

GAY MALE EROTICA

Rise of the Gay Vampires

*An enticing erotic ride through the gay
vampire world will take your breath away
and set you on fire!*

ALEX STEWART

RISE OF THE GAY VAMPIRES

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Dedication:

For Gary, Richard and Tom, and for all the boys and vampires at
Cafe Ole and 20th Street.

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CHAPTER 1

I was, and remain, 32 years old when I slipped out of consciousness and woke up out of a physical and mental nightmare. The year was 1973.

I retched the fluids and remaining solids from my body. It seemed imperative to get them out of me. My limbs were on fire and the pressure inside my skull frightened me as I clutched my head to try and hold it together, to stop it from bursting apart. Slowly the pain throughout my body began to ebb and I knew instantly, from somewhere deep in my being, that the world had somehow changed forever.

I found myself at the back of the old Mission church on Dolores Street in San Francisco. I had been propped up against a wall. I don't know how long I was out or what had happened to me but instinctively knew I had to get to my apartment two blocks up the street. For some reason it too was imperative. I knew I needed a shower and get the taste of bile out of my mouth. It was still dark. I looked at my watch. It was 4 am.

Leaning on the tombstone of some long forgotten Spanish priest, I stood up, as I did energy burst out from every part of me. My palm actually pushed a piece of the tombstone off! I felt like I was going to explode!

The weird thing was I began to feel good and powerful, something the hit of an amphetamine can do or pure cocaine, but I knew this was better and this state had much more to do with my clarity of thinking than any drug could muster up. When I looked around I could see, know and understand everything about this Mission. I knew its misguided history and could feel its ugly purpose. As I made my way out onto the street I could sense the making of this entire area and, in fact, the development of The City itself.

As much as I could, I blocked all this out and walked up Dolores Street to my home. Was I walking, floating? Was I flying? I was unsure, but seemed to get there in a matter of seconds not minutes. I got in past the grill gates and leapt up the first set of stairs, struggled for a moment to get the key in the door without breaking it down, and made my way up onto the landing.

“How are you feeling?” sounded cold in my ears as if someone was standing right next to me. Startled, I quickly turned to look into the living room to the man now sitting on my sofa. He was ruggedly handsome, the kind of guy I would always look for in the bars in the Castro or down on the exciting new gay world that was exploding on Folsom Street. Wavy, dark brown hair swept back off his perfect face, a thick brown mustache sat above beautiful, full lips. His dark brown eyes pressed into mine, connecting me to him in some, now, new seductive way.

He wore the uniform of the moment: worn Levi’s, Spanish Boots with brass riding circles on both sides and a plaid shirt over a white t-shirt. I could see thick, brown chest hair creeping up over the top of the T. Through my pulsating blood, way in the back of all the sensations I was going through, I wanted to have sex with him. “Why was I so fucking horny?”

“How did you get in here?” I demanded.

“The window was open,” he smiled.

I could see the narrow side window was ajar and knew instinctively he was not joking about his entrance. Suddenly I was in the kitchen rinsing out my mouth and gulping at water from the tap.

“Come and sit. You’re perfectly safe with me.” He pointed to my big slip-covered chair that meant I would face him when I sat down. Suddenly I was in it, my body still on fire, my attention riveted on the face and physique of this beautiful man, the man I now realized I had met not four hours before on 18th Street coming out of the Watergate West bar.

“Am I dying?” I finally threw at him. “What’s wrong with me?” In my head I flew between bewilderment and fear – why was I okay with this guy in my house at this time of the night? - and back to elation.

“It doesn’t feel like I’m dying. It feels as if I’m actually fully awake. I’m not sure if I’m both angry and frightened about this change in me, or if I need to thank you for what’s happening to me! What have you done to me?”

“Do you remember what we did after we left the Castro?” He was quietly watching me, assessing my reactions and movements. I could tell he was alert to something going on in me. It made me aware of his power, and again of his menace. This all felt like a test, a test for my life, as I had never been in such a vulnerable place before. My heart raced as I searched his face for answers.

Earlier that night sometime around 11 pm, I met up with a couple of guys I had met on my first trip to the baths down on Folsom Street.

“Breathe,” he said, “you can still do that. Everything will be okay. I need you to settle down for me and I will help you understand everything that is going on within you.” His voice had changed slightly, more hypnotic and reassuring.

I slowed my breathing down and as I did the room came into full focus. I saw every item in the room and how and why I chose each piece. I knew then that all those decisions had been made by a person I knew better than anyone else, and yet that guy, that “me”, was slipping away. Suddenly in front of me sat an abyss and I began to fall into it with the realizations I was beginning to have.

“Keep breathing slowly,” his voice reached out to me.

It was all so bizarre. “Am I dying?” I managed to ask him again.

“Yes, in a way you are,” he replied.

He came forward and put his hands on my right knee. I instantly stopped falling and focused on the oxygen going in and out of my body. I knew somehow it was vital to me and I grabbed at each lungful letting its magic work through my system.

I raised my eyes to him. He nodded and I thankfully surrendered to his gaze. There was nowhere else to go. His look relaxed as well and he sat back onto the sofa.

“Chris, you aren’t in Kansas anymore,” he said with a small laugh showing he had a sense of humor. You should know that my name is Sandor and I’m originally from Hungary. I’ve lived in the States for many years and in San Francisco for the last 50.”

He sat back, his voice still soothing. I instinctively knew he had control of me, but now we were out in an open field with one another, I was safe and the whole world was waiting for me to know it and to share in its mysteries. I did not dare take my eyes from his face.

“Last night I turned you from a mere mortal into a special kind of being. I felt your longing for something more out of this life and mixed with needs of my own, I took ‘something’ from you and gave back to you the opportunity to be the best you could possibly be on this planet of ours.”

“Then it’s true?” I asked.

“Yes, it’s true,” he replied

“I don’t want to kill people,” I said. My heart rate began to go up again.

“Ahh, you actually don’t have to do that at all if you don’t want to,” he replied, hands now again behind his head. He had a satisfied grin on his face.

Dawn was approaching and he turned to view the weak light coming in through the shades on the three large windows looking out onto the palm trees and other apartments lining Dolores Street. I noticed the thick muscles in his neck and I could “see” them moving down his back as he straightened up. His shirtsleeves were partially rolled up and his forearms were thick, muscular and hairy but at the same time weirdly elegant.

“We don’t live by killing. We’re a subset of our world. We are particular because of our same-sex nature and can only be created by our own kind. You could have been killed and had your blood drunk by our cousins but in this case” – he waved his left hand up into the night air – “I found you and turned you and made you into one of us. They are not always our friends by the way, those blood takers, but more on that later.”

Before I could ask my next question, Sandor was on his feet and had taken my arm and brought me to my feet. He turned on the sconce lights near him. We were facing a wonderful old gilt mirror that I bought a few months ago on Fillmore Street from a hippy getting ready to leave The City for a life in Mendocino County up north.

I had the guys from the former house I lived in come back with their big, old Cadillac and help me get it to my new apartment. It was a real prize and now hung magnificently above the old fireplace creating a connection to old world San Francisco before the Quake and the Great Fire.

“Look at yourself now!” Sandor whispered to me. We both gazed into the mirror and I was struck by how I still looked like me, but how much sharper and defined my face had become. I certainly was not unhappy with what I saw!

“You’re a beautiful, sexy man, Chris. You always were, but now you know it.”

“Am I taller?”

“A little, maybe a half-inch because your back has been made stronger and you will never slouch again.”

My short black hair was glossier and my blue eyes seemed to have become bluer. Were my cheekbones slightly higher? And my skin was smooth and tight across them.

“My front tooth, the one on the left, is whole again! I’ve had a chip in it from a car accident when I was 18.”

“This is crazy,” I thought, looking at my enhanced image. I had never found myself hot enough, especially in this town, and whenever I went into the bars beginning to proliferate throughout the neighborhoods making up 70’s San Francisco, something in me always held me back from seeing myself as someone who could “stop” a room. Now I knew it was definitely possible.

“I’d have sex with me!” I exclaimed showing my new vanity.

“Yes, you’re now a star and it’s an important tool for you to use to stay alive and, well, wherever you are in the world. My advice is never to abuse the gift of your looks. Stay humble about them. Your friends are going to see the changes in you, especially your physical appearance. Tell them you went to a dentist, that you got advice on your skin, that sort of thing. Just look them in the eye when you tell them and they will believe you. Do the same at work. This way it’s a gradual change they see and accept, not all at once because you will

freak them out. I would suggest you announce you're going to be working out more at the gym because your body is going to become heavier and more defined over the next couple of months and you have to show you created it naturally."

"Oh my god," I exclaimed, still obsessed with my image in the mirror, my gay narcissism coming right to the forefront. My jeans were firmer around my cock and balls. "My ass is as hard as a rock! And, I can feel my waist is smaller. These jeans are looser. The t-shirt I'm wearing seems tighter." I suddenly had an image of Disney's Cinderella in the kitchen with her fairy godmother.

"Sandor, how did you turn me? What makes you different from regular vampires – I can't believe I'm even talking about being 'turned' and using words like 'vampire' in a nominally, regular way. This is all insane!"

"Sit," he said firmly, and I did.

"After I'd pulled your jeans down and began fucking you, I released chemicals stored in my body that have built up over time in my testicles. It's like spermatozoa but richer, and gets absorbed into the walls of your anus and then into your blood stream and they make their way all over your body. When they hit the heart they stop it, then start it again. Your blood stays red but goes darker and your entire system is taken over by these exploding particles and you become a new man. This act doesn't happen often in our community. I'll tell you more about it when you get back to me from your first feed."

Suddenly I was exhausted and knew I had to lie down. I was overwhelmed with everything. "What first feed?" I suddenly thought. Dawn was becoming day and I wanted sleep, even eternal sleep given everything that had just come into my life without warning. I was shattered.

Sandor moved me toward my bedroom and I felt myself being lifted and placed on the bed. “I’ll be back late in the afternoon before the sun goes down. You’ll need to understand what must happen then and you must be ready.” He leaned in and kissed me and as his tongue entered my mouth I felt a slight prick and fell into a sleep like no other I ever had in my life.

The last thing I heard from him was “Sleep, my young prince, as this will be the last sleep you will ever have.”

CHAPTER 2

I shot up and almost hit the ceiling! I know I was calling out. My throat was constricting, my whole body on fire. I fell back on my bed and watched in anguish as my former life flashed before my eyes. It was a passing parade from birth to human death.

Crazed, I called out, asking myself, “What the fuck is happening? Am I losing everything?”

My life in Melbourne, Australia, my becoming a teacher at a boys school, of meeting the PhysEd teacher, a big sexy stud of a man, my Tom, who made it easy to admit I was gay; my safe and wonderful life then shattered when he was killed, his body lost in a car accident off a cliff and swept into the sea; the decision to leave it all behind, move to San Francisco to take up this teaching position at SF State and learn how to finally live again.

I could feel the memories being sucked out of me. I was then up on my feet! My body went from a dangling marionette manipulated by myriad of strings to suddenly pushing up and out with a rush of what sounded and felt like all the fluids in my system racing from my feet up into my brain. I was sure I was going to burst! My arms stretched out as far as they could go, my legs spread out wide, I thunderously screamed in agony... just once, and it was all over. Everything in me subsided. I felt something new take hold. As it did, I found myself calm, certain and fully awake.

CHAPTER 3

I was hot in my clothes from the night before and they felt alien on my body. I moved to the edge of the bed and pulled off my t-shirt. Standing up tentatively I undid my jeans and bending, pulled off both legs at the same time. I decided I would give these clothes away to the Goodwill.

Sandor had obviously taken off my boots and socks the night before. I slipped out of my briefs and to my amazement – and to what would have been every man’s delight – found that my cock had lengthened slightly and was thicker. I immediately began to get a hard-on and I loved the pleasure of watching my cock get hard and fat. My balls were electric as I began to massage and move them around and spasms of ecstasy shot down through my legs as I played with them and then again with my swollen cock.

I fell back on the bed and furiously began to pump my thick, hard dick. I couldn’t believe how turned on I was as I let out the loudest, involuntary groan of pleasure. Looking up I watched my cock head pump a large amount of the most beautiful, clearest jizz I had ever seen come from my body – like precum, sticky and slick. I reached over to one of my big pecs, teased my nipples, then placed a nice, long string of cum slowly to my lips and found it pleasantly sweet.

I wasn't tired at all or out of breath, beating off energized me and I almost ran to the bathroom and jumped into the shower. The water felt good and I wanted it hotter than I usually had it. I loved soaping up my entire body. It was harder now and fuller.

There was a half-length mirror at the end of the bathtub and I could see that the changes were slight but to me they felt and looked enormous. I was still hairy on my upper body and legs and my crotch hair seemed thicker, different in that the hair all seemed tidier and more attractive to me. I laughed and realized my cock was getting hard again. I gently started stroking it with my soapy hands and then jumped and almost slipped in the bathtub as I heard my named called out from the hallway.

“Chris? Are you going to come out of there soon?”

“Oh, didn't I shut that window last night?” I replied.

“Funny boy, huh?”

He didn't say anymore and I got out and toweled myself off. It felt so good to rub my body. Every move was sensual, a real turn on as if I had new skin. My ass felt great to touch and when I dried through the hairs and slowly across my hole I almost passed out with pleasure. I now was fully hard again and almost ready to jerk off.

“Where are you in the house right now?” I called out.

“Back in the living room. Go get dressed and come on in here.”

I flew into the bedroom and grabbed some jeans and a white t-shirt. I had them on in seconds and went back into the bathroom to check my hair and face – my skin was now flawless, I happily noticed, and then made my way back up to the front of the apartment.

We were now in the same seats we were in early this morning and the sky outside was on the verge of night. I felt wonderful compared to last night.

For about 30 seconds we just looked at one another. I had questions but nothing seemed more important than meeting up with him again and just being with him. Sandor was looking at me with a slight smirk on his face.

“Well, I chose well, I do believe. I hope we can fuck again soon, this time properly? When you’re ready, that is?”

“Shit. You better believe it. If you want to I’d love that,” I replied, thinking I spoke a little too eagerly. But just thinking of that made my cock hard again in my jeans. It seemed all I wanted to do was fuck since I’d woken up.

“By the way, Chris, are you hungry yet?”

As he asked me this simple question, my stomach lurched and I went from being so completely aware of needing food to feeling slightly nauseous. I leaned forward and nodded my head vigorously to him. An exquisite pain started running through my upper mouth and teeth. My eye-teeth began to throb, to pulsate. I knew I was about to find out the complete truth about my turning.

“Okay, I told you last night you don’t drink blood, and that’s true. I now want to tell you what you do eat and drink. You will still like some foods from your past, mostly fruits. This not only allows you to go out and eat with your friends but it gives you enzymes and minerals you need to live along with the main source of your food supply.

Before he said it I could smell them. Sandor pointed toward the dining room table and there was one of my large bowls full of grapes, peaches and apples. I was eating into them before he’d lowered his arm.

“You won’t like citrus, but you can eat tomatoes from time to time as they’re part of the fruit world.”

I brought an apple back with me after grabbing a paper towel and sat back in my chair. Thankfully my stomach was settling down. I had so many questions still and as I bit into it, Sandor replied to my thoughts.

“You must have noticed by now that your cum is clear?” We looked at each other. He went on.

“The fruit gives you this and after it’s mixed with other fluids it gets stored in your balls for when you want to ejaculate. It’s usually a very pleasant taste, which I’m sure you also know by now.”

“Do I still piss and take a shit?” I asked, ignoring his smirk.

“Yes, because you need water and will want beer and alcohol just like humans plus the fiber of the fruit has to be expelled as well.” He felt my anxiety.

“Let me continue, Chris. We are going to have to go out later tonight so I want to get across everything about what’s happened and what’s going to happen. You can ask me as many questions as you like, just let me tell you the answers to the obvious ones I know you want answers for right now and we can go from there.”

I interjected, “I can still breathe and I notice I can still blink. I thought we were dead, vampires are dead, they don’t breathe or blink coz they can’t.” I was rushing ahead again, getting confused and stressed.

“Yes, we retain much that is human physiologically. We are a hybrid, part vamp, part human, we have a foot in both worlds. You need to slow down now and breathe for me.”

He stood up and turned on a couple of lights. Again, as my heart was calming down, I couldn’t help but stare at him. He was more animal than human. He was in blue jeans again, boots, and a big leather belt with a large brass buckle pulled down over the top of his

impressive crotch. He'd tucked his plaid shirt into his jeans and it emphasized the size and thickness of his arms, shoulders and chest. My eyes could count the number of hairs on his chest where he'd left a couple of buttons undone. He looked like he'd just pulled all his gear right out of the washing machine and climbed straight into them. He was so self-assured which made him completely hot. My moist cock was being badly bent in my jeans.

“There's a reason you want sex so much right now.”

I squirmed in the chair. “Does it seem so obvious?” I thought. I couldn't take my eyes off of him.

“Chris, you need to feed to live and it has to happen tonight, otherwise you will suffer terrible pains and if it wasn't for some fruit during the next day, possibly die.”

I went cold and immediately began to lose my hard-on. I leaned forward now, again with my complete attention on his words.

“You've been given an enormous gift that's not given out lightly and somehow we always work it out to give it to men who can handle it over time. Your life has changed, you know it, you feel it, and now you have to create yourself in a way that's going to work for you as well as for all of us. It's a sacred trust. You must, and will never tell anyone about your new life and status. If you do, that person will die. We will know eventually and their life will be forfeited. Do you understand me?”

I nodded slowly. He looked at me hard for a moment then proceeded.

“You can live a fairly normal life. You almost immediately understand what to do. Gay vamps can live in sunlight. We don't want to lie out in the sun for long but you can walk out in a bathing suit when you're with friends on a holiday. However, you will always find yourself moving into the shade after a few minutes. This is one

of the reasons our blood cousins don't like us much. They're jealous that we have this privilege as they can only become active at night and need to 'sit out' the daylight hours. That's why many of them are subway workers, librarians, researchers and so on."

Sandor was walking up and down in front of my fireplace acting out his teaching role. He continued to look amazingly hot as he did this but I didn't miss a word he was telling me. I was riveted and yet so turned on at the same time.

"You'll develop a story about what you eat and when. It actually gets easy. And I see you are quite a sociable guy and have a few very good friends. None of that has to change. You can have normal sex with other men as well." He looked at me briefly and then went on. "So, let's get down to what you must do to keep this new world afloat!" He smiled and sat down again opposite me.

"The bottom line is, you find a guy who wants to have sex with you. You take him to a quiet place and you go down on him. That's it." He smiled again at the puzzled look on my face. "All right, there's more to it than that of course, but you'll discover all of this as you arrive at that moment. It's better this way."

I began to get nervous again and couldn't understand why my jaw and the upper part of my mouth were beginning to throb harder than before.

Part of my old fading brain, was like, "What the fuck!" But my new self was seeing myself cock-deep getting the sustenance I knew I needed in every part of my now aching body. I was hungry in a totally new way. Instinctively I could "see" myself doing this act.

"Chris, this first time tonight is important and you must stay calm. You are now much stronger than our human brethren and your hunger can make you impatient. Fortunately, again, like all vampires, you have the added power of persuasion. When you lock your eyes

onto the guy you want, he'll do what you want and it's always best to tell him as soon as you can that you want to give him a blowjob. He'll readily comply and feel completely natural about giving himself up to you. Your actual feeding is over within half a minute and he'll come fast."

"There are times when you just want sex and that will come after you've fed and are sated. You may want it later that night, but you rarely want to have it with the guy you've fed from. It sounds bizarre, but once a body has been used for food you don't want to go back there. The surge to your body after you feed is amazing and you will want to enjoy what it brings you."

"Living in a major city is great," continued Sandor, "because your feeding is steady, there's a rhythm to it. Sometimes you'll take someone early so you are able to go out to dinner with your friends and really enjoy the night and just party."

"How often do I have to do this, this feed I mean?"

"Usually every third day. The life force in you beats strong until the evening of the third night and then you have to go out. As I said, when you know you have a steady supply of men you're fine and can live a normal life. It's only when you're trapped and can't get to a cock in time that life becomes hard."

He looked away for a minute lost in the past and somehow I knew he had suffered, been deprived and had come very close to death himself.

He turned back again continuing his instructions. "You can feed the next night or the following night. You may meet a guy whose balls hold juice you may want in that moment. You must have it! Then, go ahead, feed, but remember, if you get greedy or lose what I like to call our 'rhythm of life', then your energy can overload and you can become manic causing those around to get worried. You might expose yourself."

“Oh, one more thing. When you do have casual sex, sex for fun, you cannot risk going down on the guy for pure pleasure, ever! You can fuck or get fucked, you can have your cock sucked but you must never suck a cock for pure pleasure. It doesn't work that way because the animal in you will take over and you will feed from him. He'll love it of course!”

He shrugged and made it quickly clear that if this was a guy I liked and wanted to have in my life for a while, and I did this, then I would sadly lose interest in him by the next day.

Throughout this extraordinary education I was battling with my body. I had a still voice in my head that was the survival and adult part of me, but my body and emotions had minds of their own. I was beginning to writhe inside. My cock was as hard as it could be in my jeans. I was glad I'd not worn briefs when I got dressed, so I could slide it up when I moved to get comfortable in the chair. I wanted Sandor so much and waves of lust kept coming as I listened to him tell me how my life would be in the foreseeable future.

I knew he knew what I was going through and he tried to keep the explanations light enough to help me work with the changes taking place in my new life.

“I know you want to fuck right now, but its more that you need to feed. That's what's driving you. If you try to have sex right now with me or anyone, you could hurt us, your drive to live will take over and you won't stop until that happens and you'll make a mess of everything.”

I nodded again and stood up in anticipation.

“So, don't you think its time we went out?” Sandor suggested, watching me stand.

I was in my socks and boots and had grabbed my bomber jacket from the closet before he was on the landing.

“Down, cowboy,” he laughed grabbing me around the shoulders. “You have to slow it all down and walk normally when you hit the street. Your impulses will make you move faster and you don’t want to be seen sprinting quicker than any man has ever done on the planet before.”

I nodded in earnest and bound down the stairs. I felt like a wolf puppy about to be let out to hunt with the pack for the first time.

CHAPTER 4

As we walked up 14th Street to Market, I was briefly overwhelmed by the sounds of the streetcars, the traffic itself and the voices carrying over and from all directions of the streets that meet at the corner of Market, Church and 14th streets. It was Sunday night and people were going out to dinner or coming back into San Francisco from the country or from over the Bay Bridge from Berkeley and Oakland.

My sight was keener too, almost telescopic. I could pick out the crotches of two men, walking arm in arm down Market near Noe Street and felt a strong tug as I fixed my attention on them. A woman was yelling at some old man near to them and I could hear and see what was happening. It was a domestic. He was her partner and had left the kids alone for too long when she'd had to go out. The blood was up and pumping through her veins. I could see the veins clearly on her neck as she strained to get her anger and guilt across to him. Some of this information seemed unnecessary and I tried to block it out.

“You’ll get used to all of this by the time you hit Castro Street. Don’t worry it will all fall into place in a few minutes. Your new brain and body will have it sorted out soon.”

He smiled at me as we walked comfortably together up the street.

We swung down past the Twin Peaks bar onto Castro Street and walked past the Castro Theatre. There was a crowd that had just come out from a movie and I noticed, as I passed guys milling now outside on the curb, I was getting intensely cruised. I could feel the desire and lust in a new way as if their eyes and mine now had another level of communication.

I briefly tapped into one hot guy and he jerked his head around to follow me and to see where Sandor and I were going.

Man, I was excited, and nervous! Was this real or was I in some bizarre dream that was so incredibly lifelike I just couldn't distinguish the difference?

Sandor grabbed my arm again and we quickly moved across the street and I could see he was leading me into Toad Hall. I hadn't been in there for a couple of weeks and it was the hottest men's bar on the street.

He'd been right. As we entered the bar and began to push ourselves into the now heaving crowd of men my senses were settled and I could see and hear in a completely new way. It was like it used to be, but 1,000 times better. And as Sandor, who was in front of me, turned to watch me enter the bar, I realized with great pleasure we were talking but not using our mouths.

“Pretty cool, huh?”

“Shit man, this gets better and better.”

As I actually stepped completely inside I was hit by the intense, intoxicating groin smell of 60 men. It was truly extraordinary and I could see Sandor laughing at me as we tried to get near to the pool table end of the bar. Guys moved away from us and we were able to lean on the bar and actually sit on two wooden bar stools that had just been vacated.

“You did that didn’t you, Sandor?”

He was finishing ordering two beers and stood smiling at me.

“Well, its rarely hurtful and I want you to be able to sit in a spot where you can choose your first man from comfort.”

He gave me a mock bow, which I just caught as my attention started to move around the timber-clad room and across the faces and bodies of so many men. Half of them looked at both Sandor and me and I didn’t shrink from letting it happen. Something powerful, new and strong was melding with my personality; it had always been there, I realized this now, but it also compelled me down a pathway I had to embrace if I was to survive into the future.

If it had been the old Chris, yesterday’s Chris, I would have played the cruising game – look, look away, look back, all that silly game playing. Now I just stared full-face because now I knew I wanted to have, and keep, the new life I’d been given. And I knew I needed to meet one of these men and slide my mouth and throat down on his sweet cock and find the prize that would keep it all possible.

There was a big guy, similar to Sandor in looks and attitude. He was talking intensely to two younger blond guys one of whom was obviously very hot for him, the other guy with the mustache seemed bored. He’d just looked at his watch. As I was waiting for this big sexy man to turn and see me, I realized it was after 9 pm and I had to teach in the morning and still had papers to mark. How absurd this moment of normality seemed right now as I strained gently to will him to turn. The blonds saw me staring, looked over and then he did as well. I locked eyes on him.

Within 20 seconds he excused himself and strolled over to say hi. The eager, pretty blond boy would have to wait.

He was hot, he knew it and knew I wasn’t going to rebut his advances.

I could hear Sandor, who'd turned away from me now say, "Nice choice, good sized package and loves to get that cock sucked." I quickly wondered how he knew that.

"Hi my name's Richard." He smiled a brilliant set of teeth. He had longish, slightly receding black hair with a little white at the temples, a beautiful set of lips and a naturally magnificent physique.

His eyes were dark brown with thick lashes under great well-shaped eyebrows. I knew I wanted my first guy to be special and I was thrilled he'd decided to come out this night and be my first feed.

"I'm Chris and I'm only in here for one beer as I've got to get up and teach in the morning so I'm off in a couple of minutes."

"Well now, that's a real pity," he drawled. "It'd be great to hook up with you."

"What about we go find somewhere close by and I blow you and see where we go from there?"

My crotch was heaving looking at this magnificent man and I could see his left hand quickly adjust his cock in his Levi's. I could already taste that cock in my mouth and welcomed that sweet cum.

He nodded slowly and putting his Coors to his lips drained the bottle and said, "I'm crashing at a friend's nearby on 19th. Let's go there, okay?"

I turned and put my unfinished beer on the bar and heard Sandor tell me he'd meet me back at the apartment in a couple of hours and to take my time, let my body do the work for me. "Don't rush it!" he emphasized.

We left the bar and I felt and smelled the chemicals in several of the guys as they watched me leave. Richard was whistling as we hit the street. He was a confident dude obviously used to getting his own way. We were around the same age but I knew I looked a lot younger

– I always had – and I saw he was a little nervous. He talked amiably for the 10 minutes it took us to reach his place. I nodded, smiled and answered his questions with as little information as possible.

He was setting out to get to know me. I knew it wasn't going to happen and he'd have a vague memory of me after I'd left. If and when we saw each other again, he'd not put me together with the guy who'd given him the best blowjob of his life. Sandor hadn't told me this bit of information but I knew it was true as we hit 19th. My mouth ached and I had a brief moment of panic as he opened the door of his friend's house.

Once in his bedroom he ripped off his t-shirt and stood in the middle of the room smiling at me. I moved to him and started to kiss his strong, full lips. I felt my eye-teeth extend. All of this was instinctive. It wasn't painful at all. Through an exquisite sensation I felt the needle in my right tooth push out into his mouth, prick, and let out a small amount of sedative. We kissed for about a minute standing tight against each other. I knew he wanted to flip me onto the bed but I stayed standing enjoying the sensation of exploring this man's mouth and tongue.

I started smelling and licking his hairy armpits, then down his chest teasing his hard nipples. I was on fire. As I got closer to his belt buckle and jeans I started to smell his crotch. I knew he didn't have underwear on and I would have his delicious cock in my mouth in seconds. He grunted and slid his hands in and quickly undid his belt and top button. I grabbed the sides of his jeans, pulled them down and there it was.

A glorious fat, eight inches with a great shaped pink-brown head. The uncut cock had a nice upward bend to it just begging to be sucked. My mouth opened, I felt something change in my throat and I slid down to the base of his cock with joyous ease. He groaned and his body leaned back at his hips to let me have his cock in full

submission. I held the back of his legs as I fixed onto the base and then I felt them – two tiny needles through my eye teeth plunge into him to do their glorious tasks as he became almost rigid in my hands. The right needle anesthetized him and the left went on a journey to his balls. I felt his sperm start to slide up and mix with his semen and a small amount of vital blood which I knew I needed as well.

Richard's hot semen then hit the back of my throat, pulsing out his fat load with massive groans into the night air. The needles were back in my teeth and I was sucking on him hard. I realized I got my cock out and was now cumming hard myself onto his bedroom floor.

As his three shots of cum hit my brain I knew I finally found everything I'd really ever wanted out of this life. My past took on meaning and purpose and I saw the reasons why I had gone through the things that had happened to me at school, at home, when I lived and worked at the boy's school, and why I had to leave. Was this preordained or simply a lucky outcome?

I came off of him and released him from my hold. He fell full force back onto the bed, now splayed out, his hairy thighs wide, thick dick off to one side, with the lower part of his legs still in his jeans and boots. I quickly covered him with a duvet from the floor, listened carefully for others who might be disturbed in the house, and let myself out and made for the street.

I turned instinctively right toward Dolores Park. There would be very few people on this way home and I had a little time before meeting up with my Maker to process what had just happened.

I was elated and yet at such a profound place of peace – whole and flying without leaving the ground. I slowed myself down and shoved my hands into my jacket. I'd never felt like this. It was more than being on drugs, that comparison was cheap, this was something I'd help choose, a fact I knew deep within me, which must have been the case when Sandor found me.

This was the aftermath of my first feed. With my blood soaring through my body, I was as high as a kite – I knew that – and also that I had a brain leaning into the animal in me in a way I’d never fully realized. I was alert to any danger, especially as I wasn’t fully human anymore and had all humankind against me too!

Why wasn’t I upset with Sandor, this man who had the audacity to come into my life and change me without my direct say so? Sandor must have watched me for a while through the months before he turned me. When I met him the night I became immortal, I knew I’d seen him around the Castro and down in the Folsom Street bars. I think I’d even mentioned him to my good friend Scott one night when we were leaving The Ambush. I remember a beautiful, big guy in the shadows of the back area leading to the toilets watching us. I could have gone back but Scott was desperate to go to a new bar that just opened up and I missed seeing if this hunk had wanted to go home with me. The reason he chose me lay in my past and this information was somehow being transferred from me to him.

As I turned up past the Dolores Mission I began to feel another non-mortal presence. I stopped and let my new senses guide me. He, “It”, wasn’t on the street but I could hear short, slow breathing and I knew I was being watched. I didn’t sense malevolence, not completely, but there was restrained violence as I was assessed. I caught a musky, male smell that reminded me of someone and then, as quickly as it came, it all disappeared.

I came into my apartment and there was Sandor smiling at me from the couch. I smelled him immediately and knew he’d fed as well. I stood in the hallway entrance to the room and burst out laughing. He joined in and I eventually had to struggle to the armchair and sit.

“Why would anyone want to live any other way, Sandor?” I asked in amazement to the room, my arms wide out from me.

“I know, it’s ridiculous, isn’t it? You not only get to suck cock, but to have a meal at the same time!”

We both burst out laughing again and it took a while to stop.

“Chris, we have to keep talking now as you go out into the world tomorrow and you need to understand a few things. It’s not that I actually need to teach you, your intuition is such now, that you’ll instinctively ‘save’ yourself from exposure to friends and colleagues. It’s more about getting the rhythm of your new life established.”

He sat back on the sofa and put his long arms out along the back of it. This pulled his blue t-shirt up and I could see the beautiful hair trail just below his belly button.

“You know that you never have to sleep again but when you’re with a guy you like, or you’re out in the Redwoods camping with friends, something like that, you can put yourself into a trance. It looks like you’re asleep, it’s just that you’re present. I mean, fully alert! You’ll always want to be! It just makes it easy for whomever you’re with.”

“Why would I always have to be ‘fully alert?’”

He turned his head and looked out into the night. It was coming close to midnight and through a split in the buildings we both saw a waning moon.

“Bears. Mountain Lions. Werewolves....” he trailed off, a smile on his face.

“Oh God, please don’t tell me there are any of those!” I shouted, laughing.

“There were, in Europe a thousand years ago. It was a wolf hybrid and they were dealt with pretty quickly. No, it’s really to protect your friends from our cousins.”

“Shit, of course, I hadn’t thought of that,” I exclaimed sitting forward. I was rubbing my chin. The sensation in the top of my mouth was still exquisite.

“Now I know there are vamps who want to kill people and, or drink their blood, I’ll need to watch out for my friends even more.”

I sat forward. “Sandor, I felt a presence, a ‘someone’ near me tonight from over the wall in the Mission grounds as I was coming up the street to meet up with you.”

He leaned forward as well, looking at me intensely. “Tell me everything you heard, saw and sensed.”

And I did.

He leaned back again and was lost in thought.

“They couldn’t have found out who you were that quickly, could they?” he was asking himself. He stood and looked out of the window scanning the street.

“What do you mean found out?” I questioned.

“When a human is turned within let’s say, a 30 or 40 mile radius, all vampires feel it for a brief moment. It’s that simple. Some of them want to find out who the new one is, if the newbie can be corrupted, played with, brought into a different coven, that sort of thing.

Of course, when the blood takers find out it’s a gay turning they tend to lose interest. There are a few friendships inter-species but it’s not often. I know some of them, it’s important to all of our survival to have a dialogue and one or two of us are actually in charge of San Francisco, vamps who others turn to for advice or need, or if laws get broken.”

“This vamp – I’m sure it was one - had a massive presence. I found the experience chilling even though I was so high!”

“I’m not sure who it was, Chris, although I could speculate. Be aware if you smell or feel him near you again sense who it is. It might just be the curiosity of a blood taker who was near, but what I find disturbing is that this happened at the site of my turning you. Why there? I don’t get why you would be tracked so assiduously.”

Sandor continued to explain, “Chris, the thing is, your blood and sperm have a very special smell. It’s part of the reason I had to turn you! I almost couldn’t stop myself, especially after I first came across you one night as you were walking up to your friend’s house on Hartford Street. I still needed to vet you over time, but it was hard.”

He laughed then put his hands on his hips as he looked down at me with real affection. I was falling in love with this man. I knew it in my core. I wanted to continue to have sex with him too. What was apparent, as I listened to him talk, was that each of us as vampires really weren’t satisfied with just one being. Affection could be real with someone and could be sustained for a while, but simply the nature of feeding and wanting men meant a certain solitariness that was more comfortable than anything else. “How did I know all this?” I quickly thought.

“You were lucky a blood taker hadn’t found you already. Actually, I’m surprised it hadn’t happened to you sooner. It seems to me you may have had a fairy god vampire watching over you when you first entered San Francisco that’s kept them away from you.” We both smiled, glad we’d found each other first.

“You have papers to mark, right? I should go?”

It was still a question. He was looking at me now through slightly hooded eyes. I started to vibrate.

“You mean you’d like to stay and have invited, real, sex with me now?” I slowly asked him, feeling a movement begin in my feet and snake its way up into my hard-on. I could barely keep myself from standing, my jeans were now straining against my groin.

Sandor shot past me and I heard him whisper, “Bedroom”.

I was immediately in the doorway and found him sitting on the edge of my bed. He stripped off his T and pulled off his boots and jeans. I stripped as well and, marveling again at how hard and thick my dripping cock was, I went to him.

“You’re truly beautiful, Chris.”

