

HARLEY AUSTIN



SIREN

A WAKENED CHRONICLES



AWAKENED CHRONICLES:  
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## SIREN

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# HARLEY AUSTIN'S

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AWAKENED CHRONICLES

# SIREN

HARLEY AUSTIN

HARLEY AUSTIN PUBLISHING

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*For my beautiful angel;  
the love of my life and the very best friend  
anyone could ever hope to have.*



SIREN



# 1

**W**arm hot summer sun bathed the double-wide chaise Tori found herself relaxing on. The huge sprawling pool within the almost new high-rise condo complex teemed with people in their swim trunks and bathing suits; splashing, shouting and carrying on with socializing; and with cannon balls spraying pool water onto the fine pebbled concrete. New tall palm trees, still held in place by wood supports, lined the outside of the pool fence but provided little shade with their heavily trimmed fronds.

Fortunately, the reveling and splashing was far enough away that it didn't really bother Tori sandwiched in between dozens of other chaise lounge chairs lining the pool's deck, and all of them filled with other sun bathers. She'd managed to find one of the few open chaises just as it was being abandoned by a slightly overweight middle-aged lady in a floral one-piece

and huge sunhat, obviously leaving for a more quiet area to read.

Tori took charge of the chaise-built-for-two, smoothed on some tanning lotion, and then relaxed to one side of the sun chair with a still cold bottle of Dr. Pepper stashed into the armrest's cup holder.

The late Saturday morning Florida sun felt perfect; not yet too hot, still warm enough to offset the gentle sea breeze that blew in from the beach next to their new resort-like condo complex. It was a relaxing end to an otherwise hectic week of unnecessary deadlines, email dramas, and manufactured emergencies at work. Nothing seemed to be working well, for anyone, the whole week. But now all of that was in the past; she was relaxing into a four-day Fourth-of-July weekend with no worries and none of the drama of her co-workers.

The truth was, despite the office nonsense, Tori's position of doing medical necessity reviews for insurance companies had become a dream job. Working out of her new condo remotely meant no frustrating commutes, little to no office politics, and very few impromptu meetings that typically accomplished next to nothing.

But the remote gig also meant little to no interaction with other people. In a way she liked the solitude, but in other ways her relationships with other people had suffered. She'd dated plenty while in college, but almost no one now in Tampa. Right out of school, a previous job had called her to Orlando. But a year of the brutal nursing hours typical of the hospital got old very quickly. She'd bolted to the first job that came up. The salary wasn't quite as good as she could make as a floor nurse, but it was close; and it was at least a *salary*; she never wanted to punch a time clock again.

Still, working the hospital floor had given her a few dates with other staff—none of which she felt all that interested in continuing.

With her apartment lease expiring, she'd decided to jump to the coastal city after falling into an opportunity she just couldn't pass up. The new three-tower condo complex had barely been open a year. Right on the beach, the near-the-top ocean-view, three-bedroom unit was practically a steal. It was still more money than she wanted to pay, but it was an investment. Besides, she could always find a roommate or two to help cover the mortgage if finances got too tight.

Besides the investment, she had an ulterior motive in moving into the condo resort: the huge new complex had been filling steadily with other, younger professional types. She hated to admit it, but yes, she was shopping—for a guy.

In the months she had been living here, she'd seen a handful of men she could get interested in, but all of them seemed buried in the party scene. The complex had a number of street-facing bars and restaurants open to the public; some with dance floors. She had visited all of them at one time or another over the past several months and had plenty of offers from guys, even several other women; but for some reason, she had just not been interested. Was she being too picky? She didn't think so. The last thing she needed right now was a disaster relationship with someone who lived in the same complex. She'd been there. Done that.

The truth was—okay, she *was* being overly picky. And she knew exactly the reason why: none of the guys she had seen looked even half as good as one particular guy she'd seen hanging around the pool area for the past several weeks. He didn't show up every weekend, she'd only seen him a handful of times in the past two months, but when he did show up, her eyes weren't the only ones following him around the supersized pool area.

He'd walked past her more than a few times; even stood beside her next to the pool's island-inspired Tiki bar once. But

he'd never once talked to her; or even looked at her for that matter.

Maybe it was her one-piece she always wore? The darker fabric and semi-prude cut of the unfashionable swimsuit wasn't the most flattering on her figure—nor would it have been on anyone's figure for that matter. The only reason she'd bought the thing was because of exactly that—it looked a little frumpy and it helped to hide her curves. While other girls in college were flaunting their stuff all over in front of the boys, she was really trying to hide hers.

Some women had been blessed with comely beauty, or fuller breasts, nicer hip curves, even astonishing butts—Tori had been 'cursed' with all of those and then some. Her thick brunette hair, grown long, very long, practically to her mid-thighs, crowned a beautiful face with high cheekbones, perfect teeth and full pouting lips; and Nature hadn't stopped there. Ample pert breasts, killer curves and long smooth legs had destined her to one day be a hyper-successful supermodel.

But she'd ultimately walked away from the industry.

The people and fans she'd attracted while modeling left her a little afraid. She'd been mobbed a couple of times. The last time had left her shirtless. That was the end of the modeling career.

But that was a couple of years ago in college. Now she was *wanting* to attract some attention again—at least the attention of the handsome hunky guy she'd seen in her complex. He had to live in one the towers, but which one? The resort didn't have a list of their tenants and owners like some yearbook. Probably a good thing; she didn't want her own address out there for just anyone to see.

