



# The Blood Seduction

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**Category:** Romance, M-m Romance, Paranormal, Vampires

**Description:** Never get between a Vampire and his beloved.

Seduction is in the blood.

Victor Raum is the second in command of the Rose Coven of Vampires. He's an elite warrior and a deadly creature. The Rose Coven lives on the dark side of society, skirting the rules and playing for keeps. They protect their own, by any means necessary. When Victor catches the scent of his beloved, he stops at nothing to track him down and bring him into the safety of the Rose Coven.

Jaden Pearson is at the end of his rope. He's being used, threatened, and blackmailed and he sees no escape in sight. Just as the danger starts to close in, a handsome and powerful vampire swoops in and picks up the pieces of his life. He feels the seduction of this elite vampire and gives in, body and soul. He wants Victor's love and protection.

Danger still lurks and Jaden's past still haunts his present. Luckily, Victor doesn't take no for an answer and always gets his man.

You don't cross the Rose Coven and live to talk about it.

**Total Pages (Source):** 10

## CHAPTER ONE

In the back of Jaden's mind, he knew he deserved it. He deserved everything that was coming down on him, and the disgusting position he found himself in was of his own making. The apartment rent was coming up, and he knew Murphy did not have the money. He hadn't found another job since being let go from Smithers Financial. There was a shadow that lay across him and his friends because they worked closely with Ryan Phillips, the man who caused the downfall of the entire company and then disappeared.

Jaden worked two jobs, as a receptionist during the day and a waiter at night, but his wages alone could not meet the bills. He desperately wanted to leave, but Murphy trapped him. He still had that fucking video that Ryan had taken in his office and was using it for all it was worth. Jaden sat many nights wondering if what he was forced to give up was worth what he might lose if the video were published.

Murphy threatened to send it to his parents, relatives, and friends. He didn't have many friends left since Murphy began controlling his life, so they wouldn't be much of an issue. It still crushed him to think of his poor mom and dad seeing that video and what they would think. That pain kept him tied to that bastard Murphy.

The physical side of their relationship was almost nonexistent with Murphy usually out to all hours drinking and otherwise engaged. But still, he refused to release him, demanding he stay and help pay expenses. He was paying for most everything and functioning as Murphy's personal assistant, maid, cook, and whatever else he needed. Jaden was finding his life exhausting and miserable, but he didn't know how to get free.

“Make dinner before you leave.” Murphy barked at him from the sofa where he sat scrolling through his phone. Jaden was dressed and ready to leave for his restaurant job and hearing Murphy’s demands sent a chill of rage up his spine. He ached to tell him to go right straight to hell, but he didn't; instead, he turned and spoke calmly.

“Your dinner is in the oven.” He said and continued walking.

“You are so fucking useless. I don’t know why I put up with your stupid ass.” Murphy muttered and kept scrolling. “You better make some decent tips tonight. Shake your ass and show a little cock if you have to. Treat them like you did that fucking janitor, and maybe they'd pay you better.” He laughed and continued to say rude and disgusting things as Jaden left the apartment.

Jaden hurried outside to his car and was soon on his way. The need to get away from that man overwhelmed him and he wished that he never had to go back. After a few minutes he’d settled and was getting his mind ready for a night of waiting tables. The restaurant was not upscale, but it wasn’t fast food either the place was a fine family restaurant, and the tips were usually pretty good.

He'd been taking half of his tips and putting that money away for the time he was ready to make his escape. Murphy thought the place was low class, so he didn't question when the tips were lower. Jaden had nearly three thousand tucked away; he just needed to figure out the right time. Murphy's threats were real. He was mean enough to send the video to his parents and others. He wanted so badly to leave, but he was just too damned scared of the fallout.

Victor Raum was second in command of the Rose Coven. He and Master Conall Rose founded this Coven together over a century ago after leaving their home coven in New York. They grew and thrived, building a presence and a legacy in this town and a life they were proud of. Conall was a leader like none other, and the Coven was strong and stable because of his guidance and control.

They might often operate on the wrong side of the law, but they always operated in their own best interests and everything else could be negotiated. They weren't a family friendly group Master Rose left that to the suburban covens. They were hard men with varied backgrounds and they worked together to make a good life if not a comfortable life for themselves.

Lately the men had started finding interest in uniting with their Fated beloveds. After Drakon found his and Drakon was one of the most feared and dangerous men in the coven interest started to peak. They figured if Fate gave Drakon a forever lover then she was open to giving them one too.

Victor loved his life at the Rose Coven. The only thing missing was his beloved, and he had to admit he was jealous as hell when Drakon found his beloved. He and Conall were older than any other vampire in the Coven, and yet they have never been chosen.

He refused to believe that their lives, which were brutal in the beginning and still somewhat today was the reason Fate refused them. Fate wasn't so petty; at least, he hoped not. Conall wasn't so sure and held out little hope for a forever partner in life. Victor retained his optimism on the subject because he felt it in his bones. He knew there was a man out there for him, just waiting to be found, and in the meantime, he had a job to do and money to make.

"Drakon will present his beloved to the coven on Saturday evening." Conall stated as he walked into Victor's living room. Victor was sitting by the large window taking in the sunshine and finishing his coffee. Victor's quarters took half the top floor of the Coven house and Master Rose's quarters took over the other half. Conall liked having his second close at hand and Victor liked the view.

"They will meet with you this afternoon. Welcome Dean to the Coven and find out if he has any particular wishes or needs." Conall was a harsh individual, no arguing that

point, but he could also be quite considerate.

“I’ll make sure he is made to feel welcome.” Victor assured. Conall poured himself a cup of coffee and sat down in a chair next to Victor.

“Dean has some useful finance skills be sure to investigate and offer him a suitable placement in the Rose Enterprise.” Conall was always on the lookout for talent.

“Will do.”

“Where do we stand with Smithers Financial?” He asked. It had been a month since the Coven had spearheaded the takedown of that business.

“They were one fucked up organization.” Victor shook his head. “Even if we hadn’t dismantled the place, I doubt it would have survived another quarter.”

“Really.” He sounded intrigued.

“Upper management was helping themselves, and the incident with Dean was not the first time they played fast and loose with client money.”

“Interesting.” Conall was planning something. “Have Ethan research their parent company and get back with me.” Victor nodded. “In the meantime, let us prepare to welcome our new members.

“Members?”

“Yes, Misha has found his beloved as well. He was covering as a bouncer at the Blood Rose, and his beloved walked up and introduced himself.” Conall laughed. “If only it were always so easy.”

“A vampire?”

“No, a cute little fox shifter, from what I've been told.”

"I hope we're next, Conall. I've been waiting centuries for my beloved, and so have you." Victor lamented.

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"Our day may come, and it will be made sweeter for having waited so long," Conall assured, and Victor hoped he was correct on both counts.

