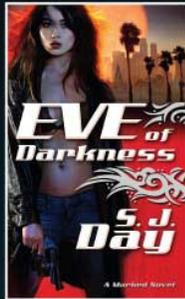


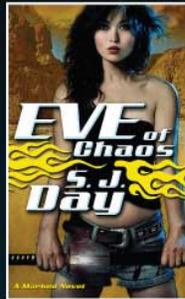
**WHEN YOU'RE
LEARNING TO
HUNT DEMONS,
HOMEWORK
CAN BE HELL . . .**

Class is in session, but Evangeline Hollis is far from being the star pupil. She's struggling to get through the required training to be a full-fledged Mark—one of thousands of sinners forced to hunt demons for God. When her class goes on a week-long field trip to an abandoned military base, passing the course suddenly isn't just a matter of pride . . . it's a matter of life and death. There's a demon hidden among them, killing off Eve's classmates one by one.

As the body count rises, a ragtag team of ghost hunters from a cable TV program unwittingly stumbles into the carnage. Now keeping the Mark system secret competes with the need to keep the "paranormal researchers" alive. With Cain on assignment and Abel investigating a new, terrifying type of demon, Eve must fly solo on her hunt to stop a killer before he strikes again.



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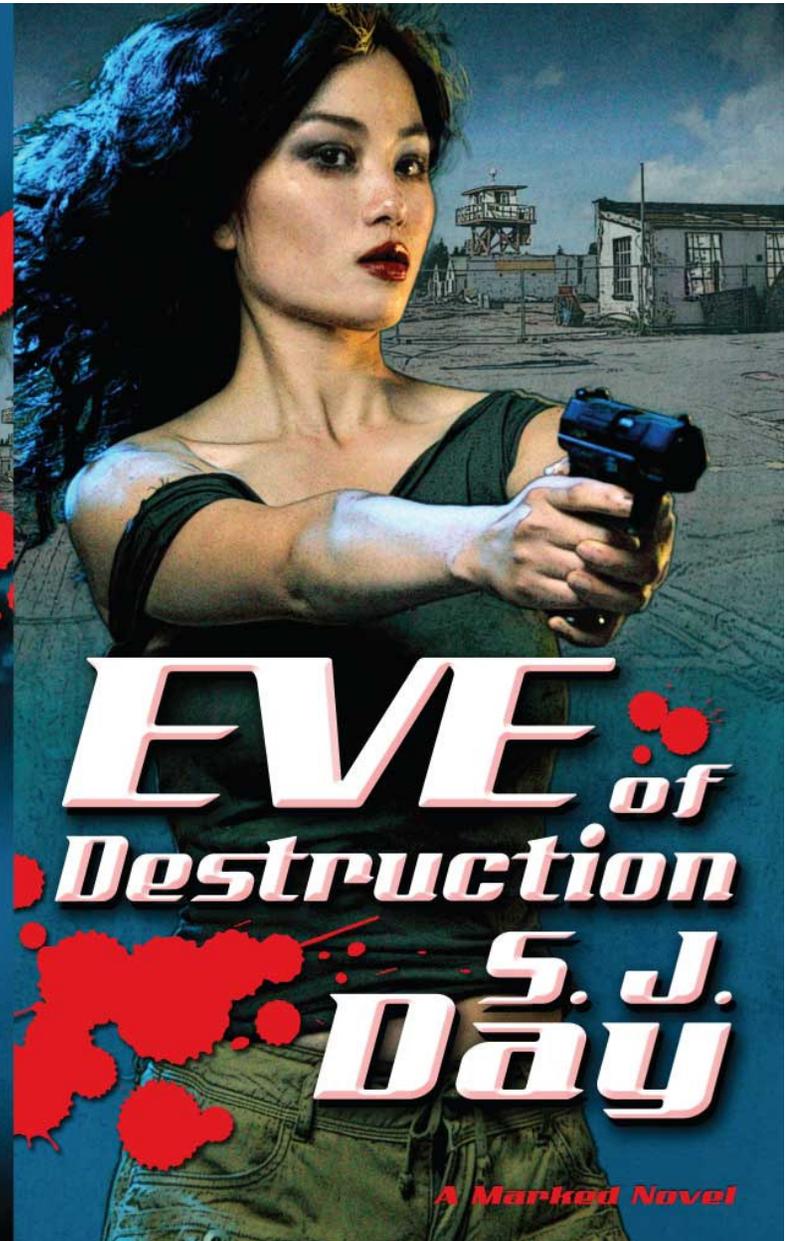
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**Eve of
Destruction
S. J. Day**



**A Marked
Novel**



EVE of Destruction

A MARKED NOVEL

S. J. Day

www.sjday.net

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Advance Chapter One Excerpt

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“Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.”

