



Olivia T. Turner Grim

GRIM

OLIVIA T. TURNER



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Edited by Karen Collins Editing

Cover Design by Olivia T. Turner

ABOUT GRIM

For one hundred and fifty years, I've been a Grim Reaper.

Wandering the earth and rendering souls for the Soul Collector.

People die, their souls must be gathered.

Millions of souls. I did it without fail. Until I saw *her*.

The demon of the underworld is not getting this one.

Her sweet soul is mine.

I keep her for myself.

It causes a bit of a stir.

The underworld is in a tizzy.

Reapers come out of the woodwork to take me down.

Not to mention the big bad Soul Collector. He's a little pissed.

So, I make a deal.

If this human female can fall in love with me, I get to keep her.

If not... I lose her forever.

Oh, and the catch (there's always a catch with the Soul Collector), I only have twenty-four hours to woo this human female's soul.

Should be easy, right?

I mean, how hard can it be to get a woman to fall in love with an undead creature of the underworld?

I got this.

Should be a piece of cake.

Ready to get freaky this Halloween? Just because our alpha hero is undead, doesn't mean he won't fall for a living soul. One look at his girl and this possessive Grim Reaper will be all-out obsessed! Rules of the underworld be damned. He's taking what's his!

SAFE, no cheating, and a sweet HEA that will have you grinning and blushing! Enjoy!

*To Jenny,
Who likes her love stories a little freaky.
Hope this one is freaky enough for ya!*



CHAPTER ONE

Grim

LIFE IS PRETTY LONELY WHEN YOU'RE THE HARBINGER OF death.

It doesn't exactly make you popular at parties.

So, what do you do?

Oh, I just collect dead wandering souls and escort them to the afterlife. No vacations, but at least I get to work outside.

You can clear a room pretty fast.

Not that I go to any parties. The last one I attended was in 1874. Back when I was human.

I can still remember it like it was yesterday. In a way, it was. Time is irrelevant to Grim Reapers. We don't feel the thick slog of ticking seconds. Time blurs together when you pick up the scythe, whether it's minutes, hours, days, years, decades, centuries, millennia—it all bleeds together into one long hazy moment.

My only concept of time is remembered from my years as a human and even that is fuzzy.

But I do remember that night. How could I forget?

October 31st, 1874. All Hallows' Eve.

My chap Albert was throwing a Halloween ball at his summer residence beside a lake. I was dressed as King Louis XVI with a bloody red line traced around my neck and a powdered wig on my head.

The band was cranking out hits and everyone was dancing and having a great time. Margaret, a girl I'd known from town, was flirting with me and trying to get me to dance. I wasn't interested. In fact, I wasn't interested in any of the girls vying for my eye.

I was drinking heavily that night. A dangerous mix of Whiskey and cider. By the time the band had packed up and left, almost all of the guests were gone, and Margaret was curled up in the arms of some other man, I was drunk as a skunk.

Foolishly, I wandered to the lake and decided to go for a late-night swim. I stripped off my costume and dove into the chilly water with only the silvery light of the full moon reflecting off the clear still surface.

I guess I went too far, or maybe I got a leg cramp, or maybe a part of my pathetic soul wanted to end the misery and sink to the mucky bottom of the lake, but whatever the case, I had drowned.

I just didn't know it.

My soul was wandering on the shore, clueless to the fact that my body was floating behind me in the middle of the lake, lifeless, soulless, and bloated with inhaled water.

That's when I saw him coming out of the shadows.

Black hood covering his weathered pale face, long wooden handle of his scythe dragging through the dirt, long curved blade sharp as a guillotine.

The air chilled wherever he went. I shivered as I watched him approach.

I remember the horror at seeing him.

Even with the heavy burden of the millions of souls I've gathered throughout my time in black weighing me down, I can still remember.

The Reaper who came for me was an evil one. He relished my terror. He toyed with his victims. He traumatized their souls before sending them off to the afterlife.

These types of Reapers give the rest of us a bad name. Terrorizing is not in the job description. We have to collect souls, not horrify them.

But just like in life, in death there are assholes who relish in the pain of others. And my Reaper was one of them.

"Your soul belongs to me," he hissed in a ghoulishly sinister voice.

"Quit mucking about," I shouted, thinking it was Henry or another of my chaps playing a lame joke.

But as the air chilled around me, my breath coming out in a white misty cloud, I knew something was wrong. I turned and saw my body in the lake, my grandfather's powdered wig floating beside me like a drowned rat.

Flashes of the drowning came back to me. The panic. The thrashing. The cold water being forced into my lungs. The heaviness as I was pulled under. The sight of the bright moon fading as the life left my eyes.

I knew. I knew I was dead. I knew what this was.

And I wasn't about to give in without a battle.

You see, my Reaper was sloppy. In his foolish attempt to terrify me, he left himself vulnerable. He didn't have to do it. He could have just sliced me with his scythe, sent me to the afterlife, and been on his way. But no. This fucker was all about the theatrics.

I was stunned and shivering as he raised his gray hand and pointed his long crooked finger at me.

"Your soul is mine," he whispered in his raspy voice once again.

He speared the butt of his scythe into the dirt and slowly, carefully, peeled back the hood. I could see the enjoyment on his leathery face, the skin pulled tight against his skull. Who knows how long he was wearing the black? From the looks of him, he might have been one of the first.

While he was distracted with the show of revealing his face, I grabbed the scythe from the ground. Plucked it right out of the earth and gripped it with two hands.

It *singed* my palms, but I didn't care about the pain. Smoke rose from my clenched hands as the power of the scythe hissed and burned through my skin. I raised it over my head with the blade pointing right at him.

Now it was his turn to be afraid. I could see the fear on his face, widening his eyes and tightening his pale skin. His grave-colored lips parted. He rose his hands in desperation.

I clenched my jaw and swung the scythe down with all of my might. The curved blade sunk into his chest and he let out a gruesome macabre scream that chills me to this day.

His body imploded in on itself, crunching into a tight ball before disappearing with a *crack*.

The ground opened up at my feet, bright orange light shined up from the depths, and I got sucked into the lair of the Soul Collector. It was the first time I laid eyes on him, but it wasn't going to be the last...

A sibilation distracts me. No, several of them. More souls ready to be collected.

I turn in the direction the murmur is coming from and slide through space and time until I arrive on the scene.

A giant bridge. Broken vehicles everywhere. An upside-down car with the wheel still spinning. Shattered cubic glass on the concrete. People screaming. A radio playing too loud—the female disc jockey happily talking about her dog seems jarringly out of place. Frantic sirens in the distance rip through the misty air as I take in the scene.

Four souls to transport. I can *feel* them. *Sense* them.

One calls to me more than the others. My body prickles with an odd sensation as I feel the soul pulling me toward it.

In the century and a half I've worn the black, I've never felt anything like this.

I'm more curious than anything, but another of the four souls wanders in front of me, distracting me from the call.

It's a man. About fifty-seven or so.

His face flashes with recognition when he sees me and then terror takes over.

Before he can scream, I slice my scythe through his torso, disappearing his body and sending it to the Soul Collector.

Two more wandering souls are next. Two slices of my scythe and two more souls are in the collection. Preserved in the afterlife for all of eternity.

And still, the fourth soul calls.

I tremble as I feel the pull intensifying. Something is wrong. No, not wrong... different.

If I had a heart, it would be pounding in my chest as I wander through the wreckage, letting the sibilation of this unique soul draw me in.

That's when I see her.

Sitting cross-legged on the edge of the bridge, gazing out at the water. In all of my days as a Reaper, I've never encountered a soul cloaked in peace like her.

I can feel the tranquility emanating from her body. The harmony. The serenity.

Her battered body is strapped into the flipped car behind her, her precious blood leaking onto the concrete. Yet, she doesn't react. Doesn't break out into hysterics. Doesn't break down in tears.

Even as I slowly approach with my skin tingling, her soul doesn't turn to me in terror. She doesn't look upon me in fear.

She sits and gazes out at the calm water in peace.

That's when something in me changes. Something snaps.

It's not love. Grim Reapers are not capable of love. Although, it feels like... No. It's not possible.

Reapers are supposed to be immune to feelings, but I sense them circling inside, growing stronger as they fight their way

up from the murky depths. Possessiveness, protectiveness, desire, lust.

I want this girl. I need this girl.

One look at her stunning face and I already know I'm about to commit the cardinal sin.

The Soul Collector is not getting her. Not now. Not ever.

Her soul is *mine*.

She slowly turns to me and smiles sadly.

My legs buckle. I nearly drop my scythe for the first time in a century and a half.

Those lips... So full of color. So full of life. I stare at them in stunned silence, mesmerized by their beauty.

Her brown eyes are like poetry, both mysteriously cryptic and stunningly beautiful. They make what's left of my soul sing.

I don't know what to do. I'm at a loss.

My body is humming with energy as I stare at this treasure. There are no angels in this universe, but if there were, she'd be one of them.

Her long black hair is framing her face in a modern style. Normally, it wouldn't be appealing to me, but with her, it's utterly perfect. *She's* perfect.

The screeching siren of the ambulance cuts through the air as several EMTs flood the bridge, looking for survivors to help.

I don't look at them. I can't take my eyes off this girl.

She finally glances back at her lifeless body through the shattered windshield. It's hanging upside-down in her smashed

car, her long black hair covering most of her still face. The seatbelt is the only thing holding her up.

An EMT approaches the car and presses two fingers to her neck. “This one is gone,” he shouts to his colleagues before moving on to the next car.

She looks at herself for a long moment and then slowly turns back to me with her beautiful brown eyes shining with fresh tears.

A sharp pang pierces my chest. I can’t stand to see her look so upset.

“Are you here for me?” she asks in a soft innocent voice.

The possession grows within me. I’ve never wanted anything like I want her.

This girl is all mine. Her soul is all mine. Let the Soul Collector come and try to take her away from me. I fucking dare him to.

“Are you taking me away?” she asks, barely above a whisper.

“No,” I say, forcing out the word. I haven’t spoken in decades. Longer even. My throat is like sandpaper. Grainy and harsh. The words come out coarse and cold. “Your time is not up, sweet soul. You have plenty of life left.”

She doesn’t flinch as I approach her, doesn’t recoil in fear. She just watches me trustingly, lovingly as I reach out my hand.

“Your soul is under my protection,” I tell her as I press my palm onto her upper chest.

She sucks in a violent breath. Her whole body tightens as I grip her.

“I know it hurts,” I whisper gently. “It won’t last long.”

She’s frozen as I carry her to the car and lovingly guide her soul back into her body.

This is against every rule in the book. It’s against the ultimate command and tenet of the Grim Reapers—once a soul is untethered, it *cannot* be returned.

It’s like a pilot intentionally crashing their plane or a firefighter lighting the match.

It’s reprehensible. Blasphemous. *Sinful*.

And I know I’m going to pay for it. I know it’s going to hurt.

But none of that is of concern as I bring the life back to this girl.

I set her soul in place and then whisper the forbidden words.

*“Soul do not leave,
Soul refuse,
Your death I relieve,
Your journey continues.”*

The energy of life flows through my hands and into her body.

She’s alive.

I can feel her soul leaving this plane of existence. Leaving the world between hers and the afterlife. Leaving my domain.

My body aches that she’s no longer with me, but when I feel the slow beating of her heart, the ache dulls.

I pull back my hood and place my ear to her lips.

Breaths. Soft beautiful breaths.

There's time in her yet. Her life is not over.

I stand up and hurry toward an EMT.

I don't know what's coming for me, but I know it's going to be bad and I know it won't be much longer.

The Soul Collector won't take kindly to having a soul snatched out of his grasp.

I'll have to answer for this.

The EMT is asking a shaken-up teenager some questions. I go right up to her ear.

"The woman in the blue car!" I shout as loudly as I can. "Go to her. She's alive!"

Her head turns. Recognition sinks into her eyes.

"I think this one is still alive!" she shouts as she rushes over.

The other EMT shakes his head. "She's got no pulse. I checked."

But the woman is unfazed. She ducks down, reaches in through the broken window, and touches my girl's neck. Her eyes widen. "She's alive! Help me get her out!"

