy, but he'd have to wait for it. Right now, everyone wanted to fuck.

Constance collapsed against Darian's chest and she kissed his nipples. "Thank you."

He patted her head. "Anytime, my sweet gem. Remember, ask and you'll always have anything you want."

Sebastian fisted his cock, and pulled her across his lap. "Suck my dick, baby."

She dropped her head over him and Gabriel smoothed his hand over her bottom. She flinched before he spanked her and her hole clenched with another expected intrusion.

Darian's finger ran down the crack of her ass. "She's tight here." He penetrated her small ring with his finger and then another soon glided in beside the first. His thick knuckles rubbed against her ass and she tightened around him.

"Darian!" She released Sebastian and cried out, "Oh damn, it hurts."

"It's going to feel really good in a minute, lover. I swear it."

Gabriel raised his arm. He smacked her ass and she jerked forward again sucking Sebastian's cock deep into her mouth.

Darian twirled his finger higher, stretching and preparing her. "Ah, yeah, that's good. Spank her again for sucking Sebastian's cock and making us wait to fuck her."

Gabriel slapped her flank. Darian twisted his fingers still higher and Sebastian ran the pad of his fingers over her nipples while she sipped at his tip. She sighed when he started to stroke harder, sliding across her tongue. He gave a few forceful thrusts. He pounded the back of her throat and then withdrew.

Quickly, he pulled her over him and slid his cock right into her tight channel. They fucked one another without intrusions and she remembered everything in an instant when she looked into his deep green eyes. Changing colors, she loved the colorful shades of lust and she loved Sebastian's eyes when they changed so quickly with his desire.

"That's it, Constance. Feel me, sugar. Let me fuck that sweet pussy, baby." His tone was more carnal than she remembered, but his dick, oh how she loved his long and wide size when he locked his hips in-between her thighs."

"I've missed you." He nipped at her mouth, drew a tiny speck of blood and sucked her lips and tongue. "You're delicious, so sweet, Constance."

She tilted her head toward Gabriel. She reached for him knowing Darian waited behind her.

"Damn," Gabriel said with a jerk before pushing his dick beyond her parted lips. "She's anything but sweet. You give her far too much credit." With a lopsided smile, his wide grin turned naughty in a hurry. "I want to come in your mouth, baby. Suck my cock, princess."

She licked at his tip and Darian grabbed her hips. She flinched when he parted her cheeks and Sebastian stopped fucking all at once.

Gabriel stroked her head, petted her like his favorite submissive. Something she wasn't sure she loved or hated. "Good girl, open wide. Take the whole thing. You're doing...damn it, Constance!" He pumped harder then and she locked him between her jaws. "Good damn, baby. Your mouth is one of the seven wonders, sugar."

She braced herself against Sebastian's chest.

"Raise your hips for Darian," Sebastian told her. "It's fine. I've got you, baby." He made sure she was ready and then nodded to Darian.

She licked the tip of Gabriel's dick and then called out over her shoulder. "Easy for you to say, you're not the one taking it up the ass. Oh, shit! Darian!"

Sebastian grinned and Gabriel slipped between her lips again, ready to fuck her pretty little sassy mouth into pure slurping sounds of satisfaction "That's right, sugar. Suck it. Let me come, baby." He clenched his ass and went deeper, striking at her tonsils with each rapid thrust.

She mumbled against his shaft and Darian smacked her bottom. Gripping her globes, he rode her ass harder and harder, sliding in deep and rubbing wide as he withdrew and penetrated in calculated time. Sebastian, slow and steady, found her G-spot and made her crazy-wild when he hammered against it,

bringing out a throaty cry of pure carnal bliss.

With the three Sabbats thrusting their large cocks in every place imaginable, Constance felt more euphoric than anything she'd ever experienced before in her life. Even Darian's illegal drugs didn't make her feel like she was lost in a heavenly experience and they never satisfied her like this.

"Sweet...hot...good damn, Constance." Gabriel came in her mouth. His hot sperm jetted across her tongue and she drank him in, smacking her lips with every last sip. When his size diminished, he reluctantly slumped away and pumped his cock in hand with a devilish grin washing across his face.

