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# WHEN DARKNESS FALLS

BY

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Liya wondered which breath would be her last, as she stared into cold, glowing eyes. His hand like a vice around her throat, his sharp fangs elongated over the soft flesh of her neck.

The midnight air swirled around them, warm and pleasant against her skin, in contrast to the perilous predicament she found herself in.

For years she listened as others whispered about mythical creatures stalking the night, terrorizing people as they drank blood and created spawn. Real fear gripped her and sent shivers down her spine. She struggled to pull air into her laboring lungs as she contemplated her now dim future.

She tried to ignore the horrid images her stubborn brain kept conjuring but found it impossible. Would her end come in one vicious swoop or would he drag it out slowly and painfully? Hell, would anyone even notice if she was never heard from again?

The fact that she could barely see him only succeeded in making matters worse. In the unwavering darkness all she glimpsed was his gleaming red eyes and imposing frame.

His ragged breathing echoed throughout the night as his massive chest rose and fell with each puff of air that escaped his lips. Her mind was a flurry of activity trying to find some way to

escape this predicament, but to her despair, the only thing that surfaced was a big fat nothing.

Paralyzed with fear, she couldn't even bring herself to put up a struggle for her own life.

She tried not to kick herself for believing that vampires were only a myth and that people told stories about them just to keep their children in line when they misbehaved. She now knew that they were no more a myth than she was. And her body shivered with dread as she realized the price for her disbelief was going to be her life.

\* \* \*

A breeze whisked by and Hawk's nostrils were filled with the sent of her delicate skin. The smell washed over him and he shivered at the familiar aroma. He closed his eyes and inhaled slowly.

"Jade?" he whispered into her neck. The fragrance lingering on her skin drew him inexorably closer. He felt her body stiffen. He sensed her fear but he couldn't stop. Pulled into another time and place, he remembered loving arms being wrapped around his neck as they made passionate love...

*What?* He yanked himself out of the memory almost as soon as it hit him and reared back to pin his victim with a hard stare. *What's happening to me?* He took a few deep breaths to gather his composure. He couldn't allow himself to be distracted. He hadn't fed in weeks and was on the verge of losing it.

He shouldn't care that her scent called to him the way a Siren called men willingly to their deaths. So what if she felt supple and soft under his touch. Having been denied a woman's touch for an eternity shouldn't have made any difference. By now he should have pierced her neck, taken what he needed and been on his way...but he hadn't.

Damn it, he needed to feed. A mix of anger and confusion swept over him as he tried to force his body back to the task at hand. With a sigh he eased his grip on her neck but made no move to release her. He frowned in frustration. *Shit...now what?*

\* \* \*

As the vampire continued to glare at Liya, something within her began to stir, something untamed and primitive. He appeared to be studying her, learning her, reading her, if that were possible. She in turn was becoming curious about what was behind his harsh stare and wary eyes.

This guy is supposed to be damn near invincible. What could he have to be uneasy about, she wondered, surprised that she was even considering the notion.

Somehow her fear began to subside and she managed to get a good look at her captor. She swallowed, the sound almost deafening in the uncanny silence of the eerie night.

He was exquisite. Enthralled by his smooth mahogany skin, not even a speck of dirt dared touch his awing beauty. His lips were lush and full and his intense red gaze caused a searing heat to develop at the junction between her thighs. She still struggled to breathe but not from fear, from blatant, undeniable lust.

Her pulse raced. Her heart pounded. She was dizzy with maddening desire. Her mind had been fighting to reject what her body was all too willing to embrace. She was insanely attracted to this man. But how? He was a ruthless killer hell bent on wiping humans off the face of the earth. How could she possibly want him?

She tried to resist, but she couldn't help staring into his magnetic eyes, imagining how good it would feel to take him inch, by slow sinful inch inside of her moist, soft flesh.

At once his expression changed. He looked hungry, but not for food. She could feel the evidence of his arousal graze her thigh as his eyes shifted from crimson to a deep dark azure. A look of confusion swept across his face and his grip on her neck tightened again.

"You dare to look into my eyes? You must have a death wish," he said in a calm tone. His deep rumbling voice sent shocks of pleasure racing through her. She braced her hands against the cool wall pressed against her back, which was all she could do to keep her knees from buckling under the onslaught of blazing desire overpowering her frayed senses.

"No," she replied with a ragged breath. Chills consumed her, making her shiver, as luscious sensations stimulated her aroused body.

Under his heated gaze, her defenses collapsed until she was nothing but a pile of raw, smoldering need and he the only one who could bring her fulfillment.

\* \* \*

Her desire was raw, passionate. Any vampire within a fifty mile radius would have been able to sense her arousal. It was managing to over power even his most primal instincts. Hawk's heart thudded against his chest as he tried to control his lust, but it was impossible. All he could think about was touching her, slipping inside her until she begged him to make her come.

He melded his body with Liya's rubbing his rigid erection between her parted thighs. Her juices started to flow and she was on the verge of begging him to thrust his hard shaft into her wet pussy.

She was panting now, no longer in control of her body. Her body craved him, burned for him. She closed her eyes in an attempt to steady her thoughts, but it only made matters worse. She envisioned being naked in his muscled arms as he drove into her yielding body again and again.

No, she thought to herself, not like this. Not on the street like some common whore.

He lessened his grip on her neck and tilted her head bringing it level with his own. Her reaction to him must have been surprising. She was sure that any other woman would have tried to fight him, but not her. She was silently begging for more.

"Open your eyes," he demanded.

She did and their gazes locked.

“Do you not fear me?” he asked in a curious tone.

“No,” she replied through the tightness in her chest, amazed that she could speak at all. He looked stunned at her response, as if no one dared to admit that they were not afraid of him.

“Do you know what I am?” he said with a frown as he cocked his head to one side.

“A...a vampire,” she said with a stutter.

“Yes, a vampire,” he said then licked his sharp canines. “And do you know what vampires do?”

“Drink peoples’ blood and kill them,” she replied.

“Now if you know all of this about vampires, why do you not fear me, human?” he said in a cool deep voice mere inches away from her face.

Because I want to fuck your brains out, she thought, but wasn’t about to make the mistake of saying it out loud. “I don’t know,” she replied instead.

