



Diary of a Demon Hunter 2:

DeathUnhonored

By MicheleBardsley

From the diary of Maggie Mortis...

Demons are difficult. After six solid weeks of living with Raphael, I'm tempted to say, "Hey,

dickhead, your two-month stint as my babysitter is up!” But... okay, look, I’m attached to him. Me, Maggie Mortis, in serious fucking like with a half-demon, half-human.

If my father were alive, he’d kill me.

Rafe and I have established a new underground headquarters, paid for courtesy of the Otherworld High Council. It’s not even half-finished, but it’s already got a lot more protections in place than Damien’s house. The place where my former Guardian’s mansion stood is off-limits to humans and Otherworlders. Elise is buried there, too, along with everything Damien owned. I can’t believe it’s only been two months since I lost the last person I could call friend.

And gained a man I could call lover.

I mourned the loss of the Jaguar XLS so often and so loudly Rafe gifted me with one of my own. It’s the same stone gray as his demon skin. I get hot just looking at it because I think about what Rafe looks like in his demon form. And how that skin feels (as smooth as silk, believe it or not), and how I like kissing it, licking it... whoa, baby.

What the hell is wrong with me? I spend my days kicking demon ass and my nights fucking my demon lover.

Does that make me a hypocrite or what?

Ah... but what if I’m as Abatu claimed... what if I have demon blood? Maybe I’d still be a hypocrite. Just in a different way.

Chapter 1

When Maggie felt the tongue lick the inside of her thigh, she didn’t bother opening her eyes. Instead, she spread her legs in invitation.

Rafe had returned early. Thank the Goddess. She hated to admit that she was lonely without him. Or that she didn’t sleep well if he wasn’t occupying the pillow next to hers. That would be a stupid, lame, uncool admission.

He'd been called away to the Otherworld. He hadn't told her why -- only that it had to do with his pre-Guardian job (and he still hadn't confided what, exactly, his role was for the High Council). All the same, she was glad her demon had come home.

The tongue wiggled to her pussy and licked her repeatedly. Sensations skittered. She moaned, sliding her hands up her stomach to cup her breasts. With her thumbs and forefingers, she squeezed her nipples. Little zings pierced her. Then she gave the peaks hard twists, shuddering as the little zings expanded into lightning bolts. And that glorious tongue kept working its magic too.

"That feels so good. Hmmm. Keep tasting me, baby."

He obliged, shoving into her entrance and tongue-fucking her. She squirmed, moving her hips to match his movements. Fingers dug into her thighs, the groans of her lover vibrating on her cunt.

"I want your cock," she said. "I want your mouth on my nipples." There was a naughty delight in keeping her eyes closed. In imagining Rafe rather

than seeing him. He felt both familiar and different. His naked body slid up hers. Two hands curved under her shoulders, anchoring.

She offered up her breasts and felt a mouth close around one nipple. Then the other. A tongue flicked. Sucked. Flicked again.

A hot, wet ache settled in her pussy.

The tip of his cock teased her entrance while that gorgeous mouth played with her breasts as if they were the only body parts requiring attention.

She seriously lost patience.

"What are you waiting for? Fuck me!"

He slammed into her, waited a nanosecond, withdrew... then plunged into her hard and fast. Goddess, just the way I love it. Her legs wrapped around his waist and she

matched his rhythm, grinding and bumping.

“Yes,” she shouted. “Yes, baby. Goddess, I missed you. I missed you so much.” She strained toward release, her rhythm wild and demanding. She raked her

nails down his back, all the way to his ass. She was sweaty now, panting with effort, frenzied.

The orgasm was a stroke away.

“Make me come,” she begged. “I want to come on your big cock.” “Oui, chérie,” breathed a very non-Raphael voice. “You will come on my cock. I

demand it of you.”

Her eyes flew open. In shock, she registered the face of Draymore, vampire and ex-lover... too late. She soared into pleasure. The orgasm rocked her, a nuclear explosion that rendered her senseless.

As her pussy convulsed and her breath heaved, Draymore planted his fangs into her neck. He drank from her while his own orgasm claimed him.

Gracious as she was, she let him come. Then she gave him a hard shove, which should've been like trying to move a one-ton boulder, but she surprised him and he tumbled off. He rolled onto his side, grinning.

“You were eager, my flower,” said Draymore. “I have neglected you far too long.”

“Argh!” She sat up and grabbed at the bedspread. Because Draymore lay on top of the silk comforter, she couldn't pull it out enough to cover herself. “Are you crazy? You can't just pop in anytime you like and have your way with me.”

“Since when?”

“Since now!” She didn't want to know how Draymore had found her. She was three hundred feet underground, for Goddess' sake! Panic bubbled through her. She had broken faith with Rafe. She'd promised herself to him and him alone, and stupid Draymore had seduced her. From now on, she would

open her eyes if she so much as felt someone tickle her pinky toe.

“You have to leave, Draymore. You have to fucking leave!”

“Do not speak to me that way, cherie,” warned Draymore. “Or I will punish you.” “Oh, fuck you. I am so over that domination bullshit.”

He laughed. Then he grabbed her hip and pushed her onto her stomach. “No!” she yelled. “You can’t, Draymore.”

He shoved one hand under her, flattening it against her pussy. Then he brought the other hand down hard on her left ass cheek. It stung. It really fucking stung. The

next smack landed on her right cheek. He repeated the spanking twice more. The tingling pain roved her skin... and arched into her core, creating liquid heat. It should’ve been a humiliation instead of a turn-on. Yet, she had to bite her lower lip to keep from moaning.

Draymore’s fingers splayed on her throbbing ass while his other hand cupped her mound. Her pussy pulsed with excitement, her cream dripping into his palm. He laughed softly. “Shall I continue? Perhaps we should get out the paddle.”

“Stop,” she begged. “I’m with someone else. We’re... exclusive.” “I’m surprised you remembered,” said the gravelly voice of Raphael. Her heart jumped into overdrive. Shit, shit, shit! Maggie rolled onto her back and

flushed with embarrassment. Rafe stood at the edge of the bed, his arms crossed and his expression inscrutable. She wasn’t blind, though, to the hard-on straining against his black Dockers. She looked over her shoulder at Draymore and saw his smirk. “How long was he standing there?”

