

Part I: Chapter 1

Her: Fear. Blinding, mind-numbing fear. Fear so intensely present it extracts the guarded secrets from the dead. Fear and lust are cousins. For like lust, fear devours and controls. And where lust is the history of sin, fear is the history of infectious distress.

Trapped inside the car, fear overtook me. My legs turned to jelly. My chest sunk in as fear sucked out my breath. I panicked, scarcely able to string one cohesive thought to another. Fear exasperated and paralyzed me. Sir William Simon Hennessy, the one and only vampire on Earth, the father of my hybrid human vampire husband, Samuel Crimson, kidnapped me for being pregnant.

I am the first to conceive a hybrid child from a hybrid son.

Only a diabolical mind like Sir William's would want to create a new race of hybrid vampire humans. When he first ambushed me in the bookstore, why didn't I flee?

But I am a connoisseur of lust, not fear. I embrace lust in my marriage, not fear. I know lust intimately and deliberately, not the debilitating effects of fear. Lust I understand and accept. Fear I had never truly known, until encountering Sir William.

Pope Gregory II terrorized Catholics with fear by fashioning the Seven Deadly Sins. He sought to raise the standard of human conduct to sainthood. At the outset, however, he rejected the inclusion of lust with Greed, Gluttony, Sloth, Wrath, Pride and Envy, until realizing the powerful sin of lust. I fully agree. We are incapable of

removing lust from our lives. I lust for my husband. I lust for food. I lust for good reading material. Yet oddly, as much as I appreciate and comprehend the many facets of lust, I underestimated Sir William's lust for supremacy. And only a fool would believe they are above fear.

I sat stupefied in the back seat of Sir William's Jaguar, the doors locked, waiting for him. From out of the tinted window, I looked at our house. Fear consumed me. What of my beloved? Samuel had been drugged and left immobilized like a statue in our kitchen. The fear of Samuel's impending demise covered my limbs like a cloak of death.

I loathe modern cars. Doors are locked and controlled by the driver. I felt weak to escape or help Samuel. I possessed only the power of defiance, the ability to disengage from Sir William. Not one look or one word would he receive from me and surely not so much as one touch.

The helpless overcome fear by grasping at desperate and pathetic measures. I decided to behave like a mute.

Sir William exited our home with confidence, his stride prominent and graceful, carrying my dream book and one suitcase. I turned and looked at Samuel's half brother, Raven, ogling me in the rear-view mirror. The second stepbrother, Cain, sat beside me, inches from my body. I didn't even need to turn my head to know he was sniffing me. Cain then sprang up and opened the door for Sir William who slipped into the back seat. I heard the trunk being opened.

"You're a deceitful prick!" I yelled.

Intellectually I had intended to remain aloof as a silent protest with Sir William but emotionally I couldn't help myself. I fiercely slapped his face. My rage for having being abducted, for being duped by a power hungry and ancient vampire, took control of my logical senses.

"What have you done with Samuel? Please tell me you haven't hurt him...and give that back to me...that's my dream book, not yours!"

My crack across Sir William's face hardly registered.

"I imparted to your adoring husband a life philosophy, prior to his coming back to the land of the moving, so to speak. I estimate Samuel will be in full raging motion in ten to fifteen minutes. The effects of the tranquilizer are not permanent, my dear. I am not a cruel man, after all. Are you comfortable?"

"Go fuck yourself!"

"Your hatred is logical, dear Magdalene...fear not, however, in a few days you will accept your situation and may find yourself feeling more powerful than ever."

I turned with poison in my eyes, the vilest most intense animosity I could muster and spat. Sir William casually removed a handkerchief from his breast pocket and wiped his face.

"Only once, my dear, I shall excuse your inexcusable act. You are rightfully enraged and feeling helpless...do so again, however."

"You'll what?" I taunted.

Sir William placed his hand on my knee and squeezed. Pinpricks of pain traveled up my thigh to my loins, making my fingertips tingle.

“You're a joke! That pain is nothing,” I said, pretending not to be affected by him.

“Indeed, you are an expert on pain. You and I shall have many enlightening conversations, dear Magdalene. I look forward to listening to your life philosophies.”

“What did you say to Samuel?” I asked, backtracking on his earlier words when he said he imparted to Samuel a life philosophy.