Jaden worked as a receptionist for a local psychologist from Monday through Thursday so often took extra shifts at the restaurant over the weekend. He was called in to help cover the lunch rush and then would return later in the evening to pick up a few more hours. The manager knew his situation and his need for hours and tried to help him out as much as possible.

Murphy was running out of money, even though Jaden was paying the rent and other household expenses. He used his money for networking or some such bullshit. Jaden didn't care; all he wanted was to get away from the man and have a chance to establish his own life once again. That fucking video was effectively destroying his life, and he didn't know how to undo it.

The sex had been a one-off; neither he nor the janitor wanted anything from the other. It was situational, and they never pursued it further, and now it had become a defining moment in his life. It wasn't fair.

He pushed the stress that was his life from his mind and began taking orders. Time was flying by until someone walked in who sent Jaden into a mental tailspin. He looked across the floor at his new table and froze for a few seconds. Sitting there with a handsome companion was Dean Simon.

They weren't close but he knew Dean they'd worked together at Smithers Financial. He felt for Dean and the torment he went through with Ryan and Murphy and the others. It looked like he landed on his feet after the company crashed. Dean deserved

a little good luck.

Jaden was surprised when he approached the table, and Dean recognized him. "Jaden, how are you? I hope things are going okay." He sounded genuinely concerned.

"I'm doing okay." He did not want to get into anything there in the restaurant.

"If I can help you in any way, please call me. Let me give you my number." He quickly wrote it on a piece of paper and handed it to Jaden. He could see that Dean's companion was not pleased with the interaction but did not interfere.

"I'm glad that place is closed, but some torments never seem to end," Jaden said more than he intended. He stepped back and was about to turn away when Dean stood and hugged him briefly.

"You were in a difficult situation with Ryan and his pals. I saw how they treated you, and I'm sorry I never said anything." Jaden was shocked by his apology and felt it was completely unnecessary.

"They treated everyone horribly; you have nothing to apologize for."

"I'm glad we're all finally free."

"I'm glad you're free." With that Jaden turned away and headed to the other side of the restaurant and began waiting tables. He was not free, but he was sincerely glad that Dean had gotten away.

He focused on work and got his mind off Dean and the handsome man he was with. Jaden had felt a stab of jealousy at the sight of Dean looking so good and so relaxed and in the company of someone so attentive. The man was gorgeous, but he was also clearly taken with Dean.



Jaden had never experienced a serious relationship in his life everything was shallow and short lived. He'd been with Murphy for two months and it felt like ten years. There was no relationship it was strictly power and control. He took his break and went out back to sit and have a soft drink. The place was busy so his break would be cut short but any chance to sit was welcome.

His mind wandered once again to Dean and the phone number in his pocket. He would never call him, but it was kind of him to offer. Jaden figured his problems were his own, and it was up to him to figure his way out. He did hope that Fate had better days ahead for him.

## CHAPTER TWO

Drakon and Dean were to arrive shortly, so Victor headed back to his quarters. He'd spent the morning investigating the parent company of Smithers Financial but found nothing but roadblocks. He was certain that Ethan and his team would get them the answers they needed. Smithers Financial had all the earmarks of a laundry set up with enough legitimate clients to look the part of a financial institution and escape scrutiny.

Whoever was running the scheme shut things down as soon as they lost the majority of their client base. They also showed no interest or concern in regard to the disappearance of their employee Ryan or the apparent criminal activity he and his friends were promoting.

He arrived at his quarters just as he heard Drakon and Dean entering the outer room. Drakon was one of his best, and as lead enforcer, he could always be counted on to carry his end in any situation. The man was known to be quick, quiet, and infinitely talented. Victor was pleased that he'd found his beloved. He lived through a lot of darkness and deserved the love and comfort of his life partner.

“Come in, sit down.” He said and handed them both a drink with which they toasted the new bond. They discussed the ceremony to induct Dean into the Coven and Victor assessed Dean’s interests and focus to get an idea of his strengths. As the meeting progressed he found himself feeling an attraction to Dean not in the usual sense but to something he was wearing. Unable to ignore it any longer he cast a serious glance at Drakon and then at Dean.

“Where were you before coming here?” He asked his tone was clipped and he couldn’t help it. He did notice Drakon placing his arm across Dean in a protective manner.

“I mean him no harm.” He told Drakon and then waited for an answer to his question.

“We had a late lunch at the Belvedere Restaurant downtown,” Dean answered.  
“Why?”

“You carry a smell that interests me.” He said and understanding shown in Drakon’s expression. “Did you get close to anyone other than Drakon.” He smiled.

“You hugged your friend.” Drakon prompted.

“Yes, I did.” Dean seemed to remember. “He was someone I knew from when I worked at Smithers we weren’t close, but we had a silent comradery since he too was treated so badly at that place.”

“His name?” Victor was getting impatient. The scent was wrapping itself around him filling his mind and his body with a desire that could be sated in only one way and with only person, his beloved.

“Jaden Pearson.” Dean told him and Victor immediately headed for the door he could not delay. Drakon called out to him good naturedly.

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“Good luck, Victor.” He said and then added for Victor’s benefit. “He’s a beautiful young man.” Victor headed directly to his car with only one thought in his mind and that was to find Jaden Pearson.

Jaden was coming back from his break when he saw Murphy standing in the hallway, separating the back rooms from the front of the restaurant. He looked angry but then he always looked angry. He was dressed in his expensive suit, but he looked disheveled and his hair, which was usually styled to perfection when he went out was a mess as if he dragged his fingers through it multiple times.

“Get your ass over here.” He spat between clenched teeth. In an effort to lessen the amount of humiliation he would feel, Jaden hurried over to Murphy and spoke in a whisper, hoping he'd do the same.

“What do you need? I’m working I can’t be socializing I’ll get fired.” Jaden kept his head down, but Murphy grabbed him by the hair and pulled his head back bringing his face up to his.

“You will listen to me and will do exactly what I tell you to do. You belong to me, and don't you fucking forget that.” He hissed the words against Jaden's cheek, spreading spittle along the side of his face. Jaden tried to pull away, but he tightened his grip on his hair. "Don't you fucking move."

“What do you want?” Jaden was still trying to minimize the humiliation, but people were beginning to notice. “Please don’t make a scene.”

"That's up to you now, isn't it. All I want is whatever money you have in your pocket."

Give it to me, and I'll go away."He was talking softer finally and pulling him to the far end of the hall, away from customers and foot traffic.

"I don't have much."

"Just give it to me." He demanded, and Jaden pulled a few bills from his pocket. "Is this all?" He wasn't happy. He searched Jaden's pockets aggressively while holding him trapped against the wall with his body. "You're fucking useless." He snapped when he didn't find anything more than Jaden had given him. Murphy looked demented, pressing his face to Jaden's and letting him know that if he didn't start making better wages, he would start pimping his ass.

