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Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1)  
Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred

By C.C. Corma

This book is dedicated to **Paula Marie Sherrill Milan**, Sept 3, 1971 - August 17, 2015, who continued to encourage the writing of it for many years, and who is the main reason it has finally been finished. May God be Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) with you all the way, and rest in peace. Nobody could've asked for a sweeter, kinder person than you, my friend.

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Wynter Sloan wasn't sure when he'd done his first dive into one of the city's dumpsters in a search for edible food. He'd been quite young then, but he did remember that it had been late summer, just like now, and the smell had been much worse than the current trash bin he was diving in to search for supper. He knew he could've gone inside the pool hall and gotten something from the owners, Angel Black and Jinx Nichols, but that was too much like begging for handouts in his mind.

No way was he going to admit that he couldn't take care of himself. He knew a lot of the patrons inside the building could remember him from a year before when he'd been a runner for Aaron Rogers, but that was before the heroin addiction had latched onto him. Before he'd lost his job. Before he had been dropped down to the lowest life form on the streets.

Junkies weren't very well thought of on the streets because they were unpredictable, unreliable, and they were usually too caught up in gaining their next fix to think of anything else. Now that he whored from his spot in front of the burnt out deli a few blocks away and struggled to keep body and soul together day by day, Wynter wasn't in the same social class as the rest of them. Most of the other kids still acknowledged that he existed, but the relationships Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) he'd had with them shifted over time into something that was more in line with the hierarchy that governed their lives.

It was a big change from his life before Dante Brooks had hooked him with that first needle ride of smack, and being a junkie put him firmly at the bottom of the hierarchy. It had taken time to adjust to the change, but he'd adapted like he always did. He was good at adapting to the ever changing world of street life, and he was what the natives of the South Gate referred to as a "survivor".

*Just like I survived when Lucy took off with that crack dealer.* Wynter shoved down the bitter thoughts on his mother because that would've meant having to think about her abandonment and everything that had happened after it. Lucy Sloan had taken off with Gerald Parson seven years ago to parts unknown, and she had left her youngest son on the streets to fend for himself as best he could. He still saw her at odd intervals when she was between boyfriends and needed money, but other than that ... he had no parental supervision to speak of.

The streets had been far from kind to him over the intervening years since her abandonment,

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but he'd managed to survive by doing what he had to for food and shelter. He'd been lucky that Aaron Rogers had taken him in during the first few months, and he'd been trained to be a runner for the drug lord's outfit. Later on, Aaron had trained Wynter to be a dealer for his domain in the Lower East Side, and he'd entrusted the Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) boy with collections within two years of taking him in.

All of that had ended, though, when Dante Brooks had waltzed into Wynter's life and gave him that first taste of heroin.

Wynter was close to concluding that there was nothing to eat in this particular dumpster, and he was considering moving on to the next when a loud bang startled him from the alley. Straightening up from his crouch, he peered over Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) the edge of the metal container and watched as Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) a blond boy around his own age leaned against the side of the pool hall and lit something that was dangling from his Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) lips, the flame of the lighter illuminating high cheekbones and big, green eyes. He looked familiar, but then everyone out there looked familiar unless he could actually remember who they were.

The sweet, herbal scent of marijuana floated on the slight summer breeze along with the whiff of the decaying garbage under his feet, and Wynter shook his head, chuckling to himself as he realized the boy had come outside to smoke a joint in privacy. It was obvious the stranger wanted to be alone with his weed since he'd come outside instead of toking up in the crowded pool hall, so it was best to continue his search for sustenance and leave the blond boy to his private high. He had learned that keeping to himself and Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) allowing others a wide berth staved off a lot of bad shit in the long run.

Just because the blond boy looked nice and appeared to be friendly didn't mean he was approachable. Looks weren't always an indicator of a person's attitude or personality, and Wynter had learned that the hard way over the thirteen months since Aaron had let him go from the outfit. Even the best-looking people could be black and evil inside.

His thoughts on the blond boy were shoved to the back of his mind when Wynter spotted Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) what appeared to be a half-eaten hamburger peeking out from Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1)

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under some cardboard a few feet from his battered boots, and he bent down to snag it with his fingers. The wrapper was *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) plain white like the ones used at Pete's Diner a few blocks away instead of the yellow or red used by some of the fast food chains in Tabor, but he could clearly see where the cheese stuck to it in places. This was a rare find for him because the burgers at Pete's were so delicious hardly anybody could *not* finish eating one.

"Hey! Let me go!"

"Shut the fuck up, kid, and gimme your fucking money."

The hard voice was followed by *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) even louder protests from the blond boy, and Wynter dropped the half-eaten hamburger back *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) into the jumble of trash surrounding his feet at the unexpected sound of the arguing.