Tori wasn't sure how long she had been relaxing in the sun, maybe half an hour with her earbuds drifting soft music into

her mind, when she felt someone touching her foot. She hated that. People not paying attention to where they were going and bumping into others. There were a few kids and a lot of older teens playing all over the pool area. She figured it was just someone moving past the rows of chairs. But when she felt them touch her foot again, she sat up, slightly opening her eyes. The annoyed look behind her sunglasses quickly faded as her eyes took in the handsome visage of a tanned guy standing at the foot of her chaise. And not just any tanned guy—she was looking at *him!*

She took out her earbuds one at a time.

“Sorry to bother you.” He smiled, gripping a long white towel around his neck.

His thick and nicely styled dark brown hair complimented his handsome smile with perfect dimples just under his dark designer Oakley’s. His very striking features gave her feelings a jump. Behind the towel he gripped around his neck were broad shoulders, well-rounded with smooth muscles and unusually cut thick pectorals that hovered over rippling abdominals. He was nicely muscled, bigger than most, but not huge like the bodybuilder magazines often showed. One of his legs was lifted with his bare foot resting on the end of her chair next to hers, still touching her ankle. His nicely thick thighs disappeared under a snug white square-cut swimsuit that looked a little small for his size. But it wasn't his thick thighs or thin waist that led to rippling abs that garnered Tori’s rapt attention for the moment. Beneath the spandex-like material of the guy’s swimsuit was a very obvious lengthy package that his swimsuit was having a very difficult time concealing. She’d never seen him in this kind of suit before. His male glands alone filled the contoured front of the man-cut suit while an obvious tubular outline reached nearly to one of the side seams. She swallowed, then tore her eyes away to look at his face once again.

"I didn't know if anyone was sitting next to you," he began. "Would you be interested in sharing the other side of your chaise? This place is really slammed today. All the rest of the chairs are taken."

"Oh, ah—" she stammered. She'd not been able to even get him to look at her before; and now *he was asking to share her chaise?! She wanted to talk to him, but she also felt conflicted about being so uncomfortably close to someone she didn't know. They'd both be right in each other's personal space on the chaise.*

He seemed to pick up on her reticence. Maybe it was the look on her face? In any event, he apologized. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to intrude." Taking his foot from her chair, he turned to survey the pool area landscape again, obviously looking for an empty chair.

Tori's lips parted slightly agape as she took in the rearview of the hunky guy taking a deep sigh. His short-cut swim trunks failed even worse at hiding a generously sculpted, perfectly rounded set of glutes that flexed beautifully as he shifted his weight from one leg to another while surveying their surroundings. She bit her lip.

"Hey," she managed to finally say.

"Hmmm?" he turned around again.

She pulled her things off the other side of the chaise. She'd conspicuously placed them there to make it look as if the other side of the chair was taken. "I'm not really using it. You can."

"Oh, are you sure?"

"Yes, I'm sure. Have a seat."

"Oh, thank you. I really appreciate it." He pulled the long towel from around his neck and laid it out over the one side, then gracefully laid himself onto the comfortable towel-covered mesh. Tori watched him sit down, her eyes taking in every movement of the tall, fit guy. His sunglass-covered eyes met hers. He smiled that dimpled grin at her.

"Thanks again."

"Sure." She found herself barely able to talk.

"Are you from around here?" he asked. His voice was strange, cultured. It had an accent, but she couldn't quite place it. He adjusted the back of his side of the chaise so that it was laying all the way down at the same level as hers.

"I live here." Her pulse seemed to have jumped. Was she really now talking to this unbelievable guy? "What about you?"

He relaxed fully reclined onto the chair, lifting his arms above his head. Tori marveled at his near hairless armpits and perfectly huge biceps. He turned his head to look at her. "I'm a vagrant."

Tori smiled. "Vagrant? What does that mean?"

"It means I don't live here, but I like the new pool, so I sneak in from the beach."

Tori relaxed back into her chaise. She'd read the condo's warnings about people coming into the pool area from the beach. It was a violation of the property rules and a few city ordinances. Only residents and their guests were allowed in the complex's facilities.

"I should report you."

He leaned up, the smile leaving his face. "Oh, please don't—"

She smiled now, looking over at him again. "Just kidding."

"Oh, you are just cruel." He grinned at her again.

She chuckled. "So where *do* you live?"

"In town, not far from here. I watched them building this place last year. I come here a couple of times a week."

"I think I've seen you here before," she admitted.

"I've noticed you here a few times. Did you get a new swimsuit?"

"I did, actually."

“It looks nice,” he complimented. “I wonder why we don’t see more of each other?”

Tori mused his words—did he just prep her to ask her out?!

“I’m usually only out here on the weekends,” she smiled. “I guess we just keep missing each other.”

“That’s a shame.” He smiled, not looking at her. She didn’t reply to his comment but she didn’t disagree with it.

## 2

**T**he sun had become warmer with just a few lazy clouds hanging in the sky moving slowly by. Tori pulled her lotion from a bag and re-applied small dabs over the warmer parts of her shoulders and arms.

“Do you use sunscreen?” she asked, offering him the bottle.

“Not usually. I tan really easily.”

“I wish I did.”

He watched her turn to lay face down on her side of the chaise.

“You should use some of that on your back. I can help if you like?”

Tori smiled inside at the offer. She had hoped he would. She handed him the sunscreen.

It felt nice feeling his hand smoothing the warm lotion over the skin of her back.

"I'm Liam, by the way."

"Nice to meet you, Liam. I'm Tori."

"That's a cute name. It fits you."

"It's short for Victoria—that name I never use."

"Too formal?"

"I hate it."

"I knew someone named Victoria once."

"Was she old?" Tori only half smiled.

"Not really, she was a lot like you. Cute, beautiful, actually. She worked at the same investment firm I was."

Tori smiled at the subtle compliment. "Is that what you do?" she asked. She was curious about what a handsome guy like Liam did for a living. Investing? That sounded interesting.

