

DEVIL
AND
DISCIPLE

The Temptation

by

L.J.K Cross



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CHAPTER 1

They both stood stone still. Two spellbound lovers hypnotised by a love so innate, so primordial that it transcended the depths of time. He was entranced, captivated, unable to divert his gaze for a single second from the object of his passion. The feelings she stirred in him were utterly overwhelming, yet completely contradictory. A heady, heart-racing tumult of temptation and innocence all rolled into one. She was a pure work of art. Irreplaceable. Inimitable. Unattainable.

A single beam of virginal white light descended from above, shrouding her porcelain beauty in an ethereal, otherworldly air. Everything around her paled into imperfect insignificance. Her divine aura highlighted the frailty of mortality. The celestial luminosity she radiated was in stark contrast to the foreboding darkness that skulked around the banished outskirts of the room, providing a contrast as clear and as cut as heaven and hell. Indeed the unparalleled majesty of her beauty demanded you make the terrifying choice. Would you be drawn to the purity and the illumination or would you be tempted to delve into the hidden unknown that lay beyond in those dark recesses?

He had made his choice long ago; an irrevocable Faustian pact, that had sealed his fate and condemned his soul to the most macabre of darkness. He would seek to create perfection that paralleled hers so that once again his hollow vacuum of a heart would know what it felt like to love, and be loved, unequivocally. He knew he was doomed but it was a welcome relief to the endless years of pain and abandonment he had endured. He had long since learnt to repress any sign of human emotion deep within. Feelings such as compassion and affection were discarded as inconvenient weaknesses that threatened to distract him from his greater agenda. The only hint of all the pain that burned inside him was the searing flames from the fire that mockingly danced in the charcoals of his eyes. Yet as his eyes drank in every flawless contour of her cold, marbled purity, it did little to quench his thirst for her. The more he observed her, the more resolute he became that he had suffered too long at the cruel hands of loneliness and pain. For too long, their choking grip had squeezed all signs of human life and emotion out of him until he had become as hollow as the statue that stood before him.

These fantastical imaginings of his muse stoked the long since extinguished embers in the cauldron of his heart. His plan began to simmer, boiling and bubbling up to the surface. As he observed each carefully carved curve that flowed into the next exquisitely crafted limb, he breathed new life into his scheme. In the twisted machinations of his mind, the closer he came to giving life to his long held desires, the closer he would come to bringing back to life what had once been so cruelly and suddenly taken away from him. He had to make her

return to him and love him once again, regardless of the consequences. Hadn't the tragic Greek hero Oedipus acted upon his forbidden desires for his mother, Queen Jocasta, and knowingly risked condemning himself to eternal damnation?

"*Match*", he whispered so only the statue could hear. His voice was as tender as the most doting child to its mother.

"*Pochemu ty ostavili menya?*" He paused and looked searchingly at the cold statute, imploring it to tell him why he had been abandoned.

"*Ya vsyo yeshchyo skuchayu po tebye*". He needed her to know that he still missed her with each day that passed. His eyes began to well with tears but did little to extinguish the searing pain that burned within him. With each heartfelt out pouring the flames in the huge stone open hearth fire to his right blazed higher; a reflection of the feverous passions that smoldered in his heart.

"*Vozvrashchaysya ko mnye*". How he wished that she would come back to him. His whole body began to shake, no longer able to contain the years of repressed emotion. For the first time in years he allowed the tears to flow freely as he abandoned himself to his memories of a time of carefree innocence when his mother's love had been unconditional and as pure as the effigy before him. When every bump and graze had caused her strong, protecting arms to envelope him, shielding him from further danger. When the smallest of accomplishments, like the first time he rode his bicycle unassisted or when he scored full marks on a spelling test at school, was magnified in the fierce pride that

beamed across his mother's face. When each night she would rock him in her arms and the melodic words of the lullabies she softly sang would carry him into peaceful slumber. "*Lyuli, lyuli, lyulenko. Gde vy, gde vy gylenko...*" He smiled as the soothing tune came floating back to him.

Alexander had idolised his mother. In his eyes she had been more perfect than any statue even the greatest of sculptors could have created. Even as a small child he had been so proud of his mother's sporting achievements. He had been her biggest supporter, just as she had been his. Yet even from an early age he had been all too aware how different his mother had been from his friend's mothers. Often he had had to defend her and often he hadn't stopped there, ending up on the ground in the schoolyard punching and kicking an apology out of anyone who dared taunt him about his mother's muscular physique. To him she was an Athenian goddess, a lioness queen of the Sahara. Her strength of body was matched only by her strength of mind. She was fearless. Invincible. Indomitable. She was gone!