The other EMT looks stunned and confused for a second, but he recovers and races over to help.

I'm watching them carefully pull her out of the car when a low rumbling hits my ears.

A black ominous haze fills the air.

The Soul Collector.

He's coming for me.

The ground opens up around my feet. A foreboding orange light shines up through the cracks.

My eyes are locked on my girl as I feel the Soul Collector's grip tighten around my legs. I never look away.

Time is irrelevant to Grim Reapers and the moment stretches out for an eternity.

But even a powerful Reaper like me can't escape the Soul Collector forever.

The unstoppable force yanks me down, separating me from my girl. From my sweet soul.

And down I go...

...into the Soul Collector's lair.

CHAPTER TWO

Grim

HUMANS KNOW NOTHING OF THE AFTERLIFE. HEAVEN, HELL, reincarnation, Akhirah, Valhalla, the River Styx, moksha, karma... there's no shortage of stories that humans will tell themselves when they don't know. They can't possibly know.

There is nothing... but this...

"*Grim*," the Soul Collector growls from the darkness. That's what he calls all of us Reapers. We leave our human names when we take up the black. "*It appears I am short a soul.*"

I grip my scythe as I hear him approach. Back straight. Chin in the air. I will not cower to this demonic being.

Heavy footsteps thud on the frosted stone floor. The thick damp air gets colder. My fingers stiffen as the frigid wintry blast surrounds me.

I don't know where the humans came up with hell being hot. There's no heat here. No warmth. Not while the Soul Collector is here.

My body tightens as he steps out of the shadows. I tilt my head back as I look up at him, trying to remain calm, trying to keep my wits about me.

Seeing the Soul Collector is always jarring. It's always shocking.

This is the third time I've stood before him and with the wrathful look in his bright red demonic eyes, I can tell that it might be my last.

"Where is my soul?"

I swallow hard as I stare into his infuriated eyes, not flinching, not reacting.

My girl's sweet soul is on the line and I'm not about to let her down by cowering in front of this demonic monster.

"Answer me!" he screams in outrage.

I grip my scythe and glare back at him.

Souls are usually terrified when they see us Grim Reapers approaching them, but we're a delight compared to this beast. If they saw the Soul Collector approaching, they would never recover, they would never be the same.

I grit my teeth as I look him over. He must be thirty feet tall. Legs thicker and stronger than the oldest of oak trees. Hands that could crush a car like a man crushing an empty soda can. Long thin tail swishing through the air like a deadly snake. Long gray claws that could easily slice through metal, rock, me. Red skin thicker than the mightiest shield. Teeth sharper than the deadliest sword. Two curled horns protruding from his forehead that could turn the bravest warrior into a whimpering wreck.

But it's his red glowing eyes that always gets me. The first time I saw them, back in 1874 on that dreadful night, I nearly had a heart attack.

Now, a century and a half later, the terror is still there, but the need to protect my sweet soul is stronger. I force down the fear and face him bravely.

For her.

"It is not your soul to have," I say in a firm measured tone.

"They are all my souls to have," he answers with a growl.

I feel the icy air piercing my skin. It chills my insides, but I don't let it faze me.

"Not this one," I say as I glare into his red eyes. "Not her."

I can feel his anger intensifying. There's a connection between the Soul Collector and this dark dank cave. It's like the cave is furious as well. I can feel the rage emanating from the rocky walls.

"Tell me why I should not crush you for your disobedience," he snarls. His huge hand closes into a fist and I know that he could easily snuff the life out of me. Before today, I wouldn't have minded the blissful emptiness of non-existence, but now... knowing that my dear sweet soul is in the world... no. I can't leave this existence. Not without seeing her again.

"Because," I say with a swallow, "I am in love."

The anger on his horrid face turns to amusement. He tilts his massive head as he watches me like a cat toying with a captured mouse.

"Reapers can't feel love. They can't feel anything."

“I feel many things when I look at her,” I answer honestly. I close my eyes and picture the way she looked at me with those beautiful brown eyes. The tug I felt in my chest as she smiled sadly at me. The intense primal need to protect her. I can feel it growing within me, getting stronger with every moment that passes. If that’s not love, then I don’t know what is.

“I feel a kinship with her soul. When I saw her, when I touched her, I felt... I felt... Love. Peace. Yearning. Lust. My body stirred. My soul bloomed with life. I had to save her. I had to return her.”

“*She was not yours to return,*” he says with his red eyes glowing.

“She is all mine,” I say as I glare back at him. “All. *Mine.*”

He looks amused as he watches me. That look pisses me off.

“*All souls belong to the Soul Collector.*”

“You cannot have her,” I say boldly. “She is mine and I will never allow it.”

He steps forward and slams his giant fist beside me, shaking the ground at my feet. I stand tall and don’t flinch as the other fist comes thundering down on my other side, barely missing my shoulder.

I stare into his eyes as he lowers his face a foot from mine. The frigid cold is unbearable. It’s freezing me to the bone.

“*You disobey the Soul Collector?*”

“For love, yes.”

We stare at each other for a long frigid moment that stretches out for an eternity.

“Souls must be rendered,” he finally hisses. *“Love or not, the plane of existence must be put into balance. The fate of life is larger than your love, Grim. It’s larger than everything. Even me.”*

“No, it’s not,” I say in a defiant tone. “There’s nothing bigger than my love for her. Nothing.”

That horrible demonic mouth curls up into a grin as he stands back up and watches me from above.

“You amuse me, Grim. I knew there was something about you. Something different. The only Reaper to get his job by massacring the Reaper sent for him. Now, this. The first to love?”

I hold my chin in the air as I stare him down.

He may think this is amusing, but it’s not. Nothing has ever been more serious.

I’ll plant this scythe through his forehead if he tries to take her again.

“Okay, Grim,” he finally says. *“I’ll let you have her.”*

A lightness fills my chest. I feel like I might explode with happiness.

“You will?”

“For a price.”

My stomach sinks. There’s always a catch with the Soul Collector.

“Anything,” I say firmly. “I’ll pay any price for her.”

“Ten souls,” he says in a harsh gruesome tone. *“One to replace the girl you stole from me and nine for your disobedience.”*

Ten people. I have to kill ten people.

I suck in a breath and nod. I'd burn the world down for her.

"The plane of existence must be put into balance," he says as he steps back into the darkness. I take a breath of relief when he disappears in the shadows. *"Do not disobey me again, Grim. I will not be as understanding the next time."*

The cave rumbles as giant cracks slice through the ceiling. Bright orange light shines down on my shoulders as an ominous invisible grip tightens around my arms. It yanks me up and pulls me back into the plane of existence.

I take a breath of relief as I look around at my surroundings. I'm in a city. It's nighttime. People talk and laugh as they walk by me, oblivious to my presence. One stressed-out man walks into me and shivers as he passes through my body.

Ten souls I owe. Ten people I have to kill.

For her, I'll do anything.

But not these humans.

The souls I take will be deserving of death.

The souls I take won't be missed.



I slide through space and time and appear in front of an old dilapidated house. Racist rock music blasts through the cracked windows and out through the screen door. A Nazi sign is spray-painted on the rotting wood planks next to the stairs that lead up to the tilted porch.

My attention turns to the six guys on the front lawn—shaved heads, swastikas tattooed on their muscular bodies, hate in their rage-filled eyes—and I squeeze the handle of my scythe.

Two of the men are fighting in a savage bare-knuckle fight. The other four are cheering them on.

My attention turns to a scuffle beside the house. Another one of these Nazi pricks is harassing a girl who's trying to get away. He grabs her arm and pours his can of beer over her head, laughing as she cries and struggles to escape.

This place will do.

There are plenty more inside. The plane of existence will be a little more peaceful once I relieve it of their souls, of their ignorance, of their hate.

I take a step forward, dragging the butt of my scythe on the ground, but then stop.

It doesn't feel right to bring this otherworldly weapon.

It won't be a fair fight.

I look at my scythe for a long moment and then hide it in the forest, leaning it against a tree.

This is *my* fight for *my* girl. I'm not bringing the power of the Reapers with me. Not for this.

I charge out of the forest with my hands squeezed into fists. I slide into the physical plane with a cold shiver.

One of the brawlers on the front lawn spots me. "What the fuck?"

They all turn, even the one harassing the girl.

“Who the fuck are you?” the shirtless one shouts as blood drips from the cut above his eye. The drops of blood fall onto his chest, staining his large black swastika tattoo with streaks of red.

“He just popped out of the air,” the first one who noticed me says. He looks freaked out as he takes a few steps back.

“Let’s pop him back to where he came from,” the shirtless one says as he pulls a knife out of his pocket.

Ten souls for my girl.

I’ll gladly trade these fuckers for her.

The shirtless one comes charging at me, hollering as he swings his knife. I catch his wrist and squeeze until the bone cracks. He screams in pain as he drops to his knees. The knife slips out of his hand.

“What the fuck are you?” he asks as he stares up at my face in horror.

“I’m a Reaper in love,” I answer calmly as I release his snapped wrist and slowly wrap my hands around his neck. The others watch in horror as I squeeze the life out of him.

His eyes still. His body stiffens. I release him and let him fall to my feet.

“Nine more,” I say as I step over his body on my way to the others.

Nine more... And then, my sweet soul is mine.

CHAPTER THREE

Anna

“ARE YOU SURE YOU’RE GOING TO BE OKAY?” MY MOTHER asks for the—I don’t even know anymore. I’ve lost count. Mom has always been a first-class worrier. She’s always been on a whole other level when it came to being anxious, but since the accident, she’s become a real pro. “Are you *sure* you don’t want to stay with us? It wouldn’t be a problem. We wouldn’t mind? Right, Gary?”

My father has the most patience of any person I’ve ever met. “Of course, we wouldn’t, but I’m sure our Anna would like some alone time.”

“I’ll be fine, Mom,” I say as she darts over to my medication *again*.

“So, you’re going to take this—“

“Every six hours,” I interrupt. “I got it.”

She’s nibbling on her bottom lip as she looks doubtfully at me. The pills are rattling in the bottle from her shaking hand.

I sigh as I walk over and gently take it from her. She’s been *a lot* to deal with over the past two months, but I have to

remember that the accident was really hard on her too. I can't imagine what she was going through when I was in a coma for ten days.

I wrap my arms around her and give her a warm hug. She melts into me, on the verge of tears.

"I'll be okay," I tell her honestly. "And if I need anything —"

"You'll call me."

"I'll call you. Promise."

She squeezes me tight until my father has to peel her off. "Don't get her more injured," he says with a chuckle as he half guides, half pulls her to the door.

"Call me before you go to bed," she says as Dad pulls her out. "And we'll come tomorrow to check on you right after breakfast."

"Okay, Mom," I say with a nod. I'm trying really hard not to roll my eyes as my father closes the door with a knowing smile.

"Bye, love. Enjoy your night alone."

"Bye, Dad. I'll see you tomorrow."

The door closes and I go collapse onto the sofa with a heavy sigh.

That... was a lot.

Two months of staying in the hospital, being surrounded by patients, doctors, nurses, my parents... It feels so good to get away.

It feels so good to be home. To be alone.

I close my eyes and take a deep breath, loving the silence. No beeping, no footsteps, no anxious mother asking me if I'm okay every ten seconds.

This is paradise.

I still can't get over what happened. One second, I was driving down the freeway, singing a Taylor Swift song at the top of my lungs, and then out of nowhere, a car smashed into mine and I was flipping through the air.

Crunching metal, broken glass, then... peace.

I remember walking out and feeling this overwhelming sense of calm. My body was hanging upside-down in the car. I can remember it vividly. Blood dripping along my cheek. My black hair hanging straight down. My arms limp.

I had known immediately that my spirit had left my body. I was enjoying the tranquility of the water when I sensed a warm presence approaching me.

My spirit hummed with energy when I saw him. A black hooded cloak covered his face in shadow, but even though I couldn't see him, I felt *drawn* to him. The feeling was so intense.

It was so...

Fake. It was fake.

I can't stop thinking about it, but I keep having to remind myself that it was just a hallucination. It wasn't real.

