

YUMYOYORI WILSON

**SEDUCE  
MY BLOOD**

**BLOODY DESIRES  
BOOK ONE**

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BLOOD

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YUMOYORI WILSON

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## Acknowledgement

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*-YUMOYORI WILSON*

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## Seduce My Blood Blurb

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When seduction runs in your veins, what better way to use it than to make yourself a billionaire?

I never wanted to be the lone succubus-vampire hybrid in the overpopulated city of New York. In fact, I would have been fine with being a vampire, seriously.

You see, Mama Dearest had a one time fling, got preggos and gave birth to little old me. As much as she wanted to win the best mother award, she couldn't ignore her succubus ways for long, hopping from man to man while I was stuck at home, vowing to never be like her. She finally settled with my stepdad...he's another matter altogether.

Now, I use my powers of seduction to maintain my business: Last Resort. Your best friend bailed for your double date? I got you. Your maid of honor got food poisoning? Say no more. You need me to take your place at the NYC champion pole dancing competition? Pay me extra and I'll get you first place.

I didn't think my next gig as a substitute secretary would lead me to one of the four richest entrepreneurs in NYC – or that I'd come to meet his three contemporaries at a later date. Did I



mention he was a hot sexy vampire who was able to resist my charms long enough to strike up an actual conversation? Extra brownie points there.

But a forbidden connection introduces trouble and confusion, leaving me as a prime target.

Will I be able to seduce my way out of this? Or will the seduction in my blood turn sour?

# Prologue



*You never realize how precious life is until the future you thought would be years is cut down to mere minutes.*

## FIVE MINUTES EARLIER...

"Liam, I can't miss this meeting and use the excuse that my vampire lover wants to keep me chained up in his mansion because he thinks the outside world is unsafe." It was probably good I wasn't holding my cell phone because I would have hung up by now.

"Anastasia, it's only because I care. I don't want you getting hurt again," Liam, my new lover, replied. I was surprised we'd been together for as long as we had. Not that I

had problems with men. It was quite the opposite actually. If they laid eyes on me, men would drop everything to cross crowded streets or climb over fences just to get to me. The attention was a blessing and a curse. At least I finally found a man who could hold a conversation with me.

“First off, that was a scratch with a little, itchy bitsy bit of poison in it. It didn’t kill me. Just made me dizzy and confused. Secondly, you know succubi are surprisingly hard to kill, which is NOT because of my amazing seduction powers that run through my blood.” I lectured, looking in my rear view mirror at the empty country road behind my pink Lexus.

I sighed, hoping this trip would hurry the hell up. Sure, Liam and I were arguing, but I truly missed his presence, which was a first for me. I didn’t even miss my best friend who made life a lot more fun than what I quickly realized was a dull life without such companionship.

“Sia.”

I paused in my speech, loving the way Liam shortened my name and used that husky voice of his, doing the whole *‘fuck this trip, my ass is turning this baby around for hot sex and chocolate dessert in bed afterward’* thing as little tingles prickled through me. *I wonder if this is what it’s like when I indirectly use my powers?*

I inhaled deeply, keeping my eyes straight ahead at the road before me. “Liam, I’m an adult. I’m a very independent woman who needs her freedom to continue doing the business I had to create to survive the madness of NYC. No one had sympathy then, and even after all these years it’s still the same. It’s just a business meeting. I would need a valid excuse to cancel,” I explained in a softer tone.

Liam was quiet for a moment. “Then can I come over there? I won’t be there exactly on time, but I’ll be able to keep an eye on you when you leave your hotel room.”

“You mean to be there out in the open? Or stalk me, like vampires love to do, spooking people.”

“You know, you are ALSO a vampire and like to stalk just as much. Your best friend told me before you even asked,” Liam countered. *Fucking Alexander! Can't keep his mouth shut.*

“That was different. I technically worked for you. Stalking is in my job description,” I pointed out.

“As a secretary?” he said in a skeptical tone.

“Hey. Don't use that tone. Secretaries are the best stalkers to make sure you don't get clumsy, like Annie giving you black coffee instead of your usual six sugars, five creams, no foam, Venti latte in the mornings before your intense three-hour meetings. Not to mention the time you slept in and I had to search and reschedule everything to ensure you were set for the next week while you were off being a sexy vampire and sparkling everywhere.”

“I don't sparkle,” he grumbled.

“That wasn't the point I was trying to make.” I shook my head. “Admit it. My stalking skills as your private secretary are the best,” I stated proudly.

He chuckled, the sound making me relax. “Yes. My Anastasia is the best private secretary I've ever had and makes sure to meet all my needs. Every. Single. One, ” he whispered and I had to remind myself to breathe.

“Tease. I'm driving.” I used my left hand to fan my burning face.

“I did no such thing. I'll be on my way. Be safe for me.” He whispered the last sentence, making me smile.

“Yes, my love. I'll be fine. The cactus will ensure no one fucks with me in this wasteland,” I joked.

“I love you,” he spoke quietly, something I knew was hard for him to say. I looked again into the rearview mirror before glancing out my left window.

“I love you t-”

Suddenly, my life flashed before my eyes as something crashed directly into the left side of my car. Slowly my car

spun high above the ground, glass shards of all sizes drifted slowly through the vehicle. My ears picked up on a scream, which I then realized came from me.

Flip, flip, flip, flip. CRASH!

The car skidded on its roof and the pain that went through me was indescribable. It felt like the air was forced out of me and for a time I blacked out.

It felt like a second, maybe two, or possibly as much as sixty. I couldn't think straight as the pain continued to vibrate through my body, making it hard to even breathe.

“Anastasia!! SIA!”

I could hear Liam's distress through the phone that miraculously was next to me on the floor. Well, the ceiling. The smell of leaking gas hit my nose and I began to panic, realizing I had to get out in case the car decided to blow up, taking me with it. I needed to escape quickly.

Moving after a car accident was a bitch, but the adrenaline that suddenly spiked through me demanded I escape this ticking time bomb. I unbuckled my seatbelt which caused me to fall onto the broken glass covering the ceiling.

I let out a whimper from the pain in my hands and legs but I continued my attempt to escape, deciding my body could probably fit through the passenger window. I grabbed the phone, realizing Liam was still on the line. I couldn't even really form words, my quiet whimpers as tears rolled down my cheeks the only way to tell him I'd managed to survive.

“Babe, Brian's coming. He'll be there in a few minutes. Just hang on,” he soothed.

I replied with another sob before I slowly made my way out of the car. When I reached the surface, I began to drag my body across the sandy ground, pausing to hold back the scream of agony that wanted so desperately to be set free. The pain was getting unbearable and I didn't know how long it would be before I fainted.

Safety. I just need to get far enough to be safe from the explosion. Yes.

I looked forward, noticing the cactus not too far away. Speak of the devil. Damn cactus, you didn't do your job.

I began to slowly drag myself towards the large green prickly cactus. The closer I got, the more energy I found to push forward. I finally reached it and cried in relief, forcing myself to remain as still as possible. I could feel the blood leave my body with each drag across the earth and my vampire instincts were already making this experience harder as my thirst grew with each second, my desire to drink that lovely thick liquid becoming stronger and stronger.

I heard footsteps approach, but instead of feeling relieved that Brian had arrived, a sense of dread ran through me. It was as if my body knew my doom was imminent.

“Sia? Sia!” Liam continued to call out over the line, and I gripped the phone in my right hand, pulling it close to my lips. “Person....not...Brian...bad.....I...love...you.”

I couldn't manage to say anything else before a pair of black shoes appeared before me. I fought to lift my head, wanting to see the person who would kill me. I don't know about other people, but this NYC girl believed in ghosts and boy, if I died today, I would make sure my ass haunted this piece of shit until he turned himself in so Liam and Brian could fuck him up. Also couldn't forget Alexander who would bitch slap the living soul out of him.

I finally lifted my head, having to squint through my blurry vision. A smug smile was on the face of the purple-eyed stranger. I knew from one look he wasn't a vampire, but then the dots clicked and I knew without a doubt exactly what he was.

He knelt down so I could get a better look at him. He chuckled quietly. “A succubus-vampire. You, my dear, are a rarity. No wonder that brat has taken a liking to you. Too bad he won't make it here in time to watch me kill you.”

I gritted my teeth, growling as my eyes locked onto the pulse beating rapidly in his neck. I may have been injured, but once a vampire's instincts took control, even the weakest could be a real threat.

He pulled something out of his pocket, but I was faster, gripping the phone in my hand as I launched myself at him, wanting to do some damage to this person who thought he could mess with me.

He crashed right into the cactus and cried out in pain as the sharp thorns stuck into him. Sadly, I wasn't fast enough to fight off his kick which sent me flying onto my back, breaking something, which at this point did nothing to me because I was already in so much pain, I felt more numb than anything. I rolled onto my stomach and snarled a spell I'd learned from Alexander's silly "Witch Magic for Beginners" guide.

"ASHLA BURN!"

Fire shot out of the ground and he screamed as he took a direct hit. His body began to burn wildly and he dropped to the ground, rolling to try and put it out. I attempted to move but was unable to muster the energy. Liam's screams through the speaker made my heart hurt. I could hear his frustration and pain, as well as his tears. I hadn't predicted our relationship would lead to love, and now as I watched the burning man slowly rise up, I somehow knew I wouldn't get to see Liam again.

I wouldn't get to enjoy my morning shifts bringing him coffee and giving him those passionate kisses at his desk or enjoy our lunch breaks as we planned for the next set of events in the afternoon. We wouldn't share those quiet rides home in rush hour traffic or the extravagant dinners we'd take turns treating each other to.

I wouldn't get to look into his hazelnut eyes, which would flicker to red before he'd take a taste of my blood, sending us both into an euphoric state. He'd put all the blame on Brian and that would be the deal breaker, turning this into a war.

Which was exactly what this man wanted, fighting the flames burning his flesh in order to stumble over to my side. I gritted my teeth as his burnt hand gripped my hair, tugging me up. His eyes stared into mine as they slowly began to dull. I knew neither of us would survive, but how would he kill me?

Something poked into my neck, making me scream, then a cool liquid slowly entered my veins. My eyes dilated and I began to choke, my body failing to take in any more air. It felt like my insides were freezing.

“Bye-bye, Miss Secretary. You’ll never live long enough to be the queen of anything,” the man struggled to announce loudly, before blood poured out of his mouth. He let go of my hair and I dropped to my knees. He took a few steps away before falling to the ground. He twitched a few times before freezing in place, taking his last breath.

I tried to take the needle out but I couldn’t move, my head laying on top of my right hand which held my phone.

“Sia, baby, hold on. Brian’s thirty seconds away. Please baby. Don’t...die...fight...for...me...please...Anastasia.”

I opened my mouth to reply, to say one last goodbye. I couldn’t tell him how much change he’d brought into my life, but a final goodbye would be enough. But then I realized it was too late. I took my final breath as my eyes dulled; my once bright world went black.



# The Power of Seduction



SIX MONTHS EARLIER...

"Sweet mother of sin! You did NOT just waltz in here holding the first place trophy from the National Pole Dancing Competition! Is that real gold?!"

I grinned with satisfaction as I kicked my heels off, thankful to have those bloody things off my feet after walking on and off the stage in them for hours.

"Yes it's real gold and I sure did! There's a reason why my business does well, bestie." I winked and giggled.

My best friend, Alexander, laughed sarcastically. "My Sweet Anastasia. Your business does well because you're a

fucking workaholic who won't let any bitch steal the grand title from her, that's why. Let me guess, you went in thinking any rank would be enough, but the moment you made contact with them sexy girls in their bling bikinis, the she-devil in you would not let yourself be outdone," he declared in a dramatic voice.

I rolled my eyes and went over to put down the oversized trophy that was literally 5-feet tall. My Uber driver had been willing to bring it up for me, but I think he only wanted to help in exchange for my number which I would have rather avoided. Not to mention I was stronger than I "apparently" looked according to the five other men who kindly questioned if I needed any assistance. *Yup, the life of a succubus.*

"That's not how it happened. It was more like, I walked into the change room and got prepped, minding my own business, *of course,*" I began, stressing the last part. Alexander raised his eyebrow at me and I crossed my arms defensively.

"I was this time. ANYWAYS, I had just finished putting on my lovely pink, blinged-out bikini and was ready to go and one of the girls who surprisingly was last year's winner bumped into me. I couldn't believe that in a hallway wide enough to fit four rows of people, she accidentally bumped into me; it was totally intentionally. So the succubus in me was not going to have any of that. So a little hip here and a little toss of my curly hair there, and I grabbed the judges' attention. Once I began my routine on the pole, it was just magic. Oh, and did you know the main female judge is a lesbian? I was shocked and a little intrigued to find out."

"You did not make out with a judge!" he scolded.

"I did no such thing." I put my hand on my chest in a gesture of innocence.

He was quiet, staring at me like he didn't believe me. "She made out with me, Alexander. There's a big difference," I defended.

"You need a boyfriend. No! You need a harem." Alexander shook his head, flicking his hand at me accusingly.

“I do not need a boyfriend, let alone a harem! I’m a succubus, Alexander. You know, a creature whose sex appeal brings all the boys and the girls to the yard. That was a good song by the way!” I called back as I walked over to the fridge to get a chilled bottle of rosé.

“I know what you are, lovely. You’re just lucky I can tone down your magnetic pull,” he replied. “And it’s two in the afternoon. Why are you drinking?”

“My magnetic pull doesn’t work on you ‘cause YOU said you were gay,” I reminded, giving him an accusing look. “And my ass was up at four in the morning so I need a damn drink if I’m going to make it through playing catch up on all the email requests I have in my inbox that I’ve been doing my best to avoid.”

“I’m not gay.”

“You act gay,” I countered.

“I ‘act’ gay because I don’t want girls hitting on me at my bar,” he defended.

I twisted the cap off the wine bottle, placing it and the bottle onto the table. I strode over to the cabinet to get my favorite glass: a blinged out wine glass with red and purple stones. It was hard to wash, but today was considered a special occasion for a job well done so it would be worth it.

“You say it’s bad that the judge made out with me and gave me first place, but you’re acting gay to avoid getting asked 21 questions from all the single ladies. Also, you get hit on just as bad with the men that think you ARE gay, so I don’t see your point.” I poured myself a full glass. I put the bottle down and picked up my glass to take a big gulp of the sweet, semi-sparkling liquid that always seemed to wash my troubles away.

“You look like you’re in heaven drinking that,” Alexander pointed out.

“Don’t change the topic.” I winked. “But I am. Rosé is the best after a long day.”

Alex grinned, walking over to where I stood. I placed my glass down, opening my arms up for a hug. Alex laughed, giving me a tight embrace. “Congrats bestie pole dancer and welcome back. The house is way too quiet for my personal comfort when you’re away.”

“Thank you, bestie. You know you could have called me. Please don’t tell me you worked at the bar the whole weekend and slept there after your shift.” I leaned back to look into his dark green eyes.

He glanced away. “No.”

“Uh huh,” I replied as we pulled out of our hug. “Were you alone?”

“No.”

“So you finally got a girlfriend?” I teased, picking up my glass and began drinking it down like water.

He laughed. “Hell no. I stayed with the cat.”

I choked on my wine and he groaned, reaching out to pat my back. “That strange cat that always comes to your bar? I don’t get why you don’t just take him in?”

This black cat with blue eyes had been coming to Alexander’s bar before closing time for the last five years. I’d been telling Alexander to take the stray in, but he said the cat, whom I called Pixie or Pix for short, needed his space and loved the wild life, only coming by the bar to keep Alexander company.

“Yes, Pix as you love to call him. I keep telling you, he likes the outdoors and prowling the streets of NYC, day and night. He just stayed with me because it rained like crazy this weekend. Didn’t want him getting sick,” Alexander defended.

“You should just take him in as a pet,” I mumbled, returning to sipping my wine.

“Anyways, why did you get to keep the trophy when you were doing the competition for the client?” he questioned, eyeing the gold skyscraper award.

“The female judge said she’d order another one, claiming the name was spelled wrong. So I got to keep this one. Look, it even has my real name on it,” I squealed, walking over to turn it slightly and showed him my name engraved in capital letters.

Alexander walked to stand next to me, leaning over to read it. “Wow, My lovely Anastasia Hollister actually got a pole dancing competition trophy. Are you going to put this in your office?”

“I should. I’m really proud. That one pole dancing class was worth it!” I exclaimed.

“Aside from the fact you made out with your female instructor too,” Alexander hummed.

I gave him a pout. “Alexander. You can’t keep nitpicking me for what I am. I could easily waltz into any club and get laid every night but I don’t. Kissing is just easier for me to remain sane.”

“You’re saying you’re NOT crazy? Well damn, bitch, how are we friends?” he asked in a shocked voice as he put his hand on his forehead and tilted his head back dramatically like I’d caused a catastrophe with my statement.

“You’re an asshole. I question our friendship sometimes.” I narrowed my eyes at him.

He laughed, loud and hard. “Sweetie, you should know that by now and I’ve questioned our friendship for years yet both our asses come back home at the end of the day. You secretly love me, just admit it.” He winked.

“Hmph. You’re manageable and I surprisingly do care about you, alright? At least you can have an intellectual conversation with me and not go all lovey-dovey *‘can I be the one to father your babies’* mode like other guys.” I sighed, leaning back against the island as I finished off my wine. I reached for the half-filled bottle but Alexander pushed it further away, positioning himself to lean next to me.

I lifted an eyebrow at him. “What are you doing?”

“Didn’t we promise you wouldn’t drink a bottle of wine when you got home from work until you at least checked your emails for the next job request?”

I glared at him. “Evil.”

“Helping you remain a billionaire sweetie. Are your seduction powers even working today?” He looked me up and down questioningly. “Because I think they’re defective,” he teased.

I gave him a seductive grin and took a good look at him. I had always found him handsome, even though I hadn’t acted on those feelings.

He was 6’4” and African American. After being born in Taiwan, his family traveled over to America for a major business opportunity.

His black hair was shoulder length and normally tied up, giving him a poofy ponytail which he called his casual look, compared to when he worked at the bar. He had green eyes which occasionally turned gold, either when he attempted to do magic or when he was super mad about something.

He explained it was a family trait and his parents had some magic in their background. Not like I minded; he looked extra hot when he was angry. Not like we were into one another or anything. It wasn’t that I had friend zoned him, but we’d just never took the next step and neither of us ever brought it up, even with being best friends and roommates for five years now.

His parents were wealthy and gave Alexander the option to do whatever he wanted. Out of all the possibilities, he decided to get a quiet bar tucked amidst the multiple hotels in JFK airport. I had no idea how it was kept so hidden in an area with so many tourists, but he claimed he’d warded the building so only certain shifters and mages could see his bar, Magical Oasis.

I glanced down at his practically see-through white t-shirt that hugged his body perfectly like a glove, giving me a detailed glimpse of every muscle and line in his chest; don’t

even get me started on his eight-pack. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, an honest to goodness EIGHT-pack! He wore black jeans which were faded in the front. His thumbs were tucked in his pockets and he had a prideful grin on his clean shaven, oval face as I took my sweet time checking him out.

“I stand corrected. See, I could be bringing all the boys and girls to the yard too, you know,” he declared triumphantly.

I grinned, letting go of the hold of my power and took a deep breath. “*Come here, Alexander.*” I purred, feeling my energy begin to flow through my body and my eyes grow hot. I knew my once purple eyes had shifted to pure silver, only the rim of my irises remaining their usual plum shade. Alexander didn’t hesitate, walking up to me right at my command.

“*Kiss me,*” I whispered, trying not to get excited by the order I just executed. I’d done this a few times to prove my point to Alexander who still, after five years believed he was getting better at resisting my gift.

I noticed how his eyes began to turn gold which also happened when he became aroused, which only helped get me into the mood. In seconds, his lips claimed mine and even as a part of me wondered if we’d ever become something other than just friends, I also realized whoever got lucky enough to have this man in their life would soon come to realize what a damn good kisser he was.

I moaned into his mouth and his hands slid down my sides, stopping on my hips. The passionate kiss became more heated as he slipped his tongue into my mouth and pressed me right against the counter, pinning me with his groin. His cock felt hard against my black jeans.

*Shit, need to stop.* I knew if I didn’t control my own greedy desires, I’d do a lot more than kiss him in order to satisfy my urges. I pulled back my energy, locking it back into my mental power box of seduction and broke the kiss.

We were both breathless, Alexander’s gold eyes staring into my silver ones which with each passing breathe became less hot and would return to their purple state when I calmed

down. It took Alexander a good fifteen seconds before he snapped out of it.

“Fuck! I thought I’d nail it this time,” he cursed.

I giggled. “Sorry, bestie. You failed miserably and you’re really hard.” I winked. He looked down at his jeans and cursed again, leaving my side to head to the bathroom. I smirked as I reached out for my rosé, opening it back up to finish the other half.

“Have fun! If you need help, call me!” I shouted. I knew he’d probably masturbate after that quick interaction. Just because it had been brief, didn’t mean it wasn’t intense.

“I hate you!” he called back.

“I love you too,” I replied, taking another long sip of my wine. *Ah. Hits the spot.*



# Last Resort



I walked into our living room and pulled my phone out from the back pocket of my jeans before sitting down on the love seat. I placed my glass on the side table.

I unlocked my phone, smiling at the funny picture of Alexander, Pix, and myself. *Yes, as much as that bar cat weirded me out, he had some type of fascination with me and ended up staying completely still just so we could take a picture.*

I took a deep breath, ruffling my short, black locks and looked back at the pictures taken from the competition.

I'd turned what I personally called my "seduction powers" off in the beginning, sealing them to make me look like any

other contestant and the girls were kind enough to take my picture before I had changed.

For my business, Last Resort, which I'd established five years ago at twenty years old, I normally changed my appearance, depending on the gig. It wasn't like I necessarily needed to hide who I was; it was simply more fun to dress up.

I was tall at 6'1", with Irish and Chinese heritage thanks to my parents. I had curves in all the right places, but I wished I had a bigger bust. The other succubi stated I was blessed for my 36C bust compared to their 38DDD and up standards, but while I didn't envy them or their back pain, I wished I had more cleavage. At least I had perfect hips and booty to fit in those Fashion Nova jeans.

My mother was Chinese and a powerful succubus, having lived a life of luxury and fortune in China for many years before she decided to make the trip to America. She was a business woman and enjoyed the American trade market and her quick seductive skills essentially worked to give her whatever she wanted.

Somewhere in her high life, she met my father, an Irish CEO who owned several casinos in Singapore. Mother, having the skills and finally feeling actual attraction for a man, began to date him. After six months of being together, she got pregnant with yours truly.

You'd think after deciding to keep and give birth to me, she'd settle down until I was old enough like many succubi in our small population did, but nope. Mother Dearest couldn't stick with just kisses to satisfy her power like I did. Soon enough, she was back to her lifestyle of sex, men, and money.

A part of me didn't want to judge her, knowing it was in our blood as succubi, but her life decisions left me in a tricky predicament. My father was a vampire, and a strong one at that, which led to me being the first succubus-vampire hybrid.

When I was born, my mother hadn't wanted my father to find out for multiple reasons, one being he'd want me to one day lead his oversized coven and become their Queen, but also

because I'd be the perfect weapon for bad people to make a living off of.

Think about it: a vampire with their agility, strength, and flawless appearances, combined with the powers of a succubus that could bring any man or woman to their knees in complete submission. Not to forget the more sex and partners a succubus had, the stronger she'd become.

Having what we called "mates" was even better. I used that term 'cause I felt it was a kinder term than slaves, but the longer or more intense your relationship was with your mate, the more power it gave you. It was also beneficial if they were different shifter species.

If you dated another vampire, both of you would receive an increase in speed and other vampire abilities. Date a magician and you too would be able to do magic with the snap of your fingers. *Heck, date a damn werewolf, and I'm sure you'd get whatever benefits come with being a...well, a wolf.*

Anyways, my mother's decision to keep me led to an isolated childhood where I was stuck at home, unable to go out and play for fear I'd somehow reveal what I was. As much as I'd love to get into the details of my shitty childhood, I'd leave that for another time.

I stayed in my bubble world, getting homeschooled until I had enough of the isolation when I turned eighteen. I'd saved every dime my mother had given me from the time I was four and decided to live on my own, getting the tiniest, most inexpensive apartment I could find in one of the more rundown parts of Manhattan.

Those days hadn't been easy, but I invested my money in taking business management courses during the day while I used my seduction to my advantage at night singing at bars to make extra cash. At least during my childhood captivity, I'd gained experience in learning how to control my succubus powers and learning to manage the basic on and off switch.

After two years, I had enough to afford a fancy penthouse, received my diploma, and opened my business.

Last Resort was exactly what its name stated. Were you in a tight jam? Maid of honor bailed the day before your wedding? Backup singer called in sick the day of your sold out concert? Or worse yet, you're unable to attend the National Pole Dancing Competition because you broke your ankle? Just call us and we'll make sure everything goes unnoticed.

Everyone assumed the company was made up of a team of experts who made sure that everything went smoothly, but it was run all by yours truly, alone. Sure, it was difficult, requiring a lot of last minute flight booking, long boring rides, and last minute UBER transits, but the payout was not just a few dollars, but millions.