“My words of wisdom on fathoming life?” asked Sir William.

“Yes, those fucking words...what did you say?”

“If I answer would you be willing to speak to me about your philosophies?”

“You already know everything about me, don't you? Why do you need to speak about my life philosophies?”

“To absorb the sound of your voice, to watch your lips vibrate as you form words, to lose myself in your expressive eyes as you give serious discourse on understanding life.”

The car left our driveway. We traveled at an easy pace. Sir William would need to take me to the airport or to a landing strip to board a private jet. How could he enter another country without my passport?

“I found your passport in your dresser, underneath a money belt,” said Sir William, with perfect timing.

“Stop reading my thoughts!” I screamed. My heart pounded. The further we drove away from Samuel, the more pronounced my breathing became. A sickening feeling of panic twisted my stomach.

“I explained to Samuel,” began Sir William, retracing our dialogue, “that comprehending life is the same as acknowledging and accepting the role of hierarchies in society.”

“What the hell is that supposed to mean?”

“A logical conclusion to the outcome of our interaction. I am destined to live as number one, until that day should come when I am no longer the one and only.”

“You're speaking in fucking riddles...where are we going? Are we driving in circles? It feels like we're driving in circles...you're trying to disorient me,” I said.

“Not too far for the time being. I want to be assured you are settled to monitor your condition. I do not want you or your unborn child to be negatively affected by these events.”

“You're a fucking hypocrite! You said in the bookstore you mean no harm to Samuel and me and that if you're bothering me I need only ask and you'd leave at once. So, are you a man of your word?”

“A man I am not and for argument's sake, the devil's word is hypocritical. Mythological texts have clearly delineated the devil must be invited into your home before he can step across your threshold. I am not the devil of course but I told you what you wanted to hear in order to gain entry into your home. I am duplicitous, yes, but a hypocrite, no. I live as I say I live. I take what I say I will take.”

Sir William looked at me and I felt his flourishing desire. I crossed my legs and looked out the window that must have been custom-designed. I could no longer view the outside. The tinted glass turned pitch black. It was only Sir William and me in the back seat, me and the bastard who stole me from my Samuel. I fantasized about seducing Sir William and at his weakest moment cutting his throat. I tucked my dream book into my pants, behind my belt.

“Your thoughts are brutally honest, dear Magdalene. I have not harmed Samuel in any way and his life will be given new purpose, to find you, to continue wanting you, to fully appreciate the gift he was given when he married you.”

Sir William’s casual arrogance enraged me.

“Where the hell are you taking me? Why won't you tell me?”

“Time is never-ending, my dear. We have time to talk. I so enjoy a good conversation. I find the minds of young women today are lacking in depth, obsessed with beautification and money and the mania of owning things. Whereas the mind of a woman of maturity, such as yourself, is open to embrace new concepts.”

“How can you expect to have an open and honest discussion with any woman if you read her thoughts while she's speaking with you?”

“The behind the mirror-mind,” said Sir William.

“What's that?” I asked.

“We freely engage in conversation while our innermost thoughts are rarely articulated for fear of rejection and retribution. When you possess the ability to read thoughts you

must be able to disengage your judgement of the individual and accept them for who they are, as I accept you for being a powerful woman.”

“You think I’m powerful?” I asked, shocked he would attach such an adjective to me.

“Yes, you are, Magdalene, supremely powerful. The love you found with Samuel has infused your perception of the world with electricity. Through your sexual antics of *hard play*, you go beyond the limits of yourself because of your faith in your husband, because he is the one and only.”

“This conversation is beginning to tire me,” I replied.

“Not tire you, my dear, pigeon-hole you. I see who you are, which is so much more than you are capable of comprehending.”

“I fucking hate you!” I yelled through clenched teeth. “I hate this child growing in me because it means I’m apart from Samuel!”

“Do not speak in such a cruel manner,” hushed Sir William.

He reached out to touch my tummy and I pushed off his hand. He reached out a second time and again I obstructed him. Persistently, he moved his hand gradually until it landed on my tummy. I gave up fighting. I allowed his hand to touch me, to sense my growing fetus, but my reactions to his touch repulsed me. Truthfully, the mere touch of his hand to my stomach excited me.

“Samuel and I love hard sex because pain and pleasure remind me that life is not an illusion,” I finally admitted.

