

Autumn Moon



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An Otherworldly Romance Book

TheEbookSale Publishing

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Praises for Autumn Moon

“Autumn Moon” starts with action and doesn’t stop. The romance is perfectly entwined with myth and suspense. A one night read.”

~Reviewed by Shona, **Bitten By Books**~

“If you have a craving for a good vampire story, you don’t want to miss out on ‘Autumn Moon.’ Read through the pages of this delightful ‘love’ story, as this unlikely pair attempt to conquer Jariec’s curse before his time runs out, leading them into a sinful interlude.”

~Reviewed by Deanna, **Ghost Writers Literary Review**~

“Ancient Chinese Vampires”

“Autumn Moon is a completely new take on the vampire genre, or rather I should say it’s an ancient Asian version retold in a refreshing new light. Autumn Moon is one of those stories that comes at you unexpectedly and takes the vampire legend to an entirely different level.”

~Reviewed by Clover Autrey, **PNR Romance Reviews**~

This is a very fast-paced piece, but it keeps the reader in the midst of the action. Ms. Nutt does a wonderful job of weaving a legend into the heart this romance.

~Reviewed by Kimberly, **Coffee Time Romance & More**~

“This books is great. I had a blast. We have an ancient evil, a tormented family, a hunky hero and his lovely lady, and plucky grandparents that are not afraid to kick some paranormal arse. Lovely work!”

~Brenda Thatcher, **Co-Owner Mystique Books**~

Dedicated to Jairec Baker,
the little boy with a very cool name.

情人

Soul mate

“A man is a bird with one wing and he searches for his mate, the other wing.”

~Chinese Proverb

Chapter One

San Francisco, California is known for its mild temperatures all year round and for its blessed fog during the summer months. In the morning, the mist acted as a magic cloak protecting Jairec Connelly, but now the enchantment wore off leaving the sun's rays sizzling the pavement like laser beams. Jairec pulled the hood of his sweatshirt down over his head, shading as much skin as deemed possible. Even with this effort, he could feel his skin burn. It wouldn't do if he burst into flames especially since he needed to keep a low profile.

From across the street, Jairec set up his stake out, watching the comings and goings of people entering *Moon's Acupuncture*, but still no sign of the man who could help him. He pursed his lips together. Help him? He'd have to convince him not to kill him first.

At 9:30, a woman with long dark hair dressed in a black suit and comfortable shoes opened the acupuncture shop, unlocking the doors from the inside. He glanced at the two windows above the shop. She must live in the apartment above like so many others did. Two other employees, one male, one female arrived a half an hour later, both in their early twenties. All three were of Asian descent, not surprising since this was Chinatown and the businesses were probably family-owned. By noon, there was still no sign of Dr. Jin Lei.

Dr. Lei had what Jairec needed. He was willing to pay for his services, but if the good doctor wouldn't help him, he'd take it by force. He wasn't a violent man by nature, but this was a matter of life and death, his to be exact.

He'd wanted no part in this supernatural bullshit, but his wanker of a brother had dragged him into it anyway. Now Tristan was missing and he had been turned into the

undead. “Some holiday,” he grumbled. He did what any preternatural freak would do. He listened. He waited and learned whom he needed to see. The other freaks—shapeshifters, demons, any who slinked out of their hidey-holes at night called her, “The Seer.” She turned out to be a crotchety old woman named Gladys Seymour, living in the suburbs of downtown San Francisco. He thought back to what Gladys told him, wanting to make sure he didn’t miss something.

Gladys allowed Jairec to enter her house and follow her to the kitchen. She wore a blue shift, sandals and her gray hair pulled back in a bun. The effects of his new life were taking its toll. He could hear her heart beating—bum-bump, bum-bump like a beacon calling him. He could smell the coppery tang of her blood flowing through her veins. The delicate skin at the base of her neck would prove no protection once he sunk his teeth into the flesh. He licked his lips in anticipation.