“Long enough, ma petite fleur.”

“And here I thought...” Rafe shook his head, his lips pressed together. His blue eyes offered only cool reproach. “You can fuck whoever you want.”

“If that is the case,” said Draymore smoothly, “you may go. And Maggie and I will finish our play.”

“All right, that’s it!” said Maggie. “I’m not a ping-pong ball that the two of you can paddle between each other.”

She shot to her feet and poked Rafe in the chest. “I love you. There, I fucking said it. I love you. And I thought Draymore was you. And I’m sorry I got fucked by another guy who I thought was you and... well, I’m not that sorry that spankings turn me on.”

She whirled to face Draymore. “If you don’t announce yourself next time, Draymore, I will stake you. In fact, you won’t have to bother because I’ll put a cross above every door, garlic in every corner, and revoke your invitation.”

“Maggie...” said Rafe.

“My flower...” said Draymore. “Y’know what? Fuck you both.”

Dignity in shreds, Maggie had every intention of sweeping across the lushly carpeted floor and escaping into the bathroom. Rafe locked his fingers around her wrist and dragged her into his embrace. “You love me?” he asked softly.

“Yes,” she said.

“It’s not like you to apologize,” said Rafe. “Don’t get used to it.”

Rafe’s lips curled into a half-grin. Then his gaze met hers. “I won’t kill him.” “That’s nice of you.”

“Do you...” He cleared his throat, embarrassed.

Maggie’s hand wandered to his crotch and found the hard-on still straining his pants. She stroked the ridge of his cock through the material. “What?”

Draymore crawled across the bed and put one hand on Maggie’s ass and the other on Rafe’s. “Ah, cherie,” he said with a fanged grin, “he wants to know if we can all play together.”

Chapter 2

“Men don’t turn him on,” Maggie said, looking up at Rafe. “Do they?” “Demon males don’t,” admitted Rafe. “They’re... unpleasant.” Maggie assessed Rafe. He was trying a little too hard not to look at Draymore.

When they’d first met, he’d let her know that although he’d had sexual relations with men, he hadn’t necessarily enjoyed the encounters. Now Maggie wondered if those encounters had to do with his mysterious job rather than with his own pursuit of pleasure. Hmmm. Interesting.

“Draymore is an expert lover,” she said as she took off Rafe’s belt and unbuttoned his slacks. “He likes women. Men. Aliens.” She sent the vamp an amused glance. “Wasn’t there a sheep somewhere in there too?”

“It was a goat,” said Draymore with a lascivious smile. He glanced up at Rafe, and Maggie saw the hunger in his eyes. “It was the 1960s. Woodstock. I made the mistake of drinking from one too many people who’d taken acid. But the goat... ah, it never called, it never wrote.”

Rafe chuckled. He took off his shirt and tossed it to the floor. He shucked his dress shoes, and Maggie knelt to help him wiggle off his socks. That left the pants...

She shimmied up his body, pressing her breasts against his muscled chest. Her nipples pebbled against the heat of his skin. “Are you sure?” she whispered.

“Maggie...” He crushed his mouths to hers.

Holy shit. He was turned on by the idea of having both her and Draymore. As she accepted the violence of his kiss, she pulled down his Dockers and the boxers with grinning orange ghosts on them. As always, the man wore the most ridiculous underwear. Cupping his balls and squeezing lightly, she used her other hand to stroke his cock.

“I want to play too, my darlings,” said Draymore. His hands wandered over Maggie and Rafe. “Such delectable asses. Which one will I take first?”

Maggie broke the kiss, licking Rafe’s swollen lips. “Nothing rough,” she admonished. “Besides, I thought you were over your BDSM phase.”

“For some it is not a phase, but a lifestyle,” he said. “Alas, my attention wandered to tantric sex

rituals. However, I am an impatient man so that, too, was shortlived .”

“And now?” she asked.

“As always, *ma fleur*, I returned to you.”

Maggie rolled her eyes. “Save that hearts-and-flowers shit for some simpering victim, would you?”

Draymore laughed. “What shall we do now, hmmm?”

“I’ll take Rafe’s ass,” Maggie decided, sliding around to press against Raphael’s muscled back. “And you suck his cock.”

Draymore got off the bed and dropped to his knees. His long, pale fingers wandered over Rafe’s cock and balls, stroking, touching, memorizing.

Watching the vampire bring pleasure to Rafe nearly overheated Maggie. Quickly, she opened the nightstand drawer. She removed a tube of lubricant and pair of black leather panties with a clit vibrator. From its center thrust a six-inch dildo.

As Draymore took the hard length of Rafe into his mouth, Maggie put on the panties, setting its wireless remote on medium. She watched, spellbound, as Rafe’s hands dove into Draymore’s silky black hair and, slowly, his hips pumped into the vampire’s mouth.

Her beautiful demon’s eyes were closed, his mouth half-opened as he panted and hissed with harsh pleasure.

Maggie got behind Rafe and squeezed the lube into his anus. Positioning the tip of the dildo at the puckered star, she slid in about an inch. She caressed his buttocks until he relaxed enough to take another couple inches.

Her hands latched onto his hips. “I can’t wait for you to come in Draymore’s mouth while I fuck your ass.”

“Yes,” he groaned. He pressed back as she pushed in the dildo further and further until she’d completely penetrated. As she waited for him to adjust, she stroked his sides, scraping her nails along his flesh.

All the while, the vibrator worked its mojo against her clit.

Unable to see Draymore mouthing Rafe’s cock, she had to be content with hearing both men’s moans. Her heart jolted as hot desire poured through her. All she had to do was imagine Draymore’s lips sliding up and down Rafe’s rigid length... oh Goddess!

Embedded in Rafe’s tight, beautiful ass, Maggie shuddered as lust penetrated her core, made her pussy slick and needy. Impatience clawed at her, but she took the first few strokes slow, steady.

Then Rafe pistoned forward into Draymore’s mouth and slammed back onto the dildo. As she gained a good rhythm plunging into his ass, he pumped his cock between the vampire’s very willing lips.