I stood in front of him and allowed him to look me over. His body was much the same, full and muscular and the black hair on his chest had thick whirls of patterns that drove me crazy.

He grabbed me around my hard ass with both hands and drew my cock into his mouth, moving his tongue gently around the cock head, up and down the shaft, then taking the whole dick in his mouth he began to suck it slowly. There was no anesthetic this time, no change in his throat, I wasn’t “made” rigid. It was just two beings beginning to have an incredible sex session.

My cock felt new. As his mouth went up and down, nerves came into play that sounded like they were singing! My body, heart and mind were moving together with his mouth. It was fucking amazing. His hands cupped my balls and everything moved down there and rioted as my balls were gently pulled and pushed around. I was looking at the ceiling and knew I needed to lie down or I was going to fall down!

I pulled gently away and jumped onto the mattress past him and then took him in my arms. We began to kiss and again my head exploded with new sensations. I felt his pleasure along with mine and anywhere our bodies touched it was an immediate sensation of fire.

I wanted Sandor so much and found I wanted to fuck him so I pushed his long, hairy legs up onto my shoulders, grabbed my cock and let my immense precum tease his ass. I slid my hand up and down my hard shaft and moved it down past his meaty balls and

as he arched up briefly, looking up at me, his deep brown eyes now watching me, I pushed at his hole until he opened for me and I slid into him.

We both grunted hard and I pulled out slightly and again played at the mouth of his fuckable butt for a few moments, and then looking right at him I pushed straight in and his mouth opened, his head went back and he began to groan hard.

I'd never felt the prostate properly in a man's body before and I realized I could feel everything inside Sandor. I hunkered in close, pulling my thighs up to his backside and began to move quicker and deeper each time. My cock represented all of me. I was fucking him with every part of myself. The head of my dick felt massive and it seemed to have a mind of its own. My pubic bones couldn't push me in any deeper as I felt my cock grow but Sandor willed it deeper into his body. I was stunned and suddenly all of me began to explode. It came through me fat and hard, like a dam bursting. I started to pump hot liquid through me into his beautiful ass and I called out. Sandor looked up at me in rapture and shot multiple loads all over his stomach and hairy chest.

"Well, that's something that doesn't happen to me very often," I heard him say, after I'd fallen back next to him.

"I'm stronger now, Sandor!" I hit my chest to emphasize the point. I looked quickly across at him to see if he understood what I meant.

"Go on," he said with a bemused look on his face.

"I know I'm still gay. I like men. My being isn't attracted to women but, if I'm sensing my 'changes' correctly, I could happily sleep with one if the opportunity was right? Does that make sense?"

"Yes, anything else?"

He was lying looking up at the ceiling, hands behind his head. “Fuck man, he’s so handsome,” I thought looking at his profile. I was leaning propped up on one elbow lying next to him looking at him.

“When I was a gay human I was scared a lot and ashamed and always felt I had to kowtow to the straight world. Now I don’t feel that way. It’s that simple.”

I fell back on the pillow and our elbows touched. We stayed like that in comfortable silence for quite some time. Then Sandor started to tell me about our purpose and how it would define everything.

“There aren’t tens of thousands of gay vamps in the world. No one knows for sure how many of us exist but the consensus is about 5,000 globally. We are in every country in the world, mostly in plain sight, but sometimes not.

“The circumstances have to be just right for a mature gay vampire to turn a gay mortal into one. And, by the way, this is the same for Lesbian vampires – the draining is somewhat similar but obviously different.”

“When someone like me gets an inkling, a feeling, then an actual smell for a candidate, I have to take at least six months to see if this is the right life for him. What every Master is looking for is a man who can become almost perfectly balanced in who he is after he’s made. It doesn’t always work.”

He turned to look at me and saw my worried face, then turned back to look at the ceiling and smiled.

Confused, I asked, “What do you mean?” I was hanging on every word and as each word made its way into my brain, my knowledge of who I was, deepened. I realized also that Sandor’s voice changed and I felt as if we were in an echo chamber and he was about 30 feet away from me.

“When I turned you I gave you your outer skin, your gay vampire skin: your toughness, your abilities, the way to survive. This melds with your physical body and becomes one. But then it’s you yourself, because of the chemical and emotional makeup you’ve brought to this life that interacts also with my exchange and forms a new ‘body’ – a new layer created deeper. It becomes this critical buffer between the human world and the darker animal world that is in the third layer of your being that would have come straight to the surface had you been turned by a blood taker.”

“When vampire blood is forced into the system of a human it explodes into the vascular system causing immense pain that can go on for hours and a willful, strong animal is transferred and takes over. It can be controlled of course, but the fledgling vampire has to almost secretly retain part of the past and lock it away. Sadly most who get bitten forget almost immediately who they were and go right into the night life.”

“I feel sorry for them,” I said and started to play with the hair on his beautiful chest.

CHAPTER 5

After Sandor left I got out my students' work and began to mark papers. I'd always been conscientious but now, wow! I was completely lost in their work and in my desire for them to do well. I filled up margins with comments and ideas for follow up, finishing all this in an hour, a job that would have usually taken me a full evening to get through. I was pleased and truly satisfied.

I realized as I packed everything up into my bag I didn't need to look at a clock or my watch any more. I knew the time all the time! I "knew" this as I dressed to leave but I still put my watch on.

I caught the M trolley to work and found the world new but the same, all at once. I had to slow down and be more patient as I had this massive desire to get to school and start teaching. I knew I could have gotten there faster if I'd run but that would have looked stupid, and I had to stop smiling to myself as I saw the buildings coming up.

In the teachers common room a few of them looked at me quizzically. My best friend at school, Howard Reid, came up and said, "Why are you so bouncy? Cut it out. It's way too early."

"I've taken up running early in the mornings now three days a week, so I'm feeling pumped." Sandor was right it was so easy to lie. "Look, I want to get to my first group and get some stuff up on the board, what about lunch after second classes?"

Howard nodded, lighting his pipe and walked away telling anyone who'd listen that I'd lost it.

And, that's how it went.

The students were silent, the rustle of papers the only noise for about five minutes. I sat up at the front of the lecture hall and waited.

"Mr. Renshaw, did you do anything else on the weekend?" asked Sandy Wellington. He'd been discussing the notes I'd written for him with two of the others around him and was cockily leaning back, his arm around his girlfriend Jane's seat. She was staring straight at my crotch.

"That's right. We think you need to get a life," called out another happily bewildered student and we all burst out laughing.

Being with my friends was another matter. My best friend was Scott whom I'd met on Castro Street within weeks of arriving. I'd been to Cliff's Hardware Store and he was waiting behind me at the register and heard my accent. He said something clever and funny about it, we got talking, and agreed to meet at the Spaghetti Factory that night for dinner. We decided over meatballs and salad we weren't trying to pick each other up and started a great, new friendship.

Scott was a lawyer and worked downtown on Sutter Street. He was half an inch shorter than me with sandy blond hair and collegiate good looks: blue eyes, a strong jaw and a big smile. He reminded me of those young first-time congressmen from the Midwest.

He just began a relationship with a guy, Jeff, who was working at The Presidio in Army Administration and invited me over to Jeff's house for a party that next Saturday night.

Jeff had two other roommates in a funky old Victorian he bought on Hartford Street just off of Castro up 18th Street and they were helping to fix it up. He'd just asked Scott to move in as well.

The party was amazing. I was lucky to eventually meet the guys who lived there but if I'd been asked to remember names the next day, it would have been a push. And, so began a wonderful friendship with a new group of men and their friends who I now cherish.

However, I knew there could be problems. There's nothing like a group of queens to pick apart changes to another man's face and body! I decided to avoid them all as much as possible for the next few weeks and came up with plausible reasons not to come over or go out with them to the bars or baths. I spoke to Scott on the phone almost every day and told him I was working out more at the gym with a real instructor and was embroiled in staff changes that were demanding almost seven days of my time. I knew this would get back to the guys and I'd have some real basis for my lies when I finally did go over to the house.

July 4th was the holiday I made my debut at the Hartford house. I was continuing to change in my face and was more buffed than ever. There was so much happening and changing in The City in those early, heady days and most of the roommates and their friends were in their mid to late 20's and weeks seemed like months to them.

I made sure I met Scott out a few nights before so he could see I'd put on some weight and that my teeth were straightened, but even his mouth dropped when I came up the stairs and entered the gathering in the late sunny morning of '73.

I wore a tank top with an open plaid shirt, shorts and boots with white ankle socks and carried in two large Safeway bags full of crushed ice and limes.

"Wow, Chris, you're even hotter than ever!" exclaimed John, one of the housemates.

He came down the stairs in a red kimono over loose fitting, purple pants he'd probably bought on Haight Street. He squeezed

my biceps that hardly made a dint. I blushed and he whispered in my ear, "Anytime my friend, you know where my bedroom is" and sashayed down the hall into the kitchen.

Everyone was either cooking or making drinks, the whirring of the blender at full force. Another roommate, Brian, took the bags from me and said, "Have you gotten taller?" I mumbled something about the thick soles on my boots and got through the throng out onto the balcony where I had seen Scott go.

I also realized I had to get some fresh air. So many guys, with the intoxicating smell of so many cocks and balls in one room, hit me hard and I knew exactly who I would suck off if I had the chance. Two or three of these men's ball juice smelled so sweet! My senses were on high alert and I fought for about five seconds not to simply levitate.

Scott was on the balcony standing in the sun with Jeff talking arm in arm with a hot, hairy blond called Gary. They diligently checked me out, as did most of the guests.

"Well, you've gone red my friend and it's not from the sun," commented Scott, leaning in for a peck on the cheek. "Okay all, settle down," he shouted. "He's been hitting the gym and some beauty parlor and you can have a piece of him later in the orgy room."

"Alright, knock it off, Scott," I half pleaded, smiling nervously at him.

"How much weight, have you put on, Chris?" asked Jeff. "I'd like to get your trainer. By the way this is Gary."

"Hey," I said looking straight into his eyes. He nodded, understood my message and smiled. "Whose for another drink?" he asked and went off to get us all refills.

“Well, someone was getting a big hard-on,” said Scott, his eyes following Gary’s ass.

“You’re a bad, bad man,” I replied noting the same scrumptious ass and began to settle down as more people arrived and Bette Midler’s voice got louder.

“Okay,” I thought. “You can do this!”

I was looking out over the rooftops of the Castro district on into downtown. I was thrilled to be living in this city and to have the fortunate life I had. I was 32 forever – I pushed the thoughts of me not showing my age as the years rolled on away for the time being – confident for the first time in my life and now, part of a new movement that was taking off around the world. Gay liberation, the women’s movement and the fight for racial equality were gaining strength and I loved being in one the epicenters of this massive shout out to the world.

Of course, I took the hairy blond home later and completely wrecked his ass.

CHAPTER 6

I had two lives now, and as I was in a city that partied hard I was able to navigate an extraordinary life.

Scott and Jeff had a comfortable understanding that at least on one night of the weekend, Scott could go out with me, go wherever we wanted to go and pretty much do whatever we liked. Jeff was wise, as San Francisco was turning into a sexual candy store and if you wanted to keep a partner, then you had to allow him to dip his hand into the candy jar alone once in a while. And, because Jeff was like this, Scott remained almost completely faithful. Tom, my former, great human love, had been possessive and told me late one winter's afternoon, he wouldn't know what to do with himself if I'd ever left him.

We hit the bars south of Market and often walked up and down Folsom Street looking at men or trying to find something new to do. The alleyways on the side streets and at the back of several of the bars were the places I found the men I needed to feed from.

Scott could be near me having sex with a guy and I could be close just getting up on my feet helping the guy I'd just blown stand still for a moment until he got over the best cock draining of his life. Sometimes, if it was late I'd fake being tired for Scott's sake so we could set off back to the Castro. I'd get out of his car, wave goodbye

and race on back to pick up the guy I really wanted to have fun with and whom I knew would be waiting for me. All I'd have to do was flick him a look and he'd be there when I slid back onto the bench next to him in Febe's or maybe at The Stud where we'd dance 'til closing.

I now had a lot of time to think and get used to my new powers. I could tune them up or down, depending on what I wanted or needed and with some this took practice.

I could hear whatever I wanted to within a certain range. Very loud noises that were far away simply got amplified, like ambulance sirens. The great thing was I could cut out noises I didn't want to hear and could have the same level of sound I'd had as a human. This was essential for daytime living. If I wanted to focus in on a particular conversation, I just had to concentrate and there I was! I felt like Superman!

But, I didn't have x-ray eyes like him. I couldn't exactly fly like him either, but I moved just like the samurai I saw in the Japanese movies playing in a theatre off Grant Street in China Town. I could leap up and land on a fourth story roof with ease. I could move from treetop to treetop by just touching a branch and when I had to move fast I could almost get past what would be a human blur.

I could see further in the dark than mortals and I knew that was for protection. Plus if there was light, like a street light ahead of me, I could use that energy, bend it and see further if I needed to.

My strength was crazy and I had to watch it at the gym. I could have lifted anything in that funky old warehouse space. I simply used weights to keep in peak shape. In those early days gay men didn't have their own gyms. That came later. This was a straight dude's gym that sat off the Tenderloin around the corner from Polk Street. It was funky, fairly dirty and needed better equipment but it suited my purposes.

There were some very hot, straight Black and Latino men who made it their meeting ground. They were okay with a few of us white boys coming in, just not the obvious queens or white male business types. It was that continual, stupid level of inequality and cultural stereo-typing that pervaded American society, but it meant nothing to me now. And the thing that made it really fun and okay for me was that all I had to do was look a guy in the eyes, tell him what I wanted, and that was that. Had I still been human, they all would have made me nervous. I was left alone and respected.

A couple of them were incredibly sexy, especially a black guy named Jerome. He had a great bod and a delicious, thick long shaft he couldn't conceal in his shorts. He and I occasionally spotted each other, but only when his usual mates were not around. I didn't want to feed from him, I wanted to have sex with him. The inner part of me never let me coerce a man who normally wasn't attracted to me, so all I did whenever we worked out together, was let myself enjoy watching him.

Jerome was some serious eye candy with dark, smooth skin pulled over his great frame. His butt sat up high and his thick arms and thighs were his best features. I nearly drooled as he lay back down. I could smell his large hanging balls and easily see his expansive cock sitting up in his shorts as his legs straddled the bench. The thing he liked about me was that I pushed him to lift heavier weights. He didn't understand how I was able to get him to do it, and he'd never acknowledge it but he'd "find me" at least once a week to work out with him.

I couldn't read minds but I knew when danger was near. Instinctively I knew how important this was for me to survive as well. There was little real danger for me from any mortal, vamp or any lower animal form, but I could be exposed so it was a great tool to have in my supernatural box.

And, of course, there were all kinds of smells! This was absolutely amazing, but I had to dial it down most of the time. I don't think any human could have dealt with what I had to endure in those first few weeks. I wanted to stay open to as much as I could then, but smelling the gross odors of everyday planetary life was a big ask! The thing was, I wanted to practice smelling men and try and work out how to find the best balls to feed from.

So, I'd do it on the trams, at the university, at ball games at Candlestick Park and of course out in the nights on Castro and in the other gay haunts in The City.

It was Sandor one night at my place, who helped me adjust to the olfactory levels of intake.

"Close your right nostril with one of your right fingers and breathe for eight counts using only the left nostril. Hold it and then breathe out slowly counting to four. As you breathe in begin to separate the different odors, become aware of each one of them but don't give them any 'good or bad' recognition. That's it. Do this over the next few days for about 30 minutes and your being will settle down with it. At that point you can dial down at will and allow the smells you need and want to be at the fore." Sandor spoke in a kind of old-fashioned, European way and I loved it.

"It's great, thanks. I'm getting the hang of it," I replied smiling at him. "And, gee. I can just now smell the sweet, sweet ass of someone in my house. Who could that be?" Before he could answer I pounced on him almost ripping off his white t-shirt.

Flight and speed were immediate. I was clumsy at first, which was to be expected. If I became too excited and wanted to get something done or be somewhere fast, I'd have to check myself for overreach. Howard would tell me constantly at school to slow down. He smoked and ate too much and walking at his pace across the lawns or down the hallways was excruciating, but also good practice in learning patience.

And, of course, all of this helped me become a better teacher. I couldn't intrude in my students thinking but I knew acutely where they were in their studies and that let me know where I could best be of service. The classroom was my first great learning tool. Human nature, being what it was, had the spectrum of light to dark, the deepest fears and levels of cruelty, those who were pathological to those who exhibited innocence and goodness.

Most of these conditions weren't fully formed in these bright 18 to 20 year olds, yet among the 35 of them, secret desires were forming and starting to be lived out.

I could feel and smell the level of testosterone and estrogen in my classes and it didn't escape me how hot some of these young people were.

I knew who was gay and who was latent, and I definitely knew who wanted me, both guys and gals. Unfortunately it was a large percentage of them! For the first couple of months I wore a jockstrap to class. I couldn't afford to get a hard-on and it would have happened at some point as four or five of the young men were not only sexy but super delicious.

Two guys drove me particularly nuts: Sam, a dark-haired boy who looked a lot like James Dean, would always be in the front row and sit with his legs wide, radiating desire. He knew he had a nice package so he'd occasionally push it around quietly during class. I could smell his precum and while it was a great turn on, it was unsafe and unfair. He'd try to hold my gaze, it never happened – unless he asked a question – and eventually I asked him to stop behind to discuss his latest paper.

Looking him deep in the eyes I suggested he sit further back and really concentrate on his learning as it was obvious to me he was going to go on to do a PhD and make a prominent name for himself in American studies.

The other boy was a whole different ball game. Jamie was blond, smooth, milky-white skin, big body and classically Aryan. For a horrible second or two after I'd been turned and I was adjusting to my classes, I felt someone probing me. Did they know? It was only one person and the feeling went on and off over that first week. I took my time and day-by-day went around the lecture hall in the class until I found him. I quickly glanced into Jamie's face as I put his test paper in front of him and smiled. He quickly looked away and I could smell his massive desire for me mingled with something else, some kind of angry urge to hurt me. I was shocked to realize this about him.

Then I saw it. His wrist was bandaged and he was trying to hide it with a wide, woven, leather watch band.

It wasn't my responsibility to seek him out and attempt to help but it still worried me. I decided to tell Sandor and at least try to work out how this young man had noticed or knew anything about my new life.

"He doesn't know a thing. He's just reacting to what's happened to him," stated my mentor. "You're a vampire and the gay in you and him, is flipping the boy out, he doesn't know why yet, and a little bit of vamp blood wants something more from him that's cruel and violent." He always sat on the couch in the same place. I stood this time by the fireplace.

"He's been bitten hasn't he?" I asked. I knew it was true.

"Not exactly, no. A blood taker has used him for a feed and I would say more than once. You said he's a big boy and has a great smell about him? Well, I would suggest this young man has allowed himself to dabble in the nighttime world of vamp feeding. The neck would be too obvious for school, the wrist or inner thigh would be easier to hide. There's a real drug rush when it's happening. It's rare for someone so young to get himself involved in this situation, but the times they are a changin', right?"

I nodded, yet unsure of where he was going with this.

“The flower power movement opened up a real opportunity for vampires to get another strong hold on The City. The drugs – especially LSD – allowed a lot of misguided young people to be wooed and fooled and with so many kids flooding into the Haight, sleeping in the day became easier as did blood for money. There were two or three run down Victorians off the panhandle that were notorious lairs.”

Still thinking of Jamie, I said, “He has a heavy hunger in him for sex and probably violence. I didn’t feel it until I connected with him. Something in me attracts him and repels him.”

“Vamps who stupidly play rough and ready, let their own blood splash into their food, it doesn’t take more than a drop or two. It’s not enough to turn someone, especially when he or she is young with a strong immune system, but they still absorb traces that are unnatural and it’s perverting over time.”

He waved his hand in the air.

“So many of the crazed homeless you see around 5th and 6th streets with the human labels given them of schizophrenia or bipolar, are those who have been used by blood takers over the decades.

“Their minds and bodies have been slowly corrupted. You see them in vacant doorways where they sleep in the day wrapped up in blankets and newspapers and wake up around the end of the work day, desperately babbling, trying to get out of the long-term spell, trying to connect with the regular mortals rushing to get home. But after being mostly rejected, they end up slinking into the alleyways and the dark places to be fed on again until there is nothing left of them.”

“Jeezuz,” I said, “that’s horrible, Sandor! I don’t want that outcome for this kid. He’s got a good mind and is in the top 10 of his class. He could go on to do great things!”

Sandor just looked at me. “You said he has violence in him, right? Do you think it’s inherent or learned? How strong is it and why has he gotten himself involved with the vamp world? He obviously wants the high and I wonder what he does with his aggression after the vamps give him some of their juice? My sense is he isn’t as innocent as you want to believe him to be.”

I nodded slowly thinking about what I could do.

“How old is he?” I knew Sandor was assessing me.

“Just 20,” I replied.

“That’s good. A vampire in this town is not allowed to turn a mortal until they are at least 21 so you have some time before anything serious can happen to him.”

Looking surprised, I asked hopefully, “So, what can I do?”

“Absolutely nothing, Chris,” Sandor stated flatly. He got up to leave and warned me again as he started to go down the stairs.

“You’re not allowed to expose yourself to him in any way. And by the way, don’t think I haven’t felt you ruminating about letting your best friend Scott know more than he should. Don’t make that mistake, my boy! You’d hate me if anything happened to him, but you know the rules.”

I sullenly looked at his broad back as he left. “Don’t get lines on that pretty face now y’hear?” he laughed up at me and was gone.

CHAPTER 7

Halloween was special for most in San Francisco but especially important for gay people. It was a day and night for joyous expressions of new freedoms slowly won, but surely, being won through the numbers of gays pouring into The City and by the work tirelessly being carried out by heroic members of the community.

For one night, or hopefully over a weekend if the festive day and night coincided, anyone could express his or her hidden desires. And, of course, it gave vampires a night of rolling with as many people as they liked all over town. They could “fake” being vamps and “pretend” neck sucking in a bar, playing with their prey until later down an alley where the bite became real, the blood taken and a smear of saliva over the punctured holes made to help healing, along with the suggestion in the ear of the victim that it was all just a bit of fun that may have gone a little too far.

I'd been berated by my students for not making an effort to come to school in a costume. Many of them had come as historic figures along with a few Supermen and camp, fairy princesses. I lied and said staff had to remain neutral but was hooted down when a French professor walked by wearing a large witch's hat on her head.

I went up to the Hartford house around 8 pm to get ready with the boys to go out. I'd my usual meal of apples and pears – it was going into fall and it was the best fruit around. I was quite excited to go out tonight. We were going over to Polk Street first, hit the bars there and then come back to the Castro. Scott talked Jeff into driving to Folsom Street before we went back to our neighborhood, but the others still found that area too scary and were going to head straight home.

I had seen a few costumes on earlier revelers, some of them on people who'd worn them to work all day, so I was excited to see what everyone was going to wear later when they actually wanted to impress or flirt on the glittering streets of The City.

“Oh for god's sake, Chris, you're not in costume!” screamed John as I stepped into the hallway.

“Yes, I am! I decided to go as a gay body builder,” I said, lamely answering his accusation. I had on a new, tight navy-blue t-shirt with white and red gym shorts, white socks and black boots.

He was at the top of the first floor stairs looking directly down at me. He was in a spectacular multi-colored harem outfit with a fully made up face. As he moved down the stairs I heard bells jingling from both ankles. I looked guiltily up at him.

“Oh well, sweetie, as I adore you and will one day make you mine, you can go as the hottest man in San Francisco because nothing feminine is going to fit around those big, gorgeous hairy legs and arms!”

Brian's head appeared out of the bathroom yelling for help with makeup, and John making an exasperated face, turned and raced back upstairs.

Scott and Jeff were in the kitchen smoking dope, both wearing matching construction worker gear – torn Levi's shorts, open plaid

shirts over white tank tops, boots, white socks and hard hats they quickly put on when they saw me come in.

“What’d think, huh? Butch, right?”

“Well, yes on Jeff, maybe.”

“Shut up you overdeveloped man-bitch,” snorted Scott. He was passing me the joint knowing I didn’t do drugs anymore, but still liked to tease.

“Okay, you both look very manly and sexy and, of course, it will certainly be the hot look when we hit Folsom Street.”

I’d been thinking about what time we’d get down there as my feeding clock kept letting me know I had entered my third day around lunchtime that day and I had 12 hours to go before I got antsy.

Jeff put on Elton John and soon we were drinking gin and tonics – no lemon for me – and laughing about how fabulous San Francisco was and what delights and promises it all held for us at this time in our lives. The others finally joined us looking gorgeous as harem girls and we set off in two cars for Polk Street.

There must have been several thousand revelers by the time we walked down from Van Ness. We passed two very clever, cloth-wrapped mummies lying in a filthy doorway. They didn’t move, they just lay there, a terrific commitment to the Halloween spirit.

On Polk it was pure mayhem. There was TV star impersonators, dozens of drag queens, historical figures, politicians and characters from movies.

People were honking their car horns, young Latino guys from the Outer Mission calling out from cars at drunk queens trying to cross the street, some of it nice, some of it not. I could sense violence under the surface of the celebrations – not everyone liked the huge influx of gays into San Francisco.

All the bars were into overspill and most people had drinks with them out on the street. It was up to me to get us in. John kept pushing me ahead as he thought it was my weight and looks that got us inside, but it was my ability to auto-suggest that allowed us to squeeze through and find a spot. It was chaotic and the sex smell overpowering. Subconsciously, I knew mortals knew about sexual energy, especially on a night like tonight, but I could actually feel it.

I could feel balls move around in tight underwear and sense the sperm getting ready to blow. I could almost taste the cum and hear it pulse as it was being shot onto the floor three guys away from me where a guy pressed up against the wall of the bar had quietly given another guy a hand job. I laughed out loud and felt safe in this bar, so I let myself go and got into the chaotic fun around me.

Guys hit on me constantly and I put up a barrier of protection. Scott also fended them off letting me lean on the bar with he and Jeff between me and the rest of the body feast.

“Damn, Chris, I’m glad we’ve become friends through Scott. I’ve come to really like and admire you. I’m glad I don’t have to see you around and have to sigh like all – he threw an arm wide to show them to me – these other boys in San Francisco have to do.”

“Thank you, Jeff. I guess?” I laughed in his ear.

“I know you know, you’re good looking, but I don’t think you realize how much.”

I knew he was being bold with me because both he and Scott had dropped a Quaalude in the car coming over and also true that he liked me a lot and trusted me with Scott.

“Leave him alone, darlin’,” Scott said to Jeff. “You are only going to swell his beautiful head and its hard enough walking into a bar anywhere in town with him where, no one, and I mean no one, is going to see me for a full minute!” Scott looked hurt at both of us. He was tapping me hard on the chest when he was saying this.

“I think the both of you are ready for some alpha male action down at Febe’s and the Ramrod, don’t you?” I asked. “It’s after 11 and you’re both going into work tomorrow, right?”

With that, I turned, waving to and telling John and Brian we were leaving and then I made my way out through the throng near the front of the bar letting my hands slide across some impressive Levi’s crotches along the way. I started to fight a massive hard-on by the time I hit the curb, and knew, I had about two hours before I’d be baying at the moon!

I demanded the keys from Jeff and got us down to Folsom Street and parked on Harrison. The streets were packed with leather and denim men. Thankfully, it wasn’t as loud as on Polk. I heard guys laughing and talking as well as the music pumping out of The Stud. My ears settled down as we made our way into the Ramrod.

We got three spaces along the long shelf opposite the bar and I could see two of the four, very hot bartenders in full leather looking straight at me, intently cruising me. I wanted cum now so bad! Jeff got us beers. We all fell quiet checking out the kind of guys we wanted to be around.

But then I knew something was different. The skin within me tightened, it began to vibrate, and my outer skin actually hardened. This hadn’t happened before, not like this. Occasionally, I’d found myself experiencing something slightly similar but it never seemed to last or to be this intense. Now, it was fully realized. Then, I saw them.

Two leather blood vampires, a black guy in full leather chaps, boots, military shirt, with a cap over a bearded face; the other dirty blond, thinner, but still a biggish dude, with tats up both arms wearing a tight, leather body harness. Both staring at me hard.

I was actually excited to see them there but I don't think they were by the way they were looking at me. Still I knew I'd eventually want to wander over and introduce myself. This was going to be a first for me. I knew I'd felt blood takers around me before and had been somewhat nervous because I was new. I didn't know that much about them, and had never had been in the same room with them.

This was all bubbling away in my head as I continued to talk with my guys – who I suddenly felt very protective of. Then to my complete surprise and horror I saw who'd just come out of the toilet and who'd slipped in between them. It was Jamie from school.

He looked older, of course, but he was still only 20. He had a leather vest on with a tank top underneath over his sculpted body and was in Levi's and boots. He looked young and hot and his smell was a major bother for me right at that moment. I had to feed soon!

He saw me and shrank into the shadows of their bodies for a second. I moved my head quickly so he didn't see my reaction and I saw him turn up to both vamps and whisper something. The three of them then all looked at me. I instinctively knew they were not going to expose me and now, I certainly wasn't going over to them to say hi.

Jamie put his beer up to let me know he'd seen me and I returned the gesture. Scott said, "Who dat cute young thang?"

"A guy from school who's in my history graduate program."

"Well, I don't know how you do it, my friend. I don't think I could keep my eyes on the chalk board with dudes like that sitting in front of me."

"You're right. It's damn hard, literally." We laughed.

We left and moved on to Febe's. The same body rush happened to me when we got inside and I could see two or three heads turn my way as we got drinks and found a place to stand. The smell of leather

and sweaty ball meat was driving me crazy and after one drink I told the guys I was going to go cruise by myself in the alleys and see about some fun before I went home.

I left them chatting with some guys they knew and made my way to Clementine Street and slipped into the shadows. I followed a guy I'd quietly spoken to while I was pissing in the trough in the toilet and he was waiting for me, his top button opened. Without hesitation, I sank down on his thick piece of muscle and slipped into his body with a huge inner sigh. I was on my knees eagerly going down on him, nearly delirious with want – the sheer size and magnificent smell of his just unzipped cock and balls, the knowledge I soon would be fed.

He was grunting hard and let a fat load go that had been waiting for me, and my head nearly burst open with joy when his sweet jizz hit my brain. I also blew hard all over the street letting every part of me feel the gift of life that had just been given to me. I got him back into his jeans and stood with him for a couple of minutes telling him to breathe slowly, then I was off home; Jamie's situation still fresh in my head. I was going to find those vamps again and get the full story.

CHAPTER 8

Of course Jamie and half the pupils I taught at State were not in the next day, but Jamie didn't come in for the rest of the week. On the following Monday he appeared and when I ran my eyes over him he studiously avoided me. He looked paler and I could see he'd lost a couple of pounds. I had Sandor's words in my head and was aware of consequences, but now I had to drive home my pretext – his age – to have a conversation with him.

I followed his scent after a late morning class and found him on a bench under an old Cyprus tree eating lunch.

“Jamie, may I talk to you?”

I startled him I know, and I meant to. I wanted to see his reaction: it was still that mixture of desire and misunderstood, teenage angst. He half got up and then sat down again in surrender to me and I took up a place at the end of the bench.

“Look at me will you?” I somewhat commanded, and he slowly turned his face to mine.

“It's no business of mine why you were out with those guys the other night, but the fact that you are 20 in a leather bar on Folsom Street does give me pause for concern.”

He dropped his lower lip, sat up, folded his big arms and perfected being sullen and said, “Yes, Mr. Renshaw. It isn’t your business.”

I paused watching his handsome young face contort slightly. He had minute beads of sweat starting at his hairline and his heart rate had gone up. I looked away for a moment and I heard him sigh with relief.

Turning back I said, “What does concern me is that you started the calendar year with high grades and truly insightful essays and now you’ve slumped to about 20th in the group and apparently, you’re not making some of your tutorials. Jamie, you have such great promise. I don’t want to see you fail.”

For a second his face took on a little panic and I could see this all truly mattered to him somewhere in the fog of his new addiction. I pushed on.

“If something, or someone, is bothering you, if I can help you in any way I want you to know you can come to me at any time. Any time!” I said emphatically.

“No one is bothering me,” he replied too quickly, and grabbed the remains of his sandwich abruptly standing up.

“Can I go now, please?”

“Of course you can, you’re a young adult and in charge of your own life. I just want to help you if you need it, that’s all.”

He fought to look away from me but I held his gaze for a few seconds more and then said quietly, “You can tell me anything and I will understand.” Then I looked down and he was off.

It was getting colder now not that this made any difference to me. All I had to do was dial up my body heat and I was fine. I did notice I had more tomatoes mixed with my fruit than in summer and this helped me feel more satisfied between feeds.

I developed a quick system for hunting by the fall season. I had Dolores Park three blocks away and there was always a guy or two looking for some action toward 19th Street and it made my life very easy.

As Thanksgiving approached I knew I'd have to talk to the boys more intensely about my new diet. I couldn't get out of the Thanksgiving dinner and so a couple of weeks before, when we sat around the dining room table, I got their undivided attention by telling them about this "hot three-way" I just had the night before.

I swept their eyes and started, "You need to be aware that all I have is fruit, fruit drinks, and fruit dishes and raw tomatoes and tomato juice. This is completely normal to you that this is my diet and so somehow these will appear on the table at Thanksgiving. You all know I'm a vegetarian so it's no big deal and that's what you'll tell your friends and family, okay?"

They all nodded slowly and I let them go. I then finished the very hot double blowjob story and all eyes stayed on me for a few seconds more. John slid his hand onto my knee and sighed.

Sandor had mysteriously gone away for a couple of months and I'd felt his absence. As December moved in and blustery, cold winds came off the Pacific and swept down Market Street, I knew he was back.

It was a Sunday evening and I was coming home from the Safeway on Church and Market streets and I saw two figures standing outside my apartment, waiting outside on the sidewalk. It was Sandor and a friend. I could feel and see his companion was also a vampire and I became very excited. Who was he? Did he live in The City?

"Hi, Chris." Sandor's strong, beautiful voice swept over me and we hugged. My cock thickened.

"This is Toby." I turned and looked at him full in the face and smiled.

He was a couple of inches smaller than me with finer features. He had a heart shaped angelic face, a sensual full mouth, perfect teeth and a mop of black hair that fell to his shoulders. I also saw steeliness in him that would surprise anyone who tried to take him on. I quickly saw a movie in my head of three boys from the Sunset District on Fillmore Street, stop their old Ford and jump out with baseball bats ready to give the “faggot” a lesson. Two were sent to the hospital and the other unsure of why he ended up with no pants and underwear trying to explain it to the cops.

“It was fun and they deserved it,” said Toby looking at me under insanely long black eyelashes. “Come on up, please,” I said opening the outer gate.

“I see you’ve shut your side window,” laughed Sandor.

“Well, now that I know you’re back, I’ll open it again.” I smiled at him as we climbed the stairs.

“This is very exciting,” I said as I put some fruit out on the living room table. “I’ve not met another person like me in The City and I’ve lots to ask about how you react to living here.” I was glancing off and on at Toby as I spoke. He sat at the other end of the couch and seemed to know why I had questions.

“I do live here, Chris, and I’ve seen you a couple of times around town.”

“It’s weird,” I said, “I’ve felt an odd presence now and again, but I guess that could have been from others too? Castro Street? And, was it on Polk on Halloween?”

“Yes definitely me on Polk. I was with the guy I’ve been seeing for this past year and he saw you first. He’s mortal. I’d felt you but it was Bill who spotted you. He thought you were insanely hot. I got us away onto the next block before you could pick me out.”

“Why, Toby? Why didn’t you come say hi?”

Toby looked at Sandor who’d leaned forward ready to jump into the explanation.

“Chris, for the first six to eight months no one is allowed to approach you. As I told you back at the end of winter, and I know I said this as a general topic, but you have to prove to yourself and to our community that this is something you truly want and can handle in your life. You can have no crutch. It’s why I’ve been away since August.”

I looked from one to the other, to their kind and beautiful faces and then realized I had sticky tears beginning to slide down my face. I hunkered over and started to really sob. Sandor came up behind and was holding me from behind the chair and Toby put both his hands on my knees.

“I’ve not cried since before and had no idea if I could again.”

