

# *Demon Kissed*

H.M WARD

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BY  
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## *Chapter 1*

“Let me go, Jake. You’re not like this.” Desperation was in my voice.

“Ivy, you have *no* idea what I’m like.” The moon hung high above the trees. It painted shadows across Jake’s face, highlighting his perfect contours.

My arms felt like lead, useless at my sides. I couldn’t tell how he ensnared me. It felt like my wrists and ankles were glued to the ground, but nothing was there. Pulling hard, unable to move, my heart started to race. I hated feeling trapped. Actually *being* trapped made it worse. Moments ago everything was normal. We were laughing, rolling around on the grass.

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“I thought...I thought you wanted a kiss?” I asked.

“I *do* want a kiss.” Leaning closer, Jake emerged from the patchwork of shadows. The dim moonlight spilled across his face, revealing his eyes. I couldn’t look away. My heart hammered as our gazes locked. An ungodly crimson ring surrounded his normally blue eyes, hugging tightly to his irises. It was like fire and blood, burning together. And they were intently focused on one thing.

Me.

Panic shot through my veins. “What’s *wrong* with your eyes?” I shivered, repressing the fear that crawled up my throat.

He shifted, hovering above me. Jake’s lips spread into a soft grin. “I’m still me. You can trust me, Ivy. I’ve wanted to kiss you for so long. My timing was perfect.”

“Timing?” I asked. “I wanted you to kiss me since our first date. And you wanted to wait. So we wait, then you bait me out here, and glue me to the ground? What the hell is wrong with you? Let me go!”

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He laughed softly, “God Ivy, I wasn’t sure about you at first, but I was right...You’ll get your kiss.”

Terror flooded through me, rippling my voice as it left my throat in a shallow puff, “What do you want, Jake?”

“I’ll show you,” he leaned closer, grinning. As his lips touched mine, I cried out, unable to contain the agonizing pain. The feeling of razor wire slid inside me, from my lips to my toes. It snaked through my body. Sharpness tore into me like a million little fishing hooks, all snagging my insides at once.

I tried to scream, but Jake’s lips were pressed to mine. His hands clutched my face, holding me still, preventing me from moving and breaking the kiss. Adrenalin pumped into me, making my thoughts splinter off into a dozen different directions, trying to find a way out. The sensation cut deeper, as I writhed beneath him. I desperately tried to think of a way to ease the pain, and did the only thing that would make him stop, without thinking about what would happen next.

Sucking his lip into my mouth, I bit down – hard. Jake pulled away screaming, as tangy warmth filled my mouth. A warm trail spilled over my cheek. I spit out a mouth full of his blood.

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Swearing, he moved away from me, cradling his lip with his palm, trying to stop the flow of crimson. Trees creaked, snapping my gaze to their massive trunks. My eyes sifted through the shadows hoping that someone was there. But there was no one. We were alone. No one would save me.

Jake returned fuming. “That was stupid, Ivy. I would have been nice. Made it less painful. But not now.” He lunged at me.

Screaming, I tried to break free. Crushing lips met mine. The razor wire sensation snaked down my throat, filling my body. It hooked into every inch of flesh and muscle, spreading deep into my bones. Then he pulled the invisible razors. Hard.

The intense pain tore through me, and I was unable to stop him. My tensed muscles tried to endure the agony, as spots formed and my vision flickered. Frantically, my mind tried to figure out what was happening. Logic didn’t have an answer, but my body knew exactly what was happening. My soul, my very being that was locked deep within me—he was ripping it out. It didn’t slide away, loose like a ribbon, tied in a pretty bow. It was attached to me, in an inseparable kind of way. Inseparable things—I learned—could be separated, but it hurt like hell.

Releasing me from his kiss, Jake paused just before I passed out. *Oh God, he wants me awake.* Drowsiness pulled at me, making it difficult to think. Pain spindled in my

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muscles as they twitched uncontrollably. Jake wiped the back of his hand across his bloodstained mouth and smiled down at me, delighted.

I spit out more of his blood onto the ground. It tasted wrong. It had a weird tang that made me gag. I knew his blood covered my lips and washed across my face, but I couldn't wipe it away.

Hysterical sobs bubbled up from my stomach, but I swallowed them whole, not wanting him to see my terror. Trembling, a single word formed in my mind, and spilled over my bloody lips, "Why?"

His greedy smile vanished and his face contorted. His beautiful features were skewed, showing no trace of the guy I knew. Veins bulging, he spit, just missing my face. He snarled, "You're one of *them*. Why else would I hunt you? Following you around for months, listening to you and your insignificant life. Why would I waste my time with someone like *you*?"

