

He looked at the door like he wanted to leave. "I will not go to the Fey without being at full strength. I must feed. I will be back as soon as I may."

She really wanted to ask who would have the honor of being his supper. *Don't do it.* Oh god, she tried to bite the words back. He stood, started walking towards the door, and she couldn't help herself. "Who is it?"

Lucas turned back and looked at her. "It does not even matter. I could not give you a name if I wanted to. I do not ask and I do not care. The only thing I am thinking now is that I have to keep you safe. Do not ask me to jeopardize that."

"What if I did?"

He shook his head. A warning.

"What if I did?" she repeated.

"Don't." And then he was out the door and Val was alone, in his bed, with no underwear.

Val dressed, and went downstairs onto the main street. She found a 24-hour pharmacy and bought some underwear with days of the week on them. Definitely not her first choice. She wasn't up on her laundry enough to get the days right. What if she wore Thursday on a Sunday? Everyone would think she'd been wearing the same underwear for days.

Really, Val? This is what you're thinking about? This Fey thing sounds like a big deal. A big problem and you want to rhapsodize about underwear?

She could see her hotel in the distance but the door to a bar was open, inviting. If she was going to die, shouldn't she have one last drink? No, she needed to go back to the hotel. That Rhianna song, "Only Girl in the World" came on and Val took it as an omen. How come no one treated her like she was the only girl in the world? Fuck it. She would drink to that.

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The bar was standing room only. She was leaning against the wooden bar top, watching the bartender make a gin and diet tonic. Mostly gin. Some guy would no doubt reap the reward of some drunken chick tonight.

This was her third glass of champagne. The bubbles were working and hey, if she was going to die, might as well have the good stuff, right?

She closed her eyes and felt it—a pull, as though a wave of desire was moving towards her. She opened her eyes and saw Lucas walking towards her, people instinctively moving out of his way. She smiled at him in irritation and he shook his head, as though disagreeing with her. *I haven't even said anything and he's saying no!*

She kept her back to him. Butterflies flitted around in her stomach as she waited for him to get to her. Music was blaring, the beat heavy and she let it wash through her, each pulse resonating in her core so that it was almost seductive, pleasurable, a feeling she couldn't resist. Close to desire. She remembered straddling Lucas, kissing him, grinding against him.

Hands slipped around her waist and she looked down. Lucas was a solid weight at her back, his body conforming to hers. She felt him behind her, his erection fitting snugly against her bottom. She pushed backwards, still swaying to the music, watching as his hands slid down her short skirt. The material ended at mid-thigh but his touch continued beyond that, sliding over her bare skin then back up so that the tips of his fingers raised the skirt slightly. Not high enough to flash anyone but certainly daring.

A thrill raced through her, a visceral thrill that had a weight to it. Lucas exhaled sharply against her neck and she felt his lips kiss her there.

She arched her neck, brushed her bottom against his hardness with a shifting of her hips.

“Do not taunt me. You need to get control of yourself. Of this.”

“Do I? You're 1600 years old, exercise your own restraint,” she said and twined her fingers with his, pulling them away from the hem of her skirt. She dragged his hands up her body, past her stomach, locking his arms with hers so that his forearms were pressed against her

chest, keeping his body flush against hers. Her nipples pebbled in response and he ground against her backside, his tongue darting out to taste her neck.

“I spend every moment with you controlling myself. Do you know how exciting that is? How painful and frustrating at the same time? It is torture and I want it. I cannot stand it but I need it.”

She leaned back into him, his lips and breath tickling her ear as he talked to her. Time slowed down, all sensation concentrating on her neck as his mouth hovered a moment above her skin and then lowered, his lips touching her soft skin. She breathed in, feeling his desire to drink her. It would be stupid to say it made her feel thirsty. She didn't imagine the blood, what the liquid was. It was the craving that struck her, the frantic need to feel one's dehydration being quenched.

For a second she prayed he would do it, urged him on, thought about how great it would feel. She threw the thought away from her, out into the crowd and could feel it ricocheting around the room like a stray bullet, slamming back into Lucas, forcing his desire higher so that he groaned against her.

She turned in his arms, reaching up, standing on tiptoes to reach his lips. “Make them look away.”

His arm tightened around her and she knew he didn't like that idea. His hand was close to her ass and he gripped it, pulling her closer so she could feel his erection pressed against her stomach.

“No. I'll take you home.”