Alexander tried to think back to the day his father had told him of his mother's death but the memory was too painful. Although buried deep in his subconscious since that day, it had been the constant key to his dogged drive and unsurpassed ambition. The sole purpose of Alexander's life from then on had been to bring her back to him. Every successful business deal, every suspect handshake and every audacious augmentation of power, by whatever unscrupulous means necessary was seen as

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a step closer to erasing her betrayal. Alexander had learnt a long time ago that money was the true root of all happiness; the only constant in his life that he had always been able to rely on.

This room, like the rest of the house, had changed little since that day. The only noticeable change was that the prodigious collection of priceless art works, sculptures and invaluable artifacts had increased to such an extent that the house was more like a museum than an everyday residence. There was little evidence of the daily comings and goings to be expected in normal households. Instead a reverent silence floated through the corridors. Conversations were muted and brief, almost embarrassed and scared in case they dared speak of her treacherous betrayal. Yet nothing could possibly diminish Alexander's devotion to his mother. With the multitude of statues and art works depicting the beauty of the athletic female form displayed throughout, the vast mansion could have been mistaken for a museum dedicated to cherishing her memory. Yet in reality it only served to remind him of what he had lost, making her absence all the more stark and painful. No matter how beautiful and valuable such inanimate objects were, they were no substitute for the love and laughter that had once reverberated through the house.

A polite cough awoke him from his reverie. Alexander turned to see the familiar faithful silhouette of Koroviev outlined in the doorway.

"Master" interrupted Koroviev deferentially, "I wanted to inform you as soon as was feasible of the

confirmation of your plans to visit Las Vegas for the Ms World Bodybuilder contest”.

“I hope all my requests were executed to the letter?” inquired Alexander, though he was sure he already knew the answer. Koroviev had never failed him yet. He feigned an insouciant air, hoping, but failing to suppress the wave of excited apprehension that was rising inside him at the mere mention of his annual pilgrimage to watch the Ms World Bodybuilder contest in Las Vegas. It was a ritual of worship of the world’s top female body builders. Women whose physical prowess was unsurpassed and, had yet to be emulated, by any artist; past or present.

“Yes Master. Your limousine and Learjet are on standby,” Koroviev informed him. “The penthouse suite at the Bellagio is booked. It has been fitted out to your specifications and your complimentary VIP tickets to the World Bodybuilder have been sent to you by the BBIF”. Alexander smiled knowingly to himself at this last detail. The very generous donation that he paid to the BBIF each year was the sole reason that the female bodybuilding class still remained part of the World Bodybuilder contest. Money had yet again brought about the desired outcome and proven that everyone and everything had their price. In actual fact the BBIF’s asking price had been mere pin money to Alexander. He would have willingly paid much more which only reinforced Alexander’s opinion that those fools that ran the BBIF had neither the sport’s nor the athlete’s interests at heart, only their own.

A thought had just occurred to Alexander for the first time. He suddenly realised that there was one thing

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in his life that he derived more pleasure from than money – that was more important to him – his devotion to and his pursuit of female physical perfection. Only when he had attained it would he be truly happy.

Then Alexander remembered. How could he have forgotten the most important detail of all?

“And have you found out her travel arrangements? Do you know when will she arrive? Where will she be staying? Whom is she traveling with?” he asked impatiently.

“She arrives on the Tuesday,” Koroviev replied calmly and concisely. It was rare to see his Master display any outward emotion, never mind see him this flustered.

“That is three days before the contest and she is staying at the host hotel. The room will be confirmed on her arrival but will present us with no problem.”

Koroviev hesitated, unsure how his Master would react to the rest of the information he had to tell him. He continued in a low, uncertain voice.

“And it appears that she won’t be alone. She is travelling with a Mr Steve Adams, whom I assume is her trainer.”

At this last detail, Alexander whipped round to face Koroviev and met him with a devilish stare. Koroviev felt Alexander’s hypnotising gaze bore right through to his soul, as if reading his mind. At a single glance Alexander could see that Koroviev was holding something back from him to protect his feelings. It was all too obvious to him that her travelling partner was more than just her trainer but Koroviev need not have bothered trying to cushion the blow though. As far as

Alexander was concerned this was a minor detail that could easily be erased.

Koroviev was dismissed with a perfunctory wave of the hand. Alone with his thoughts once more, Alexander's gaze returned to the marbled beauty that stood before him. Immediately his expression softened. As he once more beheld her chiseled perfection, he knew it was time to bring life to his deepest and most fervent desires.

"Ona budet tak zhye bezuprechna, kak i ty. Match." He whispered in barely audible tones. "She will be as perfect as you, mother."