The sea-saw effect between Darian and Sebastian only gained more momentum after Gabriel moved to the side. They gave her a thrashing fuck and when she came, she screamed, cried, shook, and damn near died in their arms, but it was all in good pleasure and with Gabriel moving to her lips again, it was definitely in good taste.

Chapter Seventeen

Samuel Spenser stared at his sons in disbelief. They rushed in and gathered their father in their arms, slapping his back and kissing his cheeks.

"Father! It's so good to see you." Orlando grinned from ear to ear and Almonzo paced the floor beaming, as well. This was a day they had waited for and all too often, they were disappointed when they plotted for their father's safe return. They'd kept their sights on their goal and they didn't lose him due to a slow move or miscommunication.

"Dear God, boys. I forgot you looked so much alike," he teased before he brought them in for another hearty hug, one at a time and then at the same time. "I almost forgot how handsome my sons are."

"Sit." He pointed to the chairs the elders vacated before they arrived. He'd had a meeting with the panel to discuss the new arrangement with Constance. He wasn't happy about it, but he'd have to figure out something once he had a chance to talk privately with his sons. They were abreast of the Constance situation and they were better prepared to handle her than he was.

"There are so many things I want to know. I need to hear about your mother and my grandchildren. We'll have time to catch up later. Right now, hurry and tell me what to expect from this new arrangement with Constance and the Sabbats."

“It’s complicated. Darian made a case about a past with her. He brought up his first association with her when she was a child claiming many of the mates meet their partners in similar situations. The elders, if you can believe this, considered what he said and decided she somehow missed her appropriate connection with her true soul mate.” Almonzo took a deep breath and continued. “Sebastian, because he saved her from Milosh and a drug Darian developed, is her mate by default. I have to say, based on the evidence presented, I agree. Sebastian took full advantage of his situation at the time, but as a male with needs myself, I have to say I don’t blame him at all in any of this.”

“What are you talking about?” Samuel respected Sebastian, even though he was a Sabbat. He loathed his brothers, but Sebastian wasn’t anything like the rest of the lot. He had some decency about him and with his help, when Samuel was held at the Sabbat compound, he almost escaped once.

“Darian was supposed to take Constance as a life partner, but it wouldn’t have worked out for him, either. Turns out Gabriel and Constance are, in every way that matters, true soul mates. They are life partners in the sense of what you are to Mother and what Tabitha is to me. Gabriel and Constance will never separate. They’ve discovered their bond is far too powerful.”

“And what about Sebastian?” Samuel Spenser bowed his head trying to process the defeat he felt and undoubtedly, his son-in-law experienced, as well.

“The elders believe, as Almonzo and I believe,” Orlando began, “Constance is spoiled, Father. She’s always had her way and the Sabbats have been good to her from what we can tell. They appear to provide her with anything she wants and everything she asks for. We fully expect her to want all three Sabbats.

“When Sebastian left with us, she pulled her stunt with the supplements and soon, Gabriel didn’t have any choice but to go to her. As her second, we all expected his duty to come first and it did. She was weak and very close to death, according to Natasha and Tabitha, so they took her to the Sabbat compound and Gabriel saved her life. That’s when, from what I understand, the elders were notified by Darian about Gabriel’s enduring connection to Constance, and one of the panel members also noticed a significant change in Darian.”

“I owe the Sabbats nothing.” Samuel Spenser wasn’t a man who forgave enemies. “And your sister will have to learn to live

without—”

Constance walked into the room with the Sabbats right behind her before he finished the statement. “Father?” She smiled, but tears streamed down her face as she approached him.

He looked exactly the same way she remembered him. “Oh, Father.” She gasped and then ran to him throwing her arms around him. She held him tight and Sebastian joined them, ready to greet his father-in-law. Constance turned to her brothers and hugged them tightly too, popping them each with a kiss to the cheek.

