

ELLORA'S CAVE PRESENTS

ELLORA'S CAVE

Quickies

MANDY M. ROTH

Solo Tu

An Ellora's Cave Romantica Publication



www.ellorasave.com

Solo Tu

ISBN # 1-4199-0440-X

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Solo Tu Copyright© 2006 Mandy M. Roth

Edited by Nicholas Conrad.

Cover art by Syneca

Electronic book Publication: January 2006

This book may not be reproduced or used in whole or in part by any means existing without written permission from the publisher, Ellora's Cave Publishing, Inc.® 1056 Home Avenue, Akron OH 44310-3502.

This book is a work of fiction and any resemblance to persons, living or dead, or places, events or locales is purely coincidental. The characters are productions of the authors' imagination and used fictitiously.

Warning:

The following material contains graphic sexual content meant for mature readers. This book has been rated E-rotic by a minimum of three independent reviewers.

Ellora's Cave Publishing offers three levels of Romantica™ reading entertainment: S (S-ensuous), E (E-rotic), and X (X-treme).

S-ensuous love scenes are explicit and leave nothing to the imagination.

E-rotic love scenes are explicit, leave nothing to the imagination, and are high in volume per the overall word count. In addition, some E-rated titles might contain fantasy material that some readers find objectionable, such as bondage, submission, same sex encounters, forced seductions, and so forth. E-rated titles are the most graphic titles we carry; it is common, for instance, for an author to use words such as "fucking", "cock", "pussy", and such within their work of literature.

X-treme titles differ from E-rated titles only in plot premise and storyline execution. Unlike E-rated titles, stories designated with the letter X tend to contain controversial subject matter not for the faint of heart.

SOLO Tu

Mandy M. Roth

Chapter One

Francy Montgomery pulled her silver sedan to a stop outside of the three-story cream-colored home and killed the engine. It was strange being back after so long but it was necessary. A strange calm surrounded her as she stared up at the house her longtime friend, Dante, insisted wasn't a mansion. With nine bedrooms and ten bathrooms it counted as one in her book. Trust Dante not to think so. The man had been born in the lap of luxury.

Getting out of her car, she took in a deep, fresh breath of country air. The very sight of the place took her breath away. It was both overwhelming and exhilarating to see it again. Part of her wanted to get back in her car and drive away. Another part wanted to lay down roots and never leave again. Unfortunately, she couldn't do that. Running wasn't an option either.

Letting her power rise, Francy let it run out and over the grounds in search of Dante. A witch by birth, she had only learned to control her powers in the last several years. Being under thirty years of age made her a fledgling in the eyes of the supernatural world. Her lack of control and five-year span of trying to harness her powers was unacceptable by many, but not Dante. He made controlling supernatural gifts look simple and always made her feel good about what she'd accomplished. The minute she sensed his magik, Francy drew hers back quickly. Her entire body tingled from the rush of power and from the thrill of having brushed against Dante, even if it was only mystically.

I should have just called. I can't face him.

It had been over five years since she'd been able to visit Dante and she wasn't sure what to expect. Sure, they kept in touch as much as they could on the phone but they both led very busy lives. With the bombshell she had to drop on him, she was positive

that their days of doing their best to stay in contact were numbered. Still, it was important that he hear the news she had to share before anyone else told him.

Red rows of tulips flanked the limestone circular drive, giving the illusion of a red carpet welcome. The arched, notched-out entranceway had potted plants on it, consisting mostly of ivy. Italian herbs were randomly growing throughout as well. That suited Dante.

The plants softened the hard edges of the entranceway perfectly. Francy could still remember Dante planting them. She had been in high school, visiting her family's cottage, and he'd seemed desperate to find things to do to occupy his time. After all, the man had centuries under his belt and countless more to come. Immortality had its price – boredom seemed to be part of it.

Desperate for anything to avoid one-on-one time with me.

It was a harsh thing to think and not entirely true. So much had transpired between them that it was hard to pinpoint what they had. In her mind and her heart, she would always hold Dante near – love him with more of herself than she would ever offer another. In reality, he was her friend. Nothing more, and now she was promised to another. That in itself was something she was coming to terms with.

Francy didn't bother knocking. It wasn't something she was known for when it came to visiting Dante and it would seem time hadn't changed the habit. She opened the heavy wooden door and smiled when she found the front room hearth covered in fruits and vegetables. It was an open layout, leaving the hearth in close proximity to a large wash basin. It was Dante's stopping spot from the garden. Francy could still picture him spending time cleaning all that he brought in from the garden in preparation for whatever feast he was planning.

She smiled as she stared at the hearth. The charred backdrop made her laugh as she remembered how and why it was that way. Stepping closer to it, Francy put her hand out, almost touching the scorch marks. The marks had been made when they had decided to enjoy a late-night meal together with a soothing fire going. Dante had

insisted on cooking for her and there was no way she'd ever pass that up. Not with as excellent a chef as he was. His ability to turn ordinary pasta into something extraordinary had always won her over.

The way to your heart, Francy, is through your stomach. Dante's words echoed in her mind.

Francy let out a soft laugh at the thought of her friend's comment and how he would tease her that he had but to cook and she'd forgive him for just about anything. In truth, it wasn't quite that easy. There were things she wasn't sure she'd ever forgive him for.

Staring at the charred wall, she thought back to five years ago, when she'd last seen Dante. The meal had started out like any other but had ended in a way she'd never dreamt possible—with the two of them teetering on the edge of making love. They had come so close yet hadn't completed the act. It was a regret she would forever live with.

So many nights, when she should have been thinking of another, she'd lain in bed touching herself. Making herself come with the use of her fingers and memories of her night with Dante.

That night, Francy had been so aroused, so in need of Dante to be in her, fucking her, taking her every way possible that she'd been careless with the gifts she'd been born with, accidentally releasing her magik and sending a charge into the fireplace. A second before Dante was about to slide his long, thick cock into her, huge flames shot forth, charring the cream-colored stone wall. It had left the two of them in an awkward spot, lying on his kitchen table, staring at the wall, and ended what could have been the beginning of something else entirely.

Francy still wasn't sure what Dante's reasoning was for casting her aside, telling her to go and live her life, but she did know that she'd never truly gotten over it. The odds were against that ever happening. Various scenarios had raced through her head but the best she could come up with was he didn't feel the same for her as she felt for him.

She had left town shortly after and hadn't been home since. Sure, Dante had spent years trying to convince her to return home, accept his apology and all would be right. Nothing was ever that easy. Francy had let someone else enter the equation but wasn't sure exactly why. She had felt compelled, as though a greater force was driving her, pushing her to accept another and move on.

"I can't believe he left the wall like that."

