



# One

*Nature knows no right or wrong ...  
Only balance and imbalance*

Rebecca mindlessly wiped down the telephone receiver. No sooner had she replaced it in the cradle than it rang.

"Hello?"

"I am looking for Becky Weatherspoon."

"Speaking and it's Rebecca," she corrected.

"My name is Wen Fiddler," he said.

"Am I supposed to know you?" She could not place the name, but something tugged way down deep inside, his voice silken and smooth, comfortable, like a precious memory of what came before, of a forgotten place and time. She felt as if she could have gotten lost in that voice, floating off into never, never land without a care in the world. She gave herself a shake snapping free of it.

"I am an old friend of your sister's." He was lying.

"Susanna?" she asked, suddenly feeling stupid. She thoughtlessly gave the receiver a final wipe. Of course, it was Susanna. She only had, but the one sister. She threw the cleaning cloth off to the side.

"Yes," he confirmed.

"My sister passed away quite a few years back, what is it you want? I ..."

He cut her off. "Your sister was a friend of mine and helped me out in the past and I am in need once again and I was ..."

"Excuse me?" she broke in, '*Who in hell is this guy?*'



Ina Louise Jackson

He drew the receiver closer to his lips, "Let's start over. Your sister and I were friends," he paused listening intently to her breathing. He grinned, sensing he had hit a nerve.

"Okay ... And?" She sat down on the sofa.

"She helped me out a number of years back and I was hoping that ..."

She reined him in before he could further his sentence. "Look ... Sphen Fiddles or whatever the hell your name is."

"Wen Fiddler," he said quietly. "My name is Wen Fiddler," he repeated.

"Whatever! ... If it's money you want I'm in-between jobs right now so you're out of luck and another thing, I don't know you from Adam and after this telephone call I don't want to either." She slammed the telephone down on the receiver. "God that guy's got a lot of nerve," she muttered.

Her relationship with her sister in the last few years before she'd passed were awkward and uncomfortable, eventually dissolving to the point of nothing—no telephone calls, no letters, no emails, no nothing. She had not even known where Susanna was living when she got notified of her death. The funeral with the closed casket and few in attendance had been more than she could bear. A silent tear ran down her cheek. Her sister and the closeness they had shared, like dust in the wind gone, forever, never to return. She found herself wishing she had not picked up the telephone, had just kept right on cleaning her apartment. She had a hard enough time dealing with the death on a daily basis; she surely did not need some long lost friend of Susanna's calling her up. It was like a slap in the face.

She put her head down and cried.

The telephone rang.

She reluctantly picked it up, knowing it was him again. "Yes," she muffled.



"Becky, I am sorry we got off on the wrong foot. I didn't mean to upset you," Wen said.

"It's Rebecca." Her sister had been the only one in her life that had called her Becky and got away with it. Becky to her had always sounded like a breakfast cereal.

"I don't want money. I want to give you money."

She stood and started to pace slowly back and forth, clasping the telephone tightly to her ear. He had caught her undivided attention; she'd been out of work for too long and bills were mounting quicker than she could shake a stick. No name mac and cheese had become her main stay diet. "I'm listening," she said.

"I would like to hire you. And as I said ..."

"I know you were a friend of my sister," she interjected.

"Yes."

"Did she work for you?"

"Yes," he said, lying once again.

"Hire me for?" She paused, it was there again, that voice, that feeling ... That déjà vu, whiffing round tugging and pulling at a memory of another life. 'Dracula' had that same effect on people, women in particular, a voice of the ages, one you could get lost in. "For what?" she finally asked.

"A twelve day job," Wen said.

"Only twelve days?"

"Yes," he said. "Pays well," he added as incentive.

"Doing?"

"Caring for my daughter."

"Babysitting?"

"Not really, she is six, more caretaking I would say."

"Caretaking?" She repeated the odd word he had used. She switched the receiver to her other ear. '*What an unorthodox way of putting it,*' she thought. '*It's babysitting.*'

"Yes."