He grabbed the edge of the metal dumpster and pulled himself up to peer over the edge, wondering what the hell was going on. His heart thumped in his chest when he stared at the two figures that had joined the blond kid in the alley, and he was able *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) to discern the picture of a briar-wrapped rose on the back of the largest figure's brown leather vest in the dim light from over the side door of the pool hall. *Banshee ... what the fuck are they doing in the Gate?*

The North Side Banshees were known for jumping anybody they thought had a few bucks on them, and they had the reputation of being violent if the victim fought back. It was unusual for them to come this far out of their territory because of the rivalry between them and the other gangs that resided in Tabor, but it wasn't completely unheard of when they got a notion to see what victims they could *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) find in the other districts.

One of the Banshees had the blond boy secured by both hands gripping the boy's upper arms while the other hurriedly dug through the pockets of the jeans he was wearing, pulling out money and a baggie of weed within seconds. It was definitely a robbery going down, and there was no one in sight to put a stop to it.

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“That’s mine, you fudging asshole!” A yelp of pain echoed in the narrow alley when the blond kicked the man in front of him with one booted foot. “Go get your own fudging reefer!”

*Oh shit ... wrong thing to do, kid,* Wynter thought, wincing when the assaulted man backhanded the boy across the face while cursing loudly. *You’re only gonna make it worse on yourself with that attitude.*

His conscience started battling with him as he watched the scene growing worse by the minute, and he knew the kid was going to get his Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) ass beat if he didn’t do something ... anything. It wouldn’t be the first time he’d gotten his ass Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) kicked royally for interfering in something that was none of his business, and he was quite sure it wouldn’t be the last. He really didn’t have anything to lose by helping the kid out of his predicament; nothing except for his life and that wasn’t worth a shit to begin with.

Wynter wasn’t much bigger than the blond, but there was no way he could just stay hidden and let those two thugs beat on the kid. His sense of decency just wouldn’t allow it. *And you know better,* a voice in his head prodded as the click of a knife opening echoed in the alley, his whole body going numb as he wondered if he was going to witness Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) a murder. *You know the difference between right and wrong.*

He’d never seen a knife pulled in a mugging before, and it froze him to the bone seeing the blade pressed to the kid’s throat. He lifted his gaze from the silvery blade pressed to the boy’s throat right above the gold chain and met a pair of terrified green eyes, the hope that flared in them making his stomach knot up even more in a way that had nothing to do with his smack withdrawals.

“You wanna fight us now, pip squeak?” the smaller Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) guy with the blade pressed to the blond’s throat asked coldly. “I can cut your fucking throat and leave you here to fucking bleed out like a damn pig.”

Wynter’s heart was thumping in his ears too Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light

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Kings Book 1) loud for him to hear the words *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) coming from the three occupants of the alley as he hoisted himself up over the edge of the dumpster, and slid down the side to land on his feet lightly. He didn't know if he was doing the right thing or not, but his conscience was telling him to do it anyway. He thought it was amazing that after so long on the streets, he even had a conscience left. Most didn't.

He didn't know what the hell he was going to do against two men way bigger than he was, but he had to do something. Scanning the trashcans that lined the alley, he spotted a broken pool cue sticking up out of one of the metal cans that belonged to Sharky's, and he grabbed it.

It wasn't much, but it could do some damage if he used it in the right way. *Shade always said to go Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred (Red Light Kings Book 1) for the head, but what if the asshole is taller than you?*

The shorter of the two Banshees was standing with his back to Wynter, and neither of them showed any signs of noticing that they weren't alone with their victim any longer. He stared at the briar wrapped rose in the dim light coming from the parking lot behind him and gripped the stick tightly in both hands as anger washed through his *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) whole body, memories of the times he'd been a victim of the North Side gang's violence rising to fuel his rage.

Stepping up behind the man, Wynter raised the busted cue stick over *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) his head and slammed the larger end down onto the brown leather vest right where the man's neck joined with his shoulders. The hard blow made the Banshee stumble a few steps forward, and he hollered loudly in pain. "What the fuck?"

Wynter had hoped the blow would take the man down, but that was just air dreaming considering the difference in their size. His next move was instinctive, but effective. When the Banshee started turning around toward him, he raised the pool cue again in a side swing and watched as the end of it slammed into the man's head just above his ear. "Leave him the fuck alone!"

Fury flared in the man's dark eyes when he spotted Wynter standing there like some kind of warrior reject, and his lip curled in disgust. "Why you little ..."

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A hollow thud echoed through the alley as the next blow connected just an inch above the other, and Wynter watched the bloodshot brown eyes widen in the Banshee's pale face before they rolled backwards into their sockets. The man seemed to crumple from the bottom up like a building being demolished by dynamite, and he slid in slow motion to his knees on the filthy concrete of the alley *Something Wicked, Nothing Sacred* (Red Light Kings Book 1) before falling over face down into the dirt and grime.

## **Something Wicked Nothing Sacred Red Light Kings Book 1**

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