—GENESIS, 4:15

Chapter 1

Evangeline Hollis woke to the scents of Hell-fire and brimstone, smoke and ashes.

Her nostrils flared in protest. She lay on her back, unmoving, willing her brain to catch up with her circumstances. Licking her lips, she tasted death, the bitterness coating both her tongue and mouth in a thick, immovable wash. Her muscles shifted in an attempt to stretch and a groan escaped her.

What the hell? The last thing she remembered was.....being burnt to a crisp by a dragon.

Panic assailed her with the memory, quickly followed by her mind lurching into full awareness. Eve jackknifed up from her sprawled position, sucking in air with such force it was audible. She blinked, but only inky darkness filled her vision. Her hand reached up to her arm and her fingertips found the raised brand there. The Mark of Cain—a triquetra surrounded by a circlet of three serpents, each one eating the tail of the snake before it. The eye of God filled the center.

The mark burned whenever she took the Lord's name in vain—which was often—and whenever she lied, which was less often but useful on occasion. When dealing with Satan's minions, playing dirty leveled the playing field.

Where the fuck am I? In her upright position, the smoky stench in the air was magnified. Her nose wrinkled.

Maybe I'm in Hell? As a longtime agnostic, she still struggled with facing the reality of God. Heaven, Hell, souls... They were concepts that couldn't be explained with reason.

Besides, if there was a merciful God and a Heaven, she'd be there. She had only been cursed with the Mark of Cain for six weeks and she hadn't yet been properly trained in how to kill Infernals, but during that short time she had eradicated a tengu infestation, killed a Nix, and managed to vanquish a dragon. She'd also helped put a lid on a major new threat to the good guys—a concoction of some sort that allowed Infernals to temporarily hide in the guise of mere mortals. *And* she'd managed to get Cain and Abel to work together for the first time since they were kids.

If all that wasn't enough to save her soul, she would take her chances with the Devil. Maybe he'd have a better sense of fair play.

As Eve's mind struggled to catch up with her present circumstances, the sound of singing penetrated the fog of her thoughts. She couldn't understand a word, but it was familiar all the same. The language was Japanese; the voice, her mother's.

The idea of sharing Hell with her mother was both oddly comforting and chilling.

Eve's hands clenched tentatively, testing the soft surface beneath her, attempting to discern where she was. She felt satin, like the sheets on her bed. A cool breeze touched her brow and

Eve's vision exploded into living color. She jerked violently in surprise.

She *was* in her bedroom, lying atop her king-size bed. As if her senses had been muted, the steady crashing of waves against the Huntington Beach shoreline increased in volume. The soothing rhythm drifted down the hall from her living room balcony and brought welcome relief.

Home. As her tension dissipated, Eve's shoulders relaxed. Then a brief glimmer in the periphery of her vision made her turn her head.

Lifting her arms to shield her eyes from the blinding light, she barely made out the silhouette of a winged man standing in the corner between her bleached pine closet doors and her dresser. Eve blinked back an unusually thick wash of tears. She risked another glance at the angel and found that, once again, her mark enhancements knew what to do even when she didn't. Her arms lowered. She could see him now without damage to her vision.

The angel was tall, with brawny arms and legs displayed by a knee-length, sleeveless robe-like garment. The gown was white and belted with a tan braid. The black combat boots with wicked spikes running up and down the outside were a surprise, as was the impossible perfection of his features. His jaw was square and bold, his hair dark and restrained in a queue at his nape. His irises shimmered like blue flame, and he had an air about him that warned her to keep on his good side.

His gaze lowered to her chest. Hers followed. She was nude.

"Yikes!" Grabbing the top sheet, Eve yanked it up to her neck.

