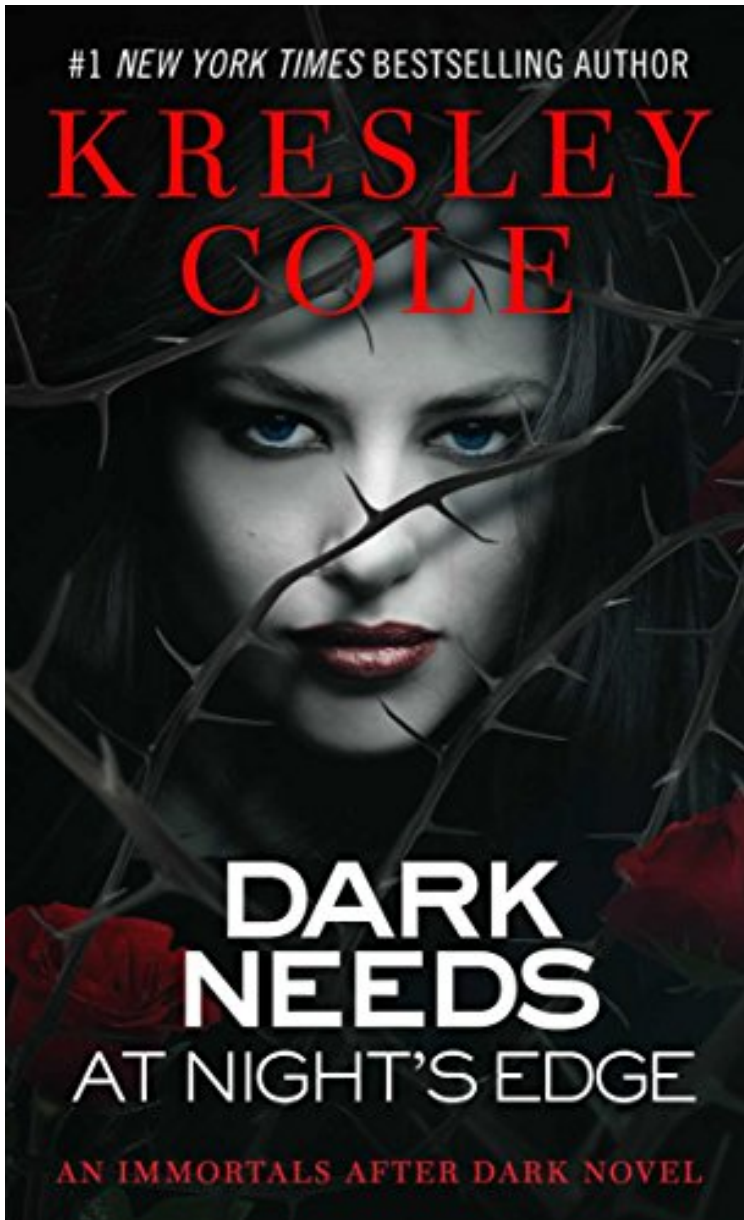


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Dark Needs at Night's Edge (Immortals After Dark, Book 4)



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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurBestselling author Kresley Cole continues her seductive Immortals After Dark series with this tale of a vampire shunned even by his own kind and a beautiful phantom, bound together by a passion they cannot resist. A RAVEN-HAIRED TEMPTRESS OF THE DARK... Nomi Laress, a famous ballerina from a past century, became a phantom the night she was murdered. Imbued with otherworldly