My doctor said that during stressful near-death experiences like the one I had, hallucinations are pretty common. The brain is flooded with all sorts of chemicals and visions. Dreams and hallucinations can feel *very* real.

“But it *was* real,” I told him. He spoke to me. I could remember being gripped by him. Even as I told the doctor about it, I got goosebumps all over.

“I’m afraid it wasn’t,” my doctor said. “There could also be memory issues from the coma and side effects from the drugs. The point is, I wouldn’t worry about it. You’re fine now. That’s all that matters.”

I wasn’t convinced then and I’m not convinced now.

It felt too real.

And it wasn’t just that.

During my stay in the hospital, I kept feeling the same masculine presence nearby, watching me, protecting me. It felt safe and comforting when it was there and lonely and sad when it wasn’t.

Doctor Jones would have said it was a side effect from the medication if I had told him about it, but I kept it to myself. I didn’t want anyone telling me that incredible feeling was a delusion. It was the only thing that kept me going.

Three people died in the car crash. I should have been number four. The doctors didn’t understand how I had survived with all of the blood I had lost. One of the EMTs even mistakenly thought I had died when he felt for my pulse and didn’t find one.

I’m lucky to be alive. That’s what everyone keeps telling me.

But, I don’t know. I’m not so sure. I can still remember how it felt to be dead, to be a spirit, to be engulfed by the possessive energy of that beautiful being and... I don’t know. *This*, right here. This *life*... It feels empty and sad compared to how it felt on that bridge.

A growing part of me wishes I could be back there. It wishes I could be back with *him*.

I keep craving his presence.

“Are you there?” I whisper as I look around my empty apartment.

Silence.

Cold, empty, silence.

I push up with a groan and grab my favorite glass from the cupboard. It’s the little things you miss when you’re stuck away from home like your favorite glass with the large tabby cat dressed in a tuxedo and top hat with the words *Classy Cat* written on top.

I smile as I fill it with water and then limp into the bedroom. My body feels like it aged ten years in two months. I’m sore and stiff all over. I can feel it deep in my bones.

I grab my iPad out of my bag and bring it into the bedroom. *God, I missed that bed...*

I stretch out on it with a blissful moan and answer some emails.

Everyone is asking how I’m doing. It’s a bit annoying to always talk about my injuries, but I guess this is my life for now. I’m just excited to go back to the time when I can stroll into work at the veterinary clinic, shoot the shit with Rebecca (that’s not about medical talk), and get on with my life.

The strong medication sludging through my veins is making my eyes heavy. I close them for a second and wake up forty minutes later.

I moan when I feel the presence in the room with me.

“Hello?” I whisper. He doesn’t answer. He never does.

There’s something electric in the air and it’s making the hairs on my arms and on the nape of my neck rise.

My body heats up. My face blushes.

I stretch out my legs under the covers and moan when I feel how wet I am.

This is a feeling I haven’t had in a while... Desire.

Need. Want. Lust.

It disappeared in the crowded sterile hospital bed, but now that I’m home, now that I’m on my own, it’s coming back with a vengeance.

The sensual feeling in the room is spurring me on. I can feel the presence, feel *him*, watching me with longing.

I’m getting so *wet*.

I kick off the blankets and can feel his ravenous hunger increasing with every passing second.

What am I doing? Maybe I am crazy.

Well, there’s nothing I can do about it now. Except...

My hand slides down to my nightie and I pull it up to my stomach. I’m wearing nothing underneath and if there is a presence here, he can see everything.

The air gets thicker, warmer. I slide my hand through my hot wetness and moan at the intense feeling.

I close my eyes and picture the hooded figure at the end of my bed, watching me with those possessive eyes.

I don’t know what he is—a guardian angel, a fiction of my imagination, a ghost, a side effect of my medication, but I do

know I'm falling for him. I'm becoming obsessed with him. He's all I can think about.

I explode into shivers as I glide my finger over my soaked clit. "Oh fuck," I moan as I touch it again and heat shoots through my entire body.

I imagine that it's his fingers instead, filling me with shivers, making me ache with lust. I rub myself harder, picturing his hands on my pussy lips, picturing him watching me with dark heated eyes, urging me on, desperate to make me come.

He's here, I know he is. I can't see him, but I can *feel* him. I can sense him. He's standing right in front of me and enjoying the sight of my fingers inside my wet pussy.

My nipples harden and demand some attention as well. I quickly sit up, yank my nightie off, launch it across the room, and then drop back down on my bed, moaning and writhing as my fingers plunge deeper inside me.

"Show yourself," I moan in desperation. I'm so damn close...

My hand is moving in fast tight circles, rubbing my clit and sending shockwaves of heat through my convulsing body.

"*Please,*" I moan as I get closer. "I need you here. Show me you're here..."

The air at the foot of my bed gets all blurry and wobbly.

"*Yes,*" I moan as he suddenly appears in my room. Black cloak with a thick hood draped over his head. There's some kind of weapon or tool in his hand, a long wooden staff with a curved blade on the end, but it's his hand that really gets my attention. He's gripping that staff with tight knuckles as he breathes deep sensual breaths while watching me. His skin is

dark gray and even though I can't see his face behind the shadows, I know he's beautiful.

"I knew you'd come," I whisper in a moan as I move my hand faster. "I knew you were real. Show me your face. *Please.*"

I'm so *wet*. My fingers are coated in need.

They get even wetter as he rests his staff on my wall and reaches for his hood. *Yes. Yes!*

He slowly pulls it back as I rub my clit harder. My eyes are locked on him as the burning sensations tear through me. The squeeze inside is becoming unbearable and I know that only he can release it.

I suck in a breath as he reveals his face. He's gorgeous. He's mine.

Dark gray skin with light gray eyes. An intense overwhelming feeling of being his slams into me as my back arches. I can see the territorial way he looks at me. I can feel the possession in his gaze. I want to be his. I am his.

His hair is short and dark gray—darker than his skin—and messy. My eyes roam over his face from his thick masculine jaw to his beautiful sexy lips. I want him over me. I want to feel his weight pressing me into the bed. I want to taste his sexy mouth.

It's his light gray eyes that really rock me. They're mesmerizing. They're saying everything that he's not—I need you. I want you. You're mine.

I can't look away as I bring myself closer to orgasm. He just stands there, watching, his lustful eyes searing into me.

It's almost more erotic like this. If all he wants is a show, then I'm going to give him one. I spread my legs as far as they'll go and rub my wet pussy in a desperate frenzy.

His intensity engulfs me. It spurs me on. It makes me feel so sexy and desired.

The heat and tightness squeeze my core. I cry out. It's unbearable. I need a release.

This tall, dark, mysterious creature is intriguing the hell out of me. He's so fucking hot. My soul is drawn to him. It's being *pulled* to him. I don't understand it—this intense primal feeling, but sometimes you have to let your body take over and lead the way. My body and soul clearly know something my mind doesn't.

“My sweet soul,” he whispers in a deep sexy voice as he licks his dark gray lips.

That's all it takes to set me off. I scream in bliss as the clenching tightness inside releases into waves of heat. They roll through me as I thrash around on the bed, my pussy gushing warm juice all over my fingers.

He just watches with those blazing eyes focused on me as my intense orgasm takes over, shooting heated bliss and pleasure down to my curled toes.

“Yes,” I breathe as he reaches for the opening in his cloak. *Take it off, I want to say. Join me.*

He starts to open it. My body gets riled back up when I see his muscular chest as he pulls back the cloak. He's so fucking sexy. I want him *on* me, *in* me.

I've never been like this. This is the most erotic thing I've ever done. I've barely touched myself up until this point and I've definitely never done anything sexual with a man.

But that's going to change now. I want him *deep* in me.

"Come," I whisper, inviting him onto the bed.

He takes one step toward me and the air around him starts to blur.

"No!" I scream as he reaches out and grabs his bladed tool. His hand wraps around the wooden staff and then he disappears.

Just like that. Gone.

I sink back onto the bed as tears fill my eyes.

The unbearable lonely feeling is back. It consumes me and all I want to do is cry.

Why did he leave?

I pull the blankets over my body and wonder if I'm losing my mind.

Maybe I got brain damage in the car accident.

I should probably get a CT scan to check.

But I already know that I won't.

I'd rather keep my brain damage if it means keeping him alive. I've never felt anything so spectacular as feeling his presence around me.

I curl up into my blankets with one thought repeating in my head.

Where did he go?

CHAPTER FOUR

Grim

“*Nooooo!*” I ROAR IN FRUSTRATION AS THE SOUL COLLECTOR drags me back down to his lair.

I let out a low irritated growl as I feel the frigid air like knives on my skin. It’s both piercing and jarring after the warmth of Anna’s room.

My body musters a little bit of warmth when I picture my sweet soul with her legs spread open in front of me, pleasuring herself to pleasure me.

“Release me!” I demand to the demonic being I know is hiding in the darkness. “Let me return!”

I can feel his grip wrapped around my legs, cementing my feet to the frosted rock floor.

“I rendered the souls you demanded!” I shout in frustration. “I did what you asked!”

I killed ten of those Nazis pricks for him. The plane of existence was put into balance. What more does he want?

“*You have been neglecting your sacred duties, Grim,*” the Soul Collector hisses as he appears from the shadows.

My jaw tightens as I stare into his glowing red eyes.

“Wandering souls are scattered all over your territory. And what does the Soul Collector find you doing? Watching that human female. Absurd.”

It’s been two months since the last time I’ve been here and I’ve spent that time making sure that nothing happens to Anna. I’ve been watching her, following her, obsessing over her every second I could spare. Perhaps I’ve been sloppy with my duties, but whatever duties I’ve been sworn to uphold all pale in comparison to my duty to protect my sweet soul.

She was laying in a coma for days. What was I supposed to do? Leave her completely vulnerable? Not a chance.

“Maybe I should take her soul as punishment,” he says with a growl.

I grip my scythe and point it at his throat. “You try that and I’ll cut your fucking head off.”

He steps up to his full height and thunders forward on huge taloned feet. My body is pounding in fury as I glare up at him. He towers over me like a grizzly bear towering over a badger.

“Do not threaten her again, Soul Collector,” I warn in a firm steady voice. “I told you *twice* that her soul belongs to me. I will *not* tell you a third time.”

He’s looking down at me in amusement, but if he knew what I was capable of when protecting my girl, then he wouldn’t be grinning. He’d be fleeing in terror.

“A Reaper cannot have feelings, Grim.”

“Well, I do. I love her. With all of my being, I love her.”

“So your twisted mind thinks. Do you really believe a human female such as her can love a demonic being such as

you?”

“Yes,” I say as I stare him down.

“You’d be the first in all of existence. In a millennia of millennia, never has a Reaper acted like this.”

There’s never been a love like ours before. I don’t care what the other Reapers are like. I know that this is real. Our love is real. I could tell by the way she was looking at me. She didn’t care what I looked like on the outside. She saw through the black cloak and dark gray skin. She saw me. The *real* me.

“You’ve been a faithful and loyal Reaper, Grim,” he says as he studies me with those soulless red eyes. His massive head with those giant curled horns tilts. *“I could spare you for a few decades.”*

“Spare... me?”

“You’ve piqued my curiosity, Grim. Human souls intrigue me. After all this time, they still manage to surprise me. If that human female can fall in love with a Reaper, it will be the biggest surprise yet.”

She can love me. I know it. It feels too real on my end for it to be fake on hers.

“I’ll make you a deal, Grim.”

My back straightens. My pulse races. A deal? The last time I made a deal with the Soul Collector, I was forced to drag around a scythe and collect souls for him until the end of time.

“I’m listening,” I say slowly.

“I will let you be with this human soul you covet so much,” he hisses. *“I will allow you to lay down your scythe and have a second chance at life. You can return to the plane of existence as a human. No powers. No soul collecting. I’ll*

spawn another Reaper to take your place and fulfill your sacred duties.”

I’m trembling all over. He’ll make me a human? A *real* human? I can be with Anna. Have a life with her. A *real* life, not this monstrosity I’m living.

There’s got to be a catch. There’s *always* a catch.