"I owe some very dangerous people a lot of money, and they have shone a marked interest in you, especially after I showed them your video." He chuckled low in his throat, a sound that made Jaden's skin crawl. "They made a deal with me that I find quite generous." He paused to gargle another laugh. "You're going to go to them and give them the fucking time of their lives."

"Absolutely not!" Jaden was horrified and outraged at the suggestion.

"You don't have a choice in this; if I say you go, then you go. You will go to them at the address I give you, and you had damn well better meet every one of their sordid expectations." He smiled through gritted teeth, and Jaden could see his eyes going red with anger. He didn't like to be challenged, but there was no way that Jaden was about to allow himself to be sold for sex. He no longer cared if his parents saw that infernal video; they'd get over it. This was a step too far, and their relationship, as demented as it was, ended now.

"Get the fuck off me." Jaden snarled and started pushing against him. That was definitely the wrong thing to do. Murphy turned ugly and started slamming him against the wall repeatedly. Murphy was strong, and Jaden heard the drywall cracking

under the assault.

Victor entered the restaurant and instantly began scanning the room looking for Jaden. He'd know when he saw him even now his scent was filling his heart and mind calling to him and pulling him closer. His heart was near beating out of his chest as he moved around the interior of the main floor in search of his beloved.

"May I help you, sir?" The manager approached him.

"Jaden Pearson, where is he?" The manager did not give him trouble. Victor could look rather dark and determined when focused on a goal.

"I believe he is in the back hall with someone." The manager pointed in the direction of the hall and Victor did not waste time. The closer he got to the back area of the restaurant the stronger Jaden's scent presented and the assault on his senses was exhilarating.

The scene before him was off. Jaden was being held aggressively against a wall by a man much taller and broader. He was scared, and the scent of his fear filled the air between them. Victor was feeling the rage prickling along the surface of his skin. The man hauled back and struck Jaden across the face, knocking him to the ground, and Victor raced to the end of the hall.

"What the hell are you doing?" He shouted at the man, knowing he couldn't kill him here in public but needing to get his attention off his beloved. He grabbed him by the front of his suit jacket and pulled him away from Jaden.

It was then that he caught the scent of tiger shifter. This was no ordinary man. He turned on Victor angrily and ready to engage but Victor flashed his vampire persona a frightening visage that had the man rethinking his plan and running away instead. Jaden had slid to the floor and appeared unconscious. People were starting to pay

attention, so Victor picked up his beloved and exited out the back door.

This was not how he was expecting to meet his beloved, but it did expedite the relationship. The tiger shifter was a concern. Was he a lover, an ex or was this a random attack? Whoever he was he would be dealt with. Jaden's life appeared to be problematic but there was nothing Victor could not resolve he had the power and the connection to take care of anything or anyone who got in his way.

He deposited Jaden in the front passenger seat of his car and buckled him in. The bruising around his mouth and cheek was becoming obvious, and it brought a fierce protective streak out in him. Victor took a cursory look around the area just in case that fucking tiger was in the vicinity. He was nowhere, which made Victor's anger continue to rise. He would find him, and he would end him.

Victor grappled with either taking him to the hospital to be checked out or taking him home letting their medic Ari take a look at him. Ari was skilled with vampire physiology, but Victor was sure of his ability to diagnose and care for human injuries. In the end he took him home not comfortable with having the young man out of his sight or in the hands of others.

Jaden moaned softly but did not wake. Victor reached over and took his hand holding it loosely and noticed that Jaden calmed immediately. The connection was just as powerful as he'd been told. The warmth and touch of his hand was having a strange effect on him. Victor could feel the desire for this manspiking and the need to get him somewhere safe was paramount. The bond was beginning to take shape and their lives were coming together.

He pulled into the back garage and took his beloved into his arms once again. He weighed no more than a whisper, and the thought that a shifter had laid hands upon him was shocking. Victor placed a light kiss on his tender, swollen lips and was amazed at the sensations that raced through him at the touch. This was his beloved,

his special one.

His apartment was not warm enough he liked it cool, but his beloved needed warmth and comfort, so he turned up the heat before taking his precious armful to the bedroom. He was okay Victor could feel his heart and his life force and both were strong.

Even though he was confident that Jaden was well and just needed to rest and recover, he gave Ari a quick call after getting Jaden comfortable in their bed. He had never shared that bed with another living soul, taking his pleasure elsewhere, never wanting a close relationship. He was waiting for his beloved even as he pondered the possibility of never getting one. Fate smiled on him and now he had this gorgeous small human to call his own. Jaden was much more than he deserved and a precious reminder that all things are possible.

He placed a warm blanket over him and slipped off his shoes and loosened his belt but didn't touch his clothing. Victor took a moment to study his young man from the dusty blond hair that curled around his face to the lovely red lips that even though bruised were calling to be kissed. His face was that of a gentle man and his aura spoke to difficulties and suffering. His beloved was a deep chasm of tension and secrets, and he intended to bring each and every one to light.

Ari and came and went letting Victor know that his beloved was fine and would awake when his body recovered from the shock. After several minutes of staring at Jaden willing him to awaken, he decided he'd probably need some help explaining himself once he did wake.

"Drakon, would you have Dean stop by my place as soon as possible." He explained the situation, and since Dean and Jaden were acquaintances, he figured Dean's presence would make Jaden less suspicious and less fearful.

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“He’ll head over right now.”

“Thank you.”

Victor closed the call and took a seat in the leather chair to the left of the bed. He didn’t want to be hovering too close in case Jaden woke. It might look creepy, and he did not want to look creepy or weird. This would be their first formal introduction, and he wanted his best foot forward. Jaden had looked at him in the hallway, but it was unlikely that he would recall since he was cold-cocked by that idiot tiger right after. Victor leaned forward and ran the backs of his fingers down the side of Jaden's face, needing the contact and the reassurance that he was okay. He was surprised to realize how much he enjoyed just being near this man and touching him.

Drakon was good to his word and Dean arrived shortly after his call. “Is he okay?” Dean always full of care and concern was immediately worried for his friend.

“Yes, but the man he was with struck him and knocked him out. He's been out for about an hour and should be waking soon.” Victor showed him into the bedroom, and Dean went over to the bed and sat on the edge, taking Jaden's hand in his. "I didn't want him to be afraid when he woke. If you're here, he should be more relaxed."

“Jaden wasn’t seeing anyone when we worked together. He had dates of course but nothing serious. Who was this man who struck him?” Dean continued to rub Jaden’s hand and speak in a voice that was soft and soothing. Drakon was a very lucky man to have such a loving partner. Drakon, like himself, was a man who did not deserve such beauty but was gifted it all the same. Fate was making moves and matches that only she understood.



“He was a tiger shifter, and he was dressed well but acted like a brute. I heard the name Murphy.” That caught Dean’s attention.

“Murphy was a friend of Ryan's. He was a pig, and I can’t believe Jaden would have anything to do with him.” Dean looked at Victor with a puzzled expression then turned his attention back to Jaden.