Maggie knew the double-whammy of pleasure was too much, even for a demon with impressive stamina. She was close to her own orgasm when Rafe’s body tensed.

“Goddamn it!” he roared. “I’m coming. God, yes...”

She knew Draymore was happily drinking the hot come spurting down his throat. If he remained true to form, he’d licked every drop from Rafe’s cock. But even as Rafe found his release, Maggie continued to thrust the dildo into his fine ass. The flesh on -flesh pounding vibrated up her clit until WHAM. Pleasure imploded... fireworks that brought light and heat and bliss.

“That was most pleasant,” said a hoarse Draymore. “Raphael is a man’s man, eh?”

“Hell, yes,” said Maggie, withdrawing from Rafe. She kneeled down and kissed his buttocks, stroking thighs slick with sweat. “He’s actually a demon’s demon.”

“What?”

Maggie grinned at the shock in Draymore's voice. That would teach him to fuck around with her. Bastard. Cute bastard though.

She put the panties in the bathroom for later cleaning, then returned to her two men: one dead and one only half-human. They sat on the bed, at least four feet away from each other, and stared at the floor.

Her love life was seriously fucked-up. "So are we playing or what?" she asked. "He's a demon!"

"He bit me!"

Maggie looked at Raphael. "He's a vampire. Sex and blood-taking are inclusive. He can't fuck you and not bite you." She looked at Draymore. "Rafe's a half-demon. I trust him. I love him. If you don't like the situation, get the fuck out and don't come back."

Draymore looked at her, worry in his brown eyes. "This is not like you, Maggie. The last time I saw you, you would sooner stick a scythe into your own eye than let a demon touch you. And now you tell me you are sleeping with one?"

"Things change," she said coolly. "And so do people. Quit talking about Rafe like he's an animal and like he's not in the room with us. And FYI, vamp boy, how I live my life is none of your fucking business." She pierced him with a no-bullshit stare. Damned if he could pop into her life after a two-year absence and think he had some say about her decisions. What an asshole.

His gaze flicked to Rafe, who looked back at him with raised brows. Then Rafe leaned back and revealed his erection. Bless that magnificent demon penis! Maggie watched Draymore watch Rafe. When Rafe wrapped fingers around his cock and stroked up, Draymore licked his lips as if thinking he might want another taste.

Instead, the vampire's gaze snapped back to Maggie. "I don't know if this is wise, cherie."

She put her hands on her hips, which drew his attention to her shaved pussy. Just to screw with him, she dropped a hand to her slit and traced her vulva. "The only thing I'm interested in right this second is sex. So, Draymore ... Are you staying or going?"

From the Diary of Maggie Mortis

I like to think I'm a girl with a healthy libido, but twenty-four hours with Draymore and Raphael would make any nympho say "Enough already."

In other words, those guys are driving me crazy. And we've only been playing together a day. Granted, it was fuck-sleep-fuck, but still...

I'm going demon-hunting tonight. Funny that kicking demon butt will be a break from continuous, exhausting sex. It's fun to shake up the bedroom action, but Rafe is my demon. Mine. And I might share his body, but I ain't sharing his heart.

Then again, Draymore isn't the kind of guy who sticks around. He's been alive so fucking long, everything bores him. I think his record for staying with me was three weeks... and only then because he was experimenting with bondage. All I can say is that he taught me the meaning of flexibility. And how to tie a mean knot.

I still miss Damian. Rafe and I don't talk about him too much. I don't know if that's because we're just not up to sharing warm fuzzies about him or if neither one of us can face the fact he's still a ghost between us. Rafe can't get over that I wanted his brother... and I guess I can't either.

Maybe it'll just take more time. Or more sex. Or more love.

Or maybe Damian will always be there, a shadow in our hearts. Maybe his memory is like a stain that fades but can never really be wiped away.

Chapter 3

A few minutes before 9 p.m., Maggie entered the tiny pet store and grimaced. She'd followed the sulfur trail into a location that smelled like urine and mold. Oh, this makes finding the demon soooo much easier. With sparse lighting and brown-painted walls, the whole place looked like a cave instead of a

business.

From the bad smells and dusty state of the half-empty shelves, Pedro's Pets was not a high quality animal-care facility. The big fish tank in front of Maggie had seen better days. Dead fish and floating moss filled the brackish water.

She turned to the right and saw three rows of wire cages. Most of the cages housed overturned bowls and dirty litter boxes. At the far end, she spotted movement. Clutching her moon scythes, her favorite among the many Goddess-smithed and Wiccan -blessed weapons she owned, she inched toward the last pen on the second row. "Meow," came a pitiful whine. "Meooooooooow."

Maggie looked at the bedraggled and starved black kitten. "Oh Goddess. Poor little thing." Its big yellow eyes stared at her. One paw pressed against the metal enclosure in supplication. "Sorry, babe," whispered Maggie. "I can't take you with me." The kitten sat down and tilted its head. "Meow?"

"There's this demon... and I gotta trap its sorry ass before it gets away. Ever heard of Magnus? Well, he's ashthead and I owe him some serious pain."

"Meow." The feline looked to its right then it looked at her again. It made the same peculiar gesture twice more then mewed.

Maggie wondered if the cat was trying to show her which way Magnus had gone... or if she was just losing her mind. "I'll make sure this store gets shut down, and I'll find you a good home. I promise."

The cat lay down and closed its eyes, either too weak to continue sitting up or too cynical to believe that Maggie would rescue it from this hellhole. She tucked a finger between the bars and scratched the fuzzy head. The kitten issued a soft, ragged purr. Maggie's chest squeezed. When had she become such a mooch? Suck it up, woman.

You're a goddamned demon hunter -- not a rep for the Humane Society. Yet Maggie found herself running the scythe's blade over the lock, which was like sweeping a hot knife through butter. The lock fell off and the door swung open. The kitten leapt onto her shoulder, planted its front paws on her collarbone, and wrapped its tail around her neck. The frayed purring kicked up a notch.

"Okay," said Maggie. "I'm glad we agree."