“Interesting.” He smiled as if he knew something she didn’t, then threaded his fingers through her hair and grazed his tongue across her mouth, inviting her to join him.

With that, the last of her resistance crumbled. She parted her lips as he thrust his tongue into her warm mouth, plunging in and out mimicking what she wanted him to do to her body.

She wrapped her arms around his broad shoulders and clung to him as a shattered moan escaped her lips. The kiss was more electrifying than anything she had ever experienced. Heat raced up her spine and exploded all over her body, making her ache to have him imbedded firmly inside her. A soft whimper escaped her lips, as he deepened the kiss, grabbing a handful of her locks and crushing her against the wall.

He used his other hand to explore her writhing, trembling body. His hand slid under her shirt and shifted her undergarment out of the way to gain access to the cinnamon peak of her left breast as it stood painfully erect awaiting his touch. He gently grazed her nipple until she started moving her hips in a provocative rhythm, calling him to mate with her in a dance of extreme fulfilling ecstasy.

As he devoured her lips, his hand continued on its downward journey, caressing her through the thin material of her pants. Her mind was a jumbled mass no longer able to make rational thought. She twisted and moaned with maddening desire begging to be sated.

She didn't think she could take anymore and then he swiftly unbuttoned her pants, pushed her panties aside and caressed her throbbing flesh. She cried out in ecstasy and dug her nails into his shoulders as he pleased her in ways she hadn't known for ages.

The intensity of the feelings building inside her core frightened her. He rubbed her aching clit, increasing his speed as his smoldering gaze met hers. Her hips bucked and swayed as he continued his assault on her body.

A loud moan slipped from her lips, her breath came in ragged, moist breaths, caressing his ear. He shuddered and his body stiffened as if he were taking pleasure from giving it.

He slid one long finger into her warmth and her body convulsed, sending waves of agonizing bliss coursing through her entire being. The earth shattered as she screamed her release, leaving her cream all over his finger. He kept going until he milked her of all of her juices, then withdrew his finger, dipped it between his lips and sucked her essence into his mouth with a satisfied groan.

Taking a large breath, he looked into her face with contentment tinged with confusion, as if searching for answers. Obviously he was as affected by their encounter as she was.

*Oh my God what did I just do?* Her face filled with humiliated heat. She concentrated on the impossible task of regaining what little composure she had left. She tried to fix her disheveled appearance, while he took a few steps back. Then their eyes met and time froze.

She couldn't believe she'd just let a complete stranger touch her in such intimate ways, no matter how freakin' hot he was. *This is not me at all!* It took all her might not to smack her forehead with the heel of her palm.

Confusion hounded her as she tried to make some sense of the situation. One second she was teetering on the edge of insane terror and the next she was coming all over his finger. Who cared if it was the most amazing thing she'd ever experienced in her boring little life, she never should have allowed it. Only...she had really wanted it. A part of her still wanted more.

What was she thinking? The guy had been this close to killing her and all she could think about was jumping his bones? She had lost her mind, plain and simple. It was either that or aliens had taken over her body. At the moment neither one of those options appealed to her. There had to be another, real explanation for her behavior. Right?

\* \* \*

Hawk's head spun as their interlude played over and over in his mind. He hadn't touched a woman in years and now this. He'd been in her presence for what, two seconds? And what really threw him was the fact that he had loved it.

His body was still vibrating from the sensations that had coursed through him as she screamed out her orgasm. He'd never been so hard for anyone in his entire life. In fact, he hadn't been able to enjoy being with a woman since he'd lost his wife.

The affect she was having on him was mind blowing. If he could manage to untangle his thoughts long enough, maybe he could try and make some sense out of their situation. He needed to figure this out, and soon, or he was going to end up in certifiably insane.

Hawk chanced a quick glance at the woman's face and noticed that she was beet red. Now she was embarrassed? He wanted to smile at her reaction but refrained. She already felt bad enough.

He watched her shift from foot to foot, casting a nervous glance in his direction. God, she was beautiful. Her full lips begged to be kissed. He imagined gripping a handful of her silky, black hair as he drove into her body.

He quickly grabbed a hold of his thoughts, urging his heated body to relax. But visions of her voluptuous curves, naked and writhing beneath him, made it all but impossible. At this rate he was going to take her against the wall here and now, consequences be damned.

\* \* \*

Why the hell was this guy looking at her like he was starving and she was grade a steak. His eyes had turned back to a rich deep blue and he looked as if he was staring clear past her flesh into her soul. She was in over her head with this man and there wasn't a damn thing she could do about it.

Her thoughts were interrupted by a loud buzzing filling the air from behind them. Out of nowhere, she was being tossed over the large shoulder of an unfamiliar man and being carried away. A scream lodged in her throat as fear started to overtake her. Who the hell was this and what was going on? She felt like her head was going to explode. The entire world had gone nuts and she was the last person to know.

Her heart hammered in her chest. Horrifying images of being raped, killed and dumped in a dank alley, passed through her brain. She pulled short quick breaths into her lungs and tried with all her might to pull herself together. This was no time to fall apart, damn it!

All of a sudden the body under her crumpled to the ground and she was scooped up into familiar arms.

“We have thirty seconds to get out of the open or we’re dead,” the vampire said in a dark tone as if he had been through this before.

“Thirty seconds?” she asked, her voice shrill. Anger took over as reason dropped into non-existence. “What the hell happens in thirty seconds?” It was annoyingly impossible to keep her head from banging on his chest. She lifted her head to try and get a good look at him. His face was a stone mask of determination and he was completely blocking her out. Damn him for getting her into this mess.

“Who the hell are you damn it?” she screamed beating at his chest.

“Hawk,” he said in a short tone and that was it. No extra info, no nothing conversation over.

Her body tingled with warning, goose bumps surfaced on her arms. Why did that name sound so familiar?

Without hesitation, he threw her into a large, dark hole that seemed to appear out of nowhere in the ground. She started to think that maybe she would’ve been better off facing whatever awaited them outside, but Hawk, as he’d called himself, had already slammed the door behind them. Seconds later, a cataclysmic explosion shook the very ground around them. The heavy metal door caved with a groan and the walls rumbled in protest.

Her panic reached an all time high. “Oh, my God, what was that?”

