

Confessions of a High School Vampire  
*birth*



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# Chapter Three

## “Thirst”

I started taking walks at night. Short ones at first. I was still ignoring Malcolm's calls and texts under the guise of "being sick." I was going to have a lot of explaining to do.

It was my fourth night in a damned eternity.

Great.

I kept my walks close to home and in the wee hours to avoid arousing any suspicion. I was surprised by how much activity there actually was in Whitehaven at three in the morning.

There was your usual brand of delinquents on the prowl, armed with rolls of toilet paper and shaving cream.

There were a couple of homeless people sleeping on benches in the park - they talked a lot in their sleep. Mostly angry grumbles about stupid drivers or nosy aliens. To be honest, I wasn't so quick to discount the alien story after my recent introduction to the world of the bizarre and impossible. Little green men? Why not?

On one of my walks I saw a thirteen-year-old girl I recognized from school sneaking out her first floor bedroom window. She didn't have a bag with her, so I assumed she wasn't running away. I wondered why she was sneaking out. I kind of wanted to follow her to make sure she didn't get abducted or run over or anything, but I also kind of wanted to drink her blood, so I decided against it.

I rationalized my nightly excursions through the fact that I was going stir crazy alone in my room, day in and day out. In rare fleeting moments, however, when I was being honest with myself, I knew I was just testing my limits. Pushing my luck.

I wanted to eat people. That was the truth. At the heart of my purportedly innocent walks was a deep and unsettling desire to feed. Each time I set foot outside the familiar confines of my bedroom, I was tempting fate. Tempting myself. I wanted to see how far I could go, how close I could come without giving in. The curiosity burned inside me.

And so I wandered.

I clung to the shadows cast by the crisp light of the moon. I traced a random and squiggly path through my sleepy neighborhood. I enjoyed my solitude in the night. It was so much harder in the daytime. Thinking about all of the people out living their happy little lives made my recent loss of one almost unbearable. At night, things were quiet - still. At night, I felt okay being alone.

And so I meandered on. Before long, I found myself standing across the street from Paige's house. I leaned carefully against a tree as I looked over at her home, a classic, well-kept blue Victorian. I imagined her sleeping peacefully. I wondered what she was dreaming about. I secretly hoped she was dreaming about me, as I had dreamed about her for years.

Paige had such a familiar kind of beauty. She was gorgeous, but approachable. Hot in a cute kind of way. When I looked in her eyes, I felt hopelessly drawn in, yet comfortable. She was a dancer and also totally clumsy. I had no idea how that made any sense. She was funny, smart and biting at times. The little bit of acidity that laced her tone when she was irritated about something just made me love her more. She was a girl that held her own, but didn't make a show of her strength. She had nothing to prove. To put it bluntly, she was the girl of my dreams. Cliché? Very. True? Absolutely. I'd always believed that clichés existed for a reason.

Right now she was warm. Safe. Blissfully unaware of the evils that lurked in the shadows. A.K.A. Me. She slept easy, knowing for a fact that all the bad things we read about in story books didn't exist and that the worst trouble she might face in the next couple years would be some form of mild heartbreak. She slept easy because she didn't know how badly I wanted her. And her blood.

I shook my head as if to physically dislodge such thoughts. The yearning I felt for her had been pure once. Well, um, not pure, exactly... just not really, you know, morbid. Despite all that, I knew I loved her. I knew I wanted to be with her. And I knew I never could. I forced myself to continue on my late night excursion before the dull ache in my chest suffocated me.

As I crossed an elementary school playground, I heard a young couple arguing quietly on the swing set. I recognized the voices. They were juniors at my school. I ducked behind some bushes.

“Come on Sarah.”

“No.”

“Why?”

“Because I don’t want to.”

“But why?”

“I don’t know, Kellan, I’m just not comfortable with it.”

“But we’ve done all kinds of other things.”

“Yeah, but ... I don’t know.”

Um, yeah. Didn’t like where this was going.

“Is it me?”

“No, no, it’s not you at all, it’s just...” I sensed Sarah squirming from a hundred yards away.

“Then what’s the problem?” Kellan’s cool exterior sounded like it was slipping away.

“I just don’t want to, okay?”

“God, Sarah. You are making such a big deal out of nothing.”

I knew it was intrusive to listen in and, frankly, it was a little disgusting, but I felt really bad for Sarah. She was a nice girl, sort of mousy. She let me copy off her Spanish homework once. I told myself I was there just to make sure Kellan didn’t do anything stupid, but if I was being completely truthful, I also had the desire to sink my teeth into their necks and drink up. Harsh? Maybe.