Five years later, I was one of the many billionaire shifters living in NYC. Thankfully, my business was the reason why I met Alexander. He'd requested my services to sing at his bar that was packed for an event one night.

I guess something just clicked between us and we'd been best friends ever since. Living together was the perfect arrangement, even if we weren't sleeping together. Our place was close to his work and for me, it was near the airport and the perfect location for business meetups and of course, the luxury parties. *If you didn't know, rich people LOVED to party.*

As beneficial as my succubus side was, my vampire side was a pain in the ass. It wasn't the dominant one between the two, my seductive gene was much stronger, but regardless of which trait was more powerful, I still was dependent on blood.

Sure, I could survive much longer without it than a normal vampire, able to go a good month without a blood tablet or pack of the fresh good stuff from one of the private blood banks for vampires and other shifters, but anything longer than that had major side effects on me.

It had only happened a few times. The worst was when my flight was delayed and the layover went from a few hours to an entire week due to a bombing incident which canceled all flights back to NYC from Washington state.

Thankfully Alexander was with me, catching my stubborn ass when I almost face planted into the floor. The perfect ‘she’s anemic, got to restore her blood levels’ excuse always worked. Another cool fact I found out when I woke up in the airport infirmary was that vampire shifters worked as undercover paramedics JUST for occasions like these. *The things you learn.*

The thing I loved about being the CEO of my one-woman business was the freedom it gave me to do whatever I wanted. I could refuse any request asked and could go on vacation anywhere in the world when it struck my fancy. Either way, my business was something I was proud of and even if I had to use my powers to help me, it still took time and hard work to keep it up and running. Sadly, you couldn’t just seduce someone to run this type of business for you.

I clicked on the email icon on my phone, noticing the red dot with the number 5200 in white. “Fuck. I cleared these out just yesterday!” I sighed and put my phone on the arm of the chair. I pulled open the small drawer of my side table, retrieving my pink iPad. I booted it up and crossed my legs in yoga style, ruffling my hair in frustration.

I glanced over at my wine glass, frowning at the decent amount of pink clear liquid. *Wait for me, my love. I’ll finish you once I’ve done my adult duties.*

“Please don’t tell me you’re talking to your wine, again.” Alexander returned, only in sweatpants with a towel resting on his head, water droplets still running down his exposed chest.

I lost my train of thought, now trying to convince myself that making your bestie a temporary mate when naked went against the human rights act. *Nope, Anastasia. You can’t mate Alexander. You have morals. Yes, morals. Kissing only to tease him or to keep me sane. That’s all.*

“Now you’re giving yourself a self-talk, aren’t you?” he asked with a grin, walking over to sit on the sofa next to me.

I sighed. “Fuck you.”

“Don’t direct your anger at me. Thanks to you, I had to take a cold shower. You don’t see me mad at you because I had to waste precious water.”

“You got to enjoy the pleasures of masturbating, that’s why,” I grumbled, picking up my iPad and opening my emails. My eyes quickly scanned through the spam and useless subject lines, half of them asking if I was legit or if I could be their last minute partner for ABCD.

“I’m not ashamed at all,” Alexander stated proudly, drying his hair with the white towel on his head. Then he crossed his legs, copying my position as he began doing meditation exercises.

“Aren’t you supposed to meditate on your own?” I inquired as I began my email deleting spree.

“I like when I have company and at least then you’ll stay on task and not finish your wine and end up falling asleep.” He spoke in a calm voice, returning to his breathing techniques after.

“Worst friend ever,” I grumbled quietly, not wanting to interrupt him too much. I knew firsthand that meditation was hard to zone into, having done it daily during my days of isolation.

“You love me, still.” His voice was barely a whisper. I didn’t reply, knowing within seconds he’d be in a mental state of tranquility.

Alexander had been into meditation long before I met him, explaining that he did it to help him learn how to use magic. Something about centering yourself and focusing on the energies around you helped call upon the elements and gave you the ability to use them at will. Of course, spellcraft would be a bonus and the words summon helped initiate the element. Learning how to make a fire out of nothing was super hard.

He hadn’t been successful yet, but to be a supportive friend, I studied all the same spells as him, even though they wouldn’t benefit me in my own life. *Why would I need a fire spell? Wouldn’t save my life, that’s for sure.*

The room was quiet for about thirty minutes as I worked on cleaning up the spam in my inbox and began focusing on the serious inquires. My eyes landed on a particular email: URGENT- SUBSTITUTE PRIVATE SECRETARY FOR CEO- PLEASE!

I frowned, deciding to open that message first out of all the various ‘I don’t want to go to work, please fill in for me’ emails.

My eyes quickly scanned the email; I paused about halfway down. *Huh. This name is familiar.*

“What’s got you staring like you just struck gold?” Alexander questioned. I pulled my eyes from my iPad to stare up at his now green eyes, having changed back during his meditative state.

“This email. A woman named Lesley Frank is a private secretary for some CEO and has a family emergency. She needs three months off and can’t find a replacement after asking four other partnered companies. She’s desperate and needs to leave tomorrow, meaning I’d have to start at seven sharp tomorrow morning for my walk through with her boss and the assistant,” I explained.

“Interesting. Well, how much she going to pay you for three months?”

“Oh, I didn’t check,” I confessed; I scrolled further down the page. “She’s willing to pay fifty milli- WHAT?! Fifty fucking million. Hold up, let me rub my eyes and make sure they aren’t deceiving me.” I did exactly that, blinking a few times for good measure.

“No fucking way. Pass that bitch over,” Alexander called out. I handed him the iPad and picked up my phone to check my business account. Serious inquiries required payment in full.

The money would be held until I accepted it at which point it was released and deposited into my account. If I declined, it would be placed back in the client’s account, which was the easiest way to decline a offer.

In order to do that, you'd have to go through my private accountant and he'd only agree if he knew the job was legit and didn't risk me getting into some mafia trouble or whatnot.

“Wow, is she serious? Is the money in your account already?”

I finished entering my login info; my eyes grew wide at the offer that glared up at me from the top of the screen. “Holy shit, it is!”

“Alright, what gives? Why would she pay you fifty million to be a secretary for three months? Who's the CEO?” he questioned.

“Uh...Mr. Smith. You know, that totally sounds like the perfect fake name,” I mumbled, remembering the movie Mr. & Mrs. Smith.

Alexander ignored me, doing some research on my iPad. “Oh shit! He's legit!”

“Seriously? Does his company match the address she gave?”

“Yup. Mr. Smith, a 26-year-old billionaire. He owns various businesses in NYC, New Jersey and even a few up in Canada. He just came back from Toronto after signing a modeling contract for next year and is in the works of getting his own clothing line. Shit, this man better hook me up with some new jeans.” Alexander gawked at the screen.

I rolled my eyes. “Of course all you'd care about is how sexy you can look with new designer jeans. I guess I'll take the job. Is he a human or shifter? Does it say anywhere?” There was a special site we could go on to see who was classified as shifter or human. It didn't reveal what shifter the individual was due to confidentiality, but it helped for people to know what they were getting themselves into.

Humans were well aware of shifters' existence, but only the higher up government officials and the President knew how big our populations were and the amount of each race living in the city.



Just like in the movies, vampires and wolf shifters really never got along. I had no idea why honestly, but I had been taught to hate their kind. I wasn't able to despise an entire race just because someone told me so, but I did get annoyed by their wolf smell once in a while, especially when there were way too many wolf shifters in a crowded place.

"Hmm...shifter. I guess that makes life a little easier for you," Alexander suggested.

"If he's a wolf, we won't get along," I pointed out.

Alexander gave me a 'not this again' look. "You get along with everyone."

"I get along with people because it's my job. Plus, some wolf shifters really smell. You know it irritates my nose," I whined.

"You'll be fine. Put that Vick's shit in your nostrils. This is a serious payout for just three months."

"Vick's is for when you're SICK. Not to get rid of wolf shifter smell. And I get it, but what if the CEO is an ass and that's why she's paying so much? He could be the fucking devil," I considered.

"I'd still do it," Alexander hummed.

I sighed while shaking my head. "If I accept this and I get taken to hell, your ass better come save me." I pointed my finger at him.

"Of course, Anastasia." He grinned broadly which actually made me blush.

"Ugh. More wine. Fine. I'll accept the job and go to bed after this," I declared.

"I can get your ride and everything ready," he offered. I picked up my glass and gulped down the remaining contents, sighing in relief. Suddenly I felt how exhausted I was from the whole trip and competition. I stood up and stretched, the empty glass still in my hand.

"Even what I'm going to wear?" I asked, knowing once I hit the bed I'd be knocked out from afternoon all the way until

dawn the next day.

He smirked, rising to his feet and walking over to where I stood. He took my empty glass and gave me a kiss on the forehead. “Even what to wear. You’ll look like the best sexy secretary any man has ever seen.”

“Professional clothes. I don’t want the ‘sexy secretary,’ but thank you.” I loved that I had his support in everything and knew he’d always be there for me.

“As long as you keep that power of yours in check,” he cautioned.

I yawned. “If I’m fully awake, I agree to those terms.” It could take me anywhere from 15 minutes to 30 mins to get my ass out of bed in the morning.

I hated getting up in the morning with a passion, and if I was half awake, it led to me forgetting to keep a lock on my seductive power. I think I had jumped Alexander quite a few times in our friendship before he realized he needed to wake me up extra early to prevent all the men and women of NYC finding out I was a succubus.

“Deal. Go rest up. Good work,” he praised, giving me a hug.

I squeezed him tightly and pulled back to smile. “Thank Alexander. I appreciate it,” I whispered.

“I know. I appreciate you just as hard. My lonely ass would start counting the little lines in the ceiling if you were gone too long,” he admitted.

I giggled. “So you did miss me!”

He coughed. “Go sleep.” His cheeks were slightly red as he walked to the kitchen to wash my glass. I took my phone and made my way down the hall and into my master bedroom.

I decided I’d attempt to take a nap and do some catching up and research before my new job as Mr. Smith’s personal secretary. I quickly stripped out of my clothes, tossing them into the hamper to the left of my dresser and pulled out a white

t-shirt and pair of black underwear. I ruffled my locks, looking in the standing mirror next to my vanity.

I had a few bruises that were now making their appearance from all the training I'd been doing to get enough core strength to pole dance, but I figured they would heal very shortly.

I yawned again, doing some quick stretches before I clapped my hands to dim the light. I walked over to my king sized bed, moving the maroon blankets with its pink and white cherry blossom pattern and slid into bed.

Relaxing my head on my pillow, I read the email once more before my eyes got so heavy I couldn't keep them open any longer. I shut my phone off, reaching out to put it on the nightstand before rolling onto my right side.

*Another day of hard work. Can't wait to see how this next one will go.*

# Lovers and Friends



"Sia? C'mon Anastasia, it's thirty minutes to six; you're going to be late."

I mumbled for him to go away, hugging the blanket I'd cocooned myself in. My night consisted of weird dreams from my childhood and pole dancing werewolves. Between the two, I was more horrified by the dancing werewolves. *Like really, try to picture that. Yup, not a pretty sight.*

"Sia."

Only Alexander knew that I loved when people called me Sia. It was my nickname, since people surprisingly said Anastasia in so many different ways and dialects. Sia just made life nice and easy.

I wouldn't admit that the name secretly turned me on, even more so when Alexander said it, but I think that was more just my succubus side creating those feelings of want.

I was still on the verge of sleep and didn't want to get up for my new job. *The money is so tempting though.* I felt Alexander tug on the blanket and I pulled back, not wanting to have my source of warmth stolen from me. "No," I whined.

"Anastasia. Fifty million dollars is on the line. You're lucky I always wake you up thirty minutes before you actually need to get up. Out of bed," he demanded. I frowned, slowly opening my eyes to see him standing on the right side of my bed.

My tired eyes slowly scanned his muscular bare chest, and I began to wonder if he'd be a good blanket. He crossed his arms and gave me a stern look. "Don't stare at me like that. I'm not going to be your cuddle buddy."

I pouted, tugging back the blanket. "Mine."

"Up," he countered. I was silent for five seconds, looking at the blanket before returning my eyes back to his; I noticed them grow wide and he opened his mouth. "Don't you-"

"*Cuddle with me,*" I mumbled. His body tensed up at my command before he let go of the blanket. I rolled over, snuggling the blanket, thinking he'd go away as I locked back my power, releasing him from fulfilling my demand. I already claimed my actual prize which was the blanket.

I heard him sigh. "You're evil, you know that?"

I looked over my shoulder and frowned. "No cuddle?" I asked, trying to fight off sleep. I doubted he would oblige and as much as my body urged me to command him so he would hold me in his arms, I didn't actually want to force him.

"No," he declared, looking slightly frustrated. We shared a look before he sighed, his shoulders sunk as he uncrossed his arms. "I really hate when you give me that sad expression. Pulls at my heartstrings."

He crawled onto the bed and I rolled over and gave him the other half of the blanket. He ruffled my hair. "Don't get

mad at me if you're running late."

"I won't," I mumbled. He pulled me into his arms. He was quiet and I had the intentions to sleep but then a thought crossed my mind. "Alexander?"

"Yes, Sia?"

"Why are we not a thing?" I inquired quietly. It was a question we would ask each other once in a while and neither of us could ever come up with a reason. I was curious if he'd give me an answer today, though I couldn't even answer my own question in my half-awake state.

"I don't know," he whispered back as his fingers played with my short messy locks. "Do you want to date?"

"I don't know." I was unsure how to truly answer that question, which made me feel silly for even asking. "I guess I'm curious because no matter what I do to you, you never once yell at me. Sure, you get mad or huff at me for using my powers on you, but you've never told me not to use it on you with seriousness. Why?"

He was quiet and I waited patiently, fighting my body's urge to sleep now that I was in his warm embrace. He knew that as a succubus I needed to be intimate with an individual, whether male or female. It could be as simple as a hug or as intimate as sex.

Of course with sex, it would be easier for me in the long run, reducing the craving for physical contact and intimacy, but I just couldn't do that with strangers anymore. I was far from a virgin, having enjoyed my freedom when I first moved out and established myself in the world.

I'd lived my life and enjoyed the luxury of what it was like to be a succubus, but the more sex I had, the more the fear began to grow inside me that I'd become exactly like my mother. I didn't want to risk having a child; they would deserve more than a careless mother like mine had been. I also didn't want my child to have a father who didn't know or care about them.

Once the fear grew to the point of giving me nightmares after each sexual exchange, I gave up entirely. Since then, kissing, hugs, and cuddling were all I could do for the sake of keeping my sanity. Alexander understood that, but it wasn't fair to him in my personal opinion. I didn't want him holding up his own personal life for my sake.

"You're my best friend, right?" he questioned.

"Isn't that obvious or was that rhetorical?" I teased back.

He chuckled, the deep sound made me happy. "Pretty obvious, but I like to reassure myself. As your friend, why should I get upset over what you are? Succubi have become a rare breed now and unlike many of them who make their own mini factions of slaves and do whatever they wish with them, you're here living in our suite making a name for yourself and just kiss random strangers here and there."

I pulled back to frown at him. He laughed. "Oh don't give me that look. You do kiss strangers sometimes, but I don't judge you for it. As a succubus, the urges are strong, right?"

"Well...ya." It was always hard to describe a succubus' urges. It was like how pregnant woman would wake up at ungodly hours of the night for the strangest food combinations.

In my case, it would start out as a nagging thought before gradually becoming an constant craving, which if ignored long enough caused a dire need for sexual contact. If I didn't kiss strangers, I'd probably kiss Alexander every other day and if I didn't do that and ignored the warning signs, I'd basically jump the first person I saw.

*Who am I kidding? I wouldn't jump anyone. I'd command them to do exactly what I wanted and make them please me for as long as I needed them until the urge was fulfilled.*

"Then what kind of friend would I be to neglect that? You want a hug, you can have one. You want to kiss, you can. Even if eventually we go our separate ways or are in relationships... I'd probably still wouldn't try to stop you. When someone you

care about is in need, it doesn't matter what you have to do. You just do it," he concluded.

"What if we did get partners? I think yours would probably get mad," I pointed out.

"I'll tell them you're a succubus and could have taken me a long time ago. She'd shrug it off," he replied.

It was my turn to laugh. "You don't know how deadly women are. We aren't like some of you men who think it's okay to have twenty side chicks."

He huffed. "I have morals, my dear. Not every man likes side chicks. What about a sideman?"

"That's not a word at all and you missed my point," I argued, slapping his chest. He pulled me into a hug before rolling onto his back so I sat right on top of him.

I grinned, sitting up to stare into his tired green eyes. I noticed the sudden glimpses of gold in them. He lifted his hand to brush against my cheek, his eyes never leaving mine.

"You'll always be important to me, Anastasia. You helped me through times when no one else wanted to look my way. My family surprisingly adores you, yet criticizes every other potential female presented to them. No matter whether we stay as best buddies or something more blossoms between us, I'll be there when you need me to. Doesn't matter if you have to kiss me senseless. At least you're a good kisser." He winked and a wide grin formed on his lips.

I mimicked his smile before leaning down to kiss him. It wasn't with romantic intention, but more of a thank you and I knew he was aware of that, having kissed him as thanks plenty of times before.

"Thank you," I whispered against his lips.

"You're welcome, Sia. Now, are you getting up?" he asked. I glanced up at the clock on the wall above my headboard, which said it was 5:45 AM.

"Fifteen more minutes," I protested, resting my body on top of him. The vibration of his chest made me grin.



He chuckled. “Good luck to whoever has to wake you up in the future. Maybe they’ll be a night owl and you’ll never have to wake up in the mornings.”

“That would be a dream come true. You’re still a potential candidate, bestie, so that reassures me I have a backup,” I teased.

“I’m not your backup booty,” Alexander argued.

I lifted up slightly to meet his amused eyes. “You so are. Backup booty, aka the man who always has my back and makes sure no one stares at my booty too long.” I winked.

He rolled his eyes. “That’s not how the true saying goes.”

“Whatever. Same shit, now cuddle with me for thirteen minutes so I can survive this agonizing day and pray my boss isn’t Lucifer in the flesh.”

“Mr. Smith isn’t Lucifer and you’ll be fine. You’ve done tons of secretary jobs and you were such a pro in every single one. Remember, they were begging you for weeks to be their permanent worker,” Alexander praised, wrapping his arms around me while I rested my head back on his chest.

“Yes, but you never know. What if he’s an incubus?” I suggested.

“Your powers would cancel one another out,” Alexander reminded.

“They would not. That only occurs when we’re both on equal levels. He’s older, he could be stronger,” I countered.

“He’s twenty-six.”

“Everyone’s twenty-six when you’re a shifter. He could be one hundred and not look a day older than thirty. You know as shifters our aging process slows down tremendously once we hit twenty-five. Blessing and a curse,” I added.

“Blessing in this world that people have some awareness of shifter race. Humans are more accepting than you think.”

“Like how you’re accepting of your succubus-vampire best friend? I can see your first step as a mage is blossoming,” I

teased.

“I’m going to be a mage one day, just you wait,” he declared.

I laughed. “Oh Alexander, I thought you said your magic percentage was like three percent. Even my magic is higher than yours.”

“You’re at ten percent,” he argued.

“Seven percent better than you,” I taunted.

“You’re mean.” He huffed. “I’ll be able to do it, just you wait. I have all the ancient texts and knowledge to be successful.”

“Those ancient books look like they are going to fall apart; you got them from eBay. Not to mention you need a magic translator for half the spells in there,” I commented.

“I’m learning how to read them slowly. You have to at least practice with me,” he begged.

“Why is that? I didn’t volunteer to become a mage.” I yawned, closing my eyes.

“Because you’re my best friend. You have no choice,” he declared.

“Hmm...true. Sad...but definitely true,” I mumbled, begin to doze off once again.

He tightened his arms around me, giving me a quick squeeze. “You’ll be fine and I’ll have my phone next to me when I sleep.”

“You have work tonight?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll come by if I need a drink. Maybe pet Pix a few times if he passes by,” I whispered.

“My bar and stage are always open to you,” he encouraged.

“No singing. Only makes people start begging for me to sing every night.”

“That’s because you’re good and when you let yourself go and sing your heart out, it’s like a spell that no one can break. I love your voice.” He whispered the last part, which made me smile.

“I’ll think about it.” I hummed.

“Ten minutes,” he reminded.

“Ya,” I muttered, already drifting off, enjoying these last minutes before the start of this three-month position.

*At least this time, I dreamed of a pole dancing Alexander rather than werewolves. That was a sexy sight indeed.*

Mr. Smith



"*H*is assistant said I should be here twenty minutes early and yet here I am, still waiting," I mumbled under my breath, looking at my rose gold Michael Kors watch that sparkled from the sunlight that shone upon me.

I sighed, looking up at the tall seventy-five floor building of SMITH EXCHANGE COMPANY. Mr. Smith's company helped individuals receive loans for smaller business, directing them to the right bank services that would approve of their request before aiding in their establishment. It was extremely hard and competitive to get even a tiny barber shop in the city, but the moment retailers heard Smith Exchange was interested, all other offers were off and they would drop everything for that person to help them set up their business.

I'd done some quick research during my ride here, Alexander having scheduled me an UBER. For a Monday, the streets weren't as busy as normal, possibly because it hadn't hit rush hour yet. I'd gotten here at 7:15 AM, wanting to look more into the building, surroundings, and get a general idea of who Mr. Smith was before I was scheduled to start.

I ended up getting distracted studying the entire area to learn more about him. I knew one of the many MUSTS as a secretary was to assess your environment for all the main services you might possibly need to meet the demands of your boss. A perfect example was the five different coffee shops in a 3 block radius. It was important to be aware of them all in case my boss was a Starbucks guy every Monday and Wednesday and a Dunkin Donut lover on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Fridays were always 'whatever will help me survive until the end of my shift' beverage so that choice would vary. *Trust me, I've conducted research on this.*

"I swear, I might as well go inside," I mumbled, glancing around for a woman named Annie Walgreen. She was Lesley's assistant and the two worked to ensure all of Mr. Smith's demands were met in a timely manner. As I continued to stand at the bottom of the three flights of stone stairs leading to the glamorous glass entrance that had automatic rotating doors, three security guards standing at post at all times, and a very fancy doorkeeper who greeted every single person who walked in and said farewell to those who left, I realized this was a really luxurious work environment. It made me curious what everyone's salary was and if they had a union.

When the clock struck ten minutes to eight, I gave up waiting and began my walk up the stairs. I took a deep breath when I reached the top step, taking a final glance up at the bluish grey, all glass building before I straightened my posture and began my power walk to the entrance.

The doorman greeted me and I nodded my head in return, walking through the automatic rotating doors before entering the lavishly designed first floor. The red carpet looked brand new and the floor was all white marble. Everyone was wearing designer clothing and holding various expensive brands like

LV, Prada, Gucci; I even saw a few Hermes bags. *Well shit. Do they get spending money just for high-class attire?*

“May I help you with anything, ma’am?”

I turned my head to my left and saw a woman standing beside me wearing a red suit. Her brown hair was tied up in a high bun with a red ribbon holding it together. Her shoes were the exact shade of red as her outfit and her red matte lipstick.

“I’m here to see Mr. Smith. I’m his newly hired private secretary. I was supposed to be directed by an assistant, but she’s yet to show up,” I explained, using a professional tone. I didn’t know if I was being tested or not, so I should probably keep up my professional appearance until I knew what I was getting myself into.

“Ah. Mr. Smith did receive an email from Lesley stating she’d reached out for a temporary secretary. Hmmm...” She looked me over from head to toe. A small smile formed on her red lips and I could sense the trickle of desire that buzzed through her. I’d locked my powers and for extra reassurance, was wearing a bracelet I’d brought with me from my locked up days, just for situations like these.

I planned to take it off once I reached the office, but with too many people around, I didn’t want to bring attention to myself until I was familiar with everything and management knew who I was and who I worked for.

The woman gave me a pleased smile, seemingly satisfied with my appearance as she nodded once. “Right this way.”

We walked over to the main elevators, but as we approached, she continued past it. I followed, my red heels clicking on the marble floor with each step.

Seeing as red seemed to be a theme with this building, I was happy I’d worn this particular outfit: a red fitted dress that reached my knees and a white blazer on top to hide the fact the dress was strapless. My hair was wavy, but perfectly styled unlike the messy fuzzy look from this morning when Alexander dragged me out of bed.

I wore red lip gloss, the shiny tint having a few gold sparkles and went well with my natural look. I had only applied a nude shade of eyeshadow with a slight darker shade to add a shadowing effect to my eyelids. Some lashes, eyeliner, and perfect brows completed my look, making me look classy and formal which I didn't regret now that I knew just how sophisticated you had to look to work here.

“Right this way.” The brunette gestured to our right. I nodded my head with a small smile as I followed her to a gold elevator. *Gold. Not the fake shit. REAL gold. How fucking rich is this guy?*

She pulled out a gold plated card, swiping it once before placing her hand on the fingerprint identifier. There was a beep before the doors opened. “*WELCOME*” a female voice intoned. The brunette ushered me in.

