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...Arturo unhooked Clara's skirt, pulling down the zipper. The material pooled at her feet. He slipped a hand inside her panties, then shoved them and the pantyhose down over her hips. She stepped out of them. His hand cupped her smooth mound. He remembered the first time he and Samir had spread her, shaved her, then fucked her. Almost everything about their relationship had been rooted in sensual ritual. It had been so very good. So right.

Clara's whole body was smooth as silk, the perfect tapestry, the perfect woman.

He pushed her onto the wrinkled drop cloth. Then he spread her, gazing at the perfectly parted petals of her labia, the glistening core pink, a shade he'd spent hours trying to match perfectly with a blend of oils. He leaned forward to trace his tongue over her inner moist lips.

He sucked her hardened clitoris into his mouth, circling his tongue over the pretty bud. He remembered the challenge of translating that perfect nub of passion onto canvas. How he and Samir had argued over the colors, the image, the need to draw the essence of Clara's impeccable flesh onto the canvas, making it live and shimmer brighter than life, beyond human, beyond worldly.

Arturo tasted her, flicked his tongue over the bud, feeling her shudder, hearing her moan. He remembered the splashes of paint decorating her flesh as he and Samir brought her to

climax after climax with just the touch of their sable brushes.

Clara screamed as a climax shattered her. She gripped his shoulders, her nails digging into his flesh. Arturo welcomed the bite of pain. Needed it to remember he was alive. There had been so many moments when he'd felt numb to the world around him.

But never to Clara. Never to Samir...

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BY

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AMBER QUILL PRESS, LLC

<http://www.AmberQuill.com>

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Copyright © 2008 by Dream Romantic Unlimited LLC
ISBN 978-1-60272-436-5
Cover Art © 2008 Trace Edward Zaber

Layout and Formatting provided by: Elemental Alchemy

PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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CHAPTER 1

Where are you, Samir? We need you!

The words screamed through Clara's mind as she studied the painting prominently displayed at the front of the exclusive department store.

"It's a very...riveting piece, isn't it? Do you know the artist?"

Clara couldn't take her eyes off the work of art. She felt the heat of a summer sun on her naked body. Sable brushes skimming across her skin, between the lips of her pussy. She squeezed her legs tightly together, trying to deny the erotic sensations that quaked through her.

"Clara, did you hear me?"

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“Yes, Maggie, I heard you. It wasn’t created by one artist—it was two. You know one of them.”

Spread your legs, Clara. Show us your desire. Clara shivered as the ghostly demand echoed inside her head.

“I do? Who is it?”

She felt fingertips stroke gently across her inner thighs. The warmth of a bonfire against her back. The rough texture of a flannel blanket beneath her.

“Arturo.”

Maggie turned to look at Clara, her mouth agape.

“I didn’t know he ever did work like this. It doesn’t look like any of the stuff you have on display at the gallery. Who was the other artist?”

“Samir Zahi.” Prince Samir Zahi to be correct. Samir, whose mouth had tasted her, lips hot and demanding on her breasts. Her nipples burned for him as she studied the painting, yearning to feel his mouth on her flesh once again.

“Why have I never heard of him before?”

A shaft of pain drove straight through Clara’s chest like a jagged arrow piercing her heart. She remembered the agony of returning to the cottage that long ago afternoon to find every speck of Samir erased. It was as though he had never been there. No note. Nothing. The paintings Samir and Arturo had created together had been nowhere in sight. Arturo had been seated in front of the window, hollow-eyed, staring off at the horizon. He had said little except that Samir was needed back in Razban. Even three years later he had shared little with her of that afternoon. Samir was gone, along with all of the

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paintings he and Arturo had created together.

“He disappeared about three years ago. Called back to his country by his father.” Clara marveled at how even her voice sounded. That was such an understatement as to what had happened and the maelstrom of emotions that had resulted. “This is the first I’ve seen of their collaborative work since then.”

“Well, I have to say it’s an amazing piece. There’s so much emotion expressed in it. Not that Arturo’s work isn’t fabulous. But this...there’s something so electric about it. The vivid imagery rips right through you.”