“A bomb. Those were *your* people trying to ‘save’ you from me by kidnapping you and making an attempt to take me out at the same time.”

“Holy shit! This can’t be happening.”

She leaped up and began pounding on the door. “Help me!” she yelled through the hard steel of the impenetrable wall. She prayed to whomever was listening to get her out of this. Her life couldn’t end on such a bad note, trapped in a room with a blood sucking vampire. She just wouldn’t allow it.

“Oh, my God!” she said breathing heavily trying to force air into her burning lungs. She realized that if she didn’t get a hold of herself she was going to hyperventilate until there wasn’t a breath left in her tired body. But how could she relax when there was a dark cloud hovering over her future?

“Everything’s going to be okay,” Hawk said reaching out to comfort her only to have her smack his hand away.

“Don’t touch me,” she hissed, pressing herself against the wall, squeezing her eyes shut in an attempt to quiet her nerves.

He breathed a harsh sigh. “Just try and remain calm. I know it’s difficult, but just try. I need to sort some things out,” he said with a strained look appearing on his face.

Liya ran a hand through her hair, trying to make some sense of her situation. Looking at the damage that had been done to this dismal cave of doom, she knew there was no hope of making an escape. The door had partially caved in and the ceiling looked as if it could fall at any given second.

She was on the verge of having a nervous breakdown but realized losing her head would solve nothing. At best she would tire herself out and be too weak to escape if an opportunity presented itself. At worst she'd be stuck here with this gorgeous, sexy vampire and that just wouldn't do. He was a threat to the nice, safe little existence she had spent too much time building. She didn't need excitement. She needed her common, day-to-day routine. No, the only option now was to try and get comfortable, to wait it out. God, that really sucked.

Hawk got up and lit a candle on the other side of what appeared to be a very spacious room. There was a small desk in the corner, and a large comfortable looking bed against the far wall. She made her way to sit in one of the cozy chairs located behind her, realizing that she was in some type of shelter.

After a while he looked at her from across the dimly lit room and began to speak. "I know you must have some questions..."

"Gee, no shit, Sherlock..."

"Hold on, Spunky," he said, shaking his head with a smirk. "Give me a little bit of a break here. A lot of this is all new to me too."

Even in the gloom of her current circumstances, she couldn't help but notice how he was trying to make things more comfortable for her. He was keeping his distance from her as she had requested and she could tell that he was holding on to his patience by the way he kept clenching his hands together and pacing back and forth.

She found that she was even affected by the impact of his dazzling white teeth, his now light brown eyes and strangely charming personality. However, none of this excused the fact that he had put her life in danger by accosting her in the middle of this horrible, dreary night.

"Is that a fact? Exactly which part of this is new? The people chasing after you, almost being kidnapped, or damn near being blown to pieces by a very large bomb?" she asked in a voice heavy with sarcasm.

"I'm afraid that all of that is old news for me," he said, moving closer to caress her face. "But what just happened with you and me...that was all new."

"Really," she whispered, unsure about where things were headed between them, she averted her eyes looking anywhere but at him.

"Yes, really," he returned in a quiet voice, touching her chin to bring her gaze back to him.

He leaned in as if to kiss her, but then stopped short as she stiffened, still uncomfortable with being in such close proximity with him. His brows bent into a frown and he bit his lip. Then he sat back with a sigh.

“I felt something significant pass between us just from the one experience we shared a short while ago and I haven’t felt anything even come close to that in quite some time.”

Thinking that she knew where he was headed, she opened her mouth to interrupt, but he shook his head to silence her.

“Please...just hear me out, before you say anything?”

“Fine,” she replied still feeling unsure about their situation.

“I realize that we know nothing about each other, but there is something between us. Something strong,” he said aiming those beautiful eyes in her direction.

The manner in which he spoke gave her chills. He was so passionate and real. No man had ever professed to have any feelings for her at all, let alone strong ones in such a short period of time. She found it refreshing and nerve wracking all at the same time. How could he be so sure of his feelings when she was having trouble remembering the answer to two plus two?

He appeared to waiting for a response from her before he continued. She gave a nod of approval. “Go on.”

He let out a sigh and continued pacing back and forth. “I would hate to miss out on something good because we were too hesitant to take a chance.” He turned to look directly into her wide eyes. “But before we decide on what to do, there are some things that you should know.

I think the best way to handle this is for you to ask me whatever it is you want to know and I'll try and explain things the best way I can. What do you think?"

She studied him through weary eyes but decided to relent for now. "Okay, fine."

"Good," he said, tapping his foot noisily on the smooth cement floor. "Alright then, what's your first question?"

"Wait a minute," she said fixing her firm gaze upon his handsome face. "Earlier you said your name was Hawk, right?"

"I should've known that was coming," he said with a slight bit of hesitation, then let out a tired sigh. "Yes, my name is Hawk."

"*The Hawk?* The one that's rumored to have slain over three thousand humans in the past five years? That Hawk?"

"Yes, that Hawk." He shifted restlessly in his seat.

"So it's true then, not a rumor?"

"I'm afraid so," he said looking down at his feet.

As the realization hit, her eyes bulged out of her head, her breath stuck in her throat. She stood and walked to the opposite side of the tiny room. She just needed a some space, that's all.

“Holy shit,” she said running her hands through her disheveled hair trying not to freak out but failing miserably.

*Oh God, I've really done it this time.* Once again she wondered how in the heck she had gotten herself into this predicament.

One moment she was going along minding her own business and then WHAM here comes some vampire guy and her quiet little life just goes up in smoke!

She whirled around to stare at him, one eyebrow arched in question. “Where did all of this come from?”

“Huh?” He scratched his head, his face turning into a frown.

“Well at first you wanted to kill me and now this? I want to know why,” she demanded.

“I’m not exactly sure...” he began but was cut off by her next outburst.

“What the hell do you mean you’re not sure? Mister...” Damn it, she was so irritated.

However the tired glance coming from Hawk’s deep eyes silenced her.

“Please, just be quiet and let me talk,” he said as he stood up and began to walk back and forth. “I hope you’re not always so argumentative.” She cast a warning glance in his direction, but managed to remain silent.

