

Three Burning Red Runaway Brides

Book Three in the Water Kingdom Series

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Excerpt #1 – chapters 1+2

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Perfect Body Double

There was a time when Sabrina London lived for this—the loud, thumping music, the bright, pulsating lights, the scent of perfume mixed with sweat—but that was then, not now. Crazy, just how much could change in six months—seemingly everything.

This was her first time back in civilization. Fitting that it was the hottest spot in Los Angeles on one of, if not the biggest, nights to party: Club Afterlife on New Year's Eve.

Every year, the club hosted one of their famous masquerade balls. This year's theme was Edgar Allan Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death."

Sabrina blended in, just another partygoer draped in a loose, crimson robe, with a stark white, full facemask on. The disguise allowed her to witness the events of the night anonymously.

She may have been there in secret, but she was not there alone.

Her partner had circumnavigated the long lines and gained entrance to the club with ease, then singled out her target and made her move. After months and months of development, the plan was finally in motion.

Sabrina watched from across the crowded club. Her double had done a good job, maybe even too good a job. Jackson had been easily seduced.

Her double had commandeered a VIP booth and then slyly fucked a man Sabrina had feelings for. Sabrina had not realized until then, when her nails cut into her sweaty palms, that she had made two tight fists—one for each of them.

Skipper sauntered back, although clearly uncertain on her heels and clumsy in her billowing, Victorian-style dress. Sabrina had nicknamed her body double Skipper for many reasons. One was to remind her of her place—Skipper was always Barbie's lesser and Sabrina hoped the name reminded the girl of just that.

Just as Sabrina felt her blood heat, Jackson called out her name; the ruse had worked.

Sabrina waved to Skipper from where she hid around a tall marble pillar. When the girl got there, Sabrina could hear her panting—she was almost out of breath.

"I didn't tell you to fuck him. *Here*. In front of everyone," Sabrina snapped. "What the hell were you thinking?"

"You told me to seduce him," Skipper said over the loud dance music. "*I did*, and it worked." She smiled as she fixed her lace Venetian masquerade mask. "You heard him, right? He just shouted out *your* name."

Sabrina settled herself quickly. She could see Jackson approaching through the dense crowd. "Fine. Time to take this to the next step. He needs to see you. All of you."

Skipper nodded.

"He's coming," Sabrina's guard interrupted.

"Already did," Skipper said under her breath.

“Remember the plan. Get him to take you home,” Sabrina repeated for what felt like the thousandth time. “Do whatever it takes to convince him *you* are Sabrina London. He needs to...one hundred percent...believe the lie.”

“And if he doesn’t believe me?”

“You know *that* answer. Don’t make me say it again.”

Skipper nodded.

“Good. Go. Run out the door. He’ll follow you.”

“Will you be okay here?”

Sabrina made a sour face as she glanced about, like it all—the music, the lights, the crowds—disgusted her. “Me? I’m leaving.”

“Okay. Wish me luck.”

“Good luck, Skipper.”

With that, Sabrina’s double stepped into the crowd, caught Jackson’s attention and then dashed for the door. Sabrina stared longingly at her former lover as he passed her by, but he didn’t even glance her way. Even if he had, all he would have seen was another person dressed as Red Death.

“We should get you to the roof,” Sabrina’s guard urged. “Dunyasha will be waiting for us.”

Sabrina gazed at the ceiling, as if she could see the vampire through it. “She’s pacing. For someone with so much time at her disposal, she’s *incredibly* impatient.”

“My queen?” her guard prompted again.

“Yes, Voss, let’s go home. I’ve had enough of this place.”

Sample - not for resale

Slippery When Wet

Skipper ditched her heels in the club's entryway and ran on stockinged feet into the cool street. She quickly retrieved a small container of eye drops she had hidden in her dress and sprayed the fluid recklessly into each eye, making them look glassy and ready to unleash a flood of tears. She knew every added detail would help sell the idea to Jackson.

"Sabrina!" he shouted from behind her. "Sabrina!"

I got you now. She slowly turned her head and gazed over her shoulder at him. He looked concerned. *Perfect,* she thought.

"Sabrina..."

She lifted her hand to her lips to shush him.

"What?"

"Are you trying to get us both killed?" She wiped an eye, smearing her makeup.

"What? No—"

"Then stop screaming my name." She glanced side to side, her best attempt to look paranoid. "I'm in disguise for a fucking reason."

He tucked a lock of hair that had fallen loose back under her wig. "The wig is a nice touch."

"Are you even listening to me?"

"Yes," Jackson said smiling. "Why are you here, Sabrina?"

