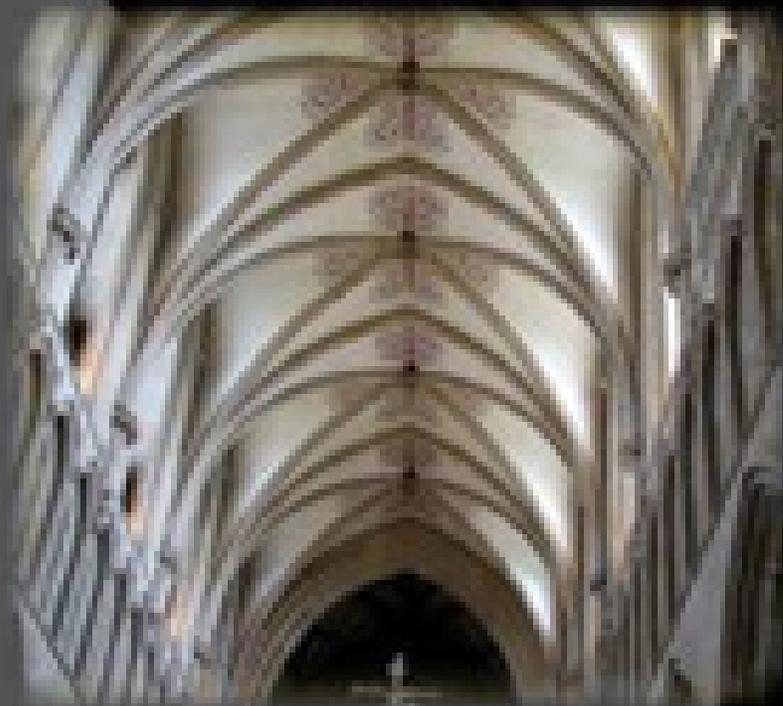


*Embracing Sin*  
Shadows



*Brenda Colburn*

# *Embracing Sin*

*Brenda Cothern*

Embracing Sin  
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Author Note: Contains m/f sexual practices and is intended for readers of legal age in the country in which they reside.

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## *Praise for Shadows...*

### *Soul Stealer...*



"Wow - I couldn't stop reading once I started! It was like mixing Anita Blake with Meredith Gentry - just yummy..." L. Lunsford... Amazon

### *When Beasts Bite...*



"When Beasts Bite will bite you back!... The way Brenda weaves the love story as it unfolds is both comforting and erotic. The trials that the duo go through to reach into the core of the heart and are a true love story..." D. Mitchell... Goodreads

### *Barely Restrained...*



"Brenda has the gift of weaving a story you can see yourself participating in. Wicked, naughty and fun.... can't wait for more!" T. Canady... Amazon

## *DEDICATION*

To all my fans that have fallen in love with Shadows and keep begging my muse for more!

## *ACKNOWLEDGMENTS*

As always, to my wonderful beta team: Tracy, Lora, Kevin, and Steve. I would be lost without all of your help! And, of course, to my favorite Tampa bar, The Body Shop for letting me camp out on a bar stool and treat the place like my own personal office!

## *Author Message*

Thank you for buying this book. As an indie author it means a lot to me that you are spending your hard earned cash to read my work! To show my appreciation, I make a promise to you, my reader. The first chapter of every book that I have ever written or will ever write will be FREE on my website for you to read. As an avid reader myself, I know there is nothing worse than purchasing a book only to discover it is not that good. So, please enjoy the sneak peeks at the end of this book and visit my website if you would like to 'try before you buy' my other books!

## *About Embracing Sin*

The Tampa nightclub Shadows, in Ybor City, has been more than just a place of employment for Sin. For the last year and a half she has waited tables at Shadows and has not had to look over her shoulder for the destroyers who constantly searched out her kind. Hidden among the others who were not 'norm', she knew she had finally found a home and the family she had never had before.

However, her boss Alec's upcoming wedding has brought an influx of guests to the club; a destroyer amongst them.

## OTHER TITLES

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When Beasts Bite  
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Shadows Anthology (v.1-3)  
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## Chapter 1

There was a flurry of activity inside the Ybor night club Shadows. The normal darkness that lived up to the club's name was banished by the house lights that the staff affectionately called the 'ugly lights.' The sound of a power tool cutting and drilling through wood greeted Cindy as she opened the door from the storage room and stepped into the club. Jordy, the club manager and bouncer, was bent over two saw horses using a circular saw to cut a sheet of plywood while Nick, his boyfriend, was framing out an area by drilling 2x4's together where the DJ platform used to be.

All of the tables and chairs that had surrounded the dance floor were stacked along the alcoves across from the bar. Alec, the club owner, was standing at the top of a ladder that was placed next to one of the iron rings bolted into the ceiling that black, ceiling to floor, shear curtains fell from. Those curtains had enclosed the tables to provide the customers with their own shadowy alcoves.

Roni, a changer and the club's head bartender, stood at the base of the ladder pulling on what appeared to be a small chain. As she pulled, the shear curtains rose toward the iron ring in the ceiling and Alec secured them by wrapping the chain around the curtains before looping the chain through the ring.