He turned and pinned her with an intense stare. “I really need you to understand that you are safe with me regardless of how you feel about what happened earlier. Now the truth is...” he said, trailing off in mid sentence, his mouth turning down into a frown. “You know it just occurred to me that I have no clue what your name is?” he said then looked at her expectantly.

Her first response was to knock him upside the head with her shoe and tell him that her name was none of his damned business. Then she calmed down a bit and realized that she at least owed him that much for saving her life, even if he was the one that caused all this mayhem in the first place.

“My name is Liya.” Her voice was low in the quiet of their haven.

“Okay Liya, let me try to make it clear. I haven’t fed for over two weeks, which is a long damn time.” He sighed and sat back down. “When I saw you I just lost it. I needed to feed and there you were. But almost as soon as I touched you, I started to feel something odd, like I was connected to you some how.”

He blew out a large breath and scratched his head. “I know it sounds crazy, but it’s true. To say I was confused would be an understatement and the fact that I could sense your arousal, well, it really wasn’t helping.” He glanced at her his now blue eyes full of unchecked desire as he continued. “It seems you tamed one monster just to bring out another. I needed to touch you. I couldn’t help it,” he said in a smooth silken voice as a visible shudder went through his body.

“You could sense my arousal...but how?”

He cleared his throat as he tried to explain. “Well, vampires have extremely heightened senses, because we’re night dwellers. One thing that I’ve noticed is that every emotion has a scent. Fear and arousal are the strongest among them. And yours is enough to drive a man wild.”

She blushed as a rush of memories from their recent sensual escapade flooded her mind. “Oh.” She took a seat and looked down at the floor, trying to hide her blushing face from his knowing gaze.

He chuckled and shook his head at her response to his last comment. “Well, anyway, does that kind of help you to understand why things happened the way that they did?”

“I guess so.”

“You guess?”

“That’s what I said, isn’t it?” she said with a slight roll of her eyes.

“Fine.” He backed off, putting his hands up in surrender. “So moving along, what else would you like to know about me?”

“Um, well there is one thing,” she said, not quite sure about how to ask her next question.

“Hey.” His voice, calm and easy, reassured her. “It’s alright, you can ask me anything. It’ll be fine.”

“Alright.” Her eyes danced around the room as she spoke. “Well you seem like an okay guy...I guess,” she said her lips quirking up at the corners, but she quickly sobered. “I need to know why you have killed so many humans. What did we do that was so terrible you hate us?” She bit her lip, unsure of why she cared so much about his answer.

The look that flashed across his face was so painful, she was no longer sure that she wanted to know.

\* \* \*

Hawk closed his eyes and gave a harsh sigh. Memories he’d kept locked away for an eternity flooded his mind, making him shiver. He had never been able to move on from what had happened and he was afraid. Afraid of what she would think of him after it was all said and done. Would she think that he was a monster?

Doubts floated around his brain as he contemplated how to handle the situation. He didn’t want to scare her off but if he didn’t tell her everything, the secrets that he’d kept would haunt their entire relationship. If they made it that far. No, this was an all or nothing deal. He was going to tell her the whole truth and hope to God that she could understand.

He took a deep breath and slowly exhaled. “Five years ago I had a wife, and a small son. We were happy,” he said bowing his head at the memory unable to look her in the eyes. “She had just given birth and wanted to spend some time with her mother while she gained her strength back. A raiding party came through and slaughtered every one of them in their sleep. Even my

son.” He paused to catch his breath and collect his composure. His chest was burning it had become hard to breath, but he couldn’t stop. Not until he told her everything.

“He was just a baby for Christ’s sake,” he said, rubbing his forehead. On the verge of tears, he opened his eyes to distance himself from his memories and try to gain control of his feelings. He glanced up and noticed that Liya was crying.

Suppressing the desire to reach out and touch her, he pulled his thoughts together to continue on. If he stopped now there was no way he would finish. He needed to do this for her and more importantly for him.

“I was devastated. They had taken away my life, my reason for living. I wandered around like a zombie for days. One night I was at a bar, wasted completely out of my mind. I heard this guy blathering on about this vampire family that he and some of his low life friends had murdered during one of their night raids.”

He was trying to keep his emotions steady but he couldn’t. The crippling memories had become far too potent to keep ignoring. A single tear slid down his cheek as he forced himself to keep going, one agonizing word at a time. “I just lost it. I tore the place apart and anyone standing in my way never had a chance. The story of what happened got out and ever since people have been after me.”

He pinned her with a pleading gaze and grabbed her hands, lacing their fingers together. “Try to understand. I know that I lost it when I was in that bar, but that’s not how I truly am.

Yes, I've killed a lot of humans, but they came after me, Liya. They were people looking to make a name for themselves among those who've decided to hunt vampires just for the fun of it."

\* \* \*

"Oh my God," she said as a sob escaped her lips. The horror of what he'd witnessed must have been devastating. The pain in his eyes reached out to her, touched her, called to her. She wanted, no, *needed* to help heal his wounds, but how? She reached out and caressed his face with a feather light touch. He closed his eyes with a visible shudder.

She searched his face, wishing there was a way she could absorb some of his pain. He'd obviously been carrying these weighted emotions every since that horrible day. It broke her heart to see him like this. He gathered her in his arms and held her close, resting his face against her cheek. "Please don't cry for me," he whispered into her ear.

She dried her eyes with a corner of her shirt in an attempt to pull herself together. He needed comfort and here she was falling apart. Their eyes locked and she almost forgot to breathe. His intense stare was like a drug and she was an addict.

She leaned up and placed a light kiss on his lips. As soon as they touched, fire roared through her veins, igniting her very soul. He moaned into her mouth as their tongues mingled and it drove her crazy.

She broke the kiss to stare into his hungry blue eyes and gave his chest a slight push. He took the hint and relaxed on the couch, a light sheen of sweat covered his brow. His breathing was ragged. He was totally into this and she loved it. Taking control was something she never thought she'd be able to do. But something about him made her feel secure and unashamed of her new found sexuality.

The more she thought about it the more she burned to touch him, feel him. She pulled open his shirt and blazed a trail of open mouth kissed down his chest, following the line of hair that disappeared into his jeans. God, she needed to get rid of those.