“Why would you do that for me?”

He grins. Uh oh. Here it comes.

“I will allow all of that to happen, if, you can make her fall in love with you.”

An empty feeling hits the pit of my stomach.

“And if she doesn’t?”

He grins. *“Then, you’re both mine. Forever. I’ll take her soul as the star of my collection. And you, Grim... You’ll pick up the scythe, return to your duties, and bring me souls until the plane of existence shatters.”*

My love for her runs deep, but her feelings for me? Doubt creeps in and I start to wonder. Could she love a monster like me? Am I fooling myself?

“Do we have a deal, Grim?”

“Yes!” I blurt out without thinking.

“Wonderful,” he says as his eyes glow brighter. *“You have twenty-four Earth hours.”*

“Twenty-four hours?!” I say with a gasp. “No! I need more time. A human soul takes time to court.”

“And yet, you claim you’re both already in love. Twenty-four hours, Grim. That’s all you get.”

My hand squeezes into a fist as I glare at him. I should never have trusted this demonic fucker.

“I’ll even make it easier on you,” he says as he waves his clawed hand. *“I’ll have an old friend take care of your Reaper duties while you’re out wooing this human female. I’m sure you remember Grim.”*

Rage flares through me as a familiar Reaper steps out of the shadows. He was the one who started this horrible adventure. He was the one who came for me at the lake.

He peels back his hood and reveals his weathered gray face. I didn’t think it was possible, but this Reaper looks even more horrifying than the last time I saw him. His light gray skin is pulled so tight, I can make out every curve of his skull. Pale gray eyes sunk deep into his eye sockets watch me with amusement as he drags the wooden butt of his new scythe on the rocky ground.

“I’ll see you up there,” he says with a gruesome smile. “You and your pretty little lover.”

“You stay away from her!” I roar as I charge toward him. The cave rumbles like an earthquake as long snaking cracks rip through the ceiling. Bright orange light shines down on us as a forceful grip tightens around my arms.

I don’t take my rage-filled eyes off him. “You come near us and I’ll end you, you hear me? I’ll end you!”

I’m yanked up through the ceiling and spit back into the plane of existence.

With my mind and body raging, I look around with a growl. *Where is he?*

I grip my scythe and scan the area. I’m alone.

In front of Anna's house.

The anger drains out of me as I rush toward the front door and glide through it. Soft music hits my ears. It's playing from upstairs.

I sprint up the stairs with my scythe and head straight for her bedroom. The bed is made and she's not in it.

How long have I been gone? How long did the Soul Collector keep me?

It felt like minutes, but it appears a day or two has passed.

I follow the music to the bathroom and glide through the closed door.

She's here.

My Anna.

Just the sight of her grips my core and makes everything okay. The Soul Collector, my replacement Reaper, their plans, their schemes, none of it matters. All that matters is that we're together.

She's laying in the bath surrounded by bubbles. A candle sits on the back of the toilet, washing the room in soft orange light. She looks radiant. So full of life. So full of peace.

Her eyes are closed and she's listening to the nice music. That gorgeous black hair is tied up into a messy bun on her head. I walk toward her, letting my eyes roam down her body. The bubbles are covering most of her, but what I can see drives me crazy. Her slick arms hanging out of the tub, the top of her chest dotted with droplets of water, her knees protruding from the bubbles. I love every inch of her. I'm obsessed with it all.

Those peaceful brown eyes slowly open and she perks up when she feels my presence.

“Hello?” she whispers softly. “Are you there?”

I stand here, watching her, hidden from her, mesmerized by her, and unable to move. My body is humming with energy, wanting so desperately to join her, but terrified that she’ll see my true nature and turn me away.

I don’t know how I’d ever recover if she rejected me. An eternity is a long time to live with that kind of unbearable pain.

“Show yourself,” she whispers. “Please...”

I pull myself right up to the plane of existence, but then stop myself right as I’m about to pierce through.

“I’ve missed you,” she says in a sweet gentle voice. “I want to see you again.”

I’m afraid, but I do it anyway. I’ll never let fear hold me back from loving her.

Her eyes widen with excitement as I slide through the plane and enter the human world once again.

I’m suddenly standing over her, gripping my scythe. My black hood is pulled over my head, the dark shadows hiding any trace of my skin.

Those beautiful pink lips part as she looks up at me in awe.

“I’m not sure if you’re real or if I’m going crazy,” she finally says as we stare at one another.

“You’re not going crazy,” I say in a deep throaty voice.

“You’re real?”

I nod.

“Show me your face again,” she says as she moves her legs through the water. “I want to see you.”

I slowly rest my scythe against the wall and suck in a sharp breath as I peel my hood back.

There’s no fear in her eyes, just wonder as she watches me.

“Now the rest of your cloak,” she says. “Take it off and join me.”

With my whole body boiling with desire, I reach for the cloak and take it off for the first time in one hundred and fifty years.

CHAPTER FIVE

Anna

MY BREATH QUICKENS AND MY PULSE RACES AS HE PULLS back the hood, revealing his beautiful light gray eyes. Seeing them is always so staggering. They're truly stunning. Shiny, bright, and full of desire.

I shift in the tub and swallow hard. He levels me with that intense seductive gaze as he reaches for his cloak.

Yes... Yes...

My body fills with heat. It swirls around my core and settles between my legs with a needy throb. I'm *aching* for this man. No, not a man... I'm not sure what he is, but all I know is that my body wants him. Desperately. And I do too.

He saved my life physically and some strong-willed voice inside is telling me he'll save my life spiritually too.

This warm inviting feeling is what I've been looking for. This sensual loving feeling is what I've been waiting for. When I'm in his presence, it feels like my soul is wrapped in a warm blanket. Like it's found its other half. My soul is leading the way and I guess I'm just along for the ride at this point.

As he peels back the cloak, I realize it's going to be one hell of a fun ride.

Good lord!

Hot steamy aches of pleasure flood through my body as he drops the black cloak onto my bathroom floor. My legs open under the bubbles as my lustful eyes roam over his large muscular (and completely naked) frame.

His skin is dark gray, but other than that he looks perfectly human. His big broad shoulders are masterfully rounded and look so incredibly strong. My fingertips tingle as I imagine what it would feel like to run my hands over them and continue down along his powerful jacked arms.

I trail a finger along my neck and down my chest as my eyes slide over his flawlessly shredded body. He's so fucking hot. I can't... stop... staring...

That chest... thick and powerful. Those abs... tight and clenching with every small movement he makes. It's a six-pack that belongs on the cover of a romance novel.

But what keeps stealing and gripping my attention is his bottom half. Above those sturdy muscular thighs is a *long* thick solid cock. It's standing straight up and looks unbelievably tempting. I lick my lips as my eyes linger on it, taking in every inch of his stiff veined shaft. His powerful round head has my mouth watering and those huge balls hanging below look so full, so masculine, so ready to unload.

My whole body *aches* as I stare at it in awe. It's the first one I've seen in the flesh and I already know I don't need to see any others. All I want is him. Forever, I want him.

I have to forcefully tear my eyes away from it to look back up at him. There's a hot inviting look on his face. He's so

gorgeous. I can't get enough of him.

His sexy eyes are full of territorial possession as he looks me over. I'm suddenly wishing I didn't put any bubbles in the bath. I want him to see me like I'm seeing him.

My slutty little eyes drop back down to his concrete shaft—I can't help it—and a heavy moan tumbles out of my parted lips.

I'm beginning to feel *starved* for him. I'm aching all over. My body begins to tremble with desire with every passing moment that I'm not in his arms.

"The water is warm," I say as I sit up and make room for him. "Want to come and join me?"

As I sit up, the bubbles slide down my chest and my nipples become visible. Those sexy gray eyes drink my breasts in with a ravenous look.

My heart pounds as he steps into the tub. Every muscle clenches, tightens, and ripples as he sinks into the water and the stunning sight has my pussy *throbbing* with need.

We gaze into each other's eyes for a long moment. It's not awkward or uncomfortable. It's comforting and safe. It's a warm safe space where the person in front of me finally understands me. Finally *sees* me.

I don't know why I feel like that, but I do.

"What's your name?" I ask in a voice barely above a whisper.

"I'm called Grim," he says in that deep throaty voice that sends tingles shooting through me. I love the sound of it. It's the auditory equivalent of eating melted chocolate or smelling freshly baked cookies.

“I’m Anna.”

“I know,” he says. “I’ve been following you.”

“I could feel you,” I say as I slide my hand over my wet arm. “Thank you for looking out for me.”

He says nothing.

“You were there that day,” I say with my body tingling with nerves. I’m finally going to have the answer to what happened after my accident. I’ve been wondering about it for months. “I was dead, wasn’t I? But then, you brought me back.”

He nods slowly. “I did.”

“How?” I ask with my voice racing. “Are you a ghost? An angel?”

“I’m a Reaper,” he says after a long moment. “I render lost souls.”

“What does that mean?”

“I bring them to the Soul Collector.”

“The... Soul Collector? What is that?”

“He’s an eternal being,” he says in his deep raspy voice. “Humans would probably call him a god. Maybe he is one.”

“What does he do with the souls?”

I watch him curiously as he cups water into his hand and slides it through his dark gray hair. He’s breathing slow and steady, that big powerful chest moving up and down with every breath.

“He keeps them safe,” he says. “Puts them to rest. Returns them to the darkness that they were plucked out of at birth.”

“He doesn’t... harm them?”

“No,” he says sharply. “I would never serve a being who did that.”

“So... you serve him?” I ask, trying to understand.

“I served him, yes. I served him for one hundred and fifty years, but that time is over. I serve another soul now.”

“Whose?”

“Yours, my sweet soul. I am your protector now. We belong together, can you feel it?”

I swallow as I nod. “I do.”

This guy is giving me all of the secrets to the universe, every cosmic mystery that philosophers, professors, religious leaders, and frankly, every human who’s ever lived have desperately searched for over thousands of years, but all I can think about is that long thick cock in the water between us.

“One hundred and fifty years?” I repeat when it finally hits me how long he’s been around. “What were you before then?”

“I was human,” he says sadly. His eyes begin to drift off like he’s back in that other time long before I was born.

“What was your name?” I ask as curiosity flares within. “Back then?”

He closes his eyes and thinks long and hard. “My name was William.”

“William,” I repeat. “Should I call you that?”

“You can call me whatever you desire, my sweet soul. Hearing any of my names on your soft lips is pure ecstasy to me.”

He sinks into the water and our legs brush together. I have a huge tub—it was what sold me on the place—but with his large imposing body, we can't help but touch.

“Tell me one thing, my sweet soul. When souls leave their bodies, they wander in fear, in confusion, in fright. But not you. Your beautiful soul was at peace that day on the bridge. Engulfed in serenity and calm. Why, my love? Why were you not scared?”

I close my eyes softly and think back to that moment. “It wasn't scary to me,” I whisper. “I was confused at first, but then I felt your presence—the same comforting presence I've been feeling off and on for the past few weeks—and it wasn't scary. I knew everything was going to be okay. That you would make it okay. The confusion left and I felt fine. More than fine, I felt at home. I felt found.”

When I open my eyes, I find him staring at me with a look of pure love. My body throbs with desire as that comforting look wraps around me and pulls me in.

We both lean in toward one another, our eyes on each other's lips. Heat rushes to my core as our mouths close the distance.

It's like a shock of electric pleasure as our lips touch for the first time. He cups my jaw and parts my lips with his hot tongue. I moan as he claims my mouth with a hungry intensity.

I kiss him back with all of the need and desire that's been hammering through me for the past two months. I grab his strong shoulders and pull him closer. His hot tongue slides along mine and thrusts deeper into my mouth. He tastes so good. He tastes like being home.

When we finally pull away, our foreheads are touching and we're both breathing heavily. He's staring into my eyes, but I can't look away from his sexy mouth. I want it all over me. I want to feel it sliding down my body to where I'm really throbbing and aching for him.

"We're meant for each other," he says in that raspy voice that I find fucking irresistible.

I nod my head without breaking contact with him. "I know."