Clara knew exactly what Maggie meant. She knew quite well what those colors represented. Passion. Seduction. Lust. And freedom.

“Yes, the work they accomplished together was truly amazing. Their combined work always was...inspiring.” The words were tugged from her chest. It wasn’t easy talking about love ripped apart by circumstances. These two men had been the loves of her life and she had never recovered from the loss of Samir.

She still read the paper daily, searching for news of Razban and the new king. After a bloody battle for control, King Zahi had come out of exile in triumph and re-taken the throne. Although there was still some unrest, it appeared Zahi’s support was strong and the new regime would thrive. But Clara always hunted for some reference to his youngest son, Samir. Never a word. Almost as though Razban’s youngest royal prince had vanished from the face of the earth.

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Suddenly she felt a chill race through her and she shivered. She rubbed her arms. Skin that was still smooth as a baby's bottom. Hairless, the way her two lovers had always enjoyed her. A blank canvas to be used for their pleasure—and for hers.

It was not a relationship she had simply jumped into. For the most part Clara had always been reserved in her relationships, but something about the two budding artists had changed everything. Samir and Arturo had eased her into the role of model, then lover, seduced her into becoming a human canvas, a position she took to with sensual enthusiasm. And she had let them; loving every moment she was with them.

Clara Simms had taken a dare four years ago and had posed nude for an art class while she was in college. How could she ever have thought it would lead to the most devastating and passionate love affair she would ever have? With two men who had loved each other as much as they seemed to have loved her. At the time. Neither she nor Arturo were ever the same after Samir's disappearance. How could something so right have gone so wrong? It wasn't that she didn't still love Arturo, nor that he didn't have feelings for her. But with Samir gone, something had changed.

The painting brought it all back, a dam burst with memories, images of passion, the feel of artistic expression, the rampant desire that would not allow her to rest.

Too many times she'd woken up in absolute agony, remembering her loss, only to discover the spot next to her empty, Arturo sitting in a corner of the darkened room,

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smoking a cigarette, and gazing at a blank canvas. Understanding had not made it any easier. Samir had been so much a part of both of them.

Arturo still painted, but some of that passion was missing, and it often left him frustrated and difficult to be around. It's one of the reasons they still kept their separate apartments. She remembered the night he had walked out, and the agony in his expression as he'd looked at her. Even that memory still caused her pain. And loneliness.

She worked, she lived, she breathed, but she somehow felt distanced, living on the fringes of life. Arturo still painted, but he never used her as the model she was created to be for two men who, together, should have taken the art world by storm. That intimacy was missing and there wasn't a day that passed that she didn't yearn to reclaim it.

She so missed the intimacy of that summer three years ago. Clara couldn't bring herself to return to the site of her complete surrender. Not just of her body, but of her soul. They had owned her, bound her to them. Molded her into something more than she had been, a living piece of art who could not survive without them.

And yet, much to her surprise, she had survived without Samir, as had Arturo. And done well enough. Clara Simms, the daughter of an oil baron, didn't need to work. There was plenty of money to do whatever she liked. An only child of globetrotting parents, raised by nannies, she had never wanted for anything. Material, that is. She had never felt loved. Until Arturo and Samir.

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Money truly could not buy happiness, or love. But she'd learned that too much time on her hands was not a good thing. She'd found a job, went to it religiously every day. And then home every night. Well, almost every night.

“So you know him, Clara? Does he have anything at your gallery? I want to see more. It's as though I can't get enough. I want to climb right inside. Do you know who the model was?”

It was a personal thing. Not to be shared. The relationship she had with Arturo and Samir was not for public consumption. Few would have understood it anyway. Even Clara's best friend.

“No, we don't have anything at the gallery that was done by the two of them. This is the first piece I've seen in years. I wonder who's handling the work?”

Maggie, her friend since they'd both attended St. Mary's private school, looked at her in surprise. She worked as a buyer at the exclusive store next door to this one. Every Friday, they met for lunch. “Now you've shocked me. I thought you knew every artist there was to know in this town.”

