

Sated

The image features two hands clasped together in a supportive grip, with the fingers of one hand resting over the other. The background is white, adorned with vibrant, abstract paint splatters in shades of purple, red, blue, and orange. The overall composition is artistic and evocative.

Truth Devour

Sated



Truth Devour

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Published in 2014
by Truth Devour

Interior layout and design
by Publicious Pty Ltd
www.publicious.com.au

Book cover design by:
Brightpixel Design
www.brightpixeldesign.com.au

Catalogue-in-Publication details available
from the National Library of Australia

ISBN: 978-0-9922999-5-8

Also available as a paperback
Paperback ISBN: 978-0-9922999-4-1

Copyright © Truth Devour 2014

All characters and events in this publication are fictitious, any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, or any events past or present are purely coincidental.

It was when I looked into your eyes that I could truly see the reflection of me. Two hearts synchronised to the same beat. Two halves of the one soul, never forgotten, never lost, destined to find their way home. I have said my vows and intend to keep my promise. You are the love of my lifetimes.
Amor Vincit Omnia

~ Yours ~ Forever ~ Faithfully ~ Always ~ Truth Devour ~

ALSO BY TRUTH DEVOUR

Wantin

(1st book in the series)

Unrequited

(2nd book in the series)

Believe

We held each other in an embrace which represented familiarity and a mutual desire never to let go. Neither of us cared about our surroundings. Bodhi and I paid no heed to the people who were now staring in curiosity. I had waited my whole life for this precise moment and for the longest time never believed it would arrive. In my mind's eye, I could see the little girl who was so familiar to me clapping her hands, dancing around us, and then she stepped closer to join in our embrace. Seeing this only made me squeeze him tighter.

I whispered in his ear, "One of us has to make the first move to break."

With no hesitation he replied, "It will never be me," and then repositioned his embrace to lock me in. "Now that I've finally found you, I'm never going to let you go."

I closed my eyes and inhaled deeply, drinking in his words. There was an unspoken strength and confidence in him; he showed no doubt about what he wanted. It was intoxicating.

I finally had to make the first move. "I have to pee," I said as I started to release my grip and shift back.

He didn't lighten his grasp. Instead he stepped in to reclaim me and held on tighter as he replied, "I'm coming with you."

I laughed; it was such a cute response. "As much as I love the concept, I think it might be a little advanced for our first meet. I'll take a rain check on the offer. Remind me again post our third greet."

He took a deep breath, squeezed one more time, hard enough to force my breath from my lungs, and then released me. "Hurry back. We have a lifetime of catching up to do."

"Yes, we do."

I headed to the ladies' room. I could feel him watching and I liked it.

When I returned, he had organised a table and was confidently watching me as I approached. His eyes held steadfast to mine. I sat down and reached across to hold his hands. It was the greatest gesture I could provide him. I never held hands with people, as I always felt its unspoken promise and intimacy. All I wanted to do right now was hold his hands.

"How did you know it was me?" I asked.

"When Eddie came back on stage I saw your name. I couldn't see through the crowd to be sure it was you but somehow I just knew it was. I was trying to read the phone number he had written on his arm so I could program it into my phone when he asked for a phone to dial your number. It was perfect. I gave him my phone, he called you and I kept the number."

"What are the chances you would be at this bar, watching this band and I walk in? You have no idea how much I cringed when Eddy made such a scene. I wanted to crawl under a rock. The only reason I gave

him my number was to make it all stop. Actually that's only partially true. I also had made a promise to say 'yes' rather than default to the safety of my usual 'no'. I've been haunted by universal messages telling me to say yes more."

He released a sigh of relief and squeezed my hands. "Well, whatever the reason I'm glad you did."

"Were you there because you like the band?" I asked, trying to inadvertently ask if he was with someone.

"I manage bands for a living so the chances of me being there were pretty good. I organised for their mini tour around the US. They're starting to develop a solid following here. You, on the other hand, are harder to find than a needle in a haystack."

"You've been looking for me then?" I secretly wanted the answer to be 'yes'.

"I've never stopped," he said, squeezing my hands.

My heart melted at hearing these words. I looked at him and knew what he was saying was true. "We danced at the masked ball. Why didn't you tell me then?" I questioned.

"I wanted to but my girlfriend interrupted me as I was about to introduce myself. If you remember, you quickly exited when she came on the scene. I tried to look for you but you were nowhere to be found. I contacted your office and left countless messages but I assumed they never passed them on because I didn't hear from you."