"I was born in the wrong century," he says as he holds my face like he's never going to let me go. "A hundred and fifty years too early. What I thought was a curse... that black hood, that scythe... it wasn't a curse. It was a blessing. It brought me to you. It brought me to where I belong. The century I belong in with the girl I belong with. It brought me home."

I kiss him again, unable to stop myself.

The deep heavy kiss turns desperate. It's passionate and hot and has us both moaning for more.

When we pull away, he turns me around with those strong demanding hands. My back is to his stomach and I sink against him, moaning loudly when I feel his hard erection pressing into my back.

"*Fuck,*" he groans in my ear as my back presses against his shaft. I love that I can make him feel good. I love that I can make him hard.

I sway my hips from side to side, making the water ripple. He's groaning and I grin, knowing I'm driving him crazy with the way my body is sliding against his long hard dick.

His strong firm hand slides along the side of my wet breast on the way down to my stomach. His palm glides over it and

continues down between my legs.

“*Oh, Grim,*” I cry out in ecstasy as his fingers slide over my aching sex. I’ve never felt anything like it. The shockwaves of heat shooting up through my body, the feeling of satisfaction mixed with the desire for more, the sensation of having a man’s hand on my most intimate of places. It’s a spine-tingling, toe-curling, awe-inspiring feeling.

I wrap my hand around his thick wrist and hold him there, loving the way his fingers are sliding through my folds, loving the way his palm is putting pressure on my throbbing clit.

My back arches and I let out an insatiable moan as he slides his powerful fingers into me. They’re so *thick* and *full*. I squeeze my nails into his wrist as he slides them back out and traces my wet virgin hole.

His other hand is palming my breast. I hold it against me as my body convulses.

Yes! I want to scream. More! More!

I hold it in, but I can’t hold in the whimpers and moans, which are getting louder and heavier.

“Get on your hands and knees,” he says in a sexy demanding voice. “Let me have a taste of your soft cunt.”

He removes his hand from between my legs and it sends my libido into overdrive. Frustration and need swirl into one as I grip the tub and climb onto my knees. His big strong hands are on my hips, guiding me, turning me, putting me exactly how he wants me.

I’m bent over with my ass wiggling in the air, completely exposed to him.

“Oh, lord,” I whisper when I feel his powerful hands on my ass, spreading my cheeks apart.

“What a beautiful pussy,” he whispers under his breath.

Knowing I’m so exposed to him, knowing he’s seeing every intimate inch of me is making me so damn wet. I’m glad the bath water is hiding how crazy he’s making me. Otherwise, he’d see my juices gushing down my legs.

The anticipation is killing me. Every moment feels like an eternity.

Water swishes around us as he finally leans forward and puts his mouth on me. My head drops as heavy shudders rip through my body.

“*Oh, Grim,*” I moan when I feel his hot tongue sliding through my aching folds. The sensation is overwhelming. It grips all of my attention until all I’m focusing on is every movement of that perfect tongue and those soft sexy lips.

I grip the tub harder and begin to moan louder than I’ve ever moaned before. My body bucks against him. I push my hips back to get more of his mouth on me.

I didn’t know it could feel like this... I didn’t know it would be so intense. So spine-tingling. So hot.

This man is a god as far as I’m concerned. I know I’ll let him do anything to me that he wants. I wouldn’t be able to say no.

He licks up and down and to the sides. He’s *everywhere*. In. Out. All at once. Sloppy and wet and making my insides melt.

I cry out as his tongue pushes deeper inside my pussy, exploring every inch of me as his firm hands grip my ass

harder.

My hips start bucking violently. I'm shaking all over as an orgasm comes out of nowhere and slams into me. I scream out as he grabs my hips and pulls my pussy against his face, licking me hard and fast as my screaming lungs get a workout.

The orgasm sweeps through me like a wildfire, stunning me to the core, staggering me as the heat takes over. My head jerks up, my wet hair slapping my back as the intensity increases.

Grim never stops moving his lips and tongue, holding me firmly against his hot mouth as I come all over him.

He wraps his lips around my clit as the waves of heat begin to dissipate and the shaking starts. I'm trembling all over, making the bath water ripple all around us, all while he continues to taste me.

I knew before, but I'm absolutely certain now. I'm his. He's mine. There's nothing else to it. Human, Reaper, dead, alive. It doesn't matter. All that matters is we're together in this moment and everything is perfect.

He glides his flat tongue up my slit one last time, but he doesn't stop there. I moan desperately as he sinks his tongue between my cheeks and over my asshole. My head drops down and my eyes squeeze shut as he tongues it, giving me the good kind of shivers all over.

With my head clearing a little, I realize there's more for me to explore. I reach into the soapy water and wrap my hand around his hard shaft.

He groans as I give it a firm squeeze. It's so *thick*. So wide. I can feel the immense power in my hand as I start to stroke it up and down.

The water swishes angrily around us as I draw more groans and grunts out of his big chest.

It feels good, but it's not enough. I want to *see* it. I want it in front of my eyes where I can admire every masculine inch of him. I want to open my mouth and taste him like he tasted me. I want to do to his body what he did to mine. I want to *please* him.

I turn in the tub and grin shyly at him. He's so sexy sitting there with his muscular arms on the tub, watching me with a possessive look in his eyes like I'm all his and there's nothing anyone can say about it.

I love the colors of him. The dark gray skin, the light gray eyes, his hair, his lips, everything. Normally, I could stare at his face for hours, but right now, there's something else I desperately want to see.

"Up," I say as I drag my hand down his hard rippling abs. I lightly trace my finger along his firm shaft and then take it away, teasing him. "Please. Sit on the edge of the tub for me."

His heated eyes never leave mine as he pushes himself up—water flowing off his beautiful body—and sits on the edge of my tub.

"*Oh*," I whimper when I see the full mighty size of his enormous cock standing up right in front of me.

I swallow hard as I psyche myself up to do it. It's so big and intimidating, but I'm eager to try.

His possessive eyes never leave me as I put my hands on the edge of the tub and sway my body as I drag my tongue up his long hard erection.

"*Mmmmm*," I moan as I taste his soft skin.

He lets out a primal groan as I wrap my hand around the thick root and hold it up.

“Do you like what you’re seeing, my sweet soul?”

“Yes,” I whisper, never taking my eyes off it. I’m studying every inch of it close-up from the pulsing vein running up along the shaft to the round powerful head to the tiny slit at the top that has beads of pre-come bubbling out.

We both moan as I lean over and drag my tongue over his head, licking up all the drops of pre-come he’s giving me. The taste is so sexy. So masculine. It’s getting me going all over again.

“Open your mouth wide, baby,” he groans as he sinks a hand into my wet hair. “And suck on my big cock.”

How can I say no to that?

I open my mouth as wide as my jaw will allow and slowly, eagerly, take him in...

CHAPTER SIX

Grim

I'M WATCHING IN MESMERIZED WONDER AS THIS BEAUTIFUL girl sucks on my cock. Her eager lips are wrapped around my shaft and she's bobbing her head up and down, making slurping noises as she gets it all wet.

I can tell it's the first time she's doing this. I *love* that mine is the first one she's touched. I can't seem to look away.

Her wet black hair is a wild mess. It keeps dragging back and forth along her curved back as she moves her soft mouth up and down my length. One hand is clenched around the base of my shaft and the other is on my thigh, anchoring her.

Those sweet brown eyes keep closing as she moans on me. Whenever they open, they dart up to my face to see if I'm enjoying it. I'm fucking *loving* it.

"That's it," I whisper to her. "Just like that. Slide that soft tongue up and down me."

She takes me out of her mouth with a gasp and then tickles my balls with her pink tongue before dragging it all the way

up to my throbbing head. A bead of pre-come greets her and she laps it up hungrily.

“I love being inside you,” I growl as she sinks me back into her mouth. Her round ass is bobbing in the water and making it ripple with waves. “Your mouth is a beautiful place to be in, my sweet soul.”

She pops me out with a gasping inhale and then shoves me back into her mouth. Those sweet brown eyes begin to water as she takes me in deeper.

“After I come in that greedy little throat of yours,” I say as I brush her hair out of the way with my fingers so I can get a better view, “I’m going to carry you into the bedroom, lay you on that bed, spread those supple thighs as far as they’ll go, and thrust this raging cock *deep* inside you. I need to feel you coming on me.”

She must be eager for that because her slutty little mouth starts moving faster. She’s sucking me off so hard water is splashing onto the floor.

It’s a beautiful sight to see her handling a stiff cock for the first time. I try to memorize every detail. Her clenched hand moving along me, the way she licks her lips before diving back down, the lustful glaze in her eyes, the outline of her spine running along her curved back, her mesmerizing ass hiding that hot wet pussy I know is waiting for me, the way her greedy tongue digs into my slit for more of her man’s hot come. I want to remember it all. I want it burned into my brain so I can be back in this incredible moment whenever the centuries get too long and thinking of her causes my whole body to ache.

She puts my head in her mouth and holds me there with her clenched lips as her hand starts jerking me off.

I grunt as I feel it coming. Strong and forceful—it comes at me like a speeding train. Unstoppable and unrestrained.

“Like that,” I growl. “Don’t stop.”

She moves faster, moaning as she desperately tries to get me off. I grip the tub so hard I’m worried it’s going to crack as the orgasm barrels down on me.

“Yes, yes, *fuck yes!*” I scream as I come *hard*.

Her body stiffens with a moan as I release my hot load all over her waiting tongue. She slowly strokes me, trying to get every last drop out, until it’s too much and I have to push her away.

She smiles happily as she swallows me down.

I watch in awe, wondering how something so magnificent like her can exist. She’s fucking perfect. In every way, she’s perfect.

She takes a deep breath as she wipes the corner of her lips with her finger and then sucks it clean.

I take a second to get my bearings as I watch her sink back into the warm water, watching me with a satisfied smile on her face. Her tits are floating in the water, her nipples hard and more tempting than ever.

“Alright,” I say when I’m ready. “You’re coming with me.”

She screams playfully as I step out of the tub, lean down, and slide my arms under her. I pick her up easily and hold her to my chest. She’s safe here. She’s right where she belongs.

We kiss as she drips all over the floor.

“Ready?” I ask when we finally pull away. “Once I bring you into that room, you’re mine forever. Decades and centuries will pass and you’ll still be mine. I’m never giving you up.”

“That’s all I’ve wanted since you saved me,” she whispers in a sweet voice that makes everything inside me flutter. “Is to be yours. Forever.”

I kiss her on the mouth again and then carry her into the bedroom.

“Hold on,” she says with a laugh as we walk through the doorway. She grabs the towel hanging on the back of her door. “I can’t sleep in a soaking wet bed.”

She’s going to have to get used to that. I’m going to have this beauty soaking wet every night.

She has to fall in love with you first.

My stomach drops as I put her down.

That was the deal. I’ll only get to stay with her if she falls in love with me in the next twenty-four hours. This may be the only time we get to do this.

I close my eyes and take a deep breath, trying to calm my wrecked nerves. I can’t think about all that now. I just have to be in the moment. She’ll never fall in love with me if my head is off worrying about a gazillion different what-ifs. I have to be present. I have to be *with* her, physically and mentally.

I focus back on her and all my worries quickly drift away as I watch her drying herself off. All of that naked jiggling and bending over and twisting into different positions has me rock fucking hard. By the time she attaches the towel back on the hook and says she’s ready, I’m burning with lust. My dick is standing straight up, concrete hard, and ready to go.

Those sweet brown eyes drop to it and she makes a little mewling sound that has me unable to hold back any longer. I scoop her up in my arms and carry her the rest of the way to the bed.

She giggles as I toss her onto it and then climb on.

I'm not sure if I can get her pregnant—I am a Reaper and technically no longer human—but I am going to try.

The thought of knocking her up makes my balls ache with need. I want to coat her ripe womb with every drop they're holding.

If all goes well and my sweet soul falls in love with me, I'll be human again and spending every night attempting to breed this girl's young supple body.

I'll spend our lifetime together—the lifetime I missed out on the first time around—filling her with babies until she begs me to stop.

“That's my girl,” I say as she spreads her legs for me. “Show me your soft little pussy.”