"And I," a deep familiar voice said from behind her, "can't believe you're finally here. *Come sei bella*—how beautiful you are." The very sound moved over her, caressing her body in places it shouldn't be able to touch.

"Dante." Turning, she found him leaning against the entranceway. His onyx-colored hair came to his chin, framing his rectangular face perfectly. It swept out a bit, always looking as though it was windblown. Though he looked to be in his mid to late twenties, he was much older than that, almost two hundred years to be exact. Their age difference had bothered him once. He swore each time they spoke on the phone that it was no longer a concern but with Dante she wasn't certain.

He is gorgeous.

Dante's dimpled chin and full lips had always been a source of fascination for her. Countless nights she'd lain in the cottage just beyond the edge of his property line with her hand buried between her legs, tweaking her clit to images of him.

Stop thinking about him that way. You have someone else in your life now.

He shifted slightly, causing the unbuttoned thin white cotton shirt he had on to move to one side. The sight of his steely, tawny chest and torso left her channel moist and her breathing ragged. The bulge in his khaki-colored, just past knee-length, cotton drawstring shorts only served to make her moan softly. It didn't matter how many years she put between face-to-face visits, the man still made her body burn. If only he felt the same way.

No. It's better he doesn't. You're with another man. Remember that.

“Hey, you,” she whispered with a smile on her face. Her pussy was damp and she could only hope that he couldn’t smell it. The werewolf part of him had an uncanny ability to smell things mortals wouldn’t.

Dante’s lips curved upwards and Francy had to fight the need to run to him. “Are you planning on standing there all day or do I actually get a hug?”

“Gee, I don’t know.” She tipped her head and bit her lower lip. Every ounce of her wanted to tackle him. She somehow managed to maintain her tiny grasp on her self-control. “The last time I saw you, you were a real ass.”

The warm laugh that trickled from his lips seemed to wrap around her, caress her in tender places. “You won’t let me live that down, will you? I’ve spent five years apologizing to you.”

“On the phone but not in person.”

Dante moved quickly, covering the distance between them, and towered over her. His six-foot-two-inch frame was a sharp contrast to her five foot five one. Something about that had always appealed to her. He made her feel safe, protected at all times and she was fairly sure that her smaller stature did something for him as well.

The minute his hands went to her exposed waist, resting between the stop of her mid-length white lace camisole and the start of her floor-length white silk chiffon skirt, her breath caught. Only Dante made her feel so alive with nothing more than his touch. Only Dante made her body ache to the point she had to fight the urge to beg him to take her.

Why? Why can't I stay detached? I'm only here to mend fences, make peace and move on with my life. Nothing more.

He traced tiny circles on her exposed flesh, driving her mad with lust. “Francy, I am so sorry. I lost my temper, chased you off. It will never happen again.”

“What? You losing your temper or making me run away?” she asked without thought.

A sly smile broke over his face as he dipped his head down a bit. "You are the only woman I know who would think to have me clarify that."

Francy stared into his dark brown eyes and gave him a smug look. "I know you well enough to question anything you say, Dante."

"Do you now?" He planted a tiny kiss on the tip of her nose, shocking her into silence. Chuckling, he repeated his action before capturing her lips with his own. Fire shot through her.

Too stunned to move, Francy simply stood there, allowing Dante to taste her. Her mind screamed at her to stop what was going on, to make him get away, but her body burned for him to be closer. It was intoxicating to have his warm tongue sliding into her mouth. It greeted hers and she was powerless to do anything other than return his kiss. His sweet exploration left her scrambling to keep up but somehow managing to follow along.

Her nipples beaded as they scraped against his chiseled chest. The only thing standing between them was the lace of her cami and Francy prayed that Dante didn't notice what was happening. She never knew when to take him seriously, and if this was another one of his bizarre proclamations or gestures then she didn't want him to know that it meant so much more to her than him.

The idea of humiliating herself by admitting to being in love with him was too much. He ran so hot-cold. One minute seeming to want her as badly as she did him and the next casting her out of his life—his very long life.

This isn't right. You have someone else.

Placing her palms on his chest, Francy pushed gently, needing to end his game before it got out of hand and she ended up begging him to make love to her. One round of begging like a pathetic puppy was more than enough for her. She'd never do that again. No. She was tougher than she'd been all those years ago. She was a different person. One who didn't require Dante to survive. Right?

Dante groaned and made a move to kiss her again. Francy shook her head as she laughed, knowing that if she bothered to try anything else, she'd only end up in tears. "Oh, you are good, buddy, but that will be enough of that."

"But..."

"Oh, but nothing. I think we, or rather, you laid out the groundwork for our friendship very clearly for me. I listened and learned. Did you?"

Dante sighed, the remorse on his face was evident but she couldn't let him change the rules to suit him. Not now. Not when so much was at stake for her. "Francy, it was different then."

"Different how? I'm still the same person I was when you explained that...oh...never mind. I didn't drive all this way to pick the scabs off old wounds. I came to see you before I have to leave. So what are we doing for the weekend? I thought we could drive into town so I can see how much, if any, it's changed. Oh, we need to go over to the cottage. I'd love to see what you've done with it. I still can't believe you took it on. It's not like you don't already have enough to worry about."

His brow furrowed and Francy had to fight the urge to smooth the crease away. "Leave? Aren't you moving home? You're finished with school now. I assumed you'd move back here. That was the plan. That's what we decided on, right?" The concern in his voice moved her.

She wanted to lie and tell him everything would be all right but she wouldn't do that to Dante. Withholding the truth about her love for him for so many years had been painful enough. Flat out lying would destroy her. "I'm here now. Let's enjoy ourselves. We can spend the weekend together before I need to head back."

"The weekend?" Dante pulled her to him. The feel of his hard body pressed to her was almost too much. "Why just the weekend?" It was easy to see the wheels of thought spinning in his head. He'd always had eyes that seemed to bare his soul.

Now, as she stared into them, she fought with all she had to stay strong. Francy's insides clenched. For some reason she thought they'd have time to just be around one

another before she had to drop the bomb on him. In her mind, they'd spend the weekend visiting places they used to frequent, talk a bit about their mutual friends and then she'd ease into the news she knew he'd hate. Obviously, that wasn't going to happen. "Dante."

He closed his eyes a moment and swallowed so hard that the cords moved in his thick neck, making her want to lick it. The idea was wrong for so many reasons but felt like it should be so right.

"What's going on? What are you not telling me?"

She sighed. He knew her well. Drawing in a deep breath, she prepared for the inevitable. "We need to talk."

Dante gathered her hands in his and gasped. "What the...?"

"Dante, I didn't know how to tell you on the phone. It's why I came. I needed to tell you face-to-face." Francy let him lift her left hand higher and had to look away as he ran his finger over the engagement ring she now wore.

"Francy, no."

