



Lucy

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Category: N/A

Description: A MENAGE VAMPIRE ROMANCE

Raised in the caves, Lucy was taken as a baby and hidden away from those that massacred her family.

But due to a spell that went wrong, she learns that she not only has two sisters, but she is a twin.

Now Lucy has to decide if she wants to fight in a war that was not of her choosing.

Not only that, but she has growing feelings for Henry. Which makes life terribly uncomfortable when she's already in love with Marcus, Henry's brother.

This is the third installment of the Virgin Vampire series. Each story features a different sister's journey on her way to love.

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CHAPTER 1

Lucy

“Lucinda! Shit! You killed them?”

I rolled my eyes at Helvetica, Vetí for short, and wondered for the hundredth time why I let her constantly criticize me. She could be such an old hag. Okay, she’s not that old, maybe three or four hundred years. But to my nineteen years on the planet that could have been several lifetimes, and if we were human, it would have been.

“I staked them,” I protested, motioning to the bloody stakes in my hand. “It was painless.”

One of the girls that had popped into our home coughed. “I wouldn’t say that.”

“And then you brought them back to life!” She threw her hands in the air in disgust.

“Um, so are we like zombies now?” the other girl asked.

I looked over at my prisoners. Two girls about my age were standing in the entryway to our home looking shell shocked.

I smirked. “You aren’t a zombie—not really.”

Vetí stormed over to me and grabbed my arm. “Don’t talk to them! And technically they are zombies—a corpse revived by witchcraft. But that’s the least of our worries.

What else did you do to them?”

“Nothing! I swear it!” I protested.

Veti’s eyes narrowed. “Do you want to explain to me why this one has your face?”

The girl in question did indeed have my face. It was eerie staring into someone else’s eyes when they so clearly mimicked my own. The only difference was our hair color. Where she was dark, I was light.

“This is so weird, it’s like seeing two Viv’s. By the way, my name is Joanie, and this is my sister, Vivian.” The other girl looked like the first, long dark hair and deep brown eyes. But she was curvier in shape and had a softer chin.

“Who are you?” Vetì barked at the girls.

“We just told you. I am Vivian,” the one who looked like me answered. “And this is my sister, Joanie. Might I ask where we are and why you killed us?”

Joanie reached forward as if to touch the stake in my hand. It was still dripping with their blood. “Everyone calls her Viv. However, that’s not the important part. How in the bloody hell did you manage to bring us back to life?”

I shrugged. “Magic? Look, you might as well come in out of the foyer. It’s a bit—sticky, right now.”

I motioned for them to enter our humble home. Vetì started squawking something or other but I ignored her. I had already killed them, so technically, I hadn’t broken any of Marcus’s rules. He never forbade me from bringing them back to life again—loopholes are my friend.

“My name is Lucinda, and this is Helvetica. We don’t get a lot of guests here in the Laos Caves.”

That was the understatement of the century. I can count on one hand the number of people that have visited, and only two of them were still breathing. They happened to be the girls that looked like passing out at any moment—resurrection was hard on a person.

Or so I am told.

“Veti, they need some blood. How about you get them some bagged, and we can figure out where they came from.”

She looked like she wanted to protest, but in the end, did as I asked. In a few moments she brought back two metal containers.

“Have you drunk from this device before?” I asked.

Joanie and Viv shook their heads.

“You have to remove the lid to break the seal. Then there are two holes for your fangs, and I sure you can figure it out from there. I am warning you though, it’s not what you are used to. We don’t have access to human blood here and survive on animals in the wild.”

Viv blinked. “How is that possible? I thought all vampires needed human blood to survive.”

Veti handed me the steel containers. She obviously wasn’t going to get that close to our new companions.

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“Humans and animals are not that far apart. Most of the animals in the wild you can drink from. Here, I have removed the lids, drink and then we will talk.”

It was odd watching as the color began inching its way back into their complexions. The looks of shock were still there, but at least they didn't appear to be on death's door—again.

“How did you find us?”

I think that Vetí meant it as a question, but it sounded more like a threat.

The girls blinked simultaneously.

But it was Viv who answered, “We found a spell book and were trying to locate Joanie's adoptive parents. Something must have gone wrong because we ended up here. Where are we again?”

“Vietnam,” Vetí snapped. “We obviously don't have any parents here. So, go back from wherever you came. We don't need any more witches!”

I cast her a scowl. “That was mean, Vetí.”

She shrugged her shoulder as if to tell me that she didn't care in the slightest bit how mean it was. But I could tell by the twitching of her fingers that she was sorry. Vetí and I had been a team for as long as I could remember. She helped raise me here in these caves.

We lived simply but had enough from the Master to survive. Marcus is the master. I have loved him for as long as I can remember. He protected us, brought us whatever we needed and most of what I wanted as well. I adore his laugh, his bad jokes, and even his stern rebukes. Maybe, I especially like those. I couldn't help the little sigh that escaped. He's rather wonderful, my Master.

Veti never really believed me, that I was in love, that is. I would always have to say, "Stop with the face."

She would put her hand on her hip and pretend to look at her nails. "I don't have a clue as to what you are talking about."

I would retort, "I am a witch, remember? I know that you are thinking this is all kid's stuff, and that I have Stockholm syndrome. Well, you are wrong."

She was wrong, I was positive that I knew what it meant to be in love. Despite the fact that I have been raised with only two other human beings.

This would invariably lead into me saying, "Now you really have the face, and the raised brow, yeah—it's snarky."

I wish I could say that we hadn't been over this a hundred times or more. But that would be lying, and I have given up lying, at least I am thinking about it.

Marcus came infrequently. We sometimes went months without a visit. I missed him when he was away, which always infuriated Vetí.

She said we should be grateful, but impartial.

To hell with impartial, I loved him.

In a fit of anger one day, Vetí spilled that she sometimes hated him. She blamed Marcus for keeping us as prisoners in these caves.

This cave, my life, was all I knew. How could she not understand that he was simply trying to save my life?

I looked forward to each and every time he came. Butterflies would erupt in my stomach and I found myself stumbling over my words, trying to tell him about anything and everything.

“You are wrong, you know.”

I opened my mouth to argue, and then realized that it had been Joanie who was speaking, not the Vetí from my thoughts.

“We aren’t really witches,” she said frowning. “Or we could be, honestly I am not sure. We have a little magic, but nothing compared to what you just did.”

Viv, the one who shared my face, was staring at me without paying any sort of attention to Joanie.

“What?” I said, looking from Viv to Vetí and then back again.

“It’s like looking in a mirror,” Viv said softly. “If you had dark hair, we would be identical.”

“Twins,” Joanie said softly, taking Viv’s hand.

I shook my head. “No, that can’t be right. The Master never said anything about me having a sister, much less a twin. In all the years he has kept me hidden away, I am sure it would have come up.”

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Veti harrumphed in that way that always let me know she thought I was wrong. She made the sound more often than I would have liked.

Viv and Joanie looked at each other ominously before Viv asked, “Master? Who is that?”

I brightened, a bright smile sneaking across my face. I could speak about my favorite subject for days. “The Master is the most wonderful person imaginable. He brings us fun things to see, clothes, games, anything a girl could wish for.”

“Except freedom,” Vetì said dryly.

I scoffed at her rotten attitude. “He can’t do that, Vetì. He has told us a million times it’s too dangerous for me. He is keeping us safe.”

“You only think that because this is all you know, Lucy.”

I hated when she said that. It made me feel naive and childish. Yes, this was all I knew, but that didn’t mean I was stupid.

“I am dangerous,” I said in a low voice. “The Master keeps us here to protect me from everyone else, and the outside world from me.”

Viv and Joanie looked more confused than ever.

“Why?” Joanie asked.

They weren't very bright. "Did you not see what I did just now? I raised you both from the dead. You don't think that might look odd to everyone else on the planet?"

Fear flashed across Joanie's face as she nodded and shrank into Viv a little, as if I might do something crazy and harm her.

I couldn't help the impatient sigh that escaped my lips. "Look, that is the least of my powers. I can do big, scary, crazy things."

Veti rolled her eyes. "A bit over the top, don't you think?"

I ignored her. "You have no idea what I can capable of."

Joanie clutched Viv. "What have we done? She is a monster!"

That stung a little. However, as I looked at their bloody torsos, thanks to me, that had only just begun to heal, I figured it might have been deserved.

CHAPTER 2

Lucy

“No, I am not leaving here. I don’t care what you say!”

I plugged my ears like a four-year-old and started humming—loudly. Viv and Joanie had just spent the last twenty minutes telling me how wrong I was to hide away.

“Lucy,” Joanie’s tone was placating, and loud. I suppose so that I could hear it over my humming. “You can’t live the rest of your life in a cave. There is an entire world out there to explore.”

I unplugged my ears for the briefest of moments. “There is an entire world to explore in these caves. Did you know there is an entire jungle down here? And that it has its own river system? I could explore for eons and never get bored.”

Viv’s eyes narrowed. “What about people?”

“People are bad,” I parroted what I had always been taught. “We kill first, ask questions later, right Vet?”

Helvetica actually lived on the outside before the Master brought her here to take care of me. I am a little fuzzy on the details, but I knew she had another life before me. I just didn’t like to think about it.

Veti was completely on board with leaving the caves. In fact, she had already begun

packing. As I watched Vetí rushing around, her eyes alight with happiness and excitement, a part of me felt terribly selfish.

What right did I have to keep Vetí with me?

I wasn't a child anymore, and I had already gone through the change.

"What's that, Lucy?" she asked distractedly.

I opened my mouth and then closed it again. If she wanted to leave, I wasn't going to make her stay.

I pasted on a smile that must have looked as horrible as I felt, because Vetí stopped rushing about and came over to me. She took my hands in hers and I felt immediate comfort. Although in appearance, Vetí didn't look much older than I was, in reality she was centuries older.

"I won't leave you here, Lucy. If you choose not to go, I will stay with you. I promised Marcus."

"Who is Marcus?" Joanie asked.

"Master," I said with a sad smile. "I can't leave without telling him where I am going."

"Is there no way to contact him?" Viv looked around the cave with its magical torches and furnishings that, for the most part, I had conjured up. "No, I don't suppose you have internet down here?"

"Inter-what?" I asked.

Joanie and Viv's jaw dropped open simultaneously.

I laughed, "You can certainly see that you are sisters when you both look at me that way."

Viv snapped her mouth closed. "I am the queen of the vampires."

This only made me laugh harder; even Joanie had a suspicious cough.

Viv's cheeks were red as she commanded, "I demand that you come with us."

I shrugged. "Well, according to you, I am your sister, and from what I understand of the family dynamics, sisters rarely agree. So, I will respectfully decline your order. Goodness, I am really good at this sister-business."

Joanie's brow arched. "Looks like you've cornered the market on snarky."

"Is she always this stubborn?" Viv asked Vetì.

Veti sighed. "This is Lucy in a good mood; don't catch her in one of her rages. After all of the damage that she does we end up having to move to a different section of the cave. There is a wicked temper on the girl, no doubt about it."

I snorted. "That was a long time ago."

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“Last month?” Vetí tipped her head to the side in question.

“Six weeks at the least!” I countered and then mumbled something about her having way too good of a memory.

Vetí’s lips twitched. “Lucy isn’t all bad, just young and impetuous.”

I was bloody well just as old as these girls and Vetí knew it. She was trying to get me to act out. I wondered what point she hoped to make by showcasing all of my faults.

“What if there was an emergency?” Viv asked as she started pacing back and forth.

I was caught up again by our similarities. It was weird to watch my clone parade about in front of me. However, I was starting to see vast differences between Viv and me in personality. It wasn’t just the hair color. She was super uptight about everything.

Sure, I supposed that being Queen of the Vampires would be difficult. I knew what the challenges of leadership were. I wasn’t as ignorant as Vetí would have them believe. I had studied about all kinds of things. I had been kidding before about not knowing what the internet was.

Even if we couldn’t get a signal, I was a powerful witch. I had no trouble getting what I needed.

I also could ask Marcus.

Systems were in place is there was a major emergency, but I wasn't supposed to do that unless things were dire—life and death.

“We have ways of getting what we need, even in an emergency,” I said stiffly.

“You are coming with us whether you like it or not.” Viv shook her head angrily. “You obviously don't know what you are saying.”

Well, she obviously thought I was a push over. Two could play at that game.

I shrugged innocently. “I suppose that I will do what you want.”

She stopped mid step. “And further, err—really?”

It was time to mess with her.

“Sure.” I blinked my big doe eyes at her. “I know that you want what is best for me.”

Viv nodded, the relief was clear as she added, “I do, of course I do.”

“That you would never try and hurt me,” I continued.

Viv shook her head. “Never!”

I smiled, a great beaming smile. “I knew you wouldn't; and seeing as how leaving would just about kill me, I know you would never ask it of me.”

She looked confused for a second as she replied, “Of course not.”

“Thanks for deciding to let me stay.” But instead of just walking away with the victory, I had to add in, “It's great that you will be staying as well. We will have the

best time.”

Her eyes started to look glazed—perfect.

Veti arched a brow. She was fully aware of my antics and I knew she would be calling me on the carpet soon. But I wasn’t through having fun yet.

“We can live here and be safe, just like you promised,” I said in a soothing tone.

Viv nodded. “Just like I promised.”

Joanie looked a little dazed as well, but her eyes narrowed.

“Why do I smell cotton candy?”

I couldn’t stifle the laugh that escaped my lips. The compelling spell dissipated, and Viv looked furious.

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“It’s against the law to compel someone!” Her words dripping with outrage.

I mimicked her pose and answered sassily, “Are you going to lock me up?” My eyes danced. “Maybe you should leave me in a cave or something. Whatever will I do with myself? On the other hand, maybe you are right. Caves really are nice places-”

“You are doing it again!” Viv screeched.

Joanie’s lip twitched. I could tell that she caught the humor in it, but then she wasn’t the one getting the full dose of the compelling spell either.

“Lucy,” Vet’s voice cut across the room from where she was trying to shove too many books into a small bag. “Cut it out!”

I waved a hand to enlarge her bag and turned back to Viv and Joanie.

“I am not sorry,” I said firmly.

This time Joanie did laugh. “She reminds me a lot of you, Viv.”

Vivian didn’t look like that had been much of a compliment.

“Gee, thanks, Joanie,” she muttered under her breath. “Listen, you are going to come with us, or I will bring reinforcements to yank you out of here.”

I seriously doubted she and Joanie had the magical ability to travel with more than just themselves, seeing as how they had used a simple scrying spell. Neither one had

a grasp on the magic. I felt another kernel of guilt. I could teach them about their magic, how to harness it and how to use it properly. I really was enjoying having them here and a part of me was starting to wonder if maybe they really were my sisters.

But then there was the master. I had been in love with him for as long as I could remember. He was kind to me, always treated me with the utmost respect. He had saved me when I was a baby from the Alliance and brought me here. I couldn't imagine leaving without telling him.

Veti sighed, "We are going with them, Lucy. It's time."

I looked at the three women who were trying to browbeat me into something I didn't want to do. The master said not to contact him unless it was dire.

I figured we had reached dire status.

"Okay," I said slowly. "Just give me five minutes."

I would just contact him and leave a little note. What's the harm in that?

CHAPTER 3

Lucy

I let Viv and Joanie stumble about, trying to remember the spell that they had used to end up in the cave. Was that a little mean? Of course it was, but I didn't care. They were making me leave and that was more than a little mean.

Veti, however, wasn't amused.

"Lucy, stop being a bitch and do the damn spell."

Viv and Joanie turned to me wide-eyed.

"You have had the ability to leave all this time?" Joanie's tone was incredulous.

I shrugged. "Relocation spells aren't difficult."

It would seem that I had stunned them yet again.

"Did you think I was a prisoner here?" It dawned on me that it might look that way.

"Why else would you stay?" Viv's lips were tight. "This doesn't make any sense. Don't you want to find out who you are and where your real family is?"

"Veti is my family, and the master."

They stared at me as if I had just walked out of a cult. Even Vetilooked pained and I wondered, not for the first time since our visitors had arrived, if I had been missing something and not even knowing it.

“It doesn’t matter,” I said, trying to change the heavy atmosphere. “Just tell me where you want us to go.”

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THREE OF THE HOTTESTbrothers I had ever seen came rushing toward Joanie. Followed by two guys, that easily could have been underwear models, who swept Viv up in their arms. Each of the men kissed the girls as if their lives depended on it.

I muttered to Vet, “I am starting to see the appeal of this outside world. Do we all get a set of those?”

Vetiblushed and told me to hush.

It was then that Viv pulled back and introduced me to a dark-haired man named Brendan and the man with streaky blonde hair named Ace.

“These are my mates,” Viv explained to me.

It seemed that I was just as fascinated with them as they were with me.

“She looks just like you,” Ace’s deep rumbly voice had my stomach in knots. Very nicely done, Viv. I could see why Viv was so anxious to get back to her mates.

Joanie introduced me to Abel, Alden, and Adrian. The men had dark blonde hair and easy smiles. Her mates were obviously infatuated with her. Each one of them had a hand on her as if she might disappear if they didn’t hold on tight.

We had appeared in the gardens of the Royal Court. I felt terribly exposed in the open air and didn't like the feeling. It didn't help that a massive castle stood upon the highest hill, looming over us like a great hawk stalking its prey. Or maybe that hunted feeling came from the hordes of vampires flocking out of the palace and into the gardens—directly toward us.