She pulled at his belt and tossed it aside. She couldn't get his clothes off fast enough. Her heart hammered in her chest and her breath came in short, quick bursts. He lifted his hips to help her remove his jeans and boxers. Finally she had his hot, heavy erection in her hands. Her pussy was wet just thinking of the things that she could do with such a magnificent tool.

As she slowly slid her hands up and down his rigid shaft his, body jerked and a moan escaped his lips. "Oh, my God, what are you doing to me?" he asked in an agonizingly sexy voice. It was almost enough to make her come right then.

She continued to stroke his cock slowly, lovingly. Watching him writhe and moan under her touch was hot. She leaned her head down and took him into her mouth, sliding his dick slowly between her moist, full lips.

“Oh God that feels good,” he said groaning out the words. She felt his hips spasm with every movement. “Oh shit, that feels so good.”

His reaction was driving her crazy. She was so aroused it was a shock she wasn't dripping all over the floor. She increased the tempo, using her tongue to make sure his dick stayed slick, and wet with every stroke. He grabbed her head and thrust into her mouth, his eyes squeezed shut.

“Oh shit, don't stop.” Sweat poured down his hard body and he started to shake. He let out a deep growl as he came in her mouth.

At first it was a shock but the warm liquid flowing into her mouth invigorated her. She had done this. He had been under her control and she reveled in it. She sucked and licked until she had milked him of every last drop.

“Mmm, that was good,” she said, instantly wondering where the thought came from. She had never been so forward in her life. And it was fantastic.

His eyes smoldered and his cock sprang to life at her comment. He had just come. How was that possible? In her limited experience, if a guy had an orgasm that was it. Shows over, let's all go home. But Hawk was ready for more. His desire for her smothered her, making her gasp for air.

\* \* \*

Hawk was in a complete state of shock. His body was rearing for action but his mind was having trouble keeping up. He took a few deep breaths to steady himself but it was useless. His heart was slamming against his ribs, his mind was a mess and all he really wanted to do was slip inside Liya's luscious body and fuck her until she screamed.

It wouldn't be so hard to control himself if he couldn't sense how aroused she was. Her scent had overtaken the room until his nose was filled with nothing but her. The way she gazed at him from her position between his thighs was wreaking havoc on his brain. *Fuck it.*

He grabbed her and placed her on his lap, straddling him. He could feel her pussy clenching and unclenching through her pants. He needed to get her undressed. She had on way to many clothes. He pulled her shirt over her head and tossed it across the room. Her full breasts rose and fell with every breath. He snapped off her bra and sucked in a breath at her perfect tits. He swirled his tongue around an erect nipple and gently rolled the other between his thumb and forefinger. A soft moan escaped her lips and she squirmed in his lap, making his erection ache to be inside her.

God she was on fire. He moved to the other breast while he worked on her pants. He slid them off and rubbed her clit through the flimsy material of her underwear. Her hips gyrated against him as he pleased her. She was so wet it was seeping through her panties, leaving traces moisture on his cock.

He had wanted to draw out her pleasure as long as possible but he couldn't wait any longer. He needed her now. He went for her panties and piece of dry wall fell on his arm. *Shit, shit, shit!* *This can't be happening.*

He looked up and to his dismay the ceiling was about to cave. He had been afraid of the damage that had been done to the structure, but since nothing had happened he'd forgotten about it. He grabbed her hips to stop her movement.

"What?" Her eyes were hazy with lust.

"We have to stop," he said in a harsh tone. He was so pissed. He was going to have to get them out and he didn't know how he was going to get his dick to fit back into his pants. "The ceiling is about to cave."

"Holy shit." Her eyes bugged out in alarm.

Yep they were done.

"I can get us out, but you'll have to trust me," he said staring hard into her eyes.

"I don't care what you have to do— just get me out of here." He could tell she was trying not to panic, but her heart rate was through the roof and she was having trouble catching her breath. She was tensing her shoulders and biting her lip. He had to get through to her. She needed to keep her head. He couldn't afford to have her to lose it while he was trying to get them out safely.

He grabbed her shoulders and gave her a little shake. “Calm down. I promise that you’ll be safe. I won’t let anything happen to you.” Her eyes were the size of saucers but she nodded. She visibly relaxed and her breathing was somewhat normal. She wasn’t completely calm but it would do.

“Now, I’m going to break the door down but the foundation is no longer secure. As soon as I get through you need to run out as fast as you can before the rest of the ceiling crumbles.” Debris was falling around them steadily. She looked like she might not make it after all. “Can you handle this?” he asked looking her square in the eye.

“Yes,” she replied with an unsteady nod.

“Good.” He moved them closer to the door. “On the count of three, I’ll break down the door and you start moving.”

She took a deep breath and lunged, ready to run. “Do it.”

She was amazing. Even though she was terrified, she could still do what needed to be done. He found that insanely attractive in a woman, but he didn’t have much time to daydream about Liya’s endearing qualities. There would be plenty of time for that later. He turned his mind back to the task at hand.

He stooped to a low crouch and prepared his body for the collision. If he did it just right, he could knock the door off with one try. He steadied his mind, focused on his goal, and took off.

He slammed into the door, putting all his strength behind it, and the door flew off the hinge with a protesting groan. Liya flew out the door in a blur and he was right on her heels.

His feet touched the ground and the brisk evening air sent chills down his spine. He was standing face to face with the hunters. Shit, he couldn't catch a break.

His breath snagged as he realized that one of the scumbags had Liya in a choke hold. His body overflowed with rage at the sight of the hunter's hands touching *his* Liya. The guy had no clue that he had just made the last mistake of his worthless little life. He spat on the ground in disgust. He was about to make them pay.

Hawk took a good look around. There were three of them and they were stupid and careless. He could scent their misplaced confidence in the air. He would be sure to wipe those sappy smirks of their faces and he would enjoy it.

Before they could blink, he attacked. He leapt in the air and slammed his foot into the jaw of the one closest to him. His neck snapped with a sickening crack and hit the ground with a thud. A stream of blood leaked from his motionless lips and began to pool around his head.

Fear rose into the eyes of the other two. Confused glances passed between them. The second guy started to back away then turned to run. Apparently he had come to his senses...but it wasn't soon enough.