“This will take you directly to the 75th floor. Another secretary will be able to give you access to his office. I'm assuming Annie's going to be late so I suggest for the sake of your reputation here, you meet Mr. Smith yourself.” She winked before bowing her head.

“Thank you for the advice.” I bowed my head in return.

“No problem. Hope you make the cut. It would be nice to have someone like you around.” Her grin was more playful and I had to fight against the urge to tease her a little bit with my power. She didn't know what she'd be getting into, unless she knew exactly what I was. I could sense vampire in her, noticing a touch of the striking color through her brown contacts.

“Thank you. Me too,” I whispered, not hiding my interest as I gave her a seductive smile before entering the elevator. When the doors closed I sighed, pulling out my phone. I noticed a text message from Alexander.

**ALEX HOT MUFFIN:**

*“You better have made it to the elevators without flirting with anyone. I bet Pix I'd give him cat wine if you failed.”*

I grinned, glancing up at the display that showed 15 and then slowly continued upwards. I had a bit of time till I reached the 75th floor so I began texting back.

**ME:**

*“So...white or red?”*

I had to giggle, the grey bubble with three dots appeared immediately and I could picture a sleepy Alexander trying to text back his rage. I found it hilarious that he made a bet with Pix who literally couldn't talk back, but knowing how kind Alexander was, he'd give him some regardless. My phone dinged; a new message popped up.

**ALEX HOT MUFFIN:**

*“Don't you dare make out with anyone working there! Especially anyone who has interest in you. Understood, Anastasia? 50 million remember? We are not making this into the Young and the Restless, Secretary Edition.”*

I wanted to reply but he sent another message which made me laugh, followed by another one.

**ALEX HOT MUFFIN:**

*“And white...damn you.”*

**ALEX HOT MUFFIN:**

*“Good luck and you'll be fine <3”*

I sighed; a wide smile formed on my glossy lips and my heart swelled from how grateful I was to have him in my life. Even though I had done this hundreds of times, I always felt a little nervous and he knew it.

Since I didn't have a loving parent to give me motivation, his words of encouragement always gave me the extra push I needed to do my ultimate best.

**ME:**

*“Thanks, Bestie. Go back to sleep. Let's drink tonight. The tab's on me, including Pix's white wine. Xoxoxoxo. Rest well.”*



I glanced up, realizing I was on the 70th floor. I quickly turned my phone off and slipped it into the interior pocket of my white blazer jacket. I took another calming breath, standing tall with a smile on my face. *Let's see if Lucifer's my boss.*

The elevator came to a stop at the 75th floor and the doors opened with a ding. "ARRIVED," the female robotic voice declared.

The blonde at the black desk lifted her head up; gold eyes met mine. I took one little sniff and could smell the wolf scent from here as I walked out, my little steps making a lot more noise in the otherwise silent room. *Aww man, Lucifer's a wolf. Why couldn't he be something else...like a hellhound or something? Hmm, I wonder if there are hellhound shifters? That would be kind of cool. They would be able to burn shit and cook marshmallows if we went camping.*

"Can I help you?" she questioned sweetly. I was glad it was extremely hard to tell I was part vampire, only strong shifters seemed able to sense it.

"Good morning. I'm Mr. Smith's temporary private secretary. I was supposed to be here at eight with Annie after a scheduled tour of the building but she seems to be running late." I approached her desk.

The girl did a good up and down look at me before she sighed. "Sorry about that. Annie and the subway system don't work well. I'll get Mr. Smith for you. Please feel free to treat yourself to some beverages on your right." She rose to her feet, gesturing to the table with various machines to make coffee, tea, espresso, and fresh orange juice.

As tempting as it was to have some orange juice, I stood my ground. I had a weird obsession with orange juice which was my normal "reward" for not trickling my magic when I didn't have my bracelet on. Sad but even though it was a reward system left over from my cruel childhood, I still enjoyed the citrus drink. I glanced down at the gold bracelet with the red and purple gems: the dark purple jewel in the

middle and two red ones on each side, all three of them with a gold outer layer that connected to the actual gold bracelet.

When the sounds of the woman's heels faded, I slipped off the bracelet, tucking it into the other inner pocket of my blazer. I glanced back at the table, frowning at the delicious orange juice but I glanced away resolutely. This was another test I remembered from a different organization.

There were five of us and I got the position just because I hadn't taken them up on the offer for a beverage. It had been as simple as that. *Never thought that shit happened at interviews? Well, now you know.*

I heard the approaching sound of heels, the blonde woman returned to stand before me. "Mr. Smith will see you now. Just head down the hall and make a left." She took another moment to give me an analyzing gaze and just for a second I noticed a glint of amusement flash in her eyes.

It wasn't a glimpse of desire but a weird sense of satisfaction like you'd see in someone's eyes when they won a game, the quick glance making me wary. I nodded my head with a smile before heading down the hall. I noticed she waited till I turned left before she returned to her desk and I could hear her quietly giggle to herself which made me frown.

I closed my eyes, deciding to use a smidge of my vampire senses to help me out by heightening my hearing and smell. I didn't know what Lucifer smelled like but I caught a whiff of the gentle aroma of cologne coming from my right. It was extremely faint, but enough to lead me in the right direction. The left smelled weird and didn't give me enough reassurance to follow that woman's directions.

*Hmph, and they wonder why vampires hate werewolves. I thought our race was the underhanded ones who played dirty. Guess not. Actually, who am I kidding? I rarely defined myself as a vampire so how would I know? Grr, I better make my decision or I'll legit be late.*

I peeked out to make sure the blonde werewolf shifter didn't see me as I moved gracefully to the right, barely putting any weight on my heels to cloak the sound of my movement

until I reached a red door with a gold knob, MR. SMITH, CEO written in bright gold lettering. *Here it goes, flames of hell greet me well.*

I placed my hand on the doorknob, relieved it wasn't hot. Clearly, my imagination was getting the best of me, which was honestly rather entertaining and a little sad that I found this humorous but hey, if you didn't make yourself happy, who would? *The little perks of life.*

I opened the door and slowly walked inside before closing it quietly behind me. The room was bright, the walls painted white and were lined with various colored paintings and other artifacts.

I slowly turned around and noticed a man standing in front of the floor to ceiling windows, his hands behind his back like he was deep in thought. He appeared to be about 6'6" with short jet black hair that was styled and combed to one side, every strand in place.

He wore a fitted black shirt and black dress pants that were tailored to his bulky body. He looked like he loved to lift which showed from his biceps which miraculously didn't pop out of his fancy dress shirt, his muscles stretching out the material to the max in his current position.

He had broad shoulders and damn, he must do some heavy deadlifts to have such a perky ass. People thought only guys liked the booty. They clearly hadn't met me or seen how I freaked out when a man had the perfect round butt. 9.5/10 for me, and only because I'd yet to grab and feel how firm it was.

*Oh, heavenly Father, I'm going to hell. I guess it's okay if this man is Lucifer. I'll have something hot to look forward to aside from the intense everlasting flames and merciless torture. All hail the booty.*

My potential boss looked over his shoulder; bright red eyes locked onto mine and my whole body froze as a wave of heat went through me. *Shit....he's a fucking masterpiece.*

I couldn't tear my eyes away as he turned completely around. My heart felt like it was pounding against my chest

and I suddenly got goosebumps like the temperature had gone from super hot to trembling cold.

I didn't know if he was experiencing the same thing, but his eyes widened for a moment as they locked onto mine. I didn't know what color my eyes were at this point but who cared? I was too busy admiring this work of art to care whether I just gave myself away.

In all my life, this was the first time I'd experienced such a strong pull, the sensation making it hard for me to even think straight. His skin was pale but not as pale as you'd expect a vampire shifter to be. I was already shocked that he was a vampire, assuming he would be a wolf because of the wolf shifter secretary who clearly wanted me to fail.

He wore a dark red tie that reminded me of blood and his smooth pink lips looked perfect to kiss. *I mean, kissing a masterpiece was allowed right? It's not like we were in a museum where they said we couldn't touch the art.* It may get me fired and make me lose out on fifty million dollars, but it would be hella worth it if I got to enjoy those seductive lips on mine.

He began to walk towards me and I held my breath, unsure what to do or say. For once, I was frozen because of a male's sexual pull and it left me wondering if he was an incubus, though his eye color screamed vampire. Most vamps had red eyes, a common genetic trait. Since my succubus genes were stronger, I was blessed with purple eyes that shifted to silver, but they would still turn red if my vampire switch was turned on.

I couldn't tell if it was flicked on or not in that moment, noticing the way his pulse beat quickly in his neck. *No, Sia. You cannot attack your potential boss. Hmm, but maybe I already fucked up and will never see him again. I could ask for his number politely...or request it. But if he's an incubus and more powerful than me, I'd be fucked. But if he was the one to fuck me, that wouldn't be too bad. May get me fired but I'd at least have the memory of a steamy experience.*

He reached my side and his scent engulfed me, the gentle aroma of his cologne was so hard to describe, yet it would make any girl swoon and want to throw themselves on him. *Only if his looks didn't trigger that reaction first.*

I waited for him to speak as he stared down at me; his red eyes locked onto my purple ones. *I hoped they were still purple that is. Maybe they were silver.*

“Vampire, huh?” he whispered and I literally stopped breathing, not because he found out what my hidden half was but because of his sexy baritone voice that sent tremors of pleasure through me.

“I knew it,” I said absentmindedly, more to myself than the man before me.

He lifted an eyebrow. “Knew what?”

“You’re Lucifer in the flesh,” I replied before realizing what I just said. I didn’t react, my mind racing from what he would say or do after my comment. *If he was Lucifer, he’d just snap his fingers and poof! I’d be nothing but smoke. Maybe he’d kill me fast enough I wouldn’t feel anything.*

“I don’t know if I should take that as a compliment,” he pondered as a playful grin formed on his face.

“If it makes you feel better, the Lucifer in my mind is quite hot. I think it fits him perfectly. You know, as the ruler of hell and all, but I don’t think he’s a vampire.”

He snickered, crossing his arms over his chest before he laughed. “Either you’re super nervous or this is just your personality.” He gave me a wide smile, giving me a glimpse of his perfect white teeth. *Oh hell, he can’t be Lucifer now looking like a damn angel with that kind of smile. What kind of trickery is this?*

“Can I get away with saying a little bit of both?” I questioned.

He nodded. “Guess you can. You’ve held my attention long enough to want to give you a shot.” He turned around to walk back to his black desk, pulling out the red leather chair

and gesturing for me to sit. I made my way to his desk, giving him thanks as I took his offer and sat down.

It was the first time I'd experienced a person of his rank display such manners. Most CEOs that I'd met during the course of my multiple businesses were cocky and only cared about themselves. Thankfully they all weren't like that, Mr. Smith proving to be a needle in the haystack.

He walked to the opposite side of the desk, pulling out his black leather chair to sit down. When he was comfortable he sighed, relaxing back before opening his eyes to meet mine.

"I'm intrigued for multiple reasons," he began, holding the intense stare we shared while he stroked his clean-shaven chin. "Why did you go right instead of left?"

"Your secretary's a wolf who gives off mischievous vibes and quietly giggled to herself after she gave me directions and watched me turn the corner. Seeing as you already figured out what I am from your guess, you know vampires don't trust werewolves," I explained.

He grinned at the last comment, slowly nodding his head. "That is true and very observant of you. Guess that was an advantage today. I didn't think you'd come up and greet me yourself."

"Was that planned?" I questioned.

He frowned, shaking his head in dismay before he shrugged his shoulders. "Nope. Annie just doesn't get along with transportation. Doesn't matter if it's a bus, UBER, or a damn airplane. She always somehow manages to be late."

"Intriguing," I replied. She must have been good at her job if he'd kept her here still, even with her bad luck with tardiness.

"I'm more intrigued that you have a werewolf secretary," I commented.

"Oh. About that...it's not really my decision," he casually stated, pulling a clipboard from one of the drawers and picking up his pen.

“You’re the CEO,” I reminded.

His eyes met mine and a devilish grin formed on those seductive lips. “That is true, but let’s just say I don’t want to deal with it. Werewolves can be a pain in the rear.” He winked.

I couldn’t help but smile as I nodded. “Agreed.”

“So, you’re a hybrid?” he questioned, scanning me slowly.

“That depends how you see it. How did you know I was a vampire?” I inquired, curious how he could tell so quickly. He slowly rose up, walking over to my side, making my toes curl when he leaned in, his hot breath brushing along my neck.

“I’m guessing you didn’t grow up around vampires due to your duality. Some vampires with compatible blood feel a pull upon meeting. Some are really weak, while others make goosebumps creep along your skin,” he explained.

I had to swallow the lump in my throat, trying to remain focused on the conversation instead of how close in proximity he was, his lips only inches away from the right side of my neck.

It’s not like I was afraid of him biting me. I was scared that I’d like it, a lot. I, on the other hand, had never drunk from a person and didn’t know what it tasted like feeding on someone, whether shifter or human. I personally didn’t want to try, knowing once you started, it was a hard addiction to stop.

“Are you admitting you’re experiencing that?” I inquired, a piece of me wishing he’d admit it.

His soft chuckle tickled my flesh before I felt the brush of his lips along my shoulder and he whispered his response in my ear. “Would it be a sin for me to say yes?”

“You’re Lucifer, so I guess it wouldn’t be seeing as you’re the devil,” I mumbled, my mind too cloudy to filter my true thoughts.

“Sadly I am not. My name is Liam, Anastasia Hollister,” he hummed before pulling away and walking back to his desk.

I was shocked he knew my real name. “How did you...?” I trailed off, trying to blink out of my haze. He didn’t look

upset. In fact, he seemed really relaxed, as if his revelation only excited him as he stared at my confused face.

“My standards as a CEO are extremely high. So when I found out my so-called secretary was able to find the perfect candidate, in her words, I was intrigued and curious to see who it could have been. Sadly, Lesley was in such a rush she had attached the email she sent to you, asking for your services. I was impressed that you showed up since there are many similar businesses like yours, yet the moment they walk into the building, they usually get intimidated. None of them have ended up in my office though,” he revealed.

“Let me guess. Miss Werewolf at the front desk would direct them to the left. No, I bet to be diabolical with a hint of amusement, you’d alternate just in case word got out.”

He grinned with satisfaction. “Smart woman.”

“I wouldn’t fit the job description if I wasn’t,” I stated confidently.

“Indeed.” He looked pleased as he sat back down, twirling the pen in his hand. “So what’s your other half? I can tell your vampire side is not your dominant half,” he calculated correctly.

“Succubus,” I answered truthfully, seeing no point in lying to him. Aside from our little connection, I was trying to ignore how powerful he was. I knew for sure he wasn’t merely twenty-six. *Damn, Alexander didn’t believe me.*

He frowned, looking confused as he stared at me, which was really cute. “You’re not a succubus,” he countered.

I laughed. “Why? Because I haven’t told you to strip down naked and make you dance on your own desk?” I teased.

“Yes, exactly that and don’t try to defend your kind by saying they don’t try to do that to every boss they encounter,” he cautioned.

I rolled my eyes, but he did have a point. *If you could seduce anyone, especially your boss, to strip and make a fool of himself on his own desk, you would totally do it. In Mr. Smith’s case, I’d enjoy every pleasurable second of it.*



“Not defending what so ever and sadly I haven’t spent enough time with my kind to really know, but since you brought it up, I’d take great pleasure in doing that. However, I actually want this job and I promised Lesley I’d fulfill the role,” I replied.

“At least you’re honest.” He sighed. “You’re not very powerful then?”

“What makes you say that?”

“I can’t sense your power,” he pointed out.

“That’s because I lock it up.”

“Why? It’s in your nature.” He looked even more confused as he frowned.

I gave him a sad smile. “Not every succubus enjoys the luxurious life of getting anyone to do their bidding whether it’s getting them a cup of orange juice or a steamy interaction in the bedroom.”

We shared a look and I hoped he understood the deep meaning of my words. He slowly nodded and whispered. “I get it. Not everything is silver and gold. Sometimes it takes polishing a piece of work before it comes out to be a shining diamond for the world to see.”

I didn’t think someone could easily come to a conclusion like that but I liked it. He figured it was a topic I wasn’t comfortable discussing in more depth and since we just met, he was respecting my wishes which was surprising for a temporary boss.

“If I gave you permission to give me a glimpse, would you?” he questioned.

It was my turn to lift my eyebrow at him. “Will you fire me?”

“No.”

“Should I have you write that down and sign it in blood for the sake of my career?” I joked. He smirked, stopping the pen that was twirling in his hand and began writing something on the blank piece of paper.

I leaned in closer, realizing he was actually writing out a contract. He signed it, then lifted his finger to his mouth and was about to bite down on it when I reached out my hands to stop him.

“You don’t have to do the blood thing. That would be more of a pain and not just for you, but me,” I stated.

He once again gave me a curious look. “Why would that be a pain for you?” You’re half vampire, you drink blood.”

“I take blood tablets once a month, or if I really need to drink will have donated blood. I never feed off a person. You’ve actually just reminded me I haven’t had a tablet in a while and I’d rather avoid being on the front page of New York Times, ‘New Secretary attacks CEO, leaving bite marks on his neck and revealing the existence of the vampire race to all.’ No thanks and I really don’t want to hurt you,” I confessed.

“Once a month... What happens if you don’t get blood?” he questioned, lowering his thumb from his mouth which made me relax.

“It’s just like when any other vampire doesn’t get blood. I get all weak and dizzy. I kinda just pass out and my best friend miraculously finds me when I’m in dire need. Well, there was the airport incident, but that wasn’t my fault.” I mumbled the last part to myself.

“Airport...you fainted?” he asked.

I nodded. “Our plane was delayed after a bombing incident.”

“Ah. Makes sense. Paramedics got to you though?”

“Yes. Sneaky profession,” I commented.

He grinned, nodding. “My family established that system.”

“Really?” I asked, a little astonished.

“Yes. Traveling for vampires can be risky. We definitely don’t have a month tolerance like you do. The stronger you are, the more you have to feed. I can last a few days if I have to, but generally, I need a shot of blood a day,” he admitted.

“A shot, huh.” I tried not to giggle, but it was kinda funny that vampires did blood shots like some drinking game.

“It is funny if you think about it, but you have to keep yourself entertained somehow,” he pointed out.

“Intriguing,” I replied. He lowered his pen before turning the page to me. I had a burning question to ask and he must have noticed my curiosity which was most likely written all over my face.

“What’s bothering you?”

“How did you know I was vampire?” I blurted out.

“Your eyes turned red earlier,” he stated, seeming unbothered.

“You’re not freaked out?”

“That you’re a succubus-vampire hybrid, the only one I have ever heard of, who is extremely beautiful? Nope,” he complimented casually.

“Well...uh, thanks.” I felt a little reassured he wasn’t going to let me go just yet. *Not freaked out is a good sign.*

“I won’t fire you, Anastasia. In exchange, I have three requests,” he declared.

“Three. Hmm, okay. Shoot.” I sat up straight to listen to his demands.

“One. You’re allowed to use your succubus power on me. I want to see how strong you really are,” he presented. “As a CEO, I travel and have dealt with many of your kind. I have built a good resistance over the years but seeing as you can hide it so flawlessly, I’d like to see your potential.”

“Sure,” I agreed.

He nodded. “Two. I like you. Your personality is laid back and unique. You have a sense of humor and aren’t afraid to state your opinion or concerns. That is a good quality for the secretary I want. Doesn’t mean I like to be disrespected, which I doubt you’ll do without good reason, but I cannot deny that this job will be harsh. Outside these walls, I will be mean,

sometimes rude, or sometimes just a plain asshole. Doesn't matter if you're the sweetest individual on this planet, you will hate me by the end of today and I accept that. Today will be the trial and tomorrow you can either come in and be determined to do everything I request of you, or you can bail. If you bail, that's perfectly fine. Seeing as I do like you, I won't ruin your name or business and for a bonus, I'll pay you the fifty million that you'll have to return to Lesley if you are unable to be my secretary," he explained.

I swallowed, staring directly into his red eyes. I knew he was challenging me and that was why he was so detailed in this explanation. I guess he didn't know yet I wasn't a quitter. My competitive side wouldn't go down without me doing everything I could to prove my worth.

"Okay," I agreed boldly. He paused, narrowing his eyes at me but I remained still, my eyes never wavering from his analyzing gaze. He slowly grinned, closing his eyes for a moment as if considering his third and final demand. When he opened them, they were full of amusement.

"I get to call you Sia outside of work," he requested.

"Huh? Why...uh...well it's not like I have a problem with that, but it's rather random." *Wow, Anastasia. You were fine with him stating he'd be an asshole but says he wants to call you Sia and you're freaking out.*

"It's a cute nickname. Popped into my mind and I personally like it," he stated simply.

I gawked at him. "You're weird," I commented, realizing too late I'd said that out loud which made me blush.

He laughed. "I get that a lot. Now you can complete my first request and we can get the paperwork signed and start our shift."

"Hmm. Promise with your life you won't get mad and fire me," I mumbled.

"I promise on my life I won't get mad and fire you. You can do whatever, even strip me naked and make me dance on my desk. I'll admit though I'm wearing Iron Man boxers." He

blushed at the last part. I snickered, having to cover my mouth.

“Iron Man?! So, a Marvel fan. I think my best friend would hate you. He’s all Captain America. I guess you guys would have battled it out during the Civil War movie,” I teased.

“Ah. I do like Captain America more, but those ones were in the laundry,” he mumbled, looking uncomfortable.

“You know you’re really cute when you’re uncomfortable.” I couldn’t help but mention it.

“Thanks...I think? Don’t tell anyone I wear superhero boxers. Well, maybe your best friend, but that’s it,” he grumbled and I laughed.

“Okay, okay. Just my best friend.” I winked, wondering if he had registered that my best friend was a guy.

“Do your worst.” He put his hands behind his head and relaxed in his chair, a cocky grin on his face. I leaned back, trying to think of what I wanted to do. I wouldn’t deny how excited I suddenly was, but I didn’t think I’d be satisfied with his naked self, shaking his booty on his very expensive desk.

“Alright. Let’s just do a test run,” I declared. I stood up and moved over to his side. He pushed his chair back and turned to face me as I relaxed against the glass of his windows. Seeing as we were 75 floors up, I doubted anyone would mind the view of my backside if they could even see, though it would be intriguing to have sex with my body pressed against the windows. *Risky, but a hell of a turn on.*

I closed my eyes, needing a second to relax and let the succubus part of me enjoy a moment of freedom after releasing it from its cage. I never enjoyed hiding what I was; it left me feeling vulnerable and out of place but it was the best for everyone, at least with my current lifestyle.

I felt the warmth of energy run through me and I smirked, opening my eyes slowly. I noticed the change in Mr. Smith’s expression, including a hint of nervousness.

“***Stand up,***” I commanded.

I noticed his resistance as he grimaced, but he stayed in place. *Stubborn one.*

“You have a high tolerance,” I noted, crossing my arms over my chest as I stared at him.

He grinned. “You have to in this business or everyone will walk over you,” he replied.

I nodded in agreement before sighing. “Hmm, fine. You better keep your promise.” I reminded again.

He smiled. “I swear by it.”

I let a few seconds pass, letting myself go just for this moment as I closed my eyes again. No one really knew my potential and I liked to keep it that way. Even Alexander was unaware exactly what I could do and even though he was my best friend, I bet he’d be afraid of me if he knew everything.

I wasn’t like other succubi who could only handle commanding a few men or women at a time and needed to have sexual intercourse to sustain their strength. I could control anyone I wished, sexually interactive or not. It was a bitch to do and went against my morals, but I would do it if I had to.

**“Stand up, Mr. Smith,”** I commanded. I didn’t open my eyes, even when I heard the squeak of the chair. I grinned. **“Come here, Mr. Smith.”**

I heard his footsteps and opened my eyes to see him standing before me. His red eyes were dazed but his heated gaze was hard to ignore. I lifted my right hand to brush against his smooth skin, sighing at the simple touch.

This weird blood compatibility thing was really making it hard for me to think now that he was standing so close, making me almost forget my purpose to begin with. I had to take a calming breath before I made my next request.

**“Place your hands on my hips and kiss my neck slowly but enough to leave a mark,”** I whispered, wanting to have at least some evidence of what I made him do. Some people completely blanked out during these interactions, so this would help.

His hands slowly fell to my hips and he lowered his head; his lips pressed lightly onto the nape of my neck. I sighed in relief and lifted my head up to give him better access, unsure why I was reacting so strongly to his touch. I had no idea what this blood compatibility bull was, but if this was how it felt to have a mate, I would want an army. *Nah, maybe just three...or four. Hmm five is a lucky number, right?*

My eyes fluttered closed and I suddenly gasped when his sharp teeth began to nibble at my flesh. It wasn't enough to draw blood but it felt so fucking good I was struggling to think straight. He outdid all my expectations with just a kiss on my neck. *What would it be like if he kissed me? Would it be as delightful as it was when Alexander did?*

I didn't want to test it out, realizing that anyone could walk in on us making out and find out what I kept hidden till now, but the words left me before I could stop them.

