

Love Bites

Book 1 of the Darkness and Light Duology

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An Excerpt - One Kiss To Seal Her Fate. One Kiss to Seal Her Doom.

The sun was already low in the sky as she shut up shop for the night. Shakira supposed she should feel scared in the eerie quiet of the coffee house, but the silence was a welcome relief to her aching head.

The window blinds were shut, and the doors were locked. Nobody knew she was there apart from Annie, so she settled down to read.

The sky was midnight blue, with only the full moon providing light by the time the knock came at the back door.

She peeked out of the blinds, and saw only a tall shadowy figure, wearing a full-length Barbour coat and bushman hat.

Her heartbeat sped up and her palms were sweaty as she opened the door a crack, with trembling fingers.

“You here to collect?” she asked through the gap, and got a brief nod in return.

She walked backwards and turned on the light so she could find the correct boxes in the store room. She heard a hiss behind her as her visitor turned the light back off.

“Ummm...you don’t want to...?” she started.

The hat shook a ‘no’. The herder strode past her, with the briefest pause, and located the boxes in the dark.

Shakira tried to steady her nerves, recalling Annie’s words of warning about their manners. She was alone in a small dark room with this person. But she could see where he was despite the darkness.

‘I’m not scared, being alone in a small dark room with this stranger,’ she thought.

The boxes got carried to the back door, and she locked up the store room.

The coat was already wafting along as the stranger went to load the small van. She hefted a box, eager to help and get this over with.

The man had his back to her, and jumped at her presence. She silently passed him the box she’d been carrying, their fingers brushing against each other as she did so. They both inhaled sharply, electricity sparking at the brief contact.

The hat’s peak raised, revealing dark eyes and a dazzling smile. Shakira couldn’t release her breath, it was caught in her throat. She tingled all over.

The herder was the first to break the spell as he coughed and loaded the box into the back of the van.

“Right, coffee,” she murmured, turning around to fetch another box.

The hairs on the back of her neck rose, alerting her to the shadow man’s presence. He was behind her in the doorway, tantalisingly close. In her mind, her back leant against his chest, his arms wrapping around her.

Instead, using every ounce of her willpower, she bent to pick up the box at her feet. She heard a groan behind her as she did so, and knew he felt it too; this need.

She straightened with a box in hand, but as she turned there was a body in her way. He took the box from her and put it back down.

Before she knew what was happening, his hand was gently at her waist, drawing her near. His spicy scent was vaguely familiar.

She let herself be pulled until she could feel his body next to hers. Her eyes closed as she concentrated on the intense feeling.

A hand was on her cheek, and his face was drawing close to hers.

She could offer no resistance, and didn't want to. Her whole being was begging for this to happen.

In a flash his lips were on hers, devouring her. Her core turned to lava.

Her hands reached under his coat and gripped around his back, anchoring them together. She could feel his firm, rippling muscles.

They stood alone in the silent night. Silvery moonlight illuminated them from behind, their tongues caressing each other as flames of passion engulfed them.

Suddenly he broke apart from her.

"Errr...my apologies," he mumbled.

Shakira's body was crying out in pain at the loss. She was trembling all over. Her eyes opened, looking at him in the moonlight.

"No, don't apologise. It was fantastic," she said hastily.

"I'm not allowed," he explained.

He strode off across to the far end of the car park. She saw him in silhouette, standing near a tree, as he raised his hat, and his hand brushed through his long hair.

Panic raced through her. What had she done wrong? Was he coming back? Surely he couldn't leave her this way.

The hat was replaced, and he returned. He silently picked up the box and restarted the process of loading up.

Shakira felt bereft. She stepped to one side and let him complete his task alone, unable to bear being so close to him without repeating their kiss. This silent treatment hurt, her heart was shrivelling in her chest.

As he shut the van doors she couldn't bear it any longer. She had to get answers. Screwing up her courage, she crossed over to him, and managed to find her voice.

"Did I do something wrong?"

"No." The hat shook from side to side again.

Is that all the answer she was to get? Frustration fuelled her anger. No, she wouldn't allow him to run away, not like this. He couldn't kiss her into oblivion and abandon her.

"Would you at least look at me?" she asked as she gripped the hat and pulled.

His reflexes were lightning quick, and he halted her progress.

"No," he softly commanded.

"Why?"

But all she got was another hat shake.

“Why?” she repeated, raising her voice.

“Rule,” he said, sounding shaky.

“Oh bollocks to this,” she said in frustration as she stepped in closer.

Instinct kicked in, making her brave. Her reactions were faster than his this time, or maybe he couldn't fight anymore.

Her mouth found his, with even more fervour than before. Her hands reached up to paw through his hair, knocking his hat to the ground as she kissed him with all her built up fury and passion, letting him have it full force.

His hand gripped her buttocks as she raised a leg to get a better purchase against him. He was going to lose all self-control, he needed to have this woman here and now. He was done fighting. To hell with the consequences. This would not be denied. She was here in his arms and he wouldn't let go.

Her scent filled his nose, driving away any last grip he had on self-reserve, and any recognition of clan law. His blood scorched his veins as it pumped round his body, and headed to his loins. He would sink into her and forget the world, claim her as every fibre of his being demanded.

But her screams ripped through the night, making the birds who'd been softly cooing in the trees take flight in a flap. The beating of their wings and cries added to the din.