“This might be your last time,” said Sandor smiling at me. He’d gone back to the couch and he and Toby had joined hands along the top of the sofa.

“I’ve been so alone these past few months and haven’t really known it until now.” I welled up again. “I’m sorry,” I snorted into a napkin.

“Chris, I cried for a full day. I think you’re doing very well,” Toby laughed softly. “It’s a burden being who we are and although most of us make it through the first period, some don’t and that can be a problem. We had to be sure of you.”

I looked up at him searching his face, then he paused. Both were looking at me again, both silent. I began to ask why but stopped as both Toby and Sandor had closed their eyes.

At first I felt the skin below my outer skin start to heat up and I knew it was the same for both of them. Something transferred from Sandor with Toby's assistance to me, an electric force that was both staggering to take and at the same time totally supportive. I momentarily saw thousands of golden lights in my vision and then I passed out.

I was lying on the couch when I opened my eyes and immediately sat up. Sandor was eating an apple standing by a roaring fire he must have lit, Toby sitting forward in one of the armchairs.

"How are you feeling, my friend?" asked Toby with an immense look of love on his face. Without thinking I replied.

"I've never felt more alive, more content, more at peace or more in charge of my being than at any other time in my life!" I looked stunned at Sandor, then Toby. Suddenly the memory of a dream flooded to the front of my mind. Astonished, I jumped to my feet. "I left this place and traveled through the night to another country. I flew! It was so freeing to soar, to dive and to watch myself shed everything I was wearing and knew." I sighed with contentment at the memory.

"Below me looked like Europe and the Alps and I arrived at a beautiful mountain lake surrounded by several sheer mountain sides, some with snow still on their peaks. There was a small, beautiful medieval town clinging to a mountainside. I slowly landed on the water itself and as I trod lightly on the surface, a portal appeared. I went through a magnificent opening into a large green field framed by tall ancient white and gold trees where there were several men and women standing together ready to welcome me."

"They began to speak, to teach me things. I was in classes. I met others like me. We sang old sounds that I can still feel running through me. It took an age or, I don't know, only 30 minutes!" I looked at Sandor for help and he urged me to go on.

“And then, as someone blessed me and put his hand on my head, I felt an enormous rush and push like I felt from you two before and I was flying back to my apartment. Was it heaven? Is that it? I know it was real. To tell you the truth I didn’t want to come back.” I sat back down.

“You have actually been in Europe, up in one of the oldest parts of Austria. Its called Hallstatt,” Sandor explained. “There is a beautiful lake there, but to find the way into our sacred meeting grounds is impossible. Your inner body traveled there, the sheath between daylight and the dark, the part of you that sits on a razor’s edge, the part of you that now has been given immense strength so you can stand with real purpose on this unstable planet.”

Standing again, Sandor went back to the fire and was talking simultaneously to the ceiling and to me.

“We are the beings who came out of the tribes of the Western development of modern civilization. The remnants, if you like, of a certain way of balanced life, from the Iron Age and the early Celts. In the world before industrialization, gays and lesbians represented the male and female in tribes all over Europe, the ‘either’ side of the coin that could stand and give wisdom to the often warring, beast-like qualities in men and the ever weakening, denigrated position of the female, especially within men themselves. It’s why we were created.

“We were the Druids and the high priestesses, so often the outsider of everyday work within the communities.”

He was poking the fire now kicking up flames, making them whirl into blue, yellow and red colors.

“Hallstatt is one of the oldest, stable communities in the world traced well back before Christ. The reason is salt and its trade. For centuries, the local people remained isolated and traded up and down using just one track. It kept them safe.

“There are huge salt mines and deep caves all over the region and, of course, a perfect place over time for evil to get its share of the human condition. It’s thought that generations of vampires lived in isolated, abandoned caves away from the town. In the 19th Century there were over 1,000 graves discovered nearby with few markings on them.”

“It’s thought that this was the birthplace of the blood vampires and thereby, out of a need, the creation of the balance, our kind and our parallel presence through the portal on the lake.”

“Men were being perverted on a certain level,” Sandor continued, “becoming more warlike and it’s how blood vampires, who’d been held back for centuries in these caves, started to make their way out and slide into the hearts and lives of certain men and indeed, some women all over Europe.”

“No one can say exactly who was the first gay person turned, but there had to have been some very powerful magic carried out by a few extraordinary individuals who knew how to create the inner body that sustains us and therefore give the world a chance to correct itself.”

“They tapped into everlasting life to the power within the universe, to the science of existence and found what humans needed to do to stay alive for what looks like eternity. Our turning is that price!” Sandor continued, “There’s obvious goodness in mortals and there is the opposite too. Blood vampires work to cause mayhem.

“We’re here to help keep the balance strong when times get tough, even on a local level in a city or a town. We don’t always win, Chris, but we do our best given what we have to deal with. The hearts of men can be whipped up fast, the fire lit and the devastation often too big to handle.”

“Yes, we do our best and that’s all we can do, and our problem is that we can never let mortals know who we are,” Toby added. “That is the law.”

“And the frustration,” said Sandor shaking his head. He poked furiously at the logs. “But,” he sighed, looking over at me, “it does mean we can have regular lives in one place for a number of years, helping those we know and love. And through it all, learn to enjoy straddling two worlds.”

“Does this make sense, Chris?”

“Are we immortal?” I asked. I felt as if I was going to live forever. Listening to them talk, I felt an enormous pride in becoming a vampire. I started to vibrate deep within me as something came to the surface.

“We really have no idea how long we will live.” He shrugged at me. “But I know some of the Masters have been here for over 1,000 years and these are the beings who instructed you tonight and have given you the full power you need to survive, plus be of service.”

I knew all of this to be true as he said it. I felt my physical body and my inner body beginning to align and sing to each other. Patterns raced and changed all over me. I could see at least 1,000 colors ebb and flow through me. The two bodies locked into place like armor and I got to my feet. Both men now faced me and took each other’s hand.

“You are now impervious to any injury man can inflict,” stated Toby.

“All your senses are fully heightened. You can now also fly,” added Sandor.

“When it’s for the good of mankind, you can read minds and persuade mortals to do what you want,” Toby went on.

“Oh, and you can understand all languages,” again from Sandor.

I reached out and took both their outstretched hands in mine.

“Now, please, tell me about our cousins in detail.”

CHAPTER 9

Toby gazed at Sandor, who was looking directly at me and said, “Chris, it has to be for another day. I’d like to spend some time with you soon and talk more, but I have to get back home. Let’s leave all that for a day this coming week. Surely you have been through enough tonight? Congratulations by the way, we’re honored you are with us.”

Toby rushed down the stairs before I could respond. Sandor put the fireguard across the hearth and looked at me with a small smile on his face. I’d seen that look before and I don’t know who made it into the bedroom first, but pretty sure it was me.

I pulled off everything fast and lay on my back, legs spread wide. I was a new man, with new powers and I intended Sandor was going to know about them!

My cock was hard lying way up on my stomach hair, my balls hammering at my body. Still standing he slowly pulled off the plaid shirt he’d worn over. Smiling down at me he – Sandor knew what I was going through! - lifted up his white t-shirt letting me see his thick black hair trailing up to the dark matte on his broad chest.

I sighed as he slowly undid his Levi’s buttons and pulled them down below his knees. The front of his briefs were wet with rich precum. I scooted over as he moved closer. I began licking and

playing with the head of his cock, caught up now tight in the stretched material. I bit into his 8" mound, he leaned back letting me move my tongue all over his shorts.

I sat up quickly putting both feet on the floor. Using my teeth to pull down his briefs, I slid my mouth down to the base of his beautiful, fat cock. I eased myself back on his dick and slowly took his fullness into my mouth, licking his cock head, then moving rhythmically up and down his entire shaft, slowly, methodically, caressing and licking his balls and lightly tonguing my way down to the base of his hard taint. My hands moved behind him over the thick hair covering his rock hard, suckable ass. I almost came without touching myself. Slipping my middle finger into his eager hole I slowly pushed it all the way in. Sandor gasped and I could feel his huge cock get even harder, bigger. He shot his huge load deep into my throat, four pulsating shots, long and fat. I kept swallowing his sweet cum hoping it would never stop. He rocked back and forth and then, in one swift motion I lifted this large majesty of a man up and lying back on the bed moved him down and as he put his knees up beside my hips to straddle me. I entered his ass.

He sat up on me now, letting me look at his massive hairy chest and shoulders. He kept his eyes on me while putting one arm out for balance to begin joyously riding my cock. I watched his face then down to my own cock going in and out of him under his big, thick balls – what a beautiful sight. His cock was semi-hard lying to one side, its head still dripping cum.

We fucked like this for a long time. I then started to move vigorously in him watching him react to the pressure I was putting on his prostate.

I lifted him up slightly each time and sank myself into him as deep as I could. His cock hardened again and with his other hand he began to beat off.

Fucking even harder, I watched his eyes go glassy and move back into themselves. I felt his inner muscles tighten. He grabbed onto his slick cock, we both groaned together and shot our loads, he coating my chest and stomach, me deep inside his receptive body. This was the best fuck of my life, everything in me was alive. I didn't stop moving until every last drop was out of me.

We started kissing again as I slid out of him. Sandor collapsed on my chest pushing his legs down to lie fully on top of me. "As I think I've said before," he sighed into my left ear, "I'm never moving again." I suddenly had an old memory of someone else saying that to me a long, long time ago in a life that was gone forever.

It was a rugged winter in Northern California that year and snow covered most of the foothills over Christmas. For the holidays I went up to Tahoe with the house and some other friends to ski. Some of the faculty I knew also had taken a house, so I moved between each group often pretending I had eaten just before I'd arrived, lessening their doubts about my "weird" eating habits.

It was special for me to be in Tahoe as I could slip away in the night and actually fly across the lake and mountains without being caught. One night I went way over the mountain range into Nevada and visited a bar out in the east near Elko. It was about 1 am and I'm sure it had stayed open illegally. I eagerly fed on a straight cowboy wearing Wranglers over a cute bubble butt after a beer and a game of pool. I buttoned up his coat so he didn't freeze as he became conscious of what he'd just done and I started to make my way back.

As I flew across the sparse lands approaching the mountain range that connected the two states, I knew someone else was with me in the night sky. It was the same feeling I had that first night on Dolores, a feeling I caught now and again down in the Folsom district. But here? Now? What the fuck?

I slowed in the freezing clear air and listened. He had done the same thing. All I could hear besides the high winds were the sounds of night flights as planes crossed the country. Above me was a canopy of twinkling lights. As I swept my eyes around, off in the distance I saw the lights of tiny towns and to the south the big lights of Las Vegas.

I shot up fast and quickly surveyed the silky black skies again. I saw a flash, a figure moving south fast. I watched as he made for Vegas, his speed enough to convince me I'd never catch him. I knew it was a male. Turning slowly, puzzled why someone wanted to keep tracking me, I made my way back to my room through the window I'd left ajar.

We skied three days at Heavenly and I found my body responded beautifully to what the mountain demanded. I arrived fast to one of the new, long lifts that had been recently installed and was standing in line to climb aboard. I wasn't going to wait for Scott and John and then surprisingly, I felt another presence close to me, this time a lot more friendly.

"Can I join you, sir?" asked a voice I knew, and letting a couple go ahead of me, I fell back to join up with Toby.

He was with a couple of good looking boys, Bill I surmised being one of them, who both waved and smiled diffidently at me, hunger oozing from their tight ski pants. The friend whispered to Bill, of course I could hear every word as could Toby, who tried to keep his eyes on mine. There was something said about how tight my ski pants were, the shape of my ass and what would happen to it if they could get their hands on it.

Toby and I jumped onto the next twin carrier and swung up. The two boys followed on behind.

“Do you want a couple of slaves?” Toby inquired laughing and then looked at me through his yellow goggles. His black curls were out of sight pushed up under a knitted cap with a peace sign patch sewn into the middle.

“You’re going to meet these two when you get off at the top, so do me a favor and put them out of their misery.”

“What do mean?” I laughed back at him.

“Just talk to them and take an interest in them for a couple of minutes, will you? They’re both pretty good skiers so maybe we could do the run down together? I also want to introduce you as someone I met at a rally last year when we handed out how to vote in your district cards, something like that. It’s how I recognized you, okay? Bill thinks I fucked you and I want to put that one to bed as soon as possible.”

“Sure that’s a great idea. Now look, Toby, we’ve got 15 minutes on this ride so please start telling me about blood vampires. I’ll shut up, look at the scenery and you can tell me whatever you think I need to know.”

There was a comfortable silence that fell between us then he started talking.

“You know how Sandor said we don’t know how we were created? Well, that’s true, but not true. The thing is, we were probably a hybrid created from a blood taker who somehow stayed conflicted.

“He, and she too, for that matter, would have been same-sex and somehow through great magic – some form of osmosis – the second sheath came forth and entered the world.

“This inner body – it’s said it’s manifested from our soul body – slipped into these first beings and formed under the skin, bringing changes to the brain and nervous system, killing off blood lust. It brought us a better way to exist in the world.”

“There are tell-tale similarities, you must have thought about it?” He continued looking at me. I was listening intently but kept my nose pointed down toward the rows of pines marking out the massive run we were soon to be going down.

“We both have fangs for a start, ours somehow, got re-focused. We feed off humans just like them. We also must have a small amount of blood, enough to allow us to live but not enough to kill mortals. We definitely don’t have a blood lust, that’s for sure!”

“We have strength like them, and fortunately we can’t be killed by them. I know from experience that one or two would like to try! We can certainly stake them and they can die in fire. There are some stories coming out from both Europe and New York that they are getting stronger and could pose a threat to our health in the future. Anyway, at this point, it’s hearsay.”

“No one wants exposure in our world, so a truce was called between the powers that be from both camps and we now have a somewhat stable set of conditions. Exposure would upset the order of the world resulting in pandemonium. Fear would turn men into armies and local militias who’d come after us. I believe the pitchfork stories from medieval times. It’s important to stay invisible.” He paused and we continued up the hill, both of us looking left and right at the magnificence of the Tahoe region.

“I still don’t like 95% of them and I avoid them as best I can. They do kill and one or two – protected by their friends – probably can’t help themselves. When a few get a blood-lust up is when we can be useful, and, I might add, this is the same when humans get out of hand too.”

By now I was getting very agitated and asked, “Okay, but Toby, how the fuck useful are we? We don’t stop wars. We don’t stop mass killings like in Africa and parts of Asia? What about Mao in China or Stalin in the last war? Hitler, for god’s sake!” One of my poles

dangerously looked like falling as I'd emphatically thrown a gloved hand up in the air.

"We're not here to change destiny, Chris," he answered patiently. "We're here to support the best actions of men and women. They must run their own lives and fight for light over darkness. But to your questions, how do think Churchill received some of his best intel about D-Day? The Bletchley Circle had one of us in their ranks. How well do you think Eisenhower would have been if there hadn't been a 'special' doctor on his team to see him through until 1946?"

"How old are you, Toby?" I asked just as we were about to alight from the chair.

"I'm 30," he said, smiling sweetly at me. Of course I knew he was lying and laughed out loud.

When I was back at school I became more concerned about Jamie. His grades continued to slip so much so that by the end of January he was asked to appear with his parents before the faculty. I wrote my report and got myself recused from sitting on his tribunal. I was across the quad that morning when I heard a door bang and saw him stride out of the meeting with a man and woman in tow.

His father yelled at him while his mother kept trying to grab at him as he rushed away. He turned saying some terrible things and I watched as his mother crumbled into her husband's arms. It looked like Jamie was out of the program and permanently off campus. What disturbed me was his vitriol and enjoyment at the pain he inflicted not only on them, but on himself as well.

A lot of students saw this happen and I heard a number of them say things like, "Good riddance!" "What a nasty pig." And "That guy needlessly pummeled me last semester when we boxed. I ended up with six stitches." As I turned away to find out more about the decision, I vowed I was going to learn more about his activities on Folsom Street.

CHAPTER 10

I started to go down to south of Market at night alone. I often sensed the presence of a good food source by the time I passed Hamburger Mary's – those fries did look good – and usually I didn't even go into the bars. I stayed on the street and learned all the usual routes gay men took to have sex or to meet up with other men. All the back streets stayed empty until 11 pm and got quite busy around midnight. Bar closure had moved to 2 am, something the bar owners had been pushing for the past ten years, but it wasn't 'til Friday night that it meant the back streets were packed from the change in the drinking code. The aromatic cock and ball smell heightened as the week went on and Thursday night got those men out who were desperate for the weekend to start.

What I wanted, besides a feed, was to find a vamp lair, and looking at some of the old rundown brick and concrete structures, there had to be one around. It would be inconspicuous, solid, with strong locks, few exits and entrances, and two floors with heavy curtains on every window.

I found a couple and decided to check in from time to time to see if I was right. Those two vamps had to be around here somewhere. I didn't have to wait long for a meeting and it didn't happen from walking around on my own.

Scott and I hit the Boot Camp the next Saturday night in mainly denim but with enough leather to be accepted. Scott even had a cap on he'd been lent. I wore a leather vest over my chest with no shirt underneath, a black studded belt through my jean loops and black boots.

When we walked into the bar the body rush was intense. There had to be at least five vamps inside. Suddenly I felt one of them leave. He'd given off a lot of energy, especially anger. Was he the one I wanted? Should I go out and around the back and confront him? And then I saw one of the guys I'd seen last year with Jamie so I stayed.

The music was loud and like many of the bars now, was beginning to get in a DJ. The Boot Camp and The Stud were the first in Soma. The atmosphere was great, dope was in the air, the smell of leather, charged ball sweat and cum smelled like a bowl of roses to my nose, but I knew all I wanted to do tonight was have good sex as I'd fed in Dolores Park the night before and was just very horny.

We were heavily cruised and soon a couple of guys came over and introduced themselves. Apparently there was a party later in a back room nearby and we were invited to find our way over. It started at 2 am and went 'til dawn. I knew this meant there would be vamps and I said I was interested. The older of the pair who'd given us this info, went to the bar to get a couple of beers for he and his friend and Scott, with a smile decided to look around the bar, maybe check out the back room.

The remaining guy was a friendly, good-looking brown-haired stud who recently moved from Chicago. He was a big guy, solid build, about 28. He wore a nice trimmed, brown mustache, over thin, but wide lips and he liked to smile. "I'm Greg by the way."

"Chris," I said reaching out my right hand. I could tell he had a good heart and was uncomplicated. He came out recently in Chicago

and gone straight into the growing leather community there. He traveled west to take up a management job at Hewlett Packard in Redwood City. While holding my hand in his leather-gloved one said, "What's it going to take to meet you again and again?" He grinned with no guile. He knew he was handsome and if he was direct with me he knew he stood a good chance. A lot of guys are terrified of being knocked back by a beautiful man and so never approach. I liked him and knew we'd have a great time in bed.

Scott had excused himself and was chatting with a couple of guys he knew from downtown. I also kept the vamp in view – he'd seen me as well, so I said to Greg, "Ya know, if you want to leave with me I'm up for it. You're a hot man. I want to speak to that guy over there for a while but I'll be back when I've finished, okay?"

"Fine by me, my man, I will wait right here and drink my beer." His friend was just getting back from the bar.

I walked over to the black vamp and immediately he whispered harshly to the guy he was with to leave. I quickly moved into his absent space.

"Hi there, name's Chris."

"Thomas," he replied watching me, giving nothing away.

"You're the first I've ever met."

"Ahh, is that so?" hissed out of him and he smiled showing yellowing teeth stained by tobacco.

"Perhaps I should be honored, my new friend, what do you think about that?" Each word was crisp and my mind went to New Orleans but via Jamaica or one of the other Caribbean Islands.

"Well, I hope we can be friendly toward each other, that's for sure," I replied. His odor was different up close, salty and cold, like I'd just licked a piece of metal.

“M’mmm, your human smell would have driven me crazy. It’s a good thing you were turned.” His golden eyes were unblinking, dead, and for a second I knew I looked like prey.

“I remember seeing you in the Ramrod a few months back, right?” He turned more toward me trying to probe my mind to see why I’d come over to speak with him.

“Right, that was me, and I know that kid told you I was his teacher at his school.” I hurried on over the music. “Look, I figure some of you have been feeding from him and that makes me worried. I won’t ask why – we know the answer to that – I’d like to know what his future’s going to become.”

I tried to keep it light, especially as his eyes widened for a second. I knew he couldn’t believe I would care too much about a mortal, being a vampire myself, but probed nonetheless to goad me. “You’re worried about him?” He put his head back and gave a small rasping laugh. “What for? Presently, he’s just food.”

“He’s a boy,” I replied looking straight into his sardonic grin.

“Not for long,” came the answer I dreaded.

He moved his face close to mine.

“Listen, my pretty, gay prince. This ‘boy’ you care so much about, don’t lie about it, you really do care for him, I can feel it under your outer skin, came and sought us out. We didn’t look for him. It’s the other way around. We did, of course, train him to keep our existence a secret.”

He saw the slight shock on my face and smiled again. “He came down here at 15 for sex and adventure, his tender smell led him into the wrong alley. He’s lucky he wasn’t killed that first time. He got one of the Masters.” He stopped for a second wearing a look of slight disgust. “He was allowed to go home after that short feed and

told not to return, but, of course, like so many wayward children, he found his way back over the past few years.” His triumphant smile was back.

Now in deep thought, I nodded and looked away. Both Scott and Greg were watching me. I had to go.

“Thomas. Thank you. I appreciate you telling me about the boy. I’d better get back to my friends. I’ll see you again?”

“That would be nice, my cousin,” he said, obviously surprised. He put his long fingers up in a far Eastern gesture of supplication and we parted.

“Who the hell was that creepy dude?” asked Scott. “Do you want to go to that party, it’s almost 1 pm? I don’t think I really want to wait around any more.” I got that he wanted to go home to Jeff so I turned to Greg and invited him home with me. I pushed Jamie’s problems to the back of my mind.

By the time we got to my place I’d nicknamed him “Chicago” and he’d turned into the biggest puppy now that he was off the Folsom strip. He started kissing me going up the stairs. I felt a nice, fat mound pressing hard against me as I let him push me against the inside wall.

We got into my living room and I told him to slow down. He stood still, put his arms up and I worked his t-shirt up and off. He had an amazing six-pack and a wide smooth chest with inviting nipples and big arms. There was a nice, thick, brown trail of hair going down and I could see the outline of his cock pressed painfully to the left of his jeans. “Don’t you dare move.”

He nodded, his mouth slightly open. I slowly undid his Levi’s as we stood toe-to-toe.

I put my arms around his back and began to kiss him. We stayed standing for a while just playing with tongues and lips, each running our hands up and down each other's backs, occasionally pressing up against each other. I slowly began to work his Levi's down a fraction as he deftly did the same for me.

He then edged my pants down to let my cock out of my shorts. "Suck it, okay?" I whispered. He immediately dropped to his knees and went down on me forcefully without abandon. He came up, slowed, then expertly let his tongue tease the head of my cock preparing his mouth to go down the shaft, then swallowing me all the way to my balls making my dick full and thick in his hot, wet mouth.

"God, you've got a beautiful cock, Chris," he uttered, admiring me as he came up for air to look up at my leaking cock in his fist. "Can we go to the bedroom now?" he panted. I pulled my Levi's off, pushed him back onto the sofa, easily tugging his jeans off, leaving his shorts for him.

We made it to the bedroom and surprisingly he pushed me gently onto the bed under him and looking at me said, "I'm sorry I don't get fucked, but I'd like to fuck you if that's okay?" I nodded so he moved between my legs and knelt up in front of me. His 9" dick was straight off a Midwestern farm, a large mushroom head, a thick and veiny shaft running off it and two, fat balls longing to bang against my ass. He had a thick thatch of brown hair around it all and I could see two very big hairy brown thighs waiting to do their work. "You like?" he smiled at me. I nodded again.

He grabbed my cock, easily worked some precum off it and put it on his own. "Man, that's so fucking good and thick, like a gel."

My legs were up and over his shoulders, his face was right up against mine. "Oh, Chris, oh shit yes, this is what I want, nice and slow," he said, looking straight into my eyes. I felt him push at my

hole and slowly slip in then slowly back out. I suddenly opened up wide looking back into his eyes and he pushed straight in and smiled at me.

He started kissing me again and again pushing straight into me starting a slow rhythmic pumping action. He scooted in closer. I was tight up against him as his full, hefty balls started to slap against my ass.

It had been a long time since I'd been fucked and it felt amazing. "Greg, this is great, so fucking great," I gasped needing to seriously bust a nut. He smiled and pushed away a bit looking down at me as he moved in and out. "You're the hottest, nicest man I've ever been in and I'm loving it, man, loving it. Oh, fuck, I nearly came, don't get me too excited, okay?" He really was a wonderful innocent.

We slowed down and I needed to get my hand on my own cock. My pubes were wet, my cock slippery, it all felt so good. I reached under, cupped his balls and gently squeezed them. They grew tight and I could smell his physical need to deliver everything to the passageway, out the hole of his cock, out the large slit and directly into me. It excited me so much I began to come on myself at the same time tightening his cock inside my ass. He began to moan, pumped me harder shooting large, hot wads of spunk into my body. "Harder Greg, harder, fuck all that cum into me."

We both kept shooting and fucked like this until the pain sensation was too raw. He slowly collapsed on top of me, his dick slipping out of me hitting the mattress with a light thump.

CHAPTER 11

As 1974 took off I was a reborn being. I settled into the gifts I was given, each day practicing keening my senses as best as I could. Only the brothers and sisters who had experienced this culminating process I'd been through at the lake at Hallstatt, knew how I felt. I lived in two worlds. As the full realization now set in that I could be like this for many, many years, I started to draw a longer bow.

I stepped back, tried to look into the coming years, and began to set targets of achievement knowing they would always be in the present moment. This troubled me at first. Could they feel like authentic achievements, targets I'd set that I knew I'd always reach? Would I have to really struggle, or was it only a matter of time before the results I wanted came to me? Then I thought, did it matter, if it was ultimately good for mankind and for my kind as well? This made me feel better.

And, what about being discovered while this work was going on? I knew I'd have to move away from a city or even the country, cutting all ties when I did, to keep from being questioned, mistrusted and feared. How would I feel about abandoning the friends I'd made?

Part of the answer dawned on me as I lay in bed next to "Chicago" a couple of months into the year. He was snoring next to me having

stayed over again, a regular thing now as I enjoyed being with him a few nights a week.

He was a bright guy, he liked to do other things socially and culturally away from Folsom Street, so we'd meet up for a show or go into the country, to Muir Woods or to Hepburn Hot Springs. We'd always fuck when we were in the country. There was something earthy and primal about being outside with a hot man. He fucked me one day with my arms circled around a young redwood tree and I came fat and hard onto its bark without touching myself calling out to the skies above.

"I want different work!" I yelled out loud. Greg snorted but didn't wake up. I got up to get a fruit juice wondering what would happen if I made a total switch in careers over this next year.

I already had an Australian science degree and I could start getting a firm grip on genetic engineering, the coming field in biology. This combined with artificial engineering is what was going to matter in the coming century. I could see it! Somehow, the new computing systems being invented were also important, I just didn't know how yet, but California was the place to be. My mind was whirring as I looked into the light coming from the fridge. I took a swig of AppleCran, put it back and began to think it through.

When I shut my eyes after lying back down, images came to me from the training I had at Hallstatt. It wasn't clear yet, but I could see brief patterns, strands of information, laboratories and symposiums flashing like single images across my inner vision. I felt deeply that night I was on a path the Masters had chosen for me.

Ever since I'd found out about Jamie, I wondered about possibly being able to either stop a process before it happened or if in its early stages, maybe reverse it, bringing someone back from a conversion. I knew Jamie was probably not the best candidate as he was obviously driving himself into the vampire world. But it made me think of young kids who might simply get trapped and want a way out.

What if there was someone who'd been like this for a long time and wanted to end "forever" and become mortal again to live out a natural life span? If blood carried the change, could a genetically modified agent introduced into the mix "kill" the effect and let the mortal return? Maybe this also could work on a gay guy who once turned, didn't like it, wanted to return to mortal life and wouldn't have to be killed?

I knew I couldn't talk about this with anyone yet, certainly not Sandor or Toby. I needed to start the process out of personal interest. I'd stay in my current role and begin classes at UCSF at Parnassus at night. Clinical genetics was established there and had led to the birth of recombinant DNA technology, ushering in a new era of molecular genetics. I was at the right place at the right time. Somehow, I had to get on the team and that's what I set out to do. I would start there after the summer break.

CHAPTER 12

It really was a great time to be gay. I'd gone from being a fairly conservative person to a liberal and a party boy. I didn't do drugs, they just didn't work for me, I could feel my vamp brain block them, but alcohol gave my body a slight buzz, felt good and allowed me to look like a normal guy. We hung out on Castro Street on the weekends, marched in the third Gay Day Parade and went to the bars and parties afterwards. I went with the Hartford gang to the Boarding House on Bush Street and saw Bette Midler, Robyn Williams, Lily Tomlin and others perform. You could feel the change in the air, people were freeing up. Things that were taboo to our parents' generation were being shot down as our age group gained more power. We'd helped end the Vietnam War and Nixon, who now was in deep trouble over Watergate and moving toward either impeachment or resignation.

The backlash was starting as well. Cops were our biggest problem. Gay people, prostitutes and people of color figured high on their radar for abuse. They hated the "girly" gays, "uppity" blacks and "hysterical" women, taking every chance to embarrass or punish us.

San Francisco has a violent history rich with murder and mayhem. There were the recent Zebra killings and the elusive Zodiac Killer that confounded the police making them bitter and angry.

The force was controlled and run by a group of white, privileged Irish-Italians, you practically had to be born into certain suburbs and have a relative on the selection board to get in.

One night I was on my way out of Buena Vista Park in the Upper Haight after a feed and I ran into two cops in their car. They were on their way into the park to do a “mini” raid on the guys in the bushes. They were equipped with spots they could shine in as many areas as they could.

“Sir, one of them said loudly, “Stop!” I did turning to face them.

“Why are you here, faggot?” They were both securely seated in their car mostly hidden in the dark knowing their faces couldn’t easily be seen. I heard almost everyone else in the park quickly scatter leaving me alone with just them.

Of course, they had guns and batons and were feeling righteous and secure. One was about 22, the younger “side-kick”. He appeared slightly nervous and unsure of his partner. My sense of him was that he’d like to be on firmer ground out in the light.

The older cop was late 20’s, the alpha of the two. I could smell his lust plus the pain of hidden desire. He was an angry man, enjoyed punishing weaker people and no doubt was a bully at school. The badge gave him all the protection he needed.

Both good-looking boys, I noted, the young one clean shaven, the older cop, a thick brown mustache over a protruding, upper lip, both straight out of the Sunset District.

“This is supposed to be fun for them, but now, more for me,” I thought as the older, beefy cop got out of the car and took a couple of steps towards me.

“I wouldn’t if I were you,” I quietly said.

“Excuse me, faggot, what did you say to me?” I could feel his blood racing and it started to make mine race too, but for a different reason.

He pulled out his baton and stopped while whacking it menacingly from right hand to left. His legs were apart and he wore a grimacing smile. There was momentary silence.

“Um, we just want to know why you’re out here so late? There was a killing here a couple of weeks ago,” called out his thinner partner who also had gotten out of the car.

“Shut up, Tommy, I’ll do the talking. I know why pretty boy is here and so do you, don’t you?” looking back at his partner angrily. “What you’re doing here with some of your girly friends is pretty fucked up and disgusting.” He turned and smiled back at me.

“And what you’re doing here has nothing to do with a reasonable search for a killer,” I answered coolly. “I’ll tell you I was sucking cock if that’s what you want to hear, but that’s it. I’m not carrying a weapon and if you want you can search me.” I looked at him, this time deeper into his eyes. I felt his cock start to harden and his balls move. My dick lurched forward as well.

He put his baton away and slowly came over to me. I let him start to pat me down and whispered in his ear to go slow, to enjoy it. His breathing became short and fast as he realized he was touching a man’s body, that it was something he’d dreamed of all his teenage life. When he got to my thighs I told him to unzip my fly, take my cock out and start sucking it.

He fumbled with my Levi’s and Tommy called out, “ Fuck Ray, what are you doing, man?” I could feel him start to panic and said persuasively, “It’s okay, Tommy, just watch and let it happen. It’s something he’s always wanted to do.”

Ray was now on his knees selfishly sucking hard on my cock. I lightly grabbed his head and moved him up and down, slowly. He undid his pants fly and pulled out his nice, rock hard cock and started beating it furiously. I watched Tommy rooted to the ground where he stood, his mouth open, spellbound.

I shot straight down his throat. Ray gagged but swallowed dutifully. Groaning loudly, he shot a large load on the ground between my legs and on my boots. I then had him get up, pull up my jeans and close my fly.

“Ray, zip up your uniform.” He did. “Now, look at me.” He slowly raised his confused, questioning and satisfied eyes up to me. “See, that wasn’t so bad, was it? “You’ve wanted this for a long time, so now you can go out and get yourself some more whenever you want. Tommy’s not going to say a word about this, are you boy?” I looked at him. He shook his head vigorously. “Okay, then, its time to leave guys. Let’s wave to each other and go our separate ways.”

We did. Somehow I knew I’d see Ray again, definitely at Febe’s.

CHAPTER 13

The summer holidays were ending and school was about to go back. Teachers were getting in early to set up classes or make any changes needed to the curriculum. I finished sorting papers and was leaving early when the phone rang. It was Scott and he sounded urgent and upset.

“Scott, calm down, what’s happened?”

“Brian was attacked last night somewhere down near Folsom Street and he’s in San Francisco General and they’re not sure if he’ll make it.” He started to break down.

“Where are you now, Scott?”

“I’m at a phone booth in the entrance way to the hospital. John’s with me but he can’t talk. Jeff’s away on another army base and I can’t reach him.”

“Okay, I’ll call a colleague and I’ll be there as soon as I can.”

“Thanks, man, see you soon,” gulped Scott.

I called Harold and told him a friend had been in an accident and I’d be in later. Of course, all my class preparations were done, but I still needed to show my face like everyone else.

I grabbed a cab to Potrero Street and found Scott and John smoking against an old, brown brick wall near the entrance.

“What happened?” I yelled as I finished paying the cabbie. I was standing with them, perhaps just a little too quickly, but they were too upset to notice. John came into my arms starting to really sob and I talked to Scott over his head.

“We don’t know much more than someone must have tried to rob him and they messed up his neck with a jagged knife. Apparently, whoever did it missed the main artery but slashed enough for him to lose a lot of blood. A couple of guys heard him yelling and found him and called an ambulance.”

I gently moved John away and looked at both of them. “I’ll go in and see what I can do or find out, okay? I’ll be back in half an hour. Why don’t you both get a bite to eat in the cafeteria and I’ll meet you there.” They both nodded and I strode into the ER.

Eventually I found Brian. He had been moved to a small room in the ICU away from the ER. I slipped in past the nurse, slowing down enough to tell her she wouldn’t need to come back for 15 minutes then went in.

His hair was matted and pushed back with a surgical bandage. Brian looked so alone and small in that hospital bed. One eye was swollen and there were four, nasty scratches that looked like fingernail scrapes on his face. His bandaged neck had a tube coming out of it and I could see beneath that several veins had been sutured off. I could smell vampire. I knew he’d been attacked from the back on the right hand side. I closed my eyes for a moment and saw it clearly. A hand had come around fast, grabbing at his head, catching his face, scratching, holding him and the fangs had gone in viciously. It was frenzied, messy and stank of a newbie. Brian’s first yells were heard and the vamp took off. Looking at him I could smell vamp blood in him as well. His heart was fighting for its life. It was a terrible attack

that I would report to Sandor. I found myself vibrating with anger and empathy for this poor, sweet kid.

Suddenly my upper mouth began to move and to throb then I felt my fangs move out. I was stunned, but somehow, not surprised. Instinctively, I moved down, fixed on a beating spot just above his bandaged throat and sank my teeth gently into him. I felt the anesthetic then another liquid flow out and into him. In my mind's eye I watched it hit his blood and start to move around his body.