“What was Jaden’s job?”

“He was Ryan’s secretary, and he was treated like shit most of the time.”

“Why did he stay?”

“You could ask me the same question. I don't know if the money was good, but it wasn't that good. I don't know; perhaps he was looking for something else most of us were looking for." Dean hung his head, and the sadness was welling up. Victor placed his hand on his shoulder to strengthen and assure him. He didn’t want his emotions to get the best of him and have Drakon come bursting through his doors. The man was very protective, and Victor completely understood his point.

"He's waking up," Dean announced, and his mood shifted to a smile.

## CHAPTER THREE

Murphy went home and called the loan sharks letting them know that Jaden would be delivered tomorrow. “We made arrangements with you for today and now you say tomorrow. I think you’re lying Murphy maybe we should just come and take him.”

"He's not here. He'll be home tomorrow, and I will personally bring him to you." Murphy was desperately trying to make them believe and to give him the time he needed to track down Jaden. He called the restaurant, and they told him Jaden wasn’t

there. He called the hospitals and clinics in the area, and he wasn't there either.

The vampire had intervened, but they rarely got involved in the problems of others, so he probably didn't do any more than stop Murphy from hurting the human. They sometimes had tender hearts when it came to humans. Murphy could not give a fuck, whether human or shifter. He treated everyone the same, and Jaden wouldn't have been the first human he killed.

He wouldn't have killed him there in the restaurant. He would have dragged him out to the parking lot and finished the little bastard. But no, he actually couldn't since he'd promised that twink to some loan sharks. He would have simply roughed him up since the jackals were expecting him alive and kicking, but they would have taken his dead body and enjoyed it. Jackals were like that.

Murphy smiled at his own disgusting thoughts, wishing now that he'd simply abducted Jaden and dropped him with the loan sharks. They weren't all jackals. There were a few wolves, and he noticed a snake shifter among them, one of the large breeds, but he wasn't sure of the species.

They were a dangerous bunch, and Murphy needed to right things soon, or he was going to be on the menu. Jaden was going to love entertaining those guys. He laughed again at his disgusting thoughts. He pulled out his phone and dialed him up, but once again, he got voicemail.

Murphy headed back to the restaurant to pick up Jaden's scent and find out where he was hiding. There was no place in this city where he could hide, and Murphy could not find him. His cat was a hunter, and Jaden had just become his prey.

"Where am I Dean?" Jaden lifted his head and looked around the room, making eye contact with Victor and then pinning Dean with an anxious stare. "What happened?"

“You were attacked and left unconscious. Victor brought you home to his apartment, which is in the same building as mine and Drakon's. He knew that I knew you, so he asked me to be here when you woke.” Dean danced nicely around the information, not lying but not being completely open.

Jaden turned and looked at Victor directly holding his gaze and donning an expression of familiarity. “I’ve seen you before.” He said and it was clear he was trying hard to remember. The moment his memory clicked his eyes blew wide. “You were there.” Victor nodded but did not speak and did not take his eyes from Jaden’s.

“You can trust Victor I know him and he’s a good man and he can help you Jaden.” Dean held Jaden’s hand and urged him to share. Jaden sat up and leaned forward toward Dean.

“I’m in one hell of a mess, but it is of my own doing, so I need to deal with myself. I can’t burden others.” Jaden spoke clearly but with despair, which pulled hard on Victor's heart. Jaden turned back to Victor.

“Thank you for getting me away from him and for seeing to my safety.”

“You're welcome,” Victor responded.

“Stay here with Victor until things settle I know Murphy and he’s awful. He was in some ways worse than Ryan.” Dean was giving it is all and Victor appreciated every word.

“You’re welcome to stay, please stay.” Victor made his desires clear. Their eyes locked once again, and he put everything he was feeling into it, letting Jaden feel what he was feeling.

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“It’s not safe for you to go home Jaden. Murphy surely knows where you live, and he cannot be trusted. Stay for a while at least until you heal properly and form a plan.” Dean persisted and Jaden was nodding his head. “You can trust Victor I give you my word on that.” Jaden smiled and glanced back at Victor who stood and walked over to the side of the bed and reached out his hand.

Jaden took it and held on for a few seconds before letting go. "Thank you, Victor."

“No problem.” He saw the wonder begin to show in Jaden’s gaze as the bond was growing stronger. Every minute they stay together the stronger it will become drawing the reticent young man closer and opening his heart to the vampire.

Dean recognized his cue and stood, backing away from the couple. "I'll leave you two to get better acquainted. If you need me, Jaden, you have my number." He then left, closing the bedroom door behind him.

“He’s a better friend than I deserve.” Jaden lamented.

“Why do you say that?” Victor sat on the edge of the bed very close to Jaden and placed his hand over Jaden’s.

“I never helped him. I knew he was being hurt, and I didn't help him."

"There was nothing you could have done. You couldn't even help yourself."

“I should have done something.”

Victor took his hand and raised it to his lips and kissed it while holding his gaze and pushing a sense of release between them. His beloved was holding guilt over something that was well out of his ability to change, and Victor wanted him to let it go. He suspected there were many things that his beloved needed to let go. The pressure of guilt and shame hung over him like a thick fog.

“Tell me why this man is threatening you. Tell me what is weighing so heavily upon you. Let me help. Tell me.” Victor used his most persuasive tone and held fast to Jaden’s hand channeling trust and honesty. He waited and Jaden took a shaky breath and at first dropped his head to gaze at the comforter but then looked up and engaged.

“I did something so stupid. I knew the kind of man my boss was, and still, I thought it was a good idea. I should have figured he'd have something set up since he trusted no one, and no one trusted him.” Jaden started in bits and pieces, and Victor let him go at his own speed.

"There was this guy at work. He was handsome and willing, and so was I. It was nothing deep or meaningful, simply sex for its own sake. He worked in maintenance, and one day, we were flirting, and things got very heated.” He paused and looked away, embarrassed, but did not release Victor's hand; instead, he squeezed harder. After a few minutes, he began again.

"Ryan was out for the rest of the day. He often left early and never returned. I took messages and sent clients to other offices, never letting anyone know of his disappearances. I covered for him a thousand times, and it meant nothing." Victor knew what was coming, and it was difficult to hear, but he pushed his own feelings down because Jaden needed to be heard, and he needed someone to care.

“I took him into Ryan’s office and locked the door, and we fed our desires. I've never seen or spoken to the man since it was just a one-off, and neither of us wanted anything more. I thought it was harmless entertainment for a Wednesday afternoon,

but it turned out to be the worst decision of my life. That afternoon turned my world upside down." He paused again, and Victor got him a glass of water, which he drank half and handed it back to Victor, who placed it on the side table. He then sat back down and took Jaden's hand once more.