Miyoko Hollis appeared in the doorway, buried in an

armful of laundry.

"Hey, you're awake," her mother called out, her voice flavored with a Japanese accent.

"I guess so." Eve was so happy to see her mom, her eyes burned. "It's good to see you."

"Eh, you say that now." Striding toward the bed with the brisk stride of a retired nurse, Miyoko Hollis was a compact whirlwind of energy, a tornado that often left Eve feeling exhausted. "You didn't move a muscle for a while. I nearly thought you were dead."

Eve *had* been dead, that was the problem. "What day is it?"

"Tuesday."

Another noxious breeze assaulted her nostrils and Eve waved a hand in front of her face. Her gaze found the source on her dresser—an incense stick.

"Whatever fragrance that is," Eve muttered, inwardly reeling that she had lost two days of her life, "it stinks."

Miyoko moved to the end of the bed and dumped the still-warm pile of clothes onto the comforter. She wore Hello Kitty pajamas—pink flannel pants and a t-shirt that had a giant Hello Kitty face on the front. With her long black hair in pigtails and her unlined face, she looked more like Eve's sibling than a parent. She also acted as if she owned the place, which she didn't. Darrel and Miyoko Hollis lived in Anaheim—home of Disneyland, California Adventure, and Eve's childhood. Still, whenever her mother visited, Eve found herself fighting for her place as alpha female in her own house.

Eve watched her mother walk right past the angel without batting an eye. Standing with crossed arms, widespread legs, and folded wings, he was impossible to ignore...

Unless you couldn't see him.

"Aromatherapy aids healing," Miyoko pronounced.

"Not when it smells like shit. And why are you doing my laundry again? I wish you could come over and just relax."

"It's not shit. It's jasmine-chamomile. And I am doing your laundry because it was piled up. Can't relax in a messy house."

"My house is never messy." Her mom did laundry every time she came over, despite the fact that at twenty-eight years of age Eve was perfectly capable of doing her own. No matter how spotless her house might be, her mother cleaned it, rearranging everything to her liking in the process.

"Was too," her mother argued. "You had an overflowing basket by the washing machine and a sink full of dirty dishes."

Eve pointed at the boxer briefs, men's shirts, and towels in the pile. "Those aren't my clothes. The dishes aren't mine either."

She wondered what her mother would do if she learned that she was washing Cain and Abel's clothes. The brothers went by the names Alec Cain and Reed Abel now, but they were still the siblings of biblical legend.

"Alec has been using all the towels and leaving his clothes on the bathroom floor." Miyoko's tone was starkly chastising. No man was good enough for Eve. They all had some flaw in her mother's eyes, no matter how small. "And both he and your boss get new glasses every time they have a drink."

"Alec lives next door. Why doesn't he go mess up his place?"

"You're asking me?" Her mother snorted. "I still don't know why Reed spends so much time at your house. It's not natural. Or why your boyfriend is CEO of a corporation like Meggido Industries, but I've never seen him in a suit."

The thought of Alec in a suit made Eve smile. "When you run the place and you're good at it, you can wear what ever you

want."

Eve stretched gingerly, wincing at the lingering tenderness in her spine. Then, she hollered, "Alec!"

"Don't yell."

"It's my house, Mom."

"Men don't like to be yelled at."

"Mom . . ." She heaved out a frustrated breath. "What do you care, anyway? He leaves towels on the bathroom floor."

It was a pet peeve of Eve's, too, but she didn't think it made a man unsuitable for marriage.

"It's inconsiderate," Miyoko grouched. "And unhygienic."

Eve glanced at the angel, embarrassed to have him witness their squabbling. His burning gaze met hers, then his nose wrinkled.

"Mom!" Eve's tone was more urgent. "Put that incense out, *please*. I'm serious. It stinks."

Miyoko grunted, but moved to tamp out the incense stick. "You're difficult."

"And you're stubborn, but I love you anyway."

"You're awake," Alec interjected, walking through the open bedroom door. He stared at her with fathomless eyes, his gaze darting over her in search of any cause for concern. "You scared me, angel," he said gruffly.

Angel. It was a pet name only he ever used. Every time she heard it, her toes curled. Alec's voice was velvet smooth and capable of turning a reading of Hawking's *A Brief History of Time* into an orgasmic experience.