Sebastian shook hands with Samuel. “It’s good to see you,” he said with a smile. Orlando and Almonzo reached for his hand and he ignored them. Samuel studied his sons and Sebastian, but he didn’t say anything. He’d heard how Sebastian was handled by Richart and while he wasn’t abused, Richart made an enemy in Sebastian by some crude implications. He possibly blamed Orlando and Almonzo since they orchestrated his holding in order to find out if he was loyal to his mate’s family.

Samuel glared at the other two men behind his daughter. He knew two vampires who weren't loyal. At least they certainly understood one another and the hatred lingering between them.

"Father, how are you?" Constance clasped her hand over his. "I've missed you so."

He glanced at her once and then turned back to Almonzo and Orlando. "Get those two out of here."

Constance's face dropped instantly into a formidable pout. "Father, they're helping you!"

"After over a decade, you surely don't believe these two are helping me with anything, do you?"

"But you're free now, Father. Free to go home to Mother."

"And what about all the years I've lost? Tell me, Constance, how do I get those years back?"

One of the elders appeared in the doorway then. "I hope we're not having problems?" It was definitely a question. They wanted and expected controversy. They often lived for it, sometimes provoked it. Many would argue the present Sabbat-Spenser case as a prime example.

Constance studied the older vampire as he took a chair opposite her father. They chatted softly and she gathered they may have been old friends. She wished she knew what they were saying to one another, but they deliberately kept their voices low.

A few other members from the panel joined them and they shook hands with everyone around the room. As with many customary meetings, the Sabbats stood on one side, and the Spensers on the other. Within minutes, the meeting was underway.

Constance recognized one of the panel members from her time in Las Vegas. He helped conduct the joining there with Gabriel and Sebastian. She felt her skin heat the second she thought about it.

Revisiting those memories made her horny in a crowded room. When she looked over at Gabriel, it was as if he read her mind. He rolled his tongue over his lips and stared at her breasts. "God, you're beautiful."

Startled, the panel members and the Spensers turned their focus to Gabriel. The senior member addressed him. "Mr. Sabbat, please refrain from comments right now. This is an uncomfortable situation for everyone."

Gabriel gave her a quirky smile. "Can I at least stand next to her?"

The elder gave a slight nod and Gabriel moved beside her and laced his fingers through hers.

How times had changed. One year ago, things were quite different. When she left Las Vegas, she never expected anyone to come in-between the relationship she'd developed with Sebastian. Only Gabriel somehow managed it and he didn't try. Or did he? Did he start planning from that moment forward? Constance shook off the sudden unexplainable thought and squeezed his hand tighter.

Someone read the formal documents and in short, from what Constance gathered, this was it. Whatever they changed about her mating arrangement, the five-year allowance became null and void with the assignment of three mates for equal consideration. After they reached a decision, the elders would never consider a petition for reversal order.

“Constance Spenser Sabbat, the head of your independent families each know the particulars of this arrangement. Due to unusual circumstance, you are assigned and permitted to have and maintain three life partner relationships. You cannot choose one over the other at any time other than right now. Should you choose to place one of these three men over the other two, then he will find an appointment as your primary mate and your position with him will not change the following.

“You will live with the Sabbats at their compound and you will work to bring about peace between your families. Your life source, basic needs, and your happiness fall upon their shoulders, but if you feel better with a primary mate, you may choose one now.”

Another elder spoke up. “If you accept all three life mates of equal consideration, Tabitha Spenser will lose Darian Sabbat as a secondary.”

Almonzo turned away from them. Constance watched as her brother squared his shoulders and stared out the window with a blank expression. She knew what he wanted her to do without asking. Darian was always a problem for him and now with his appointment to her as a life mate, Darian could walk away from his Tabitha-related responsibilities and that alone would offer Almonzo great peace of mind.

Constance gulped as she stared across the room at her brothers and her father. She turned to look at Gabriel, but he looked away from her, a sign she didn't know how to read. She watched Sebastian and Darian and saw the flash of intense pain deeply embedded in Sebastian's eyes.

“I'd like to talk to my brothers and father alone, please.”

The elders denied the request.