“Ah, we are returning to my original query about discussing your life philosophies in detail.”

“I like pain as much as I like pleasure. Both are interchangeable. Pain and pleasure remind me life is not an illusion,” I repeated.

“Ah yes, the old ‘life is an illusion’ conundrum,” said Sir William.

“Life is an illusion because there is no ultimate purpose to it!” I shouted.

It definitely felt to me the car was traveling in circles. I wanted to believe we were still in Sandy Hill. I dared not hope for such a thing. If we remained in Sandy Hill, I could escape or at the very least Samuel would have better success finding me.

“I shall tell you why you adore receiving pain from your husband,” said Sir William in his typical arrogant manner.

“Yeah, please do tell. You seem to know everything...I'm all ears,” I replied like a petulant child.

“A dominant or sadist, as some prefer one term over the other, needs to connect to their beloved through pain as a way of grounding, to establish a firm link. Pain is inflicted to reaffirm trust was given by the submissive. A dominant revels in power and inflicts pain because of its calming effect. Pain provides a sense of relief in knowing the submissive is privileged. Receiving and giving pain is like a sacrifice, a structured basis from which deep feelings arise. In a sense, you and Samuel have created a safe haven.”

“He's a joy to be with...he warms me...he activates me.”

“Samuel activates your endorphins and yes...he IS everything to you,” concurred Sir William.

“Yes, that's it...Samuel is everything I have ever wanted in man.”

“You ARE everything to me, my dear Magdalene.”

“Your logic tricked me! Don't you dare say that to me...I'm not your everything! And stop calling me Magdalene...only Samuel calls me by my full name...for you it's Maggie.”

“Your unborn child and you are my everything, my dear Maggie. I could no more let you go than I could kill myself. As I clearly stated previously in your kitchen, I am indestructible. However, being not in possession of a womb, you are required to be the first.”

“You're distracting me...that's what all this hooplah is about, to take my mind off the fact that you've kidnapped me! You're a first-rate fucking bastard!”

“Indeed you are in possession of a fine flair for dramatics,” said Sir William smiling. “I find your company to be a delight. As a woman of substance, you are in no way an illusion, this I can assure you. Your smell is real. Your anger is exciting and your mind is significant.”

The car came to a full stop. I tried to count the number of turns but Sir William's dialogue threw off my count. I thought we must have turned some twenty times. I counted out the turns to exceed the boundaries of Sandy Hill. For those unfamiliar with my slice of heaven, the enclave of Sandy Hill in the City of Ottawa is about nine by nine blocks of

residential homes and buildings associated with the University of Ottawa, encompassing the most southern part up to Mann Avenue, with King Edward Street closing the western perimeter on left, as far north up to Rideau Street, with Charlotte Street closing off the East side.

It felt as though we had been driving for twenty minutes.

“Evidently I’m not significant enough of a woman to have stopped you. Samuel and I were foolhardy to trust you. We should have fled the minute you showed your smug, arrogant face!”

“Ah, a quick exit and all would be well, yes? You are an optimist, my dear, which I also find refreshing. You will find I, too, am of that temperament. I could not have survived for over nine hundred and twenty-seven years living an ancient life were it not for optimism. Optimism has given me reason to keep going, knowing my forward momentum would eventually result in my success.”

“Oh yeah...and what then?” I asked.

“We shall see, my dear Maggie. We shall soon see.”

The front door opened and the driver exited. Sir William's door opened and he exited, sticking his hand back into the car for me to take. I refused to budge. I sat in the car chewing my nail, figuring out what to do. I peered quickly out of the car and realized we drove into a garage; it was dark and cool.

Sir William stuck his head into the car and smiled.

“I’m not bloody well coming out!” I stated. “You’ll have to drag me out!”

“Very well,” said Sir William. He pulled back, while one hybrid son crawled in and held my arms, the opposite door opened. The second hybrid son came in holding a needle and stuck me. I felt the liquid warm my arm as my eyes drooped. I spoke in slow motion as sleep overtook me.

“You're...a...bastard...who...is...capable...of...anything.”

“A herbal, liquid extract of Valerian, not harmful to your fetus, a mild sedative, quite effective if injected in a concentrated dose, similar to the effects of Valium. And naturally, my dear...a man will resort to any lengths when his eyes have set upon a prize.”