These highly influential vampires didn't look pleased to see me either. There were whispers of witchcraft, and the mood of the crowd went from inquisitive to intense in about three seconds.

I needed to a moment to breathe.

With a few soft words, I cast a spell over the group, bringing everyone to a screeching halt. The simple freezing spell would only affect this area, and nobody else would be the wiser. After all, time would just alter itself to fit back into the constraints that mother nature deemed necessary—easy peasy.

I looked at all of the strangers around me, frozen like statues. Even Vetisat frozen at my side. I could see her staring off and when I followed her gaze, I noticed a man staring back at her with a shocked expression. In his eyes, there was a flicker of recognition.

I felt another surge of guilt. Vetihad a life before she came to care for me that she had freely given up. I suppose that I had always felt she was mine and no one else laid claim to her. If anyone deserved to find happiness it was her.

“Who are you?” A high-pitched voice demanded.

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The question startled me, and I turned to face two young girls.

“Lucy, my name is Lucy.” I stammered a little, being thrown off guard by their frowns. Their gazes didn’t leave my face. It wasn’t lost on me that they didn’t freeze with everyone else. “Who are you?” I returned, crossing my arms and trying to look down my nose haughtily.

I eyed the girls. One was dark, and the other was fair-haired, just like Viv and me. But that is where the similarities ended; they didn’t share identical faces. In fact, despite the fact that they were girls of a similar age, I didn’t think they were related in any way.

“I am Evangelina,” the blond girl explained. Then she pointed to the other girl. “This is Angelica. You are a witch, aren’t you? I can see it in your aura.”

I raised a brow. “Only a witch can see auras.”

Angelica clutched the other girl’s arm; she clearly wasn’t the muscle of the outfit.

“It’s okay,” Evangelina said to her friend but she continued to stare daggers at me. “Her colors are blues and purples. Some are dark, but there isn’t any black or brown.”

Angelica visibly relaxed. Shyly she spoke to Evangelina, “I thought we weren’t supposed to tell anyone about your magic.”

I opened my mouth to speak, but Evangelina answered instead. “She can sense my power, just like I can sense hers. It was only a matter of time before she found me.”

The child was right.

“Conner told me that there was another like me,” Evangelina continued. “He said one day they would find you, and together, we would change the face of the world.”

I felt as if ice had been poured down my back. That smacked of a prophesy—damn it.

“Who is Conner?” I demanded.

Evangelina frowned. “My brother. He’s dead. Nobody here wants us to know, but we aren’t stupid. I am not sorry; he wasn’t a good person. His aura was dark browns streaked with black.”

I blew out a breath. “Wow, that is not good at all. How did you end up here?”

Time snapped back into the present and everyone started moving again. I had forgotten the spell I had cast earlier. The noise was almost defining. Evangelina snatched my hand and pulled. She clearly wanted me to follow her. On impulse I decided that I needed more answers from the child and followed her.

Thankfully, with all of the confusion, nobody paid us any attention.

We slipped into a side door and down a set of steps and then another. Deep in the heart of the castle I started to feel my lungs open up. I didn’t realize how much I needed the feeling of the caves.

Evangelina led us to a large wooden door and knocked.

“Go away, girl.” The surly voice did something to my insides. I wasn’t familiar with the melty feeling that came over me.

“Open up, Henry!” she insisted.

I heard the scraping of a chair against the rock floors and then the trudging of boots across the flagstone. This wasn't a small individual. I could feel the immense power radiating from the room. Later, I would ponder why I wasn't frightened by it.

But I wasn't scared, only inquisitive.

“Henry,” Evangelina barked again just as the door was whipped open.

It was a giant of a man. He was bare-chested and had low slung sweats on his hips that did little to conceal the obvious blessings he had been born with. His abs looked to be cut from the same stone we were standing on. And the deep vee of his hips had my mouth watering.

My eyes kept going back to the bulge that had a hard time hiding behind the thin material. Holy shit, this man was hung.

He cleared his throat and my eyes snapped to his impatient ones.

It was then that I felt a zap of energy, which felt closer to a lightning bolt, surge through my body.

“Fuck,” he said in a low growl. “You all had better come in.”

CHAPTER 4

Marcus

Don't look at her tits and just respond to the summons. I could do this. The moment that I got word from Lucy that she needed me. I wanted to come crashing in like a knight in shining armor. I was one once, a long time ago, so I know how a bloody hero is supposed to act.

But these days, I am not sure if I am the hero or the bad guy. My brother, Henry and I, were palace guards for the Vasile family. We were present during the massacre and were only able to save one child—a twin.

I enlisted my older sister, Helvetica, to help protect the baby, and I swore her to secrecy. Not only would she have to give up everything and go into hiding, but I didn't even want the child to know of our connection. The less the girl knew the better.

Helvetica reported to me that the child cried nonstop for days for her sister. The girls were toddlers and old enough to know that something was dreadfully wrong. I cursed and promised Vetí that she would soon forget about her past, and sadly that did come to fruition.

As the years rolled forward my affection for the child grew. She was always so engaging and excited when I came to visit. For a long while I was seen as a favored uncle. That is, until she started to go through the transition.

Her body had developed her into a stunning woman. And she was emitting hormones that would make a dead man sit up and take notice. I could smell her delicious scent from miles away. An untouched virgin vampire is something to be reckoned with.

I had to make my visits more infrequent. I suspected that Vetí knew I was feeling uneasy about my attraction to the child. Thankfully she never said anything. It's not a conversation that I relish having with my sister.

My brother, Henry, remained at the palace as the captain of the guards. We needed someone with inside information that could help us keep Lucy safe. When he first alerted me that Vivian had come to the royal court, I waited for the fireworks to begin.

Viv and Lucy's mother, the king's second wife, was a witch.

Witches were long thought dead in the area, but my family knew better. There is a coven that is hidden away so carefully that it is nearly impossible to find them. The young queen had foolishly fallen in love with the king and left their sanctity.

I considered taking the child to the coven for all of two seconds and then dismissed the idea. The witches hated the vampires almost as much as the vampires hated them. It was said that the young queen was officially banished when she married the king. She gave him the twins, but then went into a decline when the king was unfaithful to her.

Witches mate for life, usually more than one partner. Vampires, on the other hand, tended to have roving dicks. When it was said that another daughter was born, on the wrong side of the blanket, not six months after the twins, we weren't surprised. It was said that in grief, the queen threw herself from the highest tower.

I somehow doubted that she could have done such a thing; even in her sadness, this

was completely out of character. It was more likely that she would magic his balls to hell.

The king, unphased by his wife's death, married a girl from the Draven line. He took the bastard daughter in, with no one the wiser as to who her mother may have been. She was a king's daughter and therefore must be raised with the rest of the brood.

When the attack occurred, we feared that all of the children were lost. However, there were rumors, little glimmers of hope, that perhaps one or two survived. I knew that one had lived. By the gods, I would have done anything to save them all. But it was only Lucy that made it out of the fateful night.

Then, years later, Henry wrote and told me that Vivian appeared at court. Not to be outdone, Joanie was discovered shortly after.

I had considered bringing Lucy to court then. After all, with two of the Vasiles back in power, surely this was the time for her return. But something made me hold back.

I was glad I had when the next child was found. A girl of only seven years old, with DNA matching that of the princess and the Queen. The timelines didn't add up, nothing added up.

This had to be witchcraft. Was it the coven? Or a new evil force to be dealt with? I couldn't let Lucy loose on what looked to be a ticking time-bomb. So, I waited.

You can imagine my fear when I received the urgent summons from Lucy that she must see me immediately. I raced to the caves as quickly as my jet would allow, and then went through the wards and spells that Lucy had concocted to keep them safe.

"Lucy!" I bellowed upon entering the cavern. I could feel the emptiness and knew they were gone but my mind didn't want to believe it. "Veti, Lucy!"

I went room to room looking to see if I could find them. Once in Lucy's room, I caught a blue slip of paper inside the latest book I had sent her.

Dearest Master,

It is time that I face the world. Do not worry. I have Vetu by my side, and a girl that looks identical to me. She and her sister have come to take me to the Vampire Royal Courts. I know what you are thinking, and you are right. This is dangerous and perhaps foolish.

However, Master, I can't continue to live in the caves forever. I know my powers are staggering, you have mentioned it several times. I also know about the bigotry toward the witches. I won't let you down, Master. I will hide that part of myself and you will see that this is a good thing.

I hate to leave without saying goodbye. So, I will only say that I miss you and hope that I will see you soon.

Best,

Lucy

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Fear and dread coiled in my stomach. How could she be going there? That was directly into the line of fire. I didn't spend the last eighteen years protecting her only to see Lucy face the same fate as her mother.

In a blur of light, I raced out of the caves and to where the jet was waiting. I demanded that we fly for Transylvania immediately.

My servants were too well bred to gawk at the pronouncement, but I knew they were shocked. It had been a long time since we had graced their royal door. I was tapping on the arm rest when Roger approached me with a bag of blood.

"You are looking a bit pale, milord," he offered the bag.

"I was never a Lord and you know it," I said, right before sinking my teeth into the bag and drinking the delicious life-saving blood.

Roger's eyes gleamed. "No, milord, however I like the way it sounds better than Sir Knight."

I almost smiled. The man had been older when he was turned and was rocking some gray hair throughout his dark locks. I knew that the ladies fancied him, called him a Silver Fox. Even Lucy seemed to adore my servant, but then, she loved everything that had to do with me.

A part of my heart leapt at the notion. But another graver chunk knew that it was only because I had been her entire world. She would now learn that I was just a blip on the horizon when compared to everyone she will now come in contact with.

If I was being truly honest, I would admit that I was terrified she would decide she didn't need me anymore.

I shook my head, banishing the thoughts from my mind. I wasn't about to let things get out of hand. I would get there and protect her. In the meantime, I just had to hope that Henry was on the job. My older brother was surly, huge, and often mistaken for a pit-bull on steroids. If anyone could keep Lucy safe, it was Henry.

I just hoped that he didn't scare the shit out of her. The man had muscles upon muscles and scars on a great deal of his body. Vampires heal fast, but all of the battles that Henry had been in certainly had left their mark.

Hours later, when the jet touched down, I had barely allowed them to depressurize the cabin and open the doors before I raced out into the night, desperate to find her.

CHAPTER 5

Lucy

“Please tell me you are Queen Vivian with a new hairstyle.”

The giant of a man scowled down at me with a tight jaw and clenched fists.

I frowned, uncertain of why he was so angry. It wasn't like I had done anything to him, not yet anyway.

“I am not Queen Vivian,” I said with a smile that showed him I wasn't afraid of him. When you have the ability to raise people from the dead, teleport, and even fly should you so wish it—big brawny men were the least of my worries.

I turned on my heel to the girls. “Obviously, He-Man here isn't happy about our visit. Let's go.”

Evangelina shook her head. “No.”

She was ballsy for a kid, I had to give her credit for that.

“Lucinda, why are you here?” Henry growled at me. I even saw the slightest bit of fang, which to my surprise, wasn't unattractive on the man. He had taken a step back from me, almost as if he needed the distance to clear his head.

“I am here because Viv and Joanie deemed it so. And because it wasn't fair that I

keep Vetí locked up in the caves any longer. I am a grown woman!”

I fought not stamping a foot for emphasis, knowing full well that I would look just like a child had I done so.

“I can smell how grown up you are, there is no need to point it out.” His tone was caustic and I immediately worried that I stank something fierce. It wasn’t like I could do a pit check when he was glaring at me.

“Do I stink?” I hissed at the girls.

Angelica shook her head. “No, you smell fine to me.”

Evangelina shrugged, “I don’t smell anything.”

I could literally hear Henry grinding his teeth, and it brought my gaze back to his.

“Yes?” I stood my ground. Even if I did smell bad to him, I still wouldn’t back down. I didn’t ask to be here, and the girls brought me here. So, he could suck it if he thought I would just cower underneath his male dominance.

Master never treated me this way.

A longing, thick and strong, washed over me as I thought of my Master and how much I missed him. Suddenly, I felt very tired.

“Fuck,” Henry uttered again, turning and stomping over to a refrigerator. He yanked out a bag of blood and stormed back, shoving it into my arms. “You need to feed. Damnit woman, you can barely stand.”

I wanted to retort that I was fine, thank you very much. But he was right, my body

was getting weak and I needed blood. I didn't hesitate to sink my teeth into the plastic bag. But the taste that exploded in my mouth was nothing like I had ever tasted before.

Rich and thick, the coppery substance coated my mouth and sent every nerve ending into high alert. I felt my pulse quicken. My eyes dilated, and I had the strangest feeling in my lady parts. My nipples tightened until they were tight points, and they felt heavy and almost needy.

From a clinical perspective, I knew that it wasn't natural to have been launched into this state of arousal so quickly. In the next instant, I knew what I was drinking. This wasn't the blood of an animal, this was human blood, with the hormones and life-giving nutrients that would make my vampire self into the person that it was meant to be.

I knew what the blood lust was, just as I knew how sexually charged vampires could be when they fed. But knowing something clinically and experiencing it for yourself are two very different things. With everything sharpened around me, I sucked the bag dry and then launched myself at Henry.

For the briefest moment he was stunned, and he caught me in his arms. I started climbing him like a spider monkey, intent on sinking my fangs into his neck. Just the smell of him in the room had my desire ramped up to the fullest.

Just as my teeth grazed his neck and my fingers dug into his flesh, Evangelina cast an immobilization spell on me. I wanted to snarl and hiss like a wild animal, but I was helpless. What was even more frustrating was that I had never had someone do magic on me before.

It was very illuminating to see what having someone else take away your free will was really like. I didn't enjoy it at all. Henry was able to disentangle himself from my

death grip. My eyes followed him like a snake eyeing his next meal.

His hands were shaking.

Had I scared him? That didn't seem possible. A small part of the blood lust dissipated just as the door to Henry's rooms came crashing in.

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“Lucy!”

I wanted to whip my head around just to see him. It was my master’s voice and he sounded frantic. Everything inside of me ached to go to him. I wanted to curl up in his lap and cry. My body was a vast conflict of emotion, and I didn’t understand what was going on.

Evangelina’s spell started to fade and I slumped against the floor just as the Master gathered me into his arms.

“Wait!” Henry roared.

But it was too late, I had already sunk my teeth into the master’s neck. I remember the taste of him touching my tongue and my eyes rolling into the back of my head from the sheer pleasure of it before everything went dark.

**

WHEN I OPENED MY EYES, I was tied down. My arms and legs were immobilized to each corner of the bed. I tried to wrench out of the hold, and then tried to teleport myself somewhere else, but my magic seemed dull, almost as if it were sleeping.

“Here.” Henry thrust another bag of blood toward my mouth, and I immediately began to feed again. The same intense feelings of desire washed over me. I hated not having control of my body.

Once the bag was empty, I turned my head away. I could smell my master and I

wanted to find him. He sat in the chair next to the bed, his eyes intent on mine but when he spoke, it was to Henry.

“I don’t understand. Lucy already went through the change, and Vetí said it was very mild.”

Henry scoffed, “You raised her on animal blood, Marcus. It’s like the human’s going off of decaffeinated and then, jumping into straight shots of espresso. She is struggling to adapt. Where in the hell is Vetí?”

Almost as if she knew she were being summoned, Vetí stepped into the room.

“Oh, Lucy.” Her big eyes were filled with compassion as she moved toward me. Her calming hand went to my ankle, and I hate to admit that my eyes filled with tears.

“Why isn’t my magic working?” I choked out.

“Henry cast a spell that would keep you safe.”

I turned to the Master in confusion. “Henry is a witch?”

Henry growled angrily. “Don’t go spreading that information around.”

I wanted to laugh hysterically, or cry until my eyes fell out. I would be the last person that would run around telling people things. I didn’t even feel comfortable in front of the others.

“Viv and Joanie are worried about you,” Vetí said, changing the subject. “They asked if maybe they could come and see you.”

I didn’t want anyone to see me like this. I had never felt so helpless in my life.

“No,” I said through cracked lips. “Not until I am better.”

Veti sighed. “I understand Lucy, we have all been there. Hopefully this won’t last for long.”

I felt his hand brush against my skin and brought my watery eyes to see my master’s face.

“It will be alright,” he whispered. “I promise.”

I had never doubted him before, but this time, I wasn’t sure that even my master could make things better.

CHAPTER 6

Lucy

It had been a verylong eight days of being restrained to a bed. I had come to know Henry's scent almost as well as my master's. Actually, strike that, I was to call him Marcus now. Everything seemed so strange now. My senses were heightened to an uncomfortable degree.

I heard things that were happening clear throughout the castle. Obviously, the nights were the worst. I could tell stories about the inhabitants that would curl your toes. Viv and Joanie were some of the worst offenders. It was as if the perfect world that I had lived in with Vetí and Master never existed.

Now, I was shoved into an alternate reality where I was constantly battling with my body. It seemed to have a mind of its own.

I finally broke down on day three and allowed Joanie and Viv to see me. They entertained me with their stories of how it went when they turned. I was grateful for their compassion and kindness. As well as highly entertained by some of their antics. Joanie and Viv assured me that this would pass. But my building attraction for Henry, would that pass?

I felt the same love in my heart for Marcus, which only served to confuse me even further.

“Here,” Henry shoved another bag of blood toward me.

