

Ebook Dark Legacy (Carpathian Novel, A) By Christine Feehan



In a thrilling Carpathian novel from #1 New York Times bestselling author Christine Feehan, a woman fights to free herself from the grip of the vampire trying to possess her... In a beautiful compound hidden away from the world, Emeline Sanchez tries to blunt the pain that has wracked her body ever since her terrifying ordeal in the labyrinth beneath the city—when she was forced to exchange blood with an evil master vampire. Now, it's his voice that haunts her...that calls to her in the dark...that never lets her rest. And while the children that she helped to free from his clutches struggle to heal, watched over by their Carpathian protectors, Emeline knows one thing: She must sacrifice herself to keep them all from harm... For her beauty is irresistible to the vampires, her psychic ability like a drug. Whipped into a frenzy, they'll never stop coming for her. And only the taste of one Carpathian warrior—the rush of his blood—can save her...

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Review Praise for Christine Feehan and her Carpathian novels “The erotic, gripping series that has defined an entire genre. I love everything she does.”—J. R. Ward “The queen of paranormal romance.”—USA Today “After Bram Stoker, Anne Rice and Joss Whedon (who created the venerated Buffy the Vampire Slayer), Christine Feehan is the person most credited with popularizing the neck gripper.”—Time “Feehan has a knack for bringing vampiric Carpathians to vivid, virile life in her Dark Carpathian novels.”—Publishers Weekly “Red-hot romance and great storytelling...a treat you can't refuse...Thrill-a-minute fantasy with complex characters and a story that captivates from beginning to end.”—Fresh Fiction About the Author Christine Feehan is the #1 New York

Times bestselling author of the Carpathian series (Dark Carousel, Dark Promises), the GhostWalker series (Power Game, Spider Game), the Leopard series (Leopard's Fury, Wild Cat), the Sea Haven series (Bound Together, Fire Bound) and the Shadow series (Shadow Reaper, Shadow Rider).

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. 1 Emeline Sanchez watched the children playing in the large play yard directly across from her little Victorian home. She liked sitting outside on the wide, wraparound porch where the wind could touch her face. Sometimes, that small touch was the only relief she got from the relentless pain winding through her body every minute of the night and day. Rain had given the air a clean, fresh scent. The world looked shiny and new, every leaf on the trees a vivid green or silver. Small birds sang to one another, hopping from tree branches to gnarled limbs. They were bright red spots of color, adding to the beauty of the compound. The property was owned by Tariq Asenguard, co-owner of a string of high-end nightclubs. He had a unique piece of property, and she would have loved to live there if things had been different. Tariq was Carpathian, an ancient race with amazing gifts, but they needed to drink blood to survive. She knew they were forced to sleep in the ground during daylight hours and only came out at night. If they didn't find their lifemate in time, many succumbed to the temptation to feel by becoming the vilest of creatures-vampire. "Emeline." A tall woman with long, dark hair and forest green eyes waved at her from the play yard. "It's a beautiful day." Genevieve Marten was gorgeous. Model thin. Tall with long legs that went on forever. Dressed in slim jeans and leather boots, she looked far too elegant, even in that attire, to be playing nanny to five children. Emeline knew Genevieve was independently wealthy and had traveled the world, yet she was as sweet as anyone could be, and she'd taken on the job of looking after the children when Tariq and Charlotte couldn't. Emeline was certain Genevieve didn't have a mean bone in her body. "It is, isn't it?" she called back. For that one moment, Emeline felt normal, like she had a friend and they shared a joyous moment just because it was such a beautiful day. As she waved, a long tangle of blue-black hair fell around her face and she pushed it back, vaguely thinking she was going to have to cut it soon. She'd always loved her hair, the one feature she thought was attractive about her. But it fell below her waist, and she was just too exhausted to take proper care of it. Merely lifting her arms to brush it, much less wash it, was becoming a terrible chore. She sighed and rested her chin on the heel of her hand, her eyes on the five children running. She loved watching the children. She didn't really know true happiness anymore, but the closest she came was at times like this, observing them playing and laughing, seemingly carefree and happy. They were alive because of her deliberate sacrifice. The sound of their laughter, seeing them on swings and slides and doing normal things, was worth every horrific moment she'd suffered. They were alive. Traumatized, yes, but still alive and hopefully recovering very quickly. "Come join us," Genevieve called. Emeline wanted to join them. She even needed to, but she couldn't take the chance. She didn't think Genevieve would turn on her, but there were others . . . "I'm drinking tea," she said. "You should join me. I baked cookies." The children had become aware she was out on her porch, something she often did during the daylight hours, even in the middle of a violent storm, but never at night. At night, she stayed in the house, her heart beating too hard, terrified he would come for her. She knew Vadim was coming, it was only a matter of time. He whispered to her sometimes, when she wasn't strong enough to keep him out of her head. Those times were becoming more and more frequent. Emeline often had prophetic dreams. She could replay them over and over, changing small details in an effort to change the outcome of what occurred. Vadim had found her in those dreams, he had found a way to trap her and capture her. She escaped, but he was still with her in her mind now, impossible to get out. "Emeline!" the chorus of voices called to her. Happy. Affectionate. Although she rarely left her porch, they knew she had their backs. She'd saved them more than once at a great cost to herself. They weren't fully aware of that expense, and she hoped they never would be. They were too young to bear any more burdens than they already did. "Swing with us, Em," Danny called. At fifteen, he was tall and gangly, his form just beginning to show the promise of who he would become. Emeline knew he had great courage, as well as love for his siblings. He'd kept them together after their parents had died, and when the girls were taken by the monstrous men down in the labyrinth beneath the city, he had gone after them.

