

A little excerpt from Stone Angels! Enjoy.

An hour later, I was perched on the edge of a white wrought iron chair outside of Clair de Lune. The adorable café sat on a busy side street in the middle of Paris. The air was heavy with the smell of rain and flowers. Exhausted, I inhaled the fragrance and sighed. Roses filled my senses and I fingered a petal on the pink bloom that stood alone in the miniature vase on the table. Entranced by its simple beauty, I held it against my nose...perfect. Sipping my mineral water, I gazed around me.

Paris! The most romantic city in the world!

Soon Killian would come and sweep me out of here and everything would be all right. I could see us walking through these streets, stopping to admire the pretty buildings and gardens. He would pull me into a handy alcove and kiss me until I was dizzy with wanting him...

"It is a tragedy to find such a beautiful woman sitting alone." A flirty male voice interrupted my pornographic daydreams. Before I could protest, he pulled up the other chair and straddled it.

Startled, I stared while warning bells clanked through my head. Tall and broadly muscled, he overwhelmed the tiny chair. He was good-looking with an underlying ruthlessness that I had seen before. His features were heavy...more rugged than I was used to though. He had a heavy brow bone and deep-set eyes that reminded me uncomfortably of Scott Flynn. His wide mouth curled into a cocky grin that spoke louder than words. He was used to getting what he wanted. With a small knot in my stomach, I looked into his eyes. They were blue. Of course they were.

He had 'Primani' written all over him.

Even his shaved head and hoop earring couldn't hide the supernatural current running through his blood. I felt the thrumming from across the table. Encouraged by my silence, he leaned closer to me.

"I won't be alone for long." I glanced around. No Killian in sight. "I'm meeting someone," I said pointedly.

Smiling good-naturedly, he brought my hand to his mouth and kissed it with a flourish. His mouth lingered just a hair too long to be considered polite. "Allow me to keep you company until then. I'm Rivin."

"Rivin?" Rivin sounded like a demon name to me. I rubbed my hand suspiciously, but it wasn't burning or doing anything unusual. He looked mildly insulted when I dunked a napkin in my water and wiped it off. "Are you French?"

Rivin threw back his head and laughed. The people next to us turned to stare. A young waiter raised an eyebrow at me. I shrugged. He shook his head and moved along.

Rivin said, "French? God, no! I hate the French; bloody sanctimonious bastards, all of them!" His voice carried and several people grumbled nearby.

Okaaaay. The accent was definitely British. Not French.

Waiving a huge hand at the waiter, he ordered a beer and offered me one. "Come on, chérie, have a drink with me. We'll celebrate."

His cajoling tone was charming and I found myself relaxing. "Okay, I'll bite. What are we celebrating?"

His eyes lingered meaningfully on my lips and he murmured with a wolfish grin, "The best night of your life."

"Not even close," Killian said behind me. His tone was harsh, but the hand he rested on my shoulder was gentle. He squeezed it affectionately.

"Walk away, Leahy. This isn't your business." Rivin stood up, knocking his chair over.

"Wrong. Mica is all my business."

All conversation stopped and people scattered like pigeons. Alarmed, I stood and wrapped my arms around Killian. Leaning up, I kissed his cheek and said, "You're late, baby. I was getting worried."

"It couldn't be helped, Princess."

Incredulous, Rivin looked back and forth between us and said, "No! Tell me this isn't Mica." He gestured at my porn star hair and general cuteness and complained, "This is your charge?"

With a wicked grin, Killian answered, "Oh, she's much more than that."

With that, he wrapped his arm around me and led me down the sidewalk. I glanced back to see Rivin watching us with an unreadable expression.

"I guess you know each other?" I ventured.

"He's an asshole. You'll hate him."

"Yay! Another James?"

"Let's just say Rivin does what he wants when he wants. He doesn't like to conform and he's not reliable."

“He left you hanging?”

“Something like that.” He walked more slowly now, relaxing the farther away we got from Rivin. Pulling me over to a park bench, he tugged me down to his lap. “Come here, wench.”

Laughing, I let him pull me into a flirty kiss. His lips just grazed mine and I rested my head on his shoulder. We sat in comfortable silence and watched two little kids play in the water of a bronze fountain in the park in front of us. They laughed wholeheartedly as only toddlers do. The random squirts of cold water had them giggling and howling with laughter. Their nanny sat with a close eye on them. Every now and then one would run to her and shake water over her summery dress. She was young, with fresh pink cheeks and ivory skin. Her eyes sparkled with love as she chased them around with mock ferocity.

“Pretty little babies, don’t you think?” I asked.

“Ours will be prettier.”

I laughed and turned to see him better. He looked rested. His face had filled out again and he’d lost the dark shadows under his eyes. His natural color was back and he glowed with the healthy energy that sustained the Primani. His cheekbones were still visible, but not as sharply cut as they were when he wasn’t taking care of himself. Finally, his fascinating mouth tilted up into a smile. His eyes twinkled at me with humor for a change.

“Are you taking inventory? Am I missing anything important?” He looked down and hinted, “Maybe you should look lower?”