“Your bedside manner leaves something to be desired,” I grumbled before drinking.

The corner of his lip twitched. “You aren’t anything like I expected you to be.”

I cocked an eyebrow. With the bag of blood still being held to my mouth, I am sure that I looked rather attractive, like a psychopath.

When my fangs rescinded, I asked, “What are you talking about?”

He shrugged.

My eyes couldn’t help but devour the way his muscles rippled beneath his thin t-shirt. His rugged appeal had a wet heat gathering between my thighs. I knew he smelled my arousal by the way his nostrils flared. Thankfully he was too much of a gentleman to comment on it.

That, and it was always there when he was near me. I just couldn’t help it. He affected me in a primal way that I didn’t at all understand.

“What did you expect?” I pushed. “Someone that would do anything she was asked?”

He smiled at this, and I caught a glimpse of those perfect white teeth.

“No, you are definitely not one to do what she is asked. In fact, I would say you are one to go out of her way to be difficult. It’s just not how Marcus described you to me.”

I eyed the great hulking man. “You and Marcus talked about me?”

His tone was indifferent. “We saved you from death. I wanted to know if you were doing alright. And I worried that our sister might not be the best caregiver.”

I felt a flash of injustice for Vetí. “She was the best...”

His finger brushed against my lips and the sentence died off.

“She did an amazing job. I was wrong.”

Any fire I had behind the indignation slipped out of me.

“Do you think we could do something besides tying me up?”

Once the words were out, I realized that they had a hint of sexual tension. Or perhaps that was just the real sexual tension that I was feeling in the room. In that moment, I could picture all of the ways that I wanted him to do something to me. Something naughty and altogether sensual—damnit I needed to clear my head.

“I meant!” I cleared my throat. “We can put this bed to better uses than this.”

His eyes widened.

Damn it.

Fuck!

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“No, that wasn’t at all what I meant!” I protested just as the sexiest smirk I have ever seen slipped onto his chiseled face.

“Lucy, you know I can’t fuck you, right?”

Kill me now. I needed lightning to come into the room and strike me dead. I have never been so mortified in my life.

“I didn’t ask you to.” I grumbled, averting my eyes from his gaze.

At this comment he laughed.

I wasn’t sure that there had ever been a time when I felt more stupid than at this moment.

“You did.”

His shit eating grin had me thrashing against the restraints.

“Yeah, you wish!”

My face was hotter than the sun, and I turned away so he couldn’t see just how embarrassed I was.

Henry’s voice was surprisingly gentle when I felt the first wrist being untied. The prickly sensation of the blood returning to my limbs kept me from talking.

“For the record,” his voice was low. “It’s not because I don’t want to. Because I can think of little else since you arrived. But I can’t, I just can’t.”

It took me a minute to register what he was talking about.

Did that mean he wanted to fuck me? I felt the fire in my belly blazing into an inferno.

The next time Henry spoke it wasn’t in the soft secret tones of lovers, but in that bracing manner of his that brooks no argument.

“We will keep your feet tied for a moment while you sit up and get acclimated. Marcus will soon be here to keep you company.”

I felt a true stabbing feeling and felt as though I had somehow cheated on him, which was beyond ridiculous.

Marcus was the one I loved. I have always loved him—haven’t I?

The question was staggering.

I was angry at myself for even considering something different. We were meant to be together, for now and always. That was how life made sense.

There was a slight knock and then the door swung open.

“Good morning, Sweetheart.”

The fresh musky scent of him washed over me. I knew that smell almost as well as I knew my own. Marcus was here, and he would make all of the awkwardness go away.

“Hi Marcus,” I said shyly, ignoring the brutish way that Henry snorted behind me.

“Everything okay here?” he asked, looking over to Henry with a frown.

Henry turned his back and started fidgeting with things on his desk. I wished for the millionth time that I could have gone through this somewhere else. I hated being an imposition to Henry. He already didn’t like me. I didn’t need to supply the ammunition.

“Everything is great. I have my wrists unlocked. Do you want to play a game?”

Marcus’ face lit, and I loved his expression so much that I wanted to take a picture and keep it with me always.

CHAPTER 7

Lucy

The first day of freedom and I felt like a new colt stumbling about on my spindly legs. My senses were in overdrive as I got my first real glimpse of the castle, and it was glorious.

The gardens were an elaborate mixture of perfectly manicured hedges and razor-sharp greens. The fragrance from the flowers tickled my nose as the sun warmed my skin.

In the month that I had been in the vampire royal court, I had been strapped to a bed in the bowels of the castle and put on house arrest until I learned to control my cravings. I had also been assigned the two hottest men in existence to guard my every move.

Not to mention that I was in love with one of them and confused by my growing feelings for the other. I clearly didn't have a handle on all things vampire.

However, all was not lost; now that I was granted freedom, my magic had been restored to me.

I moved my fingers experimentally and felt the electric sparks indicating that it was ready and willing to do my bidding. I had missed my magic just as one would miss a limb if it were removed.

“Don’t do anything you might regret,” Henry admonished as he reached out to touch my arm. “Ouch!”

He jerked back as I accidentally zapped him.

I turned abruptly and grabbed his shirt, zapping him again.

“Fuck! Ouch!”

“What are you doing?” Marcus’ arms went to my shoulders as he pulled me back against his chest.

I felt the magic still running uneasily inside of me.

Henry’s hair was a little mussed and possibly smoking. His eyes were thunderous. I sank into Marcus and heard his soft groan as my ass met up with the fly of his pants.

“I’m sorry!” I swallowed hard, “I really didn’t mean to. I think my magic needs a release; it’s been restrained for too long.”

The light in Henry’s eyes softened, and it dawned on me that he probably thought I was attacking him.

I heard Marcus’ soft chuckle and it was like kryptonite. With his body around mine and his chin resting on the top of my head I felt safe and protected. But there was also the swift desire that raced through me.

I blushed and pushed out of his arms.

Henry rubbed his large hand over his face and looked away. “Are you wearing a bra?”

I looked down at the same time Marcus did and saw my nipples pressing firmly against the thin material of my shirt. A wave of embarrassment swept over me, and I automatically looked up into Marcus' face. His eyes had dilated, and I knew if he opened his mouth, I would see a bit of fang.

I wrapped my arms across my chest. "I don't like bras."

While strictly speaking, this statement was true, it wasn't the reason I didn't have one on. I felt like the bras that I brought with me were too small. I had grown at least half a cup size in my second transitioning. It was like going through puberty twice.

My hips were a little curvier, and my breasts were definitely fuller. I had managed to hide some of the changes by wearing an oversized shirt. But I couldn't force myself to wear the bra that cut into my skin and barely covered anything.

"Lucy, it is so very good to see you out and about." Oblivious of our awkwardness, Joanie approached our trio with her three handsome mates in tow.

I smiled through clenched teeth, "It is nice to have a bit of freedom."

Joanie's eyes searched my face for a long moment. "Trust me, I of all people understand. Listen, I hate to be rude, but can I borrow Lucy for a moment?"

I could sense Henry and Marcus stiffen. Did they honestly think that Joanie would harm me?

"Sure," I answered for them, and followed as she led me down a soft path to a bench that we could sit on.

"How are you feeling?" she asked, the concern evident in her eyes.

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My hands were still shaking. “I feel like a bolt of electricity, dangerous and unpredictable.”

She nodded understandingly and didn’t attempt to touch me.

“I have always thought that we needed some type of gazebo there near the lake,” she said in an offhand manner.

I blinked trying to keep up with the change of subject. I followed her gaze to the spot she had been indicating and thought about what I would do.

I smiled to myself when it dawned on me what she was doing. Unfolding my hands from my chest, I pointed to where she had indicated, and a white gazebo appeared.

“It is lovely,” she said, tipping her head to the side, considering. “But perhaps something bigger?”

This time a broad smile crossed my lips, and I let my imagination run wild. The white gazebo disappeared, and in its place marble columns grew from a large platform. The fretwork was as intricate as it was unusual, as the patterns inside my mind began to take shape. Copper lined the roof to its majestic peaks, and bright throw pillows appeared on the marble benches.

Joanie laughed in sheer delight. “You really have a gift, don’t you?”

I turned to her. How could she have known what I needed? I didn’t know how to voice the questions inside of me.

“I know that you feel like a fish out of water,” she began. “I felt much the same way, and I had already lived in the outside world before coming here. I want to help you. I can see that you are uncomfortable with how the human blood has affected your body.”

So much for hiding things. I felt my cheeks heat.

Joanie’s eyes were kind. “I have always been a little curvy. Let me help you make this transition a little easier. I know clothes, and with your talents to make anything appear we can figure out something that will make you feel more at home.”

“Why are you being so nice to me?” The question was out before I could stop it.

She smiled softly. “I know how important it is to belong. I also know what it’s like to have your life ripped apart. Even now, my adoptive parents are missing and possibly dead. I hate how the worry eats at my insides while the grief threatens to drown me.”

“I heard a little about your parents. They are with the Alliance?” I asked.

Joanie had explained to me how she and Viv were both raised as human children. “There was a vampire named Sven that was working with the Alliance. A scientist and physician, he was trying to find a way to change vamps back into humans. He was Evangelina’s brother.”

My eyes widened. “The one she said was dead?”

It was Joanie’s turn to be surprised. “She knows?”

“She suspects,” I corrected. “I think you should be honest with her. She is a bright child and will resent it if you keep things hidden.”

Joanie bit her lip. “You are right, I hate the secrets and lies as well.”

I looked up to where Marcus and Henry were talking with Joanie’s mates. Both of them were staring at me.

Joanie followed my gaze. “Anything I should know about?”

I choked on my own spit. Sputtering, I muttered, “No, why?”

She laughed; the sound was carefree and put a smile on my face.

“Let’s get your clothing all sorted.” Standing, she offered me a hand.

I worried for a moment that I would zap her just like I had Henry. But as I tentatively took her hand, I only felt the warmth and love coming from her friendship. She had been right in getting me to use some power. I felt like I had better control of myself.

Before we left the bench, I whispered to her, “After that, we are going for your parents.”

I felt her falter for a brief second before a wide smile crossed her face.

“Deal.” She grinned at me, and I knew that I had found my first friend.

CHAPTER 8

Lucy

“Are you sure this looks okay on me?”

I had a hard time recognizing myself in the mirror. The ill-fitting clothes and messy bun were gone and in its place was a rather nice-looking young woman. My platinum blonde hair hung down my back in soft waves. The red pencil skirt fit my new curves like a glove. The silky black top was a perfect match for the black ankle boots that she insisted I wear.

“Okay?” Viv laughed from where she was sitting across the room. “That doesn’t begin to describe how amazing you look.”

I frowned. “You have to say that; you share my face.”

Viv winked at me and went back to her magazine.

“You look incredible,” Joanie answered. “I can’t wait to show you off to Henry and Marcus.”

A flush stained my cheeks.

“What makes you think I care what they say?” My words were bold, but my blush said otherwise. Joanie and Viv gave each other a knowing glance.

“We have been there,” Viv said finally. “How are you feeling?”

I shrugged. “Better; I haven’t attacked anyone.”

Joanie picked up a dress that I had tried on and hung it up in the closet. As she returned, Joanie grinned at me and said, “We know all about being the resident virgin vampire, it’s the worst.”

I sighed and nodded. “It was like I had to go through vampire puberty twice. I had no idea that human blood would make such a difference.”

Even though I knew that one day I would transition into a fully-fledged vampire, I found myself getting caught up in the world’s view of what a vampire would be. I must have asked Vetí a hundred times if I would grow cold and my heart would stop beating. I wondered if I would sparkle and even questioned if one of the reasons we stayed in the caves so much was because she couldn’t be in the sun.

Once I was older and learned the science behind being a vampire it became much less romantic. I suppose that there are some incredible trade-offs. Our speed, enhanced senses, superhuman abilities, and immortality were hard to beat.

But in some ways, we were hopelessly flawed. Because of our rapid regeneration, our bodies can’t keep up the blood supply. In short, we don’t make enough blood to survive on our own. It seemed very black and white.

So never in a million years had I imagined the intense feelings that came along with drinking human blood versus animal blood. I felt on edge, not out of control as I had been at the beginning. But I wanted something, and I had a good idea of what that might be.

“So, what do you suggest?” I turned from the mirror to face them. “Should I just do

the deed and get it out of the way?”

“No!” Viv looked horrified.

Joanie was shaking her head as well. “Lucy, there are some intense things that come along with your first time. Besides, we have magic in our blood. If you don’t pick the right person, you could end up mated to someone you don’t like.”

I wondered if Henry had ever done the deed. Then, I scoffed at my own stupidity. Of course, he had, there is no way that he had been a vampire this long without it. But he had magic in his veins just like I did. Was he already mated to someone?

The thought made my stomach turn and I felt like hitting something.

“What’s wrong?” Viv asked, sitting forward once she saw my clenched jaw.

I fought to regulate my emotions. “Nothing, I just don’t like the position this places me in.”

She looked like she wanted to argue with me, but she held her tongue. The truth was that I felt angry and disloyal to Marcus. I still thought of him as my Master, and I wished that he would be a true master to me.

There was something that my new sisters didn’t know about me. I loved to read. Being secluded in a cave for your entire life means that you learn to entertain yourself. Romance was by and large my favorite genre, but in that, I loved to read about dominants and submissives. Every time I called Marcus my master, I thought about what it would mean if he really were to dominate me sexually. As powerful as I knew myself to be, the thought of giving up control intrigued me. Marcus had always been the main focus of my fantasies.

However, I was starting to see a new star player in my mind, and it bothered me for a myriad of reasons. First, because I had no claim on either of them, so there was no reason to feel guilt over relationships that existed in my head. Second, because it was likely that neither man would want anything to do with me.

I felt like the bubble I had been living in up until my sisters had come to the cave had popped. And in the aftermath, I was finding that nothing was what I had made it out to be.

Joanie moved closer to me and took my hand. “What are you thinking about to make you look so sad?”

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I shrugged noncommittally. “I suppose there have been a lot of changes that I am getting used to.”

Viv came to my other side. “Let’s go show you off. We have a royal council meeting and we want you to be a part of it.”

I took a step back, faltering in my suede ankle boots. “I don’t know anything about vampire politics.”

Viv’s eyes were intent on mine. “We don’t expect you to solve the problems of our world, Lucy. But you are our sister and have every right to be there. You don’t have to say anything at all. Henry will be there as the captain of the vampire guard. If you want, we can include Marcus in this meeting as well.”

I did want that. For some reason it seemed right that if Henry was there, Marcus and I should be as well.

**

WE WALKED INTO THE room just as Marcus had been about to sit down.

He missed the chair and landed on his ass.

While there was a flurry of movement from some of the others to check on Marcus, Henry didn’t move a muscle. Standing tall and proud, his gaze locked on mine the moment the three of us entered, and I felt the heat from his stare.

I could smell the different scents of the members of the council. But none were as prevalent as Marcus and Henry. I wanted to go to them and found my feet doing that very thing. Before I could stop myself, my hand was tucked into Henry's.

Joanie was trying to suppress a smile as she slipped into her seat next to Adrian and Alden. Viv's eyes danced with what could only be described as a big fat 'I told you so' expression.

Marcus, now off the floor, moved toward me. I went to let go of Henry's hand, but Henry only tightened his grip. Marcus looked at Henry with a scowl on his face, but he didn't say anything, only chose to stand on my other side.

Viv called out to a servant to arrange a spot with three chairs. The other members of the council were staring at us with rapt expressions.

Viv promptly called the meeting to order and they discussed the Alliance, Joanie's parents, and problems in court. I found myself enjoying the intrigue and even offered my opinion on a miniscule point. Viv and Joanie had warned me that I wasn't to disclose my magic, even to the council. And Henry had also given me a warning about sharing my witch side.

Which is why when the objects in the room started to levitate and spin, I sort of freaked out a little.

The thing was, I wasn't the one causing the disturbance, and it wasn't Henry either.

CHAPTER 9

Lucy

The door crashed against the wall as Angelica raced into the room, horror in her eyes.

“Something is wrong with Evie! You have to come right now!”

I was out of my seat in a flash with Henry and Marcus close behind me. Angelica hadn't waited for a response. She spun on her heel and raced back toward the nursery where she and Evie had been playing. With my new speed I easily passed her on the stairs and was at Evie's side in a matter of seconds.

The child was convulsing, her eyes rolled back and her body stiff as it shook. I tried to remember the few things I had read about what to do when someone was having a seizure. Did you turn them on their side? Was I supposed to make sure she didn't swallow her tongue?

Suddenly she stopped. Viv and Joanie were at my side and we stared at the pale little girl. Her eyes flashed open and a voice that sounded nothing like the Evie we knew came out of it.

“You have three days,” the low rasp sent prickles of fear up my spine. “In three days' time, if you do not surrender the crown, your loved ones will be dead. You have been warned.”

There was an outcry from many of the council members who had followed us into the

nursery.

“Witchcraft!”

“She is tainted!”

“Do not touch her!”

“The child is poisoned!”

I wasn't sure who removed them from the room, but I had a fair idea that it was Joanie and Vivian's mates. The click of the lock barely registered for me as I continued to stare down at Evie. She was starting to come out of the trance. I wasn't sure I had ever seen anyone that pale unless they were dead.

Being a necromancer, I knew a thing or two about death. And I could feel the sticky fingers of her grasp on the child. Someone was saying my name, but I ignored them. Sinking to my knees, I took the child's hand in mine. I could feel her faint pulse and saw the terror in her eyes.