Sebastian walked across the room and touched her cheek. “You heard them. You can keep us all on equal ground, but it wouldn't be fair to you, Constance. I took your blood when I didn't have the right. I know that now. I deliberately mated with you knowing the whole time you didn't belong to me. I'm not sure it would've mattered to me if I'd known Gabriel was who you were supposed to take for a mate. I was greedy with lust and I wasn't sure I could love anyone like I love you.”

Gabriel's cheek twitched with the recognition. He must've understood far more than what she did and he undoubtedly realized Sebastian's intended goal.

“I want you to choose Gabriel, because if I hadn't manipulated you and used our time together to the greatest advantage, then we would not have to endure a decision like this today. I know you love me, Constance, and it's enough to share your love.”

Gabriel leaned over and cupped her ear. “I'm happy with the unbiased, ‘we can all fuck you whenever we want without giving a damn’ kind of concept. This is your choice and yours alone.”

“Really?” she asked.

“Really,” he promised, turning toward her family. “Besides, do you really want to go against your father and brothers right now?”

“You're so sure I'd choose you?”

He licked his lips and then leaned closer. “Darling, five minutes after I walked over here I smelled your

arousal. I'm in your veins flowing red hot and it's where I plan to stay, but I don't need these fellows in robes to tell me anything about us. I just need to walk out of here with you in my arms."

"Sebastian?"

"I love you, Constance. I'll always respect your opinion. I may not like it and I may not always jump up to support it, but I'll respect it."

Darian moved closer, too. "The only thing that matters is that you leave here today as you entered, a Sabbat." He flashed his fangs toward her father and Almonzo jumped to his defense.

Almonzo narrowed his gaze while speaking to his brother and father. "Get ready, Richart is going to rock his fucking arrogant ass right off of his rocker. Wait and see. Maybe not today or tomorrow, but in one of his lifetimes, when Darian least expects him, he'll wake up in a hell only Richart knows how to create."

Constance studied her brothers. "I'm happy, Almonzo. I don't want any trouble from any of you, including Richart."

"I can't control him, little sister, but I'll pass along the word." He grinned at Darian. "My little sister doesn't want to find any of her mates with his cock down another man's throat. Maybe I can post the notice at Sabbat clubs. What do you think?"

"I think what you're most concerned about is the fact you may one day walk into your matrimonial suite and find your Tabitha's darling little mouth wrapped around my dick and sippin' the ever-lovin' hell out of it. If anyone is going to suck this cock other than your sister, it will be your Tabitha. Count on it."

A loud hiss rang throughout the room. Sabbats stood in front of Darian and Spencers blocked Almonzo as the two men fought to reach one another. The elders tried to demand order, but they initially failed.

Sebastian muttered against Darian's chest as he held his brother at bay. "Try to remember you have Constance's feelings to consider here."

Darian only shot her a quick glance before he tugged his body free from his brother's tight grip. Straightening his tie, he made another statement. "I'll take care of my own, Almonzo. Make sure you do the same."

When the rumble subsided, Constance reached a quick decision. "I'd like to keep all three mates as you've suggested. I'll consider them as my three life mates of equal consideration."

Almonzo unrolled his clenched fists and Orlando smiled realizing the decision was made thanks in part to an outburst as much as trying to do the right thing for both families. A little woman-related jealousy played its part regardless of how much Constance loved her sister-in-law.

While Almonzo only gave her a quick wink, she had time to study and gauge the reactions around the room. The elders appeared pleased, especially since Darian's assignment to Tabitha was now invalid, and Almonzo was satisfied, a first in any of these proceedings.

Her father wasn't happy, but accepted her decision. The only way he would've been satisfied at all was to have Darian and Gabriel prohibited from mating with his daughter. It wouldn't happen given the fact everyone suspected the obvious. She'd joined with them already.

Almonzo couldn't text Tabitha quick enough and Constance had a feeling that she did something to make their lives a little easier. She wondered what Tabitha would think about all of this. Would she regret losing Darian as a secondary? Would she envy Constance because of Darian's equal consideration as her mate?