"It is. But I'm on my own now. No partners."

"Do you have a lot of clients?" she probed.

He chuckled. "No. Just one. One's enough. Believe me."

"Sounds like a dream job."

"It keeps me busy. Thanks again for not reporting me." Liam spoke softly as one of the complex's life guards approached. He'd been kicked out of the place a few weeks ago by the same life guard. But Liam figured that rubbing lotion all over the back of one of the tenants probably qualified him as an official 'guest'. The two guys exchanged nods as he walked by.

"No problem. Besides, I needed someone to put some lotion my back," she smiled. Tori felt his hand smooth slick with warm lotion under the tied strap of her bikini. His hand moved down her skin and then a little more firmly over her lower back.

"Hmmm," she groaned softly feeling his fingers push over her muscles and spine. It was like he was more giving her a backrub or a massage than he was just applying lotion. She couldn't help but flex her hips it felt so nice.

"I really like your swimsuit," he complimented again. "It looks really nice on you."

"Thank you," her sweet Texas drawl peeked out from her voice.

The irony was, it was her least favorite swimsuit. The thin white material of the unlined bikini was a holdover from her very short lived modeling career. She'd worn it only on some shoots, but never in public. Unwittingly she'd discovered that the material lost half its opaqueness when it got wet and the bottoms were low enough in the front that she needed to wax before even thinking about wearing them. The triangles of the tie-up top also didn't cover all of her standout round breasts, nor did it try to hide her nipples. Honestly, she hated it.

But with her guy situation, she needed to step up her game. She'd been mulling it over in her mind for a couple of weeks—maybe she *should* wear it. After some vacillating back and forth, she'd decided to ditch the one-piece and uncover her killer curves.

The resort's spa had taken care of the wax, but she still had reservations about wearing the number in public. What would people say? No one here really knew her. But that was the problem she was hoping to fix.

Yes. She'd been trolling—hoping to get him to notice her. And now here he was! The one and only time she'd ever worn the thing in public, the hottest guy she'd ever seen was now lightly massaging warm lotion down the backs of her legs.

"I like your swimsuit too." She smiled feeling his fingers press the stress of the week from her limbs.

"Thanks. It's not something I normally wear."

"Why? You look nice in it." She caught a glance of him on his knees spread over his side of the chaise and the generous long package fully outlined by the trunks.

"Thanks."

This wasn't his typical beachwear. The cropped-short Speedo-like fabric was a little over the top the way it showed every bulge around his waist and up-front between his thick thighs.

He'd seen her earlier in the morning wearing the new bikini. Wow. He'd usually worn the typical long shorts that everyone did; but in the past she just hadn't responded to him at all in those. Even standing next to her a few weeks ago at the pool bar, even after he'd smiled at her, she wouldn't even talk to him. He'd walked by her how many times now? She just ignored him. He'd been around women who'd played hard to get, but this girl just wasn't getting the message. But—he really wanted to get her attention.

*She'd* slipped on something sexy to wear around the pool. Okay, maybe he needed to as well? He'd ducked into the resort's beach shop and ditched the loose-fitting shorts for something over-the-top. Well, maybe a little *too* over the top for his size. Now all he needed to do was get her attention on the double-chaise she was sunning on. That was nearly an hour ago. He'd already walked by her several times. *Jeeze, woman, pay attention*, he thought, walking by her again without so much as a head turn from her. Was she asleep under those glasses?

He'd finally summoned his courage when he'd seen her adjusting her earbuds. He'd raised his foot and touched it to hers.

After five years of nothing, five years of meeting no one he could get interested in; was the universe now finally somehow smiling on him? It was about time. He raised her calf for what she discovered to be a longer-than-expected warm-lotioned foot rub.

Something boomed deeply in the distance as a new cloud covered their sunshine.

"Uhhh," Liam groaned leaning up onto his elbows and looking into the sky.

"That doesn't sound friendly." Tori looked up as well.

A drop of cool water could be felt every few moments. "Looks like everyone is packing up." He surveyed the pool area as others were making for the beach exits and building entrances of the different condo towers.

Both got up from their chaise. Liam picked up his towel while she quickly gathered her things into the small beach bag.

"Looks like this is good-bye for now." He smiled.

"When are you coming back?" she asked, both still standing by their chaise as others hurried past them. Another bigger boom sounded in not so far-off distance.

"Probably in a couple of days." Each felt droplets of rain falling on their skin now. They both looked out of the pool area at the dark clouds moving in quickly from the gulf.

"I think you're going to get wet," she grinned.

"Yea. I think you're right." He frowned.

Rain began falling while they followed others around the winding edge of the pool. It wasn't falling hard, but the droplets were big enough to leave the pebbled patio splotched with water.

Without really thinking Tori took hold of Liam's hand, pulling him with her as she made her way more quickly across the pool area toward her building's portico. By the time both had reached the covered entrance, the rain *was* falling hard, wetting everything. Both needed to dry off a bit with their towels.

"Nice." Liam scowled, looking out across the pools as the rain pelted it like it was a small lake.

"At least we're not getting wet."

"You won't be. I will." He leaned in to whisper in her ear as others took shelter under the portico and then moved into the building with their RF keycards. "You live here. I don't."

"You can come inside."

"I don't want to impose, Tori. Really." He whispered.

Liam felt her take hold of his arm and pull him barefoot into the building's foyer.

The fortieth floor of her high-rise building was almost to the top of the new residential tower. The condo looked and smelled of new expensive carpet, with fine finishes, stone tiles, granite counters, and above-average appliances and fixtures that gave the smaller but luxury space a sense of real opulence. Sparsely furnished with only a few pieces of furniture in the dining, living and bedroom, the smaller rooms typical of these kinds of units still had exceptional views of the gulf waters—waters that now rolled into the shore below with whitecaps under hard winds and peels of bright lightning and booming thunder.