Her magic was waning with her life force. I closed my eyes and willed her spirit back into her body. I felt death's anger, she never liked to be thwarted, but I ignored it. When my eyes opened again Evie was pink cheeked and ready to sit up.

“How did you do that?”

Henry's arms wrapped around me and he yanked me back against his chest. Marcus was in my face, the look of worry making my heart ache.

Veti's voice came from the other side of the locked door. She was screaming something, but I couldn't make out the words. I needed to feed. It was imperative that

I got blood or death's grasp would just as easily latch onto me.

Locked in Henry's arms, I struggled to get free, but my senses were dulled. I had used a lot of magic and given part of my life force to complete the spell. Usually bringing someone back was more akin to stubbing my toe. Whatever had its grasp on Evie was dark and powerful, far more than just death sneaking in.

My head fell back against Henry's chest, the smell of him filling my senses. I did the only thing that I could do to survive. Turning my head, I sank my fangs into his neck, the blood coating my mouth and tongue.

I felt a tremendous surge of endorphins, followed by the most intense pleasure I had ever experienced. My pussy throbbed, and I felt almost as though I could come at any moment. His arms had become like vices around me, and I felt his massive erection against my backside. I rubbed my ass against it and felt the trembling of my orgasm starting to tear through me.

Never had anything been so powerful, so overwhelming. I loosened my jaw and released Henry's flesh as my body shook, the intense desire literally making my knees buckle. Henry's arms were the only thing keeping me from becoming a puddle on the floor.

"Holy fucking hell," Marcus muttered, and I looked up to see him staring back at me with wide eyes, the hurt evident in them.

I looked around the room, but everyone else had vanished, even Evie was taken away. Only the three of us remained, and it couldn't have been more strained had I drained Henry.

"I am sorry." The words tumbled from my lips and I saw Marcus flinch as I reached out to him.

In the next moment he was gone, only a blur of light indicating which direction he took. I don't know of a time when I had ever felt so terrible. I had hurt the one person who had always meant the world to me.

I didn't even realize I was crying until Henry had scooped me into his arms and carried me to a rocking chair. He held me tightly against his chest as I cried for all of the things that I didn't understand. I wasn't sure what I was feeling or if it was just the bloodlust that accompanied great doses of magic.

I had taken for granted all of the times I had done something like this before. Vetu had always been there to bring me blood, and it hadn't been a big deal.

This time I had sunk my fangs into someone else. Not only that, but I had experienced my first taste of sexual satisfaction and my body was aching for more. My breasts felt tight and heavy, my core was soaking wet, and my skin felt electrified.

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“Sweet Lucy, if you continue to look at me like that, we are both going to be in a world of trouble.”

Henry’s raspy voice brought me back to the present. I had been staring. I loved the sexy stubble on his chin, and the way his body cradled mine. He was solid muscle and I felt safe and secure in his arms. But there was something more. I felt cared for.

“I hurt Marcus,” I said, my voice catching on a sob.

He blew out a soft breath before leaning down to kiss my forehead.

“Marcus is a grown man. He will work out his own demons. You did what you needed to survive, don’t apologize for that.”

“Is it always like that?” I whispered, turning my face into his shoulder.

“Like what?” he nudged me until I turned my eyes back to his.

I could feel the heat of my cheeks burning as I replied, “Intense.”

Small crinkles appeared at the corners of his eyes. “Sometimes it is far more.”

I couldn’t hold his gaze as I considered what far more might entail. I literally was out of my league with everything that had happened. I looked up at the gash that had started to heal on his neck. I should have licked the wound closed. Either way, he would heal, but at least he wouldn’t have bled so much. I felt like a naughty child.

“I really messed that up.” I tried to push my way out of his arms, but he held me firmly. “I want to get down.”

“I am not ready to release you,” came his quick reply to which I scowled and pushed again.

“Henry,” I said with a warning tone.

“Lucy,” he mocked, just as serious.

“Is there a reason you won’t release me?” I growled.

He nodded.

“Care to share it?”

Again, the crinkles appeared at his eyes, and I was momentarily transfixed by the sheer masculine beauty that he exuded. Men shouldn’t be so damned attractive, it was distracting.

I saw his lips begin to curl up.

“You are something else, Sweet Lucy.”

I had no idea what that meant or how I was supposed to respond to it. Just when I thought that he would never tell me why he insisted on holding on to me he spoke.

“I felt you transfer your life source to the child. I have never been more terrified of anything in my life. The thought of you dying, I just...”

He broke off, his voice husky.

“Just let me hold you a moment longer.”

And so, we stayed like that for several long moments. It wasn't until I heard a knocking at the door and Vetí calling my name that I did push out of his arms.

She raced to me with a pouch of blood and handed another one to Henry.

“You must come,” Vetí insisted. “The council are threatening to revolt; Viv and Joanie need you.”

And with that, Henry and I raced from the room.

CHAPTER 10

Lucy

Thankfully by the timewe got there Evangelina had everything under control. And by that, I mean that she literally froze everyone, much like I had when we first arrived at court.

“We can’t keep doing this,” Henry growled. I wasn’t sure who he was addressing, Evangelina or me, but he was right. They were going to notice that things weren’t measuring up timewise. However, it was a brilliant solution to a sticky situation, and I didn’t mind telling Evangelina that.

“You have to be the coolest kid I have ever met.”

Her eyes sparkled. “Thanks, you aren’t so bad yourself, Lucy.”

Henry went over and touched Viv and Joanie, releasing them from the spell.

“What on earth?” Joanie flinched looking around and then realized that everyone was frozen mid rant. “I can see the spittle frozen next to this guy’s mouth.”

“Eww!” Evangelina laughed, and I couldn’t help the snicker that escaped my lips.

“We don’t have a long time,” Henry reminded us. “Let’s get you all out of here.”

“Or we could do a memory spell and erase their memories,” I suggested.

Everyone around me starred like I had just announced my undies were on fire or something.

“What?” I wrapped my arms around my waist self-consciously. “Stop staring at me.”

“The level of skill that it would take,” Henry trailed off shaking his head. “I just don’t think it would be possible.”

“I think you should try it,” Joanie encouraged.

“Maybe it would be too much on my own,” I agreed. “But I didn’t intend to do it on my own.”

Joanie squealed with excitement and Viv grinned at me.

“That is an excellent idea, Lucy!” She winked at me before turning a raised brow to Henry. He obviously wasn’t going to go against the queen of vampires, even though I knew he wanted to argue.

In the end it was much easier to accomplish than even I had imagined. We joined hands and I felt the magic thrumming between us. The pulse hammering in my veins and made me feel alive. We cast a forgetting spell on everyone that was non-magical. As the words were being said I felt some measure of guilt.

I knew that Viv and Joanie’s mates wouldn’t remember everything, and neither would Marcus. He still hadn’t returned, and I was beginning to worry. This was more than compulsion; this was literally ripping things from their memories.

The last thing we needed was a revolt within the vampires when the Alliance was already breathing down our necks.

We broke hands and suddenly the room erupted into sound as the people looked around in confusion.

“Lucy!”

I turned to see Marcus rushing toward me. I couldn’t help the butterflies that danced around in my stomach at the sight of him. I loved the way his brows arched, and the rough edge of his jaw made my fingers itch to touch the stubble there. He was impossibly handsome, and I was sure I would never get tired of seeing him.

“Lucy, I was in the garden and it reminded me that I promised to take you out on a walk.”

I flushed with excitement. “Is now okay?”

He laughed, reaching out his hand to me. “Now is perfect.”

I saw the sly wink from Viv and Joanie’s big smile. And I tried to ignore the way that Henry scowled. I didn’t want to disappoint Henry. I would have liked them both to take me. But I wasn’t sure how either brother would respond to such an invitation.

Marcus wrapped his large hand around mine and led me down the hallway. We went down a set of stairs and in moments were walking across the lawn and toward the gardens.

Everywhere I went people stared at me. Viv and Joanie already explained it was because of my scent. It was horribly embarrassing to know that everyone knew I had never had sex before. What was worse, was the way that many of them looked at me like they wanted to jump me right there and then.

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After passing a particularly leering gentleman, I tugged Marcus' hand and walked down a path that led toward the mazes.

"I am not really familiar with the maze, Lucy. I would hate to get you lost in there."

The thought of being lost with Marcus sounded just about perfect at that moment.

"Don't worry about it." I gave him a shy smile. "I will protect you from any monsters we might find in there."

He laughed. "I am supposed to protect you."

"Because I am a girl?" I pretended indignation.

Marcus looked startled, "No! Because I have been doing that since you were a little girl."

I stopped, right there in the middle of the pathway. Marcus turned and looked at me questioningly.

"You know that I am not a little girl anymore."

He blinked and nodded. "Of course."

I shook my head and took a step closer to him.

Marcus took a step back and cleared his throat. "It's not like you are still a little girl. I

know that, Lucy. I am well aware that you are a woman.”

I took another step closer and loved the way his eye widened. Marcus’ back hit the hedge, he was cornered, and I wasn’t backing down. Another step closer and the sexual tension heightened.

“Um, so did you want to talk about something in particular?” he asked, voice nearly cracking in the process.

He really was so stinking adorable, and I probably should have felt bad for being such a predator. But I didn’t. Marcus was a big boy that could take care of himself. And there was a large part of me that wanted to know just how big of a boy he was.

I bit my lip and moved closer so that there was barely an inch between us. If I leaned the slightest bit forward my breasts would brush his chest.

“Lucy?” his voice wavered but his eyes were glued to my lips.

“Us,” I said huskily.

“What?” he practically croaked.

I took the final step, sealing my body against his firm one. The bulge in his pants was very apparent and I couldn’t help the sexy smirk that crossed my face.

My hands went up his chest, and I enjoyed the way his breathing hitched. I settled my weight against him, flattening my breasts and rubbing slightly against his hard cock.

“You asked what I wanted to talk about,” I answered. “The answer is us.”

“Us?” he was reduced to repeating me, and I knew that I needed to put the poor man

out of his misery.

I went to step back, but before I could do so, his arms clamped around me and his lips crashed into mine.

CHAPTER 11

Marcus

I knew it was a bad idea the moment we stepped into the maze. There was something different about the way that Lucy looked at me. I think it's fairly impossible to say that I ever would get over her adoring gaze as it caressed my face. However, this was different. The look she gave me was carnal and full of intent.

The smell of the flowers faded into the background until all I could smell was Lucy. Her long blonde hair ruffled in the breeze, making my gut tighten. Her brown eyes, with the flecks of gold in them, began to shine and I caught just the faintest hint of fang.

A good man would have backed away. A better man wouldn't put himself into these situations in the first place. I, however, was neither good nor better. I was desperate to feel her lips against mine. I longed to have her body writhing beneath me, straddling me, and if I was being totally honest, kneeling before me.

It was wrong, I knew it as much as I knew that I was about to do something that would change our relationship forever.

She took a step closer to me and I backed up, feeling the hedge against my shoulder blades. I could see that she felt I was trapped, and she liked it. I loved the playfulness in her, the way her eyes narrowed, and her cheeks flushed.

I hardly knew what she was saying as she advanced toward me. My body continued

to tighten and react as she came closer and closer until I could feel the soft mounds of her breasts against my chest.

A flicker of uncertainty crossed her face, and I knew in that instant that she was about to back away.

Fuck no.

I wrapped my arms around her, trapping her against me, and kissed her. This was not the kiss of a doting caregiver. I kissed Lucy the way I had been longing to. Pressing her even tighter against my chest, I lifted her so that her feet left the ground and dangled in mid-air as I coaxed her lips open.

Her fingers tangled in my hair, tugging and making me yearn to be sweaty and naked together. Her body was compliant, a born submissive. I shook the thought away. There were more reasons why Lucy and I could never be together. I had certain tastes, needs that would frighten her.

The truth was that as much as I loved her, and make no mistake, I loved Lucy, and I didn't want to ruin her. Her bright vibrant soul would be shattered beneath me, and I wouldn't do that to her. The right thing to do would be to pull away.

And yet when her tongue hesitantly snuck out to touch mine, I knew that walking away was the last thing that I could ever do.

Lucy moaned deep in her throat, causing me to angle my head so that I could deepen the kiss even further. Her legs came up and wrapped around my waist, and my hands went down to cup her perfect ass. I squeezed the firm globes and pictured my cock sliding between her cheeks.

I had always been an ass man, and there was none finer than Lucy's. She rocked her

hips forward against my abs and I gripped her even more firmly.

Things were getting out of control. I should stop them, needed to stop them. And yet, the thought of ending this perfect moment was hideous to me. I sank down to my knees, taking my perfect girl with me. My lips tore away from hers and I kissed along her jaw and grazed my incisors against the soft flesh of her neck.

I wanted her so badly that my cock felt like it would explode. But this wasn't about me, this was about Lucy. My hands came up and slipped underneath her shirt to graze the lacy fabric cupping her amazing tits.

Lucy gasped, and her head lolled back on her shoulders. The way she was exposing her neck, the vulnerability of it, literally would have brought me to my knees if I wasn't already there.

I ran my fingertips over her rock-hard nipples and growled when she shuddered in my arms.

"Please," she rasped, not even truly understanding what she was asking for.

But I knew what she needed. I wasn't about to take her in the maze, but I could make her feel good. I could ease the ache that I knew would be building inside of her.

I gently removed her shirt and slid the straps of her bra down her shoulders. Her teardrop shaped tits stood proudly, the tips begging for my hands, mouth and tongue. I was lost to the moment. I needed to taste her more than I needed blood to survive.

Dipping my head, I took one of her breasts into my hands and then gently licked the hard nipple with my tongue.

Her gasp was loud and harsh as she thrust her breast, arching her back to silently beg

for more. She was perfect, every response, every move that she made was as if she were created just for me.

I licked and sucked on her nipple, causing the small berry shaped tip to become so hard that I knew she was close to coming. She ground her hips into my erection and even through both of our pants I could feel her wet heat. I moved to the other nipple, paying it every bit as much of attention as the first and loving the way she cried out in passion.

My fingers snuck down her flat stomach and I undid the clasp of her pants, loving the hiss of need and the way her fingernails dug into my arms. The front panel of her panties were completely soaked.

“Fuck, baby, you are so wet.”

She moaned rocking her hips even faster. “Please, Marcus, I need...”

She trailed off, but I knew full well what she needed.

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I slipped a finger inside the elastic band of her panties and felt the slick heat of her arousal. Her keening cry let me know that just the slightest touch would send her flying.

“Please, Marcus,” she whimpered, “Master...”

She had no idea what that did to me. Every time she used it, I could see her naked kneeling in front of me and waiting for my command. I began to stroke her swollen pussy. When I found the tight bundle of nerves that was begging for my touch, I rubbed small circles until she could no longer hold back.

I saw her teeth moments before they latched onto my neck. It was dangerous to let her feed from me. It only strengthened the bond between us. But as she sucked, and I felt my own release racing toward me, I really didn't give a fuck.

She shattered in my arms, her body shaking so hard that she dislodged her teeth from my neck. I couldn't have stopped myself from coming if my life depended on it. This was a first for me since I was a young boy, coming in my pants. And yet the whole thing was raw and beautiful, especially Lucy, she was exquisite.

“What the fuck?”

I looked up to see a very angry Henry glaring down at us.

Lucy blinked, sated and woozy from her release.

“Marcus, we need to talk,” he said through gritted teeth.

And he was right, we did. I knew that I shouldn't have touched her, but now that I had, I wouldn't be letting her go.

CHAPTER 12

Lucy

“Lucy! We have been looking for you everywhere. Viv thinks she has found the spell that can locate my parents.”

I glanced at Joanie and Vivian who were clutching an old spell book in their hands. My emotions were all over the place. For a moment there, I worried that Henry might strike Marcus or vice versa. And Marcus didn't even remember that I had already tasted Henry's blood and wanted to again.

The last thing that I wanted to do was to come between the brothers. I needed to stay away from both of them, and Viv and Joanie were the perfect distraction.

“I will come with you,” I moved deftly to their side and clutched at Joanie's arm.

Her brow raised, and I knew that she smelled the desire that still lingered in the air from before. Viv placed an arm around me, and they both ushered me out of the area. By the time we got back to the castle and went directly to the queen's private rooms, the girls were bursting with questions.

I wasn't going to say anything, but apparently our love triangle was the topic of conversation throughout the castle. If I was mortified before, it didn't hold a candle to what I felt hearing this news.

“It doesn't matter,” I said firmly. “There is nothing permanent between any of us.”

“Yet,” Viv added with a pointed look at my flushed cheeks. “There is nothing permanent yet. Leave Henry and Marcus to work things out for themselves, they will come to their senses.”

If anything, my embarrassment rose. I had seen porn and knew the mechanics of sexual intercourse, but that was nothing compared to the feelings that erupted inside of me when I was held by Henry or Marcus. I was a complete novice, and it seemed that my mind went blank when these situations presented themselves.

“Can I ask you something, Joanie?” I blurted the question out, knowing that she would be the best one to help in this instance.

Her brows knit together. “Of course, ask me anything.”

“How did your three mates come to the agreement, err, how did you?” I wasn’t even sure how to ask the question. Thankfully Joanie took pity on me and answered.

“At first there was some jealousy and even fighting. I felt terrible, as if I were splitting the brothers up.”

