

DARK INITIATION
Confessions of a Succubus Book 1

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Smashwords Edition

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CHAPTER ONE

My Confession

I write these snippets, these confessions, in the bright sun of late afternoon, as I sit in my old house, surrounded by my old life. I'm the only succubus in the Herem who returns home. My sisters think I can't let go, but I said goodbye to my former life long ago. I started coming here to plan, to plot, to prepare for the coming war. But that's getting ahead of myself.

I wasn't born a succubus. It's a choice you make, even if you don't understand it at the time. How did it happen to me? I admit it: I fucked a demon—the demon Asmodeus himself. I liked it, too. I could say I didn't know what I was doing, and maybe when I first met Asmodeus that was true. But at the moment of choice? You'll have to judge for yourself.

CHAPTER TWO

The Day I Met Dey

It's not every day you meet the High Demon Lord of Lust on your afternoon break.

I'm at the information desk, paging through a travel magazine and finishing up a cup of decaf. I'm not much of a night owl and I'd been up until two the night before binge watching season five of Law & Order SVU. This morning, I'd arrested myself for lonely stupidity and sentenced myself to a quiet dinner then an early bedtime.

I don't know how long he was standing there. I'm absorbed by a photo spread on Santorini in a travel magazine, dreaming of exotic trips I'll probably never take. I look up toward my coffee to find him watching me. It's an instant realization: he isn't just standing there, idly, and he isn't waiting for assistance. He's here for me. The thought is both immediate and ridiculous so I push it aside and manage to stutter out, "Can I help you?"

He's silent for a full beat, still staring at me with rich brown eyes under a strong brow and heavy black eyebrows. Then he smiles, white teeth bright against cappuccino-colored skin, framed by a neatly-trimmed mustache and goatee. "Yes, I believe you can." He's a tall man, and broad. The words rumble up out of his chest.

The effect of his voice is instinctive, undeniable. Yes, I echo in my head, no other thoughts, just yes. I open my mouth but for once in my life, I can't manage a word.

"I'm looking for the section on Victorian art. Alexandre Louis Leloir in particular." I notice his accent then: British, or maybe Irish. Its refinement is in sharp contrast to his almost rough appearance: a worn white button down shirt with the sleeves rolled up to reveal some kind of tribal tattoos on his forearms, wrinkled khaki trousers, shoulder length black hair pulled back and loosely bound with a rubber band, and a very worn light leather backpack slung over one shoulder. I don't realize I'm staring until his smile broadens and he repeats, "Victorian art?" as a question this time.

"Yes," I say, a bit breathless, and then I stammer, "Of course. Right over here."

I have never been as aware of how my body moves as I am for the 90 seconds it takes to walk to the Art History section. He's behind me, following me, and I know he's watching. The hairs stand up on my arms and the back of my neck. My heart is pounding

in my chest and I can hear each beat in my ears like the thump of a tribal drum. I have a quick flash of a nature film that haunted me as a child: the frantic eyes of an impala as it realizes it's turned into the path of a lion. I have that sense of panic but an odd lack of fear. I feel hunted... but not frightened by it. It's like I want to be caught.

"I don't think I've seen you here before," he's saying. "You must work Tuesdays and Thursdays, and maybe weekend evenings?"

I glance back at him, surprised. "How did you know that?"

He laughs and raises a hand in mock defense. "Sorry—just realized that sounded a bit forward."

I laugh, a sound filled with my nervous energy. "It's a little stalkerish, yeah."

"I've been in here often lately, but I haven't seen you. I assumed you work the hours I teach." I hear his footsteps have stopped behind me and turn to find his hand extended. "I'm Dey. Short for Amadeus. Visiting professor of religious studies."

I blurt out, "Rachel," and take a few steps back toward him. I grip his hand to shake it and there's a tingle through my body, a warmth that starts in my hand my ends in my chest and groin. I stare up at him in surprise and he's got an almost sly smile on his face. He knows what's happening to me.

"Are you a student?" he's asking but it's hard to hear his words because his thumb is slowly caressing the back of my hand. It's subtle but I feel my breath start to quicken a little and a flush rises in my cheeks.

"Yes, I am." My voice is husky, a shade deeper than usual. I shake my head a bit to clear it, pull my hand toward me, and he releases it. He steps through my awkwardness, putting a hand on the small of my back to start both of us walking toward the Art History section.