Constance watched her father. He discussed various items of interest with the panel members. Darian eyed her curiously and Sebastian looked really pleased with her decision. She closed her hand around Gabriel's when he reached for her and she felt his disappointment in the way he gripped her hand.

"You did the right thing," he reassured her, whispering in her ear. "It was the only way to please the vast majority and I'm not in that small group. I am a vampire unto myself."

"And the one I love most in the world," she reminded as she latched onto his lips in a very heated kiss. It was a kiss shared between lovers and they didn't care who watched or who ached because they witnessed it.

* * * *

Tabitha braced herself against the mantle over the family room hearth. She cried uncontrollably as she held onto the wood.

"Tabitha?" Natasha joined her and concern washed over her face as Tabitha flew into her arms and buried her face against her sister's shirt.

"Honey, what is it? What on earth is wrong?"

"It's Darian," she sobbed. "He's..."

"He's what, honey?" Natasha probed. "Tell me."

"He's been released as one of my secondary mates."

"I don't understand," Natasha stated flatly. "Isn't this good news?"

"No! It isn't. He's now one of Constance's three life mates of equal consideration."

Natasha pulled away from her sister and held her at an arm's distance. "Honey, this is good for everyone, right?"

"No, it isn't. You don't understand."

"You aren't in love with him," she told her. "You care for him, but your feelings for Darian will never be as strong as they are for Almonzo. You've told me yourself."

"There's more to it."

"Then tell me. Tabitha, this will work out to your benefit. Unless there's something you haven't told me."

“I don’t want Constance in Darian’s bed!”

Natasha looked shocked. “I don’t know what to say.”

The girls stared at one another before Tabitha broke down once more. She buried her face in her hands and cried uncontrollably. “This complicates everything more than you know.”

“Tabitha, you and I both know if Darian has been assigned as one of Constance’s three life mates of *any consideration*, then he’s already slept with her.”

She dabbed at her eyes and walked away from her sister. “You don’t understand what’s going on here. The children...I have to talk to Almonzo about the children.”

“What about your children? Are you afraid Darian will have access to your children and harm them in some way?”

“No,” she said breathlessly, “I’m afraid of what he’ll discover if he’s ever around them.”

Natasha gave Tabitha an empty glare. “What do you mean, Tabitha?”

“There’s...something...I...” She took a deep breath and remembered who she was talking to and decided against confiding in her sister. If she told Natasha anything, Orlando would know everything before anyone arrived back from the States. She changed her mind and decided to keep her concerns to herself.

“I can’t discuss this with you. I have to talk to Almonzo. This is the worst thing that can happen to our family. He deserves to hear what I have to say straight from me.”

“Tabitha, I’m your sister and you can tell me anything. I will never judge you.”

“The children,” she muttered against her palm and tried to hide her mouth in order to fight off another loud outburst. “I can’t tell you until I talk to Almonzo. I’m sorry.” She ran out of the room and down the hall. She passed little Kiril along the way and turned away from him. Right now, she couldn’t look at her own child for fear of looking into the eyes of a Sabbat. The eyes of a child raised to loathe a heritage he would soon own as his birthright.

The celebration was well underway by the time Sebastian and Constance arrived at the Spenser compound. They decided, all things considered, that Darian and Gabriel really didn't have a place at the Spenser celebration.

Constance couldn't remember a time when her mother looked happier, or more distraught. She ran over to her when she first arrived and hugged her tightly. Her mother greeted her with a smile but a tense grip on her forearm.

"Tonight, we celebrate your father's homecoming but tomorrow, we'll talk about the mistakes made and how we're going to fix them."

"Mother, I love them." Constance turned away before she responded, but she managed the final word when she embraced Sebastian.

After she released her son-in-law, she loudly gave him her verbal approval. "Your place is with my daughter and the two of you are always welcome here. Her room will remain the way the two of you left it."

Sebastian leaned over and kissed Marian's cheek before he shook hands with one of the elders there for the celebration. Tate was there too ready to welcome them home and yet he wasn't as happy to see Constance as she might have anticipated.

"I know what you're thinking, Tate."

"You couldn't possibly know what I'm thinking," he snapped.