A wave of relief washed over me, that was precisely how I felt. “What did you do?”

She reached over and took my hand. “You probably don’t want to hear this, but it has to be something that Henry and Marcus will decide for themselves. I wish I could make it easier for you, but some things in life are difficult no matter what you do.”

My heart sank. “I don’t want to come between them.”

Viv came to sit beside me. “If they are meant to be yours, nothing will keep you apart.”

Doubts and fear crept into my thoughts. “What if they aren’t meant to be? I feel like I have loved Marcus forever. But this thing with Henry is intense and overpowering, and so terribly new. The thought of losing either one makes me physically ill. But the thought of hurting either of them makes it so much worse.”

“My mother once told me that every time you go through something difficult it helps to shape who you are. We all start out as this cold lump of clay, but as we face trials and hardships, pieces of the clay are stripped away. We might feel as if we are losing ourselves, but the truth is that the beauty is in the creation. Throughout the process of being carved at, tossed into the fire, and forced to prove our strength, we discover what we were truly meant to be. Without it, we would remain the cold lump of clay.”

I swallowed. “Your mother sounds like a wonderful person, Joanie.”

Joanie’s eyes glittered with something that suspiciously looked like tears. “She is.”

“Where is that spell?” I said changing the subject.

Viv placed the book into my hands, and I read through it.

“I don’t see why it wouldn’t work. Did you bring something along that belonged to your mother or father?”

Joanie pulled out a necklace from beneath her shirt. The old carvings in the gold showed a family crest. “This was my mother’s.”

With a sigh, I reached out my hands to clasp them with Viv and Joanie. “I will perform the spell. Are you both ready for this?”

“I am!” a much younger voice chirped up from underneath the bed.

“Eva? Angie!” Viv’s voice was stern. I liked the nicknames that she called them.

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“We could use Eva’s magic to assist us,” I said.

Eva grinned at me. “You are my favorite.”

Joanie rolled her eyes. “I thought I was your favorite for not making you wear the fancy pants clothes that Nurse insisted on.”

Angie wrinkled her nose. “I can’t believe that you forced us to have a governess, this isn’t Victorian England.”

Viv grumbled something about the younger girls needing stricter companions but didn’t ask them to leave, which I was thankful for.

“Let’s do this!” I winked at the girls and held out a hand for Eva to grasp. We didn’t know yet if Angie would have any magic in her, but she was our sister and that counted enough for me.

I whispered the words to the spell and felt the dimension that we were in shift slightly, allowing for our bodies to leave the current existence and fly through space and time to where Joanie’s parents were being held captive.

The spell was working perfectly, and everything seemed to be going according to plan. The usual feeling of being tossed and turned settled over me. Viv looked green and I worried that she would once again hurl at our feet.

A jarring movement caught me off guard as we landed inside what could only be described as a suburban family home. Not that I knew much about suburbia.

“Where are we?” Angie whispered.

“Home,” Joanie answered in a choked voice. The color had been stripped from her cheeks as she looked at the couch where two individuals sat unearthly still.

“Are they...” Eva’s voice trailed off in horror.

“Maybe, but not for long,” I answered, disengaging my hands and walking over to where what I could only assume were the bodies of Clark and Jenny Spark.

Joanie sank to her knees in anguish, the sound coming from her throat unlike anything I had ever heard before. It was tortured and terrible. I didn’t think before reaching out to touch the two dead bodies. They looked fresh enough and I figured that it was worth a shot.

The longer a body went without a soul the harder it was for the soul to find it again. I knew how to guide the spirits back. I had done it with Viv and Joanie and several others besides. I felt their cold skin and their memories began to race over me. It was something that happened so quickly that I often couldn’t remember after I had raised someone from the dead.

“What is she doing?” one of the little girl’s asked. But I ignored her and kept searching with my mind. I needed to contact Jenny and Clark, make them understand that Joanie still needed them.

Suddenly I felt their presence near me, they were willing to return, anxious even. I pulled them back to their bodies and felt the heat begin to blossom inside of the cold skin I was clutching.

Ever so slowly I eased back and waited for them to awaken. Two sets of eyes popped open and a gasp of air filling lungs that had gone far too long without filled with

room.

Jenny raised a shaking hand to her chest. “So, it’s true?”

CHAPTER 13

Lucy

I wasn't sure I liked the way Jenny Spark was staring up at me, half fear, half amazement. But it didn't really matter because Joanie threw herself at both of her parents. It only dawned on me in that moment that her dad's name was Clark Spark.

My lips twitched, and I fought a smile.

Viv smiled over at me, but I caught the glimpse of sadness in her eyes.

"Are you okay?" I asked her quietly.

She nodded and moved closer before saying, "Yeah, I am really happy for her. I just can't help but wonder what is going on with the Alliance."

It might have been the truth, but something told me that she was hiding the real pain. I had heard stories about her adoptive mother, Susan. Apparently, she was one of the leaders in the order. Supposedly she was dead, but I of all people knew that death wasn't permanent. According to Henry, the Alliance was chock full of top-notch medical professionals as well as some of the most influential vampires.

How vampires could turn against their own the way that the Alliance had is beyond me. And don't get me started on pure blooded vampires. The fact that they take the time to see the percentage of pureness is beyond a joke. I thought that people had evolved past such petty endeavors to make themselves more important.

Viv's blood was the purest out of all of us, and she still had some witch running in her veins. We weren't sure where that was coming from either. Joanie seemed to have more magic in her, but according to the tests from the lab, she was not a full-blooded sister to Viv and me, who were indeed twins if the tests were correct.

Our mother, whoever she was, had to have been a witch for my powers to manifest as strongly as they have. I wondered, for a fleeting moment, if she had been a necromancer as well. I hadn't wanted to dwell a whole lot on the thoughts of our birth parents. They were gone, and I grew up with that knowledge.

Veti hadn't ever told me who my mother was because she herself didn't know. I felt a shiver creep over me and wrapped my arms around my waist.

"Are you alright?"

I smiled at Viv who had essentially just asked me the same question I had posed to her moments earlier.

I took her hand in mine and said, "I am good. But I don't think we should linger here. It's time to get back to the palace."

Jenny and Clark were slowly getting to their feet with Joanie's help. It seemed that it was at that moment when Jenny truly got a good look at me. Her eyes widened, and she took an instinctive step backward.

Shaking her head in disbelief she whispered, "What is going on?"

"Mom," Joanie's tone was calm as she explained, "this is Lucy, she is Viv's twin sister."

"That's not possible, we would have known."

I felt that same ripple of apprehension running across my skin. “What’s not possible?” I blurted out.

“There were only two siblings that survived the attack.” Clark’s face was filled with shame. “We should know, we were there.”

I tried to wrap my mind around the fact that these two individuals were part of the mob that destroyed my family. I suddenly hated the fact that I had helped them. I whipped around on Viv and Joanie; my eyes full of tears. “You never said that they were part of the Alliance. You only told me that they were being held captive. Why would you want to save the people that ruined our family?”

Joanie looked as though I had struck her, and I felt a small amount of guilt, but I pushed it aside.

“They aren’t bad people,” Viv explained and tried putting a hand on my arm, but I shook her off.

“They are bad people,” I countered. “Because of them, I lived in a fucking cave under the earth in the middle of nowhere for twenty years. Because of them my parents are dead and most of my siblings. How can you say that they are blameless?”

Jenny’s eyes filled with tears. “You are right. We are not blameless. We joined the Alliance because we thought we were ridding the world of evil. We had no idea what we were getting into. There was also the promise of a child, and we desperately wanted to have children.”

I scoffed, “Yeah, you wanted a child bad enough to murder someone and take theirs?”

Her face was stricken as she drew in a harsh breath.

“That’s enough!” Viv demanded.

Joanie took a protective step next to her parents. “You need to calm down, Lucy.”

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I looked down to see that my hands were glowing, and I knew that I had a lot of magical energy that needed to be spent. With a cry of anger, I cast a spell that would bring us all back to the palace. It was foolhardy, considering I had just raised two people from the dead, and there is only so much magic that can sustain a person. But I was so angry and not really thinking logically.

When we appeared in the great hall, Veti took one look at me and began to run toward me. I saw her mouth open, but her words were blurred as a blanket of darkness washed over me and I sank into oblivion.

**

THE WARMTH SURROUNDINGme when I awoke had me thinking I was dreaming. Strong arms enveloped me from the front and a warm body was behind me as well.

“Is she awake?” I heard Marcus ask in a husky voice.

“Are you awake?” Henry’s deep voice washed over me as his arms tightened.

“Ah, shit,” I muttered, blinking my eyes open. “I knocked myself out, didn’t I?”

Henry smiled, but I could see the concern in his eyes. “Most witches don’t try and rescue that many people on their own.”

I felt a twinge of guilt. “I could easily transport four people besides myself.”

Marcus pinched my behind and I yelped. “Hey!”

“You left out the part where you had just raised two people from the dead. You scared the shit out of both of us. We gave you three and a half bags of blood before your color returned. And for your information, you have been out for almost twenty-four hours.”

I tried to sit up, but Henry’s arms pinned me down.

“Let me go!” I wriggled against them and heard Marcus moan just about the same time that Henry let out a grunt of frustration.

“As much as I like you rubbing up against me like a cat in heat, you had better stop before you find yourself in a very tricky situation,” Henry warned.

I stopped immediately and took inventory. There was something thick and hard pressed against my backside, that had to be Marcus. Against my front was another foreign object that felt long and dangerous.

Was that their cocks?

Both of them?

Embarrassment and lust radiated through me.

“Shit, if she keeps this up, I will not be able to abide by the agreement.” Henry said through clenched teeth.

Before Marcus could speak, I interrupted, “Wait? What agreement?”

Henry growled at me, his voice was dark and sexy.

“The one where I stop myself from fucking your brains out because we decided that you aren’t ready to make the decision of who you want to be with.”

“Whoa, and who made you God? Since when do you get to decide what I can do with my life?”

Henry raised a brow and answered, “Marcus came up with that rule, Little One, not me.”

I felt Marcus stiffen behind me. “Thanks for throwing me under the bus,” he mumbled.

I flipped around so that I was now facing Marcus.

“Do you think that I have to obey you? I am not the little girl that you used to take care of. I don’t call you Master anymore, and I don’t have to do what you say.”

His eyes darkened, and I knew I had triggered something in him. The sad part was that my body was responding in kind. I felt my breasts become fuller and my pussy was slick with arousal.

“You will do what you are told,” he said in a commanding voice.

“Hot damn,” Henry whispered from behind me.

“Or what?” I knew I shouldn’t goad him, but I was too far gone to care.

“Or you will be punished,” Marcus replied, his eyes glittering.

I narrowed my gaze and brazenly challenged him. “Do you worst.”

CHAPTER 14

Lucy

Perhaps it was my saucytone, or the way that I defied him. But I went from being sandwiched between the two brothers to being yanked underneath Marcus' hard body. I felt every inch of him pressing into me. His minty breath washed over me, and I found myself leaning up for his kiss.

But to my surprise he pulled back just a fraction of an inch, teasing me with his closeness.

"You want a kiss?" His voice had dropped an octave and had an air of authority that made my stomach clench.

"You know I do!" I said through clenched teeth. "Just kiss me already, Marcus!"

His eyes glinted dangerously as he asked, "Who?"

I felt another twinge in my core and knew I was soaked.

"Please, Master," I whispered huskily.

Henry grunted and growled in my ear. "Are you sure this is a good idea, Lucy?"

"I can take anything the two of you dish out," I said with more bravado than was probably smart. But I was so turned on that I would have said anything for them to do

something, anything.

“Put your hands above your head,” Henry ordered. “And don’t move them unless we tell you to.”

I rushed to do just as I was told, making sure to run my hands up Marcus’ sides and loving the way he hissed.

I felt a sharp pinch on my ass.

“Hey!”

Henry laughed. “You need to do as your told, no improvising.”

Marcus moved back, straddling my hips. I loved seeing him above me, with that look in his eyes. He wanted to devour me, and I was all for it. Slowly he began to unbutton my shirt. The tips of his fingers brushing my stomach and causing flurries of excitement to erupt in my stomach.

I looked over to see Henry clutching his long cock through his pants. I wanted to see it, to taste it. The thought made my mouth water.

Marcus followed my gaze. “Do you want to see his cock, Lucy?”

“Yes, Master, please.”

Henry’s eyes were intent on mine as he unzipped his pants. He was bare. All nine inches of thick heat filled his large palm. Henry stroked his length, eyes intent on me.

Marcus unfastened the front of my bra and my breasts spilled out.

“You are so fucking perfect,” Marcus growled as his hands moved to cup my heavy breasts.

“I’d like to fuck those tits,” Henry added.

I hadn’t ever seen anything like that, but I was certainly willing to give it a try. My nipples were tight and aching for their touch. My arms wobbled for the briefest of moments. I don’t know if I was about to reach out and touch Henry’s cock or pinch my own nipples, but it didn’t matter. The second that Marcus saw I was disobeying him he moved back and pulled the belt out from around his waist.

He fastened it around my wrists and attached it to the headboard. It wasn’t too tight and if I tried hard, I could get away. But it was enough to remind me that I wasn’t in charge of this situation. I was the pupil and my two naughty masters were the teachers.

“Let her taste you,” Marcus demanded as he began to remove his clothes.

Henry blinked in surprise but moved quickly to do as Marcus instructed.

His cock was shiny at the tip, and I longed to know what he tasted like. My tongue slipped out and when he moved close enough, I licked the tip.

Henry said a string of filthy words that only caused my pussy to clench with need. I took another swipe of his cock with my tongue.

“Do you like that?” he asked huskily.

“So much,” I answered honestly.

“Do you want more?” Henry’s eyes glittered with need.

Just as I was about to answer yes, Marcus approached, naked and glorious. He motioned with his head for Henry to remove the rest of his clothing and Henry nodded. Then he took the rest of my clothes and removed them, tearing them off when necessary.

“Spread your legs, Lucy, I need to see you.”

I looked from Marcus to Henry and then opened my thighs, exposing the most intimate part of me.

“Fucking hell,” Henry whispered.

Marcus settled himself between my thighs pushing them even wider.

“You are to take Henry’s cock in your mouth and suck him off. I will reward you if you do what I say. But if you don’t you will be punished. Tell me if you understand.”

“Yes, Master.”

Marcus raised a brow and demanded, “Yes, what?”

“I will take Henry’s cock in my mouth,” I blushed furiously as I repeated his words back to him.

“Good girl.” Marcus’ praise made me flush again but this time with the sense of pleasing him. I found that I wanted him to say those words to me, to be pleased with me.

Henry brought his cock to my lips and I opened wide. The salty taste of his skin mixed with the headiness of the situation had my senses in a whirl. The second that I brought him into my mouth I felt Marcus’ hands on my breasts. His fingers pinching my nipples and causing me to gasp around Henry’s cock.

I wasn’t sure if I was performing properly for Henry, having never done it before. I found that the more I tried to take him in and the harder I sucked, the more he seemed to lose control. I focused on his face, his movements, and his need.

It all went out the window the moment that I felt the first swipe of Marcus’ tongue on my sex.

I cried out with need, hips bucking wildly.

Henry’s cock popped out of my mouth and Marcus moved back. I was desperate to have him back.

“Please, Master, I need you!”

I received a sharp smack to my pussy which caused me to squeal and glare at my captors.

But to my surprise, my pussy began to throb even harder than before. The pain mixed with my desire had sent me even closer to something I didn’t understand.

Henry brought his cock back to my lips, and I eagerly took him in. I was better focused, or at least this is what I was telling myself. When Marcus moved back to my core, licking my folds, I managed to continue to suck on Henry's cock.

I began to taste his essence and knew he was drawing close. Marcus had used his thumbs to part my sex and began to eat me out in earnest. I squirmed and sucked, careful not to release Henry and desperate to have more of Marcus' mouth.

Henry grunted and his cum began to fill my mouth. I swallowed as much as I could, gagging a little on what I couldn't get down. As he pulled away from my mouth he cursed again.

"Fuck, Lucy, do you have any idea how fucking sexy you look with my cum on your lips?"

He bent down and took my mouth in a savage kiss. Marcus slipped a finger inside of me and began to thrust in and out of my channel as he flicked his tongue over my clit.

There was no way that I could have withstood that kind of delightful torment. I felt my orgasm rising up within me. Henry kissed my mouth, spearing me with his tongue almost as if he were fucking me. Marcus was relentless, sucking and licking until I began to fall apart.

My body flew over the edge, I was helpless to stop the biggest release I had ever experienced. My body shook, as wave after wave of pleasure washed over me.

I wasn't sure when Henry stopped kissing me or when Marcus moved back. All I knew was that when I pulled myself together, they were both staring down at me like the predators I knew they were.

"That was incredible." My voice was husky and deeper than usual.

“Oh sweetheart.” Marcus’ mouth curved into a smile as he said, “We are nowhere near finished.”

CHAPTER 15

Lucy

Henry unlocked the belt holding my wrists together, and then he flipped me onto my knees. I gasped when I looked up to see Marcus' long cock exposed and dripping with need. I stared at it longingly. His body was a little thinner than Henry's, who resembled a professional athlete. Marcus looked more like a runner, with whipcord strength and tight muscles.