Roni was the first to spot Cindy as she walked into the club. She liked the waitress, who told everyone her name was 'Sin' as she gave them a mischievous wink. She was dressed like the rest of the Shadows employees, wearing an old t-shirt, jeans, and sneakers instead of her normal, provocative, work clothes. Sin's waist length onyx hair was pulled into a tight ponytail and her dark amber eyes seemed more vivid under the brightness of the house lights.

"Hey gang," Sin called out to everyone when Jordy stopped the circular saw.

"Bout time you got here," Roni replied jokingly as she watched Sin place her purse behind the bar.

"Yeah, yeah," Sin smiled. "What do you want me to do?"

"You can help Nick with the stage," Alec said as he came down the ladder.

Sin watched Alec and Roni move to the next set of curtains as she walked over to where Nick was marking a 2x4 for Jordy to cut.

"Wow, you guys got a lot done already," Sin smiled at the two huge garouls. She'd never seen either of them in their animal form but if their human form was anything to go by, they must be massive.

"We'll get this knocked out today," Jordy smiled.

"With your help, we might even get it painted before we open tonight," Nick added.

Sin had to crane her neck up to look at the two towering men before her. They were both built like brick shit houses but their size was about the only thing they had in common. Jordy's skin was a deep, dark chocolate brown whereas Nick was your all American white boy. Like every other time she had seen Jordy, his long dreadlocks were pulled back into a ponytail, again, so opposite from Nick's military buzz cut. Both men were smoking hot in their own way but since they discovered they were meant to be more than just friends, Cindy knew they wouldn't take her flirting seriously.

"Okay. Do with me what you will," Sin grinned up at them and winked.

“You're a day late and a dollar short on that one darling,” Nick laughed.

“Well damn,” Sin snapped her fingers before continuing, “you sure?”

“You guys going to get back to work or just stand around all day?” Alec called over to them.

“On it boss,” Jordy yelled back before turning back to the sheet of plywood and 2x4's.

“Come on Sin,” Nick said as he led her back to where he was finishing up the framework on the stage. “Just hold this steady,” he said as he moved to the other end of the 2x4 and screwed it in place.

They worked for a few hours and once Jordy was finished cutting up all the pieces, the assembly of the stage seemed to take no time at all. They had a third of the stage floor finished when they were interrupted.

“Come and get it!” Kira's voice rang out from the bar where she was uncovering sandwich platters from Jimmy John's. Kira was Alec's fiancé and their upcoming wedding was the reason Shadows was undergoing a temporary makeover.

Sin followed the guys to the bar and accepted a sprite and OJ from Roni before hopping up onto one of the few employees' stools.

“Thanks for the lunch, Kira,” Sin told her soon-to-be second boss.

Everyone else chimed in their thanks and began to dig in when Kira replied, “It's the least I could do since you all are working so hard to make our day special.”

Sin took another bite out of her roast beef sandwich and watched as Alec slipped behind Kira and wrapped his arms around her. Kira leaned back into his embrace and for a moment Sin felt a pang of jealousy. Not because Alec was embracing Kira or because Kira was allowing her boss to embrace her but because it was obvious they were so in love. Love. Sin didn't believe in love but when she saw couples like her boss and Kira, she couldn't help but wonder if there really was such a thing. With a shake of her head, she dismissed the thought and with it the jealous feeling disappeared.

Lust on the other hand, was something she knew well. It was her gift actually. With just a flash of her pearly whites, a seductive wink, and a little push of her will, she could incite lust for her in whomever she chose. That being the case, her bed was rarely ever empty. Sin was lost in thought when Roni bumped her shoulder to get her attention.

“You okay, girl?” Roni asked softly with concern in her voice.

Sin smiled. “Yeah. Just gathering wool.”

“Oh?” Roni grinned, “About anyone I know?”

Sin knew she couldn't just tell Roni the truth so just continued to smile. “Not likely.”

“Sin!” Nick interrupted Roni's reply and Sin turned her head toward him. “Let's knock this out so we can get the first coat of paint on before we open.”

“Guess that's my cue,” Sin rolled her eyes in Roni's direction as she slipped off the stool.

Cindy made her way back to Jordy and Nick and between the three of them, the stage was completed and the first layer of black paint applied. By the time they had finished for the day they were all sweaty, smelled of wood, and had black paint smudges various places on their body.

“See you in a few hours,” Sin called to Roni, Nick, and Jordy as she retrieved her purse from behind the bar. She heard their goodbyes as she stepped into the storage room and left the club by the back door.



Sin was back at work three hours after she had left. There was still an hour before the club opened at nine so she had plenty of time to get into 'work mode.' Her purse, she placed in the cubby behind the bar before retreating to the storage room to get her tray and stack of bar towels. Jordy was just stepping out of Alec's office as she set her stuff on the bar.

“Hey Jord,” she greeted her manager.

“Sin,” he replied as way of greeting before heading for the stacks of tables and chairs across the bar.

Sin followed him when she realized he meant to put the tables back where they had originally been. She carried chairs and placed them around the tables. They worked in companionable silence and soon the furniture was all back where it belonged.

