

*The Undercity Chronicles of Babylonia Jones, P.I.*  
The Guicai Talisman

*Excerpt #1*

Zaid finally sauntered out of the club.

*There he is.*

He looked the same as he did on the previous nights I'd watched him; tall, about six-foot-two, nice sleek body covered in an expensive suit that I guessed was tailored to fit only him. He was lean, but by no means skinny. His shoulders were broad and the few times I'd seen him without a jacket I noticed he had well-defined muscles in his arms and pecs. The cinched belt around his narrow waist highlighted a flat stomach and showed off a nicely formed ass—yes, on a couple of occasions, while I was cataloguing his looks, I did let my eyes linger on his ass, which was a very nice one, round and firm. The kind of ass a girl could take a nice bite out of.

My mouth salivated at the thought of doing just that. Not a for real bite, but a nice little playful nip. I'm sure he'd appreciate that. To hear Melia tell it, Vampires were into some pretty kinky stuff.

I shook my head.

*Get your mind out the gutter and back on the target Baby D.*

I snapped back to attention and put my hormones in check. Raging hormones plagued me ever since I took this job, but it's an expected hazard. Vampires had something in their makeup that made women and men want to fall at their feet. Dealing with Vampires isn't like how it's portrayed in the Hollywood movies, where terrorized people run kicking and screaming away from them. No. In reality people go to them willingly.

Case in point, there were two creamy-skinned blondes, one on each of Zaid's arms. Arm in arm, they walked along the red carpet that led to valet parking. To me the women looked like the cookie cutter versions of the women he'd taken home last night and the night before that; they were all pale, tall, blonde, gorgeous and wore tight clothes. These two had on dresses so short I could see the bottom of their butts hanging out as they walked.

"Have some pride ladies," I muttered to myself. "Didn't your momma ever tell you that your dress should be longer than your vagina?"

Zaid stopped at the curb and looked from left to right. I didn't bother ducking past the rim of the cement rooftop barrier. Even with his great eyesight he couldn't see me nestled on the rooftop more than a block from where he was, scoping him out with my high-powered binoculars. And, even with his sensitive hearing, he definitely couldn't hear me talking to myself. There were too many other distractions between us for him to even get a lock on my location. Plus, he didn't know he was being watched anyway—why would he be looking for me?

He was probably trying to figure out if any Witches were in the area. Vampires could sniff out Witches and, while they weren't scared of them, usually tried to avoid them. And if he did have Tina's talisman I'm sure he wanted to steer clear of her.

Zaid lifted his chin and turned his head in my direction. He then closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and shuddered on an exhale.

*What the hell is that all about?*

He opened his eyes and if I didn't know any better I'd think he was looking right at me.  
*Impossible.*

### ***Excerpt #2***

While Demarcus and I weren't a couple any longer, he and Melia were still good friends. But I couldn't hold that against her, since they'd known each other well before I was an egg in my mother's ovary.

I pulled up to my apartment building and into a parking space that had my apartment number painted on it. My place wasn't the Ritz, but it was home.

I flipped the switch, engaging the convertible top. "This was a good visit. You warned me against breaking into Zaid's house. Thank you, I won't do that anymore." When the roof was fully closed and the locks clicked into place I cut off the engine, opened the door and got out of the car. Before closing the door I leaned down and looked over at the gorgeous demi-god that any red-blooded woman would've loved to take to her bed and said, "Goodbye, Demarcus."

He leaned over and fixed his smoldering eyes, that promised great sex, on me. "Aren't you going to invite me in for a night cap?"

I glanced up at the sky, which was sunny and bright. "It's not dark yet."

He reached for the driver's seat headrest and let his thumb caress the leather, moving it in slow circular motions. I instantly imagined his thumb caressing a certain part of my body. A small, sensitive part of my body.

"We could hang out for a couple of hours," he said, his voice low and deep. "We could do whatever grown people do to pass the time and then, after we're done, it'll be time for that night cap."

I hadn't had sex in god knows how long and, even though I would never mention it to him, he was my last lover. I took a deep breath, clamping down on my resolve. "No, thank you." I closed the door, slamming it hard.

He angled his head so that he could look at me through the window. "You know you were the best lover I ever had, Baby."

I narrowed my gaze on him. He'd told me that line time after time. "If that's so true then why did you have sex with any female with a pulse while we were together?"

He opened his mouth as if to say something and then snapped it shut again.

I thumped my hand on the door. "Yeah, thought so." I turned on my heel, leaving him behind.

"Rain check then?" he hollered after me.

I walked toward my apartment, swinging my keys around my finger. "No," I said without giving him a backward glance.

I didn't worry about him following me. Demarcus would find something else to amuse himself with. That was another reason we'd broken up—there was so many of them. I wasn't enough to hold his attention for long, something more interesting than little old me always came along.

