

Scary Talks

A little while later, Echo brought in a tray with two milkshakes. One was nearly black, probably mine, the other was pink. She set the dark one in front of me with a spoon and sat in the chair on the opposite side of the desk with the other one.

"I gured I'd take a break. I never got to have one of these, but I made them all the time." She smiled.

"What avor did you pick?" I asked.

"Strawberry." She told me and started eating the treat.

I tasted mine. My sire was fond of blood foods, but never tried it myself. It was actually really good. Echo giggled as I was eating making me look up.

"I'm glad you like it. I was worried I wouldn't mix it right. Mr. Springer told me about it. He said every blood type has a avor that goes well with it. O type is chocolate, B is caramel, A is hazelnut, and AB is toasted almond. O is salty, B is sweet, A is tangy, and AB is a mix of the three. Or something like that." She shrugged.

I thought about it as I ate my treat. Springer was the reason she knew this, not Drew. I forgot how intimate feeding can be when you have the same donor often. She would have been his friend, in a weird way, but he told me he was trying to bite her thigh.

That wasn't something you did to a friend. That was foreplay. He didn't even know what he was feeding on, he was naturally drawn to it.

"You seem a lot more relaxed than I expected in such a short time." I observed.

"When you said you wouldn't feed on me; it didn't feel like a lie. It felt like the truth more than anything anyone has ever said to me. I trust you and I don't know why." She replied.

I did. Dhampyrs, like vampires, feel comfortable in the company of other vampires and dhampyrs. Echo knew I wouldn't lie because of how I acted. Her relaxed attitude was because she didn't have the threat there and could enjoy the feeling of being with her own kind.

"I need to talk to you about this whole situation." I told her.

"Alright." She sat up straighter and looked directly at me.

"I realized, I was pretty vague about what's going on. I was angry at your parents and the state of affairs as a whole. So I'm going to reintroduce myself and tell you everything you need to know." I said.

"I appreciate that. It's pretty confusing to me." Echo smiled softly.

"My name is Victor Nightshade. I am a member of the Vampire Council, a governing body which regulates our activities for the safety of both humans and vampires. I've just been named master of this territory. The region you live in." I explained.

She nodded, taking in everything without question.

"I was hunting one of the vampires I made. He stole a lot of money from me a few years ago. When I found him, he told me about you. As a member of the council in earlier years, I created the rules we have against feeding on children. It was already a rule of my bloodline. He was sentenced to death along with every vampire who fed on you, or was on the waitlist to feed on you."

"So, Mr. Springer is dead?" Echo asked.

"Yes. He was the last to die. Are you okay?"

"He was the nicest one, but I was scared of all of them. Thank you." She said.

"It's my job, but, after meeting you, I'm glad I was able to do it. I hunted all of the vampires and gathered information. There was a man watching your house, to see if there was anything else to be concerned about. He told me about your siblings, parents, and activities.

The last three vampires I killed gave me a lot of information. One had offered seven hundred thousand dollars for you. He knew your value, but under-offered betting on your parents not knowing the difference." I told her.

"My value?" She squeaked.

"The vampire told me you were a dhampyr. Your scent conrmed it. A dhampyr is a human/vampire hybrid. More than that, the vampire said your father was human and your mother was only one quarter vampire. You present like someone closer to half." I informed her.

"I'm a vampire? No, that can't be right. Why is it special?" She asked.

"You're right, you are not a vampire. You are stronger, faster, healthier, and more persuasive than a human. You can walk in the sun like they do. You can heal like we do. You won't age as quickly once you reach twenty-ve. Given the right conditions, you could live several hundred years. You're harder to kill than a human or a vampire. When you die, you will be reborn a fully functioning vampire and start your own bloodline.

While you're alive, though, you are the only one who can easily procreate with a vampire. Having children as a vampire is dicult. There are a lot of conditions that have to be met. If the person you are breeding with is a dhampyr, it is as simple as it is for humans." I explained.

"Sounds like you got a bargain." Echo's voice was wispy and broken.

"If anyone else had found you, they could've sold you for hundreds of millions of dollars. Older vampires would pay anything to be able to have a true child. By the middle of next week, you'll have my name. No other vampire can take you then, except for your sire, if he still lives." I said.

"So do you plan to have a baby with me, then?" She asked.

Echo was shaking. She smelled terried. I'd never been one to enjoy that scent. Especially from women or children, and she was both.

"No, Echo. I plan to keep you safe until you're eighteen and can choose the life you want. You'll keep my name, even if you don't want to stay with me. If you get married, do not change your name. Without my name, you'll be stating you are unprotected. On Tuesday, another representative of the council will be arriving. She and I will test you to nd out who your sire is. I hope to petition him with the fact that I've already purchased you from your mother. With luck, he won't feel the need to challenge my claim."

"I don't want to go. I want to stay here. I want to be near my family. Please, don't let him take me, Victor. Please." She pled, weeping.

"I will do everything in my power to keep you, Echo. I promise. Trust me." I said.

"I-if he tries to claim me. I want you to drain me. Don't let me be someone's baby factory. That's what they'd do isn't it? They'd keep me locked away, pregnant as often as possible. They'd make me do it, even if I didn't want to." Echo cried.

"Probably. It's been the fate of female dhampyrs in the past, that they were used to repay debts by having children for any vampire their master owed. I can't promise that I'll drain you. It would end badly for me if they decided I was stealing from them." I told her.

"Then I'll kill myself. But I'm hard to kill... how would I do that? Can you tell me? How? I can't live like that, Victor! I won't!" She was hysterical.

This was getting out of hand. We didn't even know if he'd try to take her. I handled this badly. She seemed a lot stronger than she was. Though, she wouldn't really be able to ght, so it was pretty much the only option.

"Let me research it. For now, we should carry on as we have been. He may not even be alive. There are a lot of vampires who do stupid things and die young. There are others who tire of living and decide to greet the sun. If I have to, I can pay quite a lot of money. You may have to eat ramen for a century or two, but we can manage it." I said.

She laughed and snied. "Better than some of the things I've had to eat. I'll trust you, Victor. You said you wouldn't feed on me and you haven't. You trusted me not to try and kill you while you slept. You gave me your credit card. And you paid a lot of money for me when I thought I wasn't worth anything."

"Why don't you head to bed? Drew will be here in the morning. We're keeping the dhampyr thing quiet. Don't tell him. You still don't have my name. He is Silence's servant. Right now, she only has loyalty to herself. Rosy will arrive Tuesday. I want you to have her box moved to a safe place inside. When we test your blood it will be taken via a needle and tube. No one will lay a fang on you, without your consent, while you are in my home. Okay?" I asked.

Echo nodded. She took the cups and headed out the door. Before she closed it behind her, she looked up and me and smiled a little.

"If you save me, you can feed on me whenever you want." She murmured, and closed the door.

I shook my head. Even though she'd been afraid of me just last night, she was offering to let me feed on her. It showed me just how much she didn't want that fate. Talking about death is abstract. She'd experienced feeding a vampire and hated it.