



Pleasure of a Dark Prince (Immortals After Dark, Book 7)

By Kresley Cole

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#1 *New York Times* bestselling author Kresley Cole enraptures again with this seductive tale of a fierce werewolf prince who will stop at nothing to protect the lovely archer he covets from afar.

A DANGEROUS BEAUTY...

Lucia the Huntress: as mysterious as she is exquisite, she harbors secrets that threaten to destroy her -- and those she loves.

AN UNCONTROLLABLE NEED...

Garrett MacRieve, Prince of the Lycae: the brutal Highland warrior who burns to finally claim this maddeningly sensual creature as his own.

THAT LEAD TO A PLEASURE SO WICKED....

From the shadows, Garrett has long watched over Lucia. Now, the only way to keep the proud huntress safe from harm is to convince her to accept him as her guardian. To do this, Garrett will ruthlessly exploit Lucia's greatest weakness -- her wanton desire for him.

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Editorial Review

Review

About the Author

Kresley Cole is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of the electrifying Immortals After Dark paranormal series, the young adult Arcana Chronicles series, the erotic Game Makers series, and five award-winning historical romances. A master's grad and former athlete, she has traveled over much of the world and draws from those experiences to create her memorable characters and settings. You can learn more about her and her work at KresleyCole.com or Facebook.com/KresleyCole. Sign up for Kresley's email newsletter to receive the latest book release updates, as well as info about contests and giveaways (KresleyCole.com/Newsletter).

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ONE

Southern Louisiana

Present day

“Munro, you daft git, pass the ball!” Gareth Mac-Rieve yelled at his kinsman over the thunder and howling winds.

Tonight was their yearly skins-versus-demons rugby match—a tradition for Gareth and his clan, meant to take his mind from the anniversary this day marked. Gareth was barefooted, wearing only jeans and no shirt. Rain pounded in strengthening intervals, turning this abandoned grassy airstrip in bayou country into a mire of muck and turf. Sweat mingled with mud—and some blood.

He almost felt... not numb. And that in itself was a feat.

Munro flipped him off but did finally sling him the ball. The leather was coated in grit, mixing with the filth covering Gareth's bared chest. He feinted left, then sprinted right around two colossal Ferine demons, shoving his hand in their faces, stiff-arming them.

As he ran, with his heart pounding in his ears, he could forget. The exertion and the aggression were both so welcome, he wanted to beat his bare chest.

The swift Ferines surrounded him, so he tossed the ball to Uillean, Munro's twin, who took it in to score. His brothers-in-arms were strong and ruthless contenders, as was he. The beasts inside them loved to fight, to *play*. Rough.

The demons responded to the goal with trash talk and shoving. Like a shot, Garrett was in the middle.

“You’re raring to fight for an heirless king,” Caliban, the Ferines’ leader, sneered. “Nothing new—you Lycae go through kings like I piss demon brew.”

Of all the sore subjects to bring up, Garrett’s kingship was the one most infuriating. And on this day?

He launched himself at Caliban, but Munro and Uilleam heaved him back. As other demons steered Caliban away from the scuffle, Munro said, “Save it for the game, friend.”

Garrett spat blood in Caliban’s direction before letting the two lead him away to cool off. While Uilleam and Munro stayed with him, the other Lycae on the team made their way to the sidelines to mingle with the “cheerleaders.”

The demons took the opportunity to take a timeout and drink demon brew. The only bad thing about playing with demons—one of the few species in the Lore that could contend with the Lycae in a physical contest—was their continual “brew breaks.” Only seemed fair that Garrett and his kinsmen shoot copious amounts of whiskey to mitigate their advantage. They swilled it straight from the bottle, each one with his own, the Lycae version of Gatorade.

Their cooler was full of fifths.

“You’ve got to let this go, Garrett,” Munro said, taking a deep drink.

Garrett swiped his hand over the back of his neck, getting the feeling that he was being watched. But then, he and all the other players *were*. Nymphs lined the field, oblivious to the rain, touching themselves and sucking on their own fingers as they impatiently waited for this game to turn into an orgy.

He irritably gazed at the females. “Why’d you invite them?” he demanded. “Damn you both, I weary of this. Did you never think that I doona like nymphs?”

“Nay,” Uilleam said with a swig. “Any being that sports a penis likes nymphs.”

Munro drained his bottle and added, “You canna argue with medical facts.”

Garrett knew Uilleam and Munro meant well, but this was getting old. “I doona like them. They’re too... too...”

“Beautiful?”

“Lusty?”

“Easy,” Gareth said. “They’re too easy. For once I’d like to have a female give me a challenge. One that would no’ fall into bed with me because I’m supposedly a king.” When Munro opened his mouth to speak, Gareth said, “Aye, *supposedly*.”

Munro shook his head gravely. “And still you believe Lachlain will return.”