Her gaze snapped to his. “You take a bite out of me big boy and I’ll—”

Against his will, his new acquired instincts took over and he lunged. She waved her hand, propelling him back with a magic blast from her fingertips. He slammed into the wall and slid to the floor. If he’d been human, she’d have killed him or at the very least rendered him unconscious. There were some perks to being one of the undead. He could take a beating and keep on ticking.

She pointed a finger at him and he cringed, expecting another blast from her. “I’ll forgive you this one slight because you’re newly made. Make a second attempt, Chiang-shih and you’re toast. Do you got it?” Her dark eyes narrowed, warning him to behave. She stood maybe five-two, but the power radiating from her convinced him she meant every word.

“I apologize.” He leaned against the wall for support as he came to his feet.

She nodded. She walked over to her refrigerator and

took out a bottle containing a dark reddish liquid too thick to be red wine. He had a sickening feeling of what it was and recoiled when she jabbed it at him.

“Don’t be a fool. If you don’t drink it, you’ll kill someone and all will be lost then. Keeping a pure soul will be your salvation.”

He took the bottle from her. He closed his eyes as he took a swig and hated that he liked the taste.

“Pig’s blood,” she answered his unasked question.

He drank every last drop, wiping his mouth with the back of his sleeve.

“Now sit.” She pointed to the table. She went to her cabinet, took out a wooden bowl and filled it with water. She mumbled a chant or prayer of some sort before she gazed at the liquid.

He saw tap water.

The Seer obviously witnessed something else. “You will find the cure in Chinatown. Dr. Jin Lei’s place.”

“This doctor will know how to help me? He’ll be able to turn me back to the way I was?”

“I only know the elixir of life will be found there.” She hummed and weaved back and forth as if receiving some kind of psychic advice from the other side. “Autumn moon is your destiny. You must accept the elixir before the festival’s end. If you do not, you’ll remain cursed and walk among the undead for all eternity.”

“Dr. Lei will hand over the cure. Just like that.”

Her dark eyes riveted to him. “I never said it would be easy. He will most likely want to kill you.”

“I’m already dead, a vampire. Or what did you call me—a *chiang-shih*?”

She chuckled with no mirth. “I do hate the newly dead,” she mumbled. “No moron. He will perform a ritual, sending your sorry ass to hell.” She rose from her seat and walked over to her bookcase. She moved books aside and shuffled through the magazines, finally pulling an issue out. She opened it up and ripped out a page. “Here,” she said handing it to him. “This is a picture of Dr. Lei. A few years

ago a magazine did an article about his herbal remedies.”

Two days ago, Jairec would have laughed at The Seer’s eerie premonition and her ill-gotten advice. Now he was living proof that creatures of the night existed, walking among the living in wait of an opportunity to strike.

Chinatown held an annual Autumn Moon Festival, which so happened to be this weekend. If he went by what The Seer told him, this gave him three days to convince Dr. Lei to help him. He would use any means he could. He wouldn’t succumb to his fate so readily.

When Dr. Lei never showed up to work, he began to give up hope. He jogged across the street. Since his unnatural demise, his hearing had improved, so much so that he had the urge to put earplugs in his ears. Today it would come in handy to eavesdrop and hopefully find out when the employees expected Dr. Lei.

“Don’t forget to deliver the package your grandmother left you,” the young female employee told the woman who had opened the shop. “She said it’s a matter of life and death.”

The woman who opened the shop shook her head. “Yes, of course it is.”

Her voice was smooth, silky like a caress. She wore her straight, black hair pulled back in a ponytail, letting the long strands cascade down her back. She looked worried as she chewed on her lower lip. Then she sighed. “I might as well take care of the delivery now. Get it off my hands before it’s too late.”

Jairec smiled. This could be it. Maybe he wouldn’t need Dr. Lei after all. He turned away as the woman left the shop. *Life and death, a need to get it off her hands*—he’d follow her and see where she led him. Maybe he should just steal the package. One small woman wouldn’t be a challenge to subdue.

END OF SAMPLE