Henry pushed my thighs apart and for a moment I thought he was actually going to fuck me. I couldn't even tell you how much I wanted it. But I felt his hands between my thighs instead of his cock. He rubbed the soft globes of my ass with his big rough hands and I pushed back against him. It felt good, damn good to be touched by him.

Marcus continued to stroke his cock, his eyes never once leaving my body. He moved closer and took one of my dangling breasts into his hands. The hard pinch to my nipple caused my pussy to clench.

"Fuck, she likes that," Henry said in his gravelly voice. "Her pussy is drenched."

To my utter surprise, I felt a sharp slap to my backside.

I squealed and tried to pull away, the heat from his spanking causing a warmth to develop that I didn't quite understand.

"Careful," Henry's tone was calming as he assured me. "You are safe, Lucy."

I trusted him to keep me safe, I trusted both of them.

Another smack to the other cheek nearly brought tears to my eyes. But as the warmth began to mix with the throbbing in my pussy, I felt a very different feeling. This time I didn't pull away.

"Do you like that?" Marcus asked me.

"Yes, Master."

The fire that lit in his eyes when I used that pet name was empowering.

"You are a good girl, aren't you?" he murmured, moving closer to me.

The tip of his cock touched my lips and I licked the spot, tasting the saltiness of his desire.

"What do you want, Lucy?" Marcus asked.

I swallowed hard. "I want your cock in my mouth, Master."

He growled, "Then you shall have it."

The moment that he pressed his dick to my lips, Henry began stroking my pussy again. Then I felt the tip of his tongue trace the rim of my ass. It was foreign and naughty, and I should have hated it. But I was too wrapped up in the moment to worry about social conventions and what should or shouldn't be appropriate.

All I could do was feel. And in this moment, I felt like I was going to come apart at the seams. Visions of Henry sinking into my pussy as Marcus fucked my ass swam in my mind. I wanted to know what it would feel like sandwiched so tightly between

them. To feel both of them inside of me, it would be a dream come true.

I sucked harder, hollowing out my cheeks and licking around the tip before sinking back down, taking him until I could hardly breathe.

Henry continued to play with my folds, his tongue dipping and circling my ass, driving me insane.

I could sense that Marcus was close and wanted more than anything to bring him to completion. I wanted to see the way he looked when pleasure overtook him.

Henry spread my legs further, slipping between them so that he lay on the bed and then he brought my hips to his mouth. Marcus pulled out and allowed me to sit up before joining us on the bed. I placed my hands on his hips and took him into my mouth again. It was at that moment that Henry started fucking me with his tongue. He used his whole face, rubbing his whiskers against my sensitive skin, bumping my clit with his nose.

His hands were on my reddened ass and the tighter he squeezed the closer I flew toward cumming. I took one hand to Marcus' balls, rolling them lightly and then pulling slightly, as I took him to the back of my throat.

He cursed wildly and yanked my face hard against him. He was all I could smell and see as he fucked my face and came down my throat.

Reeling from his release I blinked up at him and saw the tenderest expression on Marcus' face. I could sense the depth of feelings that he had for me. I also saw that his fangs were extended, as I was sure mine were as well.

"Please, Master, may I ask you something," I could hardly get the sentence out with Henry working his magic on my pussy.

Marcus tucked my hair back, kissing my forehead. “Anything, Kitten.”

“Would you please bite me?”

He froze for a fraction of a second and I worried that I might have destroyed everything. But then he moved to my neck and kissed the tender spot where my shoulder met my neck and his teeth sank in. The pleasure that washed over me was indescribable. I could barely keep the waves of my release from dragging me into unconsciousness. My pussy contracted again and again, shaking and cumming for what seemed like forever.

I had forgotten to breathe, the emotions where so intense. I felt when his teeth left my skin, but I couldn't open my eyes. I felt wrung out, satisfied and completely cared for.

Marcus lifted me off of Henry and I willingly went into his arms.

Henry left for a moment and I whimpered my upset at him stepping out.

“He's just running a bath for you, Lucy,” Marcus assured me.

Henry came back in and took me from Marcus. I went into his arms and felt the same love that I did when Marcus held me. Henry took me into the bathroom, and I saw that the tub was filling with hot soapy water.

Henry stepped inside of the bath and lowered himself with me still in his arms. Then he bathed me like a child or the most precious thing he had ever encountered. It brought tears to my eyes. I was already feeling emotional, and this tenderness was almost more than I could bear.

When Henry noticed the tears, he stopped washing. “Did I hurt you?”

I shook my head no—but I couldn’t speak.

“Marcus!” Henry called out to his brother. When Marcus came into the bath Henry gestured to me. “Something is wrong!”

Marcus tipped my chin up, “Are you alright?”

I nodded, the emotion still choking my throat.

“I think she is overwhelmed,” Marcus said more to Henry than to me.

I nodded again, thankful that they understood me.

After bathing, Henry took me back to the bed and I settled into his arms. Marcus took a quick shower and joined us on the bed. My life had sometimes been a lonely one with only Vetī as a companion. Being with these two men, this felt right, like it was where I was always meant to be. I fell asleep, once again, exhausted and happy.

CHAPTER 16

Lucy

“Malcolm is heavily involved with the alliance,” Jenny said, just before accepting a cup of coffee from one of the drones.

I could tell that she wasn’t overly fond of the idea that humans willingly gave up their blood for us. She was on edge, her hands shaking and her eyes darting about as if she couldn’t quite believe that she was actually staying in the royal vampire court.

Of course, not everyone was overly happy that two of the most prominent members of the alliance were now being protected by vampires. As a rule, vampires are very unforgiving creatures. Okay, so I know that is a huge blanket statement.

But I swear it’s one hundred percent true. Most of my case studies are based off of my experiences with Vetí. The very same individual that was currently sitting beside me and whispering in my ear.

“I can’t believe that you slept with Marcus and Henry,” she hissed.

“Shh,” I whispered back. “I don’t think that they heard you in New Jersey.”

“Your snarky attitude won’t save you, young lady.”

I rolled my eyes and huffed loud enough to have Joanie give me a strange look from across the room, where she sat near her parents.

They were talking about the Duke of Draven. I didn't know him personally, but I had heard of him and his brother, Sven. They are really terrible people. And according to Jenny, they are planning a major attack on the royal court.

As much as I should be paying attention because this was really important, I had Vetí's scandalized tones throwing me off guard as she whispered loud enough for any self-respecting vampire to hear.

"Do you have any idea what you are doing?"

"Veti, be quiet, seriously."

Veti leaned over and pinched my side. Just as I was about to retort something with a four-letter word Clark said something that stopped me in my tracks.

"They are planning on eradicating the entire Vasile family. They said they have informants on the inside. This isn't something to be taken lightly."

"So, what do we do?" Joanie asked, frowning. The Triple A's sat flanking her protectively, like her own personal army.

Viv cleared her throat. "We fight."

Her mates nodded in unison.

"We aren't going to let them get any of you," Henry said protectively and then moved to stand behind my chair. His arm on my shoulder immediately brought a sense of grounding that I can't even explain.

Veti, for once, didn't say a word.

“Sven really is alive?” Joanie said it more as a statement than a question.

“He was alive as of a few days ago,” Jenny answered her daughter.

“Do you have any names of who the insiders might be?” Marcus asked.

Jenny shook her head. “No, they didn’t know we were sneaking around trying to gather information. It wasn’t until they caught us listening in on a conversation between Malcolm and Sven that they left us for dead. They are coming after Evangelina; they know she is here.”

“There is something else,” Clark added. He and Jenny shared a knowing look before continuing. “Helen was frantic to get Evangelina back.”

Brendon, one of Viv’s mates, visibly stiffened.

Viv did that weird thing that she sometimes does, almost as if she were talking to him with her mind, which is obviously impossible. But she stared at him intently for a long moment.

Brendon’s hands were clenched when he said, “Helen is dead.”

Jenny frowned. “No, she is very much alive.”

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“I know for a fact that she is, indeed, dead.” Brendon said it with such finality that Jenny and Clark didn’t dare respond.

“Let’s adjourn this meeting,” Viv said with a sigh. “We can reconvene later to talk about particulars.”

She stood, and Brendon and Ace followed her from the room. I still found it strange to watch her with my face, her mannerisms being so different from my own.

Joanie left with the triple A’s. Jenny and Clark followed them.

“Might I have a few moments with Lucy?” Vetí asked.

Henry removed his hand from my shoulder and he and Marcus stepped out of the room. When it was only Vetí and me left she turned to face me, taking my hands into hers.

Vetí had always been there for me. From my first scraped, knee to my first period, she was there. Suddenly it dawned on me that we had gone from spending almost every waking moment together to just a few stolen moments here and there. My heart actually felt like it was hurting, and emotion clogged my throat.

“Please tell me what is going on with you,” Vetí asked in a low voice.

“I think I am falling in love.”

The honesty of the statement surprised both of us. Vetí blinked and swallowed twice

before responding.

“I knew that you had a crush on Marcus, but Henry? It’s only been a few weeks. How can you know?”

I shrugged. “I don’t know for certain. But the way I feel about both men is overwhelming. I know that vampires don’t really believe in soul mates.”

She shook her head. “They don’t, but that doesn’t mean that it can’t happen. I am just scared that you are jumping into things so fast. You used to tell me everything.”

“I know, but I am grown up now, Vet. You have spent so much time taking care of me that I think you have forgotten how to live for yourself. I don’t want to push you away. I only want to set you free. I don’t need a mother anymore, but I could sure use a friend.”

Her eyes glittered with unshed tears as she nodded. “I could use a friend as well. I love you, Lucy Lou. I can’t promise that I won’t freak out occasionally, I have been at this mothering business for a long time now. But I don’t want to smother you. And you are right, you are grown up now.”

She embraced me, and I inhaled the familiar scent of her perfume. I hugged her tightly to my chest and whispered, “I love you back, Vet.”

By the time we left the conference room we both had red-rimmed eyes. The talk had been good, cleansing even. It was long past time, and even though it was hard for both of us, it was the right thing.

Vet. deserved to live the life that she was meant to live. I would never, ever forget what she gave up for me.

“Is everything alright?”

A deep voice asked, bringing my eyes up and then up again. The man was staring at Vetí, clearly concerned at her upset. I searched my mind, trying to remember his name.

“David!” Vetí blushed and lowered her head. “Everything is fine.”

“Are you certain?” he inquired again.

“If you would both excuse me for a minute,” I said and disengaged my arm from hers.

Vetí gave me a death glare for deserting her, but I blithely ignored it.

I noticed that as I walked away her eyes were smiling, and she was answering the tall man. Perhaps this was what Vetí needed all along. An arm snaked around my waist and pulled me against a firm chest.

“I saw what you did there,” Marcus murmured into my hair.

I smiled a goofy smile, thankful that he couldn’t see my face. “Just a little matchmaking.”

He turned me in his arms, and I swallowed my grin, hoping that he wasn’t upset with me.

“You are one in a million, Lucy.”

The grin slipped out and to my surprise one spread across his face as well. But I didn’t have long to see it because soon he was kissing me, and to be honest I would

prefer that any day of the week.

CHAPTER 17

Marcus

I found myself staring at her, unable to think, unable to breathe. She and Vetí were whispering on the couch. It made me wonder what they were talking about. Whatever it was, Lucy had a beautiful flush staining her cheeks.

It reminded me of the night before when she was in my arms.

Henry and I had to come to an agreement earlier. Neither one of us could deny the pull that she has on us. I can't say that I was thrilled with the arrangement. But there was something right about the three of us last night, something that resonated inside of me.

I love Lucy. I could admit it, maybe not openly—yet. But I have known that she has been the one for me in my heart far longer than my mind would be willing to admit.

There is no way that I will allow the Alliance to come anywhere near her. I have spent the last twenty years protecting her.

After the meeting ended, Vetí asked to speak with Lucy alone so Henry and I went out into the hallway. It wasn't anything spoken aloud, but we both waited for her.

“Are you okay with this?” he asked in a gruff voice.

I looked over at my brother, who was both a little taller and more muscled than I was.

Henry is older, has magic, and has always gotten the girl.

Did that rub me the wrong way?

It used to.

Living as long as vampires do, you learn to let petty things go. Vetí and Henry are my only family, besides Lucy. I knew that she was developing a connection with him, and honestly, I would rather have a part of Lucy than nothing at all. Not that I would ever make her choose. Far too much of her short life has been taken away from her.

“Yeah.” I answered Henry’s question. “Are you?”

“I told you before that I was. I just don’t want things to change between us.”

I smiled at his gruff tone. Henry always sounded pissed off, even when he wasn’t. It was just his nature. I have never seen the tenderness that he shows Lucy given to anyone else. And that includes other women that he’s had throughout the years.

But Lucy just isn’t some random woman, she is everything. And Henry is smart enough to know that.

“Just because I have seen your hairy ass doesn’t mean we aren’t still brothers.”

Henry scowled at me, and I laughed. A good belly laugh that felt amazing. I wondered when the last time I had been that happy—I couldn’t remember a time.

“We are brothers,” he growled the words. “I have seen your junk almost as much over the years as I have seen my own. Don’t make this weird.”

The corner of his mouth twitched, and I could tell that he was amused. But he’s far

too badass to show it.

“Sir, there is a situation that I need you to take a look at.”

We both turned to see one of Henry’s men approach.

“Go,” I say. “I will wait for her and make sure that she’s safe.”

He nodded at me and left with the guard just as I saw another man coming around the corner.

“David,” I greeted him with a handshake. “How have you been?”

David grew up near our family. At one point I thought that he and Vetí might make something of the energy that always seems to be around when they are near each other. It wasn’t meant to be. David ended up here at the palace and Vetí stayed in the country.

Sure, she came to court occasionally, even stayed for long periods of time. But it seemed that when she visited, David would be off somewhere around the globe working for the Vasile family. When we first saved Lucy and didn’t know how we were going to protect the infant princess, it was he that first suggested Vetí to help take care of Lucy in a place hidden away from the world. It was a brilliant idea, and one that I have been very thankful for.

I wondered if my sister knew that David trusted and respected her enough with the king’s daughter. Likely she figured that we chose her because she was my sister. Sure, that had something to do with it. But David was right, Vetí was the only person strong enough to raise the princess and protect her.

David shook my hand firmly. “Marcus, it’s a pleasure to see you. I am happy to see

that Lucy is doing well.”

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I nodded. “She has grown into an amazing woman. I see you are back serving the Vasile family.”

David’s expression grew serious. “I am honored that Queen Vivian wants me on her staff. I hope to always do whatever I can to serve the true vampire court.”

I was about to respond when the door opened and Vetí and Lucy come out. Vetí was in front of Lucy so she didn’t see that I was there.

Vetí and David did their awkward routine, one that I am more than familiar with. But when Lucy tried her hand at matchmaking, I couldn’t help but feel a surge of love and affection for her. I snuck back behind her and when she tried to escape, I wrapped my arm around her waist and yanked her against me.

Her soft curves fit perfectly against my hard frame.

I loved the way her breath caught, as it does each and every time I am near. I also loved the surge of lust and heat that I always felt emanating from her. I could smell her desire, and I craved to have it on my tongue.

I turned her in my arms. She was smiling so beautifully that I couldn’t help myself. I took her lips with mine. The taste of her exploding in my mouth. My arms locked around her waist. I kissed her like I wanted to be making love with her, sensual and deep, no holds barred fucking that would leave us both breathless and satiated.

Her hands dug into my hair, tugging hard. I had thought that my cock was rock hard, but her hair tugging had me lengthening even further. I wanted to fuck her so badly

that I couldn't see straight. The image of her sucking my dick from the night before nearly had me coming in my jeans.

I cupped her ass, yanking her closer to me. She moaned into my mouth, her nails digging into my skin. I could feel her firm breasts smashed against my chest, and I wanted them in my mouth. I wanted to fuck her tits and come all over her like the Neanderthal I really am underneath it all.

I wanted to feel her fangs sinking into me and I wanted to see her fall apart as I plowed her pussy and ass.

Suddenly it was imperative that we were in a place that was far more private than the hallway of the royal court. I broke the kiss and loved the way she whimpered at the loss my lips on her own.

Before she could say anything, I picked her up in my arms and started for her room, then remembering that Henry's was closest, I went there instead.

Her lips were on my neck and I could actually hear the rapid pumping of her heart, indicating that she was just as turned on as I was. The first moment I had, I kicked the door closed, and I had her up against it. My lips crashed into hers once again.

We kissed and bit, ravaging each other's mouths. I needed her naked—now.

CHAPTER 18

Lucy

My panties were damp, and my core was aching, not an uncommon occurrence when I was with Marcus, but this felt overwhelming. His kisses were almost punishing and yet so protective and passionate. I loved that I was able to touch him. My hands roving over his strong chest and sculpted arms. I moved them up to his broad shoulders and then sank my hands into his hair. I loved the texture and softness along with the smell of his shampoo.

This was it. I was going to have sex for the first time, and it was going to be fucking amazing.

I moved my hands back down his body. As I passed his six-pack, I heard him moan. Marcus was fully erect, and I wanted some of that. Just as I went to unbuckle his pants, I heard a loud noise like breaking glass, and then shouting.

Wrenching his lips away from mine, Marcus said, “I need to see what is going on.”

“Now?” My plea was not unheard. Marcus reached out his hand cupping my face.

“I want nothing more than to be with you, Lucy, in every way. But I don’t want any distractions when I finally make you mine, and I am certain that Henry feels the same way.”