There was a thick, quiet moment that hung heavy and low in the chilly night air. I heard the swing creak.

“I don’t think this is going to work out,” Sarah mumbled.

“Why are you being such a bitch about this?” Kellan spat.

“I’m not!”

“Yes, you are!”

Definitely didn’t like where this was going.

Even more, though, I didn’t like where my thoughts were going. I wanted to kill him.

Within seconds I had involuntarily calculated Kellan and Sarah’s approximate distance and direction, how fast I could take them both out (accounting for possible slippage on the playground’s wood chips) and how to incapacitate one while I drank the other.

Wow. I was disturbing.

“Just leave,” I whispered to myself. “Leave.”

My feet remained rooted to the soft ground. Where would I take the bodies, I thought? How would I dispose of them?

“Ow! Let go!” Sarah yelled.

What would happen when their parents go looking for them? God, stop it Noah! I tried to refocus on what was happening. I couldn’t afford to get lost in my dark fantasy.

“Don’t walk away from me, Sarah.” The sudden dark edge in Kellan’s voice was frightening, even to me. And I’m a freaking vampire.

Sarah’s voice grew firm.

“Let. Go. Of. My. Arm.”

“Not until you face me you little-” What a winner, that Kellan.

“Bite me, you freak,” she interrupted.

I could almost feel the burn she was getting, trying to twist out of Kellan's grasp.

Poor Sarah! I wanted to bleed Kellan dry. I wanted him to writhe in pain. But I also wanted a taste of her dainty little wrist. I shook my head again. Pull it together, Noah!

“Shut up!” Kellan screamed at her.

With one hand, Kellan squeezed Sarah's arm and with the other he reached up and grabbed her roughly by the jaw. A tear fell from the corner of her eye.

He never saw me coming.

In a split-second (and probably ill-advised) decision, I ran and barreled into his side with my shoulder, tossing his mortal body twenty feet across the playground. I heard his ribs crack.

It was dark. In that same split-second I darted behind a plastic playground structure and held my breath. If I took a big juicy whiff of either of them right now, I wouldn't be able to hold back. It took every ounce of self-control I had to remain rooted in the shadows.

Sarah stood stunned and confused for only a second before taking off at full speed towards her home. I think I freaked her out a little.

Kellan slowly twisted on the ground in pain.

It would be so easy. Too easy. All I had to do was drink. Then it would be done.

I bit my lip so hard it began to bleed, trying desperately not to tear Kellan apart like I wanted to. Like I knew I could.

I took a breath. His stench burned my nostrils. Oh no.

This was it. I had gone too far.

A terrifying roar exploded from me as I charged at him, full throttle.

I saw him squirming on the ground, suffering, confused, frightened. There was no way he could have seen me coming.

Or going.

All the ferocity that propelled me towards his pathetic mortal body also managed to propel me past him. I don't know how I did it, I really don't. One minute I was going to rip him to shreds and indulge in his bloody mess and then next I was way beyond the playground, still running. I had charged right by him.

I kept going until I had retreated to an isolated corner of the nearby woods, where I could collect my thoughts enough to prevent myself from going back and finishing the job.

I took three deep breaths (even though I didn't need them) to try to quiet the monstrous urge raging just beneath my ivory skin.

I can't do this, I thought. I couldn't go prowling in the night, "saving" young damsels in distress. Who the hell did I think I was? I wasn't Superman, I wasn't Batman. I was Noah Vance, high-schooler extraordinaire. Noah, of the undead variety. I was a bloodsucking teenager. A monster. I was no hero. Chances were the next person I would try to save would end up my next meal. Hell, I didn't even try to save her, I was more interested in the prospect of a meal the whole time. It was ridiculous. Who did I think I was? Who the hell was I? What the hell was I?

As my thoughts went racing violently through my skull, my teeth clenched and a low, rumbling growl rolled around in my throat. My fingers curled in and, before I knew it, I put my fist through a tree.

Yes, a tree.

I pulled my arm back to reveal a strikingly precise hole through the trunk of an evergreen. That's what finally got to me. Though my hunger was still burning, I managed to steady myself once again.

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It was about four thirty when I went strolling back through the woods to my house.

What a weird night. I really had to figure out this whole “going out in the daytime” thing. I had to figure out some way to get back to my life.

It was just as I was turning off the path to head for the back door that the barking started.

Yip Yip Yip Yip Yip Yip!

Uh oh.

Yip Yip Yip!

There was a ratty, little dog loose on the path. Must have snuck out of its yard. Great, that’s all I needed, something to draw more attention. I tried approaching it. I like dogs, so I figured maybe I could calm it down.

“Shhhhhh...” I soothed.

