

Granite Kiss by Jennifer Cole



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Can a determined librarian convince a mythological beast of the night that fairytales do come true?

A good book, a puzzle to solve, a riddle to master--these all get Elena Xavier's blood pumping. But is her drive for a solution enough to break a powerful wizard's curse and free the beast of her dreams?

Over two hundred years ago a man was cursed by a spell of humility and his mortal life ended. Now he soars across the heavens under cover of darkness, praying to the gods for an end to his tortured existence.

Elena has one chance. Her problem-solving abilities are put to the ultimate test when she finds herself in a race against time. She has until the stroke of midnight on All Hallows' Eve to solve a riddle. Then, only consummation with her one true love will undo the ancient incantation cast centuries before. One obstacle stands in her way--a very stubborn gargoyle reluctant to follow his heart.

Content Warning: Graphic language, explicit sex, violence.

Excerpt

"A spell was cast, there's a way to break it." A challenge always got Elena's blood flowing. She loved to solve a mystery. Why could she not concentrate on fitting the pieces of this puzzle together?

The reason for her distraction sat on the sofa, eyeing her as if she were a tasty little morsel he was dying to sample. Any doubts she had about Zander's interest dissipated.

The differences between their physical forms meant nothing. Elena could no longer fight the attraction, and damn it, she knew Zander felt it as well. She could see it in his eyes when he looked at her, felt it in the weight of his stare as he watched her. She felt his need when he held her in his arms.

Elena wanted more. No, she needed more.

"For heaven's sake, this is ridiculous," Elena said, and leapt through the air, landing on top of Zander.

* * * *

The suddenness of Elena's acrobatics threw Zander off guard, causing him to lean back into the sofa.

"What are you—" His question was cut short as Elena brushed her soft lips against his. The room fell silent. After several moments, she pulled away from him, waggled her brow and dragged her tongue across her lower lip.

"Uh," he managed. "That was...nice."

"Nice?" she repeated, narrowing her eyes.

"Well, uh, the others are—you know—here. Watching," he said quietly, trying not to attract any more attention to them. Which he knew was futile, since Elena sat sprawled on top of him, and he was panting like a dog in heat.

Elena's heated gaze held his, and over her shoulder she growled, "Leave."

From the corner of his eye, Zander watched his five fellow beasts stumble over one another as they raced to the open terrace door.

"See ya," Adan said quickly.

"I was just thinking I could use some air," Henrik announced, pushing past Mabon.

"Where are we going to go?" Kenyon muttered.

"Stop talking and just get the hell out," Magnus said nervously, glancing back for a split second.

The loud flapping of wings carried into the suite, signaling the beasts had launched off the building.

Leaning down, Elena pressed her lips to Zander's again.

They were just as he'd imagined—soft, confident. Elena was a woman who knew what she wanted. And by the gods, she wanted him. Her taste made his head spin.

He needed to stop her.

The tip of her tongue teased the seam of his lips, coaxing him to open his mouth. As he did, to utter a protest—a mild one, but a protest nonetheless—Elena seized the opportunity to slip inside.

Wide-eyed, he watched her. Elena's eyes were closed, lids fluttering as her excitement escalated. The subtle fragrance of feminine arousal tickled his nose. He inhaled deeply, her scent taunting his lust.

A moan of passion caught in her throat, and her arms tightened around his neck, her fingers fisting in his hair.

Closing his eyes, Zander permitted himself to savor the moment. The repressed libido he'd buried years ago began to emerge. With the days of living as a man long gone, he'd never imagined once again living in human form. Yet right then, with Elena straddling his thighs, his body aching to be one with hers, Zander wanted nothing more than to be a man.

Just once.

"Do you feel it?" She asked.

"W-what?" he stuttered, attempting to tamp the hoarseness of his own voice.

"The sparks. The electricity." She paused to run her tongue along her swollen lips. "We have chemistry."

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