“No. Here,” she said, in the way only the incredibly drunk can do. “You can make them look away, can't you?”

He began to shake his head no, but she reached between them, gripped him through his clothes, put her head on his neck and then tilted it upwards, rubbing her face along that strong column of his neck.

“Now,” she said again, “here. I’m not wearing any underwear.” She’d swear she felt his cock jerk against her stomach.

There was the faintest blurring, a chill, and then her back was against a wall. He’d moved them to the corner of the bar. It was dark and shadowed. No one was looking. Her heart pounded, her sex clenched, ready and expectant. She wanted something outrageous. Something public. Even if it wasn’t.

He kissed her collarbone, his hands on her breasts, his thumbs rubbing across her nipples. His leg slid between hers, his thigh shoved tight against her mound, sending waves of pleasure cascading through her body as he pressed against her clitoris. His hand landed on her ass with a gentle smack, sliding over the material of her skirt, hoisting her against him as he cupped her between her cheeks, pulling her high onto his thigh, forcing her to ride his leg as he pleased her.

She pulled him closer, tried to press back, put one hand between their bodies and with shaking hands managed to get his pants undone, part the fabric. She felt him still for a moment, raise his head and look her in the eyes, a look of possession and passion and want. She gripped his cock, and he thrust forward into her closed fist with a groan. Her thumb swiped over the crown, finding him slick with desire. Her other hand reached down, surrounded his heavy testicles as she rubbed the pre-come over his sensitive head.

His lips were parted. He swallowed, trembled, closed his eyes as he thrust against her again. He rocked her against his leg, faster, tighter, pressing deeper until she cried out his name. And then he shifted, withdrawing from her grip.

“Up,” he ordered and lifted her, his hands coming under her thighs, fingers sliding through her folds. She was hot, knew how wet she was. He bit his lip as he stroked her damp folds. One hand left her, his hips already moving, his breath heavy and she felt him at her

entrance. Her back hit the wall, he slid her down slightly and then he was inside her, buried to the hilt.

The position was awkward, no heavy thrusts, no fierce pounding, just slow and easy, the movements contrasted with their mouths, kissing furiously as he slid his tongue along hers, tasting her, craving her.

She bit him, hard. He didn't even flinch, just groaned desperately as his grip on her legs shifted, tightening as he urged her thighs wider, wanting her to take him deeper. He ground into her and she tasted the metallic copper of his blood.

It hit her, made her lightheaded, made her come on a scream but still he worked, pounding away inside of her as he chased his own release.

"Bite me," she said, "please."

He made a noise, halfway between a cry and a plea, his head dropping down to the junction of her neck. She felt him breathing, huge draughts of air that he inhaled as he thrust inside of her.

This time he'll do it, she thought and her body contracted, the idea itself an aphrodisiac.

He licked her pulse, just a swipe of his tongue. Her hands went under his shirt, touched his chest, played with his nipples and she felt his nose pressing hard into her neck, his pace faltering a little.

"Please," she begged and squeezed him, using her muscles on him, thighs, vagina, fingers digging into his skin, willing him to do it.

He put her down. One second he was in her and then he wasn't. She felt empty, gaping, needing him back inside of her. She saw his cock, huge, glistening and unsatisfied as he stood two feet away from her, panting like a stallion after a mare. He grabbed her arm, turned her into the wall, lifting her skirt back up, pulling her hips out and then he was back inside of her, taking her from behind. Sheathing himself inside of her in one smooth thrust.

She felt his hand on her clitoris, working her towards another orgasm while his other hand twined into her hair, pulled her neck to the side so it was exposed, pulled taut, perfect to bite. Her whole body went limp and she swore, felt him pounding inside of her, picking up speed, and had no will to protest.

He held her still, conquered her and it was heaven. She felt his lips on her neck and began to beg, trying to thrust her hips back, have him fuck her harder, faster.

“No,” he said in a voice just above a whisper, a voice filled with anger and despair. “Like this, just like this.” He growled and his lips touched her neck lightly, so lightly she wasn’t sure he was there. But his nose pressed hard to the side of her jaw and she could feel the pants, the greedy gulps of air.