She choked back a sob. "I'm sorry. I wanted to tell you so many times. I just couldn't find the right words. I... I can't explain it, Dante."

"How long have you been with him?" he asked, his voice strained.

She focused on the Spanish-tiled floor, anything to keep her mind and gaze off him. She knew how much she'd let him down, how much she'd hurt him and it killed her. It would only hurt him more to find out that Ivon, the man she would be marrying, was a vampire. Not only that, but Ivon was as old as, if not older than, Dante. Nothing she had to tell Dante would please him. Still, it needed to be said. "I met him the day after I left for college."

"The day after I sent you away?" The hurt in his voice was evident.

Francy nodded, her throat feeling very dry all of the sudden. "Yeah."

“And not once in five years did you feel the need to share the fact that you were with someone? We talk on the phone at least once a month. You never thought once, in all that time, to let me in on this?”

Snorting, she cast him a wary glance. “Oh, like you shared details of your sex life with me.”

Something passed over Dante’s handsome face that she couldn’t read and her instincts told her not to dwell on it. He lifted her hand even higher and plucked the ring from her finger. “Dante!” She tried to grab it back but he held it high in the air. “Give it back.”

“No, while you’re here with me, you’re *not* engaged.”

“What?” she asked, going to her tiptoes in an attempt to retrieve the ring. “It doesn’t work that way. Stop acting like a two-year-old. I should have told you sooner but this is ridiculous.”

“Aspetta un attimo!”

Francy stared at him with a blank expression, unsure what he’d just said. Taking a deep breath, Dante appeared to get a handle on his emotions. That was a good thing. Francy was well aware of the beast he carried within him. Having him calm himself, even slightly, was imperative. The last thing she wanted was to be forced to use her powers against Dante. Not only could it harm him, it would emotionally kill her.

“Wait a minute! I am not the one who is acting like a child. I am not the one who stayed away so long. I have been here.” He gave her a hard look. “I’ve said I was sorry for snapping at you, Francy. Emotions ran high that night. It wasn’t something we planned or expected. I’d change it if I could. You didn’t need to lash back like this. You could have just yelled at me. Telling me you’re engaged seems a bit much.”

“And said what?” She stopped trying to get the ring back and started shoving him as hard as she could. The only problem was he didn’t budge. That didn’t really surprise her. Dante was special, like her. Different from humans yet not like the monsters, the demons they’d been born to fight. They were supernaturals sworn to uphold good.

Sworn to protect unsuspecting humans from things that they thought existed only in their nightmares. It was who they were and who they would always be. “Why are we even having this conversation? It’s not like we’re anything more than friends.”

“Oh, we are a hell of a lot more than that,” he said, picking her up quickly.

She yelped and clung to him. His earthy smell moved over her, exciting her in ways it shouldn’t. “What are you doing?”

Dante didn’t answer. Instead, he backed her up against the wall and took her mouth with his. There was little time to protest. Dante had her skirt up around her hips and his hands on the backs of her thighs before she could blink. The knowledge that she didn’t want to protest took her by surprise.

“Dante.”

He cupped her ass cheeks and ground his hips against her. “I want you, Francy. Tell me that you don’t want me. Tell me and I’ll stop.”

Her mind raced. The idea of him stopping, of his pelvis no longer grinding against hers, terrified her. Moaning, she held tight to Dante. “Please.”

“Please what?”

“Please fuck me.”

Sliding a finger under her thong, he sent shivers through her entire body as he skimmed across her swollen clit. It took everything in her not to cry out his name again. She clung to him, savoring the feel of his powerful frame.

Dante Guerrasio inched his tongue along Francy’s outer ear, no longer bothering to control his breathing. He had more pressing issues, like the beast within him trying to surface, fighting to be free and finish what it had started to do five years earlier – claim its rightful mate.

How could she even presume to be engaged to another? She was his. His love. His everything. It didn’t make any sense. She shouldn’t have been able to love another. She

was his true mate. That didn't come with light stipulations. That meant they were made for one another and no one else could come between them. Yet somehow, someone had managed to do just that.

Caressing Francy's swollen clit, he took in her floral scent as well as that of her arousal. Oh, she wanted him. That was easy to tell by her elevated heart rate, ragged breaths and soaked pussy.

How could she have even thought to try to replace him? Better yet, why had he felt the need to give her freedom to live away from him? Why had her need to see more, live away, learn about herself been so important to him? He'd practically driven her off by forcing her to experience life on her own for a bit. Never did he suspect she'd take that as a sign he was shutting her out of his life.

All Dante had wanted was for his mate to never look back, never regret a moment they would spend together once he took her. He'd watched his mother struggle with "what ifs" his entire life and had vowed to never let his mate go through that. The only problem was that she had found someone else to quench the thirst he'd unlocked on the table in this very room five years ago.

Now she would see what he held back from her then. What he hadn't wanted to use to tie her to him before she was ready. She'd see him in full mating glory, his cock untiring and insatiable. It was what happened to his line of werewolves when the time came to claim their mates. He'd fuck her tight little cunt until she begged him never to allow another man to touch her.

"Please."

Her plea was soft, and Dante knew he couldn't answer it as gently as he wanted to. The beast within him demanded he take her and soon. Francy would either love it or hate him forever. With what he'd found on her finger only moments earlier he knew he didn't have a choice. It had to be done.

Inserting a finger into her hot pussy, Dante growled out at the sensation. It was just as he remembered, tight, wet and welcoming. Too tight to have been well serviced by

the man she'd dared to pledge her life to. The man he would hunt and kill. The very thought of Francy sharing herself with another set his inner beast on edge. The only thing that grounded him was the feel of having Francy back in his arms.

He could still remember the way her channel had held his fingers tightly as he drank her sweet cream. The very scent of it seemed to coat his tongue, reminding him of what he'd gone without for so long. He'd been unable and unwilling to take another to his bed after he pushed her to go. The very thought of sinking his cock into anyone that wasn't Francy turned his stomach. His mate was all he wanted.

For five years he lay in bed at night, fisting his cock as he pumped it to images, memories of Francy spread out on the table before him. The idea of her taking him in her mouth, her pussy, her ass had kept him going. And with each release he would vow that one day soon he'd expel his seed in her, fill her with his child, his love and start the family the gods always promised.

He held back, always wanting to go to her but afraid that he'd drag her home before she was ready. Now, as he thought about the situation, Dante realized that he should have gone to her. Should have laid claim to her, made her his long ago. He'd been a fool. A silly romantic who believed that love would indeed lead her back to him, not into the arms of another.

Unable to wait any longer, Dante freed his aching cock from the confines of his drawstring pants. It bobbed obscenely and he took hold of it, blindly seeking the entrance to Francy's wet core. Letting a claw extend from his fingertip, he cut the tiny string of her thong with ease, removing the only restriction that stood between him and paradise.