I came away after about 30 seconds watching as his heart rate stabilized and color return to his face. I touched the liquid from my teeth as they retreated, rubbed it into the two marks I'd made on his neck and along the deeper face scratches then watched them all slowly begin to fade. Brian's eyes began to flutter so I went out into the corridor and called for the nurse.

The boys rushed upstairs when I told them there had been improvement. When we entered his room he was propped up and smiling weakly.

"Oh Brian," John cried and lurched onto the bed, putting his head on Brian's chest. The nurse asked him to be gentle and everyone started to laugh with relief.

"Chris, these attacks happen and as a rule it's not our problem." Sandor saw the look on my face. "But, I get it. He's your friend and you want to do something about it. And we will but," he paused staring at me then across the room to Toby, "I'm trying to deal with the new fact that you have these healing powers." He folded his arms. I looked back at him surprised.

"I can stop a tiny blood flow from the groin with my saliva," said Toby looking at Sandor who nodded his head in agreement, "but, Chris, having a regenerative wound healing agent come out of your fangs is amazing news to me and, I might add, it makes me very

jealous. I feel like getting in touch with the Masters and asking for an upgrade!”

“It was instinctive,” I replied shrugging. “I felt impelled to do it. I don’t know!” I looked from one to the other now feeling slightly guilty. I didn’t realize they couldn’t do this.

Sandor, smiling, was watching me. “The thing is when I was tracking you I was completely intrigued by your smell, it was like a drug. Toby and any other gay vamps knew I’d marked you so would not have tried themselves, still, it was hard for them to stay back.” Toby smiled at Chris and nodded.

“I also knew I didn’t have a lot of time before the cold bloods would find you, either try and turn you or suck you dry. But weirdly, in that first year you were here, I often felt one of them nearby but my sense was he was watching, not planning anything else.” He shook his head of the memory.

“You know by now some mortals have that special quality in them, something that’s connected to their life force. You must have a piece of that too!

“It’s like going down to Half Moon Bay as Halloween approaches and you have to pick that special pumpkin out of hundreds then you finally see that magical one. It sings to you and calls out, ‘Pick me! Pick me!’” We all started to laugh.

My better understanding of what Sandor was sharing came through by just being a gay human! Often at the house around a full dining room table with friends and family, with everyone talking about men, sex and street events, someone would say – usually John – that a hot, new guy had just come into The City and he was from a certain state and town and on and on. Invariably, another guy would have the same information about his looks, cock size and where he lived, all there out on the table.

Scott would invariably add that I wasn't allowed anywhere near the guy and to think of the needs of others.

Maybe I did have something different in me? Couldn't anyone bring something mutated or genetically modified to the table when turned? Wasn't species development always finding new ways to express itself?

I saw this as a way to introduce my career change plans to Sandor.

"I'm going to go back to school, part time at first, then if I like it make it permanent. I'm going to UCSF to get back into my science degree. I'm going to study more about our makeup. I think it's the message I got from the Masters coming back from my time with them. I feel as if we have some things to learn about ourselves, to be better and to remain relevant in this modern age. Maybe I can find how we can all make the healing fluid?"

I didn't let my thoughts about saving anyone or turning them back into human from vampire come to the fore of my mind, I only wanted these guys to think about getting stronger powers. I knew deep down the message from Hallstatt was about change and regeneration but it wasn't something that a lot of vamps from both camps would want to hear.

"Look guys, I don't know about the gift, okay? Right now I want to find the vamp who did this to my friend and have a chat," I said darkly. Sandor and I agreed to go down to Soma toward the end of that week.

CHAPTER 14

September and October are officially the Bay Area’s “true” summer. The fog stays back a lot more, especially from the hills behind the Castro up at Twin Peaks. At night you could get away with just a tank top or a t-shirt and that’s what we wore when we met up on Harrison Street to find some vamps for a talk.

Sandor led me down to an old brick building facing the double-Decker highway structure that became 101 going out to the airport. The lighting was dim and very few people ever ventured along this stretch after dark. There was a smell of trash that lay up against the walls of the old buildings, pushed there by the flow of traffic during the daylight hours. Orange street lights flickered nearby.

He banged on an old iron-faced door with no handle and we waited. We could hear loud rock music and I knew there was a party inside. The door didn’t open. We just felt them land behind us.

“What do you want?” a cold, nasally voice said behind me.

We turned into two sets of booze-addled golden eyes. My body had tightened and I felt the steady rhythm of Sandor’s heart beating next to me. I wasn’t frightened but this was new for me.

The one on the left was a big boy, overweight with short, chunky, hairy arms and legs. He had long hair that started well back on his

forehead and was wearing dog tags over a dirty, black tank top. He wore dark gray shorts and black boots. His face was boyish and I could see how glitter eyelashes and pancake makeup on Halloween could work a real treat with this one. The other vamp was another matter entirely.

“Hello Sandor, what brings you to our door? Isn’t it a little late for you girls to be out and about, especially around here?” The guy on the left giggled letting me see his fangs. He hadn’t taken his eyes off me since landing and I could feel the heat.

“Hi Roberto,” replied Sandor folding his arms. “It’s been a while.”

Roberto was six foot with a full head of black hair swept back off a ridiculously handsome face. If it wasn’t for the nasty scar down his right cheek – I could tell he wore it with pride – he could have been on the cover of those cheap middle-aged love stories that appear on airport book stands – a beautiful full mouth and perfect teeth with fangs that slid away as he looked at us. He was all in black, jeans, shirt and boots. The sleeves were rolled up as far as his massive forearms would allow. He also wore dog tags.

What I found immediately fascinating was, Roberto was straight or hopefully bi. I stopped my blood from starting to beat faster and looked away. He flicked me a cursory look, more out of a narcissistic comparison, and then focused on Sandor.

“My friend here...” Sandor started.

“Your progeny, you mean,” snarled Roberto.

“... has a mortal friend in the hospital with an amateurish ripped neck that happened close to here late last week. Fortunately, he’s recovering.” Sandor stopped and let “fortunately” sink in while looking from one to the other. “Feeding is one thing, but a perfectly healthy young person in The City doesn’t deserve to die with his or her neck ripped open for local government and police to have to investigate.”

“There are enough body bags coming out of the bathhouses that help cover up your activities, but still, too many unexplained deaths, raises more problems. It can’t help either of our groups. Wouldn’t you agree?”

Roberto kept watching Sandor. Big boy started to say something and was frozen quiet by a turn of Roberto’s head. “Man, he’s beautiful,” I thought. He quickly looked at me for a second and then back to Sandor. He looked up and suddenly was gone.

Big boy walked toward the door and put his lips to it and hissed a word and number and it opened outward toward us.

The noise was deafening, which of course really didn’t matter to us, and the mortals who were there seemed to love it anyway. Most of them were whacked out on a variety of drugs and were posturing or lying with male and female vamps; the smell of blood was salty and metallic and my cock started to get hard as I took it all in. I felt a hand slide across my swollen groin and looked down at a beautiful female vamp wearing a black tank top, flared black pants and pointed lace-up boots. “Pity,” she smiled quickly looking me up and down. “If things change you come and find me.” She laughed and moved over to a group of six mixed vamps all of them watching us closely.

Like many of these buildings it was deceptively bigger on the inside. It ran all the way back to a service street, had two stories with a wide old wooden staircase connecting them angling up the right wall. Downstairs there was a concrete floor with some large poles strategically placed for support with a huge space for dancing. All around the walls were old stuffed chairs and sofas, a few tables scattered in front of them. Some lighting was cleverly hidden giving off enough for the mortals to see and feel at home. Looking upstairs I realized that area was for the day and was barred from visitors.

There must have been close to 100 mix of beings in the warehouse; some were dancing, others lounging, talking and some feeding off of

willing mortals. Toward the back was an old, turn of the century bar obviously saved from demolition and now nailed up to allow a long bar to serve those present almost any kind of drinks they would want. The mirrored walls behind had all kinds of booze stacked up on shelves from all over the world. The bar kept a strong and steady supply of blood bags for the current coven's needs.

Roberto reappeared. I caught him coming down the stairs and again, my ears pricked up for a second, as I knew another vampire had disappeared somewhere from upstairs. When he left I felt a strange pull.

Roberto walked over to us at the bar. Sandor and I sat on bar stools with beers in front of us waiting for him.

My cock would not stop pushing out as he came close. He stood, legs apart, right next to me, and talked across me to Sandor. He could feel my excitement. His crotch was an inch from my right knee. I could feel the heat and badly wanted to touch him. He knew I found him almost irresistible and walking over he'd undone the buttons on his shirt showing me a thick covering of black hair on his upper body. I could smell him, chocolate mixed with salt and honey, and I wanted to bury my face into it all.

"It's been taken care of," was all he said and ordered a Dewers. I looked up at him blankly. "He is being punished and if he makes the night, he'll never rush a feeding like he did, again."

Sandor looked at me, telling me that was about the best apology and satisfaction I was likely to get. Disgruntled, I looked into the mirror and surveyed the room. Roberto and Sandor began to talk of other matters.

I was watching different ones come and go through a black curtain on the left of the bar and heard the bartender whisper to me, "Why don't you check it out?" I'd been in gay bathhouses before but

not where there had been women. My blood was up and the smells were overwhelming when I got a blast from the open curtain as I made my way through. I put my beer down on a barrel nearby and slowly made my way in further. It was dark at first but I was fine in a matter of seconds.

It was a large space with makeshift beds pushed up against the left wall. The room ran back behind the bar to the other side of the building. I could see several people on the beds fucking and sucking but I was more interested in the noise I could hear from this new area around on the other side as it was lit and sounded specialized.

I then saw two men and a woman pulled up by their wrists on chain pulleys receiving different forms of pleasure, torture and punishment and I don't think safe words had found a place yet with this crowd. I watched the woman first.

Her pierced nipples were clamped by steel pegs and she was being licked hard by a skinny old vamp in leather shorts and boots. Her head was back and she was bleeding from her nose.

There was a hand on my arm and I turned to look into the face of my new friend from the Boot Camp, Thomas, looking quite different than when I first met him. He looked showered and fresh and had his hair pulled back in braids. His cheekbones were now jutting out and accentuated his handsome face. His smile, though guarded, seemed genuine.

“Well hello, Chris, I didn't know you were invited into our den?” He smiled and put his beer to his mouth. “Oh, remember you asked me about your young student?” I quickly turned and followed his pointing finger and there he was, at the end of the row, his wrists held by leather clamps clasped together and held up by chains. His sexy, naked body with a semi hard-on over this thick blond thatch was being whipped and he was groaning with pleasure. A small amount of blood was dripping from his neck and inner thighs. He

was moaning hard. I knew my blood heat was rising fast and so I took off my tank top and stuffed it in the back of my jeans.

I felt my zipper go down and a hot mouth take my cock in and quickly swallow it down. I arched back and pushed down on the head at my crotch. It was Thomas, and he knew what I wanted; he knew and I knew that under all of our differences we were still vampires and our lusts were sated by seeing and having mortals.

I went with the thrill of seeing this beautiful young boy getting thrashed by one well built Master wearing a black mask, naked himself except for black chaps and boots, his own long, fat cock moving from left to right and back. There was another Master teasing and beating Jamie's beautiful cock not letting him quite cum, moving his foreskin up and down, edging him, holding him back as he screamed for release. Watching, feeling the saliva in my mouth come fast and my fangs start to protrude, I wanted his cum so badly. I wanted to fly to him and to sink my fangs into his thick blond pubes and feed from him.

I was gasping hard held back by Thomas. He knew I wanted Jamie and his hot mouth rode up and down on my shaft mimicking Jamie's torture. Then Jamie's balls began to move up into his body and the whipping got more frenzied, he groaned begging again loudly. Only then did the Master let him shoot. Jamie came hard, his fat, long jizz flying hot into the air and onto the floor. I'd become rock hard in Thomas's expert, wet mouth and, as my cock pulsated with four good loads of cum, Thomas slipped his mouth off and finished me with his gloved hand, admiring the huge flow he produced from me.

I staggered to a chair nearby and caught my breath and he joined me with my beer in his other hand. As I slowed, I watched Jamie being taken down. He couldn't see me for the lights and was cleaning up talking to a vamp and a mortal girl. They were all excited and highly spiked with their events and walked off to get drinks.

I couldn't let him see me. I dressed and said goodbye to Thomas and slipped back into the main room. I couldn't see or feel Sandor and so I walked toward the exit. As a guard was opening the door I heard Roberto say, "Come back again, Chris. I mean it." I felt a strong pull in the invitation. I looked back and he was still at the bar with his hand on a young blonde woman's knee. She was enthralled and he looked bored; his voice had shot across the noise and space and landed softly in my ear. He'd already turned back to her when I looked for him. He gave nothing away.

CHAPTER 15

We were all there when Brian got out of SF General and there was a mini-Halloween home party especially for him. He asked a few of his friends and we made up the rest. He was allowed the couch in the front room under the big windows that jutted out to the street and was propped up with four big pillows.

“You lost so much blood,” his work colleague Susan was saying to the small audience around him that first night home. “I know Jenny, one of the nurses said he should have died!” Everyone laughed at her faux pas, she looked embarrassed for a second then Scott gave her a squeeze and added, “He was a very lucky man. If someone hadn’t come along right then, it could have been a lot worse.”

I stood in the doorway watching them with Jeff. He muttered, “Honestly, I’m barring Scott from going down there anymore, and you too!” He gave me a nudge and went back into the kitchen.

“We’re okay if we park on the main street and just go to the bars,” I said to his back as I followed him into the kitchen and sat up on a stool.

“Well, as long as we go down together now and not alone,” he said emphatically. He threw me a look that slightly suggested I was at the back of the more frequent trips to the Folsom area. I let it

slide because I knew he was becoming more concerned about Scott's increased excitement of being down there.

“Okay, I agree, Jeff. By the way, does anyone know why Brian was there alone? He and John and their mates were always nervous about the area.”

“Yeah, that's true but you have to remember Hamburger Mary's is there, The Stud and that's exciting for every queen in The City. I think he was loaded and wandered off to get naughty and got rolled. He doesn't want to talk about it though, that's for sure. It was hard enough for him explaining it all to the cops!”

Later on, when most people had gone, I helped Brian back upstairs to his bedroom. I waited for him as he came back from the bathroom to make sure he didn't fall. As I bent down and helped him into bed, he quickly kissed me on the cheek. “Thank you, Chris, I think I let myself be fooled.” I looked at him briefly as he gave me a small smile and winked. I mumbled something inane about being more careful and turned out his light and left.

Halloween itself was closer to the weekend this year and it became a three-day affair for San Francisco. We joined thousands on Castro Street as it was now the place to be and tried to get into as many bars as we could to see the Bette Davis inspired buses come through with their wonderfully creative drags. It was colder this year and we were in plaid, jackets, jeans and boots. John wore heels.

By the end of that Friday night I was as horny and hungry as hell and decided to go down alone to Folsom and feed in the alleyways. At the back of my brain I was also thinking about Roberto's invitation and what it might mean, so I set off about 1 am slipping quickly down unlit sidewalks and alleys.

I went into The Ambush, got a beer and found a corner to seek out my prize. The place was packed and I got talking to a group of

guys I'd seen here before when suddenly I almost passed out with desire.

His smell was out of a coffee shop selling croissants dipped in honey with a cinnamon overtone and vanilla wafers that were trying to push their way into my brain!

As I clocked him I saw two other heads in the bar do the same thing. I quickly excused myself and made my way through and coming up behind him asked, "Can I get you a beer?" He turned, looked into my eyes and smiled, "Yes".

Fred was a regular dude, who looked a lot like many of the men over 30 in *The Ambush*, slightly balding, a mustache, but with a wonderful odor. He'd arrived for the Halloween weekend from Redding and was staying in a motel nearby. He'd only come out as gay three months before. This was his first trip to San Francisco alone and at night. I got him a stool and stood protectively in front of him.

I then strangely felt anguish, jealousy and then suddenly nothing. Someone had left the bar.

After a couple of beers I couldn't handle it anymore and I suggested we make our way back to his motel. On the way out Fred asked if we could walk a bit first as he hadn't seen all the new bars and wanted to see some of the costumes still being paraded along Folsom Street. I obliged, besides being outside gave me some other air to breath to help me calm down. We strolled and talked and I found out he proudly owned a small garage in Redding. I was pleased he really was a nice, regular guy. I decided I would give him the best sex of his life.

We cut down an alley going back to his motel and then suddenly I was totally caught off guard. I didn't feel it coming. There wasn't any pain, but I got slammed into a brick wall upsetting trashcans and

rotting boxes. It took me a few seconds to pull myself together then I shot straight up and turned. I heard a muffled whimper then a short scream. There in the alley was a figure sucking hard on Fred's throat. I knew in that instant he wouldn't survive.

“What the fuck, you moron!” I screamed at him. My voice came from deep inside of me. He turned and glared at me, his mouth wide, his eyes glazed. It was Jamie. He'd been turned and was now in a powerful early-stage feeding frenzy. The smell must have been too much for him. This didn't stop my decision to kill him.

Before I could move, I was grabbed from behind by two powerful arms and carried to a nearby roof. “Leave. Now! You missed your feed. Don't do anything stupid.”

The voice froze me, enough that I couldn't move. My inner body began to sing out in pain and memory. All I wanted to do was get away from there and get home.

There were still too many people around so I raced along the top of the closest buildings and made my way to the highway overpass and dropped down near the end of Van Ness. I raced up to 14th across Guerrero Street and made for my flat. That voice! His smell? My brain was spinning in my head and I felt as if something terrible had just punctured my universe.

CHAPTER 16

He dropped down silently as I reached for my gate landing 20 feet from me. The air changed and if I could have passed out, I would have. It was Tom, my Tom, but a hyper version in full leather drag.

He was bigger, fitter, with big thighs in Levi's covered in thick, black leather chaps. His crotch looked magnificent and pushed out with the top strap making it even more pronounced. He wore big black boots that came up just below his knees. Covering his upper body was a tight fitting vest over a black shirt rolled up above his elbows, black, studded leather bands on each hairy wrist.

His jawline was stronger and more chiseled, his skin clear and fine. I couldn't believe it. There was my Tom, who was supposed to have died a watery death, but was alive and had become more handsome? He now had a thick, auburn mustache over his top lip, clipped and masculine. The total effect was jaw-dropping. And then, to cap it off, his eyes were golden brown with black irises.

He must be the star of the new leather crowd streaming into San Francisco, those filling up the hotels, the kinkier bathhouses, apartments and bars proliferating throughout the South of Market scene. He was truly the Tom of Finland cover boy.

He didn't move, except for slowly beginning to take off his black gloves. He looked around and knew we were alone. He smiled slightly and said, "Hello, Chris." There was that rich, deep voice again. A part of me inside began to weep. I couldn't show him this, I knew that straight away, but the body within me wanted to rush to him and throw myself into his arms. It was pushing to get beyond my exterior, but I held firm.

"I've felt someone, a presence out in the wider city these past two years and now I know it's you! This is more bizarre to me than anything that has happened since I arrived in The City including being turned. When did you know I was here?"

I rushed on not letting him speak.

"Before you do anything, and it's worrying me right now, you might want to hurt me and I'm not sure what I've done to you to bring this on. Please tell me what happened to you after you left me in your car for the coast. I have to know for so many reasons. Your death was so painful and, and here you are now, right now, standing in front of me!"

I took a few steps towards him and he put up his right hand to stop me from approaching further. His eyes flashed with such menace I backed away.

Slowly, he relaxed a little. He continued to look at me so intensely I felt naked before him. If I hadn't been on the edge of fight or flight, I would have been completely aroused. He then decided to speak.

"As you remember, I'd taken off at dusk, got through Melbourne and down to the coastal road. As I left Aireys Inlet I stopped to pick up a traveling tourist, who was hitching. He told me he'd missed the last bus to Lorne and hoped he'd get a ride from some 'kind stranger'."

He snorted looking down for a moment, kicking viciously at the curb.

“We were somewhere near Cinema Point and I was telling him about the school and what we were going to do at the camp. I then mentioned that I needed to be more careful navigating the bends.”

“He then said, ‘Oh I wouldn’t worry about that my friend, you’re not going to ever have to worry about being careful again.’ And was instantly at my throat.”

“I blacked out and woke up being lifted out of the water. The sound of the sea and waves were crashing in my head. I caught a glimpse of a headlight still on, shining in the water. My car was slipping into the sea off the rocks. I was a puppet in his grasp. I knew I was dying. I briefly saw him, wet and bedraggled as he was, bite into his own wrist then drip his blood into my mouth.”

Pain flashed across Tom’s eyes and I could see the muscles in his jaw clench hard.

“I know I screamed as the pain became terrible throughout my body then I passed out again.”

“He told me later he’d found a small cave a few feet away and after putting me inside had crawled in pulling some boulders behind him sealing us in from the light of day and the inevitable search party that would have come looking.”

I was stunned as Tom recounted his turning. I nodded to the searching look he was now giving me. How he would have wanted to be rescued, brought back to the school and the life we had together.

“It must have been horrible, Tom. I’m so, so, sorry.”

“Well, yes, it was obviously harsher than what’s happened to you, Chris, isn’t that right?” he suddenly threw at me. I was stunned hearing this.

“What do you mean, Tom?”

I was doing my best not to completely fall apart with the ex-love-of-my-life standing in front of me obviously scorning and hating me right now.

I fought to stay grounded and reached into that level of my beingness that couldn't be moved either way, that provided me a strength to stay strong, alive and balanced. Yet, I was angry and felt my energy move across and touch him.

“My whole life has been altered just like yours has been! I can't believe you would feel that my experience, my turning, was something I asked for or have found less painful or traumatic.”

Again, he grunted and wavered for a second between his self-hatred and having to face up to that tiny remaining human part of him not yet fully blackened and blotted out from his being. I fished more deeply for it.

I desperately wanted him to stay and talk to me on the street because there was no way I was going to invite him into my place. I had to be sure the animal in him didn't want to kill me and set him free from the pain he was going through having to remember our past together. I urged him on.

“You watched me in Melbourne didn't you? So often I felt your eyes on me. I knew it! I remember looking out of my window, thinking I could see you off in the distance and I remember once – I know now – I actually saw you out on the sidewalk then you suddenly vanished.”

He put his hands up to his head for a second or two scornfully looking at me as I walked back and forth on the sidewalk remembering those months after he was taken from me.

For some reason he had to push on with his story. I could feel it. He had to get it all out now, tonight. No one was around, thank goodness, but I made us stand just in front of my apartment building right next door because there were no bedrooms in the front. I turned, looked into his eyes again and waited.

“When I came to, it was night again. He was sitting out on a rock waiting for me. His name was Raoul, he was Spanish and he’d come to Australia after the war as a refugee. He’d been turned in the 1930’s during the rise of Franco. He said my smell was just right to make me into a vampire and he wanted to do it for years. Something I didn’t understand for a long time to come.”

“You know about the hunger. We would find places to sleep during the day. At night he taught me to stop, woo, then tap blood without killing someone. It was easier then, less people. But then, when we got back to Melbourne hitting suburbs like Fitzroy where there were a few homeless, he taught me how to kill and not get caught.”

Our eyes were locked on each other, each of us trying to find a way through this first meeting. I felt such different waves of emotion in the 20 feet between us it was hard to keep focused. I was also furious he’d let Jamie kill Fred but knew it wasn’t the time to bring this up.

The wind moved through the palm trees lining Dolores Street. It hissed as it brushed past us letting us know the fog was on its way into The City from the ocean.

“I’d stand outside the school grounds and watch you come from dinner back to your house. I’d watch your window to catch glimpses of you.” He stopped again, controlling himself. I could feel his internal fight, the blacker blood struggling inside of him.

“What were you thinking about during this time? And, what did you want from me?” I insisted.

I didn't want to ask him if he wanted to convert me or even kill me, because it hadn't happened. I just wanted him to tell me the truth, to reach into himself somehow to see if there was anything I could help salvage.

"I killed Raoul."

"What!" I exclaimed, thrown back immediately. "Your Maker!?"

"He followed me a couple of times and masked his presence."

He challenged my look of horror, his voice getting louder.

"In our lair I'd told him all about my former life and he could feel the waves of love that still held me back from fully turning into the kind of vampire he wanted."

The pupils in Tom's eyes dilated briefly and I noticed my breathing had slowed.

"One night he appeared inside the school grounds standing directly in my vision. I was behind a tree on the street where I always stood when I came to find you."

"He smiled at me, mocking my weakness to somehow hold onto you and reaching into my mind told me how disgustingly flawed I was and that the only way I could move forward was to see you dead. Then he vanished. I shot up onto the top of your building and sat there all night to make sure he didn't try that night."

"When I got back to our lair, he had drunk and was getting ready to sleep. When I challenged him he ordered me as my Maker to submit to him and to kill you the following night."

"Something in me snapped, Chris, and because I'd just been turned I was stronger than any vampire around. I smashed the chair and table between us then as I batted away the broken wood, a chair leg flipped up in the air between us, I saw it, and I drove it home into his chest. He died while screaming for vengeance, black blood

splashing onto everything, his form becoming a puddle in front of me.”

“Suddenly I was horribly alone. My teeth ached for a week. I wasn’t sure what I’d done but I knew in my being I’d broken a fundamental vampire law and had to distance myself from Melbourne and the few vampires I’d met, plus get out of the country fast.”

“I cleaned up the mess, slept, came to try and see you one more time – that’s the time you actually did see me. I went straight to Melbourne Ports, found a ship leaving for Panama and went aboard. When I made land again, I came up through Central America, Mexico then into the States through Texas. I made for the West Coast. I’ve been here ever since.”

He looked at me intensely again, his hands on his hips. Before I could say anything, he pointed his finger at me and yelled angrily as quietly as he could.

“That’s what I did for you, Chris! I left you safe and on the best path for you and for our memories of one another! You were to go on for both of us!”

He stood looking at me with an accusative posture like a big, belligerent child.

And suddenly it all clicked into place.

“You’re angry with me for coming over here and becoming a vampire, aren’t you? You think because you’ve gone through all this torture and yes, killing your Maker” – I instinctively shuddered inside – “that this is somehow my fault?! Is this why you’re so angry? That the sacrifice you made means nothing?”

The pain on his face was terrible flying between a rigid hardness with constricting black pupils in his golden eyes to large diluted ones in a matter of moments. There was a tremendous fight going on in him.

I knew he'd been tracking me right from the early days in The City. He'd been protecting me from other blood takers. It was him in the night sky over Nevada, fleeing from me seeing him in the bars, and that night in Roberto's lair.

He looked so lost and in so much pain for so long. He must hate being a vampire! I was tempted to fly into his arms and hug him, but knew I couldn't.

"Tom, from the bottom of my new heart I thank you for saving my human life. It meant so much to me as I spent the next couple of years getting over you and getting myself out of Australia to here."

"The truth is I'm happy as this type of vampire. I know I'm lucky – I put my hands up in supplication – and I can only imagine the shock you must have felt to find my scent in your city. And, please! Don't keep punishing yourself, or me, for this! Let's keep meeting to talk about this. Please!"

Suddenly there was a soft whirring sound and Sandor appeared at my side. "Are you alright?" he asked taking my arm. My eyes hadn't left Tom's and instantly I wished Sandor hadn't come. I knew this would let Tom off the hook and he'd leave.

"Ahh, so your great Maker arrives, eh? The vamp who got you in the Mission grounds." Tom's hatred and jealousy of Sandor changed his entire presence.

"Hello, Tom, I know why you're here, but I'm not sure what you're thinking of doing, so I think it's best you leave."

Tom had taken a step forward as Sandor had arrived then stopped. He was shaking his head and started to put his gloves on.

I implored him to look at me but he wouldn't. He smiled again at Sandor viciously saying, "Take good care of him. There's a lot of very bad people out in the night air."

He shot straight up into the air wrenching something out of me as he left. I was standing at the edge of a large abyss again. Sandor struggled to hold me and help me back into the apartment.

CHAPTER 17

I lay on the sofa staring at the ceiling. I could not believe what had just happened. A senseless killing, the turning of a former student into a vampire of the worst kind, and the reality of Tom, the enormity of having Tom again in my life, both of us now a part of the un-dead, our former dreams and lives together, the fodder of history.

Why didn't I know he was in San Francisco this whole time? With instant clarity I knew that besides Sandor, Roberto would know some of this story as well. I lay there, unwilling to move. My physical body seethed with anger, my inner body fluctuating between pain and waves of love I had no idea how to direct or to catch a hold of; I was deeply conflicted. And on top of all this was an insatiable need to feed. I was sick to my stomach.

Sandor stood at the fireplace. I knew he was watching me. I could feel him reach out to me after he saw what had happened.

"How long have you known about Tom, Sandor?" I quietly asked.

Silent for a moment then with his soothing, controlled voice, said, "When I started tracking you I knew there was another vampire on the scene besides me. I knew it wasn't a gay vamp for reasons I've already explained. This meant the daylight hours were safe."

“I thought I was in competition with our cousin vampires so at night I would hover to keep you from you being turned.”

I continued looking at the ceiling, my anger blocking part of his vibrations.

“I realized over those months that this vamp wasn’t trying to attack you, he was not only tracking you, but also warning off any other blood taker from coming near you. It puzzled me.”

I caught him move out of the corner of my eye. He was slowly pacing.

“When you were with your friends or staying in for the night, I’d visit blood vamp acquaintances and ask around. There’s another hideaway in an old mansion over in the wealthy part of town, a totally different nest than South of Market. A friend in that coven told me that there was a big vamp tracking a specific mortal and no one in San Francisco was allowed to go near him. When you told me there was someone following you I put two and two together.” He stopped for a moment, than started again.

“Both groups knew of Tom. He came into The City with enormous power. He’d been in Central America and brought some dark arts with him, a vampire of Mayan descent called a Camazotz, and from Mexico, a female steeped in the mysteries of Tiahuelpuchi.”

“He was in high demand, well educated and incredibly sexual, also apparently adventurous and extremely cruel, and with his friends from the South, pushed their parties beyond the bounds of regular S&M. He’s created a strong following in both the straight Bachannale and the gay scene.”

Listening, I was fascinated and amazed by Tom’s journey. Sandor stopped for a moment to gauge my reaction then pushed on.

“The danger, and I got this from those close to Roberto, is that Tom’s a good organizer and leader, and no one knows yet when the power he wields might be unleashed or used to further either his agenda, whatever that is, or what his cohort may see as greater freedom for blood vampires in general. And, there’s word he has his own residence with invitation-only people allowed.” He then looked directly at me.

“Chris, I didn’t tell you about Tom because I didn’t know it was him for a long time. I found out a few months after I turned you and since he hadn’t approached you or bothered you, I let it go.”

I swung myself up into a sitting position and looked at him. We both stared purposely at each other.

“So after you knew, as I’d told you in intimate detail about my past and my relationship with this vampire as a mortal, you decided I shouldn’t know he was the vampire who was stalking me? Really? That was your decision?” I exploded. “Or, maybe you felt I wasn’t old enough to know my own mind? How dare you! This is my life! You took on the responsibility of turning me and therefore of being transparent, especially to someone like me! I’m not some great smelling, foolish kid. I’m an acclaimed educator with a good brain! I can handle the truth and this is a ‘truth’ I should have known about!”

“I want you to leave, for right now I uninvite you from entering my apartment.” I was standing by now with my pained, inner body screaming out to either hurt someone or to find a corner to curl up in and weep.

Sandor looked shocked but said nothing. He dropped his arms to his sides resigned to leave. He was compelled by my order. As soon as I knew he had left the neighborhood, I raced to Dolores Park and gulped sperm from the first cock I could find.

I am unsure of what happened to me over the next three months. I had never been a “bad” teenager, but I think I made up for it over the next few weeks. A lot of it is a blur. Thankfully, the school year was ending so I started my efforts to get into the science program at UCSF slated to begin in February of 1975.

When I was called on to do anything responsible at school I rose to the occasion, but the spark went out of all of it for me. Something was breaking up inside and I could not stop it or heal it. I actually felt a shadow tracking my psyche trying to drag me into a state of agony and despair.

So, I pushed all this pain to the back and decided to really party, and party hard. I fed more often to get a dopamine high, and that kept me high for a day, then by nighttime I did it again. I hung out in bars all over town and fucked my brains silly. It was never enough. I always had a gaping hole in my chest waiting for me in the small hours of the next day.

Part of me wanted to punish someone for what I had become and I began to think more and more about the sexual high I got when I watched Jamie and the others being hurt and humiliated.

As December began, I made my way down to Roberto’s lair on a Friday night just before midnight. I hit on a guy on the way to the bars and had him quickly in a side street. High off my feed and feeling reckless, I banged loudly on the door and turned around immediately to be met by the large vamp I had the pleasure of meeting on my first visit.

“Don’t you ever change your outfit?” I asked with some bitchiness, looking him up and down. He stared at me, flexing and trying to look in control. I knew he wanted me so badly. I could smell his salty lust.

“So you want in, do you?” came from his small, bearded mouth. “What are you going to do for me if I let you inside?”

“I might let you look at it, but not let you touch it,” I replied as coyly as I could muster.

“I don’t think that’s fair, do you?” His small teeth showed through his tight smile.

“I might let you smell it and lick it once or twice, but that’d be it.” I moved my crotch with my right hand teasing him.

He liked playing with his power and me tantalizing him. He honestly thought it would go further. I knew it would not.

His head suddenly jerked, he roughly brushed past me, gave the signal and the door opened up. I strode smiling past his now sullen face. I could hear Roberto’s voice and our little game evaporated.

The scene was the same but with a bigger, noisier crowd: the loud disco music, a mixture of vamps and mortals with the intense smells of blood, body fluids and alcohol. It hit me in a rush taking me even higher. I soon had a huge boner pressing to be relieved.

Roberto was in the same seat at the bar where I last left him and he smiled as I approached.

“I’d like to say you look and smell as good as you did last time, my friend, but ...” he shrugged, then slyly looked around. “I’ll admit though, for many here you are still the hottest arrival tonight.”

He sniffed, turned and ordered me a whiskey over ice. As I sat on a bar stool next to him, his scent hit me and I was wrapped in shrouds of desire so fast that I started to leak. I had to put a hand on the bar to steady myself.

“Are you okay, Chris?” His smile seemed genuine but mocking at the same time. I felt drugged and anticipatory, a part of me hyped to do something crazy. The place began to spin. He put his hand on my knee.

“Look at me,” he commanded. “Chris. Now!”

I focused looking into his beautiful, dark eyes.

“You’re feeding too much, that’s obvious. Here, let me check you out more, okay?” He came closer and his smell came with him. “You’re in a lot of pain, young man, and I’m not sure you being here is helping you. But we can try.”

As if on cue, a beautiful couple appeared next to him, then both turned and stared at me with unblinking eyes.

“Raffy, my boy, why don’t you and Simone take Chris into the back and help him come back down to earth?” My inner body retreated as I willed the animal inside me, forward. I felt my outer skin push out. All my muscles tightened, my throbbing cock wanted so badly to be out of my pants and fucking or getting wildly sucked, preferably both.

Simone had long auburn hair, white skin and beautiful, full red lips. She wore a wine colored leather vest buttoned up just under her small breasts and tight, flared black jeans over high-heeled boots.

Raffy was about 5’ 9”, a beautifully proportioned little fucker with dark brown hair swept back off a very handsome face. He had a sophisticated, hippy look about him and wore dark, striped, flared pants and a black pirate shirt. They could have been 100 years old but looked about 21.

“Only the best ones for you tonight, my darling,” whispered Roberto as he squeezed my leg hard. “I’ll answer your questions an hour before dawn arrives. Now go.”

They grabbed me arm in arm and took me into the noisy back room. There was a vacant bed toward the left-hand corner under an ornate chandelier.

Raffy pushed Simone down in front of me, his eyes never leaving mine. He had a wicked smile. He reached over to me and undid my fly and let my cock jerk itself out. He dropped to his knees and began to savor my hard dick. His long, wet tongue was a magic muscle and I heard myself groan and my legs give way. He came off me and slid his eyes to Simone, now on her knees pushing her hair to one side of her head and neck. He pulled the back of her pants down still looking at me then turned and looked at her ass.

I moved forward and knelt on the edge of the bed allowing my cock to play under her. Simone arched, then let me slip into her body.

My hard cum-slicked dick adjusted itself and I began one of the smoothest fucks of my life. She gripped me guiding me to spots she wanted massaged. It was incredibly hot.