She couldn't help but admire Danny. "Not right now, but I have a plate full of warm chocolate chip cookies. And, Genevieve, I also have fresh cranberry and pistachio biscotti dipped in white chocolate." Tariq Asenguard had taken the children in, become a foster parent of sorts, until the adoptions came through, protecting them with his friends and unique security system-just as he protected her. Emeline was grateful to him, but she knew she couldn't stay much longer. Danny raced to the porch, leaned down and brushed the top of her head with a kiss, scooped up a handful of cookies and was back at the swings before either three-year-old, Lourdes or Bella, could protest. Bella was his youngest sister. Lourdes was the orphaned niece of Tariq's wife, Charlotte. "Thanks, Em!" Danny yelled, stuffing one into his mouth whole. "So good." Both little girls immediately held out their hand for one, and Danny obliged them. Despite his youth, Danny watched over his family with a fierce protectiveness. He was equally as protective of little Lourdes, Emeline, and Emeline's best friend, Blaze. They'd helped him when he thought everything was lost. He was a smart boy, indescribably brave, and he'd begun to emulate the Carpathian males who'd taken them all in. His hair was a little too long, because he was growing it so he could pull it back in a long ponytail like the Carpathian males often wore. He admired Tariq and even walked like him. They'd been orphans living on the streets, trying to stay together, when the girls had been taken. Danny had refused to give up on his sisters and had gone after them, down into the underbelly of the city-a huge labyrinth of tunnels and rooms, a city below the city. Emeline shivered at the memory. She tried very hard not to think about it, to close the door on the horrors of what had been down there. She first encountered Danny in a dream and then, later, in reality when his sisters had been taken. Despite knowing what would happen to her, she had aided him in ensuring the safety of the girls. She'd seen her fate enough times in dreams, but someone had to get the children out or they would have died in that murky, stench-filled place of nightmares. She understood street children; she'd been one herself and she knew how much they craved the stability of a close family. She looked around the huge complex, with the buildings, gardens and lake bordering one side, the high fence surrounding the property on the other three sides, and all the amenities the acreage offered. It was still a prison. No matter how beautiful, none of them could safely leave. Not even the children. Maybe especially the children. "Cranberry and pistachio biscotti?" Genevieve put her book down. She'd gone to the bench under the tall oak where she could keep an eye on the children. "You made them?" "This morning," Emeline enticed. She wanted Genevieve's company. She needed to feel normal even if it was just for a few minutes. Sometimes, if her focus changed, she could resist the pain longer, not be afraid for just a few minutes and pretend that she would have a life like everyone else. She needed that today-one of the reasons she'd spent all morning baking. "You can ride my dragon," Amelia offered. She was fourteen, her body already developing into that of a woman's. Her hair was thick and often tousled from her continual roughhousing with her brother. She had beautiful eyes and a killer smile. Emeline adored her and the way she loved her sisters and brother. Emeline knew it was huge to get an offer to ride one of the dragons. Made of stone, the five dragons-each with a unique color-sat off to one side of the play yard. They looked as if they were statues, just that. Nothing else. Emeline knew that each dragon had been made specifically for one of the children. For their amusement, yes, but mostly for protection. The dragons, crouched so lifelike in the massive yard, could suddenly come to life, spread wings and fly as well as breathe fire. Amelia's dragon was a striking orange and she loved it dearly. Emeline often saw her whispering to it, or circling the long neck with her arm and nuzzling it with affection. Emeline sighed. She detested disappointing the children, especially Amelia or Liv, the ten-year-old, but she didn't dare chance leaving the porch. "I'd love to ride your dragon, Amelia. He's beautiful, but I'm enjoying just sitting here, drinking tea and watching all of you." That was strictly the truth. "Come get some cookies. I don't know if dragons like them, but you can feed him one and tell him it's from me." Amelia giggled and crossed the yard to the house at a much more demure pace than her brother. The Victorian was a smaller replica of the much larger one that was Tariq and Charlotte's home. That house loomed in the background, just beyond the play yard. Emeline always enjoyed looking at it as well. Tariq's main home was a sprawling mansion with the classic semicircular arches, corbel gables, rock-faced square towers, archivolt and transom