Hatred flashed across my face. "Why'd you wait? Why not just suck out my soul three months ago?" The words felt odd to say, but I knew they were true.

"I had to wait for this to appear." Flicking a curl away from my face, his fingers touched the skin above my brow.

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With my stomach twisting, I jerked away. “That’s interesting. Your mark is more...” He paused, sitting back, dabbing at his lip, “It doesn’t matter anyway, because you’re all the same. An angel-kissed, blue bastard. It’s your seventeenth birthday, and *this* happened. Just like all the others.” He leaned back laughing at me. “The first twenty-four hours are a bitch. You have no idea what you are, what you’re capable of, or why this happened to you.” The corners of his mouth pulled into a tight grin. “It’s the perfect time to kill you. That’s why I waited. And I’m usually kinda nice about it. But you bit me, you little whore. So, I’m going to make sure it hurts much *more* than usual.” He leered at me with a satanic smile, “I’m going to rip out your soul so fast that it cracks your bones.”

Bloodstained teeth beamed, as he moved toward me. Screaming wildly, I belted the sound through the trees, shattering the still night. Jake’s eyes burned in the darkness as he inched nearer. My roaring heartbeat drowned out all other noises. Stiffening in anticipation, tears ran down my cheeks. I couldn’t bear it. Not again.

Dripping with satisfaction, he hovered over me. “Are you afraid, Ivy?” His face slid toward me, slowly. His lips curled, as he sensed my terror. “Of course you are. I’m your mortal enemy. Well, *immortal* enemy. You would have been around for a while — if you’d never met me.”

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The ring of fire around his eyes flashed and pooled solid crimson, with only a single spec of black remaining. A wicked smile pulled at his lips, as his hand slammed the ground next to my head. Jake lowered his body on top of mine, crushing me, as he came closer for the last kiss.

“No! Jake don’t!” Terror shot through me. Bloody lips smashed down on mine. Slicing razors flooded my body, for the third time, searching for my remaining scrap of soul.

The last fragment of my spirit came into contact with his deadly kiss. Tiny hooks snagged it, and started ripping it away from my bones. My body shuddered one last time before it became limp, and my soul loosened. It floated freely, feeling light and unburdened inside of me, as it traveled from within me toward Jake’s lips.

Inky haze distorted my vision, as I realized death was trying to take me. Barely aware of Jake’s mouth on mine, the pain dulled as my consciousness fought to live, but my body surrendered. Strands of life slowly spilled out of me. I could see them leave my body, and spill onto the ground – like liquid gold. There was one strand left – only one bit of my soul remained.

Before the last golden strand of life left me, Jake was violently torn away. My body reacted without my consent, and I shot up gagging. It felt as if the razor wire was ripped from my throat in one sharp pull. My head wobbled on my neck, as my body crumpled,



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and fell to the ground. Hands caught me before my head smashed into the dirt. It all occurred so fast that I wasn't sure what happened.

Death was still trying to take me, even though Jake was gone. My chest felt like it was beneath a pile of boulders. My breaths were so shallow that I wanted to stop breathing. Just for a minute. It was so heavy and I was so weak.

As my consciousness was fading, warm arms wrapped around me. A voice whispered, but I couldn't understand the words. My muscles still vividly remembered the pain. I tried to focus on the voice, to allow it pull me away from the blackness that was taking me, but I couldn't. Everything sounded far away, echoing hollowly in my head. It was impossible to take another breath.

The whispers of the stranger's voice sounded farther away when I felt warmth spread across my head, with a gentle touch. Softness brushed across my lips. Feeling a surge of life, I sucked in air, and the blackness receded as quickly as it came. The haze lingered, making my body feel limp and heavy, like I'd awoken from a dream too quickly. I swallowed, soothing the burning sensation in my throat.

Suddenly aware of the warm arms holding me, my eyes fluttered open. The moon seemed brighter than I remembered, outlining a masculine shape. The trees above me

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were blurred in jagged shafts of shadows and light. Attempting to focus, I looked up into a hazy face with sorrowful eyes; he said nothing.

Sleep pawed at me, making my eyes flicker, and feel heavier. Staring, I couldn't make out more than a pair of eyes, and pale flesh. Carefully, his warm fingers pushed my curls back. An unspoken message brushed inside my mind. *You're safe.*

A weak smile tugged my lips, as I leaned into his chest, and sleep stole me.



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