"He had a camera in his office and captured the entire thing on video. He used it against me, saying he'd post it or share it with my family and friends if I didn't work late, get him coffee, pick up his laundry, and the list went on and on. Then, when Smithers Financial went under, and Ryan disappeared, I found out he'd given the video to his friend Murphy."

"Murphy made the same threats to you?" Victor spoke and reached out to cup Jaden's cheek. He was pleased when he snuggled against his touch. "You have nothing to be ashamed of, Jaden."

"He moved in with me because he lost his job and couldn't find another, but I couldn't afford all the extra bills on my own, so we got a cheaper place downtown, and still, I struggle with two jobs to try and stay ahead of the bills."

"He doesn't work."

"No one will hire him because of his connection to Ryan and the crimes he committed leading to the downfall of Smithers Financial. They see him as a liability, according to Murphy." Victor doubted he was trying very hard since there were many jobs available for a strong tiger shifter. He enjoyed living off Jaden and tormenting the poor man.

"He said he borrowed money from some people, but now he can't pay them back, so he showed them the video and arranged for me to pay them off." Jaden dropped his head and started to cry, and Victor nearly lost control and let his vampire take over. The thought of those beasts touching his beloved made his blood boil. He pulled his

reaction back and forced himself to stay calm for Jaden's sake.

The time to punish the sinners would come soon enough, but right now, his beloved needed his full attention and protection. Victor pulled Jaden into his arms and lifted him onto his lap, holding him secure and letting him cry. The man needed this release; the emotions and the pressure of what he'd been living with came to the surface and to be purged.

Jaden felt the tears rush him, and there was no holding back. As much as he didn't want to look completely helpless, there was no stopping the onslaught of pain. He tucked his face into the crook of Victor's shoulder and cried until his body shook with exhaustion.

He trusted this man and he didn't know why. He didn't trust anyone and yet he bared his soul to this one man who he met a few hours ago. Dean said he could be trusted but what Jaden felt was more than simple reassurance from a friend. He knew to his soul that Victor was good for him that he wasn't lying, and he wouldn't hurt him.

Having told him everything made Jaden feel suddenly lighter and his mind was clearer. There was nothing he could do but just sharing that mess with someone helped and the tears were just long overdue. Crying in front of Victor was safe so he dropped the mask he wore hiding the fact his life was a shambles and just let go.

Victor held him and whispered lovely, kind things into his ear and kissed him softly on his hair and his cheek. He was exactly what Jaden needed and wanted. Why couldn't he have met him before his life turned to shit? He pulled back and tried to wipe the tears from his face, but Victor stopped him, took his handkerchief, and wiped away the tears.

"I'm sorry."

“No need to be it was a normal reaction for what you’ve been through and I’m glad I was here for you.” He sounded so sincere Jaden wanted to eat him up. Handsome, strong and nice what an amazing combination.

"I should go. I shouldn't involve you in my problems. Thank you for getting Murphy off me and letting me rest herein your apartment." He made to move off Victor's lap, but Victor did not release him.

“You're not safe out there, Jaden. Murphy needs to be stopped, and the men he borrowed money from need to be dealt with as well. They were made promises, and they don't forget. I can help you, so please let me.”



## Page 6

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Jaden looked up into the eyes of the man holding him so gently and saw something there that soothed and excited simultaneously. Victor was more than an acquaintance or a good Samaritan he wanted to be there he wanted to help him. There was a connection between them that was pulling and stirring and making Jaden's heart pound in his chest.

He reached his hand up to touch Victor's face and he turned and placed a kiss in the palm. "I am so drawn to you Victor." He voiced his feelings and kept studying the handsome angular face in front of him. He'd never met a more attractive man and he suddenly realized that he wanted him desperately.

"I'm drawn to you to." He answered and placed another kiss on Jaden's palm. Each touch fanning the flames of desire growing in his core. Jaden slowly strained upward and kissed Victor on the lips it was soft and barely there but resulted in an absolute tumult of reaction. Victor's arms came around him like two steel bands and the kiss went from soft and light to fierce and demanding.

The desire he was trying to control was nothing compared to what Victor set loose. He pulled back, breathing hard, and spoke. "Are you well enough? Am I hurting you?"

"I'm fine and please don't stop." Jaden pulled him down and the kiss took off once more and Jaden felt the fire and the thrill rocket through him like nothing he'd ever experienced before. He found himself pulling at Victor's shirt tearing at the buttons and moving to straddle his legs.

Victor helped him with the shirt and soon he was running his hands over the hardest

smoothest masculine chest in all existence. His body was calling to Jaden and the more he responded the more he wanted. "You're beautiful Victor." He said and heard a low chuckle rumble through Victor's chest.

"You're the beautiful one, my love. Your body is perfection." He whispered the last and took Jaden's lips in another ravenous embrace. The taste and the sheer excitement that filled him and the air around him were intoxicating. Jaden noticed that his shirt was gone, and his pants were open and hanging off his hips. They needed to get more comfortable because Jaden wanted to keep this action going. He had never been with a man like Victor; his energy was dominant and formidable but not aggressive. His hands guided but did not control he was wonderful.

Jaden was on his back, and between hot, salacious kisses, Victor was removing the remainder of Jaden's clothes. The way he ran his hands down his body, stimulating and sensitizing his flesh, left Jaden trembling in anticipation. Victor's hand trailed lightly across Jaden's cock, and he stiffened painfully, arching his back upward.

Victor straightened and slipped off his shoes and then his pants baring his amazing body to Jaden's hungry stare. Jaden licked his lips and Victor smiled. "Do you like what you see, my love?" He teased.

"I like what I see," Jaden responded breathlessly. "I want what I see." He added.

"All yours, now and always, all yours." His tone was deep and sensuous. Jaden felt another thrill run up his spine, and his aching cock began to weep. Victor moved onto the bed hovering over Jaden, bent to lick the tip of his cock, and then placed a kiss there. Jaden could not stop the moan that burst past his lips or the way he thrust himself forward, searching for more.

Victor pressed his face to Jaden's groin and started a flurry of hot, moist kisses. Jaden felt his fingers, long and thick, press against his hole, which caused an anxious

pulsating sensation to rock him. The fingers penetrated, going deep and stretching him, sensitizing the tender flesh and causing his breath to catch in his throat.

The fingers went harder and further with each anxious thrust. Victor's eyes were focused on Jaden, reading every movement and expression. When he moaned or thrashed, the thrusts became harder and his kisses more urgent. He was pushing him so close to the edge but not letting him go yet.

He abruptly flipped him onto his stomach and lifted him by his hips, and Jaden braced himself on his knees, which were far apart. He was completely exposed and loved every second of it. More kisses trailed down his spine and he felt the slippery head of Victor's massive hard cock pushing at his opening. The lube was dripping down his leg, making him feel wanton and reckless.

Jaden pressed his head into the pillows and forced his ass higher. Victor took him by the hips and pulled him backward in a hard swift motion impaling him on his thick, throbbing cock. They both moaned loudly, and the moment became filled with electrifying thrusts that were sharp, rapid, and deep. Victor leaned forward, slimming his fingers along the side of Jaden's jaw to his mouth, and inserted two of his fingers.