Dressed in long shorts and white tank, he looked hotter than most men did in a tuxedo. His black hair was a little too long and his stride boasted a bit of a swagger, but no matter what he wore or how casually he moved, he looked like someone you

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didn't want to piss off. It was the hunter in him, the predator. Alec killed for a living and he excelled at it.

He was the reason she'd been marked. He was also her mentor.

His brother Reed entered the room behind him. Their features were similar enough to betray them as siblings, but they were otherwise as different as night and day. Reed favored Armani suits and sharp haircuts. Today he wore graphite gray slacks and a black dress shirt open at the throat and rolled up at the wrists. He was her superior.

Every Mark had a handler, a *mal'akh*—an angel—directly responsible for assigning them to targets. Reed had once likened the mark system to the judicial system. The archangels were the bail bondsmen, Reed was her dispatcher, and she was a bounty hunter. She wasn't a very good one . . . yet. But she was learning and trying.

In the meantime, Reed was responsible for her assignments and for peripherally ensuring her safety. As her mentor, Alec's sole responsibility—under usual circumstances—was keeping her alive. But God had been unwilling to lose the talents of his most established and powerful enforcer. Alec cut a deal to be with her, and the result was that Reed often had more liability where she was concerned. Considering the festering animosity between the two brothers, the setup was fucked all around.

"Welcome back to the land of the living, Ms. Hollis," Reed greeted. He smiled his cocky smile, but his dark eyes held an uncertainty Eve found endearing. He had no idea what to make of his feelings for her. Since she was in a relationship with his brother, she couldn't help him with that. She tried not to think about her feelings for him. It was just too complicated. Her life was already a disaster of biblical proportions.

Both men spotted the angel in the corner, who stood unmoving. They bowed slightly in deference.

Because Miyoko was too busy glaring at Eve, she failed to catch the gesture. Eve used her job as an interior designer as an excuse for Reed's frequent visits. As far as her family knew, she worked from home most days and if Reed wanted to see what she was up to, stopping by was the best way to do it. But Miyoko didn't believe the lie. She assumed all male interior designers were gay and Reed was most definitely *not*. Eve had no idea what her mother thought was really going on, but she knew the obvious animosity between the two men was fodder for suspicions.

Alec's smile warmed her from the inside. "How are you feeling?"

"Thirsty."

"I'll get you some ice water," Reed offered.

She smiled. "Thank you."

Alec bent and pressed his lips to her forehead. "Are you hungry?"

"A banana would be nice." She caught his wrist before he could draw away. "I had a dream. A nightmare. I was killed by a dragon."

"Your subconscious is trying to tell you something," her mother interrupted. "But you couldn't have dreamt you died. I heard if you die in your dreams, you die in real life."

"I think that's a myth."

"There is no way to know," Miyoko argued as she folded laundry. "If it happened to you, you would be dead and couldn't tell us."

Alec sat on the edge of the bed, watching Eve with an alert gaze. He knew she couldn't say what she meant while her mother

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was in the room.

"It's over now," he soothed. "You're safe."

"It was so real . . . I don't understand how I'm sitting here now."

"We'll talk later, after you've had a chance to eat." He squeezed her hand. His expression held the softness he showed only to her. "Let me get you that banana."

He left, and her mom returned to the side of the bed. Leaning over, Miyoko whispered loudly, "He fights with your boss. About *everything*. You would think they were married. Too much testosterone in those two. Not enough brains."

The angel made a choked noise.

"Mom . . ." Eve glanced at the corner. He looked pained. It was an expression her father wore often.

Miyoko straightened and gathered up the now-folded clothes. "A *thoughtful* man would carry sunscreen to the beach. He wouldn't let you get burned."

Sunburned at the beach. Eve snorted at the excuse. If only she'd been bedridden for something so simple. "I can count on one hand the number of guys I've seen carry sunscreen."

"A good man would," her mother insisted.

"Like Dad?"

"Sure."

"I've never seen Dad with sunscreen."

"That's not the point."

"I thought it was."