Moon scythes at the ready and cat in place, Maggie made a quick, quiet search. Nothing. Most of the animals were gone or dead. Whoever was supposed to be running the joint wasn't here. She looked around as frustration tapped a rhythm in her temples. Hmmm. Past the dilapidated counter with its busted register was a door that probably led to a storage room.

Magnus might be in there, or he might've poofed after leading her on a merry chase. More likely, the human asshole who worked for Pedro's Pets was probably ensconced in there doing Goddess-knew-what. Either way, Maggie was gonna kick somebody's sass.

She twisted the knob, surprised when the door opened soundlessly. Well, shit.

She was right on both counts.

Magnus was in there, all right, and so was a human. Well, what was left of one. Apparently the demon had stopped by for a little snack. Demons ate anything and everything. Garbage. Animals. Plants. Furniture. Insects. People. They liked negative energy. Gnawing on living things caused pain, which they loved, and eating stuff animate or inanimate caused destruction, which they craved.

Maggie got a look at the dead guy's face and sighed. Looked like ol' Magnus had been in the mood for Mexican. If she was lucky, the little bastard was Pedro -- and Magnus had done her a favor. Any jerk who treated animals like he had deserved to be a demon's dinner.

"Does this look like a drive-through to you?" asked Maggie as she sheathed one scythe and removed a white-pain prism from her satchel. She couldn't wait to stick Magnus into it. After disguising himself as a human, he had wormed his way into Damian's bed... then murdered him. She was ashamed that she didn't know what bothered her more: that Magnus had killed her best friend or that the demon had slept with him first.

"Maggie Mortis," it said, the ugly maw red with blood. "Daughter of Abatu." "Fuck you." She tossed the prism at its feet. "Carcer!"

He cackled and kicked away the prism.

Shit -- oh -- shit. The prism hadn't sucked in Magnus. Shock rendered her immobile for precious seconds as her mind spun with the implications. Two months ago, Abatu had destroyed her laboratory and with it almost half the prisms holding demons she'd captured. Now, it appeared the prisms had lost their mojo completely.

Okay. This news really sucked.

Magnus dropped the hunk of Pedro, which landed on the concrete with a sickening splat. The rusty smell of fresh blood mixed with the sulfurous stink that clung

to the demon. His grayish-white skin was dirty and blood-spattered. His red eyes glowed with power, with knowledge -- he knew something big. Something she didn't.

Well, hell. She knew something bad was on the way. Hadn't Abatu promised as much?

"You said something about fucking?" Magnus grabbed the sizeable cock dangling between its legs.

Her gorge rose as she realized the direction of the demon's thoughts. "I'll cut off your dick," she warned.

"It'll grow back," countered Magnus.

Maggie watched as the white hand with its yellowed, poisonous talons stroked the length into hardness. That cock had fucked Damian. Those hands had killed Damian.

Fury burned through her. She withdrew the other scythe while Magnus stared at her, stroking his cock, waiting to make a move on her.

Demons couldn't be killed. They could be captured. Tortured. Imprisoned. Magnus deserved death. Painful and slow death. Just another goddamned thing she couldn't do... couldn't have.

Self-preservation probably urged the kitten to leave her perch. She jumped off Maggie's shoulder,

walked a couple feet, then laid down. Curling into a black ball, she closed her eyes and went to sleep. Maggie grimaced at the cat. Thanks a lot, you littleturd.

Magnus grinned, his rotting teeth black with blood. His stroking got aggressive, rough. Then he lunged at her, his free hand swinging toward her face.

She ducked under the arm and shoved the scythe into his stomach. He screeched and reared back.

At least her weapons still had their powers. She whirled and kicked out his legs. Magnus fell onto his ass, but the damned demon wouldn't let go of his cock. Fighting seemed to add to his excitement.

"I want to fuck you, Maggie," Magnus moaned. "Fuck you and kill you and feed on your sweet flesh."

Apparently the idea of her as his next buffet sent him over the edge. Magnus came, shooting the load everywhere. Droplets rained onto the floor, the corpse of Pedro, Maggie's boots, and the kitten.

In a puff of black smoke and an echo of triumphant laughter, Magnus disappeared.

"Son-of-a-bitch!" yelled Maggie. She jumped up and down in a childish display of temper, then stomped to the wall and kicked a big hole in it.

What the hell was wrong with her? She should've tried trapping Magnus into a different prism. Whacked the masturbating bastard in the skull with a scythe. Punted him in the balls and stomped his ugly penis.

"I'm losing my edge," she muttered. "Losing my mind too."

She bent down and considered the sticky fur of the cat, who after sniffing its butt, decided more sleep was in order. It opened one yellow eye and looked at her. Maggie shook her head. "Look, I'll dispose of the body, okay? But no way am I giving you a bath."

Chapter 4

“What the hell is that?” asked Raphael.

“A cat,” said Maggie. Goddess, she was tired. And she smelled like week-old garbage, thanks to dead humans and horny demons.

She put down the kitten, who wandered out of the bedroom, tail flicking as she went off to explore. Maggie turned her gaze to Rafe. He lounged on the bed, clad only in a pair of jeans. He was reading Time Magazine.

“Maggie, ma fleur.” Draymore stood in the doorway to the bathroom, a towel wrapped loosely around his hips, his hair damp. He wrinkled his nose. “You smell like bad blood.”

“And...” Rafe frowned at her. “Demon come?”

“It’s on my boots,” she said as she toed off the offending shoes. “I’m burning these suckers first chance. Fucking Magnus.”

“Magnus came on your boots?”

Rafe rolled off the bed. He gathered her into his arms and held her tightly. She didn’t realize how much she wanted a hug. But Rafe had known. Her heart warmed and she relaxed into his embrace. How nice it was to share her burdens with someone who loved her. Someone who knew what she needed even when she didn’t.

“We will enjoy a long, hot bath,” said Draymore. “And take your mind off this Magnus.”

In the blink of an eye, Draymore was gone. Maggie heard the squeal of the knobs, then the gurgle of water pouring into her very big, very expensive bath tub. Made of black marble, it had jets, carved seats, and could comfortably hold four people. Her new bathroom totally outranked D’s old bathroom, which had been better than any spa’s.