Before the man took two steps, Hawk had him by the throat, squeezing the life from his lungs. The guy kicked and flayed, trying to get free, but Hawk had an iron grip on his neck and

he wasn't letting go. He could feel the man's pulse slow to a stop as he died. Hawk released him from his grasp and his head made an audible *thunk* on the ground. *Two down, one to go.*

The scumbag holding Liya looked like he was ready to bolt as well, but he could forget it. He had threatened Liya, unknowingly signing his own death certificate. Hawk straightened to his full form emitting a low growl. The guy looked scared enough to piss his pants.

He pushed Liya toward Hawk and made a break for it. Hawk took one quick step and rammed his fist into the guys back, breaking his spine with a nauseating snap. He crumpled to the ground like an old rag doll, immobilized.

Hawk had contemplated draining the guy of every drop of blood, but decided against it. He didn't want to be contaminated by *his* tainted blood. Instead, he crouched down and turned the guy's face to look him in the eyes. Hawk's body was consumed with anger. He knew his eyes were fiery red. *Scumbag* trembled, fear huge in his gaze as he realized he was going to die.

"You're dead," Hawk said, grabbing his head and twisting hard, leaving the guy there with look of frozen terror across his face.

Liya's shattered breathing pulled him from his trance like state. He stood to face her, a feeling of dread seeping through his very core. Her face was painted with horror at the gruesome scene before her. This was his every day life and it scared the shit out of her. He let out a harsh, painful sigh. Who was he fooling? She wasn't cut out for this.

She was a beautiful, sensual, caring woman and he lived in a dark, ugly world. How could he ever have thought he could make a relationship work with her? She was able to make him feel whole and alive, where so many others had failed. She was the one he could see going the distance with. And she was the only one that he couldn't have. There was no way he could ask her to give up her life to be with him, no matter how much he wanted it.

"Let's get you home," he said trying to keep his voice steady. He didn't want to show her the pain it was causing him. She had been through enough that night as it was.

\* \* \*

"Take me home?" she asked a confused frown on her face.

"I want to get you to a safe a place. And that's not with me." His voice was dark, sad even, though she was sure he was trying to hide it.

"No," she said, shaking her head. "You can't mean that." Sure, what had just happened had frightened her. But she wasn't afraid of him. Never of him. He had kept her safe, when her own people had tried to harm her. They truly were monsters, these hunters. It was clear that they would stoop so low as to hurt one their *own* if it meant gaining an opportunity to slay a vampire. She didn't want him to leave. She needed him, she realized that now. This was ridiculous. He had wanted her so badly before. Why this sudden change?

"I do mean it." His eyes were dull, tired. "I can't be around you. Everything that happened was all because of what I am. I couldn't stand it if something where to happen to you because of

me.” His eyes pleaded with her to understand, but she couldn’t. If you really cared about someone, you didn’t just leave them.

She shook her head in denial. “You can protect me. I know you can.” Her voice shook with desperation. She stopped to collect her composure and went on. “Please,” she begged, looking into his eyes, grabbing his shoulders, and trying to shake some sense into him. “Please don’t do this.”

Pain streaked across his face. He shook his head and looked off into the distance. “I’m sorry.”

“Fine,” she replied softly. A sharp pain lanced through her chest. Her heart shattered into a thousand pieces. She knew he didn’t want to leave, but, damn it, being left was being left.

He followed silently to her small house and walked her to the door. She turned for one more glance at his beautiful face. She wanted to memorize every line, every hair, every feature. He had changed her life. In his arms, she had felt free. Free to be who ever she wanted and it was the greatest feeling in the world. He was the best thing that had ever happened to her and he was leaving.

\* \* \*

He gazed into her eyes for long moments unable to move, hypnotized by her magnetic eyes. Maybe it wouldn’t be so bad if he stayed. It wasn’t him she was afraid of. Maybe he could protect her. He opened his mouth to speak but changed his mind.

No, there was no way he could bring himself to do it. She would be in constant danger if she stayed with him and he couldn't allow that. For once in his life, he would do the right thing, no matter how much it killed him. This had to be goodbye.

"Look," he started unsure of what to say. "I wish..."

"Please don't," she said shaking her head. "Let's just say goodbye." She leaned up and placed a light kiss on his lips, sending a shiver down his spine. The fact that something so small could affect him so much was still a mystery to him.

"Goodbye," he said forcing his feet to turn around and leave her, forever. The thought made a lump form in his throat. He had to fight to keep from turning around and making her his, despite all the odds stacked against them. This *was* the right thing to do. One lone tear burned down his cheek as he left the one woman that could truly make him whole again.

\* \* \*

Two weeks later, Liya found herself trying, but failing not to wallow about losing Hawk. How had she come to care for him so deeply in such a short span of time? Every day since they'd parted, she paced her house hoping that he would come back. She wished she could go looking for him, but she didn't know where to start. The only place she knew of had been demolished and she was sure he wouldn't be going back there any time soon.

After wearing out her mahogany carpet she decided she was tired. She trudged to her room and set down her mug of steaming green tea on the nightstand. Plopping down on the bed, she

stared out the small window near her full size bed. Usually a comfort, her room only made her feel lonely now. How was she supposed to move on if she couldn't get images of Hawk to vacate her brain?

With a tired sigh, she laid her head on the soft cotton pillow and tried to relax. Her mind wondered in circles about what she could have done differently to make him stay. She knew, that he wanted her and not just in the physical sense. The emotions were there. She could see them in his eyes as he forced himself to leave her.

Damn it! Why did men have to be such idiots? Why couldn't she have a say in their future too? She was a big girl and she could decide what was *too dangerous* for her. This was down right torture. Not knowing where he was and if he was okay. The uncertainty was eating her alive.

She sat back up and took a sip of tea. The fluid burned down her throat and ended in a heated pool as it landed in her stomach. Hot tea normally relaxed her but nothing was working anymore. All she wanted was Hawk.

A knock at the door made her jump, almost spilling her tea. *Who could it be at this time of night?* She padded to the front door wearing nothing but her robe and peered through the peep hole to get a glimpse of her visitor.

An involuntary gasp escaped her lips and her breath caught in her throat. It was Hawk. She swung the door open and stared at the most beautiful sight in the world. A dripping wet Hawk standing at her front door.

It had been pouring rain for hours and wherever he'd come from he had walked. Her heart slammed into her chest, her brain clouded with happy confusion. Why was the floor getting so close?