I'm talking nervously. The place where Dey's hand touched my back still feels warm. "Ok, there's Victorian art, so we should be almost there. Yes, here it is." There are two books on Leloir, on the top shelf. I'm almost 5'9" but they're inches above my grip. "I'll get the ladder."

"No need," he says, and he reaches above me. Now that he's so close, I can calculate his size: at least six inches taller than I am and broader too. "I could actually wear his shirts," I think, and the thought's so novel it stops me dead. When you're a tall woman with meat on her bones, it's rare to find someone who makes you feel dainty.

"This one looks perfect," he's saying but I'm lost in sensation. I can smell him: warm, woody, spicy, with a hint of something sharp beneath. It reminds me of campfires, of the snap and scent just after you light a match.

"Oh good," I stammer, and I take a step back in reflex.

Dey looks through the pages of the book quickly, nodding. "Yes, just what I need." I don't realize I'm staring until he smiles, using the book to point toward the register. "Can you ring me up?"

I look toward the front register and it's unmanned. Where's Frank? He's assistant

manager and usually as reliable as the electric bill (and just about as exciting). I feel like I've entered some kind of strange dream as I say, "Sure," and walk toward the counter. I'm aware that Dey's behind me, watching me, and again I feel the unnerving sense of... predation. The word pops into my head unbidden, and I try to shake it loose by walking more quickly.

I slip behind the counter, and am surprised to see that Frank's code is still active on the register. I frown, punch him out, then enter my code and scan the book. My hands are shaking. "\$42.35, please." I'm strangely proud that my voice is steadier than my hands.

He hands me cash and asks me a question that freezes me in place. "Would you care to have dinner with me tonight?"

My body is still but my mind is racing. I don't even know him. I never go out with men I don't know. I mean, I hardly ever go out with anyone at this point. I'm pretty much a hermit. Why would he ask me out? He doesn't even know anything about me. I haven't said a word while these thoughts rush through my head.

I don't know how long Dey leaves me frozen before he says, "Meet at Kahill's? 8:00?"

"What makes you think I've said yes?" I blurt out, irritated that he would assume and still be surprised enough at his question to lose my verbal filter.

"Because you're... interesting," he says, folding his arms across his chest and studying me the way visitors study a painting in a gallery. "You'd rather spend an evening alone than spend it with someone boring or awkward. So you don't say yes often, but you will to me." He grins.

"That just makes me want to say no," I say, and now he's almost disarmed me into laughter.

"You won't say no. You'll say yes because I'm interesting, too."

My head nods against my will (traitor), and I manage a shrug. "No matter how interesting you are, I don't usually go out with men I don't know."

"Right. But you will in this case." He leans forward, hands on the counter. I can smell his musk again and the smoky smell starts a warmth in my stomach. His expression is humorous, challenging, one eyebrow raised, full lips in an expression somewhere between a smile and a smirk. "Kahill's at 8:00?" he repeats.

It's phrased perfectly: I don't have to tell this man I've known for all of ten minutes where I live. And Kahill's is arguably the best restaurant in town. But that's not what makes the word yes come out of my mouth inadvertently: it's the image in my head of leaning forward, across the counter, and licking Dey's lips open to meet his tongue with mine. "Yes," I say, in a hoarse whisper, and there's a part of me that wants that to mean, "Yes, right now, right here on the counter."

He smiles widens, and I've never seen a smile look so dangerous. "Fantastic. I'll see you then."

I watch him leave, out the door and then down the street toward campus, and the store

falls silent. I'm still standing at the register ten minutes later when Frank comes back. He looks surprised. "Rachel? Did you need something?"

I break out of my trance and feel the blood rush to my face, like life returning to normal speed. "I had to ring someone up." The thought makes me look at the register, page up, and verify the purchase is there. It really happened.

"In thirty seconds?"

I look over at Frank, confused. "What do you mean?"

"I was only away from the register for a few seconds. I just went to get..." He pauses, tilts his head, and now he's the one who looks confused. "What was I getting?"

I was almost as bewildered as Frank. "I'm not sure what just happened there," I muse, but as I walk back to the information desk all I can think about is where tonight might end.