He latched onto those fingers and began sucking wildly while Victor hammered him from behind. The sensations werewild and charged, sending thrills up and down his spine. Jaden knew he wasn't going to last much longer, and then Victor leaned back, pulling his fingers from Jaden's mouth, and grabbed him, pulling him up and onto his lap while still fully seated on his hard cock.

Jaden balanced himself and started bouncing, taking him deeper with every downward thrust. "Oh, my sweet beloved." Victor chanted near his ear, and Jaden slammed himself down onto Victor spreading himself tight and forcing that cock to the base.

“Yes, so good,” Jaden whispered and closed his eyes, riding this captivating sensation for all it was worth. He couldn’t get enough. Victor wrapped his arm around him and took his cock in hand and stroked in rhythm with his own thrusts. The grip was tight and hot, and Jaden shook with the stimulation rushing through his body.

He was reaching the edge, and so was Victor. His groans were harsh and deep, and his breath was coming in short, aggressive pants. He was coming, and Jaden wanted to stroke as he could get. He sped up his movements slamming on that hard cock repeatedly and tightening his hold, forcing the climax to an immense explosion.

Victor came, filling him full and holding him fast, and then there was the bite. Jaden felt his teeth puncture at the base of his throat, and in that second, Jaden felt a rush of feelings scintillating and exciting fill his heart and mind. He came hard, bursting and covering the blanket in front of him with his essence. Jaden dropped his head back to lay against Victor’s chest and closed his eyes.

The bite was mystifying, a sharp pain and then pleasure beyond measure. It made no sense, but it was the most sensual and hedonistic delight of his life. “That was outstanding.” His breath was catching, and his heart was still racing. “Unbelievable.” Victor chuckled. He felt it rather than heard it, and then there was a kiss to the spot on his throat where he’d bitten him, and a shot of arousal sliced through him, forcing another groan.

“Amazing.” Was the one word Victor uttered once they both settled and the peak of their climax had calmed. He continued to hold Jaden on his lap for several minutes, kissing the little scar on his throat and commenting softly about his splendor and beauty.

“That bite was extraordinary. I’ve never felt anything so consuming.” Jaden commented and slowly slid off Victor’s cock to sit on the bed and gather his emotions. Everything was raw and stimulated, and his body trembled with the

afterglow.

He turned to look at Victor and noticed his face was hard and angular and his eyes had turned to red the vision should have frightened him but instead he saw him for who he was. Jaden was not unfamiliar with the locals and had come across men like Victor before although none had stirred and excited him like this man.

## CHAPTER FOUR

"You're a vampire," Jaden stated, and it wasn't a question.

Victor was surprised by Jaden's statement but not shocked. There were many in this city who were aware but would never discuss it. The threat of discussing the paranormal was enough to keep people quiet, and those who chose to talk soon found themselves missing memories or dead. The paranormal was a closely guarded secret, and every supernatural creature agreed on that point: no matter whether jackal or bunny shifter, everyone kept the secret.

"You're aware of vampires?" He decided to find out where he got his information.

"I met a few." He answered a little defensively.

"Are you aware that Murphy is a tiger shifter?" Victor moved to lay out next to Jaden on the bed. They'd washed up and changed the blanket and were just getting comfortable. Their lovemaking had been stellar and exhausting. A little rest, and Victor looked forward to more stellar lovemaking. His beloved was excitement beyond measure.

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“No, I wasn't, but it makes sense. He often went out late at night and came back in the morning looking like he had been through the trenches.”

“He was shifting and prowling the streets the big cats usually go looking for prey at night. It's a cat thing.” Victor could help the subtle disgust to this tone. "They tend to be loners, not needing the presence of others of their kind, which can make them dangerous.”

“Murphy was very much a dangerous loner. He was friends with Ryan, but I think it was simply to make his work life easier and more profitable; it had nothing to do with any true friendship or connection." Jaden, too, held an air of disgust when speaking of Murphy as well as he should.

“So, tell me what you know of vampires," Victor asked and laid back with his hands behind his head. Jaden laid his head on Victor's chest and got comfortable. This was the life he'd dreamed about; love, ease of existence between them, and loyalty. He could already feel the relationship Jaden was forging and the bond that was taking shape in their hearts, minds, and souls. Together as one, no doubt, no fears, only love and trust.

“Not a lot.” He said but then continued as if remember some things. “They have heightened senses and can run faster than anything on earth even a cheetah. They're strong and have a lot of dexterity. They're faces change with heightened emotion they get rigid with hard angles and the eyes turn red. I also heard that they're teeth elongate which seems likely considering the whole biting thing.” Victor laughed at the finish.

"Yes, the teeth do elongate and get sharper, but only the eye teeth." He continued to laugh and dropped one arm to pull Jaden up close to his side and hold him there. "Do you know anything about our culture and traditions?"

"You live together in a coven with a leader called a coven master, and he is all-powerful." Jaden stopped short and rose up to look Victor in the eyes. "Is this the coven house?"

"Yes, it is."

"Oh my God, is Drakon a vampire?"

"Yes, he is."

"Dean, sweet, gentle, unassuming Dean, is dating a vampire." He seemed incredulous.

"They're more than dating; they are bonded. Dean is Drakon's beloved, and they are a fated match. Drakon recognized him by scent when he entered the Blood Rose for a night out with a friend. He scooped him up and brought him home, where they completed their bond." Victor kept going, hoping Jaden would catch on and make the correlation between Dean and himself.

"I've heard that word. Murphy referred to Dean as a beloved and that he would have to be avoided. It didn't mean anything to me until now. The fact shook him up a little, and he even had a theory that it was Dean's beloved who ended Ryan. I was under the impression that Ryan ran when his crimes became widely known." Jaden was slowly putting things together.

"Drakon ended Ryan, and the Rose Coven ended Smithers Financial."

“Because they screwed with Dean?”

"Because they screwed with a beloved. Beloveds are sacred, and the bond is powerful. It brings further enhancement to the vampire and the beloved, be they human or paranormal. It's not taken lightly." Victor could feel Jaden processing the information.

“Dean is a lucky guy. It would be awesome to have someone care for you and defend you like that.” Victor could feel the moment that the information shifted into place. Jaden once again rose up on his elbow to look down into Victor's face.

“You called me your beloved when we were . . .”

“Yes, I did.” Silence fell, and Jaden stared at him, waiting for more. “You are my beloved. I recognized your scent on Dean after he came back from having lunch at your restaurant. You hugged him, and your scent clung to him." Victor adjusted his pillows so he could sit up a little, and Jaden moved to a seated position beside him, still eating him up with his eyes.

"He told me your name, and I went looking for you and found you in that back hall with that beast Murphy." Victor left it there as tears began to fill Jaden's eyes.

