

NEW YORK TIMES AND USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR

HEATHER GRAHAM

"Graham...stands at the top of the romantic suspense category."
—Publishers Weekly on *PHANTOM EVIL*, starred review

In the city that never sleeps, the dead never rest...

SACRED EVIL

Krewe of Hunters

Praise for the novels of Heather Graham

“An incredible storyteller.”

—*Los Angeles Daily News*

“Graham wields a deftly sexy and convincing pen.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“A fast-paced and suspenseful read that will give readers chills while keeping them guessing until the end.”

—*RT Book Reviews on Ghost Moon*

“If you like mixing a bit of the creepy with a dash of sinister and spine-chilling reading with your romance, be sure to read Heather Graham’s latest...Graham does a great job of blending just a bit of paranormal with real, human evil.”

—*Miami Herald on Unhallowed Ground*

“Eerie and atmospheric, this is not late-night reading for the squeamish or sensitive.”

—*RT Book Reviews on Unhallowed Ground*

“The paranormal elements are integral to the unrelentingly suspenseful plot, the characters are likable, the romance convincing, and, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Graham’s atmospheric depiction of a lost city is especially poignant.”

—*Booklist on Ghost Walk*

“Graham’s rich, balanced thriller sizzles with equal parts suspense, romance and the paranormal—all of it nail-biting.”

—*Publishers Weekly on The Vision*

“Heather Graham will keep you in suspense until the very end.”

—*Literary Times*

“Mystery, sex, paranormal events. What’s not to love?”

—*Kirkus on The Death Dealer*

Also by HEATHER GRAHAM

HEART OF EVIL
PHANTOM EVIL
NIGHT OF THE VAMPIRES
THE KEEPERS
GHOST MOON
GHOST NIGHT
GHOST SHADOW
THE KILLING EDGE
NIGHT OF THE WOLVES
HOME IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS
UNHALLOWED GROUND
DUST TO DUST
NIGHTWALKER
DEADLY GIFT
DEADLY HARVEST
DEADLY NIGHT
THE DEATH DEALER
THE LAST NOEL
THE SÉANCE
BLOOD RED
THE DEAD ROOM
KISS OF DARKNESS
THE VISION
THE ISLAND
GHOST WALK
KILLING KELLY
THE PRESENCE
DEAD ON THE DANCE FLOOR
PICTURE ME DEAD
HAUNTED
HURRICANE BAY
A SEASON OF MIRACLES
NIGHT OF THE BLACKBIRD
NEVER SLEEP WITH STRANGERS
EYES OF FIRE
SLOW BURN
NIGHT HEAT

Look for the next Krewe of Hunters novel

The Evil Inside
by Heather Graham
Available from MIRA Books wherever books are sold.

HEATHER GRAHAM

SACRED EVIL



For NYC—an amazing place,
and for a few of the people who have also
made it more amazing by being there.

For Aaron Priest, and all those at the agency:
Lucy Childs, Lisa Vance, Nicole James,
Arleen Priest, and John Richmond.

And, of course, for my MIRA Books editors
in the Big Apple: Adam Wilson, Leslie Wainger,
Margaret Marbury, and Krista Stroeve, who
went above and beyond and walked the streets
of the old Five Points region with me. Thank You!

Yes, ready for my cemetery tour now...!

Contents

[Prologue](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Chapter 11](#)

[Chapter 12](#)

[Chapter 13](#)

[Chapter 14](#)

[Chapter 15](#)

[Chapter 16](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Manhattan](#)

[The Perfect New York Strip Steak](#)

Prologue

Someone was following her.

Stalking her.

She'd heard the footsteps. Among the deserted streets and the canyons of tall buildings; the sound seemed to echo from everywhere.

The night was extremely dark, and, Ginger Rockford thought, you would have believed that the streets were lit by centuries-old gas lamps, as they'd supposedly been during the filming that day.

A hot afternoon had turned into a chilly, misty night, and a fog was rolling in from the river.

The area seemed ridiculously quiet—except for that sound she heard now and then, a *click-click*, like a footfall, and then a shuffling noise, as if her stalker dragged a foot.

Great. Chased through the streets by a gimp.