***"Kiss me,"*** I whispered almost desperately, unable to take how good it felt, how satisfied my body was with every little kiss and suck upon my skin. His bites alone could cause orgasms and if I let him nibble on my neck any longer, I'd lose complete control.

His lips left my feverish flesh as he pulled back. Those red dazed eyes met mine before he slowly leaned in and kissed me on my lips. I moaned instantly; a shockwave ran through me like cool water, making goosebumps run down my arms and my pussy clench with throbbing desire.

His hands tightened their grip on my hips, fingernails digging into my dress and pinching my skin, but it only added to my arousal as the slow sensual kiss began to evolve into something else.

I couldn't describe how I felt and I didn't want to. All I cared about was enjoying how amazing it felt. This was nothing like Alexander's kisses. This gave me a boost of strength I knew would end in an addiction if I didn't pull back right here and now.

I broke the kiss. ***"Enough. I release you."*** I fought to catch my breath. His eyes returned to their bright nature and I

noticed how breathless he was, both of us panting; his body still pressed me against the window.

I expected him to move, to release me after what I just did, but he did something unexpected. He leaned in and kissed me once again.

My eyes grew wide at the action and I pressed my hand on his chest in an attempt to push him away, but I couldn't. I wanted this.

My body craved the feel of his lips and didn't want him to stop. We stared into one another's eyes, while our lips did their own thing. When seconds passed and I realized he was kissing me of his own accord, I relaxed, my eyes slowly closing as I melted into his hold.

In my life, I never believed in love at first sight. Nor did I believe you could meet someone in one interaction and just get them. Yet, here I was, kissing a man I'd just met who was my soon-to-be boss and couldn't fire me for just using my power on him. My hands moved up his chest, wishing he wasn't wearing his dress shirt so I could feel his defined chest. I wrapped my arms around his neck, making it easier for me to press my whole body against his.

He moaned, his hands sliding down to grip my ass before pressing me against him so that I could feel his erect cock through his dress pants. He didn't know how wet I already was, making me a little thankful I didn't wear a pair of those thin thong underwear. The material wouldn't be able to prevent my juices from pooling and sliding down my legs from how affected I was by our kiss and his electric touch.

We kissed for what seemed like hours and if it wasn't for the third ring of the phone on his desk alerting us, we probably would have continued until we were both naked and he was fucking me against those damn windows.

We were both panting, our shoulders rising and falling as we stared into one another's eyes. I could see the slight reflection of my eyes in his irises and noticed they appeared to be an exact replica of his: bright red which only occurred



when my vampire side was in control. *Shit. Must have switched when I pulled back my powers.*

He took a slow glance of me, noticing I was slightly wobbly on my feet. “You okay?” he questioned, his hands remaining on my hips.

I smiled. “Perfectly fine, Mr. Smith,” I replied. He took another assessment before his hands left my hips and I pulled myself away from him. I swallowed the lump in my throat as my nerves about what I had just done sank in. *I’m so getting fired.*

He walked over to the desk, the phone ringing for a fourth time which contributed to the frustrated groan Mr. Smith let out as he pressed the black speaker button.

“What, Lilith?” he grumbled.

“Uh...um, I was just checking in? The secretary applicant hasn’t come back yet,” she noted.

“She’s here and filling out paperwork. Go for coffee,” he instructed.

“But...it’s only eight-”

“Go. For. Coffee, Lilith,” Mr. Smith said sternly; I shivered at the icy tone.

“Yes, Sir,” she squeaked and he hung up the phone. He sighed, rising from his leaning position and ruffled his hair. “That...was unexpected.”

“The fact I had complete control over you or the whole kissing vampire weird effect thing that happened?” I tried to clarify before groaning at my commentary. “I really need a moment to fix my professional filter.”

Mr. Smith laughed. “It’s refreshing and sometimes needed.”

I glanced at one of the works of art on the wall, able to see my reflection in the mirrored glass. I noticed the love bite and blushed, glancing away to turn my attention back to Mr. Smith. He walked back over to me, lifting his hand to fix a part of my hair that had gotten frizzy sometime during our

kiss. His hand lowered to brush my cheek before running down my neck to the very apparent hickey.

“You’re really dangerous with that much power,” he pointed out.

I gave him a shy smile. “Kinda, but I have the perfect innocent look so maybe no one else will notice.”

He chuckled, shaking his head. “I won’t deny that I’m a little pissed,” he began.

“You promised you wouldn’t fire me for that! Dammit, I should have taken your blood covenant offer,” I complained.

He blinked at my argument and laughed. “It’s not a blood covenant and let me at least finish. I’m pissed that it took one try for you to have me wrapped around your finger, but I guess that proves that power can be hidden in small, innocent looking packages,” he teased.

“I’m not innocent in any shape or form. Just because we have five inches of difference in height doesn’t mean anything,” I grumbled.

“I’m complimenting you. Take it.” He sighed, looking tired at my defensiveness.

I sighed. “Fine. I’ll be a good secretary and take your compliment.”

“Good and yes, you’re officially my private secretary, after a coffee break,” he announced.

“Do you want me to go get some?” I asked, ready to head out after I got his order but he shook his head.

“We’ll go together. It’s good I introduce you now so you don’t have to deal with werewolf receptionists. Plus, I need some air,” he offered.

I didn’t stop the giggle that escaped my throat. “I wonder why?” I teased, feeling a little excited about what was to come.

“Don’t get all excited yet. I stand by number two and conclude you will hate me by the end of today,” he vowed.

“Alright, Mr. Smith. Do your worst,” I hummed.

He grinned. “You really are going to regret that.”

“I doubt it. The only thing I regret is not attempting a threesome when I used to live the succubus life,” I confessed, grinning at his blank stare as his cheeks grew red. I walked over to push in the chair I had been sitting in and headed to the door.

“Are we going, boss? If we head down to Starbucks now we’ll avoid the twenty-five coffee order people,” I suggested.

I heard his approaching footsteps and I looked back to see him behind me. His arm slipped around my waist and I looked up at him questioningly, just in time for his lips to press against mine. I didn’t fight it, my succubus side singing hymns of pleasure and enjoying the energy that pulsed through me from the sweet exchange.

He pulled back and whispered, “Liam.”

I blinked, trying to figure out what he meant. “Liam?” I repeated.

He grinned, realizing his sudden move caught me off guard. “Liam Smith, your new boss. You should know it’s good to do a background check before taking a position. You never know when you can mix someone up,” he lectured.

I huffed. “I was sleepy. I had a pole dancing competition yesterday,” I confessed shyly.

He smirked in amusement as he lifted an eyebrow. “Pole dancing?”

I nodded. “National pole dancing,” I emphasized.

“Damn.” He looked deep in thought. “Let me watch a private show one day.” He winked and I almost squealed like a girly girl. He released me, walking past to open the door, holding it open as he used his free hand to direct me to go out first. I grinned and thanked him before heading out. He closed his office door and we walked to the elevator.

“By the way,” Liam spoke up as the elevator doors opened. I looked to my left, raising my head to meet his softened

expression, something I hadn't expected to see him portray.

“Welcome to Smith Exchange. I hope you enjoy working here. It's a pleasure to have you. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask.” He stepped into the elevator before outstretching his hand. I smiled confidently, walking into the elevator and placing my hand in his.

“I'm honored to put my skills and experience to the test, Mr. Smith. Thank you for your consideration and acceptance.”

*I didn't know what I was getting myself into, but hot damn, I wanted more.*

# Drinking and Pix



"*H*E'S A MOTHER FUCKING ASSHOLE AND I HOPE LUCIFER COMES UP FROM THE PITS OF FUCKING HELL TO CLAIM HIS SOUL! Oh, why am I hoping? I WILL CALL LUCIFER MY DAMN MOTHER FUCKING SELF!"

It was eleven at night and Alexander had closed the bar early just for me after I called him and literally burst into tears of utter frustration. I hadn't been so pissed in years and that was more than enough reason for him to tell the few customers in the bar on that Monday night he had an emergency to attend to. So there I was, sitting at the bar, drinking my anger away with wine, thankful that it was free and unlimited. *The benefits of having a best friend that owned a bar: an endless supply of alcohol.*

“Sia baby, I know you’re angry, but your screaming will break my windows and that comes out of my paycheck,” Alexander whined.

“I WILL FUCKING PAY FOR IT!” I screamed.

“At least don’t be so loud around Pixie,” he pointed out. I narrowed my eyes at him and he lifted his hands in defense, a wine glass in his right hand and a dry cloth in his left.

“Meow.” Pixie used his tiny paw to tap my thigh. I slowly looked down at his adorable light blue eyes that reminded me of the sky and his mixed fur; a good portion of him was pure white while the tips of his paws, ears, and tail were black.

He hopped onto my lap, wagging his tail excitedly now that he’d gotten my attention and lifted his front paws for me to hold him.

“Damn you and your cuteness,” I scolded him.

“Meow?” Pix opened his eyes wide with such intense sadness I felt like I had just told him to go home and never come back here. I cursed, lowering my fourth glass of wine to pick the little guy up. “Why are you so cute? It’s a curse,” I mumbled.

“Meow,” Pix replied, leaning his head to lick my nose.

“He’s trying to calm you down because he doesn’t like when you yell,” Alexander pointed out. I gave him a look. He shrugged. “I speak cat.”

“Bullshit,” I replied. He grinned, placing the dried glass in the cupboard. I grumbled, giving up on being too mad at Pix who was purring quietly while I held him with one arm and stroked his soft fur with my free right hand.

“Are you done now?” Alexander asked.

“Fucking NO!” I huffed.

“It couldn’t have been that bad,” Alexander suggested. He poured me another glass of rosé before quickly whipping up a drink for himself. When he finished, he walked around to sit at the bar with me. I thanked him as he placed the full glass in

front of me. Pix hopped out of my hold and onto Alexander's lap, staring at him with those cute eyes of his.

Alexander groaned. "Can't I give you your wine later?" he complained, staring at Pixie who remained silent. I watched with amusement as Pix jumped onto the counter, sitting right next to Alexander's drink. He looked directly at Alexander while his paw slowly and deliberately lifted up and back, ready to knock the poor glass off the counter.

"Ah! Don't you dare," Alexander scolded. Pix paused, lifting his paw slightly higher.

"Pix!"

\*Stare\*

I snickered. "Go get him his wine or you're going to have to clean up a mess and make yourself a new drink."

Alexander groaned, but got off his stool and headed for the mini fridge. Pixie lowered his paw and made his way over to where my full glass of wine was. He sat patiently and I smiled, reaching out my hand to pet him.

"I have to admit you're really amusing. If you ever wanna live with us, you can. Okay, Pixie?" I offered.

"Meow," he replied before he began to purr at my slow stroking motion. Alexander returned with a tiny bottle of cat wine, the clear liquid proving he did get white wine for Pix. He placed the little silver bowl to my right, knowing Pix would rather sit with me when I was here than next to Alexander.

He opened the bottle, pouring out a small amount. Pix didn't wait, already pushing his face past Alexander's hand, trying to get started drinking away. I smirked and tried to relax; my whole body ached but the wine was helping me.

Alexander returned and sat down, giving me his full attention. "Talk to me, sweetie."

"Today was horrible," I began.

"You didn't sound upset or anything when you replied to my text," he pointed out.

“That was before I met Mr. Smith or should I say, Liam. No. I’ll do Mr. Smith for when he’s a cocky fucking asshole! Liam is his sexy name,” I commented, reaching out for my other glass of wine I hadn’t finished yet, chugging the remaining contents. I was ready to slam the glass back onto the counter but Alexander caught my wrist.

“What did we talk about with you breaking my glasses?” he asked in a serious tone.

I pouted at him. “One broken glass equals a crate of blinged glasses in return,” I mumbled. I wouldn’t hide the fact I’d broken a few of his glasses in the past. He’d made me promise if I broke a glass, I’d have to buy a crate of super expensive wine glasses.

He nodded. “Do you want to pay me ten thousand dollars for those?”

“No,” I replied, glancing away.

“Good. Now gentle,” he instructed.

I sighed, lowering the glass gently onto the counter with his assistance. I noticed Pix eyeing the empty glass and grinned. *Pix, get my revenge.* I knew he couldn’t hear my silent plea, but it would have been amusing to watch if he had.

“Now, you said his name was Liam Smith?” Alexander asked.

I returned my attention to him, nodding slowly. “Yes. Liam. Ugh. Everything started out well...weird and hot?” I tried to describe the encounter in a way that made sense but I just didn’t know how to explain without going through everything that happened.

“Weird and hot?” Please don’t tell me you kissed your boss,” Alexander questioned. I was silent, slowly diverting my eyes and picking up my full glass of wine, deciding I should drink a good half of it so I didn’t sound like a desperate succubus who couldn’t get laid.

“I can’t believe it. You KISSED HIM?!” Alexander exclaimed. I continued drinking my wine, knowing I’d need it and Alexander would just have to wait. He groaned, taking a



large swig of his drink. I reached the halfway point and lowered the glass gently to the counter, turning my head to face him.

“Long story short, he figured out I was a succubus and I got permission with a signed piece of paper as proof that I could use my powers on him and he wouldn’t fire me,” I summarized.

Alexander stared at me like I speaking a completely different language. “What?! He gave you permission to do whatever you want? Oh please do not tell me you stripped him down and made him do some silly dancing shit on his desk,” Alexander declared, rolling his eyes.

I giggled. “Is that what all succubi do? Sounds pretty boring to me and not everyone knows how to shake their booty in a sexy manner anyway.”

“It happens all the time. They use the videos for blackmail,” Alexander revealed.

“Well damn, didn’t think of that part,” I realized.

“Wait, if you didn’t make him dance naked, what did you do?” Alexander questioned. I blushed, my hand going to the spot on my neck which was concealed thanks to the collar of my dress shirt. Alexander followed my movement and frowned.

I couldn’t even stop him when he reached out and moved my collar slightly to see the prominent hickey on my nape.

“You made him give you a hickey?!” he exclaimed. I glanced away, feeling a little embarrassed when he said it out loud.

“It seemed like a good idea at the time,” I muttered.

“That’s because your hormones were talking. Ugh. Please tell me that’s all you did,” he asked hopefully. I slowly met his gaze and several seconds passed in silence before he sighed, removing his hand from my collar to pinch his nose as he closed his eyes. “I need divine intervention for you and your succubus ways. Don’t tell me you had sex.”

“We didn’t have sex!” I defended immediately. He opened his eyes and raised an eyebrow at me. I crossed my arms, standing my ground. “We didn’t.”

“Why don’t I believe you?” he countered.

I narrowed my eyes at him. “Alexander Jackson. We didn’t have sex. First off we couldn’t because his werewolf secretary was a bitch and I bet was listening like a hawk for some type of sound to come from his office the entire time I was in there and after our coffee break when I had to sign contracts and shit. Secondly, I would have ruined the outfit you picked and you know how frizzy my hair gets when I get all freaky in the sheets!”

“You can’t say freaky in the sheets when you only make out with a person,” he reminded. I glared at him. “Alright, my bad. You didn’t have sex, BUT you did something.”

“I told him to kiss me,” I mumbled, calming down from my defensive rant.

“You kissed your boss.”

“Yes...but it wasn’t all my fault,” I argued.

“Why is that, my Sia?” he questioned. I paused in my argument to take a moment to enjoy the sound of my nickname flowing from his lips. I honestly couldn’t tell if he was upset with me that I kissed Liam or if he was just extremely amused.

“Okay, hear me out,” I began, pointing to him. He nodded in approval before I continued. “When I walked into his office, it was all Fifty Shades of Grey and shit. Like he was in the perfect tailored outfit and his hair didn’t even have a strand out of place and his muscles, and cologne...and well, his backside was hot. OH, HIS ASS-”

“Can we fast forward, sweetie? I get it, he’s smoking hot. Not as hot as me, but I’ll assume he’s at my level for the benefit of this scenario,” Alexander interrupted.

I pouted at him. “Fine. Anyways, he was hot, but there was like an instant connection. It was weird, Alexander. Like, him getting close to me caused a thrill of excitement and made

goosebumps appear on my arms and legs. It was as if I'd known him for years but we'd only just met. It was just really hard to resist but I did pull away. But he kissed me back. I wanted to push him away, yet I couldn't. Not because he was stopping me from doing so, though. It was because I actually wanted it which sounds crazy for me because I'M the succubus and he's a vampire, but...it was like a drug that you try out for the first time and you don't want to stop," I explained, hoping that made sense to him.

Alexander looked deep in thought and I noticed for a split second that sadness seemed to flicker in his facial expression, but it was gone just as quickly. He sighed, picking his drink up and gulping it down like water.

"It's bad, isn't it?" I questioned.

"Hmm. You have dealt with worse scenarios."

"Then what are you thinking?" I pressed, wanting to know what he was thinking. *Or should I say predicting?*

"He could be mate compatible?" Alexander suggested.

I groaned. "I fucking knew it." I put my head on the counter in distress.

"You're so overdramatic. What's wrong with that? You were just saying he was hot, sexy, and you wanted him which is a very different turn of events for a succubus like yourself."

"Alexander, he's the devil. No...WORSE than the devil! The moment we got back and I signed the contract, it was like a switch turned in his head and he became some fucking WORKAHOLIC BEAST!" I raised my arms for added effect.

Alexander sighed. "What did you have to do?"

"EVERYTHING! I swear if it wasn't against the human rights act, I bet he'd even make me clean that damn sexy ass of his! I don't know what the fuck Lesley was doing, but she's a shitty organizer. I had to fix the whole damn system to work for me and then had to schedule the next month of appointments because she didn't do it! He drinks like five fucking coffees a day with his six sugars, five creams, no

foam, Venti Latte bullshit. Even the temperature has to be right or he won't drink it. Then while he was in business meetings for the afternoon, I had to call all these different employees to make sure they did their shit, or we're fucked and ugh! Do not get me started with Annie." I realized I needed more wine just for that topic.

"Annie?"

"The biggest klutz I've ever seen. Like I bet on her life insurance there's an extra policy on there just to protect her from any injuries sustained by her even taking a breath," I stressed.

"Now you're really being overdramatic," Alexander insisted.

"Nope, I'm serious. She sneezed and the force was so strong that she lost her balance and crashed into the water machine of the breakroom, and managed to drench all the paperwork for Mr. Smith's meeting which was happening in ten minutes. TEN! I've never run so fucking fast, Alexander. I actually had to use my damn vampire speed. I have blisters ON my already swollen blisters!"

"So, to sum it all up, today sucked and you're not going back?" he concluded. I reached out to grab my glass and drank down the rest of my wine, feeling like I needed to reward myself, both for enduring and then having to explain my horrendous day.

I lowered the glass and sighed. "No, I'm going back."

"You're not serious?! You absolutely hated it," Alexander pointed out.

"Yes, I dreaded every damn moment, but I'm not letting him win! He wants me to quit. I bet it would give him great damn satisfaction if I didn't show up tomorrow, but nope! He's not going to be the last one laughing. My ass will be there bright and early in a really nice outfit just to tease him! I'll make Mr. Smith regret being a jerk during work hours!" I vowed.

“And after work hours?” Alexander questioned, looking amused.

I grinned maliciously. “I’ll purposely get all in his space and then leave him hanging,” I concluded proudly.

Alexander laughed. “You are the biggest tease in NYC. Unbelievable.”

I smirked. “I think that’s one of my best qualities.” I flicked my short locks.

“I’ll find you something nice to wear but we should head back home if you’re going to be up in a few hours. Don’t complain in the morning when I wake you up,” he warned.

I frowned at him. “But sleep is so nice,” I whined.

“Sleep versus revenge? Which one is sweeter?” Alexander proposed.

“Revenge,” I mumbled; my shoulder sank with sadness.

“Exactly. You’ll thank me later. Let’s get ready to leave,” he suggested. I looked at Pix who was curled up on the counter, fast asleep.

“Are we bringing Pix? I think he’s a goner.”

Alexander looked at the little cat and sighed. “Might as well. Before he wakes up and tries to break everything.”

I reached out and petted him, wondering about Liam. The moment the shift was over, he had returned to that somewhat kind person and this stupid mate shit blood thing was getting in the way of me giving him shit for being the worst boss I’d ever had.

Even though he’d pushed me to my limits, he’d scheduled a luxurious car to take me home and silly ointment for my blisters after he noticed them during my sprinting spree when I was getting all his papers in check after the water incident. *Fucking Annie!*

“By the way, are you sure Mr. Smith’s name is Liam? It showed something else online,” Alexander inquired.

“Yup, I’m sure. Remember, shifters don’t like putting their real names on websites nowadays. It’s too risky after that incident where that stalker girl followed that guy for a year and found out he was a werewolf, which led to her death,” I reminded.

Even though some humans knew about our existence, if they wouldn’t agree to keep their mouths shut, it usually resulted in their death, unless there was a mage around who could wipe their memory.

“Hmm...I guess. Just making sure. Even when he signs documents?”

“Alexander, we aren’t detectives where we have to prove someone’s identity based on their shitty handwriting. Like, you scribble your name, so it looks more like ‘Alex-and-ra’ than your actual name. But you don’t see anyone saying you’re a girl,” I pointed out.

“Fine, fine. I’m just being paranoid as usual,” he huffed. I smiled, sliding off my stool. He got off his and moved to face me. “Just be careful,” he whispered.

“I’m always careful. Unless I’m really drunk,” I admitted.

“Agreed. Give me five minutes to set everything up for tomorrow.”

“Okay.” I smiled and he gave me a quick hug before taking out glasses.

“Ah, that reminds me, make sure you take your blood tablet this week.”

“Did you order more? I thought we ran out?” I questioned.

“We did run out, yes, so I ordered some. I’ll put one in your purse tomorrow. Just make sure you take it. If this guy is your mate or whatever, you may require more blood down the road,” Alexander explained.

I groaned. “Splendid. I’m gonna die from the number of werewolf shifters there.”

“He’s a vampire though,” Alexander acknowledged.

“Yes. I’ve never seen a vampire work so easily with werewolves. They respect him too. Totally weird. At least Annie doesn’t really smell like one, unlike that silly receptionist. Ugh, she reeks!”

“Your poor sensitive nose,” he teased.

“You’re heartless,” I complained.

“I was trying to comfort you.” He laughed.

“Comfort, my ass. Let’s go home and you can cuddle with me. That’s comforting,” I suggested.

He looked over his shoulder to grin at me. “Your mate may not like that.”

I took a deep breath. “We aren’t together.”

“Alright, bestie. I want a wedding invitation and Pix gets to come too,” he joked.

“Whatever.” I walked over and picked Pix up carefully in order not to wake him up. I smiled at his little sleeping form, stroking his fur while I thought about the days ahead.

*I really hope I can do this. 89 days left.*

# Enough, and I'm Sorry



*T*ime had flown by and I'd managed to survive a month of madness over at SMITH EXCHANGE. Every day brought a new challenge, whether it was sudden meeting cancellations, Liam sleeping in which I realized he did A LOT, or him just not showing up to work at all.

Where would he be instead? Across the street at the new Cheesecake Factory that opened three weeks ago, enjoying a chocolate drizzled cheesecake with vanilla ice cream, chocolate sauce, and a regular sized cup of all sugar and cream coffee since they didn't have Venti sizes there.

He thought just because he was the CEO he could skip meetings. Well yesterday had been the last straw of skippy da-do-de games as far as I was concerned.



I'd already dealt with Lilith, the fucking bitch who had purposely thrown out the ten stapled packages I'd created for the meeting, which of course Liam had taken upon himself to miss anyway, forcing me to reschedule AGAIN. Then Annie decided to trip, spilling coffee all over the freshly cleaned carpet that we'd already spent a good four grand getting cleaned THE DAY BEFORE after her last mishap!

Now I was done with all that, my last stretch of patience was gone as I sat listening to the repetitive ringtone that would likely give me a migraine if I had to listen to it one more time. I pulled out my phone and dialed the same number as I had several times before. Mr. Smith, aka the biggest jackass of the day, picked up on the first ring.

"Where the fuck are you right now?" I snarled into my private phone, pissed after Liam had ignored my 85 previous calls.

"Sia, you sound rather pissed off. I'm just eating."

"I sound pissed off? I AM FUCKING PISSED OFF! Why the fuck aren't you here right now?" I snapped.

Liam was quiet for a moment. "I didn't want to go to the meeting," he mumbled.

"Liam Smith, please do not tell me, you had me reschedule this meeting not once, but TWICE just for you to ignore my 85 phone calls all because you didn't want to go to the meeting for YOUR company!"

"Um, Ana. Ya, can you lower your voice? Some people, aka, me, are trying to concentrate and be productive." Lilith poked her head into Liam's office where I was currently standing with my arms crossed.

I swear my eye twitched and I slowly turned to face her. She flinched and I had no clue which side of me she was seeing in that moment, but oh, I'd make her fucking wish she hadn't interrupt me.