“I'm sorry I was such an utter disappointment to you.” Victor pulled him close and wrapped his arms around him.

"You weren't a disappointment, my love. You were everything I'd hoped for and more. That bastard Murphy means nothing. I just wish I'd killed him instead of letting him run away." That got his attention, and first, it was a shocked expression, and then it was laughter, and the tension had broken.

“There were a lot of people around, so killing him was probably not an option." Jaden



laid his head back on Victor's chest and lovely sigh. "You're the best thing to ever happen to me, Victor."

"You're my beloved, and there is nothing greater in this world to a vampire than their beloved. I've waited for you for over a century, and you are my gift and my prize." He kissed his forehead, and Jaden snuggled a little closer in response.

"A century. Wow, that's hard to get my head around, but I understand vampires have a lifespan way longer than any human. I think I'm impressed."

"Your life will extend to meet mine now that we have bonded."

"We're bonded?"

"Yes." He said and reached down and ran his fingertips over the scar at the base of his throat. "This is a bonding scar. You and I are one, my love. No going back."

"That goes for you, too," Jaden added. "This is so much more than I ever expected from life, and to receive all of this in a span of a few hours is scrambling my mind."

"You'll work it out, and once you move in, everything will start to fall into place. Dean was a bit scrambled at first, too." Victor assured. "I know a way to help unscramble your thoughts."

“How?”

Victor rolled him onto his back and moved down his body to take that lovely little cock between his lips. The reaction was delicious: a loud moan and the arching of his back. His beloved was delightfully responsive. He ate away at that gorgeous cock, taking it down his throat and spreading Jaden's legs far apart, forcing his cock to jut higher as he swallowed it down, stroking and pulling, leaving him tender and sensitive. He grew hard and wanting, burying his fingers in Victor's hair and thrusting his hips forward.

It wasn't long before he was reaching his peak and erupting in hard surges, filling Victor's throat with his sweetness. Jaden let out the breath he was holding and collapsed onto the bed, but Victor wasn't done. He wanted more from his beloved. He lifted Jaden's hips and positioned himself against the back of his thighs. Victor's cock was throbbing with the need to be inside his lover.

He pressed the head of his cock against that well-stretched hole and plunged inside with one thrust going deep, burying himself to the hilt before pulling back and doing it again and again. Jaden squealed with the burst of sensations that rushed through his body, and it fueled Victor's need to do it again and hear that gorgeous sound over and over. It made his blood sing, and his desire burn for satisfaction. He hammered into his beloved, desperately seeking his own apex of completion.

Jaden started stroking his own cock bringing it back to life in seconds while Victor punished his hole with thrust after thrust plunging deep and spreading him wide. He watched Jaden pleasure himself, and it was the most erotic scene he'd ever witnessed.

“Come for me, baby.” He growled and pounded inside just as Jaden came, covering his hand and groin in his seed. Victor reached out, dipped his finger in, and brought it to his lips. “Lovely, just lovely.” He licked the finger clean, and Jaden came again.

“Oh, Victor, that was wicked.” He smiled and licked his lips.

Victor continued to hammer inside until he came in a hard rush, exploding inside his beloved and filling him once again with his seed, marking him inside and out as the beloved of the vampire. He held him until his body began to relax, and his heart settled back into a steady beat. Nothing had prepared him for the sheer magnitude of sensations that accompanied every touch of his beloved. A lifetime of this pleasure would still not be enough.

He slowly pulled out and lay down beside his amazing lover. For such a small man, he had the power to bring this vampire to his knees. “Rest my love.” He said, and he took a cloth from the side table and wiped him clean before cuddling him close once again. They were wrapped together in love and harmony, and he hoped it would last forever.

Jaden fell into a deep sleep, but Victor remained awake and alert, his mind filled with thoughts of Murphy and the loan sharks and anyone else related to the mess that Murphy subjected Jaden to. He called Conall to inform him of Jaden, but he was already aware and issued his congratulations. Victor explained the situation with the loan sharks, and Murphy and Conall offered to take care of both problems.

“I’d appreciate it if you’d handle the loan sharks, but I’ll take care of Murphy myself.”

“Consider it done.”

He then called Ethan, the head of IT and surveillance, and asked him to nail down the

video and get rid of it. He promised Victor that it would be gone by morning. His beloved needed peace of mind and to get the leeches off his back. All that remained was to get rid of one tiger shifter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

Murphy returned to the apartment just before dawn. He'd been hiding out, and in fear of the jackals, he owed money. They had an agreement, Jaden in place of cash, but they were the type to disavow agreements and go straight for the jugular, so he laid low overnight.

The thought of Jaden with the vampire burned him in the worst way. The vampire wouldn't keep a slut like Jaden, but he would use him for a few days, and in the meantime, Murphy was running from jackals. He wished he'd made a few more videos of Jaden and then just killed the little bastard. He was more trouble than he was worth.

He'd found that humans weren't good for anything except a good fuck and a good thumping. His last human, Joel, a twink he'd met at the Blood Rose, managed to entertain him for nearly three weeks before becoming an insufferable bore. He sold him to a bear clan in the suburbs. That human knew his place and did as he was told, unlike Jaden, who always had an opinion.

He looked forward to either killing that little bastard and burying him at the landfill or handing him over to the jackals. He would teach him a lesson, an end-of-life lesson. He laughed at his own joke and called one of his contacts to see if the agreement was still in play.

"They're gone. Every last fucking one of them has disappeared, man." His contact was in a panic. "Something or someone came through and found every one of them, even the loathsome snake shifter, and they are gone. Nothing left but a scorch mark

on the pavement.”

“You can’t be serious. Nothing has that kind of power.” Murphy disputed what he was being told.

“Enforcers from the Rose Coven came through here last night.” He informed but quietly as if he thought someone was listening.

“Why would they care?”

“I don’t know but apparently they do.” With that his contact closed the call leaving Murphy hanging with more questions. He decided he needed to make a move this might have nothing to do with Jaden or everything to do with Jaden so that young man needed to be eliminated.

He called Jaden because, chances are, he had his phone with him. The idiot went nowhere without his fucking phone. He put in the call and waited. It went to voice mail. He waited thirty minutes and called again, and it went to voice mail. He waited fifteen minutes, and this time, the fucking cunt picked up.

...

Victor heard the phone ringing, but Jaden was ignoring it. Then it rang again and again and finally Jaden could resist no longer and answered the call. Victor listened knowing who was calling and wishing that Jaden had let keep going to voice mail instead of talking to the bastard. But it was fear that was still pushing Jaden to a certain extent, and it would take time to purge that feeling. Murphy had conditioned him to be afraid.

“What do you want?” Jaden barked.

“Get your ass back home, or I'm going to find you and kill you and your new fuck buddy.” That was it; Victor would tolerate no more. He took the phone from Jaden.