I grabbed her hips and began to move hard into her. After a while she moaned out to me to slow down and let her move herself on me.

Raffy stood over my face with his large, uncut, hard cock out, pants around his ankles. He had one hand masturbating, and with the other reached under my cock and took my balls. He looked at me as he squeezed and moved them around making me groan and gasp with pleasure and pain.

Simone moved faster and Raffy pulled down on my balls almost too tight when suddenly I involuntarily yelled out to the rafters. I shot deep wads of cum into her as she arched and held, and then released my cock. I heard her scream with pleasure and watched muscular Raffy shoot a huge load all over my chest then the remaining jizz on to her entire back, leaving an intoxicating cum smell everywhere.

Still inside her I slid onto the bed and started kissing her from behind. Raffy slipped into Simone's arms, and with one arm across my back we moved as a unit and started all over again.

It was late when I found my way back into the front and grabbed a beer handed me by a bartender.

I saw Roberto, now sitting in a large chair to the right of the bar. He held court with four vamps hanging onto his every word. He saw me, said something and they all moved away.

“Chris, sit with me.” It was a mixture of an order and an invitation. I could tell he had fed since I arrived as his eyes had a more intense golden light in them. I sat back from him unwilling to be influenced by his hypnotic body smell.

“I’m the only one in The City that knew about Tom and you being mortals together. So you can see why it was a great pleasure and interest for me to finally meet you. By the way Tom has left San Francisco and moved to New York for a while. No one is sure if and when he will return.”

This shocked and disappointed me but I didn’t let Roberto see my inner turmoil.

He moved a middle finger around the rim of his whiskey glass as he spoke.

“When Tom came to San Francisco he created an immediate stir initially ruffling feathers causing somewhat of a showdown.” He paused and looked slowly around his small empire and finally put his empty glass down.

“As you might know from Sandor, I’ve been here since The Great Fire.” I shook my head ‘no’, he pouted and looked surprised and a little hurt.

“Along with another vampire uptown, this city has been under our control for many years, so Tom’s brashness, shall we say, caused us to pause and take stock.” He smiled at me and took another drink being handed to him by a passing waiter.

“It was accepted that the friends he brought with him added a formidable edge to the play in town and so there was a standoff. He and I established a wary relationship, then a more trusting friendship, so when you arrived he came to me to let it be known you were not to be touched. By the way, you did smell delicious. You still do.” He smiled again.

“As do you, Roberto,” I replied and kept my eyes on his face. His smell was of sweated toffee, Colombian coffee and dark chocolate.

He nodded in thanks, raised his glass briefly and then went on with his story of Tom.

“The trouble started when Sandor raped you. Tom had this long-term conflict in him about you staying a mortal.”

I reeled, shocked at the way he described my conversion to becoming a vampire.

“Yes, Chris, that’s what we call your type of turning. It’s unnatural and unholy!” He almost hissed this out at me.

Roberto’s eyes flashed briefly with a mixture of blood lust, grief and anger at the loss of me to my style of vampirism. I began to see what my turning must have meant to Tom, that I was suddenly out of his reach.

“Tom was crazed for a while and there were several spectacular deaths around the Bay Area that began to concern a number of police departments. We used our contacts in City Hall to quiet down a deeper investigation, especially South of Market. We put the blame onto the killers of queers in The City making the press scapegoat them, and that worked very well.”

“That brings us to now and I believe your recent meeting with Tom?” He looked at me to see how I had found that event. I kept very still and let out a small sigh.

“Because I thought Tom had died several years ago, it was a terrible shock,” I said quietly, looking down at the floor. “I still can’t believe it.”

My crotch felt damp and sticky and I wanted a shower.

“He’s not the man I knew, I know that, but I can still see him, that man, locked up inside of him!” I looked up to see if Roberto understood what I was saying. He nodded and replied.

“Tom has enormous power in him. I don’t know who turned him, he won’t say, but along with his adventures down South, he’s become so strong in many, many ways ...” He stopped suddenly as if he had said too much. What stunned me was that Roberto and the San Francisco vampire community did not know he had killed his Maker.

“Is it because of me he’s gone to the East Coast?” I hurried on.

“I’d say that’s partly true,” Roberto clarified, “but I think he’s planning something else anyway. I really don’t know anything about it.” He looked away from me and I wondered what he was hiding and possibly a part of.

There was movement around the rooms – I felt it – an urgent wave went through all the vampires. Roberto looked to a skylight above us.

“We have to go now,” he said. “It’s time to rest, but I hope now, you’ll come and spend more time with us.”

He looked at me with what I thought, and maybe hoped for, was a mixture of desire and genuine warmth.

“Especially as you’re not spending as much time now with Sandor.” He stood and challenged me with a slight, mocking smile.

I looked blankly at him and thanked him for the night. I went for the front door along with a number of mortal guests. The morning light hit the fog that whirled above us as it came down silently from the noisy overpass.

CHAPTER 18

I behaved badly for some time after the shock of Tom, did not return anyone's calls, neither visited anyone nor explain what I was going through. I felt more "vampire" than I'd ever felt. The pull toward Tom was profound. Part of me hardened and I had little time for human beings.

The boys on Hartford had not seen me for about a month really pissing off Scott. It became clear when I called a few days before, Brian answered the phone and told me he was not there, but I heard a laugh from the living room that could only be Scott's. My fear was I had to eventually tell Scott something about why I went off the rails. I loved the guy and did not want him to be bewildered forever, and as I felt reckless, I thought I might tell him a story close to the truth.

After I got back from Roberto's nest and had a long shower, I lay on the couch thinking deeply about the past few weeks. I knew my inner body was trying to reassert itself, some voice, an awareness, was beginning to call to me. I recalled Roberto's hiss as I was leaving, a warning to get myself back on a normal feeding pattern.

"You're not looking as pretty, Chris, and that bothers me," had been a concern of that parting message. Maybe it was time to get back on track? Knowing Tom was not coming back to San Francisco for the foreseeable future made a huge difference.

I broke up with the big puppy from Chicago in mid-November so I could use this as a reason for my bad behavior when explaining why I had gone rogue. I hurt him because I decided in my demented state to finally go down on him. He begged me to suck his cock and after the confrontation with Tom, plus my desire to push everyone away, I fed off of him. True to Sandor's words, the next day, I had no more desire for him.

He sobbed in the hallway of my apartment looking at me with such hurt. I remained cold on the couch, my insides squirming, but I was held down by my vampire desires. By the time he stomped down the stairs he angrily yelled, "You should learn to eat meat and potatoes because your eating habits are 'super weird!'"

Now it was mid-December and the holidays were approaching. As I lay there with the day turning into night, I played with the idea of getting back on track. Could I do it given my headspace?

The first step was to start feeding on the old schedule. I knew that. Then, to tell everyone who mattered to me, including school colleagues as we were going to end the year during that next week, I was pretty messed up after having a terrible break up with my boyfriend. It was a safe, plausible white lie.

And then, there was Sandor.

The minute I softened in my attitude toward him, I felt different, as if some inner connection was being revitalized. As I relaxed on the couch with my eyes shut, I felt for the first time in a while a tentative balance, then suddenly, I felt an urgent shift move throughout my entire body.

There was that song again! I watched ecstatically as a multi-colored weaving pattern began at my feet and danced all the way up through my heart deep into my brain.

My body slowly lifted up off the couch. I could not fight it anymore, I did not want to, even though some of the rich, dark-red blood in me screamed out in desperation to stay angry and to punish myself and others. I slipped away and took off into the night sky knowing exactly where I was going.

As I flew across the seas I felt my outer skin slip away. My physical form dissolved in sections melting into the air around me. I sparkled with thousands of colored lights, my spirits soaring again.

It was light when I arrived at Hallstatt. Skidding onto the water, I put my arms out wide, found I took a few exhilarating steps on the lake itself before the portal appeared and I stepped through. This time I was fully conscious: I was alert, awake and understood there was an important purpose to this trip.

I found myself on a rich, green lawn on the edge of a magnificent city that nestled up against a huge mountain range. The buildings moved away along one side into a long valley. I excitedly bound up to the top of a huge tree and saw that along the other side there was a coastal range running right up to the city suburbs holding back an enormous lake or sea. The city was built over low-lying hills at the entrance to this valley, full of glorious white spires and gold-domed buildings.

Jumping back down, I was on a slight hill in a park with huge oak, elm and plane trees behind me. The atmosphere was still and peaceful. I felt comfortably wrapped up, as if everything about this place was organic and breathing to its own steady rhythm. The city vibrated intelligence and I connected into a presence that fed and sustained all life.

Unable to contain my excitement about being in this magical place, I looked around to see what I should do next. I saw a long, white building down to my right that skirted along the side of the water so I instinctively made for it. I felt others around me as I crossed one street and found the street that took me down and around to the

front of the building. I caught glimpses of beings – some who saw me and smiled, others that were in concurrent dimensions – here, but not here in this time frame.

I walked up the dozen or so white marble stairs to a modernist structure into a large and lengthy foyer. The light when I arrived now flooded into this enormous space.

I quickly turned when I heard my name called then watched as a man, possibly in his 40's with dark blond hair falling down to his shoulders, strode over to meet me. He was my height with a solid, taut frame wearing a dark blue top in a rich, thick, woolen material teamed with dark pants and black boots.

“We’re so pleased you’ve come back, Chris,” he warmly greeted, taking my hands in his. “My name is Rafe.”

I was mesmerized by his deep, blue eyes and handsome open face and for some reason I was close to tears as he indicated with a turn of his head to follow him.

We moved through two big doors that opened as we approached then entered a large room that looked out over the sparkling waters.

It was a reception room with two sections. Each one had a circular configuration of large, comfortable chairs, couches and tables anchored by two enormous multi-colored rugs. Against the back wall was a magnificent series of slowly changing digital images depicting the creation of the universe. At some point I knew I wanted to spend hours in this room deciphering and learning their secrets.

In the far section underneath an enormous white chandelier sat five beings. Rafe introduced me slowly and deliberately to each one. It was difficult at first to tell if all of them were actually in the room. I know my eyes were untrained in the inner worlds and I wondered if this was how they saw me! I now knew I had left my body behind lying on the couch.

Everyone was gracious looking deep into my eyes to strengthen our connection. I also felt a scrutiny, an edge of anxiety at the corners of mouths about who I was and what made me up. I lay on a petri dish under a microscope.

On a couch sat two beings, neither male nor female. I knew they would be the final authorities on our conversation. Both had greenish skin and larger eyes and noses than we had on earth.

They wore loose, black, neck high tunics. I was not given their names. The drinks in front of them bubbled slightly, the smell of something like cinnamon wafting into the air.

The other three were from earth, two men and a woman from a time well before mine.

Elk, looked tall and sat bolt upright in his chair, he had shoulder length graying blond hair, a long straight nose over a full mouth with a smile that lit up his entire face.

Serge was in a dark brown shirt and pants and wore Birkenstock's. He nodded a lot and watched me intently. He was small and reminded me of Toby. Sylvie was also small, smartly dressed in navy pants and a tight gray top. She looked kind, but steely and businesslike. I assumed a strong inner strength in all three; each was a gay vampire. I longed to talk with them alone!

Rafe whispered to me as we sat that the two sages were from another dimension, part of The Council in the galactic system monitoring stability and balance.

I sat in a chair facing the group next to the sofa Sylvie, Elk and Serge were on. Rafe sat to my right in a chair next to the sofa the intergalactic couple occupied. When I looked at them as casually as I could they seemed to inhabit the entire space.

"Thank you all for being here," Rafe said starting the meeting. He looked from one to the other finally resting his eyes on me. I tensed a little.

“Chris, we all understand this is new, and hopefully rewarding, for you and my sense is that this is exactly what you want to do with your life. Am I right?” He was smiling.

I turned away and looked out to the lake, thought for a moment remembering my first day after being turned, the images that had flown through me of the loneliness and otherness I'd always felt as a human, especially pre-Tom, then the sense of “coming home” when I accepted becoming a vampire.

“Yes,” I replied and nodded. “Even being here, like this, seems normal and part of a bigger plan I know I've wanted to be a part of for as long as I can recall.”

Then the couple spoke to me in unison. “Do you remember when you were turned and you felt your turning had real purpose deep within your consciousness? Well this is that reality. You are one of those beings who slipped into multiple dimensions in that moment and touched into our awareness. We know Sandor had some inkling of your nature, he knew you were special, that he had to get to you, but even he did not know of your real importance,” they explained.

“The slow grinding Wheels of Life in the universe, some call it karma, some call it chance, has you and several other players in a pivotal position in this time. We believe if you do your best, events can occur to put a troubling train of events, right again.” The Beings stopped and fell silent.

I looked quickly around and the others seemed to come out of a trance. I was glad it hadn't been me alone who thought my heart had stopped beating for a few seconds.

“Good!” exclaimed Elk who stood straight up. He had to be 6'6”. He quickly moved to the space between us all then began to speak.

“It's usual that someone is born on a planet in almost every generation who is going to be a vital part of either moving that planet

forward or helping it to be saved from a great calamity. Although we don't directly interfere with the way each civilization is making its collective decisions, we do work to find these people," - he gave me a nod - "and give them assistance to smooth a way forward so certain balances are maintained." I now understood why everyone had me under scrutiny.

"This group is formed because we don't want blood vampires to be discovered in the 21st century on Earth! It would create panic in the world, open it to disarray, pushing science along too quickly once humans realized their presence was actually more than just a magical horror show."

"They're not ready to know of other dimensions or that access to these realms is possible. Quantum physics is moving along nicely. Discovery will come with time, but not yet. Other events must take place before this happens."

"The immediate threat, of course, is that blood vampires have stepped up their game and may expose us all!"

Sylvie leaned quickly across and placed a palm on my forehead. Closing my eyes in reaction to this, I "saw" my some of my role in the future, the scientific work I would be involved with at UCSF, Stanford and I think in London as well. I saw my goal: to help combat the rise of blood takers, to keep the balance through a treatment for this virus, to weed out the violence and stop the rise of a new breed of vampire - a super being - that was in its infancy, yet ready to manifest.

I then heard Sylvie's voice as she removed her hand. I opened my eyes and turned to listen to her.

"A virus got into the blood of vampires in Central America in the Mayan civilization. There's always been talk of that race coming in contact with aliens and in a way it's true. It happened through complicated dimensional physics and a visit by a council member

from a planet called Draxx, who, while planning support for this Mayan ruler, allowed an unbalanced being to accompany him, a female, who broke her vows and stayed, killing him, and closing the links back to their dimension. She became a powerful leader, subverting the role of the mother moon goddess living among the Mayans for several centuries. She brought down an area in Central America by mating with local men introducing an incompatible gene structure that got into the blood of the people and killed most of them over the next few centuries. When vampires, who had become the priesthood elites serving the Kings of many Mayan kingdoms, drank the human blood, they realized an increased power source. They remained night-bound, but all their faculties were heightened and strengthened. We believe the goal of the current power brokers is to walk in sunlight.”

“I know you’ve read the history of the sacrificial slaughter of captured prisoners on the high alters on the pyramids? Well, as night fell the rites became even more diabolical,” she continued. “It’s where the ritual of ripping out the entire heart became popular, a vampire delight. As the people died, the enriched vamps moved down into South America and up into Mexico. There’s truth in many members of the Catholic Church becoming vampire brethren and all the Hallowed Nights of the Dead in these countries comes from the blending of this evil source into Catholic religious practice.

“We’ve been able to hold the borders of America closed to them for almost 1,000 years but this has recently changed as you, yourself, now know.”

Elk who had sat down leaned forward in his chair. “We believe you know one of the leaders?” he asked, staring straight into my eyes. “A vamp you knew as a mortal in Australia? Did you notice now how strong he has become? How much more there is of him?”

“This breed by the way,” Elk continued, “as much as we know, is exclusive. They don’t want all vamps to be like them, but want power for themselves alone. They’re very selective and eventually want to build an army around the world to control other vampires, then they’ll move onto human kind.”

He was talking of Tom, of course, and my knowledge of his hyper presence. I understood now what he had become: an overwrought facsimile of himself, an almost grotesque cartoon made potent by this virus. I kept the fact to myself I had witnessed a small well of humanity still locked deep down in him, lost somewhere, and that I possessed the only bucket that could possibly drop down into that murky place when the time came to confront him.

“We know you’ll get into the right area at the university, Chris. Your results and experience warrant acceptance. The great advantage is your heightened abilities now that you are a vampire.”

“Your work will be important and you’ll have to let others take the credit for it. You know you can never be famous, as there will come a day when you have to move on, and we have ways to help you at that time.” Elk nodded at me, sat back down and smiled.

Serge, suddenly spoke up loudly. “Your job is to find the cure to stop them!” He stopped, looked around for confirmation and then felt embarrassed when his eyes met the two on the couch. Slowly they nodded in agreement and Serge sat back satisfied, punctuating what everyone was thinking and why they were here to meet and help me learn how to play my part.

I had no idea how this would all turn out or if I was the man for the job. All I could think of was how to put one foot in front of the other.

Strategies were then shared, plans made for another meeting then we all stood up to leave. After saying goodbye to Serge and the other two vamps, I turned and watched the two beings fade and disappear.

As they left, I felt a powerful, warm flash dramatically hit me moving throughout my entire body. I had a momentary visualization of my past, present and into my future. Reeling, I heard an inner voice say, "There are great challenges coming, allow these gifts to help you meet them." I came to with my hand on a wall.

"Can we walk and talk, Chris?"

Rafe raised an eyebrow and put his hand on my shoulder. We set off in silence back toward the park. As we climbed up to where the trees began to shade us, he stopped and looked out across the water to the hills beyond.

"You must know that Sandor is a part of this group, right?"

"I do, of course," I replied. I began to feel sheepish.

"Good," sighed Rafe. "He did not come because you have currently banned him from your presence." It was a statement not a condemnation.

We walked again, the ancient tree boughs making a vaulted ceiling as we climbed slowly up onto the crest of the hill.

"I was upset and struck out at him. I know now it was critical he arrived when he did the night Tom came after me. I was completely unprepared to take the next step with Tom. I could have done something stupid. Sandor was protecting me and had been all along."

Rafe nodded and smiled as we looked at each other knowing I would fix this.

We hugged and as I felt myself about to leave he added, "You can start night classes during the first half of this coming year, resign at State and start full time at UCSF after the summer break. The path is cleared for you. We'll see each other again around that time." He waved and we moved apart at a dizzying speed.

Back on the couch in my apartment I sat up, then stood up.

“My god!” I said out loud. “How many lives can I have at any one time?” The revelations about other dimensions, strange beings, the possibility of inner travel, and the sobering facts about why Tom was the way he was, had me pacing up and down the hallway.

It was mind blowing, yet my body felt absolutely at peace with itself. My inner system hummed and my outer body was strengthened even more than before I left. My flesh and blood, sinews, hair and bones had melded into a perfectly tuned machine. Instinctively, I knew my skin could not be easily cut. I felt I could conquer the universe! Then I remembered what I needed to do right away.

I opened myself up, closed my eyes and invited him back into the house and into my life.

It was 1 am. I had only been gone a few hours. I wasn't hungry so ate just one piece of fruit and began to straighten up the apartment. He did not appear right away. I was carrying clothes to the laundry when I felt a slight change in the air.

I put the basket down and walked into the living room. There was Sandor standing at the fireplace with a broad smile on his face. We both put our hands on our hips and realizing this, put our arms down to our sides. Laughing and shaking my head I sat on the couch just looking up at him.

“Chris, you look so well!” he exclaimed, “There's a true, deep fire in your eyes! Can you become more beautiful? I assume all went well with The Council and you have certainty about what you want to do now?”

I told him everything, even what Rafe and I had discussed about him. He nodded, shrugged then smiled and looked at me.

“Chris, your reaction was justified.”

“No, Sandor, I was way out of line.”

“Your bodies got so out of line and pulled you around,” he insisted. “I understand. You were at their mercy.”

“I ...” and I couldn’t finish my sentence. I began to blink tears away.

He was by my side in a second and took me in his arms. I had been through a lot, to lean my head and body into his allowed me to let go and just cry. His touch brought me home and I knew I had to feel his skin on mine. I turned my face up to his and started to kiss him.

Nothing felt as good as this! The smell of him again, his strong tongue searching my mouth, his hands holding me tight to his body.

I have no recollection of making it to the bed or getting out of my clothes, but I knew he was going to fuck me this time and I had never wanted it more than that night.

He lay along me, our hard cocks rubbing against each other. Sandor moved his hips rhythmically, slowly up and down. I groaned as I felt his slick, wet cock push past mine. He raised himself up onto his knees displaying his beautiful, thick, hairy chest. He pushed my legs up and onto his shoulders. I lifted my head to meet his mouth. We kissed fervently as he began to push his beautiful cock into my willing ass. His sticky precum was oozing on my taint and all around my quivering hole. I opened up immediately and with one movement he was deep inside.

He came right up against my hips and kept kissing me as he began to fuck me long and deep. I wanted him so badly. My ass begged him to use it. His cock continued to expand and grow. I called out as he fucked me harder slamming his hairy balls against my hungry ass.

I did not want to cum right away so I held it back. I wanted to be on all fours and get a better hold of my cock. I told him to move me onto my knees. He slipped one of my legs past his head, let me

move and turn coming out of me for a second or two as I raised my butt up and buried my head in the pillow.

He moved off the bed and roughly pulled me to the edge driving his cock hard into me again. I widened my knees letting the full force of his cock move back and forth, all of me wanted as much of him as I could take. I called out to him, I begged him as I came up on my hands and told him to make me his.

He grunted hard, his big hands pressing firmly on my hips then ordered me to put my head back into the pillow. His cock swelled in me again until my legs and ass cheeks could not spread any further. I grabbed my cock and started to beat it hard. The sensation of the cum rising from my toes to my hard dick became too intense to bear. I know I called out as I began to pump my juices out onto a wide span of the sheet. I felt him buck then start to explode into me. I felt some of his turning sperm come with his regular fluids. I felt it as a gift. He kept breathing loudly as he pumped into me, my inner muscles expanding and contracting, my ass eagerly squeezing every drop out of him. He then collapsed onto my back and we fell onto the sheets together.

As dawn approached, he fucked me again, this time on my side. He was slow and deliberate. He lifted one of my muscled legs up, pushed into my ass as deep as he could then shot his load in a few exquisite movements. I moved onto my back after he came out of me. He slipped his hand down between my outstretched legs and pushed two fingers into my ass to play with my prostate. I beat off slowly loving the feeling of his fingers in my butt as he milked me. He gently massaged my balls with his other hand as his fingers continued to slip up into me, the other hand busy with one finger gently massaging my left nut through my crotch hair. I went into a secret place of pleasure shooting high into the air and onto the bed sheets looking at him, begging him to never stop.

CHAPTER 19

Everyone, including Scott, bought my story about breaking up with “Chicago”. They were simply relieved they had me back as normal “Old Chris”. With a few margaritas at an impromptu dance preparation party the next Saturday night, it was put behind us. Only Brian acted differently. He talked directly to me now, something he was timid about before. Although he could not put his finger on what had happened in his hospital bed, he was alive and wiser for it. He saw me as an intimate. There was a bond through blood between us, and, because of his nature, he would never exploit it or ask me questions. He had a secret connection and that was enough.

We went into 1975 with a bang. Christmas was great; a big dinner at the house and then, my sister Susan arrived after New Year’s from Australia to check up on me for the family. At home we were the closest growing up. It was wonderful to have her stay and for me to proudly show off my new life and home.

I had not returned for a visit since I left. My parents were stressed with long distance telephone charges and as I am not a big letter writer, communications were sparse.

I found I could almost read Susan’s thoughts, more than I could with the boys or anyone else for that matter. I had an inkling it had to do with genetics, common ancestry, something like that, and it allowed me to have answers ready for her probing.

“I know Mum thinks I’m going to be lonely since I’ve come out as gay, Susan. That’s ridiculous. I may not have a partner right now but my whole life’s ahead of me.”

“Your life here seems amazing. I’m happy for you!” She paused, smiled and drank some of her coke. “All your American friends, while great,” she put her hand up for emphasis, “are so forward and intimate right off the bat!” she exclaimed. We were around the corner having a burger and a fruit platter at The Truck Stop on Church Street.

“I know!” I replied. “It’s crazy, right? It’s confrontational at first, especially when they tell you you’re going to be friends forever after an hour of just meeting one another!” We both laughed at the cultural differences between our countries.

On the last day before Susan left we were on the couch reading the daily papers. I knew she was staring at me. “Yes?” I asked, not looking up.

After a moment or two she carefully said, and I could feel the control in her voice, “You know, don’t you, you’re completely different now than when you lived at home? You must have realized you’re not who you were.”

I looked up at her in amazement and could see her embarrassment. She felt safe with me and that was good.

“I guess I’ve grown up somewhat,” I laughed steadily returning her gaze.

“No, I’ve watched you over my time here and it’s something else. You are my brother and yet, you’re someone else, almost a complete stranger.”

“Really?” I sported a puzzled look on my face.

“Look, I don’t mean to pry or to push, but you need to know, if you went home right now you’d shock them. I’m your closest friend in the family but Mum would put your feet to the fire if she saw you now.”

I swallowed hard.

“Chris, you’re taller, bigger, your face is different, almost too good looking and weirdly you sort of glow in lights at night when we’ve gone out! Almost every man on the street and in any restaurant can’t help but stare at you. You lifted each of the dining room chairs, I’m assuming unconsciously, with one finger to set the table when we had Scott and Jeff over for dinner, plus you don’t eat normal food. Your diet can’t possibly give you all you need. I don’t know how to explain it, but it’s all rather ‘other worldly.’” She used air quotes to emphasize her point.

I feigned embarrassment then went into a long rap about my gym work and how I had protein drinks straight after a workout, my running, my health routine, then began to lie about some new serum I took for longevity. “I live in California for goodness sake!” I emphasized, as I held her gaze now for just a necessary and longer moment.

She nodded, smiled and looked relaxed by the end of my explanation finally saying, “Well, in the future, I want some of that for sure!” And we both laughed.

Susan went off to Europe to ski followed by settling down to work in London. I earnestly began reading about science again and what would be expected of me in my new classes.

Since returning from Austria I knew I was different. I was granted more power for my work ahead. I did not feel as human as I had before. I felt more vampire and found it more difficult to be around mortals for long periods of time.

It did not bother me I simply got bored. I had a mission now. I wanted to get on with it and make a difference. Since being touched by the two celestial beings, my brain functioning shifted, I was eager to learn how that would manifest.

I lost interest in my looks, heeding the words of Susan that I needed to be scruffier so I did not look like I had just stepped out of a GQ magazine.

School was easy, governed by classes and short periods of time with staff. Most people knew by the end of the next semester I was moving up to Parnassus and into a new career.

I took to post grad work like a duck to water loving biology and chemistry again. My mind went nuts and a sense of quiet urgency pushed me. I was able to take the words and symbols from any page and see them in holograms and sequences. I could see how geometric patterns connected all the way back to the Greek Masters.

Often, when the day staff or cleaners arrived early in the morning and found me, I had worked all night through mathematical possibilities, combining chemical structures in order to learn more quickly.

And it was around this time when I was approached by the Head of Pediatrics to come onto his team in the Fall. His department was studying the new world of genetics. I was on my way.

“Chris, my man, I was Summa Cum Laude at Stanford Law,” said my friend Scott, “so, you know I’m no dummy.” Scott and I were sitting on two stools at the Ambush. He put the long neck to his lips and drank for a few seconds lowering his head, then looked straight at me.

“So?” I asked, as I slowly looked back at him, wondering where this was going.

“Why do you take me for such a fucking fool, then?”

“You know I don’t, so tell me what I’m missing here.”

“You’re not exactly a complete ass wipe, so surely you can see you are ignoring me more than usual. You’re distant, you work all the time and I’ve been out and seen you with other guys and not with me!”

“So now I have to tell you when I’m with other friends?” I retorted defensively.

“Yes,” he insisted. “When you tell me, after I’ve suggested we go out together, ‘No, I have to work’, then I see you chatting up some guy in a bar down the street not three hours later.”

“When was this?” I probed.

“Does it matter? The point is you’re being evasive and I think you’re a real dumb fuck.” Scott was getting drunk and more defensive. I also knew he was right. What he did not know was I soon sucked that guy off for dinner, nothing more.

We sat in uncomfortable silence and I found my mind returning to a problem I was having with a chemical equation. Scott stood up angrily and put on his Levi’s jacket.

“Wow! You are one really fucking dumb ass, you know that? You can’t even pay attention, man. That’s the bottom line! I’m outta here.”

“Scott, please don’t go. I’m sorry. I’m just caught up with getting my feet under the table in this new work.”

“Yeah, right. In that case, you call me when you decide to drag those feet over to the house,” he scowled with disgust, pushed himself out through the noise and sweat of the Folsom boys and disappeared.

Later, there was a guy going home sore, but hopefully very satisfied, after I worked off my resentment and guilt with Scott’s words ringing in my ears. I decided to make it up to him. I was not sure how. I just knew it had to be good.

Caught between my newfound inner drive and my need to remain in the human world in plain sight, I wished I didn’t have to fake affection when I didn’t feel it. I loved Scott and my human friends, but still they were slipping out of reach, something felt broken, part of me was detached.

The rush of love I felt from the intergalactic duo pulled at me to find a new world, not earthly, a place somewhere through a mist into immense beauty and joy. But, it felt like a promise, an almost impossible attainment. There were moments of deep existential sadness as I sat alone in my apartment. Looking out at the palm trees on Dolores across the Bay, I wanted to fly away never to return.

It was Brian and John who saved the day for me and Scott. They came to my house late one Saturday morning with a great suggestion.

"I'll do the talking, Brian," stated John, puffing himself up as they came up the stairs. "Chris, although a softy, is a smarty pants and not an easy push over!" They didn't know I had already heard them coming around the corner of 14th Street onto Dolores.

As I made coffee, John launched into a plan for going to New York for a holiday as a group. "Early July, around the 4th, not in the super hot months! Maybe we could take an apartment for a week or 10 days. No, let's do two weeks!" He was excited and the ever compliant, Brian, nodded and agreed with him when he saw his cue to jump in.

"Sounds good, guys, but Scott's not talking to me as you know," I said looking from one to the other.

"Well that's the point, Chris! We see this as a way for you and Scott to pull yourselves together, for god's sake, and stop being a couple of pouty queens! Jeff is going to Arizona on some mission and wouldn't be caught dead in New York anyway. He's so boring," continued John, looking at Brian for confirmation, "Old before his time," Brian nodded. "So we think this will be good for you and Scott to have some quality get-it-together time and bring us all some real happiness again!" John pushed on, several rings flashing in the air.

"We can go to some of the new dance clubs and hit the bars and bathhouses in the Village. After Dark magazine is full of great stuff

now and Manhattan will not have completely closed down for the summer yet. What do you say?"

Two sets of eyes watched me intensely.

There was another reason, more than just brotherly love going on in those not so innocent eyes, as Scott and I were the ones who picked up larger bills for dinners or rounds of drinks at certain bars in The City. He and I had discussed it a long time ago and agreed it allowed us to all have fun and party as a house together. We would go to the front desk of hotels on weekends away, put everything on our two cards and nothing was ever said beyond a surprised smile and a quick, "Thank you".

I smiled at them then suddenly heard Sandor's voice in my head. He was standing outside across the street. "It might not be a bad idea. You would be able to check in on what Tom is hatching in New York."

I was momentarily surprised. I had made my mind up, and I thought The Council had too, that we did not want me to take any risks until there was a serum therefore putting off New York for a year or so. Still, to possibly see him again! My heart lurched and I took a moment to recover pretending to mull over the idea.

"We'd have to see if Scott wants to go." I finally stated, crossing my arms.

"Sweetheart, please!" said a satisfied John jumping up. "It's settled. I'll be in touch tomorrow. C'mon, Brian. There are clothes to be bought and cases to be found and tickets to be arranged." He flicked me a quick, questioning look as he said this, I nodded back and satisfied, he and Brian were down the stairs and away in a flash.

A minute later Sandor entered my living room and gave me a big hug. As with the others I had not seen him for a while and felt a charge go through the both of us as we embraced. We agreed that after we talked we would fuck.

“You have to be careful,” Sandor posed to me as he adjusted his hardening groin while sitting on his end of the sofa.

“I may not find him?”

“If he’s in Manhattan you’ll find him,” Sandor replied dryly.

I could mask most emotion from people, but with this man being my creator, it was impossible.

“Chris, while you know his past, you also know his present state.” He smiled but his blue eyes remained still.

“I am concerned for you. You’re probably one of the most gifted beings on the planet right now. In some ways you have more powers to call on than I do, but an evil has been allowed through the fabric of this planet that Tom has sourced. And, I might add, it’s not just him we have to be worried about. There are the other two he brought up with him.”

I began to speak but he held up a hand.

“He’ll attempt to get under your second skin and turn you. It’s that simple. You believe you can reach him and stop him, or turn him, and, Chris,” he paused, “you can’t, at least not yet, and you have to accept that.”

We sat in silence for a while. We had a deep understanding floating between us now. I allowed myself to range across my mind and emotions, handpicking possible strategies, viewing the youth in me and the advanced adult that held me together now through my inner body.

Sandor was right. I wanted Tom back and a voice insisted I could do it. I was impatient as our work would take time to get close to a possible cure for this blood infection. “Would he even want it?” I wondered. I pushed all these worrying thoughts away as Sandor with a wicked smile headed for my bedroom.

We took the TWA flight 44 red eye on a Friday night and arrived at the Chelsea Hotel on 23rd Street around 8 am on Saturday. I booked two rooms with Stanley, the manager, who was a little huffy at first that we were not “artistic” enough. I persuaded him we were still fun and he went with that. I read an article in *After Dark* about the residents and the action that went on in this notorious old hotel. It seemed like a cool place to stay. I wondered if I would smell a vampire somewhere down a corridor.

Scott and I got our own rooms while Brian and John shared. The boys were not impressed, they were basic that’s for sure, but it would be free for them so not much was said. After we booked in and were about to head for the lift, in my head I heard my name called out and caught a guy near the door who, as he was leaving, asked me to meet him at a nearby diner sometime around 1 pm.

I shut my eyes for a second and replied I would. I knew I could find it.

Scott and I were almost normal with each other now, but I knew he would watch me closely on this trip. He still felt I was holding something back from him, and while we did not have to do everything together, I had a balancing act on my hands.

He was still not satisfied with the answers I had given him when we talked at the house as we planned the trip. As I could read his thoughts now, I finally knew the deeper reason why.

Scott fought falling in love with me. He was a good-looking guy, knew he was attractive and like most men found me sexually desirable. It was confusing to him that something had never happened between us. He seemed content with Jeff, but when we had great nights out together, he found jealousy creeping in when I peeled away and went off to hunt for sex.

As very close friends you build intimacy and I was able to see how difficult it was for him to stop himself from making an advance on me, especially when we might be lying across one another stoned and talking. He felt like shit about it and through my absences lately in The City he used his anger as a way to break that spell punishing me at the same time.

“I’ve got some work to finish boys, then need to mail it off to the office this afternoon,” Scott said to us as we walked from the lift to our rooms.

“Well, we’re going up to 5th Avenue to the sales!” announced John. Brian looked flattened from the overnight flight, but Scott and I knew he would have to go.

We agreed to hook up in the lobby at 5 pm and go out for drinks, dinner, then to the bars.

After unpacking and showering I left and followed a faint memory trail left by my contact. I eventually found myself at a famous deco diner car on a corner. I saw my “brother” in a booth toward the back near the restrooms.

He was blond, blue-eyed, big and beautiful, about 40, with an almost surfer look. His unruly hair was pulled back by a red bandanna and his big arms rested on the formica table top. I guessed he was about 6’2”. He wore a white t-shirt and cut-off Levi’s, brown boots with white socks. Damn, he was hot.

“Thank you,” he said to my thoughts. “The name’s Andrew,” he said out loud. We shook hands and let our energies intermingle. It felt so good to be with someone who “got” me, with nothing needing explanation.

“Chris,” I nodded back, “but I’m sure you know a bit about me from speaking with Sandor, right?”