Tori emerged from her bedroom to find Liam still standing, his towel draped around his neck, looking out of the living room's slight curve of panoramic windows.

"Everything okay?" She asked moving up beside him.

"Oh," he seemed to pause. "Yea, fine. Just watching the storm. I heard the shower, but you're still in your swimsuit?"

"You're still in yours."

"I only brought a towel to change into." He smiled, then tossed it onto the only couch in the small room.

"I just needed to wash off the lotion."

Both watched the storm and rough seas for long minutes in near silence. He felt her lean against his arm. She heard his soft draw of breath and then felt as his arm reach behind her, his

hand almost instinctively moving over her back, before pulling her gently against his skin.

"You smell really nice," she offered, still looking out the window.

"Yea, you do too," he smiled. Looking into her eyes for the first time.

"Liam? Your eyes—" she began.

"Oh," he rolled them.

"They're really different. Purple."

"Yea, they look that way sometimes—" he looked away out the window, not meeting her gaze again.

"Liam," he felt her hand on his face, bringing his gaze back to hers once again.

"They *are* purple. Shiny purple, like, metallic."

"I know. They're a little weird. I don't usually let people see them. I wear sunglasses a lot."

"They're beautiful."

He smiled at the compliment.

She moved herself close to him, her hand gliding over his wide pectorals while she rested her head on his shoulder taking in the wonderful scent of his skin.

Liam couldn't help himself. It was like she called to him with something he couldn't explain.

Tori felt his arms wrap gently around her, his hands gliding slowly over the skin of her back, as something boomed softly in the distance.

# 3

**W**ith the two of them this close, it had not taken long before she felt Liam's lips lightly teasing along the skin of her neck, nibbling up to her earlobe. Tori took in a soft rippled breath while her palm moved over his wide pectoral and rested over one of his oval nipples that had drawn up tall and tight.

Both embraced lightly as they teased the skin of each other with light touches and soft kisses for long minutes. She felt his warm bated breaths over her cheek until his lips hovered over hers, not quite touching.

"Kiss me," she breathed.

"God, Tori, you're so incredible."

He felt her pout lightly touch his in a near electric brush of feeling that gave him a serious bolt of feeling under the front of his swimsuit. With her bikini subtly pressed against his suit,

she'd already begun to feel him swelling. She pulled herself closer to him, feeling his warm growing firmness against her skin.

Their brushing lip play ended when Liam gently opened her pout with his own, and softly folded his lips into hers. With their arms embracing, each sank their lips into an eager, emotionally moving, kiss.

His warm skin smoothed over hers. Tori pulled herself a little more snugly against him, feeling his muscles move with her while their lips danced with each other's. Liam didn't really think about it; somehow it was just instinctive how his hand slipped down her back, then over her bikini bottoms to cup one side of her pear-shaped ass; pulling her against the growing firmness of his shorts. She didn't seem to mind. He could feel her. All of her. Like she was on fire with a desire she'd never known. It wasn't her fault. She didn't know who he was. He'd never *seen* anyone like her either. She was brighter than the rest when he looked at her. He'd honestly never *felt* anyone else like her. Then again, he'd never met anyone like himself until a few years ago.

A family in the shambles of divorce, Liam was nineteen when he suddenly found himself on his own with no money, no job, and no place to call home. He'd lived with gracious friends and relatives for a few years, taking unskilled jobs wherever he could find them.

Living for a few months in Costa Mesa, he'd met a wealthy businessman; a real estate developer. The guy was younger, handsome and both had hit it off. After a week of business lunches and dinners that felt more like dates, Liam found himself waking in his new friend's bedroom—only to discover that he was very different after he'd sank into a sudden deep sleep.

Even his new friend had been amazed at Liam's "awakening", as he called it. Liam hadn't just awakened, he'd done so in a way that none of his friend's small business clan had ever seen before. They were suddenly afraid of him. The things he could do. Although he wanted to stay, the clan asked him to leave. He was too bright; he might attract too much attention to their enterprises. Reluctantly, Liam agreed. That was the last he'd ever seen of them. He'd read later that the tiny clan of halfblood investors were all killed in a plane crash, their corporate jet had gone down in the Sierra Nevada's. The accident was ruled a mechanical failure.

Sure it was.

Over the next few years since he'd been awakened, Liam had met only a few other awakened as he moved from town to town, city to city; none of them as bright as himself. They'd been kind. Most of them. Teaching him things about the world, about the shadow governments, the Seven, and their Oligarchy that actually ruled the whole world.

Some of the clans knew much more than the others. They had taught him to speak and write and move in the language of the Ra.

Now in his late twenties, there wasn't much that gave him concern. Still, he avoided the police, and especially the feds. Some in the government knew about who and what he was; he'd been arrested a few times by Homeland, but they weren't able to hold him—not for long. He'd been labeled a halfblood, a demigod by them. But he was pretty sure he was more, much more, than what they had labeled him as.

It had been well over a year now. No one had followed him to Tampa; not that he'd sensed anyway. He'd laid low in the big city. Stayed out of sight and kept mostly to himself. He'd not lied to Tori when he'd called himself a vagrant. He wasn't exactly homeless, but he wasn't particularly legal either. Sure, he'd been born in the States, but in his present condition, on

the run from the feds, none of that mattered now. He may as well be an illegal alien. But she didn't know that; and right now, as heavily as her breaths pushed past his lips, he was pretty sure she didn't care.