She's looking at me under her long thick eyelashes, those brown eyes looking so damn innocent. I wonder if she knows how sexy she is. I don't think she does. She has no idea the amount of raw sexuality she has oozing off her.

She may not be aware of it, but I am. It's wrapping around me, gripping me, pulling me toward her. I can barely breathe as I look her naked body up and down.

I dip between her legs and give her wet cunt a few ravenous licks. These are for me. She's already wet and ready to be defiled, but I want her taste in my mouth and her scent in my lungs as I thrust into her for the first time.

I moan as I get up, wiping her warm juices off of the lower half of my face with my forearm. She's the sweetest thing I've ever tasted.

"I've been waiting an eternity to do this to you," I say as I wrap my hand around my meaty shaft and lean over her.

Our mouths are so close I can feel her warm breath on my lips. Her breath quickens as I slide the head of my throbbing cock up her wet slit.

"You make me so hard," I say as I kiss her neck. She moans as she rolls her hips, trying to get me to slide inside of her. "You drive me wild. There's nothing I won't do for you. I faced a demon for you."

"So, take your prize," she begs as her body writhes under me. I'm holding the head of my cock at her wet entrance and it's driving her so crazy it looks like she's about to break. I grin as I watch her arch her back, pressing those soft tits into my chest.

"*Oh, Grim,*" she moans heavily. "Put it in me. *Please* put it in me."

I slowly push into her, grunting when I feel the tight way she's squeezing me. She coats me in her warm slick pussy juices as I stretch her out.

"Fuck," she cries over and over again as I push in deeper. I'm going in slowly, one inch at a time until my head meets some resistance.

She shivers as I come up to her cherry. I hold myself there for a second, savoring the moment before I claim this flawless virgin pussy and defile it forever.

Her lips part, her eyes widen, she's staring up at me as beads of sweat appear on the soft skin between her breasts. I

run my tongue up her chest, tasting those salty little droplets with a hungry moan.

When I can't hold back any longer, when the urge to claim her becomes too strong, I drive my hips forward and thrust through her cherry, taking it forever.

She cries out as I slide all the way into her warm wet impossibly tight cunt. We cling to each other as I hold myself inside her, both of us stunned at the overwhelming sensation.

“You're mine now,” I whisper through clenched teeth as I grab her hip and pull her closer. “You're my sweet soul. Forever.”

She kisses my neck in a frenzy as her pussy squeezes my dick. It's all I can focus on—that delicious squeeze. It's like her pussy is clamped down on my shaft and trying to make me pay for defiling it.

I stretch out the moment for ages, expanding and dragging it out until the intense need to breed her pulls me back into the present.

“Stay with me,” she whispers as she drags her hand down the side of my face. She must have seen in my eyes that I was playing with time, trying to sink into this near-perfect moment forever. It's only perfect if she's there with me.

I make a vow to always be present with her. To always live in the moment and be grateful for it.

“Oh shit, Grim,” she whines as her eyes squeeze shut. “You feel *enormous* in me.”

I palm a breast because it's so irresistible and lean into her ear. “You're so strong,” I whisper. “You're doing so good, taking every inch of your man's cock. You're making me feel so amazing.”

She whimpers as I start to rock my hips, easing some of the insane tightness she's gripping me with. Her whimpers turn to moans and I can tell she's starting to enjoy it more as she loosens up.

"That's it," I whisper encouragingly as I slide in and out at a slow steady pace. I'm trying to focus on her, but the warmth, the tightness, the silky satiny feel of her pussy, it keeps yanking my attention back.

I'm trying to stay slow and easy, but my control is slipping. It's hard to hold back. It hurts.

She must sense it because she grabs my ass with a hand and pulls me into her. "Don't stop yourself," she says as she looks at me with a lustful glaze over her eyes. "I can take it, Grim. I can take *everything* you give me."

A growl rumbles up my throat as the last shred of control I was clinging to slips away.

I yank her hips up and dig my fingertips into her skin a little too hard. "*Yes!*" she says, her eyes flashing with excitement. "Fuck me like you've been dying to! Make me pay for making you wait."

I'm still trying to hold back, but her words set me off. All control vanishes.

I grunt in her ear as I fuck her hard, slamming my big dick into her soft little pussy with long, hard, punishing thrusts.

She holds onto my flexed arms and screams out in pleasure as I pull her leg up and plunge in even deeper.

"Do you like getting fucked?" I growl as I fill her cunt with my big cock. "How does it feel to be full of your man?"

“It feels perfect,” she moans as she digs her fingernails into my triceps. “Don’t stop...”

She’s still so *tight*. Her pussy juice is gushing all over me with every powerful pump of my hips.

I love watching her moaning under me, those soft tits swaying with every thrust, but I want to see her from behind. I want to see her on her hands and knees in front of me with her back arched and her sexy ass in the air.

She cries out in agony as I abruptly pull out of her.

“Hands and knees, baby,” I say as I pick her up and turn her around, not even waiting for her to do it herself.

She jumps into the doggystyle position and wiggles her ass in the air, trying to tempt me, trying to get me back in her as quickly as she can.

I lean back with my cock coated in her cream and admire the incredible erotic view from this angle. Her ass is spread, her wet creamy pussy on full display. My breath is lodged in my throat as I admire every inch of her. She’s so fucking sexy.

When we’re both dying for more, I posture up on my knees, grab my wet dick, and sink back into her. She drops her head back and moans deeply as I slide into her from another angle, hitting all the right spots.

“That’s my girl,” I growl as I grab a fistful of her hair, pull her head back, and start thrusting.

It’s easier to get the perfect rhythm while on my knees and we both sink into the flow, moving our bodies as one. She slams her hips back whenever I thrust forward, slapping her ass against my thighs and making everything feel so much better.

I take some of the cream oozing out of her and rub it on my thumb. She moans as I slide it over her asshole, teasing and tickling her as I drive in deep.

When the orgasms come, they fucking come with a vengeance.

It hits her first. She screams out so loud my ears ring as it devours her from the inside out. Her body bucks and her pussy pulses around me. Feeling the fierce intensity of her virgin pussy coming on a cock for the first time sends me spiraling into an orgasm that's so strong it makes my whole body quake.

I push my hips forward, holding myself *deep* in her warm pulsating cunt as I release every drop of hot come I have into her waiting womb. I fill her up, drenching her insides as she cries out and rips the sheets off the corner of the bed.

The heat, the bliss, the intensity... It's all so overwhelming.

I'm gripping my girl's round ass as the last drop leaves me and enters her.

We stay like this for a long time until exhaustion sinks into our bones and we collapse onto the bed, breathing heavily and reaching for each other.

I pull her into my chest and wrap my arms around her. She rests her cheek on my dark gray skin and makes a soft contented sound as her eyes fall closed.

I already love her. So much I can't explain it.

But can I get her to feel the same?

The seconds are ticking by. Each one is so valuable.

I hold her and stare at the ceiling as she falls asleep on me, hoping she'll be in love by the time she wakes up.

Our fate depends on it.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Anna

THE BED IS EMPTY WHEN I WAKE UP.

I stretch out to feel Grim's warmth, but I feel nothing but cold sheets.

"What a night," I whisper to myself as I stretch out and stare up at the ceiling. I still have an aching down there, but it's not the aching of lust. It's the aching of being stretched and filled up so completely for the first time.

That was a wild night. Leave it to me to lose my virginity to a Grim Reaper. My friends called me every name in the book—prude, wholesome Anna, goody-goody priss—all because I didn't want to lose my virginity to some random guy. They always thought I was acting like such an innocent little princess, but if they only knew. I giggle, thinking of what their shocked faces would look like if they found out that I lost my virginity to a dark gray undead being from the underworld. They'd lose their freaking minds.

I hear a crashing downstairs, which sounds like pots and pans being slammed around.

When the smoke alarm goes off, I jump out of bed, throw some pajamas and a robe on, and rush downstairs.

“Are you... making breakfast?” I ask as I grab a magazine and wave it under the smoke alarm until it stops blaring.

“I’m trying,” he mutters back.

“Oh!” I say when I enter the kitchen and see Grim in front of the stove. The first thing that catches my attention is the fact that he’s naked from the waist up. His cloak is wrapped around his waist, covering his lower half, but every single delicious back muscle is visible as he scrapes something burnt in the pan. The second thing I notice is the mess. There are dirty bowls, pots, pans, and cooking tools everywhere. Half of the fridge has been poured out on the counter and the room is hazy with smoke.

“I’m trying,” he says as he runs a hand through his hair and surveys his mess. The movement causes his big hulking biceps to move in a way that has me swallowing a moan.

“Are you watching YouTube?”

There’s an instructional video playing on my iPad on how to make pancakes. The lady cooking has a neat stack of pancakes with a slab of butter melting on top. I can’t help but notice that her kitchen doesn’t look like a culinary war zone.

“Have you ever used a stove before?” I ask, remembering that this man is from the 1800s.

“Of course,” he says with a nod. “I had a huge cast iron stove at my house. Wood burning. Top of the line.”

“Okay,” I say as I start to pick up some food and put it back in the fridge. “What about an electric stove?”

“No,” he says, “but I have seen people use it. I rendered the soul of a guy who was trying to make homemade dynamite in his oven once. He blew himself up.”

“Well, let’s not go blowing anything up,” I say as I turn off the burners. He has them all on high.

“I’m sorry,” he says with a heavy sigh. “I know humans get hungry at sunrise. I wanted to nourish you.”

“We’ve had many amazing inventions since the 1870s,” I tell him as I open the cupboard. “But none more amazing than Pop-Tarts. Behold, the peak of human ingenuity.” He watches in awe as I make a show of ripping open the foil and plopping the strawberry Pop-Tarts into the toaster. “Easy peasy and we don’t have to blow up my house or make an epic mess.”

He looks like he’s taking mental notes.

“I guess I haven’t quite grasped the fact that you’re from the 1870s,” I say as I take out the coffee. “But I’m starting to now.”

He’s watching me as I put a pot on. I think he’s trying to figure out how everything works.

“Do you remember anything from back then?” I ask as I hit the button.

“I remember everything,” he says.

I begin to clean up and he helps me. God, he moves so fast.

“But it was, what? One hundred and fifty years ago? How could you remember?”

“Time doesn’t work the same way for Reapers as it does for humans,” he says as he clears the counter. I sit back and watch as he moves faster than I ever could.

“How the heck does time work differently for you? Time is time. It’s unchangeable.”

“To humans, maybe,” he says as he grabs a rag and wipes the counter clean. “But to us, a moment in time is malleable. It’s pliable.”

I sit down on the stool at the island and watch him in awe. He’s the most fascinating man I’ve ever met.

“Okay,” I say with a laugh. “Please explain that to me like I’m five years old.”

He looks at me and smiles. The sight of his smile makes my heart skip a beat. A flutter of warmth ripples through me. I’m already wondering how I can tease more smiles out of him.

“A moment in time is like a piece of chewing gum,” he says as he stops cleaning and looks at me with those gorgeous light gray eyes. “It can be stretched out infinitely long or compressed back together. The same piece of gum, the same moment, but completely different depending on how you handle it. Make sense?”

“Not really,” I say with a laugh. The coffeemaker dings. “Maybe it will after my coffee.”

I get up and grab two cups from the counter as he fills the sink with soap and water. He starts scrubbing the pans as I yawn while pouring the cups.

“I’m tired,” I say as my eyes water. “Did you sleep well?”

“I don’t sleep,” he says as I add some milk. I hand him the cup, but he doesn’t take it. “I don’t eat or drink either.”

“That’s a shame,” I say as I grab the warm Pop-Tarts out of the toaster. He watches me as I bite into one. “Then I guess

these are both for me.”

He grins as he watches me annihilate one and then the other.

“It’s satisfying enough to watch you eat,” he says with his eyes sparkling.

Hmmm, that’s funny because it’s satisfying to watch him watching me. I could stare at that perfectly rounded chest and those chiseled abs all freaking day.

You’re staring too long, Anna. Way too long.