I slowly reclaimed my hands. "We should order a coffee. Would you like one?"

He looked at my hands now placed on the table in front of me then gently smiled as he retrieved them. This time he interlocked our fingers to prevent escape. "I don't have a girlfriend. I'm single." He stared deep into my eyes, addressing my unasked question.

"Okay," I whispered, feeling unexpectedly relieved.

His head tilted slightly and his lips pursed as he said, "I'm sorry about your parents. I wish I had been there to support you."

"You know? How?" I asked.

"When I was eighteen I went back to Haiti to backpack. I was drawn to spending time there. After my first week I realised I was unconsciously searching for you. I stumbled upon Marlee's village. She recognised me and invited me to stay with her and her family for a few days. She told me everything. Marlee also told me I wouldn't be able to find you until you were ready to be found," he said.

I nodded my head and smiled. "So I should really have posed the question 'what the fuck took you so long' to myself?"

He laughed. "Precisely."

I looked down at the table and felt sad for the amount of time that had elapsed. It had been akin to a life sentence of aching and desire unfulfilled. The sound of his voice, the confidence in the way he communicated his thoughts and the touch of his hand made me feel I had finally arrived home. There was an instantaneous comfort in being in his presence, which made me awakened to the depth of my yearning.

Bodhi used his thumbs to stroke across my hand. "Talia."

I looked up and smiled at him.

"You have to speak out loud for me to hear your thoughts."

"Sorry, I was just thinking how this feels like the comfort of home. I've never really felt settled anywhere. I've been comfortable, familiar, but never truly settled. Here we are meeting in a coffee house for the first time in thirty-four years and I feel like I've arrived home." Tears started to form once again in my eyes.

“Don’t make me come over there and hug you. I promise this time I won’t let go.” He reached across to collect a single rolling tear. He placed it in his mouth and laughed. “Salty.”

The words instantly transported me to when we were six in my bedroom in Haiti. He had kissed a tear then and said the exact same words. It felt as though we were picking up right from where we had left off.

“You’re doing it again, Talia. I seemed to have lost you to your thoughts.”

“Sorry, I’ve been silent for so long I don’t realise I’m not speaking out loud.”

“Well, you’d better get used to it. I’m here and I have no plans to be anywhere else. I want to get to know every aspect of you. No stone unturned, no secrets.”

I smiled. “I’d like that.”

I took a deep breath and exhaled, listening to his words, feeling grateful to hear them. It was surreal to be instantly drawn to a depth unparalleled by any other and yet he was a stranger before me. I felt as though he had the key to unlocking the connection to my soul. I had never felt like this before and we had only just begun. Is this what all the philosophers, painters and poets were trying to capture when describing love?

Bodhi laughed. “You weren’t kidding when you said you were silent. You’re doing it again.” He shook my hands as if to wake me from a dream.

I laughed and reclaimed my hands to cover my face. “I’m sorry. I seriously don’t realise I’m doing it. I’m bad at this.”

“We’ll just have to break the habit. I’ll buy a cattle prod online tomorrow. That should help to drive the change.”

I moved my hands down so my eyes were visible.
“What if I like it?”

“Hmm, dirty birdy. I see how it is.”

“What?” I tried to feign innocence while smirking.

“You use your sultry sexual allure to distract and command a situation.” He demonstrated by biting his bottom lip and returning my smirk.

“Ha, maybe. Sometimes,” I said, admiring his insight. It was refreshing and a little disconcerting. I may have met my match, or worse, he may be able to run rings around me. I could see I wasn’t going to get away with much in his presence.

“Do you need to go back to work?” he asked, once again drawing me out from behind my thoughts.

“No.”

“I have a meeting I need to go to. When I’m finished I’d like to spend some more time together. Do you have any plans tonight?”

“No,” I said, amused at my succinct responses.

“You do now. Send me a text on where I can pick you up. I’m thinking we can start with dinner. I want to take you out on our first date.”

I smiled as I felt the flushes of a shy little girl surface. He knew he was making me blush and didn’t hide that he was enjoying it.

“Okay,” I said.

He stood up and leant in to whisper in my ear. “Hiding behind short responses won’t help you.” Then he kissed me on the cheek and left.

I sat there smiling like a giddy schoolgirl experiencing her first crush.