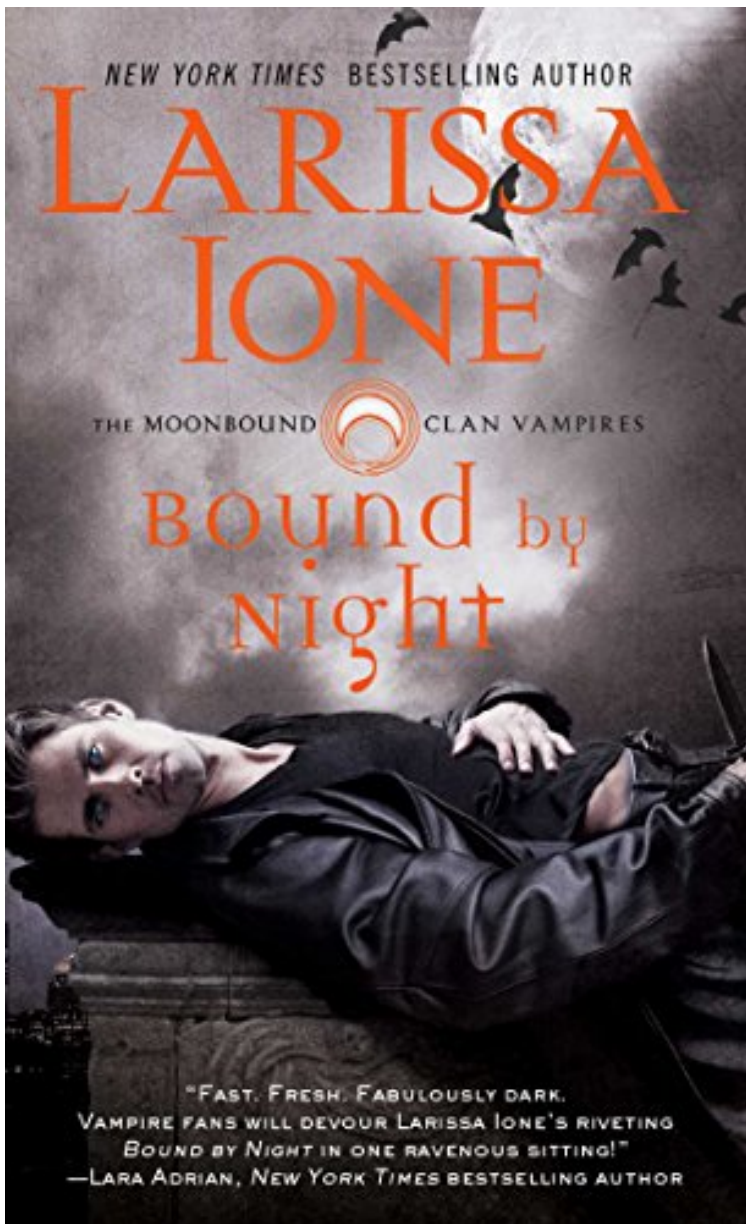


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Bound by Night



Par Larissa Ione
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurThe first installment in a sexy new paranormal romance series by Larissa Ione, author of the bestselling Demonica series!Nicole Martin was only eight years old when she narrowly survived a massacre: her familys vampire slaves rebelled and killed everyone in her household. Twenty years later, Nicole now dedicates herself to finding a vaccine against vampirismand eradicating the gruesome memories that give her nightmares. Riker, a member of the wild vampire Moon Clan, is haunted by his own demonshis wife Lorraine had been captured and enslaved by the Martin family. It was during a botched escape attempt

that she was killed, along with their unborn child. Still wracked with grief and anger, Riker is now fueled solely by the desire to rescue vampire slaves and slaughter their owners. When Riker stumbles upon Nicole in a chance meeting, he immediately recognizes her as a member of the Martin family that once enslaved his wife and she recognizes him as the wild vampire she saw kissing a pregnant slave in the moments before her violent death, an image that has haunted her dreams for years. When Riker kidnaps Nicole and they spend a

night together in a cave on the way back to his clan, suddenly they begin to realize that they aren't as different from one another as they may have thought and they're finding themselves drawn to one another. Hunter, MoonBound clan's leader, leaned back in his chair and gave Riker an expectant look. Go fuck yourself...? He made a come on gesture with his fingers.