It was New York City, for God's sake. Millions lived on this tiny island.

So where the hell were they all now?

Ginger turned around to look back in the direction from which she had come. She could still see the row of trailers on Whitehall Street; she had just left one. Sammy Vintner, fat-old-ex-cop studio guard, was still on duty, but she saw that he was on the phone.

He was the only living soul she saw.

There were markers where the tape had been that had held the crowd back during the day, separating the filmmakers from the plebs hoping to catch a glimpse of megastar Bobby Walden.

She cursed Bobby Walden. While she'd waited, believing that he was really going to call her, Bobby had surely been picked up by a big black limousine.

Bobby was a *somebody*. She was a *nobody*.

But at least Bobby had spoken to her. The female lead, Sherry Blanco, had almost knocked her over, and she hadn't even apologized. Well, maybe Sherry would learn. Ginger had done a lot of studying up on actors and their careers. She estimated that Sherry Blanco had about three years left—she was nearly thirty-five, and it was starting to show. Sherry was pretty, but she couldn't really act. Nor had she been known for any kindness to the young hopefuls with whom she had worked. Ginger hoped with her whole heart that she might be a rising star when Sherry was a burned-out has-been.

At least Angus Avery, the up-and-coming director, had noticed her. Okay, so his

words weren't every girl's dream. "Perfect! I mean, damn, do you look the role of the immigrant prostitute, her dreams already vanquished!" That was how she had gotten to be the one on Bobby's arm, and how she had managed to flirt with him.

And then he had said that they needed to hook up, and taken her phone number.

So she had sat in the trailer well past time to leave; Missy Everett and Jane Deaver—who had played the other two young prostitutes in the scene—had begged her to leave with them. Their day of extra-stardom was over. They should celebrate, and wonder if they'd wind up on the cutting-room floor.

She, like a fool, had refused to leave; she'd been waiting for Bobby. And she should have left. The set was a construction site. The ugly old building that had been there had been razed to the foundations and a few structural walls. There were rumors about the site; bad things had happened there. She didn't really know what—she wasn't into history. Maybe it had been an old burial ground. But it had been perfect for the set designers when they had installed their prefabricated backdrops and facades, and it had been right next to Blair House, a truly creepy old place. She hadn't been spooked during the day. The day had been chaotic with actors and crew, one shot being set up while another was being shot, sometimes over and over again if Avery didn't like the lighting or the camera angle.

How had she managed to be the very last one on set? Oh, yes, waiting and praying that Bobby would really call her.

Sammy had emerged from his guard post. "Hey!" she called back, hoping that he would pay attention, see her and wait for her to come running back. She'd even take a ride with disgusting fat Sammy at this point.

He wasn't looking her direction. He was going off duty, heading away from her. She should have accepted a ride from him when he'd offered, but she'd been convinced she'd find a taxi right away.

Who the hell knew that the area dried up like a prune once it got late at night?

The guard disappeared behind one of the trailers; he'd been anxious for her to go, of course, once she'd refused to ride with him. She'd been the last one near the trailers, the only one left who had been working on the on-location day-plus shoot for *O'Leary's*, a tale about crime and prostitution in the eighteen hundreds in New York City. One of the pubs in the area had had the right interior, and the buildings—except for the gap where the old Darby Building had so recently stood—were perfect. The gutted area and the work tents set up on the old site were shielded by a blue screen for the moviemaking; New York was not a city to make do without the income a permit for such work would secure for the city. Nor, with the preservationist-supporting liberals to be found in the area, could a recently discovered historic site be disturbed.

Even so, the area around the demolished building was surrounded by cheap wire fencing that any schoolboy could scale, and closed by a gate with a two-bit combination lock. It looked like a war zone in a third world country.

She was beyond it, though, and she hurried; the gaping hole in the landscape seemed alive, mocking her for her fear of darkness and shadows.

Now she cursed Bobby Walden. Megastar—jerk!

So, maybe, she had been too easy, too wide-eyed and too hopeful. But he'd really been into her during the shoot; he'd whispered such cool stuff to her between takes that day. She was ready; she knew how to get her name in the paper, and how to move