The three had been round and round about this for one and a half centuries, since the time his older brother had vanished after setting out to hunt vampires.

Uillean and Munro told Gareth that he awaited Lachlain unreasonably. Best accept that his brother was gone, especially after so long had passed since his disappearance. One hundred and fifty years—to the day, *this* day. They said Gareth hadn’t moved on and accepted his responsibilities as king.

They were right.

“When will you believe he’s no’ coming back?” Uillean asked. “Two hundred years from now? Five hundred?”

“Never. No’ if I still *feel* he’s alive.” Though vampires had killed the rest of his immediate family, for some reason, Gareth still sensed Lachlain lived. “No’ if I feel it as I do now.”

“You’re as bad off as Bowen,” Uillean said, finishing his own bottle—and opening another.

Bowen was Gareth’s first cousin, a shell of a man since he’d lost his mate. He spent every waking moment in agony, yet he wouldn’t accept the loss and end his life as most Lycae males would have in his situation. “No’ like Bowen,” Gareth said. “He saw his mate gored, saw her death. I dinna see such proof with Lachlain.” *No, I searched and searched and found... nothing.*

“Game on!” a demon called.

Gareth shook himself from his memories, swigged whiskey, then mustered to the field with his kinsmen.

Caliban bared his fangs at his opponents, a gesture Gareth returned as the teams huddled up.

Quick snap. Ball in play. Passed to Caliban. Gareth saw his chance, charging for him, pumping his arms for speed... faster... faster... He leapt for the demon, tackling him with all his strength.

As they careened to the ground, a length of Caliban’s horn snapped off, and he bellowed with rage. “You’re

going to pay for that, Lycae!”

For miles, Lucia the Huntress had been stalking her night’s prey, growing increasingly perplexed when the tracks she followed led her closer to what sounded like a battle, echoing with roars and curses.

Mayhem? Without inviting the Valkyrie? *And in our territory, too?* If beings were going to trespass in order to war, they should at least have the courtesy to invite the host faction to the conflict.

When she came upon the battlefield, Lucia canted her head to the side. *Clash of the Loreans*, she thought as she beheld modern gladiators—not at war, but at play. *Immortal rugby*.

Winds whipped along the mile-long field, and lightning flashed above them, mirroring the intensity of the contest. It was like a ceremony celebrating... maleness.

Lucia easily recognized the horned players as demons, and she suspected their shirtless opponents were Lycae. If so, then the rumors were true. The werewolves were in fact encroaching on Valkyrie territory. She was surprised. In the past, they’d kept to themselves, staying at their sprawling compound outside of the city.

Congregating at the sidelines, Nymph spectators trembled with excitement, likely seeing this as no more than a mud-wrestling match between brawny heart-throbs.

A ruthless hit on the field made Lucia raise a brow. Not at the violence—she was a shield maiden after all—but at the *unthinking* violence. Though these Loreans all trespassed, they were oblivious to an Archer in their midst, one who could inflict serious damage—very swiftly and from a great distance.

Levelheaded Lucia, as she was now known, didn’t comprehend *unthinking*. But then she didn’t comprehend men. Never had.

Luckily for them, the only violence she’d deliver this eve would be to her targets: two kobolds—vile gnome-like creatures—who’d been seen stalking human young to feed on.

Her sister Nix, the half-mad Valkyrie soothsayer, had dispatched her to these bayous to dispose of them. Lucia had asked Regin to join her, but she’d declined, preferring to play video games in the comfort of their coven over another “rain-drenched bug hunt.”

Lucia had jumped at the chance. After donning a T-shirt and hiking shorts, she’d strapped on her leather thigh quiver, archer’s glove, and forearm guard. With her trusty bow in hand, she’d set out at once....

Another brutal hit. She nearly winced at the impact from that one—a piece of horn skipped down the field like a lost helmet—but she wasn’t surprised. Lycae and demons were two of the most brutal species on earth.

Worse, one of those bare-chested males had caught Lucia's attention. Completely. No matter how badly she wished otherwise, Lucia still noted attractive men, and as the teams skirmished, she couldn't help but appreciate the power in his towering frame, his speed and agility. Though mud splattered his torso and a shadow of a beard swathed his lean face, she still found him handsome in a rough and tumble way.

His eyes were a burnished gold color with rakish laugh lines fanning out from them. At one time, he'd been happy; he clearly wasn't now. Tension radiated from his body, anger blazing off him.

When those golden irises flickered a bright ice blue, she confirmed what he was. A Lycae. A werewolf.

An *animal*. His handsome face masked a beast, literally.

"You call that a hit, you bluidy ponce!" he yelled at one of the demons, the muscles in his neck and chest standing out in strain as he bowed up and bared his fangs. His accent was Scottish, but then most of the Lycae were Highlanders—or they used to be, before homesteading southern Louisiana. "Aye, *Caliban!* Go fook yerself!"

Others were drawing him back fro...

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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