Finish the sentence. Riker rolled his eyes. Go fuck yourself... sir. Nodding his dark head in satisfaction, Hunter kicked his boots up onto the scarred oak conference table. Better. He laced his fingers together over his abs, his deeply tanned skin making his white T-shirt seem even brighter. Now, as I was saying before being told to do something anatomically impossible, if we can storm the Martin residence with enough of our warriors, we can take hostages. The humans will be forced to give Neriya back to us. Another warrior seated at the table, Baddon, flipped a pen toward the ceiling. Why don't we get ShadowSpawn to pony up some muscle to help? Without looking, he snatched the pen out of the air. It's their female we're trying to rescue. I already tried, Hunter said grimly. They insist that because Neriya was taken by the humans while in our care, we're responsible for getting her back, or they'll declare war on the eve of the new moon. Katina, the clan's only senior-level female warrior, hissed. That goes against every vampire custom and protocol there is.

No one declares war so close to moon fever. She braced her elbows on the table and leaned forward, as if ready to launch herself at anyone who dared argue with her. She's certainly done it before. That table had seen a number of brawls over the years. A few dents even belonged to Riker. You know they wouldn't do it on the eve of the full moon, when the males need to feed. No clan would risk that, Baddon said. But females mean little to ShadowSpawn except as breeders. They don't give a shit if the females miss a new-moon feeding. Fuck em, Katina spat. Let them come. Our warriors are well trained and powerful. We'll give them the fight of their lives. As much as Riker wanted to agree with her, the odds were in the enemy clan's favor. Not only did they outnumber MoonBound clan three to one, but ShadowSpawn had no code of ethics and made no distinction among males, females, and children when it came to killing in battle or otherwise. As ruthless and cold as Riker could be, even he had boundaries, and murdering noncombatant women and children was a hard line in the sand. Wendigo legend is based on ShadowSpawn, Hunter reminded them. They're killers, cannibals who have destroyed clans up and down the West Coast. Neriya was lost while she was a guest in our home. Make no mistake; if we don't return her to ShadowSpawn, we'll feel their wrath.

They're desperate to get her back. Understandable. Vampire mortality rates during childbirth were dangerously high, and Neriya's rare ability to deliver babies safely made her precious among their people.

Her gift was the reason she'd been with MoonBound in the first place. ShadowSpawn had allowed MoonBound to borrow her for a birth in exchange for weapons and a case of prepackaged human blood that Baddon had stolen from a delivery truck. I'm not afraid of them. Katina shifted, her leather jacket squeaking against the back of the chair. Riker has prepared us for this. We can win, even if we have to scatter into the forest and fight like guerrillas until the end of time. Perhaps. Hunter's gaze went to the far wall of the conference room, where a painting depicting a bloody battle between two vampire clans hung next to other vampire and Native American artwork. But our females and children will be dead. What will we have won? Riker had lost a female and a child, so he knew the answer to that. And he wished like hell he didn't. Hunter

signaled to one of the clan's maidens, who brought over a tray laden with a leather flask, glasses, and a ceremonial pipe. Hunter waited until she left the room before saying, Now, let's do the peace thing. Peace? Riker was nowhere near ready to toast to a good hunt and smoke to plentiful blood. Their clan was in danger from a rival vampire clan whose members were savage animals, and until the threat was over, Riker wasn't going to back off or play nice. Not even with the male who had led MoonBound clan for nearly two hundred years. Didn't you hear a word I said? Riker whipped a dagger from his weapons harness and sank the blade into the table, where it vibrated as violently as the temper pulsing through his veins. I don't give a shit if you're Supreme King Alpha Commander of the Known Universe. You're going to listen to me. One ebony eyebrow climbed up Hunter's forehead, and the other three warriors stopped moving and breathing. All except Baddon, anyway. He traced one of the skull tats on his forearm and let out a soft holy shit whistle.

Someone's feeling his oats today. Hunter folded his arms across his broad chest and studied Riker with deceptively calm, half-lidded eyes that were as black as his hair. Why don't you make me listen? And then