I force my eyes away and spot his scythe leaning on the side of my fridge. The blade is right beside the picture of my niece’s smiling head. It’s a perfect metaphor for us. We both come from different worlds. Literally. I come from the regular world and he comes from the undead world.

There’s going to be a learning curve here, but I hope we can make it work. Somehow.

“So…” I say as I sip on my coffee. “Do you have to collect dead souls today, or can you hang out?”

Well, that’s the weirdest sentence I’ve ever said.

His back tightens as he washes the dishes. “I… have a day off.”

“They have days off in the underworld?” I ask with my curiosity piquing. “Do they have coffee breaks too? And medical insurance? Is there an HR department and reserved parking?”

“It’s not like that,” he says with a bit of a tight edge to his voice. “It’s just… today.”

“Oh,” I say as I warm my hands around the hot mug. “I guess we’re going to have to make today count then. What should we do?”

He turns and levels me with a seductive look in his eyes. My body reacts immediately, filling with heat and hunger. I’m right back to where I was last night, wanting him with an urgency that surprises me (and maybe scares me a little too).

He must sense my arousal in the air because he drops the pot into the bubbly water, wipes his hands and arms on the towel, and comes to me.

I swallow hard as he steps between my legs, takes my chin in his strong hand, tilts my head back, and kisses me like it’s his last day on earth.

My head is all fuzzy and whirly when he pulls away. This man is incredible. He’s still gripping my chin and holding my gaze on him as he stares down at me with enough sexual intensity to melt my aching body.

“Sorry about the coffee breath,” I say with a gulp.

He doesn’t break eye contact. “You taste delicious, my sweet soul.”

I love it when he calls me that. It makes me feel like my soul was made for him.

He leans in close to my ear and nibbles on my earlobe, giving me shivers all over. “I want to be *deep* inside you. I want to feel your warm wet pussy wrapped around my hard cock. That’s what we should do today. That’s what we should do right now.”

I hop off the stool and look around with my hands on my hips. “So... in the bedroom, or here?”

He growls as his eyes turn ravenous. I gulp as I step back, knowing I'm in for another wild ride with Mr. Grim Reaper.

He steps forward with every step I take back. Our eyes are locked and neither of us looks away as my butt bumps into the table. He closes the distance and kisses me hard.

I moan into his mouth as he picks me up and places my ass on the table. We're sliding tongues and I don't care about my coffee breath at all anymore as I wrap my legs around his big hard body and hold him close.

His thick erection presses against me and my body convulses, knowing what's coming next.

I yank off my robe as he pulls off my pajama pants. I have nothing on underneath, so my bare ass is on the table and my naked pussy is exposed to him once again. I'm not nervous or shy this time, just excited. Just eager to have him back inside me.

He rips open the knot that's keeping his cloak tied around his waist and it falls onto my kitchen floor. My hands instantly wrap around his big dick and I moan as I pull him toward me.

There's no foreplay this time. No taking it slow.

He steps between my legs as I desperately guide his thick cock into my soaking pussy.

It's like home when he sinks it. It feels so right.

He thrusts all the way into me and my eyes fall closed. I can't get enough of this feeling... His enormous size... His thickness... His hardness... It makes me feel so full, so stuffed, so complete. It's heavenly...

He wraps his big possessive arms around me and holds me against his hard body as he thrusts into me with deep forceful

thrusts.

I cling to him as he fills me so completely, slamming those hips back and forth, looking like he's desperate to fill me with his hot come.

"*Yes!*" I moan into his ear. He's grunting like a beast into mine. "Come in me, Grim. *Fill* me with it. I want to *feel* it."

His body quakes and bucks under my hands. I cling to him harder, holding onto him as he amps up the pace until he's fucking me like a feral animal. Like he can't hold himself back any longer. Like I've finally made him lose control.

That hard dick plunges in and out, in and out, at a frenzied pace. He's close to coming. I am too.

"*Oh, fuck,*" I moan as I feel my orgasm on the verge of snapping. It's so tight... So unyielding... So unbearable.

Grim thrusts his hard cock into me with a primal roar and holds it in *deep* as he releases.

The squeezing tightness inside me snaps and then unravels into bliss.

He sinks his face into the nook of my neck as he fills me with his hot come. I cling to his arms as my pussy orgasms around him, milking and pulsating and adding to his pleasure.

I guess that's what they call a quickie. Fast, fun, and over in five minutes.

He pulls out of me and drops into a chair. I'm sitting on the kitchen table and watching him as I try to catch my breath. His cock is still hard and standing straight up. It's covered in me. I like that I can mark him just like he can mark me.

"Perfect start to a day," he says in a soft voice as he drags his sleepy eyes up my bare thighs.

I hop off the table with a smile. “Couldn’t agree more.” I kiss him on the forehead and he wraps those giant arms around my bottom half, holding me close.

We’re both just enjoying the moment, me gliding my hands through his hair, him with his cheek pressed against my stomach breathing in my comforting scent, when everything changes.

And not for the better.

The air beside the fridge ripples and blurs.

What the hell?

My moment of confusion costs us the chance to react. It costs us the warning Grim needed to be ready.

It might cost us everything.

Because standing in my kitchen is another Reaper. A terrifying one.

He pops out of thin air, grabs my man’s scythe, and snaps it in two over his knee. It falls and dissolves with a smoky hiss before it hits the floor.

“Now,” he says in a creepy sinister voice as my Grim darts up and pulls me protectively behind him, “is the time we settle the score.”

CHAPTER EIGHT

Grim

YOU RECKLESS IDIOT... YOU LET YOUR GUARD DOWN AND NOW look what happened...

My mind is racing as I stand in front of my girl, wondering what my next move is. This Reaper caught me with my pants down. He destroyed my scythe. I'm weaponless in the room and if this armed Reaper gets past me, then my sweet soul will be completely vulnerable.

I can't let anything happen to Anna.

"This is your last chance," I say in a threatening tone. "Leave us. Now."

Without my scythe, I can feel my power draining. In a few minutes, I'll be as weak as a human. I have to act fast. This fucking ghoul won't leave without a fight. It's gotta be now.

"I've waited for my revenge," he says in that drawn-out hissing voice. "For one hund—"

I leap forward and punch him in his skeletal face. He stumbles back into the refrigerator, taken completely off guard. I've got the edge, but it won't last long.

Anna screams as I close the distance in a blur and unleash an onslaught of punches on his gruesome face. Each hit staggers him, but with each hit, I feel my power waning. It's dissolving out of me.

He falls to a knee and tries to swing his scythe at me. I kick his wrist and it flies out of his hand, sliding down the hallway as I hit him some more.

He's rocked. *This fucker is not getting up.*

I'm standing over him, landing heavy jabs, roundhouses, uppercuts, my fists moving in a blur.

But then my arms start to slow. The hits are less and less effective.

He goes from being rocked by my punches to being amused by them.

No...

My stomach drops when he looks up at me with a sinister grin on his face. I slam my fist into him, but it does nothing.

"Anna," I say as he starts to get up. "Run! Now!"

She takes off out the back door and his ominous eyes follow her.

"Don't you look at her," I growl as I grab the thick wooden cutting board off the counter and swing it at him.

He puts his arm up to block it and the cutting board breaks into two, falling harmlessly to the ground.

"She's my sweet soul now," he hisses before slamming his arm into me and sending me flying into the cupboards.

Oh, fuck. That hurt.

I'm feeling pain like a human now. I'm losing all of my power.

He casually walks past me toward the open door and the thought of him with *my* girl ignites a protective blaze inside of me. I explode forward and tackle him to the ground.

"She's *mine!*" I roar.

"No," he says calmly as he grabs my hair and slowly gets up. I'm slamming my fists into him, but they're not doing a thing.

I can feel his power. His strength is unreal.

He picks me up by my hair and starts slamming his fist into me. Bolts of pain flash through my brain as he punches me in the face, over and over and over again.

I groan and spit out blood as he pins me to the pantry, cracking the wood.

"I've waited for this moment," he hisses as he yanks my head back. "Oh, how I've dreamed of getting revenge on the man who destroyed my scythe."

He punches me hard three times in the stomach. My mind goes all fuzzy. My eyes blurry. I feel like I'm going to throw up.

"I'll take care of you, Grim," he says as he pulls back his hood, revealing his disgusting face. He's practically decomposing with bits of gray flesh hanging off his skull. He's horrifying and I'll be damned if that's going to be the last thing my girl sees before her soul is rendered. "But first, I'm going to make you watch as I torture your girl."

"No," I growl with all of the energy I can muster, which right now is not much. "I won't let you."

He grins as his grip on my hair tightens. I wince.

“And how the fuck are you going to stop me?”

CHAPTER NINE

Anna

I SPRINT TO THE END OF MY YARD AND GRAB THE FENCE TO climb over, but I stop, hesitating as I look back at the house.

The sound of Grim's grunts hit my ears. Violent crashing and the stomach-turning sound of things being destroyed follow. It sounds like there are a dozen angry bulls in my kitchen.

I can't leave him...

He has no weapon. I saw it dissolve in front of my eyes.

My heart races as I release the fence and turn around.

This is such a bad idea, but I can't just leave him.

We belong together. If I know anything for sure, it's that.

Before I can stop myself, I sprint across the backyard and around the side of the house. The sounds of fighting begin to quiet, but that just makes me even more nervous.

What if he's hurt? What if—No. I can't think like that. Just keep moving.

I push down my fear and turn the corner, sprinting for the front door.

Every part of my brain is telling me to turn around and run away, but every part of my heart is telling me to continue. To save the one I love.

I open the door as quietly as I can and sneak into the house.

His eerie menacing voice sends shivers racing down my spine. “Oh, how I’ve dreamed of getting revenge on the man who destroyed my scythe.”

My eyes are darting around as I desperately look for a weapon. That lamp? An umbrella? A key? What the heck is the best household item to bring into battle with an undead monster?

That’s when I see his scythe laying in the hallway.

“But first, I’m going to make you watch as I torture your girl.”

I hurry over and swallow hard as I reach for it. *Ah!* My hand flies back as my skin sears. It’s like trying to pick up a glowing charcoal briquette. It’s burning hot.

“No,” Grim growls back. “I won’t let you.”

Grim needs my help now. I can hear the pain in his voice. I can feel it in my heart.

It has to be now.

I grit my teeth and grab the scythe off the ground. It hisses and smokes as it burns my flesh, but I suck down the pain and rush into the kitchen. It’s been destroyed. All my cupboards are cracked and broken, but I don’t care about that right now.

The Reaper is holding Grim by the hair, relishing the pain and anguish he's causing. He's beaten up pretty badly and leaking blood from a bunch of cuts and gashes.

“And how the fuck are you going to stop me?”

The pain in my hands is unbearable, but seeing Grim gives me strength.

“I'll stop you.”

The Reaper turns and his horrifying face drops in shock when he sees me with his weapon.

I swing it as hard as I can and the curved blade slices into his stomach.

His dreadful eyes widen as he looks down at his lacerated cloak and the fresh gash on his gray skin. Before he can let out a scream, his body breaks and cracks in on itself, imploding into a tight ball before disappearing with a boom.

I toss the scythe onto the ground and gasp at my singed hands. They're *burning*.

Grim tries to get up, but he stumbles and falls onto the ground, smacking his head on my tiles.

“Grim!” I scream as I rush over to him, ignoring the pain in my hands. I shake him but he doesn't wake up.

“Don't leave me, Grim,” I say as his eyes fall closed. His face stills. “Grim! *Grim!!*”

Oh no. What do I do? Call an ambulance? How the hell are doctors going to fix an undead being? Do Reapers have an ambulance service?

I pull him onto his back, kneel beside him, and cup his face.

“Please don’t go,” I whisper as my tears trickle down onto him. I kiss his lips, hoping this is not our last kiss. I’m not sure if it’s my imagination, but his lips feel like they’re already getting cold.

“Don’t leave me,” I beg. “You can’t... I love you, Grim. I love you.”

Energy crackles through the air.

I gasp as I look down at my kitchen floor. It’s splitting into giant cracks like an earthquake is ripping right through my property.

Orange light shines up from the darkness.