powers but invisible to the living, she haunts her beloved home, scaring away trespassers -- until she encounters a ruthless immortal even more terrifying than Nomi herself. A VAMPIRE WARRIOR CONSUMED BY MADNESS... To prevent him from harming others, Conrad Wroth's brothers imprison him in an abandoned manor. But there, a female only he can see seems determined to drive him further into madness. The exquisite creature torments him with desire, leaving his body racked with lust and his soul torn as he finds himself coveting her for his own. HOW FAR WILL HE GO TO CLAIM HER? Yet even if Conrad can win Nomi, evil still surrounds her. Once he returns to the brutality of his past to protect her, will he succumb to the dark needs seething inside him? Extrait Dark Needs at Nights Edge Outside Orleans Parish Present day Stay sane, act normal, he chants to himself as he strides down the rickety pier. On either side of him, water black like tar. Ahead of him, muted light from the bayou tavern. A Lore bar. A lone neon sign flickers over flat skiffs below. Music and laughter carry. Stay sane . . . need to dull the rage. Until the endtime. Inside. Whiskey. His voice is low, rough from disuse. The bartender's face falls. Like last night. Others grow skittish. Can they sense that I ache to kill? The whispers around him are like metal on slate to his ragged nerves. Conrad Wroth, once a warlord . . . madder than any vampire I've seen in all my centuries. A killer for hire. If he shows up in your town, then folks from the Lore there'll go missing. Missing? Unless I want them found. Heard he drains 'em so savagely . . . nothings left of their throats. So I'm not fastidious. I heard he eats them. Distorted rumors. Or is that one true? Tales of his insanity spreading once more. I've never missed a target how insane can I be? He answers himself: Very fucking much so. Memories clot his mind. His victims' memories taken from their blood toll inside him, their number always growing. Don't know what's real; can't determine what's illusion. Most of the time, he can scarcely understand his own thoughts. He doesn't go a day without seeing some type of hallucination, striking out at shadows around him. A grenade with the pin pulled, they say. Only a matter of time. They're right. Stay sane . . . act normal. Glass in hand, he chuckles softly on his way to a dimly lit table in the back. Normal? He's a goddamned vampire in a bar filled with shifters, demons, and the sharp-eared fey. Christmas lights are strung up in the back through the eye sockets of human skulls that frame a mirror. In the corner, a demoness lazily strokes her lover's horns, visibly arousing the male. At the bar, an immense werewolf bares his fangs, bowing protectively as he tosses a small redhead behind him. Can't decide if you should attack, Lykae? That's right. I don't smell of blood. A trick I learned. The couple leaves, the redhead all but carried out by the Lykae. As they exit, she peers over her shoulder, her eyes like mirrors. Then gone. Out into the night where they belong. Sit. Back against the wall. He adjusts the sunglasses that shade his red eyes, dirty red eyes. As he scans the room, he resists the urge to rub his palm over the back of his neck. Watched by someone unseen? But then, I always feel like that. He swoops up the drink, narrowing his eyes at his steady hand. My mind's decayed, but my sword hands still true. A ruinous combination. He takes a liberal swallow. The drink. The whiskey dulls the need to lash out. Not that it has disappeared. Small things enrage him. An off look. Someone approaching too quickly. Failing to give him a wide enough berth. His fangs sharpen at the slightest provocation. As though a living thing hungers inside me. Ravenous for blood and a throat to tear. Each time he acts on the rage, others' memories blight more of his own. He still has enough sanity to stalk his targets: his brothers. He will mete out retribution to Nikolai and Murdoch Wroth for doing the unspeakable to him. Sebastian, the third brother, was a victim like him, but must be slain simply because of what he is. And my time grows nigh. Like an animal, he recognizes this. He's found them in this mysterious place of swamps and haze and music. He's seen Nikolai and Sebastian with their wives. He might have felt envy that his brothers laugh with them. That they touch them possessively, with wonder in their clear eyes. But hatred drowns out any confusing jealousy. Offspring will follow. Hell kill their females as well. Destroy them. Destroy myself. Before my enemies catch up with me. He adjusts the bandage under his shirt on his left arm. The slashed skin beneath it will not heal. Five days ago, he was marked by a dream demon, one who tracks him by this very injury. One who promised that most coveted dream and most dreaded nightmare would follow the mark. His brows draw together. The hunter will soon become the hunted: his life is nearing its end. A whisper of regret. The thing he regrets most. He tries to remember what he covets so dearly. Another's memories bombard him, exploding in his mind. His hand shoots up to clasp his forehead. Nikolai enters the bar, Murdoch behind him. Their expressions are grave. They've come to kill me. As he expected. He thought he could draw them out by returning here again and again. He lowers his hand, and his lips ease back from his fangs. The bar empties in a rush. Then . . . stillness. His brothers stare at him as if seeing a ghost. Insects clamor outside. Rain draws near and steepens the air. Just as lightning strikes in the distance, Sebastian enters, crossing to stand beside the other two. He's allied with them? This he hadn't expected. He removes his

sunglasses, revealing his red eyes. The eldest, Nikolai, stifles a wince at the sight, but shakes it off and advances. The three seem surprised that hell stay to engage them, that he hasnt traced away. They are strong and skilled, yet they dont recognize the power he wields, the thing hes become. He can slaughter them all without blinking, and hell savor it. They havent drawn their swords? Then they walk to their doom. Cant keep them waiting. He lunges from his seat and hurdles the table, knocking Sebastian unconscious with a blow that cracks his skull and sends him flying into the back wall. Before the other two can raise a hand in defense, he snatches them by their throats. One in each tightening hand as they grapple to free themselves.