It was at this point last time that Francy's magik had broken loose and burned up the hearth. This time he was prepared. Slapping his dick against her clit, he encouraged added blood flow while grinning with the knowledge that he'd already made the beauty in his arms come so hard that she mystically started a fire. And that had been without even getting to sink his shaft into her.

As he pressed the head of his cock to her, she whimpered slightly in his ear. “Dante, a condom.”

The very idea of covering himself, dulling the feeling of his mate’s body accepting his was absurd. Each knew the other was supernatural, immune to human diseases. As far as pregnancy went, it was a matter that was left up to the gods. They determined when it was time for a mated couple to reproduce. Sure, they listened to prayers, dreams of the size of the family one wished to have, but in the end it was in their hands. If they deemed that he and Francy were to be blessed with a baby, then it would be and he knew she wanted children. She always had. It was why he’d refused to fully claim her when he’d first been given the chance.

With as much as Francy desired to be a mother and as much as he wished to see her swollen with his child, Dante knew the gods would have answered them and that Francy would have never experienced life on her own. Never known what else was out there. But now, she was ready to sign her life over to another—a man that wasn’t her mate and who could never give her the family she had always wanted. It was time to take action. It was time to take Francy.

Easing the head of his cock into her slowly, he bit down hard on his lower lip in an attempt to keep from coming. “Francy...you’re so fucking tight,” he whispered, unsure how he was going to move another inch without finishing too soon. “You feel so good. Do you like that, baby? Do you like me entering you?”

“Dante, we need...”

“You need to let me finish what I started, Francy. Let me finish making you my wife. I started five years ago but didn’t have the heart to complete the claiming until you’d had a chance to have a life of your own. Let me complete it now. Let me make you mine forever.”

“What?”

“You are my true mate, Francy. Five years ago, in this very room, I began the claiming ritual. It’s past time I finished it. Let me be in you. All of me. Nothing between us.”

The confused look in her eyes answered the long-standing question he’d always had. He’d wondered if she knew what he had begun. It was clear that she had no idea that he, in the eyes of the supernatural world, had bound her to him with the promise of marriage. He should have known. It wasn’t as though her family were shifters. Francy came from witches, not lycans. It was different for them. They didn’t practice the same custom.

That night five years ago, he had proposed by starting the mating process and she had accepted his advances, rendering any proposals to come after him void. Fate gave Francy to him and the nature of their supernatural species assured that they would be one. When he’d taken her, his mate, and begun to make love to her it was set in motion. He had started the claiming rights. Any other woman it wouldn’t have mattered but with Francy, it did. She was his chosen one.

“Dante?” The question in her voice warmed his heart. There was no malice in her, only genuine concern. “I didn’t know. I thought you didn’t want me like that. That you only wanted me as a friend. I didn’t know it was the start of a claiming.”

“Is that a yes?”

“Yes,” she whispered.

Surging forward, Dante buried himself to the hilt in her, crying out as he did. It was truly heaven within the walls of her body. He stilled, allowing her time to adjust to his size. “I do want you as my friend, Francy. My friend, my lover, my life mate, my wife and the mother of my children. I want it all and it’s past time I took it.”

Francy held tight to him and began to wiggle her hips ever so slightly. Long strands of auburn hair fell forward, covering half of her flawless face. As she stared up at him, one vivid blue eye visible beneath the veil of hair, he felt his heart melting. The fiery vixen had won his love upon first sight so many years ago and had only increased her

hold on his soul as time wore on. Being in her, knowing he was stretching the lips of her pussy taut and she was loving every second, was more than he could handle.

Thrusting in and out of her, Dante lifted her higher so he could drive her down onto his throbbing cock. Francy cried out and bit down hard on his shoulder, causing the beast within him to answer her call. It moved through him quickly, lengthening his incisors and forcing him to lean forward. Before he could even think of stopping himself, he was piercing her skin, much the same way his dick was piercing her body, long and deep.

The coppery sweet taste of Francy's blood ran through him, invigorating him. He moved faster, pumping himself into his mate as he let her blood slide down his throat. The animal noises that sounded around them came from him but he didn't care. The need to be sure she was forever his was too great to be concerned about anything else.

He felt it then, her magik rising up to envelop him. Pressing to her firmly, Dante took extra care to assure that his lower abdomen rubbed against her clit as he resumed his piston-like thrusts. The animal in him wanted to drag her to the ground, unload his seed and then flip her over and fuck that tempting ass of hers. He struggled hard to maintain control.

As it stood, the feel of her cunt wrapped around his shaft was pushing the beast towards the winning point. Dante fought to stay in control but Francy made it difficult, moaning, running her hands over his body while she kissed him passionately.

"Dante, please." Francy's velvet voice ran over him, causing his stomach muscles to tighten, indicating an orgasm fast approaching. "There, Dante. There. Gods yes, fuck me harder. There. Mmm. So close."

The second her pussy began grasping him, pulling him back into its oasis, Dante knew Francy was coming. Her sweet cunt fisted him and he wanted to howl out in victory. He didn't. Instead, he held tight to her as his balls drew up and his cock began to jet seed into her.

“Amore,” he whispered, licking the wound on her neck closed as the last of his semen filled her. It was done. She was officially his wife now and nothing could ever change that. There would be no more five-year spans between tasting her lips and holding her in his arms.

Chapter Two

Francy wiggled on the king-sized bed, a bit restless as she waited for Dante to return from the hunt. He'd left shortly after their lovemaking session in the kitchen and had not returned. The sun had already set for the day and Francy was doing her best to remain calm. The wolf he carried within had sensed something dangerous in the surrounding area and had left Dante little chance of ignoring it. Not that Dante ever would. He took his destiny seriously and let no evildoer go unpunished. He was a protector – the product of a witch and a werewolf.

He hailed from Italy and had been here for many decades before she'd even been born. Dante had entered into her life when she was fifteen, around the same time that she came into her powers. When her father had taken her before the council, as was standard to do with all of-age witches, they put a call forth on her behalf. It wasn't until five years ago, near the hearth downstairs, that she'd learned that Dante was the one they had summoned. Now she knew why. He was her mate.

Ivon.

The very thought of the man she'd promised to marry, the man who waited for her now back in the city, sickened her. Francy's intent when coming to visit Dante had truly been honorable. She'd never wanted to hurt Ivon. It was hard enough to know that the mere mention of coming to the countryside had upset Ivon—his finding out she'd mated with another man would be the lowest blow yet. As much as Dante disliked her being around vampires, Ivon disliked lycans. It wasn't as though this was common. Other vampires and lycans had no problems getting along.

I won't be helping their opinions on the matter any.

