

TRIBAL LAW

(Excerpt)

By

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Her client sat on the end of the bed and folded his arms. His biceps bulged with the movement. "What were you thinking?"

"Jared was an alpha prime," she said as she crossed to her handbag sitting on the bedside table. "There has to be some competition for that position. We'll see if we can come up with an alternate theory to what happened."

"Like what?"

She shrugged as she withdrew a vial of lipstick. "Like a reason one of Jared's pack might want him dead." She sat on the other side of the bed and scooted up to rest her back against the bedhead. "Did you kill Jared?" she asked carefully.

She relaxed, opening her awareness.

"No, I did not kill Jared."

Liar. That phrase had a significant chill to it, the fog in her mind clouded by a dark trail of deceit. She slid the lid off the lipstick and twisted the bottom. "What happened, Max?" she asked, curious to see what he'd come out with.

He shot her a quick glare at the use of the name, then shrugged. She marvelled he felt no pain at the movement. Years of working with miscreants had toughened him.

"Nothing. I was working on him. And then he died."

Okay, so that was truth, but it still left a lot unsaid. "But you didn't kill him?"

"No." This time the chill was almost a burn to her senses.

She took the compact mirror out of her bag and quickly, casually, applied her lipstick. It was a vibrant scarlet, blood red. Her mother had a sense of humour. She carefully retracted the lipstick. It was an old family recipe that compelled folks to tell the truth. As a half-blood, she lacked the ability to compel, but her mother's side was well-versed in the art, with loads of little tricks to drag out the truth. Unfortunately there was only one way to get others to expose themselves to this particular dose. She glanced at her client who was staring at her lips, his handsome face almost disturbing in its intensity. Her heart pounded just a little faster. For once, she was going to enjoy this.

She dropped the compact and lipstick back in her bag, then rolled up onto her knees.

His eyes met hers as she advanced on her hands and knees, prowling across the bed like a kitty on the hunt. A line appeared on his forehead, as though he was surprised – or maybe confused – yet definitely interested. She paused in front of him. Suddenly the confusion was replaced with something more – an awareness, a hot desire that energised the very air between them. Her gaze dropped to his mouth. She could feel his breath against her lips, and her own breath hitched. They paused there for a moment, as though enjoying the closeness, the anticipation.

Oh, yeah, she was definitely going to enjoy this.