Liam's hand moved warmly over her abundant round breast that seemed to defy gravity on her chest. The thin stretch material of her white bikini top didn't at all hide the taunt nipple that Liam had kneaded tall between his fingers, causing her to whimper softly into his mouth. She pulled away from his lips as he watched her exhale, tipping her head back, her long brunette hair cascading back in waves that now reached all the way past her ass.

"Aaaah—ohhhhh!" she jumped in his arms, feeling his nipple teases send ripples of warm desire into her bikini bottoms. "Ohhh, Liam that feels nice—"

"You feel nice, Tori." He gently moved new kisses down her neck, onto her chest and finally over the bikini top, wetting the material with his mouth and suckling her nipple through the white satiny material.

She lifted off the part of her top that covered her breast, giving Liam full access to her bare tip as he warmly wetted her skin with his mouth.

## 4

**S**torm rains blew in from the gulf, splashing hard against the tall windows of her condo. The dark clouds had so obscured the sun that a kind of dusk night had settled into the high-rise home's living room. Both had fallen into an overheated embrace with Tori's bikini top now laying atop Liam's towel on the sofa. Their hands moving over each other's skin, pinching nipples, and gripping swimsuit-covered ass, each all-at-once pulled away at the sound of a loud boom that softly shook their building. The surprise lightning strike gave each a much-needed hiatus from their lip play to look at each other in the dimmed light as the stormed raged against their building outside.

"You're so beautiful, Tori. I love your breasts." He smoothed his palms over the tips of them.

She pulled away slightly to give him a better view of them standing out pert from her. He took both of them again into his hands to knead her gently.

"You're really hard, Liam," she rocked the front of her hips against his, feeling him exhale deeply.

"I—ahhh—can't help it."

Looking between their embrace, she could see he'd filled out much longer and grown hugely thick, to the point where he was nearly pushing out of the thin waistband of the square-cut swimsuit. He wasn't just firm, but hard, like a huge rod of thick hardwood beneath them. Her hand moved between them as her fingers toyed gently with the solid cock pressing out from his trunks.

"Ohh, God, Tori. You're going to make want to do more than just kiss you in a minute."

"Want to?" she breathed a chuckle.

Okay. He *already* wanted to do more than just kiss her. Sure, her top was already off. He slipped both of his hands down her back and under the bikini bottoms that were cut so narrow that they really only covered the middle of her finely-rounded ass anyway. He kneaded her warmly as both returned to a heated kiss while her fingers danced lightly over just the tip of his hard male through his swimsuit.

It was then she recalled the police detective's words ...

"Do *not* have sex with him, Miss Evenson."

Tori's brow lifted. "I beg your pardon?" Her Southern sensitivities suddenly ruffled.

"You heard me."

"I would *not* even think to—"

"Miss Evenson," the detective interrupted her while he finished slipping the papers back into the large manila envelope and closing the top of it with the clasp. He handed

the dossier to her to finish studying later. “It doesn’t matter what you *intend* to do or not. Liam Sinclair, or whatever name he’s using here in Tampa, can be a very charismatic individual. Beguiling, in fact.”

“I’m a very strong woman, Detective Roberts.”

“Not against this man you’re not.”

“I am not going to just hop into bed with some, some stranger—I don’t care how good-looking he is.”

“You’re not listening to me, Tori,” the detective glared.

She pursed her lips.

“Sinclair is *more* than you can handle. Trust me. Do not allow yourself to be alone with him for even five minutes. Do you understand?”

She nodded.

“We need you to follow our instructions to a T, Miss Evenson. One misstep; one deviation from what we’ve given you to do and all of this—months and months of work—all comes unraveled.”

“I still don’t understand why y’all have picked me to do this? Of all people—”

“Because, Miss Evenson, *you* are very special. Isn’t she, Monica—”

The detective’s assistant was beautiful and very complimentary. “You are special, Tori. We’re putting a lot of trust in you to help us capture this thief. And once he’s in custody, finally, you will be well compensated.”

“And I can keep this condo y’all want me to buy as well?”

“That is part of the compensation package, Miss Evenson. Sinclair frequents this complex quite often. We need you to be living there. It needs to all look above board.”

Tori nodded. “I understand. I’ll do it. But you’re paying a huge reward here, Detective. You must really want this Sinclair guy badly.”

“Liam Sinclair has stolen millions from banks in six states, Miss Evenson. The authorities are being compensated and the reward funds provided by those banks. It’s really the banks that want him badly—I’m just setting the trap to locate him.”

“Using me as your bait for some reason.”

“That’s correct.”

“Why would he be interested in me, again?” Tori asked.

“It’s, just who you are, Tori,” Monica chimed in. “Look at you. You’re tall, well-curved, beautiful. Exactly the kind of woman Sinclair is attracted to.”

“Honestly, Monica, *every* guy sort of hits on me. I don’t know how—”

“Just—” Detective Roberts still looked annoyed. “Let us do our job, Miss Evenson; and you do yours.”

“But don’t sleep with him.”

“Correct.”

“Does he have AIDS or something?”

“It’s not exactly AIDS, Tori,” Monica offered just as the detective was about to speak. “But we don’t want you contracting what he’s carrying. It’s for your own safety. That’s all.”

“I see.”

The Detective got up from his chair and extended his hand. She didn’t really want to, but she shook his hand politely.

“We’ll have all of the papers ready for you to sign, Miss Evenson. You can move into the condo next week. All you have to do is work your new job and live there. You won’t see us; but we’ll be there keeping an eye on things.”

“And if he shows up? What then?”

“Not if, Tori, *when*.” The detective corrected.

“I won’t be in any danger?”

“None. The second you have him tucked away inside your apartment, we’ll be there to rescue you—trust me.”