Skipper hushed him again before she answered. "It's New Year's Eve. I needed to get out." She paused to fix her mask to better cover her face. "I wanted to see you."

"Really? Why now? It's been months."

"I missed you."

Jackson hesitated a moment. Skipper struggled to read his expression, as it seemed to teeter between anger and frustration to excitement and something that looked like sad puppy dog eyes.

"I missed you too."

Skipper twisted away, as she nearly cracked a smile. Jackson was turning out to be more easily manipulated than expected.

"I-I have to go," she said.

"No, wait."

"I can't..."

Throughout her months of training, Sabrina had made Skipper endure countless hours of soap operas and teen-angst dramas. Skipper had laughed while she'd watched them and constantly made fun of the sappy dialogue and overemotional characters. Now she felt like she was living in one of those worlds.

“Sabrina, I just—”

“You just created a scene in there, calling out my name like that, dressed in your street clothes. The Tainted no doubt know I’m here now. They’ll kill me if I don’t run, Jacks.”

Skipper took a step but was stopped by Jackson’s hand on her arm. “Run where? Where have you been?”

His grip on her arm ignited her fight-or-flight response. She wanted to pry his hand off and punch him in the nose, but she had to play her part. *Sabrina wouldn’t hit him, so I can’t.*

She exhaled slowly to calm herself. Acting weak was as bad as being weak for her people.

“I’m out of time. If I stay here any longer, they’ll find me.”

“Then come home with me.”

Skipper turned and looked him in the eyes. “Will I be safe there?”

“Very safe.”

“Then let’s hurry.”

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Skipper had played her part during the short ride to Jackson’s apartment, but now that they were inside his home, she dropped the scared-child routine and played into some of the skills she enjoyed more.

“I always wanted to see your apartment, Jacks,” she said as she ran her fingers down his arm.

Jackson smiled. “You know, you can take that silly mask off now.”

“Oh right.”

The masquerade mask was only one of the many layers of disguise she wore. Months ago, when Sabrina had first found her, Skipper had had an entirely different nose and chin. Those, and a few other things, had been cosmetically altered to make her look like Sabrina.

Skipper was confident Jackson would believe she was Sabrina. Why wouldn’t he? He hadn’t seen Sabrina for months, and Skipper was the spitting image of her.

“Are you thirsty?” Jackson asked as he walked into his eat-in kitchen.

“I’ll have some water. Thanks.”

“Just water?”

She nodded. There was a lot to remember. “To start.”

Skipper couldn’t help but notice all the framed photographs that adorned the walls. Jackson must have had fifty or more images on display just in his living room, hallway, and kitchen.

“Are these all yours?”

“Yeah. After I lost my job at the advertising agency...you know, after everything happened...I started doing more art photography. I was suddenly, for lack of a better word, inspired, and soon after I started, one of my former colleagues got me placed in a good gallery downtown. Had a...sizeable opening a month ago. Big payday.”

“Photographing all these hot naked chicks, huh?” Skipper’s personality slipped out. “I mean models. All you’re doing is shooting nude models now?”

“I mean, I was shooting models at the ad agency too. I’m just doing it now for my own series.”

“Series,” she repeated. “And your primary focus seems to be...” Skipper realized what she was looking at—all of Jackson’s photos were fairy themed. “Oh.”

“What?”

“I think you missed me more than I realized,” she said with a few taps on the glass of one of the photos in front of her.

“They aren’t *all* supposed to be *exactly* like you, Sabrina.”

“Right. Well, nice blond wig on this one, but she’s a little too skinny. My ribs don’t show like this. This poor girl, she looks like she’s starving.”

He nodded. “That’s an early one. Notice the wings are made of tinfoil and lined with LED strip lights. I went back and forth between physical and painted wings for a while before I settled. Polina was tons of fun to work with, but since she got her implants, she doesn’t quite fit what I’m going for anymore...in this series.”

“Oh, I took you for a ‘tits on a stick’ kinda guy.” Skipper closed her eyes a moment and shook her head. She wasn’t sure if that was her or Sabrina talking.

Jackson chuckled as he handed her a bottle of water. “I really *did* miss you, Sabrina.” He placed his hand on the small of her back and gazed longingly at her.

Okay, now or never.

“I’m all sweaty and sticky. I need to get out of this ridiculous dress and take a shower. Do you have any clothes I could wear?”

“I’m sure I have something that will fit you.”

“Great.” Skipper pointed at the door she suspected was the bathroom. “This way?”

“That’s it.”

She undid the hooks on her dress while she walked to the bathroom. “Why don’t you join me in a few minutes?”

“Yeah? I’d like that.”