“Thanks, Sin,” Jordy told her as he headed into the storage room.

“No problem, Jord,” she gave him her classic smile as she made her way behind the bar. She had just finished filling an empty plastic cherry bucket with hot soapy water when Roni came hustling in. Sin took one of the clean bar rags and dropped it into her bucket as Roni came behind the bar.

“Running a bit late?” Sin asked already knowing that Roni should have been here before her.

“Yeah,” Roni began as she grabbed lemons and limes from the beer cooler. “I was tied up for a bit.”

Sin just gave her a smile as she made her way back out to the tables to wipe them down. It was strange not to have to push the sheer curtains out of the way to get to the tables. Shadows looked so different with the curtains pulled up to the ceiling and a new stage by the dance floor. The club seems so much larger without the sheer curtains down. The improvised walls that incased the tables and gave the club a maze-like feeling were gone and she had to adjust to the openness that was now the club. She was not against open areas but preferred the club how it had been as opposed to its current appearance. Thankfully, after the wedding, Alec was planning to put everything back to normal even though he did mention possibly leaving the stage in place.

Sin is emptying the dirty water from the bucket when Jordy walked by and thumped his fist on the bar. He didn't stop but just seemed to drop his fist randomly along the bar as he made his way to the club's front door.

“Showtime, ladies,” he gave them a grin as he walked around the wall to the front door.

Sin rinsed out the bar rag in her hand and hung it over the faucet before she grabbed her bank box and attached it to her tray. She gave the new DJ, Rhonda, who was up on the stage setting up remixes for the night, a smile as the first customers started to wander in.

There seemed to be less 'norms,' tonight than for a regular Swinger's Sunday. Sin recognized those who were not 'norm' as she served them their drinks and was not fazed by the fae, garouls, and the life-drinkers in the crowd. There may have been a few changers like Roni but she had never been good at detecting them from just a brief contact. In fact, she had worked with Roni in a different form for almost a full shift before she realized it was the same being.

Currently she was returning to a table of smoking hot life drinkers. As she set down the first drink, a rum and coke, the drinker closest to her ran his hand up the back of her naked leg. The drinker across the table was blatantly staring at what little cleavage her low cut top offered as she stood she smiled at the group. Three men and one woman. It was the woman whose eyes seem to be glued to her chest. Smoothly, Sin moved out of reach of the warm palm that was traveling northward under the hem of her skirt.

“\$27.50,” Sin said. She smiled down at the group and accepted a fifty from the drinker that sat next to the woman whose eyes had not left her breasts. “Thanks.” Sin continued to smile. “Let me get your change.” She flipped open her bank box on the tray and slid the fifty behind the rest bills.

“Keep it,” the drinker next to the woman replied. “Thanks, if you need anything else, just wave me down,” Sin replied like she normally did.

“Actually,” the drinker who was trying to explore under her skirt said. Sin waited. She was used to this type of come on from the 'norms' and others. “You should join us,” he said.

Sin felt his will being directed her way but it was like an annoying drizzle instead of the tsunami he meant it to be. When Sin just continued to smile at the drinker, he spoke again, “when you have a break, perhaps?”

Sin felt his will press harder at her; like it was a physical force in the air between them but other than that she was not compelled to concede to his desire. She knew that her boss, Alec, had sent out invitations to many of his friends to attend the upcoming wedding and had a feeling that these drinkers were on the guest list. That being the case, and hopefully it was, she leaned down to the drinker who was attempting to will her into his suggestion.

“I don't think Alec would approve of you disrupting his staff's duties but,” Sin paused as she watched the handsome drinker's face. His expression did not change to her naked eye but she sensed he tensed. “I thank you for the offer.” Sin started to stand up right once more before she leaned in close again. “I'll think about it.” Sin winked at the drinker and allowed her eyes to shift red before she stood erect once more.

The threat of Alec gained no reaction from the drinker but her flashing eyes cause the reaction she had originally expected. For the briefest moment, the drinker's eyes grew wide and he blinked several times as if he wasn't sure he actually saw what he did.

Sin continued to smile as she turned away from the drinker's table and moved on to her next table of customers, swishing her hips as she always did.

Closing time came and Sin followed her normal closing routine. Tables were cleared and wiped as Jordy was steadily herding the stragglers out the door. When Jordy approached a loan garoul to tell him it was time to go, Sin called out.

“He's with me tonight, Jord.” She grinned at her manager who just gave her a nod in reply.

Her closing cleanup was finished when she moved to stand next to the garoul in question. The guy was hot and Sin did not know what type of shifter he was. But truth be told, she did not care. She only knew that she wanted to run her fingers through his sandy brown hair until they hit skin and she could score his back with her nails. Just the thought of what she would do to him, with him, made her moist.

“Let me grab my bag, sweetie,” she purred in his ear as she sent a small wave of lust in his direction. His arm had wrapped tightly around her small waist and she had to untangle herself from him to retrieve her purse.

When she had her bag she said her good night's and her garoul lover for the night wasted no time leading them out of the front door of the club.