I flushed hotly. “You are right, of course you are.”

Before I could say any more the door to Henry's room burst open.

"You come with me," a man with white blonde hair and a menacing gaze demanded of me.

Marcus stood in front of me. "Sven, what gives you the right to tell her what to do?"

Sven spat on the floor. "The Vasiles are finished. They kidnapped my sister, killed me, killed my brother, my niece is missing, and I have come for retribution."

That sparked something inside of me and I asked, "How did you come back from the dead? It's been twice now, according to the stories I have been told."

"Do you honestly think you are the only necromancer out there, stupid little witch?"

Marcus' fists tightened, and he glared at Sven. "You will treat her with respect when you speak to her. And she is not going with you anywhere."

Sven moved to attack. It was so fast, a blur of motion. One moment Marcus was standing in front of me and the next he was fighting off a silver dagger aimed at his heart. I needed to do something, had to do something.

My hand flew out and connected with Sven's forearm. I felt the darkness inside of him swirling and thriving.

Marcus screamed at me to run away but I was oddly calm and shook my head slowly. I wasn't sure why it had never occurred to me before. But just as I had called a spirit back to a body, I wondered if I could thrust a spirit out. I have never tried to take a life with my craft and knew that it was dabbling in the dark arts. However, I would have walked into hell and back to save Marcus.

With a great surge of power through our connected skin, I pushed Sven's dark spirit as far as I could. I felt the jolt as the magic flowed through me and into him and then I felt his arm dropping as his body slumped. He fell heavily against Marcus, thankfully not stabbing him with the silver dagger in the process.

"He's dead!" Marcus exclaimed in complete confusion.

He shoved Sven off of him. "What did you do?"

"I had to," I said simply, feeling a little off, woozy, I supposed. I needed to sit down.

"You had to what?" Marcus asked and then he raced over to catch me just before my body slumped to the floor.

I hadn't passed out, but my energy level seemed to drop to nothing, and I could barely keep my brain functioning enough to answer.

"I had to kill him. He was going to kill you."

Marcus' brow furrowed. "You didn't kill him, Lucy."

I nodded, just as chills began to wrack my small frame. "I did kill him."

"How?" Marcus asked incredulously.

"With my mind," I whispered, my head aching and body trembling. I felt like I had a bad case of the flu.

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Marcus swept me off my feet, leaving Sven where he lay silent and lifeless. The shouts from around the castle were growing distant, or perhaps my consciousness was fading. He carried me over to the bed, peering into my face with a worried expression.

“What?” I said groggily.

But there were more loud crashes and glass breaking. Marcus picked me up once again and moved to the fireplace. In a move that belonged to another era, he pushed the second candlestick backward and a door popped open in the paneling.

We slipped inside the passageway just as more people entered Henry’s room.

“What is going on here?” A woman ranted angrily. “Ugh, this is what comes from trusting a Draven.”

“You are all charm, Margaret, as usual. It looks like my brother has gotten himself killed again. How many times does he expect to be raised from the dead?”

The woman with him grunted. I wasn’t certain if it was in agreement or disgust.

“There is no sign of the girl or Evangelina or of Eileen,” Margaret hissed at whom I could only think to be Malcolm, the Duke of Draven. “Pick up Sven, and let’s be done with this.”

I tensed in Marcus’ arms. If they did raise Sven, he would tell them about our whereabouts. They were sure to catch us despite the fact that we were in a secret

tunnel.

“Something is wrong!”

The frustration in Malcolm’s voice caused my panic to escalate.

“What do you mean?” Margaret snapped.

“I mean that his body just fucking disintegrated into ash. I can’t pick him up. This has never happened before.”

“We need to get out of here, Malcolm,” Margaret warned. “Bring him back or leave him for dead, I don’t give a damn.”

“I can’t leave him,” Malcolm snapped at her.

“Do you have a baggie to toss him in, and a broom to sweep him up?”

Margaret sounded like a mean bitch, but I had to laugh at her suggestions. I thankfully was able to do so without them hearing.

I felt sorry for Viv’s mate Brendon, who had grown up with the woman as his mother.

“Fine, I will scoop up what I can in my pockets.”

“That’s disgusting,” Margaret said with disdain.

In the next few moments there was some scurrying and then silence.

I opened my mouth to ask if we could check things out, but Marcus shook his head,

silencing me.

I felt more like myself and wanted to be let down. I tried to shove out of his arms, but Marcus held me closer still. I felt his hot breath on my ear as he whispered to me.

“You will be punished for not obeying me, Lucy.”

Why is it that I didn’t respond with dread or fear by his threats? Instead, I felt a warmth in the pool of my belly and heat returning to my core. He had to smell my arousal at his words because he cursed softly under his breath.

“You will not know what hit you, kitten.”

I couldn’t wait to find out what he had in store for me.

CHAPTER 19

Henry

This wasn't my first visit to the states, but I had never attempted camping before. Thankfully through the gift of magic we had all of the provisions necessary, like indoor plumbing and food. Unfortunately, the task of entertaining two seven-year-olds was far above my pay grade.

We were in the Rockies on some private property in a little A-frame cabin. We had a pot belly stove, couches from circa 1970, and some knitted quilts of the most garish colors I had ever seen. I attempted to make some updates but stopped when I saw how enthralled Lucy was with everything.

It was like a child at Christmas. We opened one of the closets to find some outdoor games. Lucy insisted that I put up the badminton set and that is what they were currently playing. Not a one of them had a lick of talent, but they were adorable to watch.

I felt that odd clenching in my stomach as I watched Lucy's flushed face and bright eyes. Her platinum long hair was wound into a messy bun and she looked hopelessly, breathtakingly beautiful. Every time her eyes met mine, she would beam at me.

Try convincing your dick to behave itself when the most amazing creature alive is in your presence. It was a damned difficult thing to do.

I recalled her face back at the royal court when the news came out that Sven really

was dead. I wanted to punch every last person in the face that gave her a leery eye, and that included my brother. Lucy was good through and through, it was more than obvious to me how scared she was. The brave front she tried to put on didn't hide the fact that she hadn't a clue what was going on.

If anything, I am glad that we came to the forest just so that she could laugh again. Vetí and David had taken up a bit of a parental role. Even now, she was fixing some dinner while David made sure that the three bedrooms were livable.

I wasn't sure how the night would go. Lucy informed Vetí that she would be staying with me. The little girls had their own room, which did contain two sets of bunk beds. If Vetí wanted to sleep there she could. However, I was pretty certain, by the light in David's eyes, that he wanted Vetí with him.

Underneath him if possible, and I totally understood the feeling.

I wasn't sure how I could keep my hands off of her. There were times when I caught her staring at me with such a heated gaze that I wanted to throw Lucy over my shoulder and head the for the nearest cave. I knew it was barbaric and I didn't give a shit.

This whole sharing routine with Marcus was difficult. I didn't know where the boundaries were, and it didn't help that he had said when I left to just let things develop naturally. What did that even mean? I can't believe that he wouldn't be hurt if I took her virginity.

Shit, just the thought of sinking into her had me hard as a rock. I turned abruptly, and calling over my shoulder said, "I am taking a walk. I'll be back in a little while."

"Wait," Lucy called back breathlessly.

I wanted to ignore her so that I didn't embarrass the hell out of both of us. But I couldn't. There was something inside of me that yearned for her. I looked back to see her sending the girls into the cabin. She then raced after me and caught my hand.

Electricity shot from the contact of her skin on mine clear up my arm. I held her hand in a firm grasp, not wanting to let go.

"I am glad that you suggested a walk," she was saying as I slowed my stride to make it more comfortable for her. "I was getting winded."

I gave her a side glance, feeling my lips twist into a smirk. "You can't tell me that those two little girls were wearing you out?"

She grinned; it wrinkled her nose adorably. "I don't know how Vetí managed me all of those years. I suppose that I just took it for granted. I owe her much more than I had ever realized."

I pulled her lithe body closer and slipped an arm around her waist. She felt good beside me. We were still able to stroll along, but we were as one, inseparable. That is how I wanted it to always be. And yet, it did seem like something was missing.

I had spoken with Alden about mating when there were more than two people involved. I needed some perspective on how it all worked. Primarily on how to avoid jealousy, because I had to admit, the closeness Lucy shared with Marcus was difficult for me.

We were compatible in the bedroom, that went without saying. But I didn't have the years of Lucy's idol worship to fall back on. I wanted to know her. And that involved every aspect of who she was as a woman, a friend, and as an individual.

"What are you thinking about?" she asked stopping to look up at my face.

I shook my head. “It’s nothing, why?”

“You have a frown on your face and your brows are knit together.”

To prove her point she reached up and smoothed the skin between my eyebrows. I smiled at her and fought the urge to take her into my arms.

“I was thinking about you, if you must know,” I teased her with a wink and lightly pinched her side.

“Goodness, I hope that I wasn’t the one who gave you the scowl.” Her eyes danced when she was happy. I loved the golden yellow flecks in her warm brown gaze.

I debated telling her the whole of it, but in the end, I figured that open honesty would be the only way that this could work. “I was thinking about the three of us, you, Marcus and myself. And of a conversation that I had with Alden.”

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Now she was the one to look at bit apprehensive. I mimicked her earlier move but touching the spot between her brows and she laughed. “What did he say?”

“I was asking him how to deal with different situations.” I was hedging, not wanting to come out and say that my feelings were hurt. Fuck, I wasn’t a teenage girl and I didn’t need to act like one.

Her cheeks heated, and she said, “You mean during sex?”

I threw back my head and laughed. The sound startling the both of us as I continued to laugh louder and longer than I had in a long while.

She had an answering grin on her lips as well as a bright blush on her cheeks. “Now you are making fun of me.”

I caved into the urge I had been having all along and yanked her flush against me. Her eyes widened, and her lips curved into the most inviting smile I had ever seen. I knew that she could feel my cock hard against her stomach. There was no hiding things at this point, not with her mashed against me.

“I would never make fun of you,” I said solemnly. “But the thought of getting sexual advice from anyone struck me as hilarious. Trust me, Lucy. I have millions of things that I want to do to you and with you. If you have to know, I was concerned about feeling jealous.”

She frowned. “Why were you feeling jealous?”

“You and Marcus, you have a ready rapport and a long history together. I don’t want our relationship to only be sexual. I want you to want both of us. Maybe that is presumptuous of me...”

She interrupted me, “No, it’s not. I want the same thing, Henry. The way I feel about you and Marcus. It seems so terribly complicated and interwoven together. I don’t know what true love is, but I know that I have a great depth of feeling for both of you.”

I tucked a loose curl behind her ear. “I care deeply about you too.”

My lips came down to explore hers. She tasted of sunshine and innocence and something sweet and womanly that wrapped around my heart and wouldn’t let go. I kissed her softly, hesitantly. I wanted this to be something that we both participated in.

Her hands moved up my chest. As she felt my body beneath her fingertips, I could feel every brush of her skin through my t-shirt. She was burning me with her sweet caresses, and I had to have more of her.

I picked her up off of her feet and deepened the kiss. Her mouth opened for me and I swept inside. Lucy gave back just as good as she got. Her tongue brandished out to meet mine, causing my stomach to clench and my cock to throb.

I pulled back from the kiss but didn’t release her. “I suppose we had better stop before I do something you might regret.”

She looked me dead in the eye and said, “I would never regret being close to you. Kiss me.”

And I did.

CHAPTER 20

Lucy

Kissing Henry was nothinglike kissing Marcus. Even from the way that Henry held me, it was like being protected by this massive force. His muscular body felt amazing underneath my hands. His lips were demanding, and yet, they didn't take too much.

I felt a swelling in my heart for this man. His hands moved down my back lighting a fire with each new place that he touched. I gasped as he cupped my ass and lifted me from the ground. Words were spoken and then I demanded that he kiss me. I could see by the fire in his eyes that he was trying to hold back. I wanted him to let loose. I wanted to see him break from the rigid confines of what he felt was his place.

I didn't know much about mates other than there was supposed to be a special bond. I couldn't even begin to explain the connection between us. My hands went up to cup his face. The whiskers on his cheeks pressed against my palms and I relished the closeness with him. I felt like I could have climbed inside of his embrace and never wanted to be anywhere else.

"What you do to me," he breathed the words as if saying a prayer. His lips moving from my mouth to kiss along my jawline.

I tilted my head back, loving the sensation and wanting to feel his mouth on my neck. I wanted him to drink from me. I rocked my hips against his hard abs and heard his muffled curse.

“Do you think that is funny?” he asked in a gravelly voice.

I pulled back the slightest bit, resting my forehead against his. “I think it’s nice that I am not the only one feeling overwhelmed.”

His eyes searched mine before he spoke. “Lucy, I would never have thought that I would find the one person that I was supposed to be with. It is so rare. I never in a million years could have imagined sharing that person with someone else. But I know that this is right. I know that you are meant for Marcus and me. I hope that we aren’t coming on too strong.”

From the aching between my thighs I would say it wasn’t nearly strong enough.

“I want you, make no mistake,” he continued. “But I want to get inside your mind. I want to know what makes you tick. I want to know your favorite foods, your favorite colors, and what you want to do with your life. I want all of you, Lucy.”

My hands slipped around to grasp the back of his neck, fingers threading through his hair. I could feel his breath against my lips as he spoke.

“Henry, I want all of those things. I do.”

And then he kissed me again, harder this time. His hands slipping beneath my clothing and his fingers squeezing my bare ass. I thrust my hips against him again and found my back being slammed up against the nearest wall. His mouth was ravenous, and with each sweep of his tongue my pussy became wetter and wetter, until I was afraid I might have a wet spot on my jeans.

He yanked my shirt off and then he was tugging my bra down until both nipples were exposed to him. When his mouth latched around one, I couldn’t help the keening cry that escaped my lips. My head fell backward and smacked the wall, but I didn’t care.

He suckled my breast hard and then soft, laving the nipple and teasing it until it was heavy with need. He did the same with the other breast and I was rubbing myself shamelessly against him. I knew that he was packing serious heat, but I had no idea how good it would feel as I rubbed my pussy against him. And this was through two layers of clothing.

“I need to be inside of you,” he said groaning and then he was at the fastening of my pants, and I was trying to get out of them as fast as possible.

He dropped to his knees in front of me to help remove my jeans, and then he was pushing my legs apart. I had to grab at his shoulders before his face came in and he began to lick and suck at my pussy.

“I fucking love the taste of you.”

I flushed at his words, feeling wanton and gorgeous in his arms. He lifted one of my legs, placing it over his shoulder and then licked my entrance causing me to buck against his face.

I looked down and saw the reflection of us in the stream. I could see the way my breasts were thrusting forward, nipples standing tall with proud erect peaks. I could see the way my stomach softly curved and then his dark head nestled between my thighs.

It was erotic, and taboo and I loved it.

Henry added two fingers pumping them inside of my channel as he continued to kiss my pussy, leaving nothing untouched. The moment he found my clit, I screamed out his name. He looked up at me with a wicked gleam in his eyes, and then moved back to suck hard on the tender nub.

I came apart in his arms and would have fallen if he wasn't holding me up. His fingers continued to pump in and out of me until the last vestiges of my orgasm had left my body. I felt wrung out, and yet hollow in a way. I wanted to have him inside of me. I wanted to know what that felt like.

I opened my mouth to say something when we heard someone shouting my name.

“Lucy?”

“Just a minute, Vet!”

I reached down and shoved my breasts back inside of my bra. Henry moved up my body, kissing my stomach, breast, neck and then my lips.

I pushed at Henry's shoulders. He allowed me to fix my clothes, but he had no intention of releasing me.

Vet came rushing from around the bend. By the look on her face I knew it was something important.

“Lucy, I hate to interrupt, but something has happened.”

Henry immediately pulled back as he barked out, “What happened?”

“It's Angelica, she passed out. I need you to come quick!”

“Take me to her.” Henry demanded

Vet turned and raced down the path toward the castle.

CHAPTER 21

Lucy

Angelica's body began to seize. Her small limbs moving in an involuntary pattern that terrified me. I had heard about seizures and Epilepsy but seeing it was nothing like reading about it.

"Does she have a history of seizures?" Henry asked Eva.

The other little girl shook her head violently. "This has never happened before."

Henry shared a very concerned look with Vetí and David. I felt helpless, and I didn't like the feeling. Kneeling beside Angie I touched her arm softly and she stilled. I hadn't used any magic or called to her spirit, but the others looked at me as if I had raised someone from the dead.

In all fairness, since I did that rather often; I was familiar with the look.

"What did you do?" Vetí asked gently.

I shook my head in confusion, taking my hand away in the process. The second my skin left hers she began to convulse again. Quickly I reached out and touched her again. This time her eyes snapped open and she began to speak.

But it wasn't the voice of a child that was coming out of her small body.

“Lucy, you must listen to me.”

All eyes snapped between Angie and me.

“The Alliance, they have another that is like you. They are raising an army against the vampires, an army of the dead. You must stop them.”

“How?” I asked imploringly. How was I supposed to stop an entire army?

“You must destroy your sister, Lola,” Angie continued in that other worldly voice.

“My sister?” I jerked back, nearly dropping Angie’s arm.

“Who are you?” Henry demanded.

Angie’s head moved slowly to look at Henry. It was strange to see her acting this way. As scary as it was when she was having a seizure, this might have been almost worse.

“I am their mother.”

Henry gaped, and I released Angie’s arm.