Yip Yip Yip Yip Yip!

“Come on doggy, come on, shhh...”

Still didn’t work.

The fluffy thing just stared at me with its cold beady eyes as it took a couple of steps back and continued its verbal assault.

Yip Yip Yip!

“Shut up!” I whispered.

I tried walking away to see if it would just give up, having driven me away with its “terrifying” show of dominance. But the damn thing just followed at a semi-safe distance, yipping its annoying little brains out.

I saw a light come on in a window two houses down.

I could have just disappeared – sped off into my room without another glance, but something was keeping me there, facing off with a freaked out little pomer-doodle or whatever. I wish I’d just left. Instead I let go.

I let go of myself for as long as it takes you to blink.

Suddenly the dog was quiet.

It was quiet because its neck was in my mouth.

And despite the grossly pampered tufts of fur, I was viciously draining the life from its little body through its well-hidden neck. I couldn't stop. It shuddered and died as the blood flowed freely into my mouth, down my throat, into my being. It was disgusting. It was satisfying.

The whole act lasted about ten seconds before I was full and feeling my energy restored and my strength regenerated. Then I looked down at the limp puffball in my hands and I wanted to throw up.

“Oh god.” What had I done?

In a panic, I shook it a little in an utterly futile attempt to revive it. I knew there was no hope. My cold hard instincts kicked in. Despite myself (and my gag reflex), I proceeded to bite the dog a couple of different places – making it look as though it got into a fight with a wild animal (a rabid raccoon maybe?) and bled out. I then tossed it into the forest and raced to my room.

Safe in the confines of my house, I ran straight to the bathroom to clean the blood off my face.

When I looked in the mirror I saw a virulent, shockingly handsome animal.

An animal.

Not to be trusted. Not to be trifled with. I felt powerful and horrible at the same time. Above all I was helpless. How was this the rest of my life?

Even though I could do things at incredible speeds, I took solace in generally maintaining a human pace. It was one of the few things that helped me feel like I wasn't totally lost.

As a result, it took me forever to pick that stupid fur out of my mouth. It was everywhere. I was coughing up hairballs for half an hour. Which, of course, woke up my ever-worried mother.

“Are you okay, Noah?”

“Fine, mom.”

I gagged a little as I was reaching my finger around the back of my mouth for a particularly troublesome clump of fur.

“Noah, what are you doing to yourself?”

“Nothing, mom. It’s fine. I’ve just got something in my mouth.”

Suddenly she burst in the door, abandoning any shred of trepidation and stared at me wild-eyed, arms wrapped tightly around her pink satin robe.

“Noah, did you kill someone?!” She hissed.

I spun around to face her.

“No! Jesus Christ! What kind of freak do you think I am?”

“Do NOT use his name in vain, mister.”

“Oh, give me a break.”

“You may be a vampire now, but you are *STILL* my son and you are living in *MY* house.”

“Living. Nice.” I rolled my eyes.

“You know what I mean.” She softened.

“Yeah, I know what you mean.”

She sighed and glanced around the bathroom. This was the first time we hadn’t been separated by a solid panel of wood since the Bathroom Incident. She appeared a little more at ease around me, which was comforting. When your mother looks at you like you’re a venomous snake about to strike, well, let’s just say it can give a guy a complex.

“So what did you do?” She asked.

I shrugged and tried to force a laugh.

“What makes you think I did anything?”

She just raised her eyebrow. I told you I was horrible at lying. I needed some major practice. I exhaled and hung my head.

“I ate a dog.” I mumbled.

What a proud moment.

“You ate the whole dog?” she asked, as if it were the schematics of consuming an entire pet that were the troubling thing.

“Well, I drained a dog. And then it was dead.”

“What did you do with it?”

She was taking this surprisingly well.

“I made it look like it got in a fight and died. Then I tossed it into the woods.”

She slowly nodded her head and pursed her lips.

“You’re being very nonchalant about all this,” I said.

What can I say? It was weird. While not on par with the “birds and the bees” talk, discussing how you covered up your supernatural bloodlust with your mother was pretty awkward.

“I’m considering...” she started.

“Considering what?” Did I even want to know?

“How to go about this...” I hated it when she started sentences without finishing them. I waited for a second for her thought to resolve itself. It didn’t.

“How to go about what?” Just spit it out!

“You can’t go on like this,” she said flatly.

“No kidding.”

Silence.

“What the hell am I going to do?” I implored like a child in despair.

“Hold yourself together for now,” she responded.

Then, for the first time in days, she looked at me straight. She was done being the frightened, helpless mother of devil spawn. She was in full on mother-bear mode now.

“We need to find a steady supply of blood.”

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