That was the worst part. She'd spent years trying to track down what had happened to Samir with absolutely no success. She wanted to know he was safe and happy. That he had *wanted* to go. Arturo had refused to talk about what had happened when Samir left.

Heat threaded through her as memory took over. Her nipples screwed into tight beads. She remembered that first encounter. Both Arturo and Samir had been seniors, sharing an apartment at that point in their lives. Just like her, both had

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been living on generous allowances from their families...although she doubted their families knew of their intimate relationship. At least at the time. Clara so belied her name. A puritan name for a not particularly puritan heart once she got to know them.

Hard, naked bodies pressed her between them. Hands sweeping across her skin. Touching her. Fingertips brushing across her lips, her nipples.

Oh, God, she didn't want to remember. Not now. Her whole body ached.

Through the whole session, while she posed, she'd flirted silently with the two hot-looking, black-eyed young artists on the left side of the room. By the time the session was over, her body was burning up, her pussy soaking wet. And she knew there was something more going on with the two men than strictly modeling. But she'd not known how tightly woven together the art and the sex would be.

And then panic shoved all other thought out of her head. Did Arturo know the paintings had resurfaced?

"I have to go, Maggie. I'm sorry."

"But we haven't had lunch yet."

"I know, I know. But I forgot an appointment. I'll catch up with you later." Clara fled from the department store. She had to get to Arturo.

CHAPTER 2

“Your highness, are you ready to leave?”

Prince Samir Zahi watched as the young woman fled from the department store. He could go after her, had almost started to, but this wasn't where he wanted their reunion to take place. Not like this. And not without Arturo.

He had agreed to have the painting put on exhibition because his cousin's family owned the store and he'd done it as a favor. And beyond that, he'd hoped that if Clara or Arturo saw it, they would understand. Samir was back.

He'd never thought he would actually see Clara, certainly not under these circumstances.

He'd only been back in the States for a week. Three years

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kept for all intents and purposes in a cage of safety protected from his own countrymen, his country in revolution, his father in a dangerous position as he claimed the throne of Razban. A minor son with no prospect of becoming the leader of his people, Samir chafed at being forced to return to Razban. He'd made a different life and was eager to begin it with his two lovers. But at the insistence of his father, he'd had no choice. King Zahi was taking no chances with any of his children.

Samir had ached for his lovers he'd been required to leave behind. His family never would have accepted them and would have made their lives a living hell in Razban. But he was back now, having renounced all claims in any respect to his royal heritage. He couldn't stand the isolation another minute longer. He had to be free. And he had to see Arturo and Clara, even if neither of them wanted him to be a part of their lives any longer. Thank goodness relations with the United States were good and his return had gone smoothly.

Would Clara recognize the painting? Would she understand? He hadn't picked up a paintbrush since being whisked away that long ago summer. His father had finally agreed to let him return. Turning down that last marriage arrangement had apparently been the final straw. It was Samir's mother who had finally convinced Samir's father to let him go.

It felt like a weight had been lifted from his shoulders when he finally stepped off the plane onto American soil once again. Freedom had never tasted so good. And he planned to waste not another minute in attempting to locate the lovers he

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had been forced to leave behind. Had they married? Had they gone their separate ways? It felt as though his whole life had been stripped away when he'd been forced to leave the country. Had they forgotten him?

“Do you want their deaths on your hands?”

Those were the words that had finally forced Samir to obey the royal command. It was the only thing that could have made him leave America and return to the country that suffocated his creativity, forcing him into the stringent demands of royal duty.

He turned to look at the one guard his father had forced upon him. “You located them? And the invitations have been delivered?”

“Yes, your highness. Just as you requested.”

He watched Clara hurry out of the store. Would she come to him? Would Arturo?

He remembered his last time with them both. The late afternoon sunlight had streamed in through the window, highlighting her lush body, the paint he and Arturo had used still wet and shiny on her flesh. Her breasts and pussy were the only parts of her not colored by their artistry. Her eyes had been dark as she watched the two men, her labia lips wet with a different sheen than paint.

“Go to her,” he'd said to Arturo. The two men had just had passionate sex as Clara posed on the pedestal, still and beautiful. Their muse, their lover, their passionate tapestry.