Eve loved her father, she really did. Darrel Hollis was a good ol' boy from Alabama with an even-keeled temper and a gentle smile. He was also oblivious. Retired now, he rose at dawn, watched television or read, then went back to bed after dinner. The most unexpected thing he had ever done was marry a foreign

exchange student (and Eve suspected her mother hadn't given him much choice in the matter).

"Stop dating pretty boys," Miyoko admonished, "and find someone stable."

Eve shot a beseeching glance at the angel in the corner. He sighed and stepped closer. His voice had a soothing resonance no mortal could create.

"You want to replant the flowers in the pots by your front door," he whispered in Miyoko's ear. "You will go to the nursery, then home, where you will spend the rest of the afternoon indulging in your passion for gardening. Evangeline is fine and no longer needs you."

Her mother paused, her head tilting as she absorbed the thoughts she assumed were her own. The gift of persuasion. Eve hadn't mastered that one yet.

"You should get a spa pedicure, too," Eve added. "You deserve it."

Miyoko shook her head. "I don't need —"

"Get a pedicure," the angel ordered.

"I think I'll get a pedicure," Miyoko said.

"With flowers painted on your big toes," Eve went on.

The angel shot her a quelling glance.

Eve winced. "If you want," she amended quickly.

Alec returned with the banana. Standing by her bed, he peeled it, arresting her with the sight of his flexing biceps.

"I'm going home," her mom said suddenly. "The laundry is done, the dishes washed. You're fine. You don't need me."

"Thank you for everything." Eve intended to stand and hug her mother, but remembered that she was naked between her satin sheets.

Miyoko waved her off and headed toward the door. "Let

me change first and get my stuff together, then I'll say good-bye."

Reed's voice rumbled down the hallway and swept over Eve's skin like the warm caress of the sun. "Let me help you with that, Mrs. Hollis."

Eve looked at Alec, who resumed his seat on the edge of her bed. Then, she glanced at the angel. "Hi."

"Hello, Evangeline." He stepped forward, his heavy boots making no sound on the hardwood floor. He had an inordinate number of feathers and appeared to have three pairs of wings. He was beyond impressive; he was the most perfectly gorgeous creature she had ever seen.

"Who are you?" she asked before taking a bite of the fruit. The first chunk was swallowed almost whole, followed immediately by another. Her stomach growled, reiterating that the mark burned a ton of calories and she was expected to keep up by eating frequently.

"Sabrael."

Chewing, she glanced at Alec again.

"He is a seraph," he explained.

Her eyes widened and she chewed faster, embarrassed to be naked in such company. The seraphim were the highest ranking angels, far above the seven archangels who managed the day-to-day operations of the mark system here on Earth. Alec was a *mal'akh*—the lowest rank of angel—as was his brother. Eve was a lowly Mark, one of thousands of poor suckers drafted into godly ser vice for perceived sins. They worked for absolution by hunting and killing Infernals who'd crossed the line one too many times. A bounty was earned for every successful vanquishing, indulgences that went toward the saving of Mark souls.

"Can I get dressed?" she asked, wiping her mouth with the tips of her fingers.

Alec stood and took the empty peel from her. "Sabrael won't leave until he speaks with you. Celestials have a different view of nudity than mortals do. Tell me what you need and I'll get it."

Eve directed him to a beach cover-up that hung in her closet. It was made of pale blue terry cloth and sported a hood, short sleeves, and a pouch in the front. Alec dropped it over her head, and she shoved her various body parts through the appropriate openings.

"Okay, Sabrael," she began, brushing her hair back from her face. "Why are you here?"

"The better question would be: Why are *you* here, Evangeline? You should be dead."

She bit back a groan. Another riddle. It seemed all the angels spoke in them, except for Alec and Reed. Those two spoke so bluntly she'd be perpetually blushing if not for the mark, which prevented her body from wasting energy. "I thought I was."

"You were. But Cain claims you have knowledge we need."

Eve looked at Alec. "You brought me back from the dead to grill me for information?"

Sabrael's arms crossed in front of his massive chest. "You were going someplace where we would not have been able to ask you. It was the only way."

Her gaze moved heavenward. "You're not winning any brownie points with me," she called out.

"It is not your place to demand Jehovah prove himself to you," Sabrael said in a terrible voice.

"You said we missed something in Upland," Alec prompted, his fingers lacing with hers.