“I do, man, absolutely,” he nodded vigorously. We gave our orders to the waitress, both of us quietly assessing each other, enjoying the fact we had just met.

We started talking at once after she left the table and both stopped together and then laughed at our rush to know each other’s story. I signaled him quickly to go first.

“Well, I’m from Nebraska but moved east to attend Boston University after the Korean War. I was 22 at the time. I got a GI grant and became a doctor.

“I was in Boston Hospital for a while then heard that New York was a better place to be a homosexual and transferred down here to NYU.”

Andrew knew exactly what I really wanted to hear about and that was his turning. He could see I was mesmerized and this was the first time another gay vampire had shared this life-changing experience with me. He leaned back with one arm running along the back of the stall he was in and continued.

“I fell for a patient, actually. I saw him on the male ward on my rounds and each day I’d come in, I couldn’t stop the feelings I was having for him from bubbling up. He wasn’t my type, but I instinctively knew he had some sort of weird pull on me, that there was a connection, almost like I’d known him before, from somewhere else.” He was looking up at the tinned-pressed ceiling enjoying the telling.

“I had him moved to a private room to convalesce – no one was sure what was even wrong with him! – and we started long conversations into the night when I got off rounds. One night, he suddenly got up, closed and locked the door, and the next thing he was balls-deep in my body! It was the best sex, as you know,” he said, looking straight at me with a big grin on his face.

I laughed. “What the hell are you talking about? I don’t remember a thing, only waking up and being alone in a cemetery, feeling wretched yet new! I’m now going to speak to Sandor about the treatment he gave me, let me tell you!”

Andrew put his head back laughing out loud, “Damn, that’s rugged! Where was he?”

“At my place, waiting for me to come home!”

“Wow”, continued Andrew, “well, that’s not what happened here. I was in the bed when I came to my senses and he was sitting in the visitor’s chair. I threw up in a bucket he’d found and after a while lay back down as he began to tell me about my future. By the time it was morning, I was incredulous about what had happened and took the day off and went home to sleep. He came to my apartment that night and taught me about feeding and caring for myself. I’ve been 42 ever since.” He grinned.

I told Andrew my turning story and had his full attention as well. He asked me about my sex drive that first night awake, how I handled it and what my relationship was to Sandor. I did not go into the porno version but when I recounted a couple of sessions about how my whole being became engaged in sex with him, he let out a whistle and sat back.

“Far out, man! My Maker is not anyone I’d want to have sex with again! He’s a great guy and I love him as you would understand, but no-way–Jose with the downward dog!” He started laughing hard and I looked at him now with sincere, growing affection.

“Andrew, listen, I’ve got to get back to my friends. They’ll be coming back from shopping so I need to set up another time to hook up with you, okay? I want to find this one blood vampire and see what he’s up to. How much did Sandor tell you about him?”

“Not much, he said you’d fill me in, but it could be serious and dangerous. I work a lot at my practice and at the hospital and believe it or not, I’m not a big player in the scene. I obviously go out to feed but it’s not always from gay men. I like blowing straight guys a lot too!” he said enthusiastically.

“I know a couple of blood vamps and I’ve heard of a famous lair and a bar they go to, so that’ll be a start. Anyway, what about you send me a message late one night and we’ll meet up and go out. I can tell you’re strong and I’m no lightweight. We’ll be okay.”

We got up, paid and walked out to the sidewalk. The afternoon had become stifling hot and both of us had to get inside soon. Saying goodbye, I pulled him in and hugged him and felt his slight surprise. He flashed a grin and took off, perhaps just a little bit faster than he should have. I hooked up with the others after a shower and we made our way to Christopher Street.

Like San Francisco there was a real buzz about the developing gay community in New York and even though lots of guys were out of town for the summer months, there were still hundreds of men strolling along the sidewalks, going in and out of bars, the restaurants and shops. It looked similar, but quite different from our Castro Street.

Brian and John, now in new clothes, talked at the top of their voices while Scott and I were often half a block ahead of them, had to stop and wait up.

“What do you want to do tonight, mon ami?” Scott asked looking at me with a smile.

“Um, I think the leather bars down near the wharves.”

“Yep, sounds good. What did you bring to wear?”

“Just a vest. You?”

“Black tees. Jeans. Black boots. Doesn’t matter much really. We’ll look good in anything.” We both grinned.

“Come on you two, for Christ’s sake!” he yelled behind him. “It’s hot as fuck out here and I need a libation or I’m going to die where I stand!”

We swung into The Anvil and while we were not in leather it was early enough to get away with it. The bar was in two parts with all the walls painted matte black. All bars look better at night. We had gin and tonics, cruised the sparse crowd while the boys munched on the peanuts piled up onto the upturned lid of some barrels strategically placed around the rooms.

I listened to plans people were making and heard there were parties going on all over the Village. When I circled back from getting a second round, I told the others of events I’d heard about from the bartender and left it up to them to decide what we would do.

We left and went to get some food. I had a salad while the others had hamburgers and fries. I had to feed later that night, I could feel my inner being pushing me.

After returning to The Chelsea and changing, we set out around 11 pm, on a night that was incredibly warm and pleasant, to go to the Palladium on East 14th Street to dance. It was an exciting space and as people started to pour in, we hit the dance floor hard. There was still nothing like it in San Francisco, nothing this spacious. John and Brian wore headbands, little white shorts with red piping, white socks and sneakers. Scott and I wore our gear for later down at the riverfront bars in the West Village.

The boys took uppers and were flying and we partied for the next couple of hours to the latest disco anthems. It was fun to let go and dance, but I found myself deep in my head thinking about Tom and what could still happen out there if I ever found him.

Scott bumped me, ass-to-ass, breaking into my inner revelry and signaled we should go, and so, telling the others we'd see them around lunchtime tomorrow, set off for Christopher Street.

Scott was himself again with me – the speed helped – and we fell in, arm and arm together, as we crossed Midtown to get down to the leather bars. It was hot so we stuffed our t-shirts down the back of our jeans. I wore my vest otherwise I'd lose it. Summer in New York City was sultry, sexy and full of anticipation.

We decided on the Cock Ring at The Christopher Street Hotel as we'd been told of its notorious sleaziness. We weren't disappointed. A cheer had gone up as we approached the doorway and we looked up to one of the hotel windows and watched as a guy got pumped, groaning and roaring into the night air, his head and bare shoulders out past the sill.

We were hit on as soon as we walked in. The smell of amyl, with a mixture of leather and men's sweaty bodies was intense and we both laughed. We got a beer and stood against a wall fending off groping hands. My mouth started to hurt and I fixed my now heightened gaze on a beautiful, hairy man who'd slid past us and taken up a position near the toilets.

He smiled back at me and I waved him over. I pulled him into me and smiled past his thick, black mustache to his perfect white teeth and then slid my tongue into his mouth. With his body pressed up tightly against mine, we kissed for a full, five minutes before I suggested to him we find a place to go get it on.

Scott had obviously met someone too, but I did not want to leave the bar without him, so I created a space around my meal and dropped to my knees and undid his jeans. Within seconds I had his short, thick cock in my mouth, gulping down his big, sweet load. He was delicious, but I fought getting my own hard cock out as I wanted to be ready for The Anvil or The Meatworks later where I knew I'd really want to let go.

While I was savoring the smell and taste of the fresh cum in my mouth, I was back on my feet and found Scott. We pushed out into the street and made our way to Washington Street to the notorious Meatworks. The rumors were true. It was its own definite level of Dante's Hell.

We went up a short flight of tight stairs into a room where bathtubs were the place to be, that is if you wanted to be pissed on and humiliated. I immediately felt several vamps in the building. It was easy for them to find submissive men aching to be ordered to give up their life force.

I was clocked immediately and within a minute of checking out the badly lit rooms I knew someone was behind me. I turned and looked straight into young Jamie's face.

"Hello, Sir," he mocked. He looked terrific: full leather over his now, well-developed young body, now permanent body. He oozed sex and no doubt had left a trail of victims behind him stashed under wharves, in trash cans and floating out to sea past Lady Liberty. I felt the lust between us was still strong, but the distrust and hate overpowered that.

"Jamie, I can guess who you came to New York with," I said trying to keep my cool.

"My Maker, Tom, you mean?" he laughed baring his teeth.

"Don't you hide your fangs?"

"In this place, never," he laughed again. He was trying to edge me into a corner and because I saw Scott coming over to me, I stopped him and willed him to keep our conversation civil.

"Scott, remember Jamie? He used to be a student of mine at State."

Scott put his hand out and Jamie took it and started to “pull” him into a compromising stare. I broke the connection and got Scott to look at me. I said to Jamie, “How long have you been in New York?”

He rocked back and using a wall as a prop persistently tried to rope Scott into his gaze again. “Oh, we’ve been here since the beginning of the year,” his mouth moving, but his eyes still trying to lock onto Scott’s.

Again, I pushed his ability aside realizing Jamie’s intentions. There was no way he was going to suck on Scott with me there. Suddenly, another vamp appeared, sliding into and next to him, and I knew exactly who he was. I could feel his strength and had felt it since I had arrived.

It was Carlos from Guatamala who’d come up north with Tom. He was about 5’10” with a strong, well-formed, compact body. He wore blue jeans, a red kerchief in his left back pocket, black boots and no shirt. He had two leather bands around his biceps and he too began to look at Scott.

This was a plan hatched the minute Jamie had clocked me either in the Meatworks or earlier at the Cock Ring. They’d seen us together and they would get to my friend to get to me.

“Scott, look at me,” I commanded. He turned with a puzzled and befuddled look on his face, not quite sure what was happening to and around him.

“We should go, okay? Now!” I insisted. He nodded and turned to go.

In one quick move Carlos slid in between us, blocking me and I heard a desperate cry from Scott. The dude’s breath was foul and he moved to press me into the wall. I threw him aside and he sprawled, crashing into a group of guys in the middle of a sex scene, but was back in my face within seconds. I became like steel and found myself out of my body watching the entire space move in slow motion.

Jamie, teeth-bared and bloody, moved with lust again toward Scott. To my horror I saw a deep bite mark on Scott's right wrist. Before Jamie could get to his throat I felt energy course through me, and grabbing Carlos again I lifted him and threw him into Jamie and they both went back together.

I quickly grabbed Scott as he came out of the shock of being bitten. I saw he felt the throb of something changing him. I rushed us out of the building onto the street and then, grabbing him from behind, took us up onto the roof of the building opposite. There were very few guys around and I was so fast an image, if witnessed, would be blurred and put down to a drug hallucination.

I sat a shocked Scott down on a horizontal, raised pipe and looked closely at the bite.

"Chris, I hurt all over," he exclaimed. He shook and suddenly and violently, leaned over and puked beer and food. He wiped his mouth with his t-shirt then fell back against a wall. "What's happening to me?" He searched my eyes pleading for an answer.

"Scott, you've a poison in you and I've got to get it out."

"How? Why? What the fuck are you talking about? How do you know that?"

"Listen, I just do, okay? Jamie bit you in the bar and somehow you're now infected with a virus. Trust me and I promise I'll tell you more later. I've got to suck this stuff out of you, okay?" He tried to move away from me and struggled to stand.

"Chris, you're mad and you're scaring me and ... and ... I've known there was something weird about you for a very long time now."

He was fighting to breathe. I had to get my blood through his and protect his heart if he was to have any chance of surviving. I didn't want to turn him. I wanted him to stay human.

I roughly grabbed his face and commanded him to look right into my eyes. I told him what I had to do and he slowly nodded.

I took his wrist and bit into the foul, festering bite. My anesthetic flowed free and hard from my right fang. I felt his heart beat begin to normalize. Out of the same fang flowed something new and I felt my entire system hum. I was like a machine as energy flowed out of my body into Scott's blood. I watched in my mind's eye this fluid move through his vascular system. Thousands of snake lights went after the dark, tiny crab-like creatures, extinguishing them; it was like watching a dam burst, the water surge down the mountain, taking all before it.

Then, my body switched and I began to suck the immediate horror out of Scott's arm. As I did this, I came off him to spit large mouthfuls of blackened blood onto the roof and then go back for more. Scott watched in horror as I did this, but became stronger and more awake as I ended the grisly task.

He was fine, but had I managed to get all of the virus? I didn't think so, but we could deal with that situation later. I pushed some saliva out onto my fingers and moved it over the gash marks. The wound healed and faded. Scott watched with amazement and I knew right then, I had a huge decision to make.

I abruptly jumped up and walked to the edge of the building and looked down at the quiet of 4 am on the streets below. I looked out to the Hudson and to the lights beyond into New Jersey. My mind worked furiously as I looked at the options in front of me. Had I saved his life to now have him killed in the future either by the virus or by a group who couldn't have him know about it? There had to be another way and I think I knew what it was, but I'd have to talk to Andrew then Sandor to set it all up. I turned back to face my best friend.

“Chris, who are you? What are you? I’m completely freaked out and I’d like to go back to the hotel.”

He was standing when I turned and backed away slightly when I came toward him. “Let’s find a diner nearby and I’ll tell you everything.” I had made up my mind and had a plan I thought might work long term.

CHAPTER 20

We sat in a booth near the one I had met Andrew in the day before, an event now that felt like weeks ago. Scott gulped down a steaming cup of coffee filled with lots of half 'n half. He looked at me then away, a mixture of bewilderment, anger and embarrassment on his swollen face. I had given him my t-shirt to wear. His was left on the roof covered in blood and vomit before we flew to the ground.

“No one can fly, Chris, not even Superman, because you know why? Superman isn't real,” he jeered at me.

He put his coffee down putting his hands under the tabletop as they'd started to shake.

“What the fuck, man! I feel like I've just come off a horror movie set or something!”

He breathed hard slowly beginning to relax. All I could do was let him vent, get it all out and then talk to him.

“You don't eat regular food, you're too smart for your own fucking good and, I knew I was right about this! You sometimes, glow a little in the dark!”

When he took more coffee from the waiter and I had gotten another apple juice, he looked at me, nodded and let me talk. An hour later I had told him everything that had happened to me including the real story behind my relationship with Tom.

Dawn was trying to get into the diner as I sat back and watched his face. His look was incredulous as he moved his head slowly from side to side. He was overwhelmed, needed to sleep and sleep hard.

“We need to get you to bed, Scott,” I offered gently. “I know. I’m totally wiped out and this night has been so fucked up,” he replied wearily. “This is all a bad dream and lights out is what I need! Am I okay to go to sleep? You said you didn’t get all the venom out of me, right?”

“We’ll hook up with the gay vamp doctor I met yesterday and get his opinion, but somewhere inside of me I know you’re fine for a few weeks. When I’m back in The City I’ll be able to work on a serum or on something that will kill it.”

I felt certain about this, and now I actually had someone whose blood I could use to find antibodies to the venom!

“This could be what I needed!” I thought excitedly. I didn’t share this with Scott of course, he was quietly freaking and I needed him to remain focused, to stay well.

Standing outside his room I told him I needed to give him an anesthetic so he could sleep soundly. I would take care of the boys and spend the day with them doing whatever they wanted. He would be safe and get his strength back.

“I’ll tell them you’ve reacted badly to some drug we took and you needed to sleep all day,” I insisted.

“Where’s the sleeping pill then?” he asked as he moved into his room. I turned him around and taking him in my arms, kissed him.

A quick spurt of fluid came out of my fangs making him crumple into my arms within seconds as I put him on the bed and covered him with a sheet. I put the “Do not Disturb” sign on the door handle as I moved to my room and made for the shower.

I was deeply disturbed but at the same time felt calm and decisive. Part of me wanted to find and kill Jamie for this and the San Francisco murder in the alleyway. He’d become a vile, irredeemable, nasty piece of work. I could take the other vamp as well, but also knew I needed help. As I soaped up and let the hot water bring me back to normalcy I made my mind up. I needed to find Tom and somehow call a truce or at least have his Rottweilers put on a leash. We were here for eight more days. I couldn’t watch and protect my friends every minute of the day and night. As my mind drifted to thoughts of Tom and his big hairy thighs, my cock got fat fast and I furiously beat off imagining what he would feel like again deep in my ass.

My first decision was to call Andrew and let him have a look at Scott. I needed a second opinion. What worried me was my lack of knowledge about the venom and its long-term effect. Did I kill it? I knew I hadn’t. Would it simply hide and mutate like some retroactive viruses did? Would Scott be ruined as a human? Could we let him stay this way or would he need to be turned? Could he become a gay vampire with this disgusting shit in his blood? Tom had to have some answers.

In the early evening I knocked on Scott’s door. The boys had met some New York locals at the Palladium and they were all going out to dinner and to party later. I warned them to be careful. John patted my arm sympathetically, but Brian knew what I meant and nodded.

I heard him awake and waiting, so I entered with a coffee, an apple and a bagel with cream cheese. He smiled. We looked at each other for a moment and I asked him if I could sit on the bed. He

was dressed, lying back with his arms behind his head. He looked fantastic, his skin and eyes glowed.

“I’m not sure, Chris, are you going to eat me?” He smiled so I sat down with some relief.

“So, I have to get bitten for you to finally fucking kiss me, huh?”

“I’m so sorry for what happened, Scott, really so sorry,” I said quietly. “How are you feeling?”

“Physically, I’m rushing. I’ve beaten off twice and am still full of energy. I’m also hungry and thirsty so that’s got to be a good sign?” He’d dove into the bagel the minute I handed him the bag.

“Mentally, I want you to tell me everything that happened last night was a fabulous, fucking joke and none of it’s true. What do you say?”

He smiled at me but seeing my stony, sad face, started to slowly shake his head.

“Jeezuz, I don’t know if I’m ready for this! You know I love kink and am into most things well brought up Episcopalian boys are into, but deep down I know I don’t like too much change, and now I know the world is truly seen through a prism defying physics. I’m a little concerned about my sanity.”

I nodded. “It’s a very weird feeling, I know. You can imagine how I felt the first time I woke up after I was turned.”

“The question running around in my head since I woke up is, am I going to change in any way, cos I don’t want to, okay?”

“Andrew should be here soon and with the others out for the night we can work through all of this to see what we can do.” And with that, there was a knock at the door. He had been outside listening for about five minutes, waiting for an appropriate time to enter.

Andrew bound in taking Scott's hand firmly. Scott retreated into the bedhead obviously terrified of meeting another vampire so I cautioned Andrew to be gentle. I had only been able to give him a sketch of the events of last night. He needed to put his clinician's hat on and help me move my decisions forward.

"Umm ... Hi, Scott, sorry, man ... I'm always a bit clumsy when I meet other dudes, especially good looking ones." He put his medical bag down on the bedside table.

Scott liked the flattery and waved Andrew to the chair by the bed. I could tell he found Andrew sexy as well which would help the situation.

After we'd gone over the attack, Andrew asked if he could examine Scott. We switched places and Andrew went to work. As he moved around Scott's body I realized he was employing more than just Western medicine. He put Scott into a light trance taking him on a journey throughout his body. It was fascinating to hear and watch and I knew then, there had been special training for Andrew from the inner worlds at Hallstatt. By the end of the examination we knew where Scott stood.

"So, am I right that what I'm getting here, boys, is that unless I get some sort of cure within the next six months I will slowly turn into a blood-sucking vampire?" His face went white as he looked from Andrew to me and back again.

"I'll never let that happen, dude, never," I exclaimed. I felt wretched.

"And," he went on ignoring me, "because I know all about you and your world, I'll probably not have to worry about that anyway, as I'll be killed by your higher ups for being told about you? Am I getting the gist of this fantastic future for myself?"

Before I could tell him about my idea for his full survival, he bound off the bed nearly flying to the window. Andrew and I were stunned.

“How the fuck did I get here this quickly?” he yelled. He turned looking fearful and thunderstruck.

“Andrew, there’s got to be a mixture of the venom and the healing fluids from me to Scott, right?”

“Right, I think it will wear off after he’s had a few meals and his own blood begins to reassert itself. He’s human after all. Still, far out, man, I’m impressed, but Scott, you’ve got to chill out,” Andrew implored. “You can’t do that in public, okay? I get you’re on an extreme high and probably want to go out and fuck the world, but please try and control your movements.”

“Andrew and I’ll go to dinner with you,” said Chris, “and then we need to get some better info about what’s happened to you and to work on some other business I’m here in New York to complete.”

“Bullshit, I’m coming with you and don’t even think about that eye contact crap with me, Chris, I’ll just shut my eyes.”

I had to smile, I could have him hog tied and on the bed in 20 seconds but something in me let him run with it.

“This is my life! I’ve the right to be a part of what’s happening to me right now. The both of you can just fuck off!”

“Scott, man, this could get super hairy. We don’t want you to get hurt,” warned Andrew who then slipped behind him and had him pinned against his body about to put him in the closet for the night.

“Stop! Stop! It’s okay, Andrew. I think the fact he’s got venom in him will probably protect him and I think your presence as protector will keep any idiot blood taker at bay.”

I paused for effect and looked at Scott struggling, but whom I could see enjoyed being held by this impressively big man.

“Okay, we’ll let you come, but you have to do exactly what we tell you to do and you must always stand with Andrew, okay? You saw what happened last night. These fuckers move fast, but as you can too, it means they can’t now fool you.”

Scott got free, shot across the room again, let out a whooping noise, raced into the bathroom and shut the door. He yelled out that we were all going to the bars and that if Andrew wanted to take him home later, he’d be up for it. Then he started to laugh hard.

Andrew looked at me a little perplexed but I felt his sexual energy increase as he whispered to me, “Wow, that’d be nice.”

“I heard that, Andrew, and I’m looking forward to it too,” came from the bathroom.

“Oh, not his hearing as well!” I exclaimed slapping my forehead. We all had a much deserved laugh.

We hid Andrew’s bag in Scott’s room and went to find the vamp bar that Andrew found out about. Scott refused to eat anything on the way. “I’m staying as powerful as I feel for as long as I can. Do you guys know there’s a little brown dog three blocks down this street with a collar saying, ‘Henry?’”

As we made our way into Soho crossing Houston, I decided I needed to watch him closely. He seemed more aggressive than normal, but he had that in him already. Now a civilized layer was peeled back and I didn’t want him to be reckless. He was not a vampire, he was mortal, a good step down from the top of the food chain.

The Soho District was run down, full of old warehouses, mostly stone but a few still wooden. I could see the gentrification seeds of change beginning to happen in one or two of the stores and some

of the lights were on in several buildings as we made our way down Prince Street. Few people were out as we slipped down a short, dead end street on the edge of the district.

And then it happened as it did at home. We felt the hot, night air move and two blood vampires stood right behind us. Andrew was about to knock on an old iron door covered in graffiti when we all quickly turned around. Scott froze.

“Can we help you, gentlemen?” Green and gold eyes, long dark hair, white skin and tight black clothing over buffed bodies met our gaze.

“Is Benjamin here tonight?” Andrew asked, his voice changed, deeper now with greater authority.

“Perhaps,” said the twin on the left. “Who’s the man with the sexy stink coming from his pants?” They both turned and looked at Scott.

To his credit Scott looked nonchalant but I knew everyone else could hear his heart beating fast.

“He’s our toy,” said Andrew with a sudden smile. His face changed, it was harder and his teeth were out. “Damn, he looks hot,” I thought.

The right twin sniffed the air and folded his arms. We were not going anywhere just yet.

“There’s something familiar about your boy here, isn’t there? It smells like someone else has had a feed or two, someone from either here or on the West Coast? Help me out, gorgeous,” he sneered looking straight at me.

“You have a keen sense, mon ami.” I tried to place their accent to see if I could fall into their patois. I suspected Louisiana, probably New Orleans, the time of their turning at least late 19th Century.

“Ah am stunned at your abilities, sir, and perhaps when you invite us in we can settle down at some point in the night and have ourselves a drink together?”

His twin turned and looked at him, but Lefty never took his eyes off of mine. He then smiled. They quickly both flew up and disappeared over the lip of the roof and the door opened. The dance music and the noise of horrific scenes collided in our heads.

CHAPTER 21

We entered a large ground floor hallway, and as it was summer, all the coat racks were jammed up along the left wall. The lighting was dim and hundreds of voices swept down from the main rooms vying for my attention. I could smell it all as I moved down the hall and suppressed my desire to play. My cock wanted to get hard, my balls moved up, but I knew I might have a fight on my hands so quickly brought myself under control.

Andrew and I agreed to head for the long bar stretching down the left side of the building deciding to keep to the darker end and get a place at the bar to lean up on to check out the occupants.

I smelled blood and the stench coming from the next level up. There was a staircase leading to a mezzanine that stretched back from halfway down on the first floor. I heard noises coming from several rooms, some from lust, some from terror and pain. I didn't want to know so I controlled my hearing to the ground floor only.

In front of us was a dance floor with a mixture of vamps and humans, gyrating and moving to funk and soul. To the sides were smaller, individual scenes of blowjobs, blood sucking and conversations.

“Welcome, gay men,” came a voice in our ears. It was said with sarcasm and the twin on my right outside was now standing next to me at the bar. He turned, spoke to the bartender and three whiskeys were lined up in seconds. “The first one’s on me,” he whispered close to my ear.

“Where’s Benjamin?” Andrew asked.

“He’s coming, my friend, be patient. I’m called Francois.” We all told him our names.

He looked at Scott with interest and murmured to me that his blood would not be the best to drink right now.

I nodded realizing no one was interested in Scott because of the smell of the venom, but as different vamps came by there were looks of admiration as well as fear. They couldn’t make him out and this played with their certainty and power over humans.

Rafe had said the venom wasn’t allowed for everyone, only to be had by a select few, so Scott was seen as privileged. I then realized it also put him in real danger by someone like Tom or the leaders of this pack. It made his turning either attractive to them or a threat and either way they would want him dead.

“We need to get Scott out of here, Andrew, and fast.”

He turned, saw my face then suddenly looked over my head at someone coming down the stairs. His smile quickly took on the look of surprise. I turned to see a nice looking vamp coming down from the mezzanine and behind him, five steps back, was Tom.

There was an audible, three second shift in the air when Tom put his first boot on the ground floor. His presence was enormous, golden eyes flicked back and forth and many shifted their bodies either toward him or away, depending upon desire or fear. He had not taken his eyes off me. Taking a beer handed to him from a bartender,

he slowly made his way to about six feet in front of me. He flicked a look at Francois who then melted away. He knew I was here from the second I'd arrived.

"Chris."

"Tom."

I heard him take a deep breath and could feel part of me involuntarily waft up his nostrils. For a brief second my inner body winced but I felt the presence of my gifts, my body becoming a locked vessel. He looked surprised and nodded in recognition.

"I see you're very well."

"Yes, I am."

"Stronger than when we last met?"

"I am, yes."

"That's good. More of a challenge."

He drank from his bottle and turned to look at Scott.

"Hello there, I see and smell you are on your way to joining us."

I willed Scott to stay silent. Whether he heard me or not he did just that. His heart rate was up and he drew increased attention from vamps around him.

Andrew moved closer to Scott. Tom smiled at him and then turned back to me.

"Nothing's going to happen to him tonight, unless he wants something to." He looked back at Scott and I could feel the pull on his emotions as Tom searched him for signs of desire and weakness. Andrew's energy blocked Scott's responses and Tom let out a small grunt.

“I think you and I need to talk, Chris.” He turned and started back up the stairs.

I pushed away from the bar and felt 200 eyes on me. Andrew and I agreed if I wasn't back in an hour he was to take Scott out of there. I climbed the staircase watching Tom's perfect, tight ass move in front of me. He was wearing black leather pants, boots and a black muscle t-shirt. There were two leather straps at each wrist, his smell strong like trees in an old forest mixed with peaches, blood and semen. I had an inner fight on my hands already and I had not reached the balustrade on the next level.

At the top he walked left and I saw another smaller staircase against the wall. He started up with a quick look to see if I followed.

On this level, down a hallway past “sleeping” rooms, he entered a large room leaving the door ajar. He was pouring us drinks when I joined him, shutting the door behind me. A subdued silence reigned.

This large space had acoustic panels on all the walls and across the ceiling. There were no windows. He had as much privacy as he wanted and said as much as he turned and handed me a gin and tonic with a large slice of lemon, the drink we shared in the rooms at school back in Australia.

I kept my heart rate steady and tried to take in his domain: an old walnut desk and oak chair, a large Victorian lamp to its left giving off a warm, red glow, a huge bed covered in white sheets and pillows, an open shower, a sink in one corner enclosed in a large glass cabinet – I started to get hard – and a huge, deep red rug pulling it all together. I turned back to face him – our first, real encounter in over 10 years.

“You look amazing. You are more beautiful and somehow more serene than when I knew you as mortal.” His deep voice washed over me and I looked at him trying to gauge his game with me. Was it fake or real? I found I felt nothing but love.

“Tom, I want to say the same sorts of things about you, but I’d be lying because I know what’s in your system and how you’ve developed your amazing looks.” I felt sad as I said these words because I realized the enormous gulf that lay between us. I rushed on.

“Don’t close down because I’ve just said that, I find you so hot and nothing would please me more than to move to that bed and start kissing you, but it can’t happen. I won’t let it happen.”

“Are you sure, Chris?” His left hand slowly slid down to his massive package and I could hear the leather stretching over his engorged cock.

I shook my head and turned away.

I felt him closing off and a feral smell hit me hard. I turned back. He shook a little as I watched him furiously make up his mind what his next move would be. There was a powerful animal in him trying to get loose, that beast rarely got knocked back.

“Tom, I’m here to talk and I need your help.” My cock was hard pressed in my jeans and my ass began to throb. I prayed I didn’t leak any precum he could smell. His eyes were beautiful, rich gold and emerald green and he stood with his legs wide apart, his huge cock pushing out at me.

He quickly turned, moved to a small fridge, took out a bottle and swilled most of the thick red liquid down fast. I could smell it and saw he needed it to calm down.

“Thank you,” I said and sat down at his desk, and pushed the chair away to face him. He finally perched on the edge of the desk, one leg straight out the other bent at the knee, the mound in his pants moving with him.

“My god, you are a god, Tom, my Tom,” I sighed inside.

Our eyes locked again until he broke it. I kept still as his eyes slowly followed down my body and rested on my hard crotch.

“You said you needed my help?”

I swallowed and rushed into what had happened to Scott, that he was my best friend and I wanted to know what his future would become if I couldn't get the venom out. “Can I save him? How can I do it? Is there a cure?”

I realized then how upset I'd become about my responsibility for what had happened to Scott. I abruptly stopped, took out the lemon and finished my drink in one hit. The rest of the agenda was well hidden deep inside me. Tom could know nothing of that. None of us would leave this warehouse if it were discovered.

“You love this guy?”

“Yes, as a friend.”

“Do you have anyone in your life?”

“No, do you?” I threw back at him.

He was up and pacing. He smiled and shook his head.

“Why on earth would I go down that road again?” He poured us another drink giving me time to get my horniness back under control. I faced him again as I took my glass from his big right hand. That's when I saw it.

“You still wear the watch I gave you?”

“Not always, but I put it on tonight. It's a long time ago but I wondered if you would remember.” Before I could reply, he put up that hand to gain control and began to speak.

“Your friend will become a true and real vampire in about six months. The venom will reconstitute itself, he'll become more and more violent, seek out a vampire and he will be turned.”

“There’s got to be something I can do, Tom! What about a full blood transfusion?”

“No good. The virus is in his brain and attached to other cells. It’s retroactive waiting until it’s called forth.”

He just looked at me with a curious unfeeling and dispassionate expression.

I felt helpless and angry. “It’s your fucking ward, Jamie, who did this! If he’s here I’ll kill him!”

“Chris, you haven’t killed anyone in your life and you know you won’t unless you’re attacked.”

“He’s not mortal, he’s a vampire,” I spat back.

“And you’re not?”

“Apparently not to you.”

“You still feed off humans and take their blood and you live forever.”

“Yes, but we don’t kill them.”

Tom put his hand up again and said, “Stop this. I don’t want to do this with you. You’d better go now and get your friends out of here.”

I heatedly hurled my glass against the wall above his bed shattering it all over the sheets and the floor. I was at the door and about to leave when he surprisingly, almost tenderly asked, “Will I see you again?”

“Why?” I gruffly replied, “You can’t do anything for me.”

I raced down the hall, down to the mezzanine and stood for a moment looking over the balcony at the dancers below. I was breathing hard, my body tightly wound, vibrating. I either had to fuck or fly 1,000 miles away, high up into the coldest air I could find. Then I saw him.

CHAPTER 22

Jamie was on the dance floor gyrating with a woman and another vamp. They were loud and obvious. I looked for Andrew and Scott then saw them down at the end of the bar deep in conversation with his friend, Benjamin. Andrew had his arm over Scott's shoulder.

I found Jamie again and flew down to him, grabbing his throat then in one swift pull took him up to the ceiling. A cry went up from his group and soon I had a circle of vamps circling around me in the air. Jamie's eyes were bulging and I could feel his throat close off. Although as a blood vampire he didn't breathe, I had my hand on both the arteries sliding up his neck. My body pulsated and I felt it hold the others at bay.

"You little dumb fuck! I should have done this to you on Folsom Street."

His eyes glassed over in terror while grappling wildly trying to tear my arm away from his throat. Suddenly Tom was beside him reaching for my other arm.

"Don't, Chris!" He bellowed. "I can't let you kill my progeny. This room will kill you and your friends if you don't stop now." I looked to the end of the bar where the twins and several other vamps were huddled menacingly around Andrew and Scott. I knew Scott

wouldn't make it. Looking Jamie hard in the eyes, I let my grip relax and he fell to the floor far below. I heard a voice in my head tell me there'd be another time. Tom and I looked at each other, everything raw between us. I flew down to the boys.

“Come on, we're out of here.”

No one moved and Tom slowly landed next to me.

“Let them go.”

Scott held onto Andrew and we made for the street. As I hit the hallway with Tom still watching us, I turned yelling at the crowd, “This isn't over!” I hit the humid, night air of New York. It never felt so welcoming. Andrew took Scott to his place. He could answer a lot of questions for him, and for that I was grateful. I knew he would give him some hope. As they left me near the West Village I told Scott I had solutions, to remain positive and to have the best sex of his life. I would see him later and that the other boys would be fine.

I sped to the Cock Ring then up into a filthy room in the hotel with two hot, Puerto Rican men and fucked the immediate hurt and pain out of my system. My guilt about Scott could come back tomorrow.

The rest of that next week was comparatively placid. Scott and I had a couple of in-depth conversations and I laid out a plan to take to The Council via Sandor when we got back. I felt this could work. On the issue of ridding his body of the virus, it meant a lot of work in the university lab. Having his blood was a fantastic leaping off point.

“Yay!” Scott sarcastically jeered.

The four of us, with Andrew, who joined us for meals as a friend of mine - we didn't want Jeff to hear Scott was seeing someone in New York even if it was just a fling - set out to see all we could in

and around Manhattan. Sometimes Scott went off with John and Brian to shop while I stayed in my room to work on tasks I had set for chemistry and advanced physics. On hotter days we all went to the major museums together seeing art we had always heard about but had only seen in books.

Scott retained his powers and that worried me. He and Andrew spent almost every night together now, either in the hotel or at Andrew's apartment on the Upper East Side. He toned it down for the boys but we both knew how quick and clever John was at spotting differences. Twice I had to erase his memory of Scott slipping through the racks at the men's sale at Bergdoff's a tad quicker than was normal. Apparently at Barneys, he tried for some sweaters that were obviously out of reach, leaped up to them and returned to the floor pleased as punch. He did not see he was doing anything out of the ordinary. John later would burst through my door with tales of weird behavior and extreme embarrassment for him and Brian.

I confronted Andrew about this and he confessed to helping Scott "enjoy" his time in the city meaning he was enhancing his blood to keep his levels up.

"He's begging me, man! What harm can it really do? He's so goddamn cute. I can't resist his pleas, especially when he's sitting up on my cock begging me to own him. Now, I want to move to San Francisco."

He looked balefully at me then looked away. I was livid and he knew it.

"It's not for you to decide that he stays in this quasi-vampire-human state, Andrew! The Group would be horrified you're breaking these rules of engagement! I get that this is totally new, at least for us, but he has to come back to earth, get home in one piece and act fully human again."

“I know, I know. I’m sorry. He’s just so damn cute,” he repeated.

He was playing with his juice and had shredded the straw that came with it.