“Good. See you soon.”

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The hot water felt nice on her skin. The heat usually would have relaxed her, but in this instant, every inch of her body already felt like it was a forest fire ablaze, the flames on the move.

This is what you signed up for. This. Months of studying, training, reshaping your face, body, and mind. It’s all led to this first hurdle. There can be only one of two outcomes now: success or failure. And fire does not fail.

She drew a deep breath and repeated her maxim. *In the fire, I am purified. In the fire, I am free. In the fire, I am welcomed. We burn as one.*

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Skipper would never forget the day this all started.

She had stepped from the lava tube, her eyes not yet adjusted to the sunlight. She had heard the most sickeningly sweet sound call to her—a voice. Sabrina London’s voice.

“I was told I’d find you here, Amber.”

“But no one told you just how dangerous *here* was,” she said as her eyes further adjusted. “Did you see her erupt? Did you behold the power of Soufrière Hills Volcano?”

“I’m thankful I missed it.”

“You may have missed the eruption, but you’re here in time to watch the lava cleanse the island.” Amber—because she was still Amber then—finally took her first good look at Sabrina. “Wow, you are *much* prettier than they said. Glad I just bathed.”

Sabrina hovered above the lava flow at the side of the mountain. The winds pushed her back, but the gusts were no match for her large wings.

“Bathed?” Sabrina looked puzzled. “You’re covered in ash. And how can you stand this heat?”

“For an elemental queen, you sure don’t know much about your kind, do you?”

Sabrina crossed her arms. "I'm not a queen...not yet."

"Not yet."

"Look, you know what kingdom I represent. You know my people and your people have never meshed well."

"The Fire Kingdom fears no one, especially other fairy, Water Sprite." Amber watched Sabrina look her up and down.

"You look strong."

"I am strong. And like my mother and her mother, I am fireproof."

"The assembly said they'd find someone who looked similar, I'll give them that." Sabrina nodded and smiled. "We look *similar*, but you and I are nothing alike."

"I'd never want to be you."

Sabrina laughed. "But here we are."

Amber crossed her arms and mirrored Sabrina, whose arms were also crossed. "Here we are."

"Your king told you what I expect of you."

"He did." Amber scrunched her nose and fanned errant strands of red hair out of her face. "Nothing more or less than he himself would expect of me."

"And you agree to the terms?"

"I do."

"Then put some clothes on and let's go, before this...this thing erupts again."

"Where are we going?"

Sabrina hovered higher. "Home."



The handle on the door jiggled a moment before Jackson opened it and stepped in. He was fully nude, and while she had felt him under his clothes at the club, Skipper was still pleasantly surprised by just how muscular he was.

"You've been working out, Jacks."

"A little."

He stepped into the tiny shower stall and shut the door behind him. "My God, you're sexier than I remembered. Looks like you've been working out a little too."

Skipper shrugged and smirked. She used to be much more muscular, but pretending to be Sabrina had changed all that. What she saw now when she looked down at her own body still felt foreign to her.

"Come here." He pulled her into him by her waist. "Let me look at you. It's been forever."

Skipper went onto her tiptoes. She was almost an inch and a half shorter than Sabrina, something easy to fake with heels, but in the shower, with no way to disguise it, she had to improvise. Luckily for her, Jackson was more interested in other things.

"I've dreamt of these," he said as he massaged one of her breasts with one hand and rubbed the hot water the shower sprayed on her lower back with his other.

"You like them?"

"You know I do."

"As nice as you remember?"

He squeezed harder. "Oh, *they* are."

She was relieved to hear him say so. Sabrina told her how her boobs would be as important to convincing Jackson as her wings.

"Easy, okay? They're tender."

“Okay.”

Skipper turned around. “Do me a favor, wash my back. It’s covered in makeup.”

“Sure.”

“Where’s your loofah?”

“My what?”

“Sponge? What do you clean yourself with in here?”

“Soap.”

Skipper smiled. She had never used a loofah before she met Sabrina and felt they were entirely useless too.

“You ever try a pumice stone?”

“No.”

When Jackson began to scrub his big hands down her back over her raised but unreleased wings, she lost her train of thought. His touch felt good. Sabrina may have had some strange and annoying behaviors she had to mimic, but she was right about this—keeping her wings up at the surface felt good.

“That feels nice, Jackson.”

So fiendishly sensitive like this. Pleasure... You water fairies and your constant pursuit of pleasure.

“The tattoo—your wings, they look kinda blurry.”

Skipper swallowed hard. With all that was happening, she must have forgotten. She had to concentrate more, not only to keep them in place, but also to match Sabrina’s design. It was a difficult task; she’d have rather had them out, but that was an entirely different concern altogether.

