

## THE UNDINE'S TEAR EXCERPTS:

All excerpts ©2019 Talena Winters. Permission to reprint for promotional and critique purposes is granted. Learn more at [www.talenawinters.com/undines-tear](http://www.talenawinters.com/undines-tear).

### EXCERPT ONE:

Osaze looked between them with fear in his eyes, then turned back to Calandra.

“Redeemed. That’s what the queen did to me before, right? Is that what you mean by ‘help’?” He clutched Calandra’s arm. “Please don’t do it again, Calandra. I—I think I would rather die than have that happen again.”

As soon as Osaze touched her, a wave of desperation and fear crashed through her. She put her hands to her ears as though she could physically block out the sudden onslaught of emotion. *Is it happening already? Is this the Madness?*

When Osaze’s hand fell from her arm, the emotions subsided. She slowly lowered her hands, staring at the boy. Those feelings . . . they had all come from *him*? Why had she felt them so strongly? Did it have something to do with the Heartstone?

“It’s okay, Osaze. It doesn’t hurt, does it?”

He shook his head and buried it in his hands. “That would be better. It’s worse than anything you can imagine.”

Calandra stared at him, stricken. As a rule, undines treated every living thing with respect. She had always been told that Redemption meant saving the men from themselves, cleansing them of impurities they could not purge on their own. But how could it be right to do something to these men that they hated so much?

### EXCERPT TWO:

“You are wondering how to gain control of your powers,” Damon said without preamble.

Calandra thought about ignoring him or denying it, but what was the point? This was nothing more than a dream, and the slippery logic of dreams fuzzed her will to keep her more rebellious thoughts to herself.

“You know, I shouldn’t even be talking to you. An Unredeemed male. I could get in big trouble.”

The corners of his mouth curved under his trim goatee.

“And who will report you?” He indicated the blackness around them. “Certainly not I. I exist only in your mind.”

She crossed her arms and cocked her head, studying him. “Have you ever been Redeemed?”

His expression became stony. “Redemption is for humans.”

“Redemption is for men. To make them safe. It just happens that the only men are human.”

Thinking of Osaze’s dread, she wondered again at the morality of it. Uncrossing her arms, she shifted her gaze from Damon’s face to his bronze chest.

“And one of them is my friend.”

“All humans should be controlled,” he replied nonchalantly, drawing nearer. “They have not the patience nor discipline to control themselves. And *I* am not human, yet I am male.”

She looked up at him, eyes narrowed. “I can see that. What are you? I’ve never seen an undine with golden eyes.”

He smiled knowingly. “Not human. But I could be your friend.”

That same feeling of security and warmth from their first encounter enveloped her, as though he were projecting it from himself intentionally. She frowned, wanting to accept it and shake off her heavy heart, but not daring to trust him yet.

“What do you want from me?”

“I want to help you.”

Damon came near enough to touch her but didn’t, pausing before her with his arms to the sides in a placating gesture.

She wrapped her arms around herself and glared into the blackness beyond him. “Yeah, well, you can’t. Not unless you can tell me how to control powers that could sink an island and heal the Heartstone without going Mad.”

“Little lark,” he said, amusement dripping from his voice like honey from a spoon, “that is exactly what I intend to do.”

### EXCERPT THREE:

Zale surfaced, pushing his shoulder-length blond hair out of his eyes. He hauled himself up onto the wooden bench along the top edge of one side of the tank. Within moments, his gills had flattened against his neck, his tail had melted into human legs, and his mucosal layer had reabsorbed into his skin. If someone saw him like this, they would have no clue that he was anything other than human—except for the iridescent green of his eyes, which he had been told shone softly in the dark.

He descended the stairs on the back of the tank and then dried himself with the soft cotton towel that he had left on a small table for that purpose earlier. He grabbed his breeches from the pile of clothes on the table and pulled them on, then became aware of someone's presence in the room. Odd. He hadn't heard anyone enter.

"I'll join you for supper in a few moments, Eric," he said without turning around as he pulled on his stockings.

A woman's voice replied. "I'm afraid supper will have to wait."

Back erect, Zale swivelled toward the intruder, his shirt bunched over his hands.

The young woman glanced at his bare chest, raising her eyebrows and biting her lip on a smile. She crossed her arms and nodded appreciatively.

"Well, aren't you all grown up now? After five years, I suppose that was to be expected."

Zale gulped and stared. For a brief, breathless moment, he wondered if this was what drowning felt like.

### CONTACT:

**Talena Winters**

[talena@talenawinters.com](mailto:talena@talenawinters.com)

[www.talenawinters.com](http://www.talenawinters.com)