“I’m going to find you and pull your spine out, your asshole Murphy, and then I'm going cause you some real pain.”

“Who is this?” He shouted with just a hint of terror.

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“The fuck buddy. You come anywhere near Jaden, and I’m going to do things to you that are unheard of outside of hell.”

"You don't scare me, vampire.”

"I don't mean to scare you, shifter. I mean to kill you."

“Jaden Pearson is mine, and if you wish to dispute that claim, then meet me at the warehouse on Thirty-Third and Lester. Be there by two this afternoon, and we'll see who takes the prize.” Murphy closed the call, and Victor handed the phone back to Jaden.

"You can't do this, Victor. Murphy is an animal. He follows no rules and fights like a dog. I can't have you hurt on my behalf." Jaden was becoming frantic, drawing situations and outcomes from fantasy.

“Don’t worry about me, and just so we're clear, there is nothing I wouldn't do on your behalf, be it battling a tiger or the devil himself. You are mine, and the world will know that truth."

“Please don’t risk your life over this.” Jaden held him and pleaded.

"I am the second in command of the Rose Coven, and I answer to no one but Master Conall Rose. There is no one on this earth that I fear apart from Conall Rose. No fleabag tiger shifter is going to lay claim to what is mine and walk away.”

“Murphy isn't worth your time or your effort. He is nobody."

"He hurt you repeatedly, and he will pay." Victor pulled Jaden into his arms and kissed him hard and exacting, letting him know that this was how it would be, that nothing would stop him from meeting Murphy's challenge.

Victor called Drakon to cover the exterior of the warehouse while he was inside with Murphy. He didn't trust him not to have something planned and Drakon had a nose for traps. He also asked for Dean to stay with Jaden while he was gone. He didn't like leaving his beloved, but it was necessary to get rid of Murphy. The tiger was an irritant that was becoming impossible and the sooner he was dispatched the better for everyone.

...

Jaden sat in the living room of Victor's apartment with a cup of coffee and a tray of sandwiches and fruits. Victor was concerned that he might be hungry and asked him to try and eat but Jaden had no appetite despite not having eaten since yesterday noon.

The thought of his amazing lover fighting over him filled him with both pride and worry. He didn't want Victor hurt. He was the first person to treat him like he was special and talk to him like he mattered. He didn't want to lose this man or scare him away with his baggage.

Dean arrived shortly after Victor left, and Jaden appreciated his company. "Drakon went with him. Victor didn't trust Murphy not to set some traps, so Drakon will take care of the exterior while Victor takes care of Murphy."

"I shouldn't have gotten him involved. It's not his problem." Jaden implored.

"You're his beloved. There is nothing he wouldn't do for you. It's the way vampires are wired. I know that you feel it, too, because I was drawn to Drakon like a mad



person. I couldn't get enough of him, and all he had to do was speak to me, and I was falling to my knees.” Dean became a bit dramatic, but Jaden couldn’t deny he felt the same for Victor.

“Would you fight for him?”

"Of course, I would."

“Well, there you go then. Let him deal with this challenge. You can support him. You two have bonded, so you can connect. Think of him and push love and support. That is the best thing you can do for him now." Jaden wasn't sure what he was talking about but decided to follow his direction and began pushing his love and support out to Victor. To his surprise, he got an answer.

“He responded.” Jaden was shocked.

"Of course he did. You're his beloved."

“He let me know he was fine, and he loves me too. It wasn’t in so many words, but I felt it, and I know it.” Jaden smiled with relief.

"Just keep sending him your love," Dean told him, and they settled in.

Victor was surprised when Jaden made the connection sending him a mental message of love. He was so lucky to be gifted such a man sexy as sin and pure and gold. He planned to finish with Murphy and get back to him as soon as possible. He met up with Drakon on site and he had already taken out two snipers. They wouldn’t have killed him but could have injured him and given Murphy an edge.

“I’m sure there are more Murphy strikes me as a liar and a cheat, so he probably has several paid assholes in the rafters," Drakon stated and headed off to the neighboring

warehouse.

Victor stepped inside and looked around. The smell of cat shifter was strong indicating there was more than one cat in the area. It wasn't long before Murphy came forward from behind some random boxes and walked toward Victor.

"We don't have to do this. Just hand him over, and we can both go about our business." He offered in a cocky tone only a cat shifter can achieve. It's a cross between bootlicker and bully. Victor didn't respond but rather studied the area, noting a cougar shifter off to his left and another overhead.

The one overhead took a shot at him but missed, and the one on the left ran at him while Murphy stepped back and let them fight. Victor tore out the one's throat before he had a chance to raise his hand and then leaped onto the overhead beam and gutted the sniper. He then dropped back to the main floor and faced Murphy.

"If you're waiting for your men outside to assist, they are already dead," Victor stated and started walking toward him. Murphy stepped forward and pulled a dagger from his jacket. It was long and sharp, and he wielded it like a professional, but in Victor's eyes, he was nothing but a cat with a knife and nothing more.

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"He isn't worth it," Murphy stated sharply

"That's what he said about you." Victor taunted.

"I've sent off the video to his family and sold it to a group that plans to upload it far and wide." He tried to antagonize, but it wasn't working.

"The video has been wiped, and anyone who attempts to find it will become a target of the Rose Coven. Jaden has nothing to worry about. All that is left is you." Victor moved swiftly, and although Murphy managed to get in one swipe of his dagger, catching Victor in the upper arm, that was all he managed to do.

Victor took him down easier than he thought he would. Murphy had become sloppy and out of shape his reactions were slow which often happened with shifter who didn't pay enough attention to their animal.

Murphy tried to shift, but his cat did not respond. Victor took him to the floor and bent his arms behind his back. "You are such a waste of time and effort." Victor grabbed the dagger from where it had dropped and plunged it through his heart, a sure way to finish a shifter. Victor bent down and whispered into his ear. "He is mine."

"It's over." Jaden announced and Dean agreed. "You felt it too?" He asked and Dean nodded.

"Drakon always keeps me informed. He knows that I worry." Dean explained.

"I am so happy, Dean. I can't believe that my life has taken such a positive turn,

considering the mess that I was in. I couldn't see a way out until Victor stepped into my life."

"I was the same with Drakon. He came into my life, and my troubles disappeared."

Jaden was waiting for him out back of the Coven house and as soon as he pulled in and parked Jaden was at the car. Victor stepped out and took him into his arms. "I love you so much Victor."

"I love you too, baby." Victor picked him up in his arms and they headed inside. "I need a long, hot shower would you like to join me sweetheart?"

"There isn't anything I'd like more than to have you naked and wet and in my arms." Jaden declared, and Victor ran for the stairs, not content to wait for the elevator.

"Wet and naked sounds awfully good to me, too." Victor chuckled. "No more worries, my love." He told him once they were inside the apartment. "You are mine, and I am yours."

"The vampire's beloved," Jaden stated.

"Forever, my darling."

THE END