“Are you okay?” asked Raphael. “What happened?”

“I tracked his sorry ass to this pet store in the bad section of town. That’s where I found Hellion.”

“You named the cat?”

“Yeah.” She glanced up and saw the shock in his eyes. “Shut up.” “I didn’t say anything.”

“Good.” She sighed and put her head against his shoulder. “Anyway, Magnus had already killed a guy and was gnawing on the poor schmuck’s insides when I finally got there. Then he jacked off -- while I was trying to kick his ass -- and poofed.” She pulled away just enough to meet Rafe’s worried gaze. “The white-pain prism I tried to use on Magnus failed. We still haven’t figured out how Abatu broke the prisms. He infiltrated the lab protections because... shit, Rafe. He’s gotta be related to me. How else do you get through the genetic locks and the blood spells?”

“You think Abatu is going to move on you again?” asked Raphael. “Six weeks without hearing from him? That asshole’s been busy doing

something-- something more important than killing me and we know that’s a priority for him. Today was the first time Magnus has wandered into my territory. He’s kept away because he knows I want his head on a pike.”

“Abatu sent him.”

“Probably. But why? To see if I’d notice?” “To test your resolve. Or maybe to test your weapons.”

“You mean to see if the prisms worked on Magnus? You think Abatu has hooked up his minions with anti-entrapment magic or something?”

“It’s possible.” Raphael grimaced. “Damn it. I don’t want to leave you. Not now.”

“Leave me?” Maggie stared at him, not liking the trembling of her heart or the way her stomach dipped. Since when had she been the clingy sort? She didn’t need Raphael babysitting her. In fact, she should be relieved he was going away. What was wrong with having some time to herself?

Liar, liar, whispered her conscience. You don’t lie to yourself. Don’t start now just because you’re in love. “I don’t want you to go,” she admitted softly. “Stay with me.”

“It’s an assignment,” said Rafe. “The High Council needs my particular talents to accomplish this mission.”

“You’re my Guardian. That’s your assignment,” said Maggie. What was with this feeling of desperation and fear that needled her? Raphael could go wherever he wanted any time he wanted, and he was capable of taking care of himself.

“Maggie?”

Shit. Rafe had sensed her very un-Maggie-like reactions. “Ignore me. I’m fine. I’m good. Do what you gotta do.” She broke out of the embrace and sauntered toward the bathroom. Rafe captured her wrist, spinning her around and gathering her into his arms again. She let him do it. Let him because she needed him to hold her. She was so weak. So vulnerable. Because of him. Her beautiful demon.

Draymore appeared in the doorway, naked, his dark eyes aglow with lust. “The bath is ready, darlings.” He waved a hand at his half-hard cock. “And so am I.”

“Me too,” said a tiny voice.

Rafe and Maggie looked down. The black kitten sat at their feet, looking up. “You say something?” asked Maggie.

“Yes. I need a bath too.”

“A demon,” said Rafe. “And you brought it here.”

“You little fucker!” Maggie raised her foot, intending to squash the deceiving bastard. “You tricked me into taking you. Acting all pitiful and cute. Argh!”

“Please, mistress. You saved me and so I am bound to you.”

Maggie’s foot hovered above the kitten. Reluctantly, she put it down and sighed. “Well, shit.”

“Two demons, Maggie?” asked Draymore in an amazed voice. “You have decided to collect them rather than kill them?”

“Shut up!” She reached down and picked up the scrawny, smelly thing. “Give me one good reason I shouldn’t put you into a pain prism.”

“You saved me from Abatu’s wrath.”

Maggie blinked. “Ooookay, that’s a good reason. Why did Abatu want you squirming?”

The kitten tilted her head, her gold eyes staring at Maggie. Finally, she heaved a sigh. “He has found a way to kill demons.”

From the diary of Maggie Mortis...

I’ve had a shitty week. Draymore, staying true to his fuck-’em-and-leave-’em format, left the same day Hellion dropped her bomb about Abatu. I ended up bathing with the stupid cat, which wasn’t nearly as stress-relieving as getting into the tub with two hot men.

Turns out the fucking Council knew Abatu had acquired the ability to kill demons. That’s why they called in Raphael. They want him to take a little trip into Hell to find out how Abatu is doing it. They want to learn how to assassinate the demons too.

They’re not all that interested in why Abatu is killing off his own kind. But I am.

Chapter 5

“You’re nine months pregnant,” Maggie said. “I can’t hire you.” They sat at a table on the patio of Starbucks, Maggie with a Venti Mocha and the

tenth unacceptable applicant with a Tao Tea. The afternoon light faded into the purple and blue hues of dusk. A headache that had started hours ago still throbbed in Maggie’s temples. Give me a demon. Any demon. Kicking immortal ass is so much easier than hiring an assistant.

“I’m six months along,” said Miss Sarah Lynn Traynor.

Maggie looked at the young woman’s huge stomach. “You’re shitting me. You look ready to pop. What the hell do you have in there?”

“The Anti-Christ.”

Her tone was matter-of-fact and her lips didn’t twitch into a smile. Maggie resisted, barely, rolling her eyes. “Okay, look. I know dealing with the Otherworld is

weird, but I’m not taking on looneys.”

“I’m not insane,” said Sarah. She didn’t sound offended.

Maggie sipped her mocha. Where does Mel get these people? Probably thought it would be funny to send someone pregnant with... oh shit.

“You... uh, know the name of the father?” “Oh, yes. His name is Eltar.”

“Eltar.” Maggie blew out a breath. For a split second, she thought Sarah would admit to being pregnant with Abatu’s child. Stupid. Abatu was trying to kill all his offspring, demon and human. He wouldn’t go around and make more rivals.

“You can type?”

Sarah nodded.

“How’s your spell work?”

“I specialize in protection spells.” She looked down at her tummy. “Well, I do now. I learned a lot of safety and lock-key magic to keep Eltar away. He’s really horny.” Maggie nearly spit out her coffee. Instead, she put down her cup and pressed a napkin to her lips to hide her grin. “What about battle skills? Do you know how to wield a sword or throw a knife?”