“What is—?”

Before I can finish the thought, Grim and I are sucked down into the light.

CHAPTER TEN

Grim

OH FUCK. NOT HERE. NOT WITH HER.

I struggle to push myself up, but my legs give out and I crumple back down to the familiar rocky ground. Everywhere is pain. Every movement hurts.

I don't care. It doesn't matter. I have to fight through it for my girl.

I plant my fist onto the ground and push myself up with a grunt.

"Keep her out of this!" I shout into the darkness. I know he's there. He's always there.

"Such a beautiful, innocent little soul," the Soul Collector hisses from the shadows. *"And feisty too. She had the chance to escape, but returned and destroyed my Reaper to protect you. I understand now why you covet her so much."*

"Don't take her away from me," I say with a crack in my voice. I don't have a heart, but I can feel it aching just the same.

“*We made a deal, Grim,*” he says as I hold Anna protectively behind me. I’m holding onto her arm, hoping we can somehow get through this. “*You. Human female.*”

“Don’t talk to her,” I growl possessively.

He ignores me. “*I heard you say the words, but is it true? Do you love this creature? This Reaper of human souls? This Grim?*”

“I do,” Anna says from behind me. She puts her hand on my back as she steps forward and proudly stands beside me.

I stare at her in awe. She’s so brave. She’s so incredible. She’s facing down the Soul Collector to proclaim her love for me, looking defiant and brave. I’ve never felt so connected to another person. I’ve never felt so in love. It’s overwhelming. It’s all-consuming. I can feel the light of her love filling me from my head to my toes.

“I do love him,” she says with her chin in the air. “More than anything. I don’t know who or what you are, but he’s done his time. He’s paid his price. Let him go. Stop tormenting him.”

“*Of all the creatures who’ve inhabited this planet since its creation,*” the Soul Collector hisses, “*the human female is by far the most complex. The most confusing. I don’t know how human males figure you out.*”

“They don’t,” she says as she smiles sadly at me. “But they try and we love them for it.”

“*Whenever I think I have the mind of a human female figured out, something surprises me and I realize I don’t know a thing. A human female falling in love with a Reaper? With my Grim? I didn’t think that was possible and now here we are.*”

“We had a deal, Soul Collector!” I shout into the shadows. “So, let us go! At least let my Anna go. Keep me if you must, but return her. Now!”

“We had a deal and The Soul Collector never reneges on a deal. Your time as a Reaper is over, Grim. Your scythe has been destroyed. Your soul is no longer enslaved to me. I release you from your bondage.”

I take a breath of relief as tears fill my eyes. I’m so relieved, but I’m still weary. There’s always a catch with this demon. I’m just waiting for it to drop.

“*But,*” he says with delight in his voice. Here it comes... “*The mark of the Reapers will be on your human skin for everyone to see.*”

“The mark? What mark? That wasn’t part of the deal!”

“*As you pass through the light,*” he continues, ignoring me, “*you will become human again. Never speak of this place and your souls will be at peace. They will be where they belong, together.*”

Anna screams as the cave shakes and the long cracks snake through the ceiling, spilling orange light on our heads.

The forceful grip seizes our arms and we cling to each other as we’re yanked up through the ceiling and back into the plane of existence.

We wake up on Anna’s kitchen floor. The place is still trashed, but we’re only focused on each other, making sure that the other is okay.

My eyes are quickly darting over my lover’s body, making sure that she’s unharmed.

“Are you hurt?” I ask in a breathless tone.

She shakes her head, but her eyes are wide as she stares at my neck.

“What is it?” I ask as I feel my neck. There’s heat. There’s a pulse. Soft skin. I feel... human. I put my palm on my chest and water fills my eyes when I feel a heart beating.

“Why do you look so alarmed?” I ask with a sinking feeling in my stomach.

“Your... neck. It’s his mark, I think.”

I race to the bathroom, barely noticing that I no longer feel any pain. I’ve been transformed back to my human self and the wounds and bruises are gone.

“What?” I gasp when I see my reflection in the mirror. My skin looks human once again. My hair is brown, my eyes blue, my lips pink, but there’s something new. A skull is tattooed on my neck. Bright orange eyes stare back at me over my Adam’s apple—the mark of the Reapers.

If having this mark is the price it takes to be with my girl, then I’m willing to pay it. I just hope it doesn’t scare her.

Anna creeps up behind me and slides her palm up my back as she looks at my reflection in the mirror.

“It’s kinda sexy,” she says with a warm smile. “I like it.”

I turn and stare down at her, brimming with love. My heart is pounding in my chest, each beat thumping for her.

“This is real, right?” I ask as I look at my palms, at the light skin, at the human skin. “Tell me this isn’t a dream.”

Anna slides her hands into mine and stands on her toes to reach my mouth. “This is a dream,” she whispers as her lips hover under mine. “But it’s also real. But just in case I’m wrong, kiss me before I wake up.”

With a grin on my face and a hungry growl in my throat, I
lean down and kiss my sweet soul.

EPILOGUE

Anna

One Year Later...

I LOVE WATCHING WILLIAM WHEN HE COOKS ME BREAKFAST. I smile as I watch him moving around our kitchen like a natural, plucking a spatula out of the holder and then flipping my chocolate chip pancake while he stirs up some scrambled eggs with his other hand. He's come so far since that first morning together when he made a disastrous mess that ended up in Pop-Tarts.

He's been a human for about a year now and I no longer call him Grim. Only when we're in the bedroom does that old name sometimes slip out in the lustful screams and cries he pulls out of my throat. He doesn't mind though. I think he kind of likes it.

"You don't have to do this *every* morning, ya know?" I say as I cup my orange juice in my hands.

He looks at me over his shoulder and my body tingles all over when I see those bright blue eyes gazing at me. He's so

freaking hot. Even in the morning, he wakes up looking like a god. It's not fair.

“Yes, I do,” he says as his warm watchful eyes drop down to my swollen breasts and pregnant belly. “You're eating for two now. I have to keep you well fed and healthy. It's my duty.”

“Does that duty come with maple syrup for those chocolate chip pancakes?”

He smiles as he pulls open the fridge and takes the sticky bottle out. “Of course. We're not animals after all.”

I'm filled with happiness and contentment as I watch him work. That black robe reminds me of his old Reaper cloak (that's why I bought it for him) and he looks so damn sexy in it. The sleeves are rolled up his thick forearms and I can see the bulges of his biceps straining against the fabric. That sight always gets me going.

He turns back to the stove and I admire his huge hulking back shaped like a V from his broad shoulders down to his waist. *Is it too early for a quickie?*

Soft music is playing and everything is so peaceful. Snow is falling outside, but in here, it's warm and cozy and absolutely perfect. It won't be this peaceful in three months, though.

Our little girl is coming and we both can't wait.

“Chocolate chip pancakes,” William says as he slides the delicious-looking plate in front of me with a flourish. “Scrambled eggs, toast, and some freshly cut up fruit.”

“Missing one thing,” I say as I look up at him with my chin tilted.

“Right,” he says as he darts back to the island and grabs the maple syrup. He puts it in front of me, but that’s not what I wanted.

“I was hoping for something sweeter,” I tease him.

He smiles when he realizes what I want. A moan leaves my lips as he leans down and kisses me on the mouth.

“How was that?”

I lick my lips as I look up at him, marveling at his brown hair, pink lips, and tattooed neck. “Very tasty.”

I dig into my huge breakfast with my mouth salivating as I drench my pancakes in maple syrup. He’s a good cook now.

This man has learned so much in the past year. He was clueless when it came to any modern amenity—washing machines, dishwashers, computers, phones, the television. He couldn’t even drive.

I had to teach him everything, but he was a quick learner, an eager student, and we always had a lot of fun.

Now, with the baby on the way, we’re going to start the next phase of our lives learning together. We’re finally on equal footing and I’m as clueless as he is.

I’m so proud of him. He got a job at the funeral home in town and he’s been great at it. With all of his experience over the years, it was a natural fit.

My parents adore him now, although that took some time, especially with my mother. She took one look at the skull tattoo on his neck and was convinced he was the antichrist. It was only after *several* meetings did she calm down and start to see the sweet caring man he is inside (the turtlenecks helped too). If she ever found out the truth about his past, she’d

probably worry herself into a coma. Some secrets are best kept as secrets.

William sits at the head of the table and watches me eat. He still doesn't have much of an appetite, although you would never know that by the size of him. After one hundred and fifty years of not eating a thing, it's hard for him to get back into the habit. Or, maybe he just doesn't like my bad cooking but is too nice to say anything. That wouldn't surprise me.

"What should we do today?" I ask when I'm near the end of my mountain of pancakes. "You have the day off, right?"

"I do," he says as he looks at me with a fire in his blue eyes. His light gray eyes were so erotic and sexy, but these are so full of life and brimming with love. Both versions are stunning. I always find him so mesmerizing. Sometimes I find myself just staring at him while he's busy with something else. I swear I could watch him for hours and never get bored.

"Maybe we could go shopping for baby clothes?" I suggest.

His heated eyes narrow on me. I gulp, knowing what that means.

"That could be fun," he says in a voice that's getting deeper and throatier with every word. "Or, we can go upstairs, get those clothes off your slutty little body, slide into bed, and we can spend the whole day fucking like animals."

I slowly put my utensils down and drop my napkin onto my plate. "Your idea is better," I say with a nod. "Let's do that."

He comes to me and I gasp as he easily picks me up. Six and a half months pregnant and he can still pick me up like I

weigh nothing. He cradles me to his chest like I'm the most precious thing in his life and carries me up the stairs.

By the time we arrive at the bed, that precious loving look is gone. He's all animal now.

My body hums with excitement.

This is going to be a hell of a good day!

EPILOGUE

William

Seventeen Years Later...

WHEN I FINISH MY CHAPTER, I LOWER MY BOOK AND LOOK around.

The fire is crackling, filling our log cabin with warmth. My beautiful wife and our three gorgeous kids are lazily laying on the couches each with their noses in a book, their feet wrapped up in thick wooly socks.

I take a deep breath and feel my chest expand with gratitude for this wonderful life. Dinner is slowly cooking in the oven, Norah Jones is singing softly at her piano through our speakers, the calm lake is spread out before us in the spectacular view, and all of the fall leaves are breathtaking hues of orange, red, brown, green, yellow, and gold. I'm feeling overwhelmed in the best possible way.

Our oldest, Kirsten, giggles as she reads a young adult book. Her cheeks are blushing, which means she's probably falling for another book boyfriend. She's collected many of them over the years. I smile as I watch her.

Our middle child, Aaron, is reading an adventure book full of pirates and missing treasure. He's got the biggest imagination out of all of us and sometimes I find myself staring at him, wondering what is going on in that overactive brain of his. I wish I could experience it with him.

Our youngest, Carrie, is curled up with Anna. She's reading a spooky book with a witch and an owl on the cover, so she might be sleeping with us again if she gets all freaked out. That's okay. I don't mind. It won't be long before that phase slips away and I wouldn't mind clinging onto her childhood for a little bit longer.

Anna's loving brown eyes dart to me over her book. We gaze at each other with warm smiles on our faces, our eyes full of the gratitude I know we're both feeling.

It's incredible what we've built—this relationship, this family, this life full of love.

We have a nice home and a small vacation cabin. I still can't believe this is real. I can't believe I got a second chance.

That fact is never lost on me. I *never* take it for granted. Not for one second.

Every day I'm appreciative of what I have.

For my home, for my job, for my kids, but especially for Anna. She's the light of my life.

She's the love I never thought I'd get to experience.

She's everything.

My sweet beautiful soul.

The End!

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OBSESSED

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A Mailing List Exclusive!

When I look out my office window and see her in the next building, I know I have to have her.

I buy the whole damn company she works for just to be near her.

She's going to be in my office working under me.

Under, over, sideways—we're going to be working together in *every* position.

This young innocent girl is going to find out that I work my employees *hard*.

And that her new rich CEO is already beyond *obsessed* with her.

This dominant and powerful CEO will have you begging for overtime! Is it just me or is there nothing better than a hot muscular alpha in a suit and tie!

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