Thankfully, Angie didn’t fall back in to the trance. She blinked to clear her eyes and then asked, “What are you all doing here?”

Eva started to cry and Vetí took her into her arms. David hovered near them protectively.

“What do you remember last?” Henry asked Angie.

Angie looked from Eva, who was still crying, back to me and Henry. Her eyes were full of questions when she answered. "I remember playing with Eva."

I opened my arms to Angie. "Come here," I said gruffly. She moved, coming to give me a hug. Then she went over to Eva.

"Your eyes rolled back and then you fell," Eva said to Angie. "It was scary. And then you began to shake, and we couldn't make you stop." Her eyes moved to where I was still sitting on the floor. "Lucy made you stop. But then you started talking and you didn't sound like you."

Angie wrinkled her nose. "I don't know what you are talking about. None of this really happened, did it?"

I wasn't sure who she was asking, but thankfully Vetí answered.

"Everyone gets sick sometimes. Let's get you girls something to eat." She ushered the two girls into the kitchen and began to fix them a snack.

I got up and faced Henry.

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“What do you make of that?” I asked in a low voice, not wanting to upset Eva or Angie again.

“The royal family did have seven or eight children, many of them were girls. It is possible that you have another sister out there named Lola. I honestly don’t know for sure. I don’t know who the voice was or why your dead mother would choose to come through Angie to speak with you.”

I shrugged, before saying, “I have never spoken with the dead. I can call a spirit back to a body and apparently send it away, but I haven’t spoken to spirits that have passed on. Do you think that is Angie’s gift? Perhaps she speaks with the dead, but because she is so young, it hasn’t developed fully yet.”

Henry nodded slow. “It is a possibility. I wish that we knew more. We need to speak with Queen Vivian and the council.”

I tensed. “I don’t mind speaking to Viv, Joanie, their mates, or Marcus. But I have reservations about speaking with the entire council. There have to be more factions of vampires working inside the castle, and for all we know it is the highest of the group that is leaking information to the alliance.”

I didn’t have the chance to say more because at one moment Henry and I were secluded, away from the others talking, and in the next, Joanie and her triple A’s had popped into the room.

Alden looked like he was going to puke. Aiden grinned at me, and Adrian was holding Joanie’s hand.

“What are you doing here?” Henry and I asked at the same time.

“Dream,” Alden said distinctly as if that one would should solve all of the questions of the world.

“What?” Henry demanded.

Joanie smiled and moved to give me a hug. “I had a dream about Angie. We saw all of you here, as well as Angie being sick, and then speaking with that deep voice. As soon as I had awakened, I raced into Viv and begged to be able to come to you. She helped to send us but couldn’t come herself.”

I was completely shocked. “How long have you had these dreams?”

Joanie’s eyes twinkled. “You aren’t the only one who has magic in them. We all have our gifts, mine is to spirit walk in dreams.”

“I think Angie’s is to speak with the dead, and mine is to raise them.”

Joanie nodded and said, “I think you are right. Now the only question is if we have another evil sister out there, what are we going to do about her?”

I hadn’t the slightest idea.

“We are going to find her,” Henry said with determination. “Are you here to stay or do you have to return?”

Alden took a seat and whipped it around before plopping down into it. “We are in it for the long haul. Army of zombies? Hell yeah, bring it on.”

CHAPTER 22

Lucy

“Necromancy is a certaintype of magic involving communication with the deceased—either by summoning their spirit or raising them bodily. It is often considered sorcery or black magic as it goes against the natural order of things.”

I rubbed my hands as I listened to Vetí repeat what we had read about necromancy. It wasn't anything that I hadn't discussed with her a million times. But it felt different knowing that there is someone else out there with the same gifts, but she uses them for evil.

Lola.

I wondered what she looked like. Was she the oldest? Viv and I were not quite a year older than Joanie. Angie was twelve years younger. Was she somewhere in that space? Why did she help the alliance? I wished that I better understood the dynamics of everything. It was one thing to hear about Brendon being forced to take care of his mother, and quite another to think that you personally, might need to kill your sister.

I had a much greater empathy for Viv's mate. I can't imagine going through that once, only to hear that you needed to do it all again because they were raised from the dead.

Eva had been unusually quiet since Angie's ordeal. I wondered how she was dealing with things. Had she heard about Sven? So many questions and so few answers.

I felt a comforting hand on my shoulder and looked up into Joanie's worried expression. I tried to paste a smile on my face, but it must have sucked, as much as I wanted it to be successful, because she grimaced.

"What are you thinking about?" she asked kindly.

I shrugged my shoulders before responding, "There are too many things to count."

She nodded and sat next to me. "Pretty weird that there is another one of us."

"Yeah," I said wrinkling my nose. "I don't understand how the court doesn't have better memory of our family. It doesn't make sense."

Joanie nodded, saying, "I was talking about that with the triple-A's and they agreed. We think that they were spelled to forget what really happened during the massacre that destroyed our family."

"It was really weird speaking to my mother," I blurted out. "I should have asked her so many different things, and yet I was an idiot that just sat there. I should have gotten more information."

Joanie's expression changed from compassionate to stormy. "No, you need to stop that thinking right now. Lucy, you had no idea what was going on. For all you knew, Angie was having a seizure. You can't blame yourself for any of this. We didn't start this war; it came to us."

I hated that my throat felt tight and my eye glistened with unshed tears. I wanted to be as strong as Joanie and Viv. But growing up, sheltered away from the real world, I had missed out on so many different things. I felt like I was trying to make up for something, and my body was betraying me.

“It scares me too,” she whispered softly.

I turned to meet her gaze. “I just wish I understood better.”

I turned to look at where most of the group was talking, and Joanie followed my glance.

“Everyone here wants the same thing that you do, Lucy. We all want to get to the bottom of things. We all want to be able to live in peace without the threat of the Alliance over us. We all want to understand.”

I leaned my head into her shoulder and sighed. “I miss Marcus. How do you handle three mates?”

Joanie laughed. “I don’t. Not really. They handle things far better than I do. Just trust in Henry and Marcus and try to not overthink things. I know it’s confusing, but once you have completed the mating, everything seems to fall into place.”

I nodded slowly. “What if they don’t want to mate with me permanently?” I gave voice to one of the biggest fears that had been plaguing me.

“That’s not even a possibility.”

It wasn’t Joanie who had spoken, but a deep voice that I would have recognized anywhere. I flew out of Joanie’s arms and launched myself at Marcus.

“When did you arrive? I missed you so much! Have you seen Henry? Do you know what happened?” Each statement or question was interrupted by kisses that I smashed on his face.

He laughed, the sound pouring into me like warm honey, filling all the cracks.

“I missed you, Lucy.”

Those words were just what I needed. I held him closer, burying my face in his neck and smelling the rich essence that was only Marcus. I felt a hand on my back and knew that Henry had come to join us. Popping my head up I wrapped an arm around Henry and gathered him in to the embrace. “Did you see? Marcus came for us!”

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“I see, love,” his gruff reply was like salve to a wound. I needed both Marcus and Henry. I had felt off kilter with one or the other, but when we were all together things really did fall into place. I looked up to see that the room had been cleared.

“Where did everyone go?” I asked.

Marcus placed a soft kiss on my forehead. “They wanted to give us some privacy.”

“Oh.” As far as responses go, it wasn’t my grandest.

Henry laughed and wrapped me in his arms. “Come on, Little One.”

He carried me into our room and plopped me onto the bed. I watched as Marcus locked the door and came toward me. Both of my men reached up to remove their shirts at the same time. I stared as I watched the muscles on their toned bodies contract as they peeled off their shirts and then their pants. Two thick erections were barely concealed by their underwear. I swallowed hard.

“Do you accept me as your mate?” Marcus asked in a deeper tone than I was used to hearing from him.

I nodded.

“I need to words, love.”

“Yes,” I blurted out. “I accept both of you, Marcus and Henry as my mates.”

Henry growled, his extended canines flashing quickly as he faintly smiled. I could smell their arousal in the air around me, and it escalated the sense of need that was already threatening to boil over. I needed to tell them everything.

“I have fallen in love with you, with both of you. I don’t know when or how it happened. But I love you both. I want you to take me, to love me, to claim me, and to promise to never let me go.”

“You are ours,” Henry said in a low growl that sounded almost like an animal. “Nothing will ever keep us apart again.”

Marcus nodded and said, “We were destined to be together, Lucy. Henry and I were nothing until you. We love you.”

Henry moved to the bed, stalking me like I was prey. I felt my stomach tighten as he made short work of my clothing, nearly ripping it off. Then he leaned over me, his massive body pushing me back against the soft bedding and claimed my lips.

I kissed him back with all of the love that I had in my heart. It was raw and dominant and everything that I wanted from a kiss.

I felt my legs being parted, and then I felt Marcus’ mouth claiming my pussy in a kiss that was every bit as incredible as the one Henry was giving to me. This was how it was meant to be.

CHAPTER 23

Lucy

Marcus licked and sucked at my juices, ravenous in the way that he took me. This was finally my moment, the time when I would submit everything to my lovers, and we would become one. I could hardly stand the anticipation of it.

My hips wanted to move, but Marcus kept a firm grasp on them. Henry continued to kiss me while his hands snaked out and captured mine. I felt them lifted and then being fastened to the headboard. At the same moment, Marcus' mouth left my pussy and I cried out into Henry's kiss.

But he wasn't leaving, Marcus was taking each of my feet and fastening the cuffs that would leave me spread before them like a feast. I felt the air on my tender folds and relished the feeling of erotic decadence. I imagined a room full of faceless men that all wanted me, were dying for just a glimpse of my naked flesh. It was nothing that I would want to have in real life, but as far as fantasies go, it caused my juices to flow even more freely.

Marcus was once again back between my thighs, pressing them obscenely wide as he ate at me.

Henry's lips left mine for the briefest of moments as he growled, "You are ours, Lucy. Ours to fuck, to love, to cherish, and to ravish whenever we wish."

"I am yours," I whispered through swollen lips. "Do anything you wish." I paused the

briefest of moments before adding, “Masters.”

Henry’s eyes blazed and then he was dragging his elongated teeth along my throat and I was crying out and begging him to taste me, to take me, to do his will with me.

I cried out the moment his teeth sank into my flesh. The pleasurable pain of it immediately washing into a massive orgasm that was only extended by Marcus’ mouth on my core. One orgasm slipped into the next, and I was helpless against the torrent that continued to drag me under. I was shuddering and begging for a reprieve when Henry finally lifted his head.

In a matter of seconds, he had replaced Marcus at the juncture of my thighs. Only it wasn’t his mouth at my entrance. His massive cock felt like fire against me. I didn’t have time to wonder about how it would fit or what I should feel. Because one moment Henry was staring down at the place where our bodies met and the next he was pushing into me.

I muffled a scream as my innocence was ripped away.

“You are such a good girl,” Marcus murmured, moving up to cradle my face and offer me support. “You are taking his cock so well; we are so proud of you.”

The praise warmed me, as I searched Marcus’ eyes. I was desperate to see that my masters were proud of me, and indeed, they were. He kissed my forehead and then my mouth.

The tension and tightness from Henry had changed from the piercing pain into something else. There was still an intense amount of pressure. But as Henry pulled out and then pressed in again, slipping in my wet channel, I began to feel something delicious.

Henry fucked me slowly, deliberately. And all the while Marcus whispered words of praise.

“There Lucy, just like that.” Marcus winked at me wickedly before capturing one of my nipples and giving it a hard tug with his teeth.

I gasped; the stinging pleasure seemed to travel straight to my clit.

“Shit do that again,” Henry growled.

Marcus continued to torture my breasts in sweet ecstasy while Henry’s thrusts increased in pace. My body was spiraling, soaring, for surely there couldn’t be more pleasure to be had in this world. I couldn’t fathom it.

“It’s time,” Henry said and pulled out of me so abruptly that I cried out. “Shh, love, all will be well. We both need to be inside of you to perform the claiming.”

Both.

Inside of me.

Holy fucking shit.

“Are you alright?” Henry asked tenderly, seeing the warring emotions cross my face.

I nodded.

“Words, love.”

With one large hand, he captured my cheek as I leaned into him. I immediately felt better.

“I want this,” I said. My voice was raspy, and my eyes were sparkling with the tears that has slipped down my cheeks.

“But?” he encouraged.

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“I’m scared,” I whispered the words, letting go the last of my secrets. “I don’t want to disappoint either of you.”

Marcus and Henry were on either side of me in a flash.

“You could never disappoint us, love,” Henry said as he kissed the traces left from my tears.

Marcus smiled, the love he had for me radiating from his face. “What is this nonsense? Get up on your knees or I will spank you until your ass is on fire.”

The thought of his hand on my ass did strange things to my belly.

“Is that how this is going to go?” Marcus asked huskily.

“I didn’t listen, Master.” I bit my lower lip and cast my eyes down.

It was all a game, and yet I knew that if I had my Masters taking the choices from me, caring for me, that I wouldn’t have time for the doubts and fears plaguing me. I needed to submit to them, and they needed to dominate me.

Marcus moved and untied my feet. I was then turned so that my hands remained tied to the headboard, but my ass was high in the air. Henry caressed my skin, touching me everywhere, my shoulders, the small of my back. He even took the time to trace the curve of my throat and the tender spot behind my ear.

“You are so fucking beautiful, Lucy,” he said tenderly. “You are our mate and we

will do everything in our power to please you, to care for you.”

“I love you, Henry. Marcus, I love you, too.”

I was leaning into his caress like a cat rubbing up against its owner when the first crack of Marcus’ hand landed on my ass. My scream filled the air as the burning heat from his first strike warmed my ass. I barely had time to think before the next hand came down and then another.

Tears flooded my eyes once again, as Marcus spanked me with his bare hand.

Burning heat flooded my lower region. And the sweet ache that had started to develop from Henry’s touch became a wildfire of need and want. My clit throbbed, and my pussy ached. It needed to be filled, to be fucked.

CHAPTER 24

Lucy

Henry reached up tountie my hands and then laid with me atop him. His cock filled me just as I felt Marcus move my hips so that I was in position, then he gently pushed into my ass. Instead of pain, my body welcomed them. It was tight, so very tight that I wondered if I would ever breathe again.

Henry's incisors clamped down on the opposite side of my neck just as Marcus leaned down and sank his teeth to my shoulder.

I don't know if I could possibly describe the feelings that shot through me. It was glorious, heart stopping, a religious experience, this bonding of the mates was more beautiful than anything I had ever done before.

My body was filled with the men I loved, and I was positive that nothing could ever be sweeter.

And then they moved, and I saw stars.

I couldn't tell you how many times I climaxed during our mating. Nor could I tell you the moment when I sailed off into subspace. All I knew was that when my soul returned to my body, I was firmly pressed between my two mates.

"Are you alright, love?" Henry asked with a concerned look in his eye.

I nodded and couldn't help the smile that spread across my face.

"What is it?" Marcus asked indulgently.

"Nothing," I said quickly, and then squawked in protest when Marcus pinched my already sore bottom. "Fine, I will tell you. It's only that I am truly happy. For the first time in my life, I am full. Does that make any sense at all?"

Marcus nodded, and caressed my bare breast. "I feel it too, Lucy."

Henry grunted in what I can only assume was agreement.

"What now?" I asked. "What do we do about the threats from the agency? What do we do about Lola?"

Henry spoke, his voice menacing when he said, "You are not to worry about her. Marcus and I will protect you."

I raised a brow. "Maybe I will protect the both of you against her. I am not afraid of Lola for myself. But I have just learned who my family is. The both of you and my sisters, they are everything to me. I don't know how this girl could possibly be our sister. Maybe it's a trap?"

"No matter what happens, nothing will take your family away ever again," Marcus said with such strong authority that I wanted to believe him. "She might have powers that we aren't familiar with, but you are a powerful witch as well as a vampire, Lucy. I cannot help but think that when you, Joanie and Viv work in tandem that it will be a power unlike anything we have ever seen."

"Your sisters need better training," Henry added. "The best thing to be done now is to see that we are ready. We don't need to seek them out, it would appear that they are coming for us. What we need to do is be prepared. The magic that your sisters hold

needs to be cultivated and harnessed properly.”

“But what about the vampires?” I gasped. “They abhor magic.”

Marcus curled his lip in distaste. “It is wrong that vampires should have to live in fear for their lives because of who we are, and yet, our race does the same thing to the witches. Perhaps if all of the hatred and hypocrisy were to be addressed, we might all live in peace.”

I laid there stunned for a moment. I hadn’t considered this possibility before, but Marcus was right. Vampires hated witches and hunted them to what they supposed was extinction. And yet the vampires were now experiencing the same thing from the humans.

What if this was all just an elaborate plot? It was as if someone was using our differences to create problems and allowing us to destroy ourselves.

“What are you thinking in that beautiful head of yours?” Marcus murmured softly.

I bit my lip, concern etched in my expression. “The vampires and the witches can no longer be divided. If we have any hope at all, we must put away our differences.”

Henry traced a finger across my cheek. “You are very wise, my love. We will gather in the war room and present this to our queen.”

Marcus smiled softly and held me close, just as Henry was doing on the other side of me. I didn’t know what would happen with this war, the witches, the vampires, or my long-lost sister, Lola. But I did know that with my mates by my side, we could do anything.

I could only pray that anything would be enough.

Continued in Virgin Vampire 4: Lola for an excerpt, keep reading.