“It’s all that greasy makeup,” she said, spinning the lie quickly. “I put like three coats on.”

“Oh, yeah.”

“You’re gonna have to scrub harder, babe.”

He did as she said and the chills it sent through her body made her jump. But it was not the arousal inside her body that made her want more—it was his arousal outside it.

His growing cock bobbed against her buttocks, and Skipper turned slowly, reached out, and took it in her hand. “I would’ve offered you help with this, but it looks like you don’t need any.”

“Sabrina...I thought I’d never see you again...let alone...”

“Fuck me?” she said as she stroked his shaft.

“Yeah.”

Skipper suddenly remembered one of Sabrina’s stories and used it. “Well, I’m just glad you accepted this invitation. Last time I asked you to join me in the shower you declined.”

“I was a fool.”

“Still are,” she whispered over his lips.

“Turn around. Release your wings. I want to see them while we do it.”

Skipper tensed up a second. Her ability to mimic Sabrina’s tattoo was good, but to match the actual wing span of a queen of the elemental kingdom—there were only so many things Skipper could fake.

She looked him in the eye again—he had no idea she wasn’t who she claimed to be. This would be the final test.

“You sure you’re ready for this?” she asked him, but the question was more for herself.

Jackson grasped her waist again and gently turned her around. She placed her hands on the shower wall and looked over her shoulder at him as he entered her.

He looks like he’s in heaven, even happier now than when we were having sex at the club earlier. Is this... But the sensation of him pushing farther inside of her erased her thoughts.

“Slow at first, okay?”

“You all right?” He stopped and asked, “Did I hurt you earlier?”

“No. Not hurt...just...tender. Anyway, it’s slippery in here. I don’t want to fall.”

“Don’t worry, Sabrina. I got you.”

His words were so kind and caring, it was as if Skipper could feel them wrapping around her. She had only ever dreamt of such kindness in her life.

“I know you do, Jacks.”

When he started thrusting into her, she hoped he would forget all about her wings. But his hands left their tight grip on her waist and began to trace at the lines of her tattoo. *Maybe if I can get him to come quickly...*

But no sooner did she have the thought than she began to feel her back tingle. *Wait, something's wrong.*

“Shit! My wings are gonna pop!”

ZZZAP!

With a bright flash of light and an intense wave of heat, her wings unfurled.

“My God, Sabrina.”

She was afraid to look over her shoulder at him; she was afraid to even have her eyes open. “Sorry, I couldn't control them.” *Moment of truth...*

“Did you shut the water off?”

“What?”

“The water... Whoa...” Jackson held still. “Your wings...”

When he didn't finish his statement, Skipper opened her eyes and hesitantly looked back at him. Her wings were out and their placement, along with the heat they generated, had evaporated the shower spray and created a sauna effect.

She watched Jackson reach out for one. Sabrina had warned her he might try and touch them; apparently, most of her past lovers had liked to tug at them during sex. But Fire Fairy wings were different than Water Fairy wings—much hotter.

“Careful, Jackson, they'll burn you.”

“They didn't burn me before.”

Skipper knew she had to distract him. He was scrutinizing them too closely. “Hey! Why'd you stop? That felt really fucking good. You here to fuck me or play with my wings?”

“I thought I'd do both.”

Skipper straightened up and turned around, making sure to bounce a bit as she moved. “But then you'll miss these.” Once she faced him, she stood up on her tiptoes again and pressed her body into his.

“You're so *fucking* warm.”

“A *hot* shower with a *hot* man can do that to a girl.”

Even she could not deny how yummy the skin-to-skin contact felt. Jackson was warm too, and his muscled chest and stomach made her nipples rock hard.

“I bet this is warm too.”

She slowly lowered herself, sliding her breasts over his penis until she rested comfortably in a squat and he pressed atop her lips.

“I think I remember you saying you wanted to come—”

“Not yet.”

He reached down, grasped her by her armpits, and lifted her back up before he pressed her to the shower wall, her wings scorching the tile. After a long kiss that made her heart flutter, he rested his forehead against hers.

“I wanted you in my mouth,” she said breathlessly.

“There will be plenty of time for that later,” he answered confidently. “I am *never* letting you go.”

His hand moved to her thigh and hooked and lifted her leg, so he could reenter her.

This feels good, she thought. *This feels really, really good.* Skipper moaned and bit at his neck playfully—exactly what Sabrina would have done in the moment.

“Keep going,” she whispered, so turned on she no longer worried about anything—not her wings, not her mission, not her future. “Face to face like this... You're fucking me so good, Jackson.”