Suddenly all went dark.

She came to, staring into the eyes of a concerned Hawk. She couldn't believe she had fainted. She had never fainted in her entire life. And him being there wasn't a dream, he was actually in the same room with her. But why, she wondered sitting up to place herself on more even playing field?

"What's going on?" she asked once she forced her thoughts into making some type of sense. "Why are you here?"

"I had to see you," he said, his eyes filled with intense emotions. "I couldn't stay away." He leaned in close and toyed with her freshly washed hair. He buried his face in her locks, inhaled deeply and shuddered. His response to their closeness made her long for what she couldn't have. Him.

Tears she could no longer hold back leaked from her eyes. Quiet sobs racked her body. She was tired of being alone.

“Please don’t cry,” he whispered into her ear, tugging her closer.

“I can’t help it. I’m so tired of being lonely.”

“Why are you lonely?” he said with a frown. “Where are your friends, your family?”

She stared at the floor. Could she tell him? She didn’t even know if he was going to stick around. Did she really want to open herself up to him, when she was feeling so unsure about where they stood?

“You can tell me.” Holding her gaze with gentle eyes.

“I don’t even know how to begin.”

“It’s okay, just take your time,” he said, rubbing her back in a circular motion.

She nodded, took a deep breath then released it slowly. “When I was nine, my parents were killed in a fire.” She paused to collect her composure then continued. “As if that wasn’t bad enough, later on we found out that it was done intentionally.”

“Arson?” he whispered.

“Yeah. This guy was in love with my mom but he didn’t want to let her go.” She stopped, no longer sure she wanted to share this with him.

“It’s okay you can tell me,” he said with an encouraging nod.

She went on with a sigh, “I thought I would die from the pain of losing them. I was left completely alone. That psycho, crazy asshole ruined my life. He took them from me all because he couldn’t stand that my mom didn’t want him!”

She swallowed and rubbed her tired eyes. “I haven’t been able to trust anyone since. I always find myself looking over my shoulder, afraid that someone is going to come after me. Because of him, I have no family, no friends, nothing.”

She lifted her head to see into his eyes, his irises were black.

“What’s with your eyes?” she asked deciding to change the subject.

“The color of my eyes shows how I feel, which is why I never want anyone to look at them. They turn four colors. Red when I’m angry, blue when I’m aroused,” he said with a wink, which made her blush. “And black when I’m unhappy. Any other time they’re just brown.”

“They’re black right now. You’re unhappy?”

“Hell yes, I’m unhappy.” He sighed and shook his head. “Very unhappy. I hate that you’re alone. I hate that no matter what I do I can’t stop thinking about you. You’re all I dream about, you’re all I want. And I really hate that I’m afraid of what’ll happen to you because I can’t stay away from you.” His black eyes pierced her soul with their intensity. Was he saying what she thought he was saying?

“So do you mean that you want to give us a shot?” Hope welled in her chest at the thought of having a chance to be with Hawk. It was everything she had dreamed of for the past two weeks and now that he was here she wasn’t giving up without a fight.

“I don’t know what I mean Liya.” His gaze danced across her lips, her eyes and her body. He was holding back, hopefully not for long.

There was a long silence that followed his last remark. His mouth said one thing but his eyes said another. “I like them,” she said, her voice quiet.

“You like what?” he said shaking his head. “You can’t just start a conversation in the middle. How do you expect me to keep up?”

“Your eyes,” she said smiling, mesmerized by his masculine beauty. “I think they’re beautiful. I think *you’re* beautiful.”

He grazed her face with his fingertips, stopping at her lips. Then he stared at her, looking as if he wanted to devour her, his eyes turning a beautiful shade of deep blue.

She reached between his thighs and rubbed his already hard erection through his pants. “So blue really does mean aroused?” she asked, a mischievous little grin gracing her lips.

He closed his eyes, swallowed and leaned his head back. “Yes.”

She touched his face with a soothing caress, loving the way his perfect skin felt against her hands.

He let out a soft moan. “If you know what’s good for you, you’ll stop.” He opened his eyes, staring her down with a heated look. “I held back the first time I touched you, but I don’t think I can this time. I haven’t fed for a week and I may not be able to control myself this time. I could bite you.”

“Do you mean to tell me that biting is somehow connected with sex?”

“Yes,” he said as he shifted trying to get comfortable.

“But I thought vampires needed human blood to survive,” she said with a frown.

“Human blood is required to fully nourish our bodies, but we can drink vampire blood as well. Think of it as more of a delicacy. We only do it when we’re mating. It takes the whole experience to another level.”

“But what about diseases?”

“We don’t catch diseases. Our blood is immune to them. A protective measure since we are required to drink blood to survive.”

“So,” she said, taking a deep breath while staring at a spot on the wall behind him, “What would happen if you bit me?”

“Well, for one thing you wouldn’t be turned into a vampire,” he said with a smirk playfully rolling his eyes.

“Would it hurt?”

“No, it won’t hurt. It may feel like a little pinch for a second after you are bitten, but that wouldn’t last for long.”

“Oh,” she said, tapping her finger on her chin. “So what about children? You said that you had a son. How do vampires have children?”

“We have sex. But we have to perform a special mating ritual first. It requires drinking a fertility potion. I know it must sound ridiculous, but that’s the way it’s done.” His blue gaze consumed with passion as he stared intently on her mouth.

Her body tingled with arousal at the thought of his hard muscled body thrusting inside of her, mating with *her*. She closed the distance between them and, feeling bold, she straddled his lap. Leaning forward she gave his neck a soft slow lick, eliciting a moan from his lips.

She turned his head to face her and gave him a gentle kiss making him squirm beneath her as she teased his mouth with her moist tongue.

He let out a tortured groan, grabbed her waist and started to grind into her body. Their breath came in rushed puffs as the fire of their arousal burned bright with heated desire.

She gave his ear a gentle lick and he sucked in large breath.

“Oh God, what are you doing to me?” he moaned.

“I need you...right now,” she replied as she caressed his mouth with her tongue until he let her in. They both sighed with pleasure as their tongues danced and mated, their heated bodies melding against one another.