Then his lips pressed down, open on her neck, just enough space so he could speak, whether to convince her or him, she didn’t know. Over and over again he told her he wouldn’t do it, a promise, a curse, a denial to the pounding of his thrusts. “Just like this, I won’t do it. I swear I won’t. I swear. I sw—”

She felt his body go rigid, felt him come, his hand contracting on the front of her body, pressing hard, throwing her over the brink into another orgasm so they came together. She knew when he finished, felt his weight briefly on her back, her cheek pressed to the wall as he hugged her tight to him. And then he pulled out of her, lowered her skirt, brushed it to make sure it lay straight and pulled her back around to face him.

She watched him tuck himself away, watched his fingers, still glistening in the light as he buttoned his jeans and then he gave her a dark look, a look that promised a conversation, possibly a lecture. She found her gaze lingering on his lips and then wandering down her body to his cock, wondering if she could get out of having a conversation if she—

“No,” he said with finality and he gripped her hand in hers, taking them from the bar and back to his room. *Buzz kill.*

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“Take a shower and get dressed. I have things for you to wear in the closet.”

She pursed her lips as she walked into his huge bathroom, looking at the marble walls, marble floors, all of it a nice sand like color. “You’re sharing your closet with me?”

He was opening a linen cupboard built into the wall and pulled out a gigantic and fluffy-looking towel. “Yes, you may even leave some things here. Do you want a drawer or an entire wardrobe?”

She crossed her arms. “Sorry. I don’t know if it’s because you’re not looking at me or what, but how serious are you? You would really let me have...space in your home?” *Maybe I am good in bed.*

He set the towels on the edge of the tub, then reached in to the shower, a huge open space with a glass enclosure and turned on the water before answering. He turned around and looked at her. “Space is a big deal. The symbolism being that if I am willing to let you into my home I may let you into”—would he say ‘my heart’, she wondered—“my life. You are in my life. I want you with me and I want you comfortable. You may have a closet. You may have a room or a wing. Whatever you desire. Now, take a shower. We leave in thirty minutes.” And then he left the room, shutting the door so she was alone.

Val stripped and went under the hot water. She loved this shower. She’d been in this shower less than two hours ago. But all the towels she’d used were gone, like the maid was loitering and the moment they stepped out would frantically clean. Now *that* was good service.

Shoot, that alone made her happy to stay. This was it; she was now firmly sleeping with Lucas. In his bed and, truthfully, the sex was so good she wasn’t sure when she’d leave it.

What else was there to do, anyway? She could go back to school she supposed. Geez, should she get a job? Her father was dead. She and Jack had some serious issues they might never work through. She was out of the vampire hunting business for real. So would she just hang around and be Lucas’ whore?

Hang around, screw him and hope she could be happy even if he didn't love her. *Jesus. Jesus, she was going to have to do something. Why don't you focus on the here and now, you moron?* Okay, what was the here and now? Someone from the Fey had a hold on her. And it could be a big deal. Not that she saw how. In her dream, she'd felt peaceful. There was nothing evil there. And Rachel was going to break the hold, right? So what was the problem? She got out of the shower and walked out to his bedroom, finding Lucas standing over a pile of clothes, a cup of coffee in his hand.

"You like coffee?" she asked, the idea making her happy somehow. It was relatable. Would he blow on the surface to cool it down or did he drink it hot because he didn't have to worry about burning himself? Did he take cream and sugar?

"No. It is for you." He held it out to her. "I do not want you going to the Fey inebriated."

"I'm not inebriated. I could say that word ten times fast if I had to."

"Fine .Topsy. Here." He thrust it at her and she took the mug then set it down on the nightstand in order to look at the clothes on the bed.

"Drink it," he said to her arrogantly, slight surprise in his voice, as if he'd expected her to guzzle it the moment he handed it to her.

"I want to get dressed first."

"And I want you sober." His words were chill and flat. It was clear he was irritated. "I understand that you have no concept of the Fey, no reason to fear them. Their magic can be drugging, their victims often die or are abducted with a smile upon their faces, but this is a concern. The sooner we get there, break the hold upon you, the better."

"Are you sure you don't want them to have a hold upon me? Don't you want to find them?"

He looked at her and it made her feel warm, a flush spreading over her body from the heat and weight of his gaze. "Not as much as I want you safe."

She felt her heart melt, had that slightly choked feeling that meant she was feeling sentimental and might cry. Why? Because she could interpret that as a sign that he cared? Because he could say the right things but feel nothing? She knew he was emotionally blank. Felt it from him.

He'd be just as irritated if one of his people were taken by the Fey, she thought. Val turned her attention to the clothes on the bed and got dressed. She'd worry about it later. After the Fey.