I expected the hours until I get off work at 6:00 to drag but they fly by. I'm walking home past a small boutique when I see it: the perfect dress. It's grey rather than black, which is kinder to my pale Irish skin. It has three-quarter sleeves, which feels like a miracle since apparently while I was in a fashion coma the whole world went sleeveless. It's also long, what they've labeled a "maxi dress," a term I've never heard until that moment. And they even have a size 12.

When I try it on, the silky grey material clings to my figure, dipping in folds along my chest to show the start of cleavage then follow up that hint with more than a suggestion of the shape of my breasts. It follows my curves along my waist, past my hips and over my bottom, and then falls in a graceful line to my lower calf. The color suits me: my fair skin looks freckled but rosy and my eyes take on a blue hint instead of their normal hazel. I love it, I'm out of time, and those two factors combine to overcome any reluctance to spend \$100 on a dress I will most likely only wear once.

I'm home by 7:20 and in the shower five minutes later. The scent of jasmine body wash rises up in fragrant clouds of steam. I take a deep breath, and flex my shoulder muscles to let the pulsing water beat against tense muscles on my back. I confess that my thoughts wander at the rough feel of the loofa against my breasts. I can still feel his gaze on me, the weight of it, the almost physical pressure of his intense interest. I follow the loofa with slippery, soapy fingers. My nipples rise into sharp peaks, and blood flushes up into my cheeks.

"Is this how he would touch me?" I think, and as my fingers pull on a nipple I hear his voice again, like distant thunder. Instead of the light, summery body wash I begin to smell Dey—that sharp, distinctive smoky musk. My breath begins coming more quickly and I lean against the back of the shower as one hand travels down my stomach, to the newly trimmed hairs at the top of my triangle, and then inside. I'm already slick with arousal. As my fingers start a circular motion and the hot shower tingles against my erect nipples, the rush of immediate response is overwhelming. I see a flash of the dark tattoos on his strong arms as he leans forward, across the counter, daring me to say yes. "Yes," I

say again as I come. “Yes!” My legs are shaking so much I have to take a few minutes before I can finish showering.

When I’ve finished drying my hair and putting on makeup, it’s 7:50. I take one last moment to check the mirror, as I fasten my favorite pair of black pearl earrings. My brown hair brushes my shoulders in gentle waves, and subtle blue eye shadow enhances the color of my eyes. A light foundation let my freckles show through. I spritz myself with a jasmine and orange perfume, take a deep breath, and head out.

The drive is quick and the lot’s busy, even on a Tuesday night. I walk in briskly, and my hands are shaking. I’m 10 minutes late, but that’s fashionable, right? It isn’t the lateness causing my nervousness, but my unusual behavior. What am I doing? I pause in the parking lot, one hand on the hood of a Lexus backed into a spot. I feel dizzy, off-balance, and like I’m on the verge of realizing something important. It has something to do with Frank, I think, and how out of character it was to leave the register and not even seem to remember why.

Then Dey steps out of the restaurant, scanning the parking lot. My heart stops and I have a momentary urge to flee, before he... too late. He’s seen me, and now he’s walking toward me. He’s changed clothes too, into a black shirt and pants. “Rachel! I was beginning to wonder if I’d said the wrong restaurant.”

It’s a lovely night, still very warm. The air’s moist from the Missouri river that flows steadily just beyond the restaurant, and it generates a slight cool breeze. I can feel my dress clinging to my back with the beginning dew of sweat and humidity. My breathing is shallow, uneven, because he’s looking at me, clearly admiring me. I can feel his eyes like fingers against my skin as he takes in the swell of my breasts and the curves of my waist and hips. He looks up, and his eyes meet mine. “You look delicious.” And he smiles.

I’m completely unprepared for such directness. A few breaths pass before I manage, “Um, thank you.”

Dey’s wearing a cologne that smells smoky, like sandalwood incense, and beneath it is the distinctive smell I’ve already come to associate with him: the sharp scent of a recent match flame. I take another few breaths, and I feel the blood start to rush back to my head and the world begins moving again. I’ve never had a man look at me that way on a date. No one dared to. Sure, there are always a few guys on the street who catcall as I walk to work, but that’s not real. That’s not a man like Dey, saying I’m delicious like I’m on the menu tonight.

And then my breath picks up again as I realize I very much want to be on the menu tonight.