Taken by surprise, she said, "I don't like that tone."

"And you aren't going to like the pending news about Darian and Tabitha either but one day soon, it will fall upon your ears and you and your brother will have a lot of decisions to make. For now, allow your father to enjoy his homecoming and realize that tonight this celebration is not about you or the men you choose to take to your bed."

Before Constance could say anything back to the caretaker, her father joined her and slid a kiss on her cheek. "Would my daughter be so kind as to dance with me?"

Grinning, she took Samuel Spenser's hand in hers. "I'd love to dance with you, Father."

Everyone watched as Samuel led Constance into a charming waltz inspired by a Russian tune none of the younger generation recognized. Her father's eclectic tastes in music never changed and his skillful dance techniques made her mother very proud. She could see it in her mother's eyes as she watched them.

Little Samuel and Iriza tried to follow them around and both proved they had two left feet, but they were cute and sweet for trying to keep up. A few minutes later, Constance felt a tug on her dress and she peered down into the loveliest shade of familiar lime green eyes. Startled, she looked away and searched for Sebastian at once before she returned her gaze to her nephew.

"Kiril, I..."

“Aunt Constance, do you want to dance with me?” He held one hand at his back and one out in front of him with his palm turned upward.

Samuel patted the boy on the head, kissed his daughter’s forehead, and turned her over to his grandson.

“I’d love to dance with you,” she said somewhat cautiously as she took his hand and allowed her nephew to take the lead.

The music changed, a new selection played, and Kiril had something to discuss. Something that weighed heavy on his mind.

“Aunt Constance, can I ask you something?”

“You can ask me anything you want,” she responded. “Except about the arrangement I have with the Sabbats.”

“That’s what I wanted to ask you about.” He giggled and bashfully ducked his head.

“Oh,” she replied, stepping with him as he attempted to lead. “Well then, ask anyway and I’ll see if I can explain.”

“Do I look like your mates?” he blurted out. “The one they call Darian, do I look like him?”

Sebastian approached around the same time the little boy let go of the question. Sebastian’s brow gathered and he patted Kiril on the head with a ready response.

“I think you look like Kiril. That’s what I think,” he said.

“Me too,” Constance agreed. “And no one looks like Kiril any better than you.” She ran her finger through his curly dirty blonde hair and glanced across the lawn. She spotted Tabitha and Natasha at the edge of the patio and noticed immediately their worried expressions and a brooding Almonzo standing nearby.

Kiril placed Constance’s hand in Sebastian’s palm and he slowly walked away. He didn’t seem satisfied with the answer, but he accepted it.

“Do you know what’s going on here tonight?” Sebastian whispered.

Constance studied the faces of her family members and focused on Kiril as he strolled across the lawn alone. “I have a pretty good idea.”

Sebastian stopped moving. “Is it true?”

“What?”

“Kiril... is he Darian’s?”

“I don’t know how he could be Darian’s when the other two look so much like Spensers,” she said. “I think his blond hair and fair skin made for small talk, empty assumptions, and a last ditched effort from Tabitha.”

“You think she cared for Darian?”

“She cares for Darian and maybe she’s using anything she can to keep him in place as her second.”

“Do you really believe she’d do something like this, at the expense of her child?”

No, she didn’t, but she couldn’t bear to think of Tabitha as the mother of Darian’s child. Not now.

Kiril walked over to Almonzo and reached for his hand. Almonzo reluctantly patted the boy on his back and turned to Tabitha. Whispering something to her, he disappeared back into the house and Constance waved to Kiril noticing how sad the boy looked.

“He does bear a striking resemblance to him,” she commented.

“No, Constance, he looks exactly like the pictures I’ve seen of Darian when he was a little boy. Kiril is, without a doubt, Darian’s son.”

* * * *

“How was the party?” Darian asked as if he were truly interested in the guest list and dinner menu.

Constance pulled off her high heel shoes and slid them to the side of the settee. “Interesting. Where’s Gabriel?”

“He’s waiting for you upstairs, I imagine.”