“I can shoot really well with my Glock .”

“I can’t believe I’m about to do this, but, honey, you’re the best of the bunch. You’re hired.” Maggie reached out her hand and Sarah took it, pumping it twice. Then she dropped her palm against her tummy, drawing Maggie’s gaze. In Sarah’s womb grew the child of the demon Eltar .

Goddamn it. I really am collecting demons.

Maggie stood in the choir loft of the abandoned church and looked down at the dusty pews and collapsed altar. When she was a little girl, her parents had brought her to this place of worship outside the city. Back then, the stained glass windows shone brightly, filtering in the perfect light of Love. They almost always sat in third pew on the left side. She would squeeze between her mother and father, her dress sliding against the polished wood, the faint scent of lemon oil mixing with the floral perfume her mother wore.

Every Sunday until her mother’s death, they came to this tiny church and listened to the pastor talk about sin and about redemption. How small her world had been then. How beautiful and perfect. Yeah. Ignorance really had been bliss.

“Maggie?”

She turned, her hands twisting around the rickety railing, and faced Raphael. He moved silently out

of the shadows. How long had he been standing there, watching her?

It was past midnight. She'd had a lousy night of demon hunting, haunted more than usual by the ghosts of her past. "Do you think the ones who abandoned this church abandoned their faith just as easily?"

"People carry their faith with them. They don't leave it in an old, broken-down building." He stood next to her, his enigmatic gaze on her face.

"How did you find me?" she asked.

"I will always find you." He gathered her into his arms and held her tightly. "I will always love you."

"Shut up," she said, tears threatening. "You've turned me into a stupid, blubbery mush-ball, you know that?"

He drew back just enough to look at her. "You say the most romantic things." Maggie smacked his solid chest, but a laugh escaped. "You're leaving." "I have to."

"No, you don't." She wrenched away from him, terrified. This was what happened when you got attached to people. Hadn't she lost enough loved ones? Everyone she'd ever cared about was gone. Everyone but Raphael. Damn, she was a fool.

"I'm not leaving you forever."

"So what if you did?" She clenched her fists, fought the pain raking her heart. "I don't need this shit. Just... go. Go and fucking stay there, okay?"

"Maggie..."

She didn't want to hear his promises. Didn't want to be soothed or cajoled into feeling better. Turning, she strode away but Raphael suddenly stood in front of her, holding her by the arms.

“Don’t,Rafe .”

“Don’t what? Don’t care about you?”

“I’m not in the fucking mood!” She pushed him away, but he wouldn’t let her go. He was half-demon andwaystronger than her. But he’d never used his powers against

her. Her heart trilled with fear, but she beat it back. “Let me go.”

“Never.”He yanked her forward and kissed her.

She struggled, smacking his chest and arms, kicking at his legs. But he didn’t stop. His mouth conquered hers with gentle reprimand. Love was in his kiss. Love and longing.

He broke her with that aching submission and she collapsed against him, sucking his tongue into her mouth. She tasted her own fear on his lips.“Rafe.”

“Ssshhh.”He undid the buttons to her shirt, parting it to reveal her black lace bra. Leaning down, he kissed the top of each breast before reaching around and releasing the clasp.

“You’re killing me,” she said.

“I’m worshipping you.” He removed the shirt and bra. He cupped her breasts, his thumbs swiping the nipples. Needscissored through her, cutting deeply. “You are so lovely, Maggie.”

He captured one taut bud between his lips and flicked his tongue over it. Maggie moaned, her hands diving into his hair. His mouth swooped across her breasts, tasting her flesh with lips, with tongue. He captured her other nipple and gave it the same divine treatment.

His hands coasted to her jeans, unzipped the denims and slid them off her hips along with her

panties. Lust shuddered through Maggie and she tore at his pants, ripping at the buttons. His hands clasped hers and gentled her movements.

With trembling fingers, she pushed down his pants and boxers, releasing the thick length of his cock. She grasped his hard-on, stroking the firm, warm flesh, reveling in Rafe's harsh intake of breath. Her other hand cupped his balls, squeezing gently.

He kissed her temple, then dropped to his knees and helped her take off her shoes. Then he stripped off her jeans. When he stood, she impatiently tugged on his shirt. He took it off, tossing it to the floor.

Hungry for him, Maggie rubbed the smooth planes of his chest, her hands coasting down his muscled stomach to once again take his cock. While she stroked him, her tongue danced along his chest... nipping here and there... then she attacked his nipples.

Groaning, Rafe grabbed her ass and brought her closer, then used one hand to cup her sex. Two fingers parted her flesh and found her sensitive clit, fondling it until she trembled on the edge of orgasm.

Then, and only then, did he lift her into his embrace and slowly penetrate her. His cock filled her, stretching her to the max, and she wrapped her legs around his waist and clenched him, her pussy swollen and wet and needy.

For a long moment, they held onto each other, taking in the feel of their bodies, skin against skin, heartbeat against heartbeat.

Then Rafe began to move, his cock plunging into her wet heat, slamming against her until she moaned with pleasure.

Her nipples scraped his chest as she met his strokes, riding him, holding onto his shoulders for dear life. Because he was, she realized, very much part of her life. Part of her soul.

Her tears fell, dropping between them, mixing with their sweat, with their tender sorrow.

Then she felt the rise of bliss, it crashed over her... through her... and while she rode the wave, she heard Raphael's cry... then he was riding the wave with her. Together, they fell into the darkness -- buoyed only by each other.

As they left the church, hand in hand, Maggie turned to her lover. "You said that you had to go. Why?"

Raphael hesitated, then brought her knuckles to his lips and kissed each one. He met her gaze, and the emotion glittering there made her heart leap in distress. "When the Guardian rescued me and Damian and took us to the Otherworld, the Council bound me to their service."

"What?" Maggie felt the breath rush out of her lungs.

"I'm half-demon, Maggie. They figured I couldn't fight my true nature forever and might one day turn on them."

She seethed. "Bastards. They want someone to do their dirty work." Raphael had proven his worth to her -- and to the Council. It wasn't fair that he couldn't refuse the Council's demands.

"There are others like me. Other half-breeds they've rescued and bound." He grimaced.