***Excerpt #3***

I liked to think myself immune to the Vampire allure by now, but Zaid was proving to me just how wrong I was. I thought that hanging out with Melia made me aware of all their predatory habits. That's what it was, looking and sounding the way they did was ingrained in them. They didn't know how to turn it off. It was as if they lived every hour "on". Even in sleep they were predatory. They looked so angelic laying there, but get too close and instinctively they'd reach out and grab hold in an unyielding grip until the sun went down. And then—well, then it would be left up to the Vampire to decide what to do with you. Lucky for me Melia had woken up and let me go.

Zaid's mouth spread into a smile. Not a smile that I'd describe as happy or inviting, but one that I guessed Ted Bundy gave to his victims as he lured them to their deaths. The smile didn't take anything away from his sex appeal though, as I'm sure it didn't take anything away from Mr. Bundy's.

I pretended to turn my attention back to Brutus but every ounce of my being stayed focused on the predator in my room. I resumed scratching behind the dog's ear. If it wasn't for him I'd probably still be trapped in Zaid's fake vision for as long as he wanted. "So what gives, Mr. Brightmon?" I smirked as I said his fake name. "I know you didn't come all this way to mess around with my head, or so that me and Brutus could have a playdate."

"Call me Zaid. Please. I can hardly expect us to be formal when one of us is quite naked, now can I?"

"You can call me Babylonia," I said, ignoring his point about me being naked.

He chuckled. "I'd rather call you by your nickname, Baby. I like it better." My insides pooled into goo at hearing the endearment that was my nickname roll off his tongue. Exactly the reason why I didn't want him to call me that. "But if you prefer Babylonia that's what I'll call you. So tell me, Babylonia, why did your mother name you after an ancient empire?"

"I don't know, you'd have to ask her." As soon as I said the words I wanted to take it back. I didn't want Zaid anywhere near my mom. I trusted myself to look over at him. "Why are you here?" I pressed my left arm against my chest, holding my sheet firmly in place while I inched my free hand under my pillow to search for the extra gun I had stored there.

"You left me no choice. Brutus was walking around like he'd lost his best friend." He looked at Brutus with a sad face.

I felt the cold steel of my gun handle. I didn't know which one I held but I hoped to God it was the one that fired the wood bullets. At least then I'd stand a chance at surviving this.

His body slightly stiffened. "Babylonia, don't do anything stupid," he warned.

I couldn't afford not to do anything stupid.

***Excerpt #4***

I took a deep breath and put on my best game face. Not many people would go willingly into a Vampire's lair, let alone his bedroom. I opened the door and stepped inside his room. This time I didn't have to let my eyes adjust to the dark because of the red light hanging in the center of the room.

"In here," he hollered from the room which held his bed.

I crossed the outer room and went to the slightly ajar door and paused. “You decent in there?”

“And if I said that I wasn’t?” he drawled, all sexy-like from the other side. “Would you come in anyway?”

My insides melted. But just to show I was somehow immune to his effect I pushed open the door and leaned a shoulder on the doorframe nonchalantly. “Show me what you’ve got but, I have to warn ya, I’m sure I’ve seen better.”

My eyes jumped from the empty and made up bed to the plush velvet chair where he sat with dark shades covering his eyes. Every time I’d seen him he’d worn an expensive suit, but this time he had on black pajamas. Dammit. I’d been teasing him, but my heart fell a little by not finding him sans clothes. Man, I’d give a left tit to see him naked.

“You look disappointed that I’m fully clothed.”

I pouted. “I was so looking forward to seeing a pasty white, god knows how old, naked dead man. It would’ve made my day.”

“And night.” He took off his glasses and there was no mistaking the heat in his eyes even under the low lighting. “This ‘dead man’ has learned a trick or two along the way. I’d need the day and all night to scratch the surface of my extensive skill set.”

I inhaled a sharp breath.

“Would you like for me to show you what I learned over the centuries, Babylonia?”

*Yes. God yes.*

I wanted him to teach me everything and then some. I wanted him to cross the distance between us, strip me naked and lay me on his bed and do whatever he wanted to me—all night long.

*Say yes.*

I watched his eyes and through them I knew he would take care of my body, having me come within minutes. When was the last time someone made me come? Never. That treat was reserved for my toys in the bottom drawer of my nightstand.

A slow tongue trailed across his bottom lip and then to his top one. My panties instantly wetted.

*Say yes.*

And that same tongue could be on my body, from top to bottom, worshiping me as I deserved to be worshiped.

Zaid’s hands gripped the arms of his chair.

*Say yes.*

And those same hands would caress my breasts, playing and kneading them, and be on my ass, holding me up while he bent between my legs, driving his cock deep and hard into my dripping valley.

A throaty moan escaped my lips.

*Say yes.*

A bark sounded in the distance.

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The vision of him on top of me and my legs wrapped around his hips began to fade. Another bark sounded.

I shook the last effects of his vision from my head. “You motherfucker!” I pulled my gun from my waist and leveled it on him. “I warned you about messing with my head.”

He put up a hand. “Old habits are hard to break. Put down the gun, Babylonia.”