She thought back to her last assignment—vanquishing an

Infernal in one of the men's bathrooms at Qualcomm Stadium. Alec had taken her out on their first "date"—a Chargers versus Seahawks football game. Reed had come along and said it was time to parlay her classroom instruction into the field.

"A wolf," she murmured.

"What?"

"I assigned her to a werewolf," Reed said from the doorway. He approached the opposite side of the bed and passed a chilled bottle of water across the expanse to Eve. "A kid. Easy pickings."

"Only it wasn't a wolf," Alec retorted. "And it sure as shit wasn't easy."

"But there was one there," Eve explained. "One of the kids we spotted in the convenience store in Upland."

Upland. She'd never think of the town the same way again. They had been sent there on an investigation. Just as Marks bore the Mark of Cain on their arms, Infernals bore "details" that betrayed what species they were, and what their rank in Hell's hierarchy was. Sort of like military insignia. They also reeked of rotting souls, which made them easy to detect. When Eve stumbled across an Infernal who bore no details and no stench, she and Alec had been tasked with discovering how that was possible. They'd found that a masking agent had been created, a concoction that could potentially tip the balance between good and evil enough to set off Armageddon.

The operation had been run out of a masonry in Upland. The place was gone now, blown to smithereens when Eve shoved a water demon into a fired-up kiln. But it appeared the original problem still remained to be dealt with. The dragon had been odor-free, a condition made possible only by the mask.

"He said the Alpha sent him," she went on. "They wanted

me dead as retaliation for the death of his son."

Alec's face took on a hardened cast that chilled her blood. "Charles."

"The bigger issue," she said quickly, "was that the dragon he brought with him didn't stink or have any details."

"There has to be more of the masking agent somewhere," Reed said. "A stockpile or a new batch."

"Perhaps the mask is permanent?" Sabrael suggested.

"No, it wears off. I saw it happen."

The seraph's gaze moved to Alec. "You did not smell the Infernal either?"

"I told you, I didn't pay attention." Alec continued to focus his attention on Eve. The muscle in his arm twitched just below the mark, as if it pained him, and she knew immediately what he was doing—he was lying. The mark burned when sins were committed.

Turning his head to look at Sabrael, Alec said, "I haven't been trained as a mentor. I don't know how to focus on both the target and Eve at once. I only know how to hone in on her."

To bring her back from the brink of Hell, he'd lied to someone in power. A seraph. Or maybe God himself. Alec would pay for that . . . somehow, some way. And now he was lying again. For her.

Her grip on his hand tightened until she was white knuckled, but he didn't complain.

Miyoko bustled back into the room, her gaze narrowing at the sight of the two men on either side of Eve's bed. "Okay, I'm ready to go."

Alec stood so Eve could get out of bed, but he held her back when it became clear that she was too dizzy to complete the effort. She held out her arms for a hug instead.

"When did you get your scar removed?" her mother asked as she bent over.

Her fingers brushed over the Mark of Cain. All of Eve's childhood scars had been removed with the mark. Her body was a temple now. It ran like a well-oiled machine—precise and without deviations such as sweating, a racing heartbeat, or labored breathing. Except when sex was involved. Then everything worked in full mortal fashion. It made orgasms as addicting as a drug, since it was the only time a Mark could get "high."

Eve frowned when her mother didn't say anything about the mark on her deltoid. Her younger sister Sophia's first tattoo had been lamented with the statement, "You used to be such a beautiful baby."

"I get a tattoo," Eve said dryly, "and you're worried about a mole?"

"You got a tattoo?" her mother screeched. "Where?"

Eve blinked and looked down at her arm. She glanced at Alec who shook his head.

Her mother couldn't see it.

Sadness settled over Eve, weighing her down. The barrier between her and her old life wasn't just meta-phorical.

"Just kidding," Eve husked, her throat tight.

"That was terrible," her mother complained, pushing her gently in recrimination. "I almost cried."

They hugged, and her mother straightened. "I made some *onigiri*. It's in a container by the coffeemaker."

"Thank you, Mom."

Reed moved to the door. "I'll help you carry your things down, Mrs. Hollis."

Miyoko beamed. Eve's condo was on the upper floor and

the carport was subterranean.