Liam's lips had already traveled down from the tall wet tip of her breast, past her belly button where he'd lingered teasing her navel with his tongue. Now on his knees, Liam's lips caressed the leg seam of her bikini bottoms, inching closer to the middle of the low-cut swimsuit. Tori gasped feeling his hands cupping and squeezing her ass while his lips and tongue now teasingly assaulted the front of her bikini and between her thighs.

# 5

**W**ith her bikini bottoms untied, the flimsy fabric had dropped to the floor long ago. Barely standing with Liam kneeling in front of her, her fingers moved through his thick hair, gripping and pulling as she called out softly with each new sensuous sensation he pushed wetly between her thighs.

Liam danced his tongue between her wet lips and over a tall clit, taking in her feminine scent like she was catnip. Gods, she tasted amazing. Liam teased her hard button with warm gentle slips of his long tongue, even slipping the tip slightly inside her.

Tori had never in her life been kissed like this. Liam was half killing her with the way he tasted her. With another thrust of his tongue, Tori's knees suddenly buckled; but instead of

falling, he caught her, lowering her gently on to the plush new carpet.

Her heart beat rapidly with her chest and tummy rising and falling. He moved over the top of her between her legs, feeling her desire on fire. Their lips meeting once again, neither was timid about their kiss as their hips and bodies rocked and moved over each other.

Liam felt her pulling at his swimsuit, beginning to draw it down from around his ass. He spoke with bated breaths between their kisses.

“Tori—hmmm—” he kissed. “God I’m *going* to fuck you into next week if you take those off.”

“Maybe—hhhaa—I need to be fucked—”

“You *do* need—hmmm—to be fucked.” He kissed hard against her lips.

She pushed his swimsuit down until it bound up around his thighs, holding his smooth hairless legs together. She could feel his exceptional, hard cock pushing, probing her, teasing her wet folds. She arched her back beneath him as she felt his massive member parting her; then filling her like she’d never experienced before. He was gentle. Slipping himself into her little by little; allowing her body to take him.

“Ahhh, GOD. Hhhhhh. You’re really big, Liam,” she breathed and winced, feeling him widen her inside tightly while he continued to move slowly into her.

“Are you okay?” he asked concerned; stopping to look at her. Then pulling back out a little.

“No. Please. Don’t stop. I need you.” Her voice grew pleading while her fingers locked around his ass, as if to pull him closer and further into herself.

Jesus she was tight; all around him. But his teasing had left her wet inside. He’d been with a few women before, but always he’d needed to stop. Completely filling them he’d

never been able to fully extended himself into them. Now he felt his own trimmed pubic patch mingling with hers.

“God, Tori,” he breathed against her lips. He wanted to ask how she felt, but he already knew. She was rocking her hips beneath his, moving him back and forth inside her. He matched her gentle rhythms pulling out and then moving back into her.

Feeling Liam so deeply extended within her lit more than one G-spot inside her. It didn’t take him long to detonate a powerfully built emotion within her. Her body bucked wildly beneath him while his lips covered her loud ecstatic cries. A soft glow of perspiration covered her skin as Liam let her down slowly, gently moving himself within her until her ecstasy had subsided.

Tori had *never* been so sexually moved before in her life! Although still just as tight, Liam slipped and glided more easily within her now. Both moved with each other, kissing and gripping. It didn’t take Liam long to bring her to another powerful climax.

“God, Tori,” he’d lifted himself to watch her go off again. “You’re so, hmmm—beautiful—” he seemed to wince as he talked to her, “when you’re—ahaaa—coming!” his voice was soft, quiet, but filled with intensity.

“Are *you* okay?” her hand went to his pained face.

“I can’t—stop. Tori. I’m trying!”

Somehow, instinctively, her legs wrapped around him while her hands gripped his ass, pulling him further into herself, as deeply as she could. The words of Detective Roberts echoed in her mind, but she ignored them; she didn’t care. All she knew right now was that the most beautiful man she’d ever seen was making love to her; his face wincing and stunning with a deeply building ecstatic pain she swore she could somehow feel within herself; he needed to come, badly. And

right now she wanted him coming as hard as he could deeply inside her.

Tori drew Liam down onto her lips holding him to herself with all her strength as her handsome man whimpered in a deep, unbearable ecstatic pain—a pain that all at once released with a vengeance! His ecstatic cries muffled against her lips, she felt his rock-hardness flex and pulse again and again inside her. She'd foolishly had unprotected sex a couple of times in the past. She knew what it felt like to have a guy go off inside her—nothing. She'd just become slippery. But what was happening now wasn't anything like what she had felt in the past. Yes, Liam's intimate connection with her had become just as slippery, but his seed, it felt—warm. More than warm. He was causing her to build all new ecstatic feelings, not just through their intimate connection, but all over her body. Her ecstasy had suddenly returned with even more intensity. Her body detonated with a climax so powerful she screamed. She could barely breath. When she could finally focus again, she found Liam breathing heavily, and smiling at her, his thick arms stretched out lifting him above her, watching her.

She moved her hands and fingers over his pectorals.

“Wow—HUUUH—” her body rocked again with a fleeing ecstatic tremor. “What are you looking at.” She smiled.

“Your eyes.”

“You look different. Brighter somehow,” she breathed quietly, feeling exhausted.

“You're getting brighter.” He beamed at her with an infectious grin.

“Why am I so tired all of a sudden?”

“Don't worry about it. You need to sleep.”

“I do need to sleep.”

She turned her head and never even made it to a yawn before she drifted off.

He laid with her, moving himself still rock-hard within her until he needed to come again. He hoped she wouldn't mind as he climaxed hard again within her. Now his jewels really ached. But, god, the woman just needed to be fucked. It was like her body just demanded his. He made out with her sleeping lips for a minute before withdrawing himself from her. He discovered his swimsuit was still wrapped around his thighs and the carpet had pooled wet with the seed of their lovemaking between her thighs.