“You aren’t going to join us?” she asked, looping her arms around his waist while using his body to pull herself from a seated position.

“Not tonight. I have some business to take care of,” he whispered against her lips. “Do you want me to join you?”

She nodded. “I’d like to have all of my men with me tonight. I need you especially, Darian.” She rested her head on his shoulder and inhaled his scent.

His open palm moved across her back and he unzipped her dress allowing it to fall to the floor there in the open living room.

“Gorgeous,” he growled, backing away from her.

“Darian, I have to tell you something.” She unhooked her bra.

He bit at the fullness in her breast and ran his tongue over her nipple. “It can wait,” he assured her, releasing his belt and dropping his zipper. His cock sprang from his shorts and she dropped to her knees, touching his balls with her forefinger, stroking and caressing him.

"I don't care about anything else right now except this," he said. "My woman came home hungry and I plan to feed you, doll."

She nodded and silently agreed with postponing the news. There were some things better left for others to discuss and carry as good news. She felt confident Darian wouldn't perceive a son as good news. He wasn't exactly father material.

She slid her tongue across his slit and curled it over the thick engorged head. "You taste like mine," she said with a smile. His pre-cum seeped from the tip and she sucked the mushroom form between her lips and released a sigh when she grasped a better taste of his salty musk.

He held onto her ears, splayed his legs and slowly moved into her mouth. "Darling woman, I am yours." Holding his shaft to her lips, he pumped his cock into her mouth. Tilting his head to the side so he could watch her suck him deep into her throat, he touched her nipple again. "I do love fucking you, little gem."

Drawing him down her throat, she buried her mouth over his thick shaft and swallowed as much of him as she could manage. Her gag reflex rarely found a way to fight him. He slid over her tongue like he'd done it many times before.

He watched her suck his cock and seemed to find a lot of pleasure in it, but not as much as she found on this particular evening. She was a Sabbath now. She had a lot of reasons for keeping the secret her family evidently planned to guard. Sebastian knew the truth and soon, she'd share it with Gabriel but for now, only this mattered. Darian said so himself. The sex was more important, at least for now.

"Suck deeper, sweet gem," he said with a wicked smile.

She sipped at his thick dick and cried out when he twisted her nipple.

"My little Spenser gem, I have you right where I've always wanted you," he exclaimed, almost triumphantly. "That's right, little Spenser gem, suck that Sabbath cock. You know what I want from you."

He stroked her mouth. He stood and grabbed her ears before he thrust forward with a quicker attempt to climax.

"Now!" he screamed while she drank him in and sipped every last bit of his seed.

When he collapsed against the sofa, he pulled her to him and lavished his appreciation over her nipples and neck. He patted his neck and his lips curved in a smile.

"Come and get it, baby."

She crawled over to him, straddled his cock, and felt him sink into her wet folds. "Ah, Darian, tell me I belong to you," she said, sounding more like a Sabbath than a Spenser. "Tell me you love...me."

Darian moved her over him and thrust into her walls going deep, going wide, sinking into her world one inch at a time. "You own me, lover."

"I hope so."

She threw her head back and ground her pussy against him. This was one sweet ride, heavenly in a way she'd never imagined.

Her family had suffered greatly because of Darian and she found him easy to love, easier to hate, and better still a true joy to fuck. She reached between her legs, tapped his sac, and screamed out her pleasure when he hammered into her vagina working for another release. "That's it, baby. Touch me here," he said, moving her fingers to his balls again.

"Oh yes, Darian! That's where I want you. That's where *I have you*, lover, by the balls." For once in her life, she felt powerful, beautiful, seductive, and more like a Sabbat than any of the men carrying the name.

Hours later, she was still in Darian's arms. They'd spent most of their time fucking, but after he bathed her, they slipped into his bed, and she drifted down his belly one more time.

She traced the fleshy thick head with her wet tongue and sipped at his cock. She licked the tip, ah that sweet little slit, to make sure she savored the taste of rich and creamy revenge.

Her family had it. They had the best of it now and she damn well knew they planned to use it. They had the only son of Darian Sabbat.

THE END

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