"Kiss ass," Alec muttered, as they left.

Eve smacked him. "She needs help."

"I was going to help her, if he hadn't jumped all over her."

Sabrael cleared his throat. "You will hunt the Alpha wolf, Cain."

There was a long moment of stunned silence, then, "Eve is in training."

"And she will remain that way," the seraph assured. "The classroom is the safest place for her to be, but you must go."

Alec shook his head. "No way. You can't separate a mentor/Mark pair."

"Charles Grimshaw is connected to the Infernal mask. His son was at the masonry where the concoction was being manufactured and the masked dragon that killed Evangeline was sent at his behest. Time is of the essence. He must be put down before he causes more damage. Your agreement was that you would still perform individual hunts as well as your mentored ones."

Alec ran both hands through his dark hair. "Once it becomes known that she's still alive, they will hunt her. She'll need me nearby to protect her."

"Raguel has full use of his gifts at the moment. I doubt even you can offer better protection than an archangel in full regalia. Also, don't forget that you are earning double indulgences for every vanquishing. Killing an Infernal of Grimshaw's prominence will advance you by years."

Alec's jaw tightened. "And I'm just supposed to say, 'Sorry, angel. I'm off to save my own ass, so you're on your own?'"

Eve winced.

"I'll be okay," she reassured, her thumb brushing

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soothingly over his palm. "Shouldn't be any trouble at all. You and Reed can go about your business without worrying. We all know Gadara won't allow anything bad to happen to me, since he needs me to bully you two."

"That doesn't mean," Reed drawled as he returned, "that we're not going to worry. You always manage to find trouble."

She almost argued that Gadara liked to shove her face first into trouble just to irritate Alec, but that wouldn't make them feel better.

"I especially don't like that this week is field training," Alec said, glancing at Reed. "It's one thing to be in Gadara Tower. It's another to be out in the open."

"Fort McCroskey is a military base," Sabrael said. "A *closed* base."

"It still has a military presence, and Raguel will travel with his entourage of guards."

Eve frowned at all three men. "What are you talking about?"

Reed explained. "Raguel is taking your class up to Northern California. There's a former Army base there that he likes to use for field exercises."

Eve groaned inwardly. A week-long trip with a class of newbie Marks who resented her for having the infamous Cain as a mentor and the equally revered Abel as a handler. She figured the coming week would be as much fun as a Brazilian wax.

"Doesn't the Alpha live in Northern California?" she asked.

Alec nodded. "A couple hours north of the base. Fort McCroskey is near Monterey, the Grimshaw pack is nearer to Oakland."

"A couple of hours' drive is quite convenient," Sabrael pointed out. "You could have been sent on assignment to the

other side of the world."

"You can't make me like this," Alec bit out. "But I'll take Eve up to Monterey, then continue on."

Reed grinned. "I'll keep a close eye on her while Cain is busy."

"You have an Infernal to classify," Sabrael reminded him. "You both must trust that Raguel will see to Evangeline's safety."

Eve sighed. "Anyone want to switch places?"

"Sorry, babe," Reed said. "Mark training isn't a place to play hooky."

"She's not your babe," Alec snapped.

Reed held both hands up in a gesture of surrender that was belied by the mischievous twinkle in his eyes.

Their feud wasn't helped by her past intimacy with Reed. That happened before Alec had reentered her life, so he didn't hold it against her. But to say that he didn't trust his brother to be within a mile of her would be an understatement.

Alec looked at Eve, his features softening. "You'd rather hunt real demons than pretend to?"

"Maybe I was resurrected with a different personality," she suggested. "Like *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*."

"Or maybe you're pissed off at getting killed, and want a little payback."

Her mouth tilted at the corners. How well he knew her.

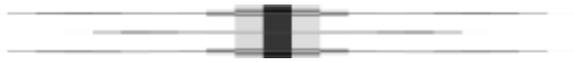
"But if you are a pod person," he continued, "you have great taste in bodies."

A tingle moved through her. His wink told her he knew it.

"Four more weeks, angel. Then we'll tear 'em up."

Four more weeks of class, one of which was a camp-out. Eve sighed. She was definitely back among the living.

Hell would have more direct means of torture.



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