"They can't do that to you."

"Yes, they can." He brushed his lips across hers. Then he released her hand and stepped back.

She watched as he morphed into his demon form. His clothes and shoes popped, falling away in shreds as he rose in height, widened in build. His stone-gray skin glistened in the moonlight. Then, his magnificent wings unfurled.

Maggie grinned. "Why did you put on your clothes if you weren't going to wear them?"

"You said you liked it when I did my Hulk routine."

Laughing, she ran into his outstretched arms. "I love it when you do your Hulk routine." She kissed the base of his throat.

"I love you, Maggie Mortis."

She leaned back, looking into his black eyes. "You really piss me off, y'know that? Love makes people vulnerable."

"Yes. But love also makes people strong."

He wrapped his arms around her waist, and Maggie pressed her face against his chest. Bending his knees, he launched into the night sky and they hurtled into forever, a demon cradling his most precious possession: the woman he loved.

Chapter 6

"Meelena, you bitch." Maggie looked at the wavering face of the High Council Priestess in the water of her scrying bowl. "Raphael's been gone a goddamned month."

"We will send you another Guardian."

"And I'll send him back to you in fucking pieces."

Meelena sighed. "Your bargain with Raphael is concluded. We need him now. There is a war raging in Hell and Abatu is winning. When he is finished conquering the minor kings, he will fight Drak. If he wins against Hell's high king, nothing will stop him from trying to conquer Earth."

Maggie hated the desperation that clawed at her. "Have you heard from Rafe?" Meelena's eyes flashed with worry, but her lips formed a reassuring smile. "We

will keep you updated."

"Oh, fuck you!"

"Maggie!" Meelena's usually serene features pulled into a scowl. In that instant, Maggie saw the true emotion that ravaged her boss. If Meelena

was this concerned about what was going on in Hell, then it was bad. Really fucking bad. The Council had sent Raphael into the war zone -- knowing Abatu had the power to kill him. "You don't care about them, do you? The ones you bind to your service. Rafe didn't choose to be born a demon!"

"The High Council does not answer to you, demon hunter." Meelena's eyes snapped with anger. "Your relationship with Raphael has severely affected your judgment and your abilities. If he succeeds in his mission, I will assign him elsewhere."

Shock ricocheted through her, stealing her breath, her heartbeat. "What? You're not going to let him come home?"

"His place has always been in the Otherworld. It was a mistake to let him come to you. If Damian hadn't extracted my promise --" Meelena's gaze filled with sorrow and with secrets.

"You might as well tell me the rest," whispered Maggie.

"Damian had something of mine. He agreed to give it to me only if I promised that if he should die, I would allow Raphael to replace him as your Guardian."

Stunned, Maggie steadied herself. Damian had bartered with Meelena to insure his brother would find her. Had he done it for her? Or for Raphael? Had he known that they would fall in love? Goddess above. It was a beautiful, terrible thing he'd done. "If you made such a bargain, why did you wait six months to send him to me?"

"I have told you more than enough."

“If you promised Damian that you would make Raphael my Guardian, then you cannot break your word. You have to return him to me.”

“Damian should’ve made a better bargain,” said Meelena. “Because he never specified how long Rafe had to remain your Guardian.”

“You really are a bitch.”

“I do what is necessary. You will continue to hunt demons that threaten humans and await further orders.” Meelena sighed. “Do not contact me again about Raphael, Maggie. He is lost to you.”

The water went dark. Anger and terror pulsed through Maggie, tearing her to shreds. She screamed, sweeping her hand across the table. The crying bowl flew across the room, smacking the wall, its contents puddling the floor.

“Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!” She stomped around her bedroom, twirling her scythes, wishing she could lodge the blades into some High Council ass.

“Maggie?”

“What!” she shouted at Hellion. The kitten sat on the unmade bed watching her. If Maggie didn’t know any better she’d think the little poot was worried about her. “I’m in a really bad mood.”

“Not as bad as Sarah’s. She threw me out of the office because I was purring too loudly.” The cat looked offended. “Are you sure she’s only seven months? She looks like she’s going to give birth any second.”

“I know, I know. She’s humongous. But she can type, do spells, and shoot people. She’s too good an assistant to give up because she’s getting ready to pop out a demon.”

Maggie plopped onto the bed and stroked Hellion’s fur. The picky bitch would only eat tuna. She enjoyed hunting down snakes and mice, but she didn’t eat them. She left them as presents for Maggie...

in the bed, on the shower floor, in a desk drawer. Maggie could slam her scythe into a demon's head without blinking an eye, but finding a dead snake in her shower stall gave her the heebiejeebies .

Hellion's raggedy purr comforted her. The kitten's fur was silky and felt good threading through her fingers. Where was Rafe ? Was he okay? Had Abatu gotten to him? Surely if he'd been able to get word to her, he would have.

Sarah's scream startled her. But it was the gunshots that drove her to action. She jumped to her feet, scythes at the ready, running out the door, down the hall, and into the office.

When she got there, she found Sarah, her pretty blue dress ripped open, backed against a wall, the Glock pointed at a familiar male.

"Draymore?"

The vampire turned and stared at her. Goddess! He looked like shit. His designer clothes were torn and stained, his shoes missing. Sarah was a helluva shot. Six holes pierced his chest, the wounds leaking black blood. Draymore's skin looked gray. His mouth was flecked with dried blood and spittle. And his eyes -- his eyes were empty.

"Maggie Mortis," hissed a voice not Draymore's . "Give me Auren ! Give her to me now!"

Auren? Was he talking about Sarah's unborn child or the mouthy kitten? Maggie twirled her scythes and circled closer to the possessed vampire. Her new place had strong magical protections, including blood spells wrought from Raphael. Abatu might disengage codes that held her genetics, but he didn't have dominion over Rafe . No one but her, Sarah, Rafe and Hellion could walk into the compound and live. But she hadn't recreated spells or codes to keep out Draymore . There was no point. Vampires could get around most magic. The only way to ensure they wouldn't cross a threshold was to revoke their invitations.

"Magnus, you really do have shit for brains."