No part of her had thought that she'd fall into Dante's arms. He'd seemed so headfast, so sure that she needed to move away from him that she'd assumed he didn't desire her as she did him.

It was obvious she'd been wrong. So wrong in fact that she'd betrayed another. A man she still couldn't understand her attraction to but had promised her hand to all the same.

How the hell am I going to break this to Ivon? He'll want to come and try to work it out. I'm sure of it. Dante won't stand for that.

Francy's chest tightened as her mind raced. This was all too much. Too soon. A whirlwind that she couldn't seem to find her footing in, nor did she have any desire to change what had happened.

It was wrong and she knew it. She also knew that she loved Dante with all of her heart. What she had with Ivon, while wonderful, was so very different. For some reason, Francy felt removed from it all. It made sense when she was with him. But once she stepped away and looked at the situation, she wondered why she'd ever agreed to marry him to begin with.

I love Dante. The proclamation chased some of the guilt away and left her thinking of her mate. Running a hand over her lower stomach, Francy closed her eyes and wished with all of her heart that she now carried his child. If the gods offered their blessing then she and Dante could very well be parents before the year was out. It was something she had always dreamed of and when Dante had carried her up the stairs she'd found herself slipping into his mind, reading his thoughts. It was a trick they would perfect over time. All mates could do it. It had taken her by surprise at first and when she found him hoping that their union would produce a large family she couldn't help but smile.

Francy slid her hand down further, running her fingers through the juicy aftermath of their lovemaking, skimming over her clit in the process. Fire shot through her inner

thighs as she made another pass by her swollen bud. Biting her lip, she did her best to keep from crying out in agony as her body burned with desire. *I need you, Dante.*

Amore. Dante used their bonded link for the first time to communicate with her.

“Yes?” she said, out loud, not yet comfortable with the idea of speaking with her mind. Dante seemed to hear her as if she’d pushed with her mind so Francy went with it.

I can see you in my mind, spread out on the bed, touching yourself and I know that you’re thinking about me. I know that you want me there, licking you, fucking you, coming in you. Show me how right I am.

That drove her onward. Francy opened her legs more and began methodically rubbing her clit, wishing it was Dante’s tongue there. She could almost feel his sexual frustration even with the distance between them. “Are you safe?”

I was until I was suddenly hit with images of my wife pleasuring herself. Now I’m in danger of my own needs killing me. Every ounce of me wants to have my cock buried deep within you, wants to experience this with you. She sensed his sigh. *I can smell your sweet cunt, Francy, and I want to be there tasting it.*

“I want you here tasting it too,” she whispered. It was the truth. All she’d ever wanted was Dante. Knowing that he was now, in the eyes of the supernatural community, her husband, her mate for eternity only served to increase her need to find sexual release.

Come for me. I want to see you touching yourself as you think of me while I continue to hunt whatever it is that’s out here.

“Is that safe?”

He chuckled. *It’s a hell of a lot safer than depriving me of what I want. Don’t think I’ll go easy on you if I have to return with a dick so hard it could impale you. I’ll fuck that sweet ass of yours, Francy. I’ll bend you over and mount you. Mmm, I’m hard just thinking about it – about you.*

“Mmm,” she let out a soft laugh. “I don’t know, Dante. I’d rather have you here touching me.”

Do it, Francy. I need it. Let me experience you masturbating. Let me watch and feel it through our otherworldly bond.

Giving in, Francy rubbed faster and lowered her other hand. She inserted a finger into her wet channel and continued to stimulate herself. The very thought of Dante’s body entering hers pushed her close to her zenith.

“I can’t. Not without you.” No sooner did the words leave her mouth than she felt something warm draw her clit upwards. Gasping, Francy opened her eyes to find Dante leaning down, licking and sucking on her. It was one of the most erotic sights she’d ever seen. “Dante.”

He moaned, the sound vibrating through her pussy as he stared up at her with dark, haunted eyes. The passion and lust in them shook her to her very core. All those years of believing that he’d turned her away, wanting only to be friends, had been wasted. Dante was the man she was born for and she had denied him for too long.

He swirled his tongue over her clit and she writhed beneath his expert touch. Clutching the sheets, Francy tipped her head back and let the pleasure of her orgasm wash over her. Dante slid his long tongue into her, lapping up her cream, prolonging her pleasure.

“No more,” she pleaded, unable to take another single second of the mind-numbing sensations moving throughout her body.

Dante ignored her as his gaze bore through her and his tongue continued to work its magik, forcing her to peak again and again. She lay there, so wet, so stimulated that she bordered on numbness. When Dante slid his finger into her ass she jolted, the intrusion surprising, and he chuckled into her pussy.

The strange fullness that followed as he finger-fucked her ass did nothing in the way of stopping the seemingly endless onslaught of pleasure. It built slowly at first as

her body grew accustomed to the bizarre feeling of fullness. Dante added another finger and she immediately drew in a sharp breath.

“Relax and push down, *amore*.” Dante licked her clit, easing her fears and allowing her to loosen a bit. “Has anyone ever taken you here, Francy?” His voice was suddenly cold and his gaze hard. “Did *he* take you here?”

“No,” she panted. Until now, the very idea of a man fucking her ass had never occurred to her. Having Dante’s finger in her, she knew that she wouldn’t be completely satisfied until she was permitted the pleasure of his cock in her ass as well.

“How could you let another man touch you? Pleasure you? Love you, Francy?”

No part of her wanted this conversation to take place period, let alone in the middle of what they were sharing. Reaching down, she cupped the sides of his face and tipped her head. “I didn’t know, honey. I swear it’s true.”

It was easy to see that he understood that fact when he nodded ever so slightly but it didn’t erase the hurt on his face. Francy let her magik build before running it over Dante’s lower lip with the pad of her thumb. “I love you.”

His gaze snapped to her face. For a moment, he looked confused and then shocked. How he could be surprised by her admission was beyond her. She’d been in love with him from the day she met him but their age difference prevented either of them from acting upon it.

“Francy?”

“This is where you tell me that you love me too, Dante.”

With his supernatural speed, he moved up and over her quickly, hooking an arm under her right leg and lifting it as he entered her. His cock filled her, spreading the walls of her channel to the brink of tearing. Thankfully, he’d more than prepared her. Her wet pussy still managed to grip his shaft, demanding that he stay rooted in her.

“*Ti amo*—I love you.” As the words fell from his lips Francy felt her very soul, her essence reaching out to meet his. The beast and the man answered her mystical search,

merging with her on all planes of existence, binding them even more than the claiming had.

Dante's lips captured hers as their merged magik set out, caressing them in places they never dreamed could be reached and leaving them both so close to coming that they shared a moan a second before they shared an orgasm. His hot seed filled her quickly. Being connected to him caused Francy to experience what he did. She knew how her pussy felt around his thick, long cock and she knew how good he felt in her.