“Has he suggested he wants you to visit or move to The City?” I inquired as gently as I could. I still wanted to hit him.

“We’ve talked about it. He’s told me all about Jeff, that he’s been straying from him over the past year but is now open to something happening with me after he gets back. He needs time to work it out with Jeff.”

Fully calm now I warned, “Be careful, my friend. “This is a holiday and you know how these romances usually end up.”

“I get it, Chris, I really do, so we’ve agreed nothing can happen until he knows if he is going to live or die or become a vampire. We’ve talked all of this through and I think it will help you work with him as the weeks roll on through.” He looked up at me negotiating my feelings on his behavior now.

I nodded and thanked him. Andrew was a good man. I knew he didn’t want to see anyone get hurt and would remain honorable. If these two men were meant to be together – especially under these extraordinary circumstances that only a few people would ever understand or know about - then I would get out of the way completely. The first priority on our list was curing Scott.

I couldn’t stop thinking about Tom, his state of mind, the virus that formed part of who he was now, and of course, the surprisingly strong attachment we still felt for each other. One night toward the end of our stay after we had just returned from dancing in a small bar in the Village, I put my energy out to meet up with him. I wanted to fly up high, out over the Atlantic. New York City was way too hot for me. If Tom connected, fine, if not I would travel the night alone.

I slipped out of the hotel listening to the amazing stories going on in the rooms as I quietly made it down the staircase to the foyer. It really was a hotel with a difference. I loved the fact that some people owned apartments, while others just rented regular rooms while they were in town for gigs or shows. I think I recognized a couple of famous voices.

I turned away from the foyer and used a back door to find a hallway to the alley behind, then checking for prying eyes, I shot up through the bright lights of New York and moved on and up into the blackness of the night. As the air cooled, I breathed a sigh of relief, turned to fly higher, up and over the Statue of Liberty and out to sea.

He was near, I felt him. By the time the East Coast lights softened and disappeared, he was next to me.

I put my left arm out, he took my wrist and we traveled through the night sky allowing ourselves to be connected without the need of language, reason or necessity. It was just Tom, me, and a billion stars above us.

Speeding up, he shifted us south. Before long I saw the lights of an island chain appear and the coast of Florida on my right. We descended on a slow run. I looked at him and caught a smile and so, trusting my heart plus the fact that he came out with me away from all the others, I went with his decision.

We flew down very close to the water, passing some sleeping fishing boats and raced across a jungle, past small villages, hills and valleys landing near the edge of a town. Tom dropped down into a walled garden and momentarily disappeared from sight to then appear striding across a lawn to a small brick house with a red-tiled roof, which sat squat up against a high wall covered in a riot of purple and white bougainvillea protecting it from a lane that went into the town itself.

I hesitated, then saw him at the door waving me to come down. I dropped and followed him inside.

“It’s a retreat from New York,” he explained as he lit lamps in the main living room and the bedroom. I wasn’t sure where we were but guessed it was Haiti, a place of voodoo and black magic, so of course vampires would be on the cultural menu. I knew there’d be a caretaker nearby but he wasn’t on the property right then so we were alone. I wasn’t worried about being here, just slightly nervous being so physically close to Tom.

He stood in the middle of the room, smiled at me, then ripped off his t-shirt and wristbands, his massive upper body caught by the light of a lamp, his dark auburn brown hair thick and rich on his chest. My cock started to grow. His big hands moved slowly to his black jeans and slowly undid the buckle of his belt. He was about to undo them, then stopped and nodded to me to undress.

“It’s me, Chris. Tom. I’ve taken a suppressant and I’m a calmer version for the next four to five hours.” I didn’t question him as I could see a different man than was back in New York and I went with it. His smell of sex and my need to get fucked by him came to the forefront. Tom’s body proportions were huge, bigger arms and legs and a tighter waist than in the old days.

I fumbled getting my boots off and fell back on a couch pulling off my jeans. He was over to me in a second, pulled me up then gently had me raise my arms and take off my t-shirt. We didn’t talk. I don’t think I could have. We stood inches from each other then his mouth was on mine.

Every cell in my body exploded as his big arms enfolded me. He lifted me off the ground, kissing me, searching my mouth, tasting me, catching up on memories of what I was like so, so long ago.

I slipped my legs up and around his waist, he didn't move a muscle, his hard now thicker, longer cock lay hard under the root of my shaft, the head pushing up against my hole.

I watched him peel apart a rubber, a sign he wanted to protect me, and slowly slip it on over the big head of his beautiful rigid cock sliding it down the huge shaft. He walked me into the bedroom slowly placing us both down onto the mattress and into the sheets.

I could feel everything, every touch of skin and every hair on his and my own body. My legs fell apart, he lay between them, slid up onto my belly and pushing up onto his elbows looked me straight in the eyes.

Tom remained the ultimate Tom of Finland drawing, the one most men really want to see with masses of hair on the chest and arms, massive hairy thighs and an amazing cock that was beer-can thick and now at least nine inches long stuck hard above two big, meaty balls. It pressed hard up against mine, gently moving through my now wet stomach hair.

"I'm a little disappointed in you, you know," he said sweetly trying to look hurt. He wouldn't stop sliding his cock against my stomach and was playing with my right ear, gently pulling on the lobe.

"About what?" I sighed in complete sexual agony. I loved the weight of his enormous body lying full out on me.

"Waiting this long to contact me after you stormed out of my club."

"Well I was angry with you."

"Were you now?" he gently teased and pushed himself up onto his haunches and looked at me with a big grin. His thick, red-brown beard and mustache showed his white teeth off to perfection and all I wanted was to have that mouth against mine again.

He took my legs pushing them up onto his shoulders. My hungry ass was just inches from his face and he gently moved his tongue inside, loving the smell, the taste, the excitement. He smelled, caressed and licked my balls. I was so close to shooting a huge load. He scooted himself slightly back and I felt his hot cock head at the opening of my ass.

He ran his tongue up and down my calves, I moaned, automatically starting to rock back and forth with my hips pushing my ass up to meet his ready, throbbing dick. He knew my eyes were begging him to enter me.

He continued slowly, licking and watching me. I was in heaven and I cared nothing about anything beyond this actual moment.

“None of the boys and girls in the club like you, they think you were rude to them.”

He smiled innocently at me and went back to licking but now had a big middle finger playing at the opening of my asshole, gently moving in and out helped by my wetness.

“You can tell your boys, and girls, I actually hope I never see them again.” I moaned again, looking up at the ceiling for a minute. My eyes rolled back in my head as he’d started to push his huge cock into me and I suddenly remembered how this man had felt when he’d fucked me so long ago. Tears welled up and I cried out as he pushed his entire shaft into my waiting body.

“Chris, are you okay?” he asked with such care. He didn’t stop moving as he saw me nod quickly. He grunted, satisfied, and held my legs out wide to watch his cock move out then deep into me, pushing me to open up my ass as much as I could for him.

I felt part of me take his cock and move back and forth with it. As I did I felt him swell even more. His huge balls were smacking against my butt, moving up, tightening as he became more excited.

He let my legs go around his hips and he thrust his cock in harder as we continued to kiss. I was hungry for every part of him. We both had our fangs out as we became hotter and closer to coming. He pulled his mouth away locking his eyes on mine. I could see something trying to push out behind his eyes, his body seemed momentarily bigger.

“I need to be careful.”

“I know. I trust you,” I replied. He stopped fucking hard and we moved slower to make this time together last.

“I’ve never stopped loving you.”

“And I, you. Never.”

“Until tonight, I’ve been so angry with you for becoming a vampire, my careful cookie-cutter image of you shattered. That sweet, young man in his dark, gray suit and skinny tie was all I held onto for the years following me leaving Australia. When I caught your smell in The City, then later realized you weren’t into blood but cum, I wanted to hurt you.”

His eyes fluctuated from yellow to gold with flecks of brown, he stopped talking and started to push harder again while moving me up and onto his shoulders. He let me know he was ready and we pumped each other wildly with everything we could. He came and I imagined his hot, sweet jizz shoot into me, I came on both of our chests splattering some up to Tom’s chin, both lost in cries someone had to hear somewhere on the island.

I’m almost as big as Tom, but not quite, allowing me to lie on top of him comfortably. He removed the condom and we lay wet and warm saying nothing for about 10 minutes. He gently massaged my butt.

“I have to go back soon or I’ll stay in this house all day.”

“Yep, you will,” I agreed, trying to turn up and look at his face. He slid me off him and took me in his arms.

“How about you? Can you stay?” Tom asked.

“I can’t Tom. We leave tonight. I have my last day with the guys in New York and there’s a couple of things I still need to do.”

He started to kiss me again and within seconds we were leisurely beating each other off.

I didn’t ask him about the suppressant he took but that piece of information had my attention. I let him shower first so I could wrap and slip the used condom into my jeans. I cleaned the place up to cover my tracks then quickly showered after him. With the witching hour gone, we took off and headed back to New York to be there before dawn.

Tom sacrificed a lot to be with me this night. He didn’t know how I’d respond to him and pushing the dominant side of himself to the back might have weakened him, or his position in the lair. Blood vampires were more cruel than kind, and a whiff of weakness was an invitation for subversion or domination. I met only one of the two evil blood vamps from down south on this trip and I knew they both had a role to play in what might be coming. I had not found out if a new order might rise and felt inept and foolish as a result.

We landed at the roughest edge of Soho and stood looking at each other. His eyes started to change color as I felt his darker nature pressing for dominant power again. Tom had about 15 minutes to get inside.

“Are we going to say corny shit?” He had a big grin on his face. I could see the animal back in his swagger.

“Tell me one thing,” I said ignoring the viral takeover. We both had our own agendas and as we looked at one another we both suspected some sort of game plan.

He looked at his watch then at me.

“When you say you took a suppressant what did you mean?”

He thought about it, looked reluctant but revealed, “There’s a plant very much like Aloe Vera that has properties to subdue our wilder side.”

“How powerful is it and how long does it last? Tom, I’m thinking of Scott!”

“It depends on how much you take and how often. It could be effective for about six months total. I’m sorry.”

“Thank you, my love. You’d better go.”

“People in Oaxaca can help you find it,” he said smiling before he turned and strode off. I watched him go, a piece of my heart trucking along with him. We both knew we would work to see each other again.

I had to get to Andrew as quickly as possible to give him Tom’s semen for microscopic investigation. And someone had to find that plant in Mexico and get it up to San Francisco for me to synthesize. But still, I felt guilty, as I knew I had slipped off target. I needed to feed, so I lit out for the early morning stragglers back at the warehouses on the Hudson.

CHAPTER 23

I'd lied to Tom. We had one more day in New York and another night. Andrew and I used his hospital research facilities to study the semen and make tentative future plans on my final night there.

Surprisingly, no one wanted to do much more in Manhattan and the boys slept until well after lunch. They wanted an afternoon at the baths and an early night as our flight left at 8 am.

Scott insisted on joining me and Andrew, so we told John and Brian we were going to the Cock Ring on Christopher Street, something they thought was gross.

Scott and I found time to have lunch at the Metro Grill and talk through what had happened. He still buzzed and I agreed with Andrew's summation that he looked amazing.

"I'm not giving up this skin glow buddy, that's for sure!" he said, admiring at his bigger, smooth, muscular arms.

"I get it. You look young and fresh. The truth is, Scott, we don't know how much of the effects of the venom will remain or fade away. It's confusing at this point."

"Well, I'm eating again, I can't see as far as those first couple of days, but my sight, hearing and mobility are still pretty good. Let's hope I have it for at least a few months."

“I’ve been working on some legal projects that are going to make me a full partner in the firm for sure! This shit in me has opened up a part of my brain that’s allowed me to see results that are unique,” he paused looking for the right words, “I don’t know, but somehow I can see where corporate law ought to be heading. I’m also going to get into mergers and acquisitions. I know I can make a difference.”

We shot each other quick, tight grins. Both of us looked around the restaurant for a minute or two then finally after we ordered I began, “Because I can, and because I’ve been granted some additional strengths from The Council, I’ll now work tirelessly to find a way to stop you turning.” I let out a held breath.

“We have about a year now. Tom told me about a plant that will slow conversion down. Nothing is going to manifest for months as it is, so hopefully we’ll have the time to come up with a vaccine or at least, in the beginning, a stop gap drug giving me a while to find a permanent solution.”

“You can’t put all your time into this, can you?” Scott asked with a worried expression. “Your department will want you to work on their plans and developments.”

“Yes, but I have the night. I don’t sleep and I can persuade them to allow me my own project. It will be ground breaking which will make it a contribution to the work of the department.”

Neither of us spoke as we ate on our respective dishes. I still felt like shit that Jamie had used him to get to me.

“Chris, I want you to listen to me for a minute or two, okay? Don’t interrupt. I can see what you’re going through, well actually, I can feel it too, at the moment, so...” he faded away for a moment as he smiled at another of his current gifts.”

“I knew you before you got turned, I sensed something was different after you got turned, and I watched you change over the next year as a result. I now understand all of this so well.”

“None of it is your fault. You’re as much a victim as I am. My deal in this is, ‘wrong place, wrong time’. It’s that simple! We have a job on our hands and whatever happens we’ll get through it. When, and if I start to get aggressive, we can find a place for me to let it out. And who knows? I may even have a vampire with me or near me, as a new boyfriend.”

“Are you that serious about Andrew?” I gently questioned, relieved he was letting me off the hook. “What about Jeff?”

Scott sighed and moved his sunglasses around the tablecloth. “We’ve been drifting apart for some time but kept it to ourselves. He’s a great guy but I’ve wanted more for over a year and wham, here’s a sexy, fucking vampire showing up. What’s a girl to do?” We both broke up and the waiter came over and pretended to ask us if we needed anything else to get us to stop laughing and shut up.

“Now,” said Scott, picking up his glasses as we got ready to leave, “Tell me again how big Tom’s dick is and how he slammed you into the head of the bed really hard and told you to shut up and take it like a man.” As we walked out the door, I grabbed him by the shoulders and murmured, “Oh man, you’re just too much.”

With Scott in tow, that night at NYU hospital, Andrew and I looked at Tom’s semen and Scott’s blood under the microscope. The blood from the semen showed stasis. The virus, while apparent, was almost immobile. The plant’s chemistry was powerful.

There was certainly greater movement than normal in Scott’s blood but the cells weren’t dividing fast.

“Well, it’s active in his blood stream but it’s not replicating right now,” I noted. “And what we can see from Tom’s cum is that the presence of the plant causes the virus to hardly move! It’s encouraging.”

“Yes, but, it’s throughout Scott’s system and who knows what the fuck it’ll do, man, and when?” stated a worried and tactless Andrew. He had his hand on Scott’s shoulder giving him a comforting squeeze. Scott did not look comforted.

“There’s nothing we can do until I get back. I’m reading a lot about other viruses that we’ve found cures for, like polio and measles, and I’m sure I can repeat the experiments. There will be someone who can help me plus I’ll get help from The Council if I need it.”

We went back to the Chelsea and Andrew stayed with Scott. I knew he would leave before we left discretely saying goodbye to me then.

CHAPTER 24

It was Sandor's turn to be mad at me.

"You told him about us? And, while that's not bad enough, he's possibly going to become a blood vampire? Chris, what the hell is wrong with you? Are you out of your mind? Now he has to die!"

I remained calm as Sandor wore the floor out in front of the fireplace, also wondering if the information about having a condom from Tom for research made any difference to him. He did not broach the subject saving me the embarrassment of that explanation. He would instead wait for me to say something.

"I'd like to meet up with Rafe, Sandor, and have him put it to The Council. Think about what we've discovered! There's a plant that stops blood vamps from getting out of control. Who knows how much more we can do with it once we get it into a lab? Also, now I have Scott and his blood, I can work directly on a vaccine. Having a host was going to be difficult."

He was now sitting on the sofa looking stone-faced at me. I went on, realizing I was smacking the back of my right hand into my left for added effect.

"The other issue is, because of the virus Scott's abilities are enhanced so he could be of enormous help to us in the physical world. Do we have someone who understands us to offer legal protection?"

“We don’t need his help as we can live as mortals do,” he countered.

“But to have someone with his brain power, his intellect working alongside us, may be useful in the mortal realm in these difficult times, especially with the possibility of increased blood vampire activity.”

“It’s possible,” Sandor somewhat acquiesced. “But I need to meet him. I’d like to get a feel for him. I still think I’ll have to kill him, but I’ll let The Council decide. Chris, you’re playing with fire and our lives.”

“Sandor, you’re missing the major point here. Scott’s been bitten! He’s on the way to becoming a vamp which makes him extraordinary. He’d never tell anyone about this! We’re his only hope of recovery!”

He got up to leave. I know he came anticipating sex, I could smell it, but that outcome was leaving the room with him.

“I won’t let you or anyone else kill him, Sandor,” I said quietly yet emphatically, as he made for the stairs. “Please contact Rafe for me tonight, or I will.”

The next day I was given access to the research labs at UCSF through my department head who believed I was working on advanced math and chemistry. Besides, there were PhD students working through the summer vacation so it was not an issue. I always tried to gain access to things naturally, without persuasion, and it was satisfying to know the department’s support was genuine, not coerced. I only worked at night and having taken blood from Scott I hurried to begin finding a vaccine.

Rafe appeared three days later around midnight at my apartment and pressed the bell. I was surprised when I looked down the two stairways to the grill gate and saw him. He had been so quiet I wondered if somehow he had simply materialized. He was at the top of the stairs giving me a quick hug within seconds. We moved into the living room and sat.

He wore a thick, gray, woolen tunic buttoned up the front with a large, dark brown belt cinching the waist. The large clasp on the front of the belt was made of silver with intricate ancient symbols woven across it. It looked Celtic, medieval and timeless. He had on dark brown, handcrafted boots.

“I live in a monastery on the Italian coast and this is our uniform.” He smiled at me putting his hands in his lap. He was a wonderful, handsome, older man who looked youthful one moment and sage-like in another.

He waited for me to speak.

I told him everything about New York including the night in the Caribbean. I had to because of the microscopic scrutiny of the semen.

“Good that you thought on your feet, eh?” As we both knew I was flat on my back, we both smiled. It seemed to do the trick.

Rafe was such a comfortable man to be with and I knew he trusted me. After all, The Council made it clear I was chosen to combat whatever was coming from the new blood vampire group and I had to be allowed some leeway.

“Chris, I’m surprised by the actions of your former lover. It seems he still has some decency and love in him. I wonder why he’s not completely overwhelmed by this virus? He must have enormous, deep wells of inner strength. Do you see him as a danger to you or to the world?”

“I had no way of finding out his or his friends’ plans as we were suddenly thrown into a panic from my friend’s bite. All priorities shifted. We definitely have an ally in Andrew in New York and he’s finding out from his blood vamp friend any news we can use. I don’t believe Tom wants to kill me if he doesn’t have to, but who knows in the future?” We both looked at each other and wondered about what was coming.

Suddenly the door buzzed, I started and Rafe put his hand up to signal all was well. He was expecting someone and I realized then who it was. I looked at him and he nodded that all was okay. I got up and let in Sandor, and with him, Scott.

“Hi buddy,” I greeted Scott who looked hesitant and a little scared. Sandor smiled tightly at me and sat on the sofa alongside Rafe. I stood at the fireplace signaling to Scott to sit in the big chair.

“Hello, young man. My name is Rafe and you’ve been put in a precarious position through no fault of your own. You must not think you’re in danger from us. You’re not. We have assessed what happened and have agreed,” saying this with a quick, confirming look at Sandor, “that you be left alone and allowed to continue on your life’s pathway until you either turn or we find you a cure.”

“You cannot tell anyone what has occurred and you must work with Chris to find this cure. Your blood is valuable and as it will take time to find a permanent cure, or at least some antidote to the horrors it seems to bring to blood vampires, we want your assurance you will comply and join us in this quest.”

Sandor was about to jump in to warn Scott as well when Rafe stopped him.

“The Council believes you are actually meant to be where you are right now, that this is part of your destiny making your role sacrosanct.”

As he said this he put his hand on Sandor’s knee as reassurance for him to accept the edict. I let out an audible sigh while Scott crumpled slightly deeper into the chair.

He then perked up and sat forward. “I’ve been thinking of ways I can help your organization. I realize you are able to live almost normal lives, but perhaps now with a mortal who fully understands your situation, I might be able to provide legal aid in some way, help with investments, things like that.”

Sandor and Rafe looked at each other, then Rafe gently explained, “Scott, we can talk about that down the road. We first have to find the plant in Mexico and see how fast Chris can come up with a vaccine. Your possible turning stops us at this moment from accepting your kind offer.”

Scott realized the gravity of his situation and knew he was clutching at straws to help, to stay alive avoiding the real possibility he may still become a bloodsucking vampire.

“You’re right, of course. I’m a fool,” he said bitterly looking quickly up at me.

“You’re not at all,” reassured Sandor. “This is not your fault.”

He didn’t look at me but I knew he thought it was mine. He went on in a conciliatory fashion, now leaning forward with interest. “Tell us about yourself. What are you experiencing right now? It would be valuable to know.”

Scott sat back, closed his eyes for a minute and opening them again said, “I’m fast if I want to be. I have to watch it.” He laughed. “I’ve already smacked into a wall at my house shattering a roommate’s framed poster of Bette Midler! I’m stronger than I was, my weight training is ridiculous and Chris and I have to fake the amounts I can lift at the gym.”

“We go at night,” I added.

“You have a beautiful body,” murmured Sandor. Scott went red as I could see he found Sandor very sexy. I could smell the desire coming from both of them.

“I can hear anything said within my house and if I’m out walking, maybe about two blocks down Castro Street. It’s not as strong as in New York. Both my vision and my hearing were extraordinarily acute, then.” He looked somewhat wistfully at me.

“True. It would be hard to have a power wane,” I said, acknowledging his look.

“I can’t fly, I think I could have in the first two days of being bitten, but I can still jump up to about a first story height in a flash.”

He looked down for a few seconds, his mind turning over, then jumped up and began to pace the room. “What’s absolutely important is how well my mind works now.” He looked at all of us, but especially at Rafe, to see if he was being understood.

“I can sort through any issue given me about the law, governance, global issues and human behavior. I understand how things work so life isn’t such a mystery to me, especially about how humans function and make decisions!”

“I’m in awe of what I’m discovering,” he explained quietly. He stopped, again just focusing on Rafe who had walked up to him as he finished.

“Scott, this is amazing and all this from a blood vampire bite containing a virus! From what we know you have received essential DNA from another world and because of who you are, it’s manifesting along lines that support life. Your host, I believe, was a little thug and it’s only made him worse, but with you it has attached itself to your generous, inner nature. I will tell The Council about this as it may mean that if the virus can be separated from blood vampires, it might be able to work for good in some form.”

He took Scott by the shoulders looking him in the eyes to reassure him. “We’ll do everything in our power to give you back your life.”

Scott’s eyes flashed amber for a second, I took in a sharp breath, then stepping back from Rafe he said, “I don’t want to be human after this, Rafe, I want to become a vampire like you guys.”

Rafe searched his eyes and put his left hand across Scott's forehead. They stood for a moment, still and silent. Sandor and I watched in amazement. A strong current of energy surged through the room and for a few minutes I began to really believe we might have a way forward. There was a real team developing.

"Now, what's this I hear about Andrew moving to San Francisco?" asked Rafe looking at all of us in turn.

"Nothing is firmed up," I quickly stated.

"I'm currently breaking up with my guy at the moment and we're working out property and living arrangements," further explained Scott. "I'm able to stay on in our house on Hartford Street and not much will truly change. We've been coming to this for a while." "Anyway, meeting Andrew was somewhat of a catalyst and bonus. He's contacting SF General for a position. I hope he moves here."

"Goodness, what vamp power we will have on the West Coast if he does come!" exclaimed Rafe, with a single clap of his hands.

"I must go now gentlemen. I have to feed then get back to Italy. He murmured "Mmmm" thinking of his own immediate desires. His head turned up to the ceiling, his hands on his hips. "Ah, these delicious American men," he sighed and we all laughed.

Scott and I talked late into the night after Rafe and Sandor left my apartment. I needed certainty about his desire to become a gay vamp.

"I'm sure you've thought this through?" I didn't want to insult his intelligence.

"I have, very much. I've been trying to work out the downside. Is there any?"

"Honestly, Scott, the living forever part of it still plays with my head but I've been assured by The Council there's help with adjusting

to it with a continual flow of time. I have no idea what that all means but I feel deep within me it's manageable."

We left the conversation where it landed, as his future was uncertain, speculation a waste of time. Having my best friend become my best vampire friend was almost too much to hope for!

CHAPTER 25

Toby had gay vamp contacts in Mexico including Guadalajara and Oaxaca so he made a two-week trip down to help in the search for the plant. Like me, Toby was a teacher and as it was still summer vacation he was able to do this for us. It transpired the plant wasn't rare, just grew in a particular canyon hidden from prying eyes, probably introduced from Central America by the blood vamps themselves.

Toby's friends finally got this from an old, Mestizo man living out in a small village in the hills where he sold rare and strange potions and herbs out of a small, mud dwelling. He had an infected, blood vamp as a friend in the 50's when he was a young man and helped the vamp control his more extreme urges by using the succulent.

"Apparently, three doses over a week can help teach the body to tolerate the virus, put it to sleep and calm urges," stated Toby lounging, one leg thrown over the arm of the big chair in my living room. He started chewing on an apple.

"We're so grateful, man, thank you," said Scott. He was on the couch. He and Toby had been sneaking looks at each other since they met. I could tell neither was interested in each other sexually, but there were questions both wanted answered from the other.

“My questions are,” I threw in, “how long does this treatment last, how often can you administer the drug before its ineffectual and how much of it did you bring back?”

I tried to look at ease at Toby as I asked him these questions. After chewing on his apple core and swallowing it, he replied, “The effects don’t last long I’m afraid.”

He snuck a look at Scott. “Maybe two months, but it can be taken again. The trick is, and this is because it’s used by vampires not humans, the vamp can simply go back to his or her old ways then choose it again whenever he or she wants to have the effect again for another reason. Usually a vamp wants it just off and on.”

“Scott’s situation is difficult as he’s human and as the drug wears off, my assumption is he will progress toward his inevitable fate unless you find a more permanent solution.” We were all holding our breath.

“But, he can take the drug again, giving him another couple of months?” I suggested, watching Scott’s face.

“Yes, but Miguel said the greater the use, the weaker the effect. Three major times over a year and the effect will only be a couple of weeks at best.” He put his hand up to stop me from interrupting him and continued, “But, he has never had a human who has had the virus in him and it might react differently, it may last longer.”

He looked hopefully at Scott then to me said, “And, to answer the last part of your question, I have enough to last a good year.”

“Look guys, if Scott can have stretches in between doses this could play out for a full year, maybe longer. We’ll find him a padded gym to work out in for those times he’s off it.” He stopped and looked quizzically at Scott as if he was an insect under a microscope.

Vaccines are notoriously difficult to create and involve three trial periods to realize efficacy, the first with animals, the second two with large host groups, some taking the actual vaccine and others a placebo over two to three years. We probably have a year before Scott becomes unmanageable.

Summer was officially over for the gay community with a spectacular dance party held at the Gift Centre starting off Fall and the holiday season. With about 10 of our good friends, we partied until dawn on Sunday morning ending up at The Balcony on Market Street doing shots of vodka watching the fundamentalist Christians across the street tut-tut their way into assembly.

I kept an eye on Scott dancing, especially when the organizers let 50 large, white rubber balls come loose from the ceiling and bounce around, over and into the hundreds of revelers below. Guys started to jump up and grab at them and Scott was well on his way to setting a new Olympic high jump record when I grabbed him around the waist and quickly pulled him back down.

John would not dance near Scott, complaining to me later that since Scott had ended it with Jeff, he had become highly vocal and opinionated, that he tended to bounce into people and occasionally climb stairs a little too quickly.

“Chris, you have to get him to stop working out so much, alright? Yes, he looks fabulous, but somehow it’s giving him too much energy and he can be a little frightening at times,” he confided all this to me out on the real balcony of The Balcony with the sun up high over our heads. San Francisco can often have its true summer in October so I didn’t want to stand out for too long in direct sunlight.

“You’re his best friend,” he went on, putting his glass at a precarious angle on the balcony’s edge. “And,” he moved in to whisper a secret to me, he didn’t know Scott could hear every word of his concerns, “sometimes, and I’m not kidding you, his eyes change color!” He

paused for affect, his perfect eyebrows arched in a practiced Joan Crawford fashion. Brian joined us at that moment and John quickly looked down Market Street. Brian gave me a knowing look, grabbed the wayward glass and invited us back inside.

Classes at the UCSF School of Medicine started where I was now a full-time post-grad working on a Masters, assisting two associate professors.

As I began working with them, I discovered I would outstrip both of them within a year. Soon I realized I ought to start my own PhD but I pulled back in the day and trained myself to keep an even pace with everyone else's work. I could not bring unwanted attention to myself. I showed "brilliance" and demonstrated a small amount of independence, but I had to show I was learning from them as well.

Academics can become protective of their territories as grants and bursaries are hard to come by. The objective is to become tenured and the only way to get a permanent position at a university is to produce published papers that are recognized by peers in the global scientific and medical communities. No one wanted an upstart like me pushing ahead and besides I couldn't be exposed through the work I did.

So I focused on two things: my passion for increased scientific knowledge and finding a cure for the Mayan virus. I had Scott's blood when I needed it and Andrew had taken blood from him straight after the attack in New York and kept it between 2-4 degrees Celsius at his hospital then had it shipped out when he moved to The City. We knew the antigen levels would be high from this first batch and respond well to diagnostic testing, but I had to have access to a battery of cell lines from animals and humans. There was a state-of-the-art laboratory set well back from daily traffic to work on viruses affecting children. I was granted a room to work in at night. I finally had to use my powers of persuasion to have the small group who

worked there except I was on a special project. My presence became the norm over the next few months. I had Scott's blood when I needed it.

Three things happened as 1976 approached: Andrew moved to San Francisco, transferred to SF General Hospital and Scott needed his first treatment from the Mexican succulent.

All the boys liked Andrew immediately and Jeff, the ever-noble man he was, actually took him out alone to show him the tourist sights of the city.

Andrew came to my lab at night and we reduced the gel of the plant to a viscous material capturing it in capsules following Miguel's vague guidelines on quantities.

"Jezuz, that boy can fuck! I'm worn out, man," said Andrew. We laughed over this as we shared a meal at The Truckstop, around the corner from me on Church Street.

"He's in a whole new place, I said, "It's just going on six months since he's been bitten, and we have to allow him that arena, but we can't let him slip into showing off." I was pushing a tomato slice around my plate. I felt sorry for Andrew as he was now with Scott most of the time.

Still, it was hard to tear them apart over the start of the New Year. Andrew stayed with me for the first three months and I was glad to be working most nights. I couldn't stay home with the two of them fucking all night. Scott was loud and demanding. Andrew was able to eventually settle him down, especially after he had him swallow several capsules, but he said that even as a vampire his energy had to be replenished more quickly than usual.

"But, he's settled, Chris," reassured Andrew. "He is. You don't have to worry, and as this is unprecedented, we can work with the amount of capsules Scott takes and when. I think we watch how he

goes over the next few months being guided by his change in moods. He may exhibit something completely different from blood vamps. He's strong-willed and he's promised to talk to me every night about what's going on in that pretty head."

"My head is pretty?" Scott asked as he snuck down into the booth next to Andrew and poked him in the ribs. "You two didn't even hear me come into the restaurant did you? Be honest!"

I laughed putting both my hands up in surrender.

"I was sharing my concerns with Andrew here about you and didn't have my antenna up."

"I know, Chris, I heard you as I was coming in. C'mon you guys, we agreed we'd keep everything on the table and that we'd work it all out together. I don't want to hide what I'm going through from either of you. You know that, right?"

We nodded and both looked a little sheepish at this now, very stunning man. He was filled out even more, his hair glowed and he was even growing some back on his receding forehead. He challenged my look with a big smile then turned his head toward the counter. "Man, are we getting cruised in this place! I'm sensing a mixture of desire, jealousy, admiration, envy, definitely all of the Deadly Sins."

"Damn," he said out loud, "where's that waiter? I'm hankering for some rare, bloody meat right now."

He slapped the tabletop to emphasize his desire then whispered to us, "Settle down, I'm just joking, I'll get it medium."

The thing I did quickly notice – Scott was followed in by two blood vamps. They were nonchalant and pretended to wave to a couple at a far window booth, but didn't know I could see that neither of the pair recognized their gesture and had returned puzzled to their own conversation. I then heard the ugly cold bloods argue with

a waiter about where they could sit because they wanted a direct eye line to Scott.

I looked at the larger of the two and he clocked me. Hurriedly he looked down at the menu and told his friend quietly to just order a coffee.

I wondered if someone more powerful had sent them or were they doing this surveillance on their own? Was it random, as simple as the fact of Scott being out after dark and smelling like he wanted a set of fangs in his throat? His safety was beginning to worry us.

“I wonder, Andrew, if his smell is now attracting a desire for turning him?” We were in my living room a couple of days later.

“I suppose you’re right. It makes sense. His odor is becoming strong and pungent. I wonder if humans can smell any change in him?”

“At the gym after we work out, I’ve noticed he gets a lot of attention in the changing room. Gay men want him more than before and I sense a stronger desire. I think it’s more than just his great body, it’s the smell too. They just wouldn’t know why and keep putting it down to his looks.”

“I’m glad our kind don’t have the same reaction,” nodded Andrew. Right from that first night in New York we were able to turn the virus mixed with vampire blood off through our olfactory system.

“Mostly I get a kind of burnt toast smell from my young stud, but as I’m super into him, it turns me on, not off.”

The next Friday night we went down to Roberto’s lair as Scott and Andrew really wanted to see the place.

We went to Folsom Street first to hit The Ambush and Febe’s. I decided this was a good first step before we locked ourselves away with 90 or 100 cold vamps for the remainder of the night. I wanted

to see what the reaction was to Scott now that he had been infected for over six months.

A couple of vampires came over to us at Febe's marveling at Scott's smell and looks. "If you didn't smell so strange, I'd fuck you," said a big Latino, his hand grabbing at his fat crotch.

Scott put his arm across Andrew who started to move forward and quipped, "I'd need a bigger cock, my friend." We then headed out for Roberto's.

As we approached the door I felt Scott's anticipation rising. He was so turned on I was beginning to get concerned. Andrew felt it as well and stopped to speak to him privately as I moved to knock.

The door pushed open. There was no friendly door dude this time. Roberto stood inside waving us all in. I hugged him this time, both of us taking in a deep breath as we embraced.

"It's good to see you made it back from New York, my young friend," he said, as he carefully scanned my face. It took me a millisecond to handle his smell and I put my hand on his shoulder.

"Things went well, thank you."

"Yes, but not so much for your friend, I hear," he replied, looking curiously at Scott then at Andrew.

We made our way down the length of the main room to the bar and sat at a table to its right. "I've never smelled anyone like you," he stated looking across at Scott. "You have a combination of strong desire for, and repulsion from, my kind."

"Thank you, I guess?" replied Scott sarcastically, looking around with fascination, and a little fear at some white, staring faces.

"I can see and feel it around the room. It doesn't mean someone wouldn't want to kill you. You confuse some here." With this, he

waved his hand in the air. Immediately hundreds of pairs of golden eyes looked away with small nods of understanding and resignation. Everyone went back to what they were doing. I realized the music had stopped, and now it started again.

Andrew and Scott drifted away and I knew exactly where they were headed, I could smell it as well. My crotch twitched slightly.

I was glad. I wanted to talk to Roberto alone about New York. He might drop something about blood vamp plans if he thought I had found out anything myself.

“Did you know I was invited into Tom’s lair in Soho?” I began.

“I didn’t. Good for you.”

“Have you had the pleasure?”

“No, not as yet, but I plan to get there in early spring.”

“Meetings?” I smiled at him waiting for any hints in his reply. I made certain my outer physical body was blocked to psychic feelers from him. I knew Roberto had sussed that out as I sat down with him.

“There are always issues to discuss in the precarious lives of vampires, you must know that, mon cher.” He feigned boredom with a small sniff but never took his eyes off of me. He accepted a drink without looking at the waiter then I felt him push for more information after he took a slug of the whiskey.

