

# Sebastian Cupid

The Arrows – Book One

J.J. Martin

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TO ELAINE

*For teaching me the value of "what if."*



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# PROLOGUE

That was the day Sebastian decided he'd had enough. When the first slap landed on his jawbone, realization popped into his head. He stood watching tears run out of the corners of her eyes, her lips trembling, and he was thinking to himself, *"What the hell? There has to be a better way than this."*

Sebastian said all the right things, of course. That's his job. He told her it was him, not her. He told her it was a very confusing time in his life. It was all truth. He handed her tissues and accepted the second slap as she walked out the door. It worked like it always had for hundreds, even thousands of other women before her.

The other Arrows would be telling him to get over it. They'd sit him down at the bar, hand him a fresh brew, and start telling him the same things they tell each other every time someone in the group goes through a rough one like this. That's their job. They talk about the greater good and the ends justifying the means, etc, etc, and they wouldn't be lying. They really mean it, and most of it is true.

On this particular day, none of those explanations helped. Sebastian watched Cynthia Bledsoe stomp out of the Italian restaurant which he would avoid for the rest of his days and decided he had enough. Discontent with the assigned method fluttered around in his head all day, like bats circling around a street light. When he sat at his desk that night, looking down on the lights of the city, he penned Cynthia's name in his book next to all of the other names. He'd done her a great service, though she'd never know. For once, even the knowledge of that wasn't enough. If he had to reduce his purpose

J.J. Martin

down to one sentence, he'd never be able to sell what he did to any woman.

*My name is Sebastian Cupid, and I'm here to break your heart.*



# ONE

Sebastian realized how cliché the whole scenario was. He kept grimacing while he stood there, leaning against the bar, running the tablets in his pants pocket through his fingers. The thumping bass of techno music pounded his skull in time with the flashing strobes attached to the iron grid in the ceiling. Couples dressed in black leather and fishnets slithered all over each other on the dance floor. Sebastian personally hated that he hadn't come up with a more original place to do what he needed to do. However, he couldn't discredit the obvious advantages to a place like this. He needed to be ignored. This was the flashiest crowd in Chicago at the moment and a good chance to disappear.

Sebastian had debated how to dress for this. He didn't want to stick out in the crowd, but he'd drawn the line at leather and fishnets. He was dressed in simple black jeans and a t-shirt. It was hard enough to slip under the radar without flashy gear. Sebastian had been designed to attract attention. The Arrows were all tall, handsome, and shockingly beautiful. Mortals couldn't get enough of them. Tonight he needed to be invisible, which wasn't going to be easy.

Sebastian pulled his curly, dark hair into a stocking hat, which was fortunately "in" right now. He couldn't think of a way to hide his bone structure without making himself stand out more, so he settled for large sunglasses to hide his eyes and part of his face. He was receiving cursory glances from both women and men, but nothing lasted long. Sebastian kept his eyes to his drink, forcing himself to bob to the ridiculous music pounding his head into submission.

Sebastian heard people say all the time you never find your true love in a bar. A select few were going to prove that saying wrong tonight.

If he managed not to screw it up.

It was just after midnight on a Friday, and the club was starting to fill up. It was the end of a long workday for most, and everyone was ready to unwind. Sebastian was counting on it. He watched out of the corner of his eye as patron after patron lined up at the bar. He got an idea as he saw people waiting on drinks. In a joint like this, it didn't matter how many bartenders were on duty. The ratio of drinkers to bartenders always got out of hand, and people were starting to pile up around the bar. Pretty soon, they started lining up behind Sebastian's bar stool, trying to flag down a drink with annoyed looks on their faces. Sebastian fumbled in his pocket for one of the tablets, his hands starting to get a little sweaty with the notion of what he was going to do. He took a swig of Killian's to ease the dryness in his mouth. This needed to work. Sebastian didn't want to think about the consequences of his plan going badly considering how many chips he had used up to get approval for it in the first place.

Sebastian held one of the tablets, about the size of a pencil eraser, in the palm that rested on the bar while he held his drink. He held it loosely so the sweat and heat clinging to his skin wouldn't make it dissolve. If he had to wait too long, he would have to throw this one away and start again. Just as he was reminding himself not to chew his lip, the bartender clunked two drinks down on the bar in front of him and gestured behind Sebastian's stool. Sebastian placed his beer back on the bar, picked up both drinks that were dark in color (perfect!), and passed them to the patrons behind him. As he did, he dropped the tablet from his palm into one of the drinks. A tall blonde guy with a Mohawk and three piercings in his left ear said, "Thanks, man," as he passed the glass with the tablet in it to the short, black-haired girl standing next to him.

"No problem," Sebastian grunted. There was a very tense moment when the girl raised her maroon colored eyebrows while sipping the drugged drink and cocked her head to one side with a look of serious

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