His jaw dropped and his eyes swirled with flecks of solid black as a growl tore free of him. Dante moved his hands away from her, leaving the entire weight of his body pressed to her. Riding out her orgasm, she tipped her head and found that his hands had shifted. Long claws and the starts of honey-colored fur hovered above the bed.

Her heart sped as she considered screaming and bucking him off her. Dante growled again. "Don't, Francy. Don't be scared, it makes it harder for me to control the beast. I can smell your fear and it makes me want to pin you to the floor, mount you and fuck that sweet ass until sunrise."

"Dante?" she asked, unable to push her fears away.

He shook his head slightly, his jaw tight and the cords in his neck popping out. "Please, Francy. Don't be scared. I would never hurt you. I love you."

Before she could respond, something pinched deep within her lower abdomen. Drawing in a ragged breath, Francy's eyes widened. "Dante, something's wrong." A strange, fuzzy feeling washed over her. It held a magik she didn't recognize and it seemed fixated on her womb.

Dante took a deep breath and a feral smile spread over his face. "You accepted my seed, Francy. The gods blessed us."

"The gods blessed...?" It hit her then. Tears welled quickly in the corners of her eyes as she reached out and brought his clawed hands to the sides of her face. Any fear she had of Dante fled and she planted tiny kisses in his palms. "We're pregnant?"

“Yes, *amore*, we are.” His hands shifted back into human form while she held them. Dante stroked her cheeks, wiping away her tears. When his lips found hers, she surrendered herself to his kiss, knowing that he was every bit as happy as she was.

Francy picked a handful of strawberries and placed them in her basket before moving forward to the next bed. Dante’s gardens were extensive and spanned the western side of his home. The smell of rosemary, oregano and thyme filled the air around her, invigorating her. She’d awoken hungry and feeling a bit worn. That was to be expected after having spent the night in the arms of her insatiable husband. With the dawn several hours out, she was hoping to be able to surprise Dante with breakfast when he woke.

At random times she’d wake to find Dante slipping his cock into her. His excuse had been that he was making up for lost time. In truth, he needed no excuse. She had no problem allowing him to find pleasure in her because she found pleasure with him as well.

Smoothing down the pale green, ankle-length skirt she wore, Francy couldn’t help but smile as she thought about Dante hiding her undergarments from her. After they showered together, she’d gone to put some on only to find him grinning mischievously. After twenty minutes of searching his mansion she gave up and slept next to him naked.

Francy ran her hand over her bare midriff, trying to imagine what her stomach would look like in several months. As she stared down at the cropped white vest that she wore, she knew it would be a thing of the past very soon. Already, it barely contained her breasts, coming just shy of showing her nipples to the world.

Something rustled in the trees surrounding the gardens, catching her attention and leaving an odd sensation prickling over skin. The hair on the back of her neck rose and her gut told her to get back to the house. Back to Dante. There was still an hour before

sunrise and she knew better than to wander to the edges of the property but the lure of making him breakfast had been too great to pass up.

Turning to rush back to the house, Francy found herself standing face-to-face with the one person she never dreamt to run into at Dante's – her now ex-fiancé.

"Ivon?"

"Surprise," he said, his French accent thick. That was never a good thing. It usually meant that he was upset about something. "I thought you might be lonely, coming up to stay at your parents' cottage all by yourself, so I decided to join you."

Francy watched him closely. Something was very off with him. His normally blue eyes were as dark as the sky surrounding them and his ear-length chestnut brown hair was disheveled. Ivon was normally one who appeared together at all times. This was different.

Ivon glanced back towards Dante's house and nodded his head. "Hmm, it is so much bigger than you described it, Francy."

"That's because it's not my parents' cottage. The cottage is down that trail that leads through the woods," she said, knowing that she had to tell him the truth. She'd mated with another man and was now Dante's wife. Not to mention that she was pregnant with his child.

"You are a long way from it, Francy." Ivon took a step towards her. His all-black ensemble added to the menacing air about him. He'd never intimidated her before. Why now? "Care to tell me why you're on Dante Guerrasio's property and why you wear his scent?"

"You know Dante?"

The smile that covered Ivon's face scared her. "Oh, he and I go way back. I am surprised that he has not told you all about his first love."

Francy drew in a sharp breath. First love? Ivon moved towards her with a speed he shouldn't possess, even for someone with his powers. He was standing before her in the

blink of an eye. He caressed her cheek with the back of his hand. "Did he forget to mention that to you before he fucked you? That is what he did, is it not? Did he fuck you, Francy?"

She tried to back up but Ivon slid his hand behind her and cupped her neck. "Ivon..."

"Answer me, Francy. Did he fuck you?" He tipped his head down, centering his gaze on her. "Did you open yourself to him, knowing you told me that you would spend eternity with me?"

"You don't understand. Dante had already started the mating process before I met you." She pleaded with her eyes. "I didn't know."

"Mating process?" Ivon's eyes narrowed. "Are you telling me that you are his true mate?" A sick-looking smile crept over him slowly, making Francy's stomach clench.

She didn't answer. It turned out she didn't have to. Ivon laughed, the sound made her skin crawl and confused her even more. "Ah, this is so fitting. He had an affair with my true mate, leaving me no choice but to kill her to avoid the shame it would bring me to claim her and now I have spent five years paying him back—fucking his true mate, making her scream out my name and beg me for more."

"Get away from her," Dante said, his voice hard.

Francy tried to look behind her to see Dante but Ivon refused to ease his hold on her neck. He glanced over her shoulder and seemed to take great pride in the situation. "I came expecting to find Francy fucking some ex-lover, a human even. Never in my wildest dreams did I suspect she would be fucking you." He licked his lower lip. "Tell me, Dante. Did you ever dream that it was me she has been fucking for five years? That it was me that she agreed to wed?"

Dante growled, the sound so loud that it vibrated through Francy. Ivon made a move to go at Dante but Francy put her hands up quickly and pressed them to his chest. "I need to talk to you, Ivon." She glanced at the ground. "I can't..."

“You wish to tell me what I have already figured out, Francy.” He reached down and cupped her sex, taking her by surprise. “You let him cram his dick in you. You let him fill you full of his animal seed and you let him mark you as his.”

“Ivon, what in the hell is wrong with you?” she asked, doing her best to understand his complete personality turnaround. “This doesn’t sound like you. Where’s the man who spent countless nights making me laugh as he spun me around our kitchen to old swing music? Where’s the man who whispered sweet nothings in French every chance he got?”

A low jealous growl emanated from Dante. Guilt consumed her as she glanced at her mate.