“Where’s your room?” His voice was gruff, anxious. She pointed to the back of the house. He carried her down the hall and guided them down on the bed, smothering her lips with his.

He broke the kiss to take a few deep breaths then pulled her robe open. He concentrated on her breasts first, took one starved look and closed in, drawing slow circles around her left nipple. She moaned his name and rocked her hips in anticipation of what was to come, her thoughts coming in a blur.

*I never dreamed it would be like this*, she thought, as thick juices flowed from her throbbing pussy. She had never been so turned on in her entire life.

He pulled one taught nipple into his mouth, driving her mad as he licked and sucked on her sensitive flesh.

“You taste so good,” he murmured, moving to the next nipple and giving it the same treatment. “Is this what you wanted?” he asked, shifting his eyes to look at her as he continued to suck at her breasts.

“Yes,” she moaned. “Please...more.”

“More what?” he said, still teasing her with his tongue. “Tell me what you want.”

“I want you to make me come,” she said, her breaths quick and shallow as he continued to pleasure her.

“How do you want me to do it?” he murmured as he slowly moved down her body.

“I want your tongue here,” she said her middle finger sliding around her clit. She was barely able to breathe her lust was raging out of control.

His eyes burned into her, his nostrils flared and he was breathing impossibly fast. He looked wild and out of control. He was glorious. He stripped her robe completely off and began to draw slow, short circles around her throbbing clit with his moist tongue.

She cried out and spread her legs to give him better access to her pleasure zone. Strangled moans escaped her lips one after the other until they became one continuous melody.

He slipped one long finger inside of her tight, wet pussy, torturing her with pleasure as he slid in and out, caressing her silken walls. She bucked her hips, begging for more.

His tongue danced and circled around her naked flesh, her back arching with reckless abandon as he plundered her body. She screamed her release, convulsing into a chain of spasms. He continued teasing and nipping until he had coaxed the last cry of ecstasy from her lips, and her body finally relaxed.

A look of hard restraint on his face, she could tell that he had been trying to hold himself back from biting her, but he was struggling.

It was right then that she made a decision. She was nervous and excited all at the same time.

Taking a deep breath, she turned her head and exposed her neck to him. “It’s alright, go ahead.”

“I don’t have to do it. I can control myself. I don’t want to force you to do anything you may regret later.”

“I know what I’m doing. Just trust me.”

He stood up and threw off every scrap of clothing and then moved on top of her, bracing himself on his elbows.

He placed his rock hard erection at the entrance of her sex. His heated gaze bore into her, melting her. He rotated his hips, teasing her.

“Hawk,” she said with a whimper. “Hurry.”

He shivered and plunged inside of her soft flesh with one fierce thrust, biting her neck at the same time. She cried out, her mind unable to comprehend the extreme pleasure taking over her body. She never imagined that being bitten by a vampire could be so intense.

He moved inside of her with powerful strokes, sending ripples of intense, erotic bliss throughout her entire body again and again. He released her neck with a satisfied sigh and then muffled her cries with demanding, needful kisses, moaning into her mouth from the ecstasy of their lovemaking.

Her body started to shiver. She could barely contain what she was feeling. He pulled out of the kiss. His heated gaze captured hers as he drove into her again and again. Their bodies were out of control, moving of their own accord, a thick sheen of sweat covering them. They moved in perfect unison together—their bodies made for one another.

She rose to meet him with every powerful thrust. The tip of his cock repeatedly hitting her sweet spot, driving her out of her mind, she clawed at his back, their coupling ferocious, yet sensual.

Her body began convulsing, fierce orgasmic pleasure ripped through her entire being. She screamed his name as she came, covering his shaft with her sweet nectar.

He joined her with a hoarse shout as he poured his hot seed into her body, spasms of pleasure consumed him. He collapsed on top of her body with a satisfied groan.

They lie in each other's arms, their breath mingling, as they recovered from their lovemaking.

Tears began to flow from Liya's eyes and a loud hiccup escaped her lips. Hawk lifted up just enough to look into her face, smoothing back her hair. "What's wrong?" he asked, placing a soft kiss on her forehead.

"I don't know...nothing," she said, shaking her head.

"Nothing?" he asked, rolling over to his side.

She sat up wiping her eyes. “I’ve never even come close to experiencing anything like that before,” she said, still shaken by the beauty of what they had just shared. “I’m just overwhelmed I think.”

“Is that really all?” he asked sitting up.

“Well...” she began with hesitation.

“I knew there was something else. Please tell me,” he said, stroking her cheek.

“What happens next, Hawk? I mean...where do we go from here.” She paused, to look around the room. “I don’t think I could bear it if you left me again. Not after what we just shared.”

Hawk placed a light kiss on her lips. “You don’t have to worry about that anymore.”

“What do you mean?” Liya asked, gazing up to look him directly in the eyes.

Hawk smiled softly at her before leaning in to kiss her tenderly. “I can’t imagine life without you. The past two weeks have been the most miserable of my life. I don’t ever want to feel that way again.”

Relieved, but still a bit unsure, she bit at her lip. “Really?”

“Yes, really.”

“And what about when you need to feed? What about the men who tried to kill you? I think we both know they’re not going to stop looking for you. What about that?”

Liya looked up to Hawk in just enough time to see his eyes turn their deep, exotic blue.

“One step at a time, baby. Now the way I see it, when darkness falls, we come back here and make love until we can’t anymore.” He touched her wounded neck with his fingertips. “Now, that’s something even you can’t argue with.”

A slow smile graced her lips. “You know, Hawk, I think you’re right.”

## AUTHOR BIO

Born and raised in Chicago, IL, affectionately known as Chi-Town, Lauren Murphy has developed the wit and the knowledge needed in order to survive every day life. She began her writing career in high school colorfully illustrating her views and experiences on paper. Her love for writing blossomed deep inside of her. Moving to Nashville to attend college, she surprised everyone by earning a degree in mathematics. It has been often said that she is in fact two separate halves of one person. Although she can be very analytical one moment, she is a hopeless dreamer the next. Lauren has labored long and hard to become a published author, and continues to diligently work at perfecting her craft. Her greatest desire is to share her passion with others.

To learn more about LAUREN MURPHY, visit her online at <http://mslaurenmurphy.blogspot.com/>

BOOK LIST

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