tell me why I shouldn't fire you as my second before I toss you into the pit for a month. Summoning his military sniper training, Riker inhaled a slow, measured breath in order to steal a few precious seconds to set up his next shot. He'd stepped over the line by disrespecting Hunter in front of the senior warriors, and Riker would take his punishment like a good little vampire later. Right now, he had to knock some sense into his thick-headed clan leader. You're a great chief, Hunter, Riker said calmly. But urban battle and covert ops are my specialty, and I'm telling you that in this case, a stealthy surgical strike is going to be more effective than numbers and brute force. If my plan for rescuing Neriya doesn't work, you can rally the clan for a larger assault, but you've got to let me do this my way. You've trusted me in charge of our warriors for more than thirty years, so trust me enough to handle this now. I can get her away from the humans who captured her. We'll return her to ShadowSpawn before they have a chance to come after us. Riker popped his dagger from the wood and sheathed it. And you don't want to fire me because you'll be stuck dealing with Myne on your own. Which is also why you shouldn't drop me into the pit. Hunter appeared to consider what he'd said. Although Riker was only half kidding about why Hunter shouldn't fire him or drop-kick him into the pit used for nonlethal punishments, there was some truth to what he'd said. Myne and Hunter, the only two pureblood male vampires besides Baddon in the clan, got along like two tomcats in a bag, and neither would admit that he needed the other. Where is the bastard, anyway? Hunter asked, and Riker shrugged. Myne wasn't one to share his plans. Patrolling, probably. Not my day to watch him. Jaggar, a male who had worked with the CIA before being turned into a vampire fifty years ago, cleared his throat. Riker's right about stealth. I'd feel better if we had a whole team going in to rescue Neriya, but until we have more intel on her situation, it might be wise to let Riker go in the way he wants to. Especially with the increase in hunters and poachers lurking in the forest lately. Katina growled, her pearly fangs flashing in stark contrast with her brown skin. A large group of vampires heading toward Seattle's billionaire district is a lot more likely to attract their attention than one or two of us. Except for the sound of the cuckoo clock ticking on the wall behind Katina, there was silence as Hunter looked each of them in the eye. Finally, like a great cat rising from its jungle resting place, he dropped his feet onto the wood floor and unfurled to his full, impressive six-foot-seven height. Those who had been born vampires instead of turned into them were generally taller than most humans and turned vampires. They also got to keep their natural eye color, unlike turned vampires, whose eyes always became some shade of silver as their fangs grew in. Ill give Riker a shot at doing it his way. He jerked his head toward the door. Out. Everyone but Riker. Fill in the other senior staff. We'll let the rest of the warriors know what's happening when we need to. What about general clan members? Baddon asked. Everyone is on edge. Ill speak at dinner. Assure everyone there's nothing to worry about for now. Hunter nodded at the door again. Go. Jaggar, Baddon, and Katina filed out, each shooting Riker a sympathetic glance as they went. Once the door closed, Riker got to his feet and moved away from the table, waiting for the dressing-down. It came in the form of a right hook to the face. Riker hit the wall hard enough to make the picture frames rattle. Don't disrespect me in front of the others again. Hunter glanced down at his knuckles. Also? You have a hard face to match your hard head. No one went from pissed to playful in a split second the way Hunter did. Tasting blood, Riker tested his jaw. Nothing broken or loose, but he'd feel it for a while. You didn't learn that the first ten times you decked me? The truth was that Hunter had held back. Riker had never felt the full brunt of his chief's anger, but he'd seen it. If Hunter had wanted to, he could have shattered every bone in Riker's skull with a single blow. Hunter gave a lazy shrug. I'm a slow learner. That was a load of crap. The ancient vampire came across as a laid-back, couldn't-give-a-shit slacker who liked video games, Sports Illustrated, and muscle cars, but he was a lot smarter than anyone who didn't know him gave him credit for. His calculating mind was blade-sharp, his smiles frequent, and his nature affable and calm, outwardly, at least. He'd never ruled with an iron fist and he didn't need to. Respect for his leadership kept the clan running smoothly. You won't regret this, Riker assured him. I can do it. Doubt all but billowed from Hunter's pores as he lifted the ceremonial pipe from the tray. If this were any other mission, I wouldn't be concerned. You know that. I know, Riker admitted. But you know I'm right about this. I'm familiar with the Martin house. I've memorized the grounds. I've studied every detail of their security, both inside and outside the house. Studied? Okay, stalked. But my point is I know what your point is. And I know how much your hatred for the Martins has eaten at you. Hatred makes you sloppy. Makes you focus so completely on revenge that you're blind to the dangers around you. Makes you determined to succeed. Hunter put his back to the wall and propped one foot behind him, his pose casual, his expression as serious as Riker had ever seen it. Your mate was a slave in the Martin household. How can you be sure you can do what needs to be done without that history coloring your actions? A pissed-off bear will run straight for the hunter with a

gun. Because this is my home. Riker met his leaders gaze head-on. This is my family. And if I screw up, I lose everything. He glanced over at the depiction of MoonBounds battle with the now-extinct CloudStrike clan. We all lose everything. Revue de presse "Sexy, dark and suspenseful... Larissa Ione brings to life a riveting new world filled with sizzling sensuality, dark wit and wicked hot demons. Larissa Ione is an exciting voice in paranormal romance!" (Lara Adrian, New York Times bestselling author of *Midnight Awakening*)