Three hundred years of this, he hisses. Their struggles do nothing; their shocked expressions satisfy. Squeezing Wood creaks behind him. He shoves back and heaves his brothers at a new enemy. Too late; that Lykaes returned and slashes out with flared claws, ripping through his torso. Blood gushes. He roars with fury and charges the werewolf, dodging claws and teeth with uncanny speed to barrel him to the ground. Just as his hands are about to meet around the Lykaes corded neck, the beast claps something to his right wrist. A manacle? Clenching harder, he grates out a rasping laugh. You dont think that will hold me? Bones begin to pop beneath his palms. The kill is near, and he wants to yell with pleasure. The werewolf cuffs his left wrist. What is this? The metal wont bend. Wont break. They goddamned mean to take me alive? He leaps to his feet, tensing to trace. Nothing. Sebastian on the floor, pouring blood from his temple, has him by the ankles.

He kicks Sebastian, connecting squarely with his brothers chest. Ribs crack. He whirls around in time to catch the bar rail the Lykae swings at his face. He staggers but remains on his feet. What the fuck is he? the Lykae bellows, swinging the rail again with all his might. The brutal hit takes him across his neck. A split second of faltering. Enough for his brothers to tackle him. He thrashes and bites, snapping his fangs. Cant break free . . . cant . . . They attach the manacles at his wrists to another chain. He kicks viciously, stunned when they trap his legs as well. Choking with rage, he strains against his bonds with all his strength. The metal cleaves his skin to the bone. Nothing. Caught. He roars, spitting blood at them, dimly hearing them speak. I hope you came up with a good place to put him, Sebastian says between ragged breaths. I bought a long-abandoned manor, Nikolai grates, place called Elancourt. Chills course through him even through his fury; pain erupts from the injury on his arm. A dream. His doom. He can never go to this Elancourt knows this with a savage certainty. Hes too strong for them to trace him theres still time to escape. If they take him there, they wont take him alive. . . .*** Under a clouded nighttime sky, the spirit of Nomi Laress knelt in

the drive at the very edge of her property line, gazing hungrily at the newspaper, lying wrapped in wet plastic. Today the deliveryman that capricious fiend had missed the drive again, this time tossing the bundle squarely onto the desolate county road. Nomi was starving for that paper, desperate for the news, reviews, and commentary that would break up the monotony of her life or her eighty-year-long afterlife. But she couldnt leave the estate to seize it. As a ghost, Nomi could manipulate matter telekinetically, and her power was nearly absolute at Elancourt she could rattle all the windows or tear off the roof if she wanted to, and the weather often changed with her emotions but not outside the property. Her beloved home had become her prison, her eternal cell of fifteen acres and a slowly dying manor. Among fates other curses, each seemingly designed to torture her in personal and specific ways, Nomi could never leave this place. She didnt know why this was soonly that it was, and had been since shed awakened the morning after her murder. She recalled seeing her haunting reflection for the first time. Nomi remembered that exact moment when shed realized that shed died when shed first comprehended what shed become. A ghost. Shed become something that frightened even her. Something unnatural. Never again to be a lover or friend. Never to be a mother, like shed always planned after her dancing career. As a storm had boiled outside, shed silently screamed for hours. The only thing she could be thankful for was that Louis hadnt been trapped here with her. She stretched harder. Must . . . have that . . . paper! Nomi wasnt certain why it continued to arrive. A past article had recounted the problems inherent with recurrent billing of credit cards, and she supposed she was the benefactress of her last tenants credit card negligence. The delivery could end at any time. Every one was precious. Eventually she gave up, defeated, sitting back in the weed-ridden drive. Out of habit, she made movements as if she was rubbing her thighs, yet felt nothing. Nomi could never feel. Never again. She was incorporeal, as substantial as the mist rolling in from the bayou. Thanks, Louis. Oh, and may you rot in hell because surely thats where you went. . . . Usually, at this point in the newspaper struggle, shed be battling the urge to tear her hair out, wondering how much longer she could endure this existence, speculating what shed done to deserve it. Yes, on the night of her death, shed refused to die, but this was ridiculous. But even as desperate as she was for the words, she wasnt as badly off as usual. Because last night a man had come into her home. A towering, handsome man with grave eyes. He might return this

night. He might even move in. She shouldn't get too excited about the stranger, to have her hopes crushed yet again. Lights blinded her; the shriek of squealing tires ripped through the quiet of the night. As a car shot forward onto the gravel, she futilely raised her arms to protect her face and gave a silent cry. It drove straight through her, the engine reverberating like an earthquake when it passed through her head. The vehicle never slowed as it prowled down the oak-lined drive to Elancourt.

Revue de presse
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