"Lilith. Why are you interrupting my conversation with Mr. Smith when you should be working on the 100-page document that needs to be done and sitting in my inbox in

exactly four hours, ten minutes, and fifty-eight seconds?” I asked as sweetly as possible, even as my free hand shook with my growing rage.

I watched her gulp and I thought she’d retreat like a good girl, but NO, she couldn’t even just this once leave without having the last say.

“I’m working on it, Ana, but you’re too loud and you shouldn’t be talking so familiarly to our boss. Last time I checked, you’ve only been here for 31 days and-”

“Lilith. I will talk politely to Mr. Smith when he learns how to fucking pick up his damn phone! You see this?! MY phone, MY property, MY rules. Now, why don’t you take your reminding goodie-two-shoes face out of this office and get back to what you SHOULD be working on,” I ordered.

She frowned while her eyes narrowed at me. “Ana-”

“Anastasia. My name is not fucking Ann or Anna, or Annie, who should have been back here fifty-five minutes ago but LET ME GUESS?! Transportation fucking hates her. How the flying fuck does she get anything done? Just get out!” I snapped.

“This isn’t your office,” she reminded and I lost it, walking straight up to the doorway and right into her face.

***“From this moment onward, you won’t dare walk within three inches of this door. I don’t care if the fucking building is on fire. You will stay away from this office unless Mr. Smith or I request you.”***

I watched her eyes glaze over and she nodded once, before slowly turning around and walking back down the hall towards the front desk. I slammed the door and growled. “This isn’t your office, my fucking foot. The owner is eating fucking cheesecake across the street and I, his loyal private secretary is here rescheduling an entire month of fucking meetings because of it! This should be my fucking office,” I ranted, not caring that Liam was listening to me the entire time.

“I’m gonna get a fucking cactus and shove it up everyone’s fucking asses. Piss me off? CACTUS! Say my name wrong?”

CACTUS. Oh and if that Lilith bitch pisses me off, I'll give her a fucking cactus as a gift and shove it in both holes!" I vowed vehemently.

It took me a few breaths to calm down; the line remained quiet. The phone on the desk rang and I marched back over to it. I took a deep breath before picking up.

"Smith Exchange, this is Anastasia speaking," I said as sweetly and calmly as I could manage in that moment. "Ah, I'm terribly sorry. Mr. Smith had some researching to be done which wound up taking longer than expected. He should be back here tomorrow. Yes, Friday. I will definitely tell him that Mr. Silverstein called. Thank you and have a pleasant evening." I hung up the phone. I frowned, feeling a strange shiver run through me. *What a weird name.*

"Sia."

I was still quiet, remembering that name from somewhere, but couldn't put a finger on it. *A memory? Maybe a client of my mom's? Ugh, that's just going to give me a headache.*

"Anastasia!"

I flinched at the loud voice that came from the speakers of my phone and I quickly answered. "What?!"

"Are you okay?" Liam asked with a stern voice. He sounded ticked off and I mentally cursed, forgetting I just cussed him out, including his ways of running his business, his management team, and threatened to shove a cactus up their asses. *I personally didn't regret that last one.*

"I guess," I mumbled, deciding to walk over and sit in his chair. I relaxed my head on the desk, closing my eyes and enjoying the scent of Liam's cologne that lingered in the black fabric of his chair.

He was quiet but I could hear footsteps in the background. *He's probably going to come up here and fire me.*

"I can print out and sign my resignation letter now so you don't need to see me when you get back," I spoke in a resigned voice. With how quiet he was, I really was starting to think I'd pushed him to the edge. If he wanted me to leave, that was

fine. I'd be fine without the fifty million and I'd even help look for a replacement who'd hopefully be able to handle the level of craziness in this place. *Why am I sad about the thought of leaving?*

I heard the click of the door but remained where I was, one hundred percent confident it wasn't Lilith or Annie at this point. *Annie would probably trip or crash into the wall before reaching the office, alerting me to her presence.*

The dial of the phone went on and I sighed, moving the phone from my ear and dropping it to the table. "I fucked up and now he probably hates me. Great," I mumbled, closing my eyes.

*Why do I care? He's my boss and I'm just his temporary employee who has some weird attraction to him and he surprisingly deals with me ogling him when he's apparently "not" looking. Ugh, I need a boyfriend.*

Something brushed my cheek and I opened my left eye to see Liam, his soft fingers still caressing my cheek. He didn't look a bit angry. In fact, he appeared really concerned.

"Sorry," he whispered and I thought I was hallucinating. *Did he just apologize to me?*

"Why...are you apologizing?"

"You've been working hard and I've been slacking. It's not like I want to. It's just...I really don't want to attend that meeting. There are people there I really don't get along with and attending would do more damage than good. I didn't think you'd stick around this long and continue rescheduling it. Anyone else would have thrown in the towel by now," he commented.

I could hear the vulnerability in his voice, but I could sense there was more to it. He truly didn't want to meet these individuals and there must have been a damn good reason for him to keep ditching.

"Why didn't you just say so?" I questioned.

"It makes me look weak if I ask. I'm a CEO and billionaire, yet I can't suck up my pride and go to a stupid

meeting with a bunch of asshole shifters who have it out for me.” He looked irritated just by the mention of the subject.

“If it’s a decision you know won’t benefit the company, ditch it. If it’s something important, let someone go in your stead,” I suggested.

“Is there anyone here you think would meet that requirement?” he questioned.

“I could,” I offered.

That brought a grin on his lips and his red eyes softened. “Aside from you.”

“Uh...” I tried to think. Lilith was too clueless and would focus more on checking out the men at the meeting than dealing with anything business related, and Annie was more of a safety hazard than someone who could get through a business meeting successfully without breaking something.

“Exactly.” He grinned, still rubbing my cheek gently. Our eyes were locked on one another and once again, that weird goosebump-inducing sensation ran through me.

His simple touch seemed to make me feel a little better and I really needed it. I kept forgetting to take my blood tablets even after Alexander reminded me. But this month, every night when I got home I was so tired, I barely had the energy to splash water on my body, clean the necessary areas, and face plant onto the bed. *I’m pushing my limit though. Tonight I’ll take them.*

“Let me attend the meeting,” I whispered. Liam stared at me for a long time, the sound of the clock ticking in the background the only indication that time hadn’t stopped.

“I’ll think about it,” he replied after some consideration. “Can you delay it for at least another month?”

I pondered that for a moment, slowly sitting up and pulling out the schedule book I kept in his top drawer which I’d eventually claimed as mine. He watched me patiently as I opened up to the calendar page, immediately taking my work phone out from my black blazer and dialing without looking at the screen.

“Anastasia, what-”

“Good evening, Hannah. I’m good. Yes, we just talked an hour ago. I’m reworking the schedule and Mr. Smith is just so booked. I know, I know, the life of a CEO is just so demanding on the body. I really don’t want him burning out but he’s given permission for a substitute to attend the meeting. Yes, simply send me the requirements and I’ll make sure Mr. Smith reviews it and chooses a perfect candidate for the meeting. My pleasure. Thank you and have a pleasant Thursday.”

I pressed the end button, smiling with confidence as I sighed. I looked up to Liam who looked completely stunned. “What?” I asked.

“You fixed it just like that?” he questioned in awe. “It takes Lesley hours just to get that woman to pick up.”

“Oh, Hannah? She’s a succubus and has a hatred for werewolves. It’s like she can smell them through the phone. We go way back and I’ve worked with her a couple of times before. I had to reorganize your meeting with the CEO of the water company during my first week and realized she worked for a few of the companies you work with, scheduling business trips and meetings. We’re chill. I’ll organize the rest, you can go relax before your meeting at four,” I explained, glancing up at the clock on the wall.

It was already late afternoon and I figured he might as well relax since his next meeting was happening in thirty minutes. He pulled back his hand to slowly run his fingers through my black tresses. I looked up at him and we shared a look before he slowly closed in.

I didn’t move, wanting desperately to feel his lips on mine, the feeling that built between us making me eager to experience his taste, even if only for a minute.

Those sweet lips closed the distance and I lifted my hand to brush his left cheek. This kiss wasn’t rushed or demanding. It kept to a slow sensual pace, yet held a lot of emotion. I reluctantly broke the kiss, leaning back to look into his red eyes which were hooded with lust. He didn’t know how much

I'd craved the taste of those lips and to see that glazed look, ever since our first kiss.

"You should go get ready for your meeting. I made sure a different suit was dry cleaned and should be in the other room with all the packages you may need. I included that favorite pen you like as well," I explained. He had some fascination with pens which I'd realized the second week of working for him. He would only use black ballpoint pens that left a thick layer of ink upon application, disliking those really light toned ones.

I'd secretly bought him a pack and slid it in his desk, always making sure one was in his jacket pocket for emergencies.

He gave me a wide grin which made my heart stop in pure satisfaction. It was interesting and quite an extraordinary feeling to see how proud he was of me for something so small.

"Thank you, Anastasia," he whispered.

"You're welcome. Good luck with the finalizing of the contract. If you need anything, I'll be right here," I reassured him. He nodded, then leaned down to give me a kiss on my forehead before walking away. The sensation left me feeling like I was finally exactly where I belonged, but the feeling began to dissipate the further away he walked, and was gone entirely when his presence left the room and he closed the door behind him.

I leaned back in the chair, closing my eyes for a moment. *I can't be falling in love with him...can I? One month? Is that even normal? Maybe I should confront him about this mate thing.*

As much as I loved our connection, I wanted to know for sure whether this would go somewhere. I'd been hurt enough in the past from those of my own blood. I couldn't allow myself to love wholeheartedly if I knew it would fall through the cracks and become something nonexistent six months down the road.

The phone rang and I realized it was one of the companies I had been trying to reschedule earlier. *Perfect!*

I continued with phone call after phone call until it was a fifteen minutes to eight and I'd penciled in the last meeting for the next month.

"Finally," I whispered, putting down the pencil and stretching. I'd taken off my black blazer, leaving my shoulders bare, when I had been pacing around the room during a heated rescheduling with some woman who decided to lecture me on the mechanics and disadvantages of scheduling for CEOs. Information that was utterly useless to me, but since I was the one in their debt due to me rescheduling yet again, I had to listen to the entire forty-five-minute explanation before she finally agreed to move the meeting dates. *The splendid life of secretaries. I should make a damn soap opera for all the underlying drama.*

I glanced over at the small two seater sofa that sat in Liam's office, my blazer laying on the armrest. *So far...*

With a sigh, I crossed my arms on the desk, laid my head on them, and closed my eyes. I recalled my ranting and was still impressed that Liam hadn't gotten mad and had even apologized to me.

In this business, the hardest thing for any CEO or person of high command to do was to apologize to someone under them. It put them in a vulnerable position because it meant they were willing to acknowledge that they were wrong about an action or decision.

Even for me, I had a few times where I had to put my pride and ego aside and let Alexander tell me how it really was and what I was doing wrong.

I'd never regret any advice he'd given me. I recalled the sad look that flickered on his face during our talk about the whole mate thing. I didn't get why it came to my mind now, but it made me wonder if Alexander did want a relationship after all. Did he want to date someone like me?



He knew the full extent of my personal issues, having seen the best and worst of me. But would he want to take it past friends? Or would he be okay watching from the sidelines if this whole mate thing was true and became set in stone? *If that was actually what Liam and I had.*

More importantly, would Liam be able to understand me? Sure, the connection was there, but would he be able to strip down the guard he still had and let me in?

I knew after working for him all month that he truly was a nice, genuine man, but from his behavior, I'd realized he must have been hurt before which created this hard exterior that had become his armor in this cruel business. No one was there to take care of you in this world, even when someone caused you to trip and fall.

You had to pick up yourself, bandage your own wounds, and march towards what you wanted to achieve despite your setback. It was a job that was filled with competition and betrayal and you were either the hunter or the hunted.

Something soft settled onto my shoulders and I opened my tired eyes, turning my head slightly to see Liam walking back to the sofa. I didn't say anything, feeling my eyes must just be playing tricks on me as they slowly began to close again.

It took an extra push to keep them slightly open; I watched Liam sit back down on the sofa where my blazer rested. He crossed his legs, picked up his white iPad and began tapping the screen, looking hard at work.

I could see his determination and a hint of passion as he smiled. His phone rang and he picked up on the first ring. "Hey. Ya, I can't talk for long. Hmm, why am I whispering? Um...someone important is resting and I don't want to disturb them. Ya, my new secretary rescheduled everything. Yes, she did. You seriously don't believe me? No, you can't have her. She's mine. You can have Lesley when she comes back."

I grinned, the happiness that filled his softened voice was enough to ease me back to sleep. He'd probably be working for a few more hours, so I'd take advantage of the time and sleep.

# Vampire's Weakness



"I want a cactus."

"Why do you want a cactus, Sia? That's the most random thing I've heard from you since you said you wanted a pet penguin after watching the Discovery Channel," Alexander complained through the speaker of my phone as I relaxed on the rooftop.

I was currently on my lunch break and my feet were still blistered and bruised, even after a month of busting my ass. I pulled off my maroon heels, wanting to take a closer look with the sun out to help me see the damage.

"To shove up people's asses, but realistically, Liam said I can get a cactus," I revealed.

“I’m still not correlating the significance of the cactus, sweetie.” Alexander’s voice held a hint of amusement.

“I’ll explain this weekend, or if I’m not too tired, I’ll give you the whole story tonight,” I reassured him. He was quiet for a few seconds. I took that time to observe the state of my blisters and frowned, hoping to put some cooling cream on them when I returned to the office.

The roof was a nice place to take a break. Liam had given me the spare access card to come here and relax during my breaks if I needed to rest. I’d been feeling really shitty this week and he must have noticed, because he was always encouraging me to rest, eat, and even sleep for a bit during my long lunch break.

It had been a week since our talk and from then on, Liam had been on his best behavior. He was on time for every meeting and people had noticed, complimenting him on his renewed dedication. Hannah had been telling me the gossip. Apparently most people thought Liam had new a girlfriend and the change was due to her influence. That part made me laugh, but it also reminded me about the fact we needed to talk about what was going on between us.

“Anastasia.”

“Huh?” I asked, just realizing Alexander was still on the line. He was quiet for five seconds before he spoke. “When was the last time you took your blood tablets?” he questioned.

“Why?” I mumbled and he sighed. I could already feel the long lecture coming.

“Anastasia. Where’s your purse?”

“At home.”

“I’m coming over there,” he declared and I groaned, standing up from the lounge chair. I walked around barefoot on the clean, smooth cement. Liam always had someone come clean here every day to make sure the area was spotless.

“You can’t come here, Alexander,” I huffed, beginning to pace.

“Meow?”

I paused in my pacing at Pix’s adorable meow. “Pix is with you? Are you at the bar? It’s only noon.”

“Well, you weren’t home,” he whispered. I sighed, hearing a tone of hurt in his voice. I bit my lip. I had been so caught up in preparing Liam’s documents for his meetings next week that I’d fallen right asleep for the fourth time this week. Liam discovered the first time I accidentally fell asleep at his desk that it was extremely hard to wake me up.

He ended up holding me in his arms and we slept together on the sofa. *Fully clothed, of course.* When I’d returned from lunch that shift, the previous sofa was gone and had been replaced with a larger one that could be converted to a bed. Liam said that if I ever felt tired, I should just pull it out and rest my eyes for a bit. No one else had the entry key and thanks to my little command, Lilith wouldn’t dare come near Liam’s office.

Since then, whenever I fell asleep, Liam would set up the bed and place me there. I even had my own blanket and everything. After the third time I woke up in his arms, I asked why he stayed with me and he said he didn’t want to leave me alone. He had some sweet excuse, saying that it was his fault I was working so hard, so the least he could do was keep an eye on me.

I couldn’t help but tease him since he wasn’t really keeping an eye on me if he was sleeping too. Either way, not coming home for four days must have been making Alexander anxious. Even though he knew I hadn’t slept with Liam because he’d ask each time and I’d confidently answer back, I still worried I was pushing his limits with me.

“I’m fine. I’ll come pick them up on my next break,” I reassured him as I continued my pacing. I walked over to the steel ledge, sighing at the gorgeous view. Though we weren’t the tallest building in NYC, we were at the perfect height for taking in the magnificent view.

“Are you sure?” Worry lingered in Alexander’s voice, which sounded much softer than before.

“Yes. I’m sure. Where did Pix go?” I asked.

“He ran away,” Alexander grumbled. I smirked. *Ya, he’s lonely.*

“He probably got disappointed that you weren’t coming by,” I joked.

“That’s only because you won’t let me,” Alexander argued.

“Thank you, Alexander, but I’m fine,” I reassured him. I spotted a man sitting on the roof at the opposite building. I had to tilt my head and narrow my eyes to get a glimpse of his tiny frame in the distance.

His silver hair was long and flowed in the passing warm breeze. I was able to catch sight of his bright blue eyes, a gentle grin on his lips. *Who is this guy?*

He mouthed something but I couldn’t decipher it, which only left me more confused.

“Anastasia? Sia? You there? Oh please don’t tell me you zoned out,” I heard Alexander say but my eyes remained glued to the man. I blinked and just like that, he was gone. *I’m officially going insane.*

“Anastasia!” Alexander shouted through the phone. I blinked a few times, feeling rather dizzy on my feet and my mind felt like it had been wrapped in a fog. My breathing was rapid, my inhales and exhales loud to my now very sensitive ears. My palms felt sweaty and I struggled to keep my grip on the phone in my right hand. *Fuck, I need to sit down.*

“Sia?”

Arms wrapped around my lower waist, steadying me. I sighed in relief, resting back as the arms tightened their hold, supporting my weight. I knew this was a side effect of me not attending to my vampire half, but after experiencing this a few times before, I was confident it would pass without me killing anyone, especially not Liam. *Hopefully...*

“Anastasia?” Liam’s worried tone was the only thing keeping me conscious at this point. Being in his arms was

somewhat comforting. I felt a weird energy, like a type of aura that made me realize he was anxious, even with my eyes closed. I could still pick up on Alexander's concerned voice but I felt so tired and didn't want to lift my hand up or speak to answer him.

I heard Liam curse under his breath, then felt him gently tug the phone out of my hand. In one smooth motion, I was lifted into his arms, my head resting on his chest. It took a few moments of keeping my eyes closed and taking deep breaths for the fogginess in my mind to clear. Even then, my throat still felt dry like I hadn't had anything to drink in days.

I felt my body being lowered to the sofa and I finally opened my eyes to meet Liam's serious ones. He had my phone in his hand, Alexander's voice still talking on the other end but Liam didn't answer, his focus 100% on me.

"When was the last time you fed?" Liam questioned.

I glanced away. "I don't...drink people's blood, remember?" Even whispering, my voice cracked midway and I tried to swallow the lump in my throat, but the small action almost made me cough. My mouth was so dry I wondered if there was even any saliva left.

I felt like shit and my hands were clammy. My body was cold, making me want to shiver but afraid Liam would get upset. This was obviously my fault, but I didn't want him to be angry with me. I hesitantly looked back at him and his stern look softened as he sighed. He frowned at my phone in his hand, finally putting it to his ear.

"You screaming over there isn't helping anyone. I heard everything you said, so stop repeating it," he huffed. There was a moment of silence and Liam looked me in the eyes.

"You won't make it, even if you were Usain Bolt. I'll figure something out. Yes, I'm well aware, she told me....you're really annoying. Can we argue another time when Sia is better? Yes, I call her Sia....are we really having this conversation right now?" Liam's expression alternated from annoyed to confused.

“I’ll deal with it. She’ll be fine, I promise. Don’t come here. I’ll drop her home once her eyes are back to normal. Fine.” Liam hung up my phone and ruffled his hair. “Your boyfriend is annoying.”

“We’re not dating,” I croaked, feeling somewhat defensive and also a little bit depressed that I had to announce that out loud.

Liam eyed me carefully and slowly nodded. “You think you’ll be okay to sit?” he questioned. I nodded, not wanting to say too much.

He helped me sit up and my eyes locked onto his neck, eyeing his pulse while my hearing heightened to listen to the rapid beat, blood pumping through his veins.

“Anastasia.”

Liam’s stern tone clicked me out of my daze and I lifted my eyes to meet his blank expression. He took another deep inhale before he presented his wrist to me. “You need to drink now, or it will be more difficult for me to calm you down if this escalates any further.”

I stared at his wrist like it was some foreign dictionary and he had just asked me to read the entire thing out loud. “Um...” I trailed off, unsure how to explain that I’d literally never bitten anyone before.

It took another ten seconds of me staring at his outstretched hand for it to register. “You’ve literally never fed off someone?” He sounded astonished. I looked down at my lap shyly, not feeling in the mood to explain my past right now. *Kinda hard to feed on anyone when you’re chained up every night, lucky to ever see the light of day.*

He took a deep breath, walking over to me and lifting me into his arms. I didn’t know what he was planning, but he sat down, positioning me in his lap. His left arm wrapped around my waist to support me while he presented his right arm.

“I don’t think we have much time for a detailed tutorial right now, so I’m going to bite my wrist. You’re going to be drawn by my blood instinctively. It’s going to be really hard to

control yourself, but I'm going to ask you to stop when you're satisfied or when I know I can't take it anymore. Understood?"

I frowned, looking into his red eyes. *How can he trust me? What if I overdo it? What if I fuck this up; would he ditch me? Would he cast me away because of my mistakes, like Mother did?*

He lifted his free hand and brushed my cheek. I blinked, realizing I was crying. "I know you're scared. I won't be mad. Just relax and let your instincts tell you when it's time to stop. Every vampire knows when they're satisfied. It's hard in the beginning but it will get easier. I'll be here to guide you. Everything will be okay, Anastasia." He whispered the last part and gave me a smile of encouragement.

I slowly nodded and he moved his hand from my face, rotating it so his wrist was visible before moving it up to his mouth. His fangs extended out and he bit slightly into his skin. I noticed the slight flinch in his expression, hinting at his pain but my concentration was soon stolen by the divine smell of blood that hit my nose.

It was like walking into a bakery and the scents of all the freshly baked goods hit you all at once, making you inhale deeply and want to eat everything in the entire store. It was exactly like that, but overwhelming in strength and I thought I'd lose all sense of control.

"Breathe, Sia. Take a few breaths before you drink," Liam whispered into my ear. His voice hard to describe, sounding gentle yet somehow still had a firm authoritative tone to it, making me aware that I had to keep it together but at the same time reassuring me that he was here to help.

After the fifth inhale, I began to calm and he brought his wrist to my lips. I took a steady breath, allowing my vampire side to take over. My hidden fangs extended and I felt the pooling strength and power that heightened my senses and body. I slowly opened my mouth, using my tongue to lick at the trails of blood that stained his wrists.



I closed my eyes, wanting to savor the taste and fight the urge to moan out in satisfaction. His taste was absolutely delicious and something I'd never experienced before. Blood tablets were the basic swallow and straight to the stomach way and packs of blood were normally donated by humans. I never knew a vampire's blood could taste so good and be so addicting.

I slowly sunk my fangs into the holes he had made with his teeth, noticing him flinch but he didn't stop me; his arm was still securely wrapped around my waist. I closed my eyes and drank down the warm liquid. Energy seemed to pulse through me with every swallow I took. I fought to drink at a slower pace that wouldn't bother Liam too much. I could hear his rapid heart and his quick and uneven breaths, but I could feel something that made the succubus side of me excited.

I'd read when I was young that when you bit a person, particularly a human, the exchange set off a wave euphoria through the person being bitten and the vampire performing the action.

As the seconds passed and I continued to drink from Liam, I realized how turned on I was. My nipples were hard and with my mindset getting clearer, I noticed the throbbing ache of my pussy. Being in Liam's lap wasn't helping at all to calm my growing arousal but I was enjoying how pleasurable it felt being so close to him.

"Sia," Liam warned, his voice thick with desire. The sound tugged at my core and my eyes slowly met his; his dark red eyes were filled with such an intensity of lust it made me stop drinking his addicting blood. My pursuit for blood was suddenly replaced with a strong urge to kiss him senseless.

My succubus side quickly took over as I retracted my teeth, sucking the last bit of blood before I pulled away. Then I turned my head and smashed my lips to his.

He moaned, his eyes slowly closing as he fiercely returned my kiss. My right hand slipped into his as we exchanged hard, passionate kisses. The buzzing connection running between us

was powerful and helped make me feel more energized than I'd been in days.

If it wasn't for my lungs burning for air, I wouldn't have stopped kissing him, enjoying every second of our pleasurable exchange and making me desperate for more. I slowly opened my eyes to meet his, which had returned to their usual bright red appearance.

He slowly grinned, leaning in to kiss me once more, but this time it was gentle like my lips were a fragile treasure. "You did good, Sia."

I felt relieved with his praise, knowing I hadn't gone too far, but a part of me was still frightened, fearful of the potential possibility he'd be upset later on when the fuzzy emotions faded and were replaced with the question of why I neglected myself to the point of having to feed off him in the first place.

Liam must have noticed my tension, his wrapped arm leaving my waist so he could rub my back soothingly. "Why do you look like you're going to cry again?"

"Why aren't you mad?" I questioned. "You should be furious...or upset or yelling at me for being stupid. Yet, here you are praising me instead."