He had lain back on the bed, stroking his cock as Arturo crawled to where Clara was poised. Not a sound from Clara,

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for fear of marring the landscape that had taken Arturo and Samir hours to complete.

Even now, three years later, the image of that passionate afternoon had the ability to rouse him. He had watched Arturo carefully slip his tongue between her lips, tasting her, sucking at her juices.

He'd heard her moans slip from her as Arturo pierced deeper. Crouched in front of her, ass raised enticingly, Samir had stroked his cock.

It was the game they loved playing. How long could Clara hold the pose without moving? How good would Arturo be in driving her over the edge? Arturo's hands lifted up to tweak the hardened peaks of her nipples as his tongue and teeth feasted on her sweet cream. A slight ripple of movement from her hips and Samir had known it wouldn't be much longer.

At that moment, Samir had climbed off the settee, grabbed the lube and joined them. Arturo was already opened for him, but he used more lube, sheathed his cock in a condom, and buried his cock in Arturo's hole, just as Clara screamed, her legs giving way as she crumpled to the pedestal.

Arturo had pulled her down onto the floor, grabbed a condom from the packages scattered on the floor and sunk his prick into her pussy.

The smell of wet paint and hot sex filled the room as the lust built. Arturo's hands had smeared the paint on Clara's flesh, transferring the fuchsia and sapphire, emerald and onyx to Arturo and eventually to Samir.

They had come fast and hard, buried deep, filled with hard,

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pounding flesh, covered in the tapestry of their creativity. It had never been better.

Even to the moment, at sundown, as the rich flare of burnt orange lit the skyline and they raced into the white froth of the ocean, there had never been a moment more indelibly imprinted into Samir's mind than that moment of sublime ecstasy with his passionate lovers.

Could he ever regain those moments again? Would they want anything to do with him after his apparent abandonment?

He had to try. Or he would go mad with wanting them. Nothing could take their place. He thanked Allah that his father had finally realized if he continued to keep Samir bound to the duty of the royal house, he would die, for there was no love to be found in Razban. Not for him. Nor would there ever be without his lovers. There could be no art, no passion and he would surely be lost.

A man lost and without a country was no truer a statement than for Samir without his lovers.

CHAPTER 3

Arturo inhaled sharply on the unfiltered cigarette. A bad habit, but one he couldn't seem to quit. Slowly, he blew out the smoke as he stared down at the note which had just been delivered. It couldn't be true, not after all this time.

The memory of the parting on that long ago day pushed to the front of his thoughts. When the men in the black, unmarked cars had first descended on the summer cottage, he hadn't known what to think. Clara had gone out for groceries and at the time he'd had no way to get in touch with her because she'd forgotten to take her cell phone with her. She had a habit of doing things like that.

As far as he knew, since that time, she had never forgotten

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it again. At least since moving to the city, every time he called her, she answered. It had been traumatic for all of them, even though neither he nor Clara spoke about it. Not that she didn't keep trying. But he didn't want to go back over it. It hurt too damn much.

He couldn't paint worth shit, and she never forgot her cell phone. How fucking stupid was that? Even worse, he couldn't even touch Clara without thinking about Samir. Yet he couldn't *not* touch her. She was all he had left. He should have known better than to get himself mixed up with someone of royal blood. It couldn't have lasted and he should have known that. But in college, none of that had mattered. What had mattered was the intensity and the passion. And the art.

Arturo had met Samir first. And when they saw Clara it was like the sun had blasted through to illuminate both their worlds. And they had both been of the same mind when they first saw Clara Simms poised on the pedestal in the classroom. There had been no question that she had to be with them.

That whole last semester of college they had been inseparable. That final summer at the beach was about making plans, talking about the future, and cementing their relationship on so many different levels.

The painting had been rapturous as Arturo and Samir collaborated together with Clara as their model. The loving had been exquisite. The relationship volatile at times, playful at others, but intensely satisfying at every corner.

A passion like that wasn't meant to last. It was too intense, too much of everything. They'd been too happy. He'd scanned