“The second you gave yourself to that animal you killed that part of me, Francy.” He pulled her to him and stared down at her. “Denounce his claim on you and come home with me now. I swear to you that I will make his death quick and painless if you do.”

Death? Quick and painless?

Francy fought down the sick feeling in her stomach and shook her head. “Ivon, you can’t hurt Dante. It was his right to finish the mating ritual. And he couldn’t have done it if I didn’t want it to happen. I didn’t plan on it, on him, but I can tell you that I refuse to regret it or wish it away.” She stood tall, not wanting to show how very afraid of him she now was. “I’m sorry that I hurt you. That was never my intent.”

Ivon laughed. “Please, Francy. Do not tell me that you believe his bedroom lies. He promised Edeline the world, his eternal love and protection. He followed through on none of those.”

“Edeline?” she asked, doing her best to keep up with it all.

Ivon traced the outline of her nipple while he pressed his mouth to her ear and she shuddered with disgust. “She was to be my mate until she allowed that filthy beast to enter her. Tell me, how does it make you feel knowing that he loved someone before you came along? That he wanted to spend his life with her?”

As hard as Francy tried to fight it, her jealous streak kicked into full gear.

He lies, Francy, Dante's voice boomed through her head. She came to me, scared of him, seeking refuge. I offered her that but nothing more. I swear to you. It was never sexual between us, Francy. Never. You are the only woman I've loved, Francy. You know that's true.

She rolled her eyes. *Ivon may not be acting like himself at the moment, but he would never lie to me.*

Really? Then did he tell you that he's one of the heads of the Dark Council?

The Dark Council was evil through and through. Thoughts of her five years with Ivon flooded her mind. All the nights that he had to leave on sudden business trips, all the times that he would call and cancel plans, all the times he'd hold her close as if hiding her when around his friends—it all made sense. Had he used black magik on her to make her want him? Was that why she'd felt the odd pull to him?

Before Francy could question Ivon about it, he was dipping his head down and sniffing her stomach. He hissed, flashing fang as he went. "You carry the animal's child."

He seized hold of her quickly, lifted her off her feet and glared at her through fully shifted vampire eyes. "Edeline, how dare you do this to me? You know who I am. You know my position on the council yet you seek to embarrass me by running to that...that *thing* for help. Why? Because you could not handle the truth about me?"

What? Ivon had gone mad. She wasn't Edeline.

"I'm not... Ivon, please."

He sneered. "Beg for your life and that of the child you now carry. I want to hear it passing over your lips as I teach you once and for all that if you do not belong to me then you belong to no one."

"Ivon," Francy clutched onto his arm in an attempt to ease the pressure on her throat, "You're hurting me—Francy, not Edeline."

Ivon laughed deeply. "Can you not sense her around you, Francy? It is what first drew me to you. She is your guide, your protector from the other side—a gift from the gods. I should have known that he was your mate. Edeline would tell me again and again how sorry she felt for him, not having a true mate, not knowing real love. I should have known that she was standing by your side, protecting you, guiding you to him. Her heart literally bled for him in the end. As will yours."

Francy clutched tighter to his arm as she stared into his hate-filled eyes. "Ivon, don't do this. I can feel your pain. You're letting the demon within you make decisions for you." A breeze kicked up from out of nowhere. It surrounded her, lifting her hair and whispering without words. The sudden knowledge of who it was, Edeline, and what she was saying hit her. She gasped and agreed to what Edeline wanted. Closing her eyes, Francy allowed the presence to enter her.

When she opened her mouth to speak, it wasn't her voice that came out. "Ivon."

He stilled, no doubt shocked by the sound of Edeline's voice.

"You misdirect your rage. It was not you that I ran from, scared for my life and that of our child. It was the demon you carry within you."

Ivon's brow furrowed, his dark gaze seeming to search Francy for answers she could only pray she had. "Edeline? A child?"

"*Oui.*"

"How are you here?"

"I watch over her, Ivon. You said it yourself, I am her spirit guide. But I am more than that to her. It was I who went to the gods upon my death, choosing not to seek vengeance on you but to repay another man's kindness." Francy felt her hand lifting as she pointed back at Dante but knew that it wasn't she who controlled the action. "Dante did nothing other than act as an ear for my concerns about you. He agreed to help me try to reach you through the demon that had taken control."

Ivon snarled, his face twisting as it partially shifted into its vampire form. "You lie."

“Ivon, you feel the truth of my words. Dante was your best friend. He only wanted to help you find your way back to me—to our child. To try to pin my murder upon him was beyond a betrayal. Had the High Council not discovered you were working for the Dark Council, Dante would have been executed.”

“They should have killed him.”

“No.” The force within Francy did its best to soothe her as it revealed things she did not know. “He deserved to live, to be happy. You know this is true, Ivon. Look deep within and you will find the answer there.”

Ivon rolled his eyes, still seeming confused by it all.

“That is why I went to the gods, Ivon. I told them every tiny detail that I had ever heard Dante reveal to you about what he wanted in his mate. Each time you would talk with him, pry information about what he wanted in a woman, I listened. And I remembered.”

An odd feeling of peace, of absolute happiness surged through Francy and she knew that the spirit that spoke through her was proud of her decision to go to the gods. “I told them and they listened with open minds and hearts. Once they deemed the threat you posed to his future mate was long past, they created her. They sent her spirit forth to be born unto this earth. She was created for him, made to be everything he had ever wanted and so very much more. It is something the gods hold sacred, Ivon. Something they insisted I help guard. I was sent the day she came into her powers to watch over her, to keep her from being harmed by you or any like you.”

The wicked laugh that came from Ivon made Francy shiver. Edeline didn’t seem fazed by it. “I know the thoughts that now run through your head, Ivon. You think that Dante’s mate did not love him enough to resist you. That is not true. I did not know that I was able to push my will on her or that Francy was sensitive enough to respond to it. When I saw you, I could not stop myself. I went to you. It was natural for her to follow. It was my need to see the goodness in you once again that blinded her to everything—

that gave you access to her bed. Not her own. She has loved only one man and she now calls him her husband.”

“No.” Shock was evident on Ivon’s face. As much as Francy feared him, she also felt fear for him. If he couldn’t fight his demon for the woman he truly loved – Edeline – then he had little hope of being reached now. She wanted him to fight it, to push his demon down, but she wanted her child’s safety more.

“Ivon, did you know that she called Dante every free moment she had? Did you know that her heart hurt the day you asked for her hand and I was so taken with your kindness and warmth that I pushed her to say yes? She spent the next day in tears, knowing that her heart belonged to another but too confused to realize what was happening.”

The shock of it all hit Francy as she listened to the truth come forth from her own mouth. “She has always been and will only ever be in love with one man and he is restraining himself as we speak to afford me this chance at redeeming you. He does this because at one point you were his best friend, but know that he will not allow harm to come to Francy. She is his wife, the mother of his child and the only one his heart has ever belonged to. She is our gift to him, Ivon – our thank you for trying to fix us.”