He lifted an eyebrow at me. "Why would I be mad at what you are? We need blood to survive, Sia. Sometimes mishaps happen and I have to take responsibility for that. You've been working yourself hard all week and though I noticed you've been tiring yourself out easily the last few days, it didn't cross my mind that you hadn't gotten your dose at all this month. It makes me both worried and curious about how long it's been since your last dose of blood."

I grimaced at the reminder, unable to recall the last time I'd taken those blood pills. I hadn't had one when I first started here which meant it could have been a good forty days or even two months since my last dose.

"Maybe a month and a half...or two," I confessed, feeling ashamed I'd been so careless. "I'm sorry."

Liam's hand held my chin, tilting my head up to meet his gaze. I realized his right wrist had already healed, the punctures from my fangs gone. The lingering blood stains were the only evidence I'd bitten him at all.

"It's fine. Don't apologize, but I don't want you going that long without blood from now on. Now that you know the taste of warm blood, it would put you in a dangerous situation if you reach that state again. From now on, make sure you have a blood tablet with you at all times and if you really need to feed, find me," he encouraged.

"But..." I trailed off, unsure how to bring up the next question.

"What is it, Sia?" he pressed and I looked back up to see his calm expression.

"We aren't together. Like, couples do that kind of thing. Lovers are the ones who will go over and beyond for you and even that depends on the person and relationship. Why are you so caring for me? I'm not even your mate or anything." I whispered the last part, more to myself than him.

I had to acknowledge the fact we might just stay as boss and employee, and saying it for my ears to hear would help me accept that reality and move on.

"Do you want us to be?" he asked. I needed a minute to breath as I stared at him in shock.

"Um...well...but we can't," I admitted. Now that the idea was in the air, my mind was already racing with all the ways it could go wrong.

"If we were just two normal individuals, not CEOs of our own businesses or known to anyone. Just two people, living life and spending as much time together as we have this month in a more social setting, rather than our current work one, would you consider dating me?" he proposed, laying out a hypothetical scenario.

"Yes...I would," I said immediately.

When he presented it that way, it sounded so easy and like nothing would get in the way. My past issues wouldn't

interfere and it would be the first time I was willing to let someone into my life that I hoped would stay.

“Then what’s the problem?” he questioned with a smile.

“We...you mean us as a ‘thing?’ An item...a-”

“A couple, Sia,” he finished for me.

“Yes. That’s the word.” I blushed, looking away. “We can’t though.”

“Why is that?” he questioned.

“You’re my boss,” I began.

“There are many bosses who are in relationships with a fellow worker,” Liam countered.

“Yes, but I just got here a month ago and then BAM! We just say we’re dating? That would look bad and people would look down on you for it,” I proposed.

“No one has the right to judge me and my life decisions. My relationship is a part of my private life and I know neither of us would mix work into the equation when we were on the clock. I know you feel what I do whenever we’re close, Anastasia. A wave of energy that buzzes between us whenever we’re near each other,” he revealed.

I slowly nodded, my eyes locking onto his. “Yes. I feel it. Makes it hard to concentrate,” I mumbled.

He grinned. “I agree, it does. But this entire month, you’ve ignored it and gotten more work done than any secretary at SMITH EXCHANGE. You separate your outside life and give your all at the workplace. I doubt our relationship, if we agreed to have one, would compromise anything. Even when Lesley is back, you’d have no worries and can work with me to expand things in this business.”

“Work with you? Not for you?” I asked, noticing that little detail in his phrasing.

He nodded. “You have amazing ideas, Anastasia. I’ve watched your work ethic and I’ve noticed the little notes you leave on my work packages for my business meetings. A few

of your suggestions are already in the works after I presented them. I'm hoping once they're finalized, you will take the credit for them and work alongside me to make those ideas blossom even more."

I gawked at him, stunned that he'd taken my advice. Businesswise, none of the companies I'd worked for temporarily had ever taken my advice when it was presented. It didn't matter how big or small the idea was. I was the new girl who would be gone in a short period of time, so my opinion didn't matter.

Not to mention our business market was still shifting to having more women as CEOs and business management advisors, which was beginning to benefit us, but there were still those who had the mentality that men knew all. My words of advice were a waste of oxygen to them.

"So...you want to date me?" I clarified.

He nodded. "If you'd accept my offer to date you, of course." He grinned.

"And if we date, wouldn't we have to hide things like holding hands when we're around your office and worry about random paparazzi or something?" I pointed out.

This made Liam laugh. "Why? I do what I want. I don't need to hide anything from anyone. If I'm dating you, that's my choice and no one's interference is going to stop me. They can't talk shit to my face so why should I concern myself and try to act all ninja-like to save face?" He shrugged.

"You're really laid back which is surprising, considering your work ethic," I mumbled.

"I get that a lot from my friends outside of work," he replied with a playful grin.

I smiled and stared into his red eyes. "Okay. Let's...uh...date?" My cheeks flushed at my words of acceptance. His expression softened and immense joy overtook his face.

"I'd be honored to date you, Anastasia," he whispered, giving me a sweet kiss. When we pulled back to smile at one another, a thought crossed my mind.

“One more thing.”

“What?”

“I want a pet,” I proposed.

I didn’t know why the idea came to my mind but it seemed like a good thing to bring up if we did decide to take this to the level of being an actual relationship.

“A pet? A dog, cat, fox, tiger?” he questioned.

“A cactus.”

We were both silent for a moment. He blinked a few times, his expression blank for a second before a smile slowly formed on his lips as he fought back a laugh.

“Sia, a cactus isn’t a pet.”

“Yes, but aren’t there magic ones that move and shit? Like in Mario?” I suggested.

“That is definitely not a cactus, but if you want a magical one that moves when you water it, I’ll find you one.” He snickered and I couldn’t help but laugh.

“Hey, don’t laugh,” I whined. “You have to promise to water it, too.”

“Are you bringing it to work?” He snickered harder, his shoulders moving up and down.

“Sometimes! What if Alexander can’t water it? It needs to grow. It’s the first step to learning how to take care of something other than yourself before getting an actual pet,” I argued.

He couldn’t fight it anymore, laughing loudly at my claim. “Anastasia, you are adorable.”

“Hey, you said you wouldn’t laugh.” I grinned, feeling much better now after sitting and of course, having had some of his addicting blood.

*If you could seduce someone with your blood, he’d be the perfect candidate for a vampire shifter.* His laugh was just as

addicting and contagious as his blood, and I ended up giggling with him.

“Sorry, sorry. You feel okay to go home now?” he asked.

“Ah, yes. I can take an Uber,” I suggested but didn’t move from his lap, kinda enjoying our closeness.

He smirked and slowly leaned in to kiss me. I smiled against his lips and he slowly deepened the kiss. He pulled back to stare directly into my eyes.

“We’ll go together. I better deliver you right at your doorstep before your boyfriend and his cat form a plan to kill me,” he proposed.

“Alexander and I aren’t dating, and what cat? How did you know Pix was with him?” I questioned.

“Pix? That’s the cat’s name? He kept meowing in the background of your phone. That guy still acts like he’s dating you,” Liam commented.

“We haven’t come to a decision and I guess since we’re dating now, he and I lost that chance.” I whispered the last part, feeling a little disappointed by it.

Liam’s hand brushed along my cheek, grabbing my attention. “Why?”

“Huh? Why what?”

“Why would you lose the chance because we’re dating?”

“Um, because we’re a couple now?” I reminded, in case he’d forgotten.

He raised an eyebrow at me. “But you’re a succubus.”

“What does that have to do with anything?”

“You’re going to eventually have more mates, aren’t you?” he inquired.

“Um...no? I don’t think so. That’s...is that even allowed? I mean, like I get most succubi have multiple...well we call them slaves. I call them mates cause I don’t believe in that slave shit, but you wouldn’t be okay with me dating more than

one person. A succubus doesn't need multiple lovers if the main one can deliver," I explained, blushing. The conversation was going in an interesting direction, and one I hadn't expected.

"Who said I wouldn't be okay with it?"

"Uh..." I trailed off.

He chuckled, shaking his head. He placed a quick kiss on my lips before he slipped his hands under my knees and lifted me up with ease.

"I've seen you talk with your best friend on the phone a few times and though I don't know the extent of your friendship, I can tell you care for him. I also noticed when he was yelling up a storm on the phone that he cares dearly for you. Maybe neither of you are ready or perhaps he's human and you don't want to bring him into the shifter world. Whatever the case, I'm not expecting you to be exclusive. I respect your race and if you need multiple partners, I'm cool with it."

I was shocked by his acceptance, another reminder of how laid back he was when work wasn't involved.

"And..." He paused, leaning in to whisper in my ear. "I'm only suggesting multiple mates for your own pleasure. Don't think I can't deliver and meet your demands, because I certainly can, and am always up for a challenge in the bedroom."

My jaw went slack and I couldn't formulate a response, knowing anything I would say in that moment would just be gibberish. He noticed how speechless I was and grinned in satisfaction.

"Let's get you home," he declared and I didn't argue, feeling like I was on cloud nine.

I'd found someone who respected who I was, supported my weird hybrid self, and survived my anger tantrums. It made me wonder about his past and how he must have been raised to be such an accepting individual. It also left me imagining what would come out of this relationship.



*Most importantly, I wondered how hot and pleasurable the sex would be.*

# Workers by Day, Lovers at Night



I dragged my feet out of my room, grateful that today was Friday and over the weekend I'd get to sleep as much as I wanted. Pixie strolled behind me, playfully running in circles around me as I ever so slowly made the painfully long walk towards the kitchen for some much-needed coffee. *Yes, I was choosing coffee over orange juice. I was THAT tired.*

This week had been utterly exhausting as Liam had a business conference in San Francisco and we ended up going together. Aside from all the work done in preparation for interviews and listening to Liam speak on stage, which was really hot, we got to enjoy some more alone time and had a few great opportunities to get to know each other.

For the sake of hiding what kind of shifter we were, everyone was required to wear bracelets that neutralized all of our powers, making us essentially human. It felt weird but it was the safest security method when having huge conferences where the attendees were a mixture of shifters and humans. We already had enough tension between shifter races, so adding humans to the mix would only risk a huge disaster.

We'd arrived at my place really late, so I told Liam he should stay for the night. Alexander didn't look too pleased with me inviting Liam without notice but I could barely keep my eyes open and didn't even make it to my bedroom before Liam had to pick me up and carry my knocked out ass to bed.

Even though we'd shared a hotel room, thankfully getting the last available suite that only had one king-sized bed, we hadn't been intimate. It had been hard as fuck and I could sense his own struggle but it was comforting to know he wanted me for who I was and not for my body. *Plus, he was a really good cuddler which made up for the fact I had to wear a bra all night long.*

I had woken up in the middle of the night to pee, so I didn't give a flying fuck at that point, stripping out of my clothes, throwing whatever shirt was long enough to cover my ass and crawling back to bed where Liam pulled me into his arms in his half asleep state. *He seriously looks adorable when he sleeps too.*

The smell of bacon, eggs, and toast hit my nose and was the motivation I needed to drag my feet a little faster to the kitchen.

I didn't have to open my eyes to feel the sudden wave of tension that hit me and made me want to turn around and go straight back to sleep. *Ugh, why couldn't I sleep in? Damn work.*

"Sia?" I heard Liam ask and I slowly opened my eyes. I was surprised to see him placing scrambled eggs on a plate that already had bacon and toast with butter on it. I shifted my gaze slightly to see the glass of orange juice and a normal cup of coffee.

My body moved on its own and I pulled the high stool out from under the kitchen island to sit on. Pixie hopped up on me and clung to my shirt which caught my attention. I used my left hand to lift him up and placed him on the counter where he ran over to the little bowl of food and water.

I sat down and took a long whiff of the mouth-watering food, wanting to dig in but unsure if it was for me. Instead, I put my chin on the marble counter and stared longingly at the delicious masterpiece with puppy eyes.

Liam laughed, the gentle sound making me lift my gaze. I took in his attractive appearance; he wore a black apron that covered his bare chiseled chest and his bed hair made him look really fuckable right now. *Hmm, sex in the kitchen would be new...*

“It’s your plate, so go ahead. Take your time, we don’t need to be at the office until noon today,” he reassured.

I squealed, picking up the coffee and taking a big gulp of it. “So sweet,” I commented.

Liam looked like he was deep in thought for a moment. “I guess two sugars instead of three next time?” he questioned.

I grinned. “Yes, please. Two is more than enough.”

“I’m surprised you’re drinking coffee first,” Liam noted.

“I feel like a zombie,” I mumbled, drinking more of the hot caffeinated beverage. Regardless of the sweetness, I appreciated the fact he’d made it for me along with breakfast.

Even during our trip, he made sure that right when I woke up, room service was at the door with a tray of food, ensuring they always had a big jug of freshly made orange juice waiting for me. I didn’t know what power he possessed to know when my coma self would wake up from the land of sleep, but every day he’d been able to get it spot on.

“You’ll make it through the day? You can stay home and rest if you need to,” he suggested. It wasn’t like the time difference between NYC and San Francisco was a lot, only three hours, but it threw my sleep schedule off nonetheless.

“I’ll be fine, as long as Lilith doesn’t piss me off and Annie doesn’t spill coffee today,” I mumbled, lowering my coffee that was almost empty. I ruffled my messy hair. *Hmm, where’s Alexander?*

“Are you wearing my shirt?” Liam asked.

“Huh?” I looked down to see I was indeed wearing his shirt that he’d brought to work out in, but never ended up getting the chance. I looked back up and saw he had a wide grin on his face, like he’d won some type of competition. “Oops? Uh...you can have it back if you want?” I offered, but I kinda wanted to keep it. *Oh no, I’m already claiming his stuff. It’s only going to go downhill from here.*

“You can have it,” he replied with a wink before untying the apron Alexander and I used when we baked. Liam hung it back up on its hook and turned back around to face me, grabbing his plate of food and walking over to sit opposite of me.

I stopped midway through eating my toast to stare at his lovely eight-pack of hotness. *Why does everyone have eight-packs? Aren’t they like extremely hard to maintain or something?* I was lucky to have the outline of my six-pack after eating.

Liam chuckled, shaking his head. “You look like a deer in headlights.”

“I do not,” I argued, blushing. Then I returned to my food.

“Meow meow meow.” Pixie was done with his own food and began walking around our plates and stealing bites of our bacon. Liam reached up and began petting Pix who relaxed, laying down and letting Liam continue to spoil him.

“Oh. I should give you this,” Liam commented. I gave him a confused look as I began drinking my orange juice. He got up and walked over to the window, which I thought was odd. He picked something up from behind the curtain. My eyes grew wide and I quickly swallowed my juice before setting the glass back on the counter.

“A CACTUS?! Liam, it’s HUGE! Did you go to the fucking desert to get one?” I exclaimed, reaching my hands out for the green plant.

“Be careful,” Liam warned and I brushed him off as I practically hugged the pink pot that held it.

“How did you get this here?” I demanded, beyond excited by the present.

“I asked my driver to bring it over. I ordered it from Dubai. That’s the only place where I could find a magic plant,” he admitted.

I gawked at him. “IT HAS MAGIC?!”

He grinned and nodded, walking over to get a glass of water. He handed it to me, gesturing for me to pour it into the pot. I poured a small amount and Pix moved to sit next to my hand as we both watched the plant intently. I squealed when it began to move from side to side like a dancing Groot from Guardians of the Galaxy.

“It dances!!! OMG! I need to name it. Wait, is it a he or a she? Decisions,” I hummed to myself.

“Meow.” Pix poked the pink pot, and I stared at it for a moment, realizing he must have been suggesting it was a girl.

“A girl?” I asked Pix, who nodded his little head, tapping the pot again before nudging it with his cheek. I grinned. “Rin!” I spoke with determination.

“Why Rin?” Liam asked, looking pleasantly amused.

“Um...you’d laugh.” I blushed with embarrassment, feeling silly about the name choice.

“Try me?”

“Um...well I really like Chibi Moon from Sailor Moon and her English name was Rini, but since my cactus is a grown plant and not a baby, Rin sounded more mature,” I revealed.

“Ah, I think it’s a nice name, so don’t look so embarrassed,” he reassured me.

“You’re just being nice,” I mumbled but smiled at his acceptance.

“I’m serious.” He matched my smile with one of his own. We returned to our breakfast while I eyed the plant like it was a trophy.

A phone began to ring and we both turned to see it was Liam’s. “Ah, I was expecting a call. I’m gonna take it outside,” he announced.

I took another look at him. “You sure you don’t want your shirt back?” I teased with a wide grin.

He chuckled, picking up his phone. “If I did, I wouldn’t be able to answer this phone call. You know, distractions and all,” he flirted back, his eyes scanned my body like I was a chocolate bar.

I noticed his gaze shift for a few seconds but I ignored him, realizing I was hungry. I began chomping my food, secretly stealing his remaining bacon.

“I’ll be back and stop eating my bacon, Sia,” Liam called out.

“It was Pix!” I defended.

Pix turned his head to me, blinking his eyes innocently. “Meow...” he whined.

I grinned. “Take the fall for me and you get more bacon,” I proposed in a whisper.

“Meow!” he replied and I giggled, leaning in to rub my nose against his. I fed him some bacon and patted myself down, looking for my phone which I soon realized was back in my room, still on the charging dock. *Ah, I have to make sure Annie didn’t burn anything today.*

I got off the stool and turned around, almost having a heart attack at seeing Alexander at the entrance way, quietly watching me with his hands behind his back.

“For Heaven’s sake, Alexander! You trying to give me heart problems?!” I grabbed my chest and sighed, needing a moment to recover from the scare.

“I don’t get why you’re so surprised,” he mumbled.

I frowned. “Um, you were just quietly standing there.”

“I was here the whole time, Anastasia,” he pointed out.

I gave him a confused look. “No, you weren’t. I didn’t see you,” I defended, trying to think back to when I walked from the hall to the kitchen.

“You walked straight to the island. I was sitting right there.” He used his head to nod at our sofa and I frowned, feeling a wave of dread hit me for not realizing he was there.

“So...the whole time you were there? Why didn’t you say something?” I felt horrible as I walked up to him in the doorway.

“You seemed busy.” He shrugged, looking away.

“Alexander,” I said sternly. I knew I shouldn’t be upset, but I knew the look on his face. It was the expression of loneliness that tugged at my heart, the same look I’d seen on his face when we met. We understood each other for so many reasons, and I hated that we seemed to be so distant lately.

“You don’t need to say anything. I get it,” he replied dejectedly.

“Get what, Alexander? Why are you jumping to conclusions instead of just asking me?” I didn’t want to sound upset but I was.

“He’s your mate, isn’t he?” His question sounded like it was something he accepted as a given statement.

“I don’t know. It’s not like you can take a test to reveal who your mate is. Even if he was, what does that have to do with us?” I asked.

“It has everything to do with us. I’ve barely seen you this whole week. It’s only a matter of time till you get whisked away by Mr. Eight Pack Billionaire and travel the world together,” he whispered.

I almost choked on my saliva as I gawked at him. “Alexander, I’m not going to ditch you and go travel the world



together with Liam, AND you have an eight pack too!" I pointed to his abs, which seemed to have slightly less definition than before.

"I'm at seven," he pointed out. I frowned, narrowing my eyes to try and find the little eighth section of his abs.

"It's there...it's just hiding now that you brought it up," I defended shyly. He sighed, his head hanging low.

"Dammit, Sia, I miss you," he whispered and my heart broke at his admission. I slipped my hands around his neck, hugging him as tightly as I could. His arms wrapped around me, holding me so tightly that it made me realize he must have been really worried, thinking that I was disappearing.

"Alexander, I miss you too. Don't sound so sad," I whispered.

"But you'll leave me." The heartbreak in his voice made it sound as if I'd actually already discarded him and he had nowhere else to go.

"Why would I leave you, Alexander? I've known you for so long. You've seen things and know things about me no one else does. I would never ditch you. Doesn't matter what the future holds. I'll never desert you," I vowed, meaning every single word.

"Even if Liam sweeps you off your feet and takes you away?" he asked.

I pulled back to stare into his eyes. "No one is sweeping me off anywhere. I can walk on my own and the last time I checked, I hadn't given anyone approval to take me away, anyway," I defended.

That made him chuckle. "I guess that's true."

I bit my lip, unsure if I should do this. When I made up my mind, I went on my tiptoes and kissed him lightly on the lips. He was stiff at first but slowly closed his eyes and relaxed.

The movement of our lips was slow. I didn't feel like we were in a rush, taking time to enjoy the moment. I pulled back

and opened my eyes and saw his small smile. “Sorry,” he apologized.

I smiled, shaking my head side to side. “No harm done,” I reassured him. “Just know that no matter what happens between us, whether we remain as friends or we decide that we want to take this to the next step, I’ll never abandon you. I can confidently promise that.”

He slowly nodded, lowering his arms, but kept his left hand hidden behind his back. I tilted my head. “What’s in your hand?”

“You don’t need it,” he whispered.

“I wanna see.” I tried to move around him but his tall ass blocked me.

“No.”

“Pretty please? I wanna see,” I whined.

“But...it’s useless,” he insisted.

“Nothing is useless in this world. Did you see anyone call Magikarp useless in Pokémon? Well..they did, but then BAM! He became fucking Gyarados and can water blast the shit out of other Pokémon,” I elaborated.

“Are you seriously using Pokémon, the video game, as an example to lecture me?” He sounded astonished.

“It worked. Now show.” I put my hands on my hips and his eyes lingered on my chest for a few seconds. Then he cleared his throat, glancing away as he slowly moved his left hand from behind his back.

I blinked, taking it in, before I squealed. I reached out to take the tiny cactus in a shape of a rose. “Alexander! A ROSE CACTUS! Is this real?” I asked, reaching out to poke the super prickly thorns. He stopped my hand before I got too close.

“Yes, it’s real. You don’t need to test it out.” He sighed.

I practically bounced on my feet in excitement, “Thank you, Alexander!” I gave him another hug, making sure the

cactus didn't poke him while I squeezed him.

I pulled out of his embrace and noticed his stunned expression. "But...you already have a bigger one," he pointed out.

"So?" I asked. "Just because I have a big one, doesn't mean I don't need another one. I'll call her Saturn and she can be friends with Rin! It works perfectly."

"You're so easy to please," he mumbled.

I grinned at him. "Proud of it,"

He smiled. "I'm gonna go shower. Finish your breakfast." He kissed me on the cheek before he turned and walked away.

"Thanks, Alexander," I whispered.

He paused in the doorway. "You're welcome, Sia," he replied quietly; I had to strain my ears to hear it.

I sighed, hoping my words and actions would be enough to rid him of any doubt he had. I glanced down at the lovely rose cactus. The rose part was a mixture of light pink and magenta.

"I should water it and see if it dances," I mumbled to myself.

"It does," Liam's voice announced. I turned my head to see him sipping his coffee while he was petting Pix, who looked completely satisfied as he wagged his tail back and forth.

"Liam?! When? I swear, how do you guys hide your presence like that?" I complained as I walked back to the island where we had sat previously. "How long have you been there?"

"Since Mr. Seven Pack Jealous Best Friend said we'd travel the world and leave him behind," Liam revealed, sipping more of his coffee. He continued. "If he wanted to come, he could just say so."

I sighed, placing Saturn next to Rin, then sat on my stool. "He's not good at asking, but he's not jealous!" I defended.

Liam raised an eyebrow at me, as he got off his stool to grab my plate of food. He took it over and placed it in the

microwave, removing the toast first and putting it back into the toaster.

“He’s totally jealous. Also, does that mean you won’t go around the world with me?” he asked innocently. I couldn’t help but smile at his question, realizing he was actually worried about me not wanting to travel with him.

“I’ll go anywhere with you if you want. You just have to agree that Alexander can come if he wants,” I suggested.

“Sure, I don’t care,” Liam replied. The microwave beeped, indicating it was done warming my food. The toaster popped out my once cold toast; the smell of it hit my nose, reminding me that I was still hungry. I hopped off my stool and walked over to him as he placed my toast back on my warm plate of food.

“You’re so laid back with life, yet at work, you’re like an evil boss with a stick up his ass.” I giggled at him and he rolled his eyes in response.

“I have to be that way. Honestly, if it wasn’t due to certain circumstances, I’d run things differently,” he admitted.

“Differently?” I questioned. He smirked, setting my plate next to his, then he slipped his arms around my waist, pulling me close.

“Ya. I totally wouldn’t have Lilith or Annie if it were up to me. All I would need is you, and I guess my driver would be useful,” he admitted and I laughed.

“You’re lucky your driver didn’t hear that tone of yours. Ohh, get rid of them but keep me,” I whispered, leaning into him.

He slowly nodded, his red eyes darkening with desire. “Yes, but at least I could have my way with you in that office with no interruptions,” he confessed before his lips claimed mine. I kissed him passionately, feeling calm as the remaining bits of tension from my earlier discussion with Alexander left me.

“That sounds delightful,” I whispered against his lips.

He grinned, giving me another kiss before lifting his hand. He gestured for me to sit next to him. I did while he took his seat, reaching out to bring my orange juice to my left side.