He slipped his swimsuit the rest of the way off and just felt her, awakening. But while he admired her, he soon realized that his sense of danger was already going off. All-too preoccupied with his emotions mingled with hers, it was too late when the front door of her condo burst open with police rushing in, clad in heavy SWAT gear. With his eyes wide, he soon found himself surrounded by heavy weapons pointed at both himself and her.

He couldn't chance it. They might get a shot off and kill her. Still on his knees between hers, his huge rod tall and glistening, he lifted his hands slowly into the air as the rain splashed wildly against the windows.

# 6

**I** TOLD YOU! NOT TO HAVE SEX—DIDN'T I?!" Detective Robert's face burned red with anger. His breath visible in the cold concrete-walled room that someone had tried to make look a little more cozy with some throw rugs and second-hand furniture. "EIGHT MONTHS OF PLANNING! SHOT TO HELL!" he waved a thickly gloved hand at her.

Tori frowned. The lump in her throat told her she didn't want to be anywhere near the detective at the moment. He obviously had anger-management problems.

"NOW WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?!" he glared at her.

Tori said nothing. She felt very vulnerable while he unloaded his frustration, yelling at her while she stood in the cold room wearing only some thin pink cotton underwear and matching top while he was clad in a thick winter parka. She'd

just woken up in the strange place and had no idea where she was.

She was glad when his cellphone rang and he left her room to take the call. She found it odd that although the room was apparently freezing, *she* wasn't really all that cold herself. The other thing she quickly noticed was that her unusually good hearing was even more unusually good as she listened in on the private conversation going on in the hallway between Detective Roberts and someone from someplace called "corporate".

"Roberts—" he half gruffed into the phone.

"How is our little debutant goddess doing? Does she know anything?"

"Hardly. She just woke up this afternoon. She didn't even talk to him before jumping him like some lovesick bitch in heat."

"You can't blame her, Roberts. It's their biology. Where were your SWAT teams when they were doing the nasty?"

"It was raining buckets. They got delayed by the storm."

"Delayed; by the storm—"

Tori could hear the thick sarcasm of the man on the other end of the call.

"We had near hurricane-force winds, Gabe."

"My weather report said fifty. It wasn't even a tropical depression. Your seasoned officers, Tampa's Finest, were delayed by—the weather."

"They aren't *my* officers. I'm just using what you gave me. *My* people don't melt in the rain."

"I understand, Roberts. Perhaps we should have hired all of your team instead of just one of you; like you suggested."

"I did try to emphasize that."

"You did. How long were they alone?"

"Almost forty minutes."

"Oh good lord. She was left alone—with a god—for *forty* minutes?!" the quiet voice prodded, obviously not happy.

"I wasn't there, Gabriel. So stop trying to pin this on me. The cops had their orders. I can't follow her every waking moment."

"Agreed. And what about Sinclair?"

"Escaped. Again. The cops couldn't even hold onto him long enough to get him into the freezer van."

"This is getting embarrassing, Roberts."

"Not my monkeys, Gabe. Not my circus. You paid for keystone cops, you get what you pay for."

"No. No, you're right, Roberts. The board should have just hired your team from the outset. I'll resubmit your proposal. I'm sure they'll approve the funds now. Considering the situation. So, what about the girl? What are we supposed to do with her now that she's been awakened?"

"I have her on ice."

"Forever?"

"I'll deal with her. You don't need to worry about that."

"And Sinclair? He's obviously aware we're on his trail—again. He's bolted."

"I don't think so. Not this time."

"Oh? And what makes you think that?"

"He's awakened a goddess. He'll be very attracted—to her."

"Oh, interesting. And you think he'll try to rescue his new paramour?"

"I'm betting on it."

"I see. Your plan has merit, Roberts. I'll inform the board. I'm sure they'll want to revisit this and fund your own team now, under the circumstances."

“A third in advance, Gabe. Non-refundable. I’m going to nail this bastard.”

“Sure. Sure. That won’t be a problem. However, Roberts, I don’t need to remind you that this isn’t our typical bounty. There are hundreds of millions at stake here. The board needs Sinclair alive. We intend to recover the money he stole. Otherwise, all of this is just—academic. A dead Sinclair is of no use to us.”

“I got it. I’ll nail him this time. Alive. You can count on it now.”

“Very well, Roberts. I’ll be in touch.”

Tori heard the call end. She was glad when the detective stormed away from her door until he was out of earshot.

*Awakened?* She thought to herself. She didn’t dare say anything out loud. She was pretty sure her cell room was bugged and under video surveillance.

*Gods? Goddesses?* What was *that* all about? Liam was supposed to be some kind of god?

Detective Roberts and Monica had told her that Liam had some kind of infection—like AIDS. She was pretty sure AIDS wasn’t even close to what Liam had infected her with. Whatever it was, Roberts had been uneasy about it. And he *had* warned her. Both about Liam’s disease and his whiles. But God he’d been unbelievably sexy. No guy was that hot; it was like he’d beguiled her; seduced her into dropping her swimsuit.

*No.* She corrected herself, vividly recalling their encounter in detail so minute it was like she could still feel him; like he was inside her. *Whooo*—she waved off the sudden ecstatic emotion. She’d led *him* on. She couldn’t pin this on him—not totally anyway. She was the one who’d toyed with him through the front of his trunks and slipped them off.

And now she was supposed to be some kind of—of *goddess*? She was pretty sure her church wouldn't think highly of her being called that.