Ivon thrust his power out, pushing Edeline’s essence from Francy as he lifted her higher in the air. “If that is true then she is a gift I no longer wish him to have.”

Francy screamed out as pain shot through her. She wanted to fight back but it was all happening too fast. Something drew upon her power quickly, using it to strike out at Ivon. He dropped her and she fell to the ground.

Stay down!

The command came a second before Francy would have stood. She obeyed Dante, realizing he was the one who had drawn on her powers, and stayed low to the ground. In a flash he was leaping over her, his claws unsheathed. He struck out at Ivon. Francy watched as a cloud of dust encircled Dante. Everything looked like slow motion. Her breath caught. Ivon was dead.

Cool energy wrapped around her for a moment before Dante dropped to his knees. "Francy, are you hurt?"

Shaking mostly from the shock of it all, she cupped his cheek. "I'm sorry."

"Shh, it wasn't your fault. You loved me. You heard Edeline explain it. You didn't betray me or our bond." He held her tight, chasing away her inner demons. "It's okay, Francy. They're together again and we're together. No one's between us. No one's pushing the other to something they don't want. It's just us."

A tiny tickle of power ran through her lower abdomen, instantly calming her nerves. "Well, and baby makes three."

Dante's breath caught. "The baby's fine?"

"Yes," she took his hand in hers and ran it over her stomach, "he's fine."

"We'll have a boy?" he asked, smiling as he lifted her into his arms. "The first of many."

Epilogue

Dante woke to the sweet sensation of warm lips over his erect cock. As he took in the erotic sight of his wife filling her mouth with him, he slid his hands down into her long auburn locks and ground his teeth at the pleasure she was bringing him. The pleasure that she would forever bring him now that nothing stood between them. Edeline had given him a gift he could never thank her enough for. She'd given him his true love.

The tip of his dick hit the back of Francy's throat, yet she showed no signs of discomfort. Not even when her gag reflex kicked in, causing her mouth to water around his cock. She let out a sultry laugh as she sucked on him harder.

Francy seemed to need to taste him every bit as much as he needed her to do it. She hummed softly over him, sending him dangerously close to the edge of filling her mouth and throat with his cum.

"Francy." Holding her hair gently, he tried to ease her off him but she refused to move, opting for licking him as though he were a lollipop. Each swipe was pure torture – one he hoped he would be forced to endure for centuries.

Another throaty laugh escaped her. "Mmm, do you like that? You twitch whenever I do that."

Unable to think past the fact that she now had her teeth pressed to his tender flesh, scraping them against it, sending his body into a spasm, he simply nodded.

Francy laughed again. "How about this?" She slid a finger into her tempting mouth and pulled it out, slick and wet.

Dante watched with nothing short of rapture on his face as she tugged gently on his balls before easing her finger into his ass. Pleasure shot through him as she crooked it ever so slightly, pressing it to his prostate, filling him.

Quickly, she covered him with her mouth in time to catch the cum that shot forth from his convulsing cock. She kept her finger in his ass, fucking him slowly as he continued to come in jetting waves down her throat. Her purring only served to drive him onwards, making him come even more than he normally would. "Enough."

Francy shook her head, looking every bit the siren she truly was. "It's not nearly enough, Dante."

He reached down and brought her up and over his still-hard cock. Part of him wondered if he'd ever be able to satisfy his need for Francy. Somehow, he knew he never would. She was his other half and he'd never tire of her.

As he lowered her body, allowing himself to spear her sweet pussy, he growled out. The feel of her already beginning to milk him before they'd even begun was almost too much. "*Amore,*" he whispered, nearly begging her to show him mercy.

Francy pressed her palms to his chest and sent a toe-curling surge of magik through his system. It felt as though hundreds of tiny mouths were kissing, sucking his skin. When she leaned forward and captured his lips with hers he knew that she held a power over him that no one else ever would. He may have over a century on her but she had his heart and in the end that was all that mattered.

He probed her mouth with his tongue and her pussy with his hungry cock. Thrusting his hips upward, Dante moaned as he felt her channel grasping hold of him. Immortal as he was, as they were, he knew she would be the death of him. Her love was toxic and it was one he'd gladly accept again and again.

Francy clawed his chest as she came with a start. Her pussy fisted his cock tightly and he gave in to the need to fill her again. She collapsed on him, her breathing shallow and her pulse speeding. "I love you, Dante."

"And I love you. *Solo tu* – only you, Francy."

The soft sounds of their son sleeping came over the baby monitor. He chuckled. "I love him as well, of course. As you would say, and baby makes three."

Kissing his collarbone, she purred slightly. "Honey, we need to change that to baby makes four."

"What?" Dante could hardly believe his ears. "The gods blessed us again?"

"Are you upset?"

"Upset that I have the woman I love in my arms, a healthy, happy son, another child on the way and an eternity with my family? No, Francy, I'm not upset. I am quite possibly the happiest man alive."

"So that means that you might be willing to do something spectacular with pasta for me?"

Dante couldn't help but pull her closer to him as he laughed. "Ah, craving again?"

"Mmmhmm," she nuzzled her lips to his neck and kissed him, "for pasta and you. You were more than worth the wait, Dante."

"As were you, *amore*."

About Mandy M. Roth

I grew up fascinated by creatures that go bump in the night. From the very beginning I was odd and creative—a combo every mother hopes for. After studying art all the way through school, I majored in it at college. One rather unexpected child later, I changed my major and finished with a great balance of art and business. I'm working on my MBA with a concentration in marketing but it's taken a back seat while I plug away at the keyboard.

I live in Ohio with my husband and three boys. They definitely keep me busy. Between convincing one he really doesn't need to have his eyebrow pierced, listening to the middle one's philosophy on life and pulling the youngest off the countertop, I do manage to eek in a very small amount of writing time during the day. More often than not, my writing is done from 8pm until 3 am.

If the following years are half as good as my first one in writing, I'll be a happy gal! I'm doing something I love, meeting tons of new people, have the greatest readers in the world and the support of my family. The only thing I still don't have is that hot lycan on a motorcycle. I'm working on it, though.

Mandy welcomes mail from readers. You can write to her c/o Ellora's Cave Publishing at 1056 Home Avenue, Akron, OH 44310-3502.

By Mandy M. Roth and Michelle M. Pillow

Pleasure Cruise

Red Light Specialists



Discover for yourself why readers can't get enough of the multiple award-winning publisher Ellora's Cave. Whether you prefer e-books or paperbacks, be sure to visit EC on the web at www.ellorascave.com for an erotic reading experience that will leave you breathless.

www.ellorascave.com