“Do you have plans this weekend?” he asked as I was midway through my warmed up breakfast.

“Nope. Probably just sleep,” I replied.

“You think you’d be up for a business trip?” he questioned.

“Business trip?” I repeated.

Liam nodded. “The phone call I just got was from a colleague who needs me to go over some things this weekend at his resort for a future business deal. I couldn’t refuse since he’s helped me a few times in the past. If...you aren’t busy... would you like to come?” he asked, his cheeks growing red as he asked the last question.

I beamed at the idea, wondering where this resort was. Even if it was just for work, it sounded better than being at the office. Also, seeing as it was going to be warm this weekend, I would probably get to spend time at the beach. Well, if they had one there. I didn’t really care honestly. A kiddie pool would do. I just wanted some time in a pool since I hadn’t had the luxury to enjoy the one in our apartment or use my swimming membership for that huge swimming pool for celebrities and well-known business individuals. It was a waste of money if I didn’t go there more often, but I didn’t want to cancel.

“I’d love to!” I cheered. “Please tell me there’s a pool?”

“There’s an infinity one,” he reassured me and I grinned.

“Perfect!” I declared, stretching my arms out.

Liam smiled, looking pleased as his eyes trailed down my body. “You should wear that shirt more often.” I opened my eyes and looked down at my shirt, realizing my nipples practically showed through the super thin white fabric. I blushed, lowering my arms as I tried to hide them.

“You like it?” I questioned, noticing the hint of lust evident in my lower tone.

He grinned, leaning in to whisper in my ear. “If it wasn’t for the fact your boyfriend was here, this shirt of mine would be off your glorious body and you’d be enjoying something more pleasurable than just toast and scrambled eggs,” he teased. His left hand reached up and gently squeezed my left breast, making me shiver as a soft moan left me.

“Tease,” I whispered and he kissed me softly, teasing my breast with his finger that slowly rubbed my hard nipple in a circular manner. He quickly let go and pulled away, just as I heard the click of the washroom door down the hall as it was being unlocked.

I returned to my breakfast before Alexander walked out into the hall. He headed to his room and I sighed, thinking he caught us in our heated moment. *Wow, I feel like a teenager hiding from my parents.*

“Let’s finish breakfast and head to work,” Liam suggested, his playful grin hinting at something completely not work related. *Maybe we’d have a little fun at work.*

He noticed my gaze and grinned. “I feel like I should say no to whatever you’re imagining, but it’s probably hot and intense, and something I’d love to partake in. But if you don’t finish your breakfast, we won’t beat the traffic to get that luxury,” Liam suggested.

I didn’t delay, digging into my remaining food. He chuckled, reaching out to run his hands through my hair. I turned my head slightly to stare into his pleased expression.

“He’ll come around. Give him some time,” he whispered. I slowly nodded and he rubbed my cheek with his thumb before he let go, returning to finishing his coffee which I knew must be cold by now.

He drank it anyway and it made me realize how genuinely amazing he was because I knew for a fact he hated when his coffee was cold. We didn’t know the secrets we hid from one another, but half of me was okay with that.

*The other half hoped to get to learn every detail about his past, even though some secrets could do more harm than good.*

# Holiday and Commitment



"*T*his resort is absolutely AMAZING!" I cheered.

"I agree," Liam replied with a smile. We walked into our suite, both of us finally dry after a morning of swimming and an afternoon of sunbathing and business planning.

Liam was the ultimate sneaky boss, bringing me to a seven star, *yes SEVEN star*, resort for 'work.' He explained how proud he was of all my hard work and had scheduled for us to enjoy the private resort which was on its own damn island. We had it all to ourselves, because he had booked it for the entire weekend.

I was absolutely stunned when I found out. Liam's driver, Nicholas, had wished us an awesome trip on the private island,

which had piqued my curiosity. Liam was unable to keep it secret any longer and explained his mischievous plans.

What a generous gift, to reserve the weekend away for the two of us. We still made sure to get some work done, though. It wasn't a requirement, but a choice, and I was really enjoying the ability to decide what I really wanted to do.

“Meow.”

“Pix, no destroying of my socks,” I reminded the cat who'd somehow snuck into my luggage. I don't know what possessed him or how he got through airport security, but he was with us, enjoying playing with my rolled up socks, even though we'd bought him a few toys after discovering he'd joined us.

“Sneaky cat.” Liam looked amused as he walked over to the counter to put his sunglasses down. He looked amazing in his swimming trunks as he unintentionally showed off his new tan. We'd both fallen asleep at the beach but thankfully woke up before we got some major sunburn. Pix decided to help by continuously patting Liam's face until he woke up. Liam had failed at waking me up, so he simply scooped me up and took me back inside. *I really need to work on not being such a deep sleeper.*

“Thanks to him, we didn't become red lobsters under the blazing sun.” I giggled.

“True, but his friend is all alone in NYC,” Liam reminded me.

I sighed. “True. Maybe I should call and check on him?” I suggested. Liam was referring to Alexander, who was working all weekend because there was a huge event happening in the city and it would have been a waste to not take advantage of it.

Now that Pix was here though, I realized Alexander would be all alone at the bar where he'd most likely sleep for the sake of not having to travel back and forth.

“I'll call him,” I announced, walking over to our bed and grabbing my phone on the nightstand. I sat on the bed, glad



my bikini was dry, and quickly began checking the glaring notifications of my email.

“Don’t get distracted,” Liam reminded.

I glanced up to see his playful grin. “I’m not going to get distracted,” I pointed out.

“You say that now, but you’ll get lost in your emails and forget to call Alexander like you did yesterday.”

I bit my bottom and looked away. “That was an accident,” I mumbled, returning my eyes to the phone in my hand.

“I know,” he replied with a chuckle, walking over to the bed. “I’m going to go take a swim in the steamy pool.”

The steamy pool was his term for the oversized hot tub that was outside, surrounded by fresh flowers. I looked up to see him lean in for a kiss. I closed my eyes and my lips met his, enjoying the tender exchange which I secretly wished would have lasted longer.

We hadn’t gotten to the workplace in time on Friday to enjoy some fun in his office and I thought yesterday would be our chance, but I ended up falling asleep! *Irony, I tell you.*

“Okay. I’ll be there soon,” I whispered, staring into those red eyes of his that twinkled with mischief. He walked back and turned around, then began unbuttoning his shorts.

My attention was locked on him as he pushed his trunks down, the black piece of clothing falling to the floor in a heap, leaving me with the perfect view of his amazing ass. *I change my rating. 10/10 just for looks alone. I need to grip that bad boy, though, or I’ll go insane.*

“Sia.”

I blinked, realizing Liam was looking over his shoulder. From the wide grin on his face, I assumed he called my name more than once.

“Um...yes?” I squeaked, my face hot from being caught checking out his very firm and attractive booty that I would rather do less staring at and more feeling up.

“Don’t take long,” he whispered in a low, sexy voice that made my stomach flip with excitement.

“I won’t,” I said, my voice already sounding breathless as I thought about what the view from the front would be like. He grinned and walked out into the luxurious backyard in all his naked glory. If it wasn’t for Pix jumping onto the bed and climbing onto my crossed legs to try and attack the phone in my hand, I would have lost all motivation to call Alexander. *Totally bad best friend, but I believe if anyone saw a naked masterpiece like Liam, they would forget their name and purpose at that moment, so who could blame me?*

I clicked Alexander’s name on speed dial and ruffled my hair which was curly and fuzzy from our morning swim.

He picked it up on the fourth ring. “Hello?”

“That took way too long, so either you got utterly wasted last night or you were having the best dream ever,” I commented. Alexander was a light sleeper and for five years, had always picked my phone call before the third ring. Anything beyond that usually meant he was drunk or was having a wet dream of some kind. *Yes, we were close enough for him to reveal that to me.*

“Sorry, there was an issue last night at the bar so it tired me out,” he confessed. I grimaced, not liking how exhausted he sounded.

“Alexander? Are you getting sick? You don’t sound well at all,” I pointed out.

“Nah. I just need some sleep. My friend will run the bar tonight so I don’t lose out on the sales,” he explained.

“Then you ARE sick,” I sighed, feeling worried. I didn’t want him being sick without me around to take care of him. “You want me to come back? It would take us longer because it’s rush hour but I’d be back before midnight,” I offered. We weren’t planning to check out until tomorrow around five in the morning to beat the morning traffic, but I would leave early if he needed me.

“Nah, I’ll be okay. You have your business trip to finish,” he pointed out. *Ah, I didn’t tell him that Liam surprised me.*

“It was supposed to be a business trip, but ended up being a surprise from Liam. He brought us to some private island and stuff. We’ve still done work here and there but he said he wanted me to relax after all my hard work last month,” I revealed.

Alexander was quiet on the phone and I grew anxious waiting for his reply. “That’s good. You do deserve a break. I’m feeling really sleepy so I’ll leave you be. Have a good night, Anastasia.” He didn’t wait for a response before he hung up. *Fuck.*

“Meow meow.” Pix leaped, tackling my hand that held my phone, knocking it to the bed. I raised an eyebrow at him and he slowly looked up at me innocently. “Meow?”

“Alexander’s upset. Ugh, I don’t want him thinking I’m ditching him. I honestly don’t even know what he’s so upset about,” I whispered, placing my hands on my face and closing my eyes. *No crying. I’m just going to enjoy my time with Liam and can deal with Alexander later.*

“Meow.” Pix sat quietly watching me.

I lowered my hands, my eyes already filled with tears. “I’m gonna go chill with Liam. You be good and stay here,” I whispered to Pix, petting his head. He gave me sad eyes but stayed on the bed as I uncrossed my legs and shuffled off and to my feet.

I stripped quickly, tugging the straps of my bikini and letting them fall to the ground before I walked outside. I noticed the beautiful sunset happening before me. *Too bad it’s all blurry and shit because of all my tears.*

I reached the hot tub where Liam was reading something on his iPad, looking deep in thought, but when his gaze lifted to meet my tear-filled ones, he frowned. “What happened?” His eyes slowly scanned my naked body. I gave him a small smile, loving that he was trying to be comforting but still couldn’t ignore my naked form. I walked into the tub, sighing

at the warmth of the water. Liam put the iPad down on the rocks behind him next to his phone and came over to me. His hands cradled my face and soft thumbs rubbed away the tears that escaped.

“What’s wrong?” he repeated, his voice low and gentle. His question only made more tears fall and I huffed in frustration.

“Alexander...he’s...I don’t know. Like jeez, how am I supposed to get through to him and make him realize I won’t ditch him? I was honest and told him you treated me to this trip and then he went all silent and shit. He said he was fine, even though he sounds sick and hung up before I could say bye. He didn’t even use my nickname.” I cried, trying to stop but began to sob even harder.

“Hey, don’t cry,” Liam whispered, pulling me into his arms. He allowed me to weep into his chest, rubbing my back slowly. “He’s just scared of losing you.”

“I’m just as scared and he knows it!” I snapped, pulling back to stare up at Liam, who looked a little taken back by my outburst. I clenched my teeth and looked away. “I’m fucked up, Liam. I’ve dealt with shit...and the moment my mind sees the warning signs that I may lose someone dear to me, I freak out like this. I panic and...I just...I can’t lose Alexander! He’s been there for me through everything. But he’s showing those signs. The ones everyone displays before they leave your life for good.”

I turned my gaze back to Liam’s sad eyes. “You don’t get it. Or maybe you do, I don’t know...but how am I supposed to be here enjoying myself if I have this growing fear Alexander is already packing and by the time we get back, he’ll be gone. Just like that, vanished from my life. Even if I leave now...it may be too late. I’m just fucking scared,” I whispered.

Commitment was the thing I feared most because no one in my life had ever been able to commit to me. My father couldn’t commit to his responsibility while my mother couldn’t commit to a relationship with him, or anyone else for that matter. Even if my mother had tried to stop my father

from finding me, she moved on regardless, leaving me behind with the excuse I wasn't ready.

The teachers who tortured me didn't commit because they felt a desire to help me. No, they stayed because they were paid to do so and all that led to anger and hatred, and the end result? A broken, fucked up me, who hides my scars and bruises behind my beauty. I ignored the nagging thoughts in my mind by drowning myself in a business I created to help people who had experienced firsthand the backlash or hurt that came from someone pulling out of an agreement, whether it was a business or social one.

My business foundation was based on commitment, that when someone couldn't hold their end of the bargain, I'd come to your aid to relieve the stress caused by the problem and find a solution or help in any way I could.

Alexander knew this. He knew how dark my past was and exactly how to flip my switch. He flipped my switch so I'd do exactly what my mind was urging me to, to cut the trip short and head back. When I got home, he'd probably be asleep, and would claim nothing was wrong when I asked. He played dirty and while a part of me knew he didn't really mean to, and was just dealing with his issues of abandonment, the other half was extremely pissed at the shady move.

Liam put his hand under my chin and tilted my head up. He stared long and hard into my teary eyes. "What does your mind tell you versus your heart?" he whispered.

I was quiet, needing a second to really think about his question. I knew he was serious by his hard tone and his question deserved a proper answer, even if I didn't feel like revealing what I really wanted.

"My mind...the thoughts in my head tell me I should go back or he'll leave," I began, swallowing the lump in my throat. "But...my heart wants to stay here. Every time I've wanted to enjoy something, life hits me in the face and says no. It's like I'm cursed and even though I worked so hard to escape my caged life, I still feel like I'm trapped in a cycle of highs and lows. I just wanted to enjoy tonight with you, even

if it means I may lose you now that you know how weird I am,” I confessed.

“You aren’t losing me.”

“We barely know each other. Well...we are getting there slowly, but you could leave just like that. When the contract ends in less than two months, I’ll be back to my business and you will be running yours. We’ll be like strangers and that’s what is so hard for me, Liam. I want to know that if I give 100% of my commitment to someone, I’ll at least get the same back. Stupid right? We live in a world where people can’t work out their differences anymore. One year of marriage and people call it quits and get a divorce. You make a mistake at work, they dismiss you and terminate your contract. You end up dying, your spouse who said ‘til death do us part’ will use your insurance money to find a new partner to spend their remaining years with. I hate it...so much, and it’s what does THIS to me. I go from being in control, always trying my best to please, to a total mess of problems and ugly crying. THIS is who you’ll have to deal with if you decide to commit to me.”

The area was quiet as the small lamps around us began to flicker on, the last bit of sunset making the sky a beautiful mixture of colors. The cool breeze passed and the steam of the hot tub surrounded us.

Liam took a step forward, closing the gap I’d created during my rant; his body pressed right up to mine. He lifted his hands and cradled the sides of my face as he slowly leaned forward.

He wasn’t going slow for no reason, he was doing it on purpose to give me enough time to back out if I wanted. I’d studied him long enough to know he was a person who analyzed everything and either went fast and hard to seal a deal or took his time, ensuring everyone knew what they were getting themselves into before dropping the hammer.

His soft lips locked onto mine; the kiss was deep with passion. I placed my hands on his chest, wanting to live in this moment, just in case it was our last together.

When we finally broke apart, we were both out of breath. His eyes were dark and lowered to stare at my swollen lips. He looked like he didn't want to stop and frankly, I didn't want him to either. I wanted this to continue but then he pulled out of our embrace and turned around.

I thought he was leaving, the whispers in the back of my mind already doing their work at proving how right they were, but instead he grabbed his phone and moved back to stand before me. He opened it up. "What's Alexander's number?"

I glanced at his phone, unsure why Liam would want to call him. "He won't pick up," I pointed out, knowing on the weekends he would only pick up if I was the one calling.

"Let's try anyway," he urged. I met his intense gaze and slowly nodded, not wanting to argue with him. I took the phone from his hand, dialed Alexander's number, and gave it back to Liam who put the phone to his ear.

We waited; my sensitive ears listened to faint sound of the ringing tone. It took six rings before Alexander picked up. I couldn't hear what he said but Liam didn't give him a chance to talk for long.

"How long have you known, Sia?" Liam questioned. There was a moment of silence before he continued. "You've known her for that long, but you're okay with making her cry?"

I was confused by what Liam was trying to accomplish here and I anxiously waited to see what would happen. "Alright, what if I didn't bring her back?"

*Huh?* I stared at him in shock at his sudden question and from the lingering silence, I figured Alexander was just as stunned by the inquiry.

"Silent huh? What if I decided I wanted to mate with Sia right now? What if we did mate and I decided I'd let someone who capable of running my company take over, so I could travel the world with Sia and I guess Pix too since he's here. Would you be be okay with what you did?"

I gawked at Liam like he was crazy, but then his red eyes met mine. *He's serious...*

“I’ve known Sia for six weeks. I’ve watched her come into this job with no one to guide her. She accepted my challenges and I worked her hard. Probably harder than I have anyone, and you know what? She stayed. I don’t know her past or secrets, but you know what I can’t stand? People who run away. We live life once and you should know that as the so-called magical human you are, but shifters can die too. If we died suddenly, would you regret what you did?”

I stood there, wondering what Alexander was saying, but Liam laughed. “For the fact you think what you did was nothing, let me tell you: it hurt Sia. I did a background check on Sia’s work ethic and you know what? She hasn’t taken a vacation in years! An actual break where she could sit down and literally do nothing work related. Even this weekend, we still ended up getting some work done, which was not in the memo. Yet, here you are, thinking your actions and words did nothing, and yet you still claim to care for her.”

Liam ruffled his hair and took a deep inhale. “I’m not an idiot, Alexander. I can see through the disguise of yours and I’m trying to do you a favor right now, but you know what hurts my heart? Watching Sia walk towards me with tears in her eyes. She’s crying over the fact we may come back and that you’ll be gone. She’s willing to pack her things, sit in an Uber for a ridiculous amount of time with her anxiety and fears running through her mind all the way back, for the huge possibility you would still be right there. Then she’s left with having no sleep and go back to her life of working her ass off every day. But I guess you didn’t think of it that way. You went all over NYC to get that specific cactus, yet you can’t be open about what you really want.”

*Went all over NYC for Saturn?*

“You’re a man, Alexander. Just as I am, but one thing I’ve learned in my years on this earth as a shifter is that with age comes regret. I made stupid decisions and because of those foolish moves, I lost people I can no longer get back in my life. Don’t be an idiot and lose Sia, because once you do, I’ll make sure you never get her back and I ALWAYS keep my word.”



Liam was silent for a long time and I couldn't hear anything from the other end of the conversation. "Think about it, but what you're going to do is apologize to Sia," Liam declared, offering me the phone. I gave him a fearful gaze and he returned it with a soft expression. "You can do it," he whispered encouragingly.

I nodded, taking the phone and placing it by my ear. "Alexander?"

"...Did you really think I was going to leave?" he whispered.

I opened my mouth to speak but more tears began to fall. "Alexander, you know the answer to that!" I sobbed, my shoulders shaking while I cried. He was quiet for a time. I knew he hated when I cried, something I rarely did to begin with.

"Sia. I'm sorry. Don't cry. I'm not going anywhere. I was...just frustrated," he whispered.

"I asked you to come. I said we could go together. I know you have to run your business and I didn't even know Pix would sneak into my bags, leaving you all alone. I didn't mean to hurt you," I confessed.

I heard him take a shaky breath. "I'm sorry, Sia. Please, don't cry anymore." He spoke with an unsteady voice, thick with tears.

"I won't abandon you. I'm not gonna do what your biological parents did. I'll always be there for you even if we stay as only friends," I reminded, feeling like I had to reassure him yet again.

"I know. I understand, Sia. No more crying. I'm sorry," he apologized once again.

"I'm sorry too."

"Don't worry about me. Try to relax. I'll see you tomorrow, okay?"

"Okay," I mumbled, giving the phone back to Liam.

“We’ll see you tomorrow. Make sure you water Rin and Saturn. Bye.” Liam hung up and walked back to put his phone on the stone ledge. Then he came over to where I stood, wiping my flushed, tear-stained cheeks.

He didn’t say anything, wrapping his arms around me and holding me tightly. He held me until I finally relaxed. I felt foolish for bringing my problems to him.

“Liam I’m-”

“Don’t apologize.” He continued to stroke my head soothingly while his left arm wrapped securely around my waist. He pressed a kiss to my forehead and I looked up and saw a small smile on his face.

“We all deal with things like this. Not one shifter can say they don’t have a problem or secret they don’t want someone to know. I don’t want you to feel ashamed for sharing how much you care for Alexander. Maybe it’s what he needs to finally take the next step. I know you love him and I can see he loves you too, but both of your insecurities are preventing you from moving forward. I know you’re willing to try and have a relationship with him. He just has to be confident to take that step forward with you,” he explained.

“You should be one of those relationship therapists,” I mumbled

He chuckled. “There’s my Sia.” Then he kissed me on the lips. *My Sia...*

Even though this holiday didn’t really feel like one, I knew somewhere inside I’d made huge progress with myself and my relationships. *Maybe I would be able to let Liam in after all.*

# Seduction and Double Trouble



"Meow."

I opened my eyes, watching Pix play with the little pink fuzzy keychain that hung off my packed luggage. I smirked, feeling exhausted but I couldn't sleep. I sat up, which caught Pix's attention; he paused midway through hiding the fuzzy ball with his paw. I smirked.

"You can keep playing with it. I'm just getting some air," I whispered. Pix's eyes lit up and he continued his playful antics, making me giggle. I leaned over to see if Liam was asleep and noticed how peaceful he looked.

Other than how he took charge during my whole breakdown about Alexander, Liam had been very relaxed and really good company. Even once I calmed down, he continued to hold me until I fell asleep, naked and all. When I woke up

an hour later, I was wearing his shirt and was tucked into bed. He must have fallen asleep reading, since his iPad was on resting on his abs.

I'd gotten up to use the washroom and moved his iPad to charge it, knowing we'd use it for some meetings later in the day when we arrived at work. After laying the thin blanket I'd been hogging on top of him, I'd tried to go back to sleep but simply couldn't.

Memories of my childhood haunted me, the sound of crickets reminding me of the times I'd be left alone in the basement of my mother's hidden home. I shook my head, wishing I could shake away the memories that threatened to flood my mind and attempted to consume me.

I got up and quietly slid open the glass door, squeezing between the small opening and heading out to the backyard. I didn't need to walk far. I turned left and strolled over to a little patio area that faced the garden that looked like it was glowing. It almost felt like the flowers had magic as they glowed lightly under the moonlight that shone above me.

I rested my arms on the wooden rail of the patio, taking a deep breath of the sweet aroma of the flowers. My hair blew gently in the passing breeze, which had grown a little cooler this evening. I was a little cold, but maybe it would help me out of the self-destructive mindset I was fighting within my head.

Something soft wrapped around me and I looked over my shoulder to see Liam. He still looked really sleepy, his eyes barely staying open as he stared down at me. I looked to see he'd placed a wool blanket over my shoulders.

"You'll catch a cold," he stated quietly. His concern made me smile. I turned to face him and his arms wrapped around my waist, pulling me close to him.

"Hey. Did I wake you?" I asked.

"No. I was cold and realized you weren't there. Plus Pix threw your keychain at me," he explained.

I raised an eyebrow at him. “The fuzzy keychain that was attached to my bag?”

He grinned. “It’s not attached anymore. He’s playing with it on the floor.” Liam pressed a light kiss to my forehead. “I’ll buy you another one,” he whispered. I grinned, leaning up to kiss him.

We made out for a while before we turned to stare at the vast glowing flower garden, little fireflies fluttering around.

“You couldn’t sleep?” Liam asked, resting his chin on my shoulder while he tightened his hold around my waist.

“I tried. I just have a lot on my mind,” I whispered.

“Is this about earlier?” he asked. I slowly nodded.

He lifted his head to press a soft kiss to my shoulder. “Can we talk about it?”

“It’s a long sad story that would damper the last of our luxurious seven-star resort vacation.” I sighed quietly, trying to lighten the mood, but I didn’t sound convincing, even to my own ears.

“Anastasia.”

I turned in his embrace to face him again and he stared directly into my eyes. “Can we be official?”

“Official, as in?” I asked; my heart skipped a beat at his question. We’d talked about this before which made me curious as to what he meant for bringing it up again..

“Official, as in us being a couple. Regardless of being at work and whatnot, can we officially date and I can announce we’re dating to anyone who asks?”

I almost stopped breathing at his proposition, unsure how to answer. He was asking to date me. ME, the succubus-vampire hybrid who for years had been begged by men to be the carrier of their babies solely because of my powers of attraction and good looks.

Even with Alexander, although we loved one another, we hadn’t been able to take it to the next level. Yet, Liam was

standing before me in nothing but boxers with those beautiful red eyes of his, asking if we could be together. *We could be a couple. We wouldn't need to hide or lie to people. I could say he was my boyfriend and be proud to state it.*

“If you’re not ready, I’m willing to wait and do what we previously agreed upon,” he offered.

“But....you don’t...” I trailed off when his expression softened and a wide smile formed on his lips.