Still, there were things about herself that were very different now. The most obvious thing was that the freezing-cold room didn't seem to bother her all that much dressed only in some underwear. Another was her mind seemed to work like lightning now, as if her memory had become eidetic. Her vision seemed much clearer and sharper just before she'd gone to sleep.

She went to the mirror over the vanity in her room. The faucets didn't work; she mused it was probably too cold for them to have it on. She looked into the mirror at her eyes. Her once green eyes were now very different, a golden iris ringed by deep purple hues and all of it shining metallic.

*Jesus, Liam.* She thought as she looked into her reflection. *What the hell did you do to me?*

# 7

**L**iam sat in the busy truck stop restaurant just outside of Gainesville. He'd vacated the coastal city, but he knew he wouldn't be able to stay away for long. She was already calling out to him—not literally, but that's what it *felt* like.

An older man took the booth seat opposite his. Although weathered and greying, there was still a very live spark in the eyes of the frail-looking halfblood.

"I got your call," the old man offered in a tongue time had long, long forgotten.

"When are you going to get a cellphone?" Liam asked, taking a sip of his soda.

"Probably when they stop making landlines and answering machines. Those wireless things are traceable, you know."

"Not all of them." Liam assured.

"Suit yourself." The old man politely ordered a cup of coffee from the waitress as she passed by.

"I need a favor."

"Oh?" the older man's face showed curiosity mixed with subdued sarcasm, "What did you do now?"

"I awakened someone."

"And you didn't kill them this time?"

"Not funny. She's been arrested."

"By who?"

"Tampa police."

"You're getting' awful close to the feds on that one."

"I don't think so. It doesn't feel like the feds."

"Still robbing banks?"

"I haven't knocked over a bank in years, Louis."

"But they're still following you. That would be my bet."

He nodded. "Probably."

"You could give 'em their money back."

"I've thought about that. The only problem is, I've spent and invested a bunch of it already."

"Yep. That's a problem."

"I need the clan to help me get her out."

"Nope."

"You won't help me?"

"No. It's not that I won't, Liam. It's that I *can't*. Your problem isn't really this girl—it's Karma."

Liam frowned, nodding.

"You took something that didn't belong to you, Liam. And not just because you were hungry. Pallets of their cash went missing. How much was it—four hundred—?"

"—million," Liam nodded.

"That is not chump change, my friend."

"They're all a bunch of greedy—"

"They are. No question. But it's still not your money."

“They were taking people’s homes, Louis. Tossing them out into the street—literally. I watched it happen.”

“So you took your revenge.”

“I looked at their books and saw what they’d made stealing other people’s homes. They could have renegotiated those mortgages. They just didn’t want to. Lazy—bastards.”

“So you taught ‘em a lesson, did you?”

Liam frowned. Then shook his head.

“Thought so.” The old man winced a smiled as the waitress set his coffee onto the table. “They’ll never give up comin’ after you, Liam. A bank that big is just a step or two away from the Oligarchy, and the Seven. Fact is, you, my friend, may already be on their radar.”

“Probably.”

“Not Probably. Are.”

Liam nodded. “So at this point it doesn’t really matter what I do.”

The old man pursed his lips after taking a hot sip. “Nope. Probably not. Hunted is hunted, my friend. Doesn’t really matter why.”

“I have to get her back, Louis. I’m not leaving her.”

“You say the PD nabbed her?”

“Yea, I was there when they stormed the apartment. I didn’t want bullets flying around her condo. I let them arrest me. We were on the fortieth floor.”

“Fortieth? Jesus.”

“What?”

“She made of money like you?”

“She said she’s a nurse.”

“With a forty story up condo. Sure she is.”

“What are you saying?”

“I’m saying, Liam, that your girlfriend isn’t showing all ‘a her cards.”

Liam’s eyebrow lifted.

"How long have you known her?"

"I've been watching her at the resort off and on for a few months now."

"Like she just moved in?"

"You think she's a plant?"

"Probably. Wouldn't be the first time Humans have used nascent blood to attract other awakened. Oldest trick in the book."

Liam grimaced. "And I just fell for it. Hook, line, and sinker—"

"Along with rod, reel, and boat." Louis nodded, taking another sip from his mug.

"Then they're using her."

"Or she's working for them."

"How do I know which is which?"

"You don't. You could be walking into a trap with an agent who's now just as much of a goddess as you are a god."

"I'm trained."

"Like hell you are."

"More trained."

Louis nodded his agreement.

"What do I do?"

"If it were me—" Louis seemed to stare into nothing; his older lips making old-man facial expressions. "I'd check out her family. Where are they?"

"Good idea."

"Next I'd like to know who in Tampa PD was running this little show. The Seven usually don't deal directly with the peons; someone's gotta be their point man."

"The mayor?"

Louis shook his head. "Oh, God, no. Too messy this far down. Presidents; congress people, sure. Maybe a governor here and there. No, you're looking for some unelected peon this far down. Probably some contractor. I've seen them use

bounty-hunters before for this kind of work. That way they can just disappear if things go awry. ”

Liam nodded.

“Where would they keep her?”

“Freezer cell, somewhere. Unless she’s actually working for them, then all bets are off.”

“She’s a goddess, Louis. They are not going to let her live. Not for long.”

“No, you’re right. As long as they think they can draw you out of the woodwork with her, they’ll keep her alive. Once they have you, she’s dead.”

“They’re not going to get me.” Liam readied himself to leave.

Louis caught his hand just as he was about to stand up. “Liam—you’re smart. Real smart. But you’re also inexperienced.”

He nodded.

“This joker who nabbed your girlfriend—that trap was set for the both of you; and *they* screwed up. Now she’s awakened. The Seven don’t put up that—not for long.”

“Then Tampa PD may not be my only problem.”

“At this point—I’d bet real hard money on that.”