windows in a ribbon pattern, all classic Richardsonian Romanesque. Water from the lake lapped lazily at the shore. The sun poured down into it, so that droplets disturbed by fish and birds appeared as dazzling diamonds dripping into the water, causing beautiful rings that spread across the surface. Emeline always found peace in the sound of the water moving. Sometimes she wished she was like Blaze or Charlotte, no longer human but Carpathian, the ancient race of people capable of amazing things. With a wave of their hands they could move water, make it dance, keep that soothing sound up so she could concentrate on it rather than the pain racking her body. Amelia threw herself into the chair across from Emeline's. She caught up a cookie and leaned forward. "Em, you do know if there's anything at all I could do for you, I'd do it." God. She loved the children. They were all so amazing. Every last one of them. She was grateful she'd made the decision to go into that labyrinth, the chambers of utter horror, to get them out. She refused to regret that decision, no matter the price she had to pay-and she was paying it every single minute of the day. She forced a reassuring smile. "I know I look awful, Amelia, but I'm getting better." That was a lie. The pain was getting worse. Pain and fear. She kept a close eye on the sky. Sunset was fast approaching and she'd go immediately into the house once the sun dropped out of the sky. "No, you're not," Amelia whispered. "You're not, Emeline. Please let Tariq or one of the others help you. A couple of the scariest ones are good healers." Emeline couldn't help the automatic withdrawal, the way her body went smaller. She wrapped her arms around herself, as if she could cloak her body, make herself invisible. The ancient race could heal. She'd seen it. She wanted to be able to go to them and ask for help. Anything at all to stop the pain. She shook her head. "I'm fine. I don't need them." "Are you afraid of them? I'd go with you." Amelia reached out and touched her wrist and followed the line of bruising up to her elbow. Her touch was light, but it still hurt. Emeline forced herself to remain still. Amelia had been traumatized by the events in the underground city. She didn't need to worry about Emeline when there was nothing she could do. Emeline wanted her to be a child, although, realistically, she knew there was no going back for Amelia. "It's such a beautiful day, isn't it? I love the rain, but this is gorgeous, everything fresh and shimmering new." She kept her voice light as she casually reached for her teacup, the action giving her a legitimate reason for moving her arm out of reach. When she settled the teacup back into its saucer, she put her hand in her lap, surreptitiously tugging on the sleeve to cover the bruising. Amelia opened her mouth as if she might say something, but in the end, she just took a bite of the cookie. "These are still warm." "Right? They're so good. I love them with ice cream." Amelia scooped up three more. "My dragon's going to love these just like they are. Thanks. Any time you want a ride, let me know, and if you need me, Em, I'll come stay with you." Her gaze dropped to Emeline's bruised arm, not that she could see the discoloration, but she knew it was there. "Thanks, honey," Emeline said, fighting the burn of tears. "Go have fun with your dragon." Amelia hesitated, standing awkwardly in front of her, then she leaned down and brushed a kiss across her forehead. "You're important, too, Em. To all of us. You know that, don't you?" Emeline tightened her arms around her middle, holding it together by a mere thread. She was going to have to risk leaving the compound to ensure Amelia's-and the other children's-safety. She knew when she made the decision to leave that she probably wouldn't survive. "Thank you, Amelia. Sometimes, I guess, we all need a reminder." She wasn't as important as the children. They deserved a life, and they'd never had it. They were street children, living from one garbage can to another, the older ones stealing to provide for the younger ones. Huddling together to keep warm in the worst of winter. Here, in Tariq Asenguard's compound with the wealthy Carpathian as their guardian, she knew they finally had a home. She couldn't endanger them by drawing the worst evil imaginable to them.

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immersed in the story. I don't want to give away any of the story so I won't. I will say (although a standalone) it left me wanting more - more - more. Any of Christine Feehan's series will have you anxiously waiting for the next book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Dark Legacy By Kindle Customer Sensual, exotic and many more creative terms can be given to this novel. It is interesting as the Carpathian series progress over time, it has increased in sexual pages and less in content of a true Carpathian storytelling. However, it is the norm of our times and a many years of developing this series. Truly, I still enjoy Christine storytelling and continue to be a follower. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Awesome!! By Kaye Great continuation of the Carpathian storyline. Love this series with originality and great imagination. The characters and their relationship that stems from the beginning of the series to the present shows that Christine Feehan knows her characters and the twist and turns in the story melds the past with the present. Looking forward to the next book. See all 187 customer reviews...

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