Draymore's mouth widened into a barbaric grin. He lifted dirty, pale hands and made a "come-get-me" gesture.

“I exorcised Abatu,” said Maggie with a confidence she didn’t feel. She could seriously beat the crap out of Magnus, but she didn’t want to hurt Draymore. “What makes you think your sorry ass has a chance?”

“I will kill your friends. All of them. Did I not tear out the heart of your beloved Guardian?” His tongue slithered out, wiggling like an obscene lizard’s. “Human hearts are so delicious.”

“I really fucking hate you,” said Maggie, rage drumming an ancient beat in her blood. “I’m going to expunge you, Magnus. I’ve been working on a special pain prism just for you.”

“You cannot trap me with your prisms or your words.” Draymore’s body danced close, the movements of deranged puppet. “Give me my master’s daughter.”

Well, that explained the pet-shop prison. Abatu had kept his progeny there, awaiting their execution. And Magnus had figured out that he’d missed one. Hellion. Maggie smiled. “You killed ol’ Pedro because you thought you’d gotten them all, right? Then you found out Auren was missing. Tsk, tsk. What would your master do if he found out you failed to kill off all his demon children?”

“Give me Auren!” he screeched.

“Tell me how to kill demons and we’ll talk.”

Draymore’s lips pulled into a snarl. Then he tilted his head, considering. “A bargain?”

“Tell me how Abatu is killing demons.”

He shook his head. “Give me Auren and I will not kill your precious Draymore.” “If I bring Auren to you, I want you to promise to never harm anyone I call friend.”

Magnus cackled. “If I agreed to your terms, Abatu would have no use for me.” Maggie gritted her teeth. She had never wanted to capture a demon more in her

entire life. The prism she'd been building for him was unfinished, but it was unlike any

ever made. It would hold Magnus and it would keep him in excruciating pain for as long as he resided in it.

"Give me Abatu's daughter," said Magnus in an oily voice. "And I will tell you where to find Raphael."

Her heart revved. She wanted to see Rafe again, to feel his arms around her, to know he was safe. All she had to do was hand over a demon -- a demon who might very well be her only living relative, other than Abatu. Damn it. How could she honor Raphael's love for her if she sacrificed those she'd promised to protect? She had enough blood on her hands.

"Promise that you will not harm me or anyone I call friend today, and I will bring Auren to you."

"You are a fool to give up Raphael for your friends." Magnus considered her words, obviously examining them for tricks. He nodded sharply. "I agree, Maggie Mortis. If you bring Auren to me, no harm will come to you or your friends this day."

"Maggie," whispered Sarah. She was still pressed against the wall, the Glock pointed on Draymore's back. "You can't give him what he wants. That damned cat is annoying, but she doesn't deserve to die."

"I made a bargain." Maggie sheathed her scythes. "I bring him one little demon and we live through today." She avoided Sarah's gaze, knowing she'd see disappointment in the woman's eyes. No one could feel worse about the situation than Maggie. She'd given up Rafe, for Goddess's sake. What the hell was Auren's life compared to his?

She hurried to the bedroom. Hellion sat on the bed, her gold-eyed gaze sad. "Maggie?"

"C'mon, you little turd." Maggie picked up the tiny black furball. To her credit, the cat settled into her arms with a resigned sigh.

They returned to the office. Neither Sarah nor Magnus had moved from their spots.

“Okay, shithead . I’ve brought you Auren .”

Magnus sidled closer. He obviously wanted the kitten desperately, but not badly enough to risk Maggie’s scythes and prism.

“Have I displeased you so much, mistress?” Hellion sighed. “I suppose it is honorable to trade my life for those you love.”

Maggie lifted the kitten and kissed its nose. “You’re my friend, Auren .” Magnus reached for the cat, but Maggie stepped back. “The bargain is met.” “Give her to me!”

Maggie smiled. “I never said I would give her to you, Magnus. I just agreed to bring her to you. And you agreed to not hurt my friends today, which includes Auren .”

Magnus snarled and leapt forward, his hands extended. He froze, growling and wailing, his gaze on the kitten. Demons might be able to resist prisms and exorcisms, but one rule was absolute. They were incapable of breaking a bargain.

“Draymore, I revoke your invitation.”

“Nooooo!” He sparkled out of sight. Since Magnus couldn’t harm Draymore , he would no doubt leave the vampire of his own accord. And some place safe too, since he had guaranteed no harm would come to those she called friends.

“I need a drink.” Maggie released the kitten, who padded to Sarah. Hellion sat down at the woman’s feet and mewled.

“Uh-oh.” Sarah looked at Maggie wide-eyed. Water gushed from between her legs, dowsing the unsuspecting kitten. Hellion scurried away, yowling.

Maggie sighed. “Just when I thought this day couldn’t get any worse.”

From the Diary of Maggie Mortis

MargaretEltarinaTraynor arrived a little early, but healthy. Turns out Sarah was closer to her due date than she led me to believe. Hell, she didn't need the job as much as she wanted the protection afforded by the compound. Her baby girl is beautiful. Doesn't make me yearn for children or anything. She's just kinda cute, when she's not screaming her lungs out. Looks like Sarah and Margie will be hanging out with me and Hellion for a while. She doesn't have anywhere to go and she's determined to keep Eltar away. I have my own reasons for keeping her around--like making sure the High Council doesn't try to bind the child into their

service.

Draymore called me on my cell phone to report that he was okay. I offered to reissue his invitation, but he declined. He says he's staying the hell away from me for a while. I think Magnus's possession scared the crap out of him. Draymore has control issues, and a demotaking over his undead form was just too much. He usually takes off anyway. He has commitment issues too.

I dreamed about Rafe last night. I was in the abandoned church, sitting in the third pew on the left side. Light shone through the broken stained-glass windows, creating rainbows for dust motes to dance in.

Raphael appeared next to me and I looked at him, feeling such an aching sorrow in my chest that I couldn't catch my breath. He took my hand and whispered, "People carry their faith with them."

Then he faded away. I was alone with my fears and my weaknesses. When I awoke, I was weeping. Goddess above! Too much has been taken from me.

I have no faith, Raphael.

Forgive me.