In this position, she could kiss him more, and as his hands continuously worked her breasts, she could withdrawal her wings unnoticed.

Between kisses, she breathed over his lips and touched his handsome face. *Sabrina is lucky to have such a good man. Pity...*

"I just want to live in this moment forever."

"Inside me until the moment you die?"

"Yes."

Skipper's legs quaked, her body tingled, and her toes gripped the shower floor; she was near orgasm. Jackson's pace got faster and faster before he erupted suddenly with a loud grunt, spilling on her lower stomach. Both feet on the shower floor, Skipper felt stable but she knew, if she moved, she might wobble and fall over because her legs were so weak.

"That was amazing." The water washed her clean as Jackson knelt before her, the reason unclear at first.

"You okay?"

"You didn't finish." With his face leaned into her, he parted her lips with his tongue.

"Damn!" she cried out.

He didn't have to hook her leg this time—she lifted it herself and planted her foot firmly on the opposite wall. She wanted this.

"Oh shit! Jacks!" Skipper grunted and groaned with delight as he worked his tongue deeper and faster.

"Make me come." She grabbed a handful of his hair and pulled it tight. "Faster."

Her entire body began to heat up, and she feared her wings would unfurl again if she didn't find another release soon. Her free hand slid down, her fingers joining his tongue. *Damn it...damn it...*

Just when she began to doubt it would, it happened.

"Fuck!"

Her leg went weak and draped over his shoulder. Back pressed to the tile, she slid down some.

"I got you," he said as he braced her weight. "You okay?" He waited until she stopped shaking and then stood and looked her in the eye.

"Yeah, that was intense, Stonewall." Not sure what was next and feeling a little embarrassed, Skipper avoided his gaze. "I need a few minutes to catch my breath, okay?"

Jackson rinsed himself off a moment and then opened the shower door. "I'll get something for you to wear. Shout if you need me."

"Will do," she said with a little wave.

Will do? Skipper shook her head under the water, which was beginning to get cold.

What the fuck? Why doesn't Sabrina just have this guy move in with her? He could live in the ruins, the fortress, guy could probably build an awesome shack or something on the beach. Why waste her time tricking him?

"Hey, Sabrina?" Jackson called out from the hallway.

She turned off the water, stepped out of the shower, and wrapped herself in a towel. "Yeah?"

"I was just wondering...is there something wrong with your wings?"

She did not like the sound of that question. "Why?"

"They looked...I don't know, kinda smaller. Less colorful."

She gazed around the small bathroom. There was no escape, and she hated being cornered. "So, this is what you say to a girl after she rocks your world? Twice in one night. Thanks, pal."

"Sorry," he laughed, his voice farther away now.

Skipper opened the door and peeked out into his apartment. There was a clear line to the front door—she could run if she needed to. But she could not return to Sabrina with any doubt in her mind.

"I'm about to get my period. That's why I told you not to squeeze too hard." She pointed to her boobs as she lied. "Oh, and I'm close to shedding. I'm surprised my wings didn't fall off in the shower. Kinda felt like they might."

"Oh...that makes sense." He was in the kitchen now but getting closer.

“Nothing to worry about, Jacks. In a few days, they will be as big and bright as you remember. In fact, bigger now.”

“Bigger? Really?”

“Yeah, now that I’m queen.”

Jackson walked into the bathroom with a robe, tank top, sweatshirt, and pajama bottoms for her to wear. “Here you go.”

Skipper nodded. “Thanks.”

“You hungry?”

“Tired,” she replied. “What time is it?”

“My bedroom’s back here,” Jackson said as he walked into the room at the end of the hall. “After one a.m. Huh...I guess we missed it.”

“Missed what?” Skipper asked as she joined him in the small room that was decorated just like the others: in copious amounts of fairy-themed photography.

Jackson leaned over and kissed her briefly on the lips. “Happy New Year, Sabrina.”

“Oh. Right.” Skipper had totally forgotten. “Happy New Year.” She took a quick inventory of the room—nothing looked dangerous. She had not wanted to stay the night, but she knew Jackson would find it incredibly strange if she tried to leave now.

“Do you have a hair dryer?”

“No,” he said as he climbed into bed and then patted the mattress. “Queen-size bed for the Queen of the Water Fairy Kingdom. You know, I thought you told that Tainted thing it would be a year before you were...um...crowned?”

She dropped her towel. “I lied.”

“Did you?” He smiled. “I didn’t know Sabrina London lied.”

“Oh, Sabrina London lies.” Skipper pulled on the sweatshirt he gave her. “She lies all the time.”