“Sia, we’ll get to know one another. We have to build trust, and if we are going to date, I want to start fresh. I’ve been thinking long and hard about this and I want you by my side. I’ve always been a person who has to put up a front to cover other people’s backs. It doesn’t matter if it’s with friends or family. When I’m asked to do something, I’ve always had to obey, even if it makes me look like a liar or bad person. It sucks and I really hate it, but watching you work every day, no matter how people treat and looked down on you, made me want to work even harder myself. Kinda made me want to stop being a pushover or a pawn in this business game and go back to what I was originally passionate about,” he explained.

“You, a pushover?” I asked, lifting my hand and pressing it on his chest. I tried to push him even a little bit but it was an epic fail. He chuckled and I smiled.

“I don’t know the details of what you’re talking about, but it sounds nice. To not be used and abused but to be your own boss and follow your rules,” I whispered.

“Would you come with me if I decided to?” he asked. I stared into his determined eyes long and hard, and I knew his resolve was clear.

“I would need the details and what I’d be doing. I’d also have to be able to fit my business into the equation because I won’t let go of it,” I announced. He needed to know that I wasn’t a woman he can say ‘come work only for me and dump everything you’ve worked years to achieve.’

“I’ll respect your schedule and make sure you can continue running your business. I’ll also make sure you get days off.”

He grinned and I tried to smile back, but fear trickled through me.

“But I have secrets, Liam. I’m nowhere near ready to share them yet. Honestly, I don’t know when I will be. Are you really okay with that? You’re okay with not knowing my past?” I questioned.

“Are you a killer?” he asked.

“No,” I replied, feeling a little confused by his question.

“Have you done drugs?”

“No?”

“Have you ever robbed a bank?”

“No, and if I tried I’d be in jail by now,” I concluded.

He smirked. “Then there’s nothing to worry about. We all have secrets, Sia. Even me. We’re shifters and sadly, secrets just somehow run in our genetics. We live in a world where honesty leads you to ruin, while lying will help you walk up the stairs of fame and financial freedom. It sucks, but this is the world we live in. But, I vow that with time, I’ll be able to share my secrets, one of them hopefully tomorrow if the plans go well. I know eventually, you will be able to tell me yours as well, when you can trust me wholeheartedly.”

“You have that much faith in me?” I whispered.

He had a pride-filled expression on his face and nodded once. “110% faith in my private secretary and hopefully soon-to-be girlfriend,” he teased.

I wrapped my arms around him, hugging him. “Liam. Thank you,” I whispered.

“No, Sia. Thanks for being you. It was an eye-opener and maybe I’ll continue to learn a thing or two. I’ve already learned I can shove cacti up people’s butt holes.”

I blushed at the mention of that particular rant and pulled back to defend myself. “That...I was angry, that’s all.” My face was probably beet red in that moment.

“I know,” he whispered.

That buzzing sensation returned with force and I swallowed, trying not to focus on the way my body pressed against his hard rock frame. I slowly looked up to meet his gaze, seeing he too, could feel the growing pull between us.

“Let’s go back inside,” he whispered. His husky voice made me want to do anything he asked, which was a nice change from me commanding others to do my bidding.

“Sure,” I replied, putting my hand in his and we walked back to our bedroom. Pix was curled up around my now broken keychain, sleeping away near our packed luggage.

When Liam closed the glass door, he walked over to me. His hands rested on my hips as he continued to stare into my eyes.

I felt extremely relaxed and a little horny as we just stared at one another. Then I lowered my gaze to his lips. He took this as a sign and slowly leaned in to kiss me. This kiss was more than just passion. It was filled with intense heat and an impatient desire for us to surpass the boundary we’d unconsciously set up in our minds.

I wanted to savor his body and please him, but he seemed to have other plans. His lips left mine and locked onto the nape of my neck.

“Liam,” I moaned; the quiet sound escaped my lips, loving how it felt when his hands roamed down to my ass.

“I know I don’t show it, but it’s such a struggle to hold back when I’m around you,” he whispered. His hands grabbed the hem of the shirt I was wearing, inching it up my body, and I lifted my hands so he could remove it entirely.

I stood there naked, and his hungry eyes looked at me like something sacred. He slipped his boxers off, moving them to the side with his foot. Then it was my turn to take in his bare body, my eyes beginning at his gorgeous head and trailing down to his long length.

My pussy ached to feel him inside me and oh, I’d certainly get to squeeze his ass then!



“Really?” I whispered, my voice low as I closed the distance between us. I figured both of us had experienced sex; I was the one who had been holding myself back from such pleasurable activities.

He gave me a seductive grin, leaning in and tugging my lower lip with his teeth teasingly. “Yes. I know you try to lock it up, but sometimes I can feel what we’re experiencing now, only stronger. It’s so hard to concentrate and be good when I’d rather lock the office door, throw everything off my desk and lay you on it so I can have my way with you, savoring the taste of you down below, while listening to your moans which only excite me more.”

I pulled him into a kiss, my tongue invading his mouth while I lowered my hands to his 10/10 ass, squeezing it slowly. He broke the kiss to groan and his eyes grew dark with lust.

I grinned. “I’ve been wanting to squeeze your firm ass since the day I walked into your office,” I whispered.

“You saying that is really hot and also a big turn on.” He chuckled before claiming my lips once more. In seconds, we were on the bed, kissing passionately as our hands explored one another. So long had I wanted to have my way with him, to be able to tell him what I wanted and enjoy the orgasmic performance I knew he’d deliver.

Not to mention my dreams lately; wet dreams of Liam fucking me nice and hard while meeting my every request, one after another. The thought made me excited and I wasn’t able to hold back any longer. ***“Liam, please touch me.”***

His eyes met mine and he grinned, his hand sliding down my torso and straight to my entrance that was wet and desperate for him to fill me.

“Really hard to fight off your commands, lovely,” he whispered, his eyes a dark red. He lowered his mouth to my breasts and I arched my back. He teased me with his tongue while his fingers played with my entrance.

He pulled away from my breast to speak. “I’ll touch you, my Sia. I’m at your command without the need of your

power,” he reassured me before he slid his fingers into me.

“Mhmmm!” I moaned as his two fingers began to slide in and out. He didn’t need to go slow. I had wanted this for so long and now that I was getting it, I wanted him to go fast so we could move on to fucking and other sensual activities.

“Faster, Liam,” I whispered, this time not using my power to command him. I was already so close and wanted to climax from the thrusts of his fingers. He pinched my breast hard with his free hand and began to pump his fingers in me even faster.

“*Okay, Sia. Cum,*” he commanded, and my body seemed to surge at his words. A gasp escaped me as I tensed up, my orgasm vibrating through me. He didn’t stop the rapid movement until my whimpers had all but died down. He pulled his fingers out; my creamy juices clung to his index and middle finger.

*Fuck...that was too intense.* Liam noticed my concern and forward till he hovered on top of me. “When I commanded you to cum, you did so right away,” he whispered as if to confirm it with me.

I slowly nodded. “It felt like you ordered me to cum like how I would order someone to do my bidding as a succubus,” I admitted, already putting the pieces together. Liam nodded, then moved his fingers to his mouth and licked up every bit of my release that clung to them.

My stomach flipped and my eager pussy ached for more, just from the very seductive move. “Let’s try something,” he whispered. I grew excited at the noticeable flash of mischief in his eyes.

He positioned his cock at my entrance before locking eyes with me. “You’re protected?” he asked, clearly wanting to know just in case he needed to put a condom on first. I grinned, unable to stop the giggle that escaped me.

“Yes, Liam, now fuck me,” I ordered. His grin widened before he slid himself inside me in one quick movement. We both moaned and I had to take a minute for my pussy to adjust to the size of his large cock. Liam didn’t move until my body

had relaxed, which I found comforting; I leaned up to give him a kiss.

Once I was satisfied, I settled back onto the bed, my back pressed against the sheets. Once my eyes met his, he began to move.

“Oh yes, fuck!” I moaned. My eyes rolled back and I gripped the sheets as he drove deep inside me. Each thrust told me he knew exactly what he was doing. When the pleasure began to build and my moans grew louder, he shifted the angle just slightly, perfectly hitting my G-spot, which made me moan even louder.

“Yes, yes. Liam, faster,” I begged, opening my eyes to meet his. I was shocked when I noticed the shift in them; the once dark red color was now a vivid purple. He didn’t stop fucking me but his eyes lingered on mine and I only caught a glimpse of bright red in his eyes.

“We’re mates,” Liam breathed, looking like he was approaching his climax. He moved to pin my body and his hips began to move quickly.

“Ah. Faster, Liam, please!” I cried out. My body was so hot with need and the pleasure building within me was both amazing and overwhelming, making me wish I hadn’t gone so long without sex to begin with. I had a strong urge to bite his neck. My eyes locked on the rapid beating pulse which made my mouth water as my body grew tense, almost at the peak of my orgasm.

“Liam. I...I...really want to bite you,” I confessed, unsure if I could resist the urge much longer. Liam moaned, his thrusts so fast I had to grip the sheets tightly to keep me in place.

“We need to try this,” he whispered.

***“When you cum, I want you to bite the base of my neck, not the middle. Sia, cum now!”*** he commanded. I felt the jolt of my orgasm hit me hard and I cried out as I came. My pussy clenched around his cock and he cursed before he released inside me.

My mind felt hazy and though I wanted to relax in the sheets beneath me, I sat forward instead, wrapping my arms around Liam's neck. Without further warning, I extended my fangs, plunging them into the bottom section of his neck.

His hand landed on my hips to hold me and he moaned loudly while his cock twitched deep inside me. I didn't blame him; my own cry of pleasure escaped me as my eyes fluttered closed and the rich addicting taste of his blood flowed into my mouth.

I wanted to drink more but Liam's hand rubbed my back. "***Sia, baby. Stop.***" He whispered the command and I finished the last gulp of blood, then pulled away to catch my breath.

His purple eyes met my mine, astonishment sinking in at what just happened. "Are my eyes still red?" He whispered through pants.

I slowly slowly shook my head side to side. "Um, no. They're purple"

"Oh..." He replied.

"Shit. You were able to command me and I bit you. Oh... um...sorry?" I apologized, unsure if I was supposed to since he technically ordered me to. He grinned, slowly leaning in to kiss me hard.

"It's okay. I liked it but I kinda wanna fuck again," he confessed, his cheeks slightly red.

I grinned. "As long as we talk about this mate thing tomorrow?" I suggested.

He nodded. "Sure. Anything for my Sia," he whispered, before pinning me back to the bed for another round of heated passion.



"We made it!" I breathed, closing the door behind us and dropping to my knees, trying to catch my breath.

“The one day we need to be on time, we end up sleeping in,” Liam panted, sounding just as out of breath as I was.

We’d returned from our trip, heading straight to the office instead of my place to drop our things because we’d accidentally slept in and got caught in the ridiculous morning traffic jam. Nick said he’d take care of our luggage and we quickly dashed into the building which caused a few shocked glances ‘cause no one had ever seen Liam run to make it to his own shift.

“We have ten minutes,” I reassured and opened my eyes to look up at Liam who smiled.

“I don’t get how you’re always on point,” he whispered, extending his hand. I placed my hand in his and he helped me stand.

“You have to be on your game, even if we slept in because someone wanted to play 21 Positions,” I commented. He grinned, sliding his arm around my waist and pulling me up against him to give me a deep sensational kiss.

“You enjoyed every second of it,” he whispered. I smirked, unable to deny his claim. By far, it had been the best experience I’d had with anyone. What I loved the most was that Liam knew exactly what he was doing.

“I won’t deny you surpassed my expectations and were able to deliver,” I hummed.

“Meow!”

We looked down to see Pix pop out of my purse. Then he began running around the office with my fuzzy keychain in his mouth.

“I thought we left him in the car for Nick to take home?” Liam looked puzzled.

“Ya...I don’t know what happened,” I confessed, unsure how Pix managed to survive the rough conditions of my bags.

“Get ready. Let me go get some te-” I began but was interrupted by the knock on the door. “Huh? Who’s that?” I wondered, moving out of Liam’s embrace to open the door.

“Sia, wait-” Liam began but I ignored him and opened the door, meeting a pair of gold eyes. I blinked, slowly looking back at Liam and then again to the stranger before me.

“Liam?” I pointed to the newcomer who looked identical to Liam, the only difference being his gold eyes and the strong scent of a werewolf coming from him.

“Two questions, brother.” The stranger spoke up. “Why are you in my office and who’s the hot chick in front of me?” His voice was hard, with not even a hint of empathy as he glared at both of us.

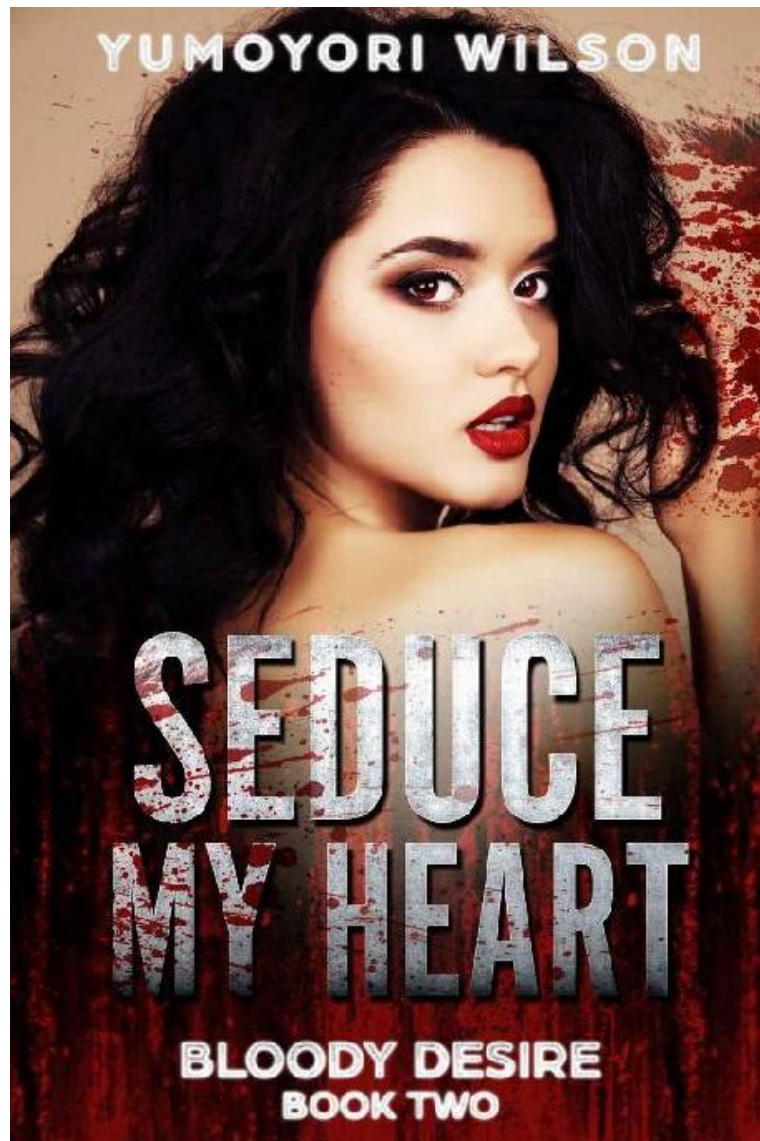
I looked between the two men, over and over, unsure how to answer as I stood there, completely speechless.

*I went from being just a temporary private secretary to having two pet cacti, Pix who loved to sneak into my bags, my best friend who I still didn’t know would ever want to become more than friends, and also finding my mate.*

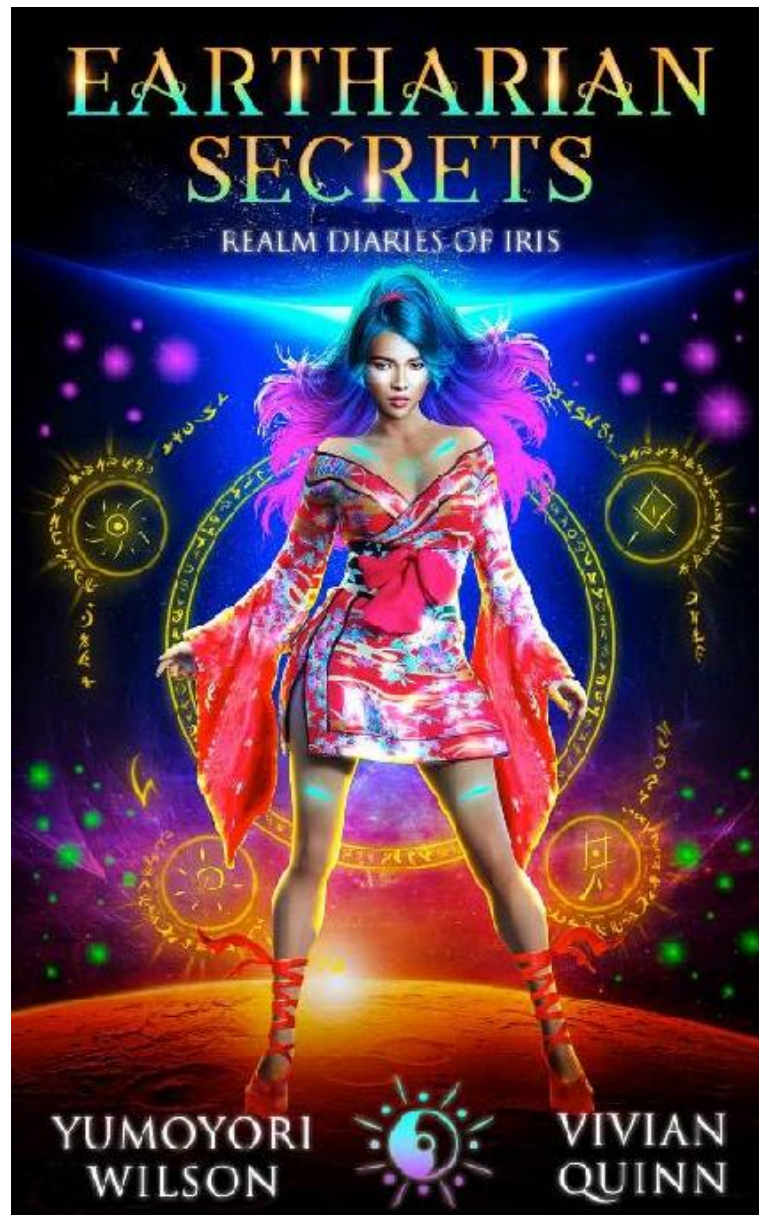
Who knew he’d have an identical twin?

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

*Look Out For...*



*Eartharian Secrets Sneak Peek*





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# Prologue

FLAMES OF DESPAIR

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*I stepped through the portal into a world in flames.*

For a moment, I thought I was in the wrong realm but when I saw the familiar cobblestone streets, I knew the truth. Eolas, the only home I had ever known, the world and the people that had sheltered me for as long as I remembered, was now burning to the ground around me, little by little.

I stood in shock, flames ravaging the landscape around me. *How... how did this happen? I had been here, only hours ago, and everything was normal. How could such a short amount of time change everything?*

In a daze, I walked down the wide city street looking for something I recognized and for any survivors. I could imagine the main square bustling with people shopping and going about their daily lives, laughter ringing through the air and discussing among one another about their everyday desires and struggles. Not a single thought would pass anyone's mind that this terrible disaster would befall them.

I imagined the screams of my people, the panic that must have broken out as their civilization burned around them. The immense fear that shown in their eyes as they ran aimlessly, looking for a means of escape. The cries of little children who were once happily playing in the garden and fields, now standing helpless, watching the chaos unfold and unsure if their parents would find them before it was too late.

Endless images of their struggles and attempts to flee flashed through my mind as I continued my walk of desperation.

I saw to my left what was left of the little bookshop I used to visit after my lessons with Elder Aiya. The foundation was all that remained; the ashes of the books indistinguishable from the rest of the ruin around them.

There was a loud *'crack'* and I turned quickly to see the roof of my favorite bakery collapse inward, and the rest of the building with it. I ran ahead in a panic, desperate to find something, or better yet, someone that remained in the city I loved. *Please, let there be someone left. Don't tell me they're all gone.*

As I walked, something beneath my feet gave a 'crunch.' I looked down and panicked when I realized I had stepped onto a charred human skull. My eyes went wide and I stepped away from it, as if it was a tainted object, ready to claim me into the depths of the burning hell that surrounded me.

The acknowledgement of human remains was what triggered my nose to pick up the scent of burning flesh, making me want to be sick. I gagged and clamped my hands over my mouth, praying the vomit in my throat would slide back down. I couldn't waste anymore time but how could I possibly ignore this horrible thing?

Somehow, despite seeing the buildings burning around me, it still seemed unreal. Like a movie or story you'd read about a person losing everything they cherished in a snap of their fingers. But I was not the main character in my own desolate world and with that acknowledgement, reality finally settled in. I had just stepped on what might have been my friend or neighbor. A person who used to talk and breathe, was now nothing but a clump of bones.

My heart raced and I began to breathe heavily, nearly hyperventilating. I started into a run, moving as quickly as I could from that area and refused to look back at the remains. I avoided staring at the ground beneath me, unable to muster the courage to lay my eyes upon another dead body.

I passed the park where I'd shared my first kiss with Bryan, the boy I had hoped to be bound to after we both had our Aging Ceremony. The thought of him too, being among the dead caused pain to rip through my heart and contributed to the growing urge to break down where I stood and mourn the lost of my people.

The few trees that remained standing weere charred black and just another haunting reminder that everything left in this place was dead.

Even the Sacred Pool in the middle of town where I had dreamt of one day having my Bonding Ceremony, was now dried up which I didn't even know was possible with the heavy protective symbols carved into the large marble surface, ensuring it would continue to flow endlessly.

Everything was eerily silent, the only sounds breaking through the quiet were the crackle of burning wood and occasional crashes as buildings that had been built to stand for thousands of years crumbled and fell around me.

*What possibly could have caused this level of destruction?* Eolas had been built to withstand the ages, heavily warded and defended with symbols carved into every building and street corner. No accident could have caused such catastrophic ruin.

Any symbol or magic powerful enough to cause such damage would have been locked away to prevent misuse. Someone must have found a hidden text and used their uncovered power to destroy my world. *But who would do such an evil thing?*

Our race was a peaceful one who observed other realms and endeavored to protect our own secret ways of life. Only a monster would be so cruel as to murder my people and destroy our history and home that had survived for countless years.

I kept running until my lungs couldn't take it anymore; the thick smoke that polluted the air made me feel nauseous, adding to the overwhelming scent of death and debris. I came to a stop, reaching a large clearing area that was once filled with a large market and homes. But the flames had already done their damage, leaving nothing but ash in their wake.

The sight before me was endless rumble and nothing was left of the city I remembered leaving only hours ago.

*Nothing. Everything I loved and cherished was gone and there was nothing I could do about it. Whoever did this knew exactly what they were doing and had succeeded. Not a single person or animal had survived this calamity, meaning I was all that was left.*

***I was truly alone.***



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## About Yumoyori Wilson

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Yumoyori.W.Wilson lives in Toronto, Ontario with her lovely Mother, Queen Loulou. When she's not working the night shift as a Community Registered Nurse, she's out relaxing with friends or sipping bubble tea while playing Elsword with her gaming friends.

She has an obsession with fashion and currently owns 100+ lipsticks, 50 being various shades of nudes though she insists all of them are different in their own way. She enjoys reading during her night shift, immersing herself in reverse harem, paranormal and romance novels to pass the time and prevent herself from falling asleep.

To connect with Yumoyori online:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/yumoyoriauthor>

Yumo's Star Knight Facebook Group: <http://bit.ly/2idc6oD>

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Books by Yumoyori Wilson

## THE STARLIGHT GODS SERIES:

*Dark Wish*

*Tainted Rose*

*RYDER*

*Poisonous Dream*

*DANIEL*

*Forgotten Fairytale (July 28th 2018)*

## PARANORMAL INC SERIES:

*Visionary Investigator*

*Visionary Awakened (June 16th 2018)*

## HOLIDAY SERIES:

*Visionary Christmas*

*Starlight Christmas*

*Visionary New Years*

## EARTHALA SERIES:

*Visionary X Starlight- Chapter One*

*Visionary X Starlight- Chapter Two*

*Visionary X Starlight- St. Patricks Day*

## STAND ALONE NOVEL:

*Makoto's Birthday (September 8th 2018)*

## CRIMSON STORM SERIES:

*Taming the Storm*

*Calming the Storm (July 1st 2018)*

## BRIGHTEN MAGIC ACADEMY SERIES:

*Reflections of You (May 5, 2018)*

*Reflections of Me (July 29th 2018)*

## BLOODY DESIRE SERIES:

*Seduce My Blood*

## UNICORN BLESSED CHRONICLES:

*Celestia*

*Celestia 2 (May 26th 2018)*

## FAMILIAR BLESSED CHRONICLES:

*Arielle Rainbow (July 14th 2018)*

## COLLABORATIVE WRITING:

## RECLAIMING THE THRONE (WITH TAMARA WHITE):

*Shattered Destiny*



# REALM DIARIES OF IRIS (WITH VIVIAN QUINN):

*Eartharian Secrets (July 7th 2018)*