“Chris, you’re up to something with your mortal friend. I know you want to save him. You can’t. He’ll have to be turned or killed at some point later this year. He is an anomaly that cannot be tolerated.” Sitting at the end of the table, he pushed a chair out and straddled one of the arms with both his legs. I stared, waited and willed him to go on.

“Your silence tells me you are, and you think you can save him. Foolish boy. He’s marked for death or eternal life.” He waited, golden brown eyes returning my gaze.

“What do you know about the virus, Roberto?”

“Not much. It didn’t attract me to its charms. I certainly can see why most of my brethren want it in their systems. I prefer a simpler life, especially one that lives in the night and, yes, needs protection from mortals in the day. This absurd promise of the day...”

He stopped, his glass held in the air as he talked. He put it down and looked at me again. His eyes narrowed.

“So, there’s promise of being able to walk in sun light, how can that be?” I asked Roberto. “Is that what Tom and his cohorts are working on in New York? I didn’t get that information from him or anyone there. Tom said nothing about it to me.”

“You spent time with Tom?” he asked. I didn’t answer and Roberto quickly made light with our conversation. “Fascinating that you saw him! He didn’t try to eat you?” He smiled at me, his teeth glistening under the overhanging lights.

I said nothing about what happened between Tom and me in Haiti.

“He was cordial, that’s all. I foolishly tried to kill one of his progeny, a young idiot who was once my student.”

“Well! That would have gotten his attention!”

“He stopped me by letting my friends live.”

“Yes, I remember that silly young man. Tom turned him. This highlights my point completely. Some vampires should not be allowed to get the virus. Tom was obviously on some sort of twisted, sexual high when he turned and then infected him.”

I told Roberto about the scene in the alleyway and how it led Tom to me, then about Scott being bitten on the docks of Manhattan.

“I can understand why you would be upset,” He nodded knowingly. “This virus could expose us all.”

I left Scott and Andrew in the sexual labyrinth and slipped out into the night air. I had to think about Roberto’s slip. Or did he want me to know he knew about the virus? He was way too clever to let something that important be known by outsiders. He must know by now I was working on a cure. I wondered if he wants to see these vamps vanquished and his world under his control stay firmly in place?

So part of the plan was to walk in the day? But how? And when? I had to tell Sandor. I would let him worry about this problem for now. I needed to stay focused and find the cure for the virus. I knew a cure could be part of that solution as well. The thing would be how to get a vaccination into these pumped up monsters and bring them back to earth. That seemed an impossible campaign. I headed for the lab.

Viruses pose a challenge to the body’s immune system because they hide inside cells. So far the virus killed the cell lines from animals. I now started culturing in human cells. And, for the first time when I looked this night, the cells were exhibiting certain changes. It looked like the human immune system might be a real fighter. The element within the virus from another dimension worried me. I sat down and asked for help from the inner worlds.

“It’s getting harder to contain Scott and his behavior, Chris.” Andrew and I were sitting in the living room at their new flat. “Well, at least it’s good you’ve found a new place together. The boys would have suspected something worse than what we told them and have called out the men in white coats by now!”

Scott was not quite out of control yet. He did well with the capsules and we were able to stretch out his “normalcy” well into summer. He took leave from his law firm after concocting a story of an illness suggesting cancer and that he may not return. His brilliance over the past year had not gone unnoticed and senior partners were desperate to have him return so he had all the support and time he needed to “get well”.

The Mexican plant cure was definitely losing its power, but if we held back as much as we could and allowed Scott to have some intense excitement and get some energy out of him in the orgy and S&M sling rooms in several of the more hardcore bathhouses. He then continued to remain stable for up to three days. He craved rarer meat and Andrew found it more difficult to be around him at dinnertime. “He can be gross, man,” was all Andrew said.

It was also a good thing Andrew was a vampire and could handle him in bed.

“I watch his eyes, they’re the clue to what a session with him is going to be like. If I can hit it on a night after he’s medicated or he’s been exhausted then it’s great, but when he’s horny and viral high, it takes all my strength to keep him on all fours. My dick gets sore sometimes and I know he actually bent it one night!”

If Andrew hadn’t looked so hurt and forlorn I would have burst out laughing.

The three of us spent more time down on Folsom. It was certainly more acceptable there than on Castro or in the Upper Fillmore bars. A lot of leather men found Scott very sexy loving his crazed moments. If they were on drugs it was another level of fantastic reality. Acid was still a strong bathhouse drug, especially at The Barracks, where it was handed out as you entered. If you thought you saw a vampire or guy who walked across the ceiling, well

Sandor came to me one night in the lab. I was pleasantly surprised but from the look on his face I knew this was not a social visit.

“Chris, there’s too much going around about Scott’s condition. Toby and a couple of others, even some women vamps, have been told from blood vamps about him and his approaching need to become fully blooded. There is real excitement, because there is no other mortal in The City with the virus in them. Scott’s become a minor celebrity for them. Every blood vamp wants to be his Maker.”

“I know something has to be done, Sandor, I do! I’m caught between containing him and finishing this vaccine. I’m close. I know I am! I can feel the Elders watching this final process come forth and I think I can take it to them for the final tweaks.”

“You have to do both and now. We save him and let him join us or we kill him. My sense is we have a month before we must do one or the other.”

His brown eyes bore into me as I tried not to look sheepish and uncertain. Looking straight back at him I finally said, “Okay, I have a physical strategy, a plan I think will work.” As I looked at his skeptical expression, I wondered if I truly had the time I was given.

CHAPTER 26

I found him before dawn. His smell was acidic, sweat mixed with dark-blooded chocolate. I watched him, still unsure how the coming light would affect him. Was Scott mainly human or had the virus made him susceptible to the conditions of a blood vampire? Would he cling to the shadows or run out into the street and make me chase him down?

He was standing at the end of the alleyway. He looked bigger, his chest heaving. I felt relieved as it meant he was still mortal. He was hunched over, sweating, obsessed with touch, his hands moving up and down pressing into his body. Scott had lost his shirt, and his jeans were pulled down low onto his hips. He talked loudly to the air around him and immediately heard me step into the alley.

“Hello there, buddy!” I cautiously called out.

Scott stared at me forcing himself out of a fog. His eyes were reptilian and quickly found me as I slowly made my way down toward him.

“Ahh, the main man is here!” He stood up and swung himself to face me. “I’m not sure you want to be near me now, mon ami. I know you want to reign me in and I don’t want that anymore.”

“Scott, you can’t give up,” I implored. “We’ve come so far and I’m weeks away from something that can make a real difference to your life. You just have to let Andrew and me ...”

“Control you!” he shouted back at me fast. “Is that what you want to say, Chris? Keep me locked up in some fucking room somewhere until you’ve got this whole god-awful chemical shit worked out!? Well, I’m fucking sick of it!”

He began to strut around like he was on a stage in front of a theater crowd.

“I like the way I feel. I can see how much power is coming my way if I just let this happen naturally.”

He marched up and down, his glistening, muscled torso caught in the weak, yellow light stuck over a dark doorway.

“I had no idea it would be this great! The idea of slipping into the night doesn’t scare me anymore. I look forward to it. I figure I’ll be a real asset to the true vampire world.”

His eyes were dead cold and I could feel the virus pushing him to cut all ties with the mortal world and its influences. There was something poisonous in his brain looking out, laughing right at me!

It was only a matter of weeks before he was gone to us. I could not think of what to do as I watched my friend disappearing behind this mask. I was unable to persuade him, I knew that. I needed powerful help. As a sense of helplessness began to take over me, I called out silently begging for some real help. Then, my inner body started to hum and a powerful vibration moved out from me into the alleyway. Scott looked up at me slightly fearful as he felt my new energy hit him.

I felt them first, then saw them land beside me and behind Scott. He looked surprised and angry and began to move himself up to escape over the rooftops. He was wrestled from behind, held tight and brought back, crumbling to his knees.

He howled and struggled, trying to break from whomever was holding him tight. The being moved past me to join the other. Both took him to the ground.

He was quickly bound and Sandor, who dropped from a nearby building, said, "I'm sorry, Chris, we don't think Scott will make it. We have to kill him before he exposes us, kills someone, or gets turned."

"Sandor, you can't do this!" I turned and faced him and grabbed him by the shoulders.

"This is a rare situation. We can keep him safe until the vaccine is ready. It's maybe two weeks away! Please don't do this!" I pleaded. "I've arranged a cell to hold him and Andrew and I will watch him. Please, give us this extra time. I know we can bring him back. Just get him there for us." Sandor stared at me for a few seconds then reluctantly nodded.

I had met a prison guard from San Quentin at Febe's one night a few weeks back and asked him how I could get a large secure cage built. He was into full bondage and would know a lot of the guys who would either have something like it or had built one themselves. I didn't have to persuade him to help.

The next night I met the guy he told me about who could help us out at an iron foundry in South San Francisco in the industrial section. It was a perfect porn film set. There were tools hanging from the rafters and on the walls. The floor was concrete and could be easily hosed down if a scene got too rough. There was a large kiln against the back wall and an open fireplace gently glowing and smoking. The place was warm and inviting after coming in from the foggy night.

This guy was a stud with curly black hair and a great body. I knew we would be doing more than talk. I had seen him out, but he was with a boyfriend when I spotted him, so I did not intrude. As he strolled over I saw he had no underwear under his overalls.

“So whom do you wish to lock up?” he asked formally and laughed.

“Well right now, that’d be you.” I replied, laughing with him. We did not shake hands as he showed me his were covered in grease.

“Whoa! Settle down, not my scene. I like to look but I’m not a player. I’m more of a general lover.”

He walked back to the metal fixture he was working on and wiped his hands on a rag. He turned to look at me. I felt his cock getting hard before I saw it grow in thickness and length in his loose fitting pants.

Mine strained against my jeans. Looking questioningly at him, I slowly started to undo my top button then he, nodding, started to slip out of his overalls.

He was left standing in a tank top and boots with the overalls around his ankles. His fat, hairy cock was full and growing fast into a hard-on, his balls tight.

“Come over here and suck my cock,” I commanded looking into his eyes. I did not want to feed on him if there was a chance I could see him again.

We spent the next 30 minutes with his wet mouth slowly making its way up and down my hard shaft, his warm tongue tasting my odor, licking my balls, moving up and teasing just the cock head, slowly lowering his entire mouth onto my willing and waiting dick. He loved sucking my cock and balls and he was fucking great at it. He continued savoring my cock very slowly in this fantastic setting. The smell of oil, metal, dust and this man, made it incredibly exciting. When I shot a fat load down his throat it was one of the best blowjobs I had had in a long time.

“Name’s Roger.” He stood leaning back against a 44 gallon drum, his cock still dripping cum onto the floor.

“I’m Chris.”

We agreed we had seen each other out in the scene spending an hour talking about our pasts and why we moved to San Francisco. Surprisingly, I found myself falling for Roger and I wondered about his situation now. I figured if I waited, this would all become apparent.

A transplant from Massachusetts, he dropped out of MIT engineering and came to San Francisco in 1973 wanting to find something practical to do with his life and to come out. After a short apprenticeship, his family, disappointed he had quit college, bought him the foundry.

“You’re a lucky man,” I complimented him, looking around. It was a great space and I could tell he was proud of it. Everything had its place.

“I do alright.” His deep blue eyes kept drawing me in. After we dressed, we sat at a bench. I told him what I needed but lied about why.

Roger went to work immediately and told Andrew and me at another trip to the foundry he would have to assemble it in the space itself to make it truly secure and workable. I would make Roger forget having anything to do with the cage, but certainly not about us having great sex and getting to know one another better. By the time construction was finished he told me he was single.

And this is the cage where we brought Scott, held securely by Sandor’s soldiers.

Andrew had tracked down an old, brick armory at the corner of Mission and 14th. It had not been used for years and so became the perfect place to store an out of control half-beast of a man. Painfully watching him in the new cage reminded me of the old werewolf films I watched as a teenager – the gnashing of teeth, the abuse, the howling and the pleading to be let out.

Andrew and I made a spray from the rest of the plant gel some of which we pumped over Scott whenever he had a wave of violence move through him. The worst attacks were around sunset when the pull to live as a vampire was at its strongest.

“I’m leaving one of these guards to help you if he gets out or things go wrong,” Sandor warned. “It will end his life. Do you understand?”

“Thank you, yes I do,” as I totally agreed. I had no idea yet about these guys Sandor had brought to help us. The one guy disappeared when we were there and reappeared when we had to go. He had no smell and I wasn’t sure if he was fully earthbound or not. As long as we had help, it was an explanation for another time.

And with Scott secure, I raced to get the antibodies responding as quickly as I could. I knew I was close to a solution. The antibody response was strong but still fell apart after a few days. We did not have a lot of time left. I had asked for help and so far, nothing!

As I walked down the secure corridors to the lab I knew there was a presence right behind me. I heard a voice momentarily in my head say, “Use your fangs.” I sat at the lab bench and placed a glass slide up to my mouth, shut my eyes, concentrating on what could work. I felt a drip come down from one of my now protruding fangs. I combined Scott’s blood and this small amount of liquid to the antiviral human antibodies and watched the response under the electron microscope. Within the week, I felt confident I had the solution to our immediate problem.

CHAPTER 27

I heard the furious cry come up from Andrew around midnight and instinctively grabbed my pack from the fridge containing the new serum and flew down the three blocks from my place to the Armory on Mission. Something had happened to Scott and I was terrified he had hurt himself or worse, maybe the guard had killed him.

Sandor was on his way. I could feel him getting closer but my first sight was of Andrew, hands on hips, looking into an empty cage. The gate was almost ripped off and hung precariously from one top hinge. The guard was placed up against a wall, dazed and bloodied, his hands holding his neck and throat. He had some sort of makeshift bandages around what looked like serious wounds.

“He’s fine for now,” Andrew explained hurriedly. “I’ve got him stabilized, but someone needs to get him to a hospital or a clinic, and soon. He told me he doesn’t self-heal in the physical world and can’t make it back to his realm in this state.”

“It’s fine,” said Sandor, who was now behind me, “I’ll get him fixed up. What’s happened and where the fuck is Scott?”

We both looked at Andrew and then all turned to the guard. Sandor rushed over, bent down and lifted him up into his arms.

“Grebbon, what happened?” Sandor was mystified to find his powerful charge overwhelmed and injured.

“I’m sorry, Master,” he gasped. “There were four of them and one of them was too strong for me alone. I’ve not felt such strength, then all of them together. I I ... I needed back up.” His hands, face and upper body were covered in blood, his tight body suit covered in his and others’ blood. It had been a frenzied attack. I could smell vamp, the acrid smell of the virus mingled with it. The blood was not Scott’s and somehow I knew it wasn’t Tom’s. Suddenly it hit me. I could smell Jamie! I flew back in a rage, hitting the cage and bending some bars.

“Jamie has Scott!” I screamed. I knew that little fuck wouldn’t stop once he’d tasted Scott’s blood and, of course, he would be the one to want to turn him, to make him his progeny! He had come back from the East Coast, dominated some old vamp friends and planned this attack.

I was out in the night air before my thoughts caught up with my emotions. Andrew was right behind me. At a slight distance we heard Sandor make plans to get his guard medical attention and the scene cleaned up.

We followed the strong scent trail left by Scott. It was a mixture of fear, fury and virus. We both knew he would fight for his life and that he had built up enormous strength over these past months.

The scent led down over some hills into the avenues and eventually into Golden Gate Park out near the Pacific Ocean. It was now March, the night cold and foggy. No one would be out near the ocean on such a bitter night leaving the blood vamps with plenty of fields and areas to finish their crazed desire to torture and either kill, or turn Scott, into their kind.

Andrew made a noise and burst ahead of me, diving fast past a tall, stately, small sequoia grove, then through dense bushes and out into a small clearing ringed by eucalyptus trees. I heard high-pitched squeals and laughter as I saw three vamps vigorously attacking Scott. He was twisting and fighting back as each vamp taunted and lightly bloodied him.

Jamie was in the air above him urging his friends on. His cock was out of his leather pants. They all meant to drag Scott's human misery out as much as they could in their blood frenzy, then Jamie would turn him.

They heard us flying through the bushes, turned and were almost ready for us, but not quite. Jamie's face contorted, he screamed in anger and with a barking laugh, rose up fast to meet me.

As I was about to collide with him, time suddenly stopped. I stepped out of the moment and found myself gathering a million bright tiny stars into my being. A majestic sound launched itself into the night air, as if there was a full orchestra playing from somewhere deep in the park. I was amazed as I watched everything slow down and the scene take on a life of its own.

There was a shield of gauzy, white and yellow light between him and me. In slow motion I saw the same thing happen for Andrew as he broke into the circle. As he moved through the gauze-like film, he turned back and caught my eye with a smile full of determination and confidence.

Each vampire was flung back with a powerful force. One of them became impaled on a short, thick branch sticking out from a tree 30 feet away, while another had his head snapped, lying crumpled at the edge of the clearing. Slowly each turned to blood and dust and faded away. The third had been smashed into the bushes but hurriedly disappeared.

In the suspension of time I threw my pack to Andrew. He reached in, took out the syringe and as Scott became aware of what was happening, deftly plunged it into his upper body pumping all of the serum into him.

Jamie reeled back from the force giving me a second to grab his throat tight in my left hand and slam my right hand hard into his chest through skin and wet flesh to his heart, rip it out and hold it up to his huge, surprised eyes. We had two seconds to look at each other, to recognize everything past and present. He then fell hard to the ground and began to dissolve.

I landed next to Andrew. Both of us kneeled down to see what would now happen to Scott.

He was shaking violently so it was difficult for Andrew to keep his blood-matted, sweating head in his lap.

“What do we do, Andrew?” I asked feeling completely helpless. “He’s still human and he’s bleeding and it’s so fucking cold out here!”

As Andrew continued cradling Scott, he exclaimed, “Wait, Chris, I can sense the antidote working, or at least something is happening. He’s softer, I don’t know how else to say it! There’s definitely something different about him, but it’s better than it was.”

I peeled off my polo top and we gently got him into it. Scott deliriously mumbled something and clutched tight onto Andrew then we lifted him, slowly rising and flew high up into the star filled night sky and back to my apartment.

“Well?” anxiously asked Sandor. He and Toby sat together on the couch. We all turned to look at Andrew as he came down the hallway from the guest bedroom where we had kept Scott for the last two days.

Still nervously fraught, I jumped in before Andrew could say anything, “He’s been asleep most of the time. I think he’s healing well.”

Andrew then broke into a big grin as he threw his arms out wide exclaiming, “It’s gone. There’s no more virus in him. Our boy’s back to normal.”

And from down the hallway, came Scott’s voice.

“So, who’s going to be my new, gay vampire Daddy?”

CHAPTER 28

“Whoa!” exclaimed Scott. He landed on the edge of the Persian carpet standing there with a big, gorgeous grin on his now crystal clear face. He had just entered through the side window as Sandor often had.

“You look amazing, Scott! How does it all feel?”

He walked straight up to me and tightly hugged me. He held on and I hugged him back. We knew it was an incredible moment for both of us.

“Thank you, Chris, from the bottom of my new heart. If you hadn’t pushed so hard to keep me alive, I wouldn’t be here right now. Thank you.”

We stepped back. I had the chance to look at him up close. He looked serene. I saw a more brilliant, exciting mind now operating through those beautiful, big, blue eyes. It felt wonderful.

“Jeezuz! Unbelievable that you’re hotter than you were before! I’m feeling a little tug in my short-shorts right now.” I smiled at him. He winked and smiled back.

He was now almost my height and incredibly ripped. He wore a white cotton t-shirt that looked painted on, Levi’s and brown boots. His six-pack was a black ski run down into an impossible 29” waist.

“You look like you’ve been working out at Arnie’s gym down in Santa Monica. Those guys are super studs.”

He turned in a mock pirouette.

“I now understand,” he said, “that you always knew I wanted you to fuck me when I was mortal. How didn’t I see that then?”

“You were human and your emotions and mind games always kept you foggy. You also were too much of a gentleman to overstep the gay friend line and, possibly have the chance of being rebuffed.”

He smacked me in the chest.

“Well, it’s not going to happen now anyway, for two reasons: I’m still your best friend and it would be icky, and more importantly, we both have boyfriends.” He smiled slyly as he said this, and looking around the room nonchalantly, threw himself down on the sofa.

“My man is a vampire and it makes everything super easy. Ha!” He slightly hesitated, “So, how is Roger?”

I now was deeply involved with Roger from the foundry and making it work as best I could.

“Has he asked you to go down on him yet?”

Looking wryly at Scott, I quickly returned, “Well, I see you haven’t lost that bitchy sense of humor.” And I had him in a headlock before he could think of moving.

New vampires, whether blood or gay, are always super strong for the first six months after turning, but I fortunately had those extra powers from the Elders from the inner worlds and Scott was immobile in seconds.

“Alright! Alright! Don’t choke me.”

Laughing, he pushed me off. I slid my head down and rested myself in his lap. I sighed looking up at the ceiling.

“I guess the truth is, it’s never going to last with a mortal, is it?” Scott asked already knowing the answer.

Scott decided on Andrew as his creator just two weeks shy of the murderous events in Golden Gate Park. It was such a rare event and so personal that the rest of the gay vamps had to wait until we were invited to meet up with Scott to learn of this momentous occasion.

One of the main things I liked about being a vampire was no human emotion. There was right and wrong built into gay vamps and we responded with anger and joy when appropriate. When it came to sex we did not hang onto jealousy or abandonment issues that were there when we were mortal. I could have sex with Scott or Andrew, they were both hot, and it would be fun, but there was something built into us to keep our close brothers away from that. If you were around your Maker, like Andrew and Scott, it was different. If you and your Maker were attracted to one another you were almost inseparable. But knowing Scott, I figured he’d hang onto some of his human personality and have sex with humans too.

“God, Chris, I can’t believe this! I’m a vampire and even though I don’t actually drink blood, I take a little bit every time I go down on a man. I suck on humans – well, men! I’ve had two experiences so far and my mind has been blown each time! I’ll never joke about it. You know that,” he said while patting my chest. “It’s such a gift and a real part of the magic of the life force on this planet. I also get why the blood boys want to drink it now! The energies, the highs, the sustenance, they’re all in the juices, the elixirs and are the reason we can, and do anything, whether human or vampire!” He trailed off and we both lay there comfortably in amazement of our mutual condition.

“The biggest problem for me,” he went on, “isn’t going back to work, it’s meeting up with the Hartford Street guys. Thank god I moved out and have been living with Andrew for most of this year and also that I’ve been working out hard with you. They’ll notice

a difference in me for sure. John is going to be a nightmare! Jeff certainly will have questions too.”

“Yes, we’ll have to calm John down, but Jeff will protect his own ego and surmise your changes were necessary because you met a new man and needed to work out hard after coming down with the illness you were floating about.”

I told Scott what really happened to Brian and how I had found him in the hospital and saved his mortality, about what he might suspect, but how on a deeper level that was never fully understood by him as a mortal, something he may know in his makeup but never be able to articulate.

“By the way, when are you going back to Harrison, Jeffers and McClintoch?”

Scott went to stand and I sat up. “I’m not going back. I’m starting my own firm. I’m negotiating a mid-size office space in the 300 block of California Street.” He reached for an apple upsetting the fruit bowl as he moved too quickly.

“Damn, still getting used to this stuff,” he mumbled, biting hard into its rosy flesh.

I nodded and smiled. “Makes perfect sense. With your enhanced abilities and your past experience downtown, lawyers will beg to work with you.”

He gave a short bark and said, “They’re basically a shit-eating, power broker group of privileged morons who hate sharing their wealth with anyone except family.” Raising his fist in the air he exclaimed,

‘Oh, yeah, I’m here to kick some establishment ass! Now, I’m not against their families, but there are others far more worthy in this city so I plan to create a wealth fund for myself and them within the next 10 years.’”

I continued at UCSF to finish my Masters. I was unsure about the PhD now. We discovered the cure for the virus – at least in humans – and as a result from that work I was able to contribute to helping with a genital defect in young children. I had slid certain findings across to my superiors and they were able to link it into a positive result with their genetic lab tests and UCSF would soon be hailed as the new center for genetic bio-engineering in Northern California. Venture capital money would flood in.

I was certain my next steps could easily take me off the grid, into the murky world of blood vamps, cures and treatments. And possibly help save the planet from a crazed vampire takeover.

John called and asked me over for a holiday weekend party at the house. It was going to be big so could I see my way to stopping at a liquor store and buying tequila, vodka, ice, salt, lemons and limes? “Oh! And, if you can carry it all, some bottles of gin, and a couple of six-packs of tonic water?”

“Of course I could!” I thought, laughing out loud as I climbed up the stairs to the house and walked through the open doorway. It was about noon and I was given strict instructions not to be late but I could see a few people had already arrived.

I heard the whir of a blender and David Bowie pulsing from the new speakers Jeff got at the start of the year.

“Oh, thank god you’re here!” gushed John coming out to help me from the kitchen. Brian waved – he was making the drinks.

“Of course I would have had Scott go and get all this stuff, but now, since he’s not really living here anymore, I had to suffer on your kindness, dear Christopher,” explained John. “Do you think it will last with the big East Coast man?” He fluttered his painted eyes at me and whirled around moving everything noisily onto one of the kitchen benches.

“I really don’t know what’s up with Scott, he’s changed and I find it all disconcerting,” admitted John, now standing at the stove stirring a pungent, beef chili. It was making me nauseous. “I blame you,” he said waving a big wooden spoon in the air. “You and he are obviously on steroids and work out too much and now this ... this hunk from New York is here and Scott’s left his job downtown.” He fell silent and kept stirring the chili vigorously. I heard his brain working overtime.

“And ... and ... Scott and Lurch are now eating on your sort of diet! They were here for dinner last week and only ate salad and fruit. What the fuck? I’m watching you, mister!”

“Are they here yet?” I asked, desperate to get the focus off me. I couldn’t sense them. I had no answer for John and I looked at him with sympathy. I felt his fear of losing Scott and of Hartford Street breaking up. He quickly looked back and forth at me. He realized I cared, but I didn’t know what to say to give some comfort. Brightening up he said, “No, but there’s about 20 or so folk out on the balcony. Go twirl that fabulous butt of yours and wreck people’s lives, but” – and he emphasized this by grabbing my left wrist – “do not try and hook that cute little dude with the overgrown hair in the yellow t-shirt and cargos. He’s one of Scott’s new friends and I have first dibs.”

I followed his finger and saw he was pointing right at Toby and I wondered why I had not sensed him the minute I walked in?

“I know him, John, and we’re not into one another. You be careful, he’s kinda special and will not be toyed with.” I had not seen Toby for a month and wondered if he was here with his boyfriend.

“Hey, man, what’s happening?” I slid past a couple of buffed guys in denim and tight-fitting American Boy t-shirts then thankfully noticed the fog was hitting the Castro District.

Toby was leaning back against the balcony fence and looked content. He had John Lennon-style glasses on and he actually reminded me a little of Arlo Guthrie.

“It’s good to see you here. Are you alone?”

“I am indeed. We broke up about the time you guys got back from New York. Now that it’s been a while, I’m loving the freedom and thrill of the chase again! What about you? I heard there was someone about?”

“Yes, but Roger doesn’t have weekends. He works when there is work. Now he’s in the middle of some big iron chandelier for a new bar opening on Harrison, so I go visit him when I’m summoned.” I knew in my heart the two of us had a short shelf life.

We both turned together as we heard Andrew and Scott come up the street. Toby smiled at me and softly whispered, “Who’d of ever think it, huh? Your best friend now a brother!”

Andrew came straight up to us and gave us both big hugs. “Good to see you guys. Scott’s being piled up on and getting a lecture.”

There were beers in an old washtub filled with ice sitting next to a barrel of red geraniums and Andrew grabbed one for him and me.

“How do like living here, Andrew?” Toby asked.

“It’s cool, man, because summer isn’t brutal like on the East Coast. I can be out more in the day and not fry.”

“And, what’s it like at SF General?”

“I like it. Wow, I had no idea STDs are as much of a problem here as they are in New York! There are a lot of boys out there playing with fire.”

Scott bounced out and we heard a lot of people, more arriving all the time, exclaim about his new looks. He had the patter down, pretended to blush and accepted compliments with good humor and grace.

“Damn, Chris, he’s almost prettier than you,” whispered Toby. Andrew blushed and nodded as he watched Scott work the balcony. He was obviously smitten.

There was a red envelope in my mailbox when I got home. I was buzzing from the booze, so it was a nice surprise and I thought it might be another invitation, but as I opened it, I smelled Roberto’s cocoa-chocolate, body odor. On a single, thick red card it read, “Tom’s on his way back in a couple of weeks. Come and see me.”

We didn’t know if the vaccine worked directly with blood vampires. It was promising, as Scott’s blood had contained both vampire blood and the virus and we believed it was the combination of both that gave him his early powers. And, more importantly, the vaccine had knocked out both the Mayan influence and the vampire blood from Jamie. The human immune response was powerful.

But could we vaccinate blood vampires and rid their bodies of the virus, thereby returning them to a vampire status quo?

Roberto met me away from the nest. We both knew this had to be secret. We sat in the back booth of Orphan Andy’s on Market and 17th just off Castro and talked in low tones. It was 3 am, mid-week and fairly quiet.

“Your antics in Golden Gate Park have stirred up immense opposition to your kind right now.” His statement didn’t surprise me. I was ready to defend my actions. Plus I needed his help.

“Jamie had it coming,” I retorted.

“Maybe, but the other two?” He looked at me carefully and sniffed. “You also let one low-life escape and he’s attempted to spin another story across The City how your kind are intruding on our kills. Your friend was still mortal.”

“Oh come off it. It was more complex than that and you know it, Roberto,” I countered.

Fruit cups and coffee arrived. Roberto pretended to eat his.

“It doesn’t matter what I know, Chris. This fracas has threatened a fragile truce that’s existed for over 150 years.”

“Indeed it has and we have to fix it,” chimed in another deep and soft voice as Sandor signaled me to push over so he could sit down. He grabbed Roberto’s fruit cup and said, “Roberto, let’s face it. You’ve never been happy about Tom and his friends settling in San Francisco and you have other friends who feel the same way.”

Roberto started to object and Sandor raised a hand. “Come on, man, you have lost some of your power base with them here and if there’s a way to get it back I know you’ll want to take it. There are other vamps like you who want The City back and we can also hopefully find support from them if needed.”

“My problem is,” I added, “I have to find a vampire who is infected and shoot him up and see if it kills the virus and, that’s not going to be easy!” I quickly explained my findings to Roberto and almost immediately his face lit up into a wicked grin.

“Do you remember my chubby little doorman of last year?” We both nodded.

“He was friendly with Jamie.”

“Of course he was,” I said dryly to Sandor.

“Before Jamie left for New York he dripped some of his blood into him and now the little fucker is an out of control blood vamp living with the other two or three infected who stayed in San Francisco. They’re somewhere deep in the Haight living with a small coven of vamp and human misfits.”

“He has the hots for me!” I exclaimed.

“Who doesn’t, my darling?” asked Roberto and he and Sandor burst out laughing.

“I mean,” I said emphatically, ignoring his jab, “I can get close to him and probably get an injection into him.” I tried to look annoyed.

Roberto slid his hand across the table covering mine. “Leave it to me. I’ll be faster and I’ll be able to get away with it.”

CHAPTER 29

“**W**hat’s going to happen when the Meat Truck arrives, mon ami?” asked Scott referring to Tom. He and Andrew were on their couch wrapped up in each others’ arms in their apartment on Upper Fillmore. They found an airy and spacious place that caught a section of the Bay including part of the Golden Gate Bridge. It was a large, one bedroom with great art deco molding throughout.

“Ha ha, funny man. And to answer your question, I have a plan and it includes you,” I replied pointedly.

“Why include me?” asked Scott sitting up and taking closer notice. Andrew began to take interest as well and replied thoughtfully for him, “I think Chris wants to show you to Tom, so he can see he has saved you, right?”

“That’s it, guys,” I admitted. “But Chris, surely you killing his progeny will outweigh the saving of my human life,” offered Scott.

Andrew jumped in. “The vamp who got away didn’t see the end play out. Tom may not know for sure it was Chris who killed Jamie! He’ll have to be sure before he decides to do anything.”

“For a start, Scott, we’re just as strong as Tom, especially together,” I explained reassuringly. “He would need about six other ramped up

vamps to take us on and win. I also know something about Tom that will let him see that what I did was okay.” Two sets of eyes waited for an explanation.

“I can’t tell you what it is, but it makes everything alright, okay? You need to trust me.”

“I want to be there too!” said Andrew obviously needing to be a part of this. “Okay, let’s see how this thing plays out. Before you go, Chris, what about the antidote working on our viral cousins?”

“I’m waiting for Roberto to contact me about that. I hope to know tonight. I gave him a syringe full of it and he’s sent two vamps who loathe a vamp named Hugo to spring on him somewhere in the Haight.”

When I got home from Upper Fillmore, there was another red envelope from Roberto with news it had happened and we would have to wait and see.

Roberto’s second part of the plan was to throw a huge party on October 30th, the day before actual Halloween, and put it around town that it was only for a select crowd and invitation only. He made sure Hugo knew he was on the list so I could see the results from his attempt to have him inoculated.

The two main attractions were a soul and disco group who played in the world of night-time delights up from LA and a pair of famous male blood vampire dominants – one gay, one straight – coming from Europe by ship (safely boxed away in the hold for protection) arriving three days before the event. They would glorify and control the back room for the four nights over that exciting Halloween weekend.

San Francisco, like New Orleans, was a city of misfits that partied hardy, loved glamour with an edge of violence and adored excess, or at least the visual pleasure of watching it happen around them.

Roberto's back room had all of this and more. After getting ready at my flat we headed on down to the Folsom District.

"We have about three hours until we need to do anything so I'm taking Andrew back into the mayhem to get down and get very, very dirty," excitedly said Scott, his teeth gleaming at me.

"Can you put your fangs back in your head, please?" I laughed.

"Forget it!" said Andrew. "Scott is the perpetual All American Gay Boy Vampire and I'm going to get some t-shirts made to prove it."

Andrew was behind him laughing, moving him into the warehouse, arms wrapped around his torso. They were such a hot couple, being admired and looked at with suspicion in equal measure by all the cold blood vampires. Some of the crowd was human, pretending to be vampire and several looked in awe at Scott. I did not have to read minds to know a lot of hands would be trying to slide over his body tonight.

The sound was intense inside so I had to tone down my hearing. On stage was a glam group warming up a massive, excited and drugged up dance crowd. Lights, strung high above the crowd, gave off blues, yellows and reds, and banners fell from the walls showing striking scenes from olden days depicting werewolves and attacks on villages and castles by the Dead. Some in the crowd were sure to have been there. There were amazing costumes everywhere I looked. Humpty Dumpty I saw waddle by me was going to certainly have to be put back together again an hour before dawn.

I fed the night before so I was clear for what was to come and easily pushed my way through the throng to get to the right hand side of the bar. Roberto and I agreed not to be seen together. I quickly caught his eye as I reached the bar then moved past him to a very solitary stool at the back edge to get my bearings. Simone and Raffy waved from the edge of the dance floor then she signaled to me to

join them. I shook my head and touched my ring finger. She pouted and flashed her fangs.

And then it hit me. A wave ran through the room picking out certain people as it moved like wolves across a field full of young deer. The lights had a momentary flutter and I swear a werewolf on a tapestry began to move. I sensed it hitting only those in the crowd who had the virus and watched as several heads looked up, stopped and stared toward the door. I expected the same thing would be happening in the back room as well.

I moved against the wall at my end of the bar and slipped into the dark to watch the newcomers move through the crowd. The performers kept playing and singing, but the lead singer looked a little puzzled as he sensed some of the joy leave the room.

Then I saw them, the Guatemalan blood vamp Carlos and the Mexican female vamp, surrounded by three other big blood vamps on either side. Adriana was in a full-length leather coat with a big black lamb's wool insert and lapels, a tight leather body suit and black, high-heeled boots. She had an austere, cold beauty with dark eyes taking in everything.

Carlos was in a studded full harness with black leather pants and black boots. They were on parade with revelers moving to the sides to either get out of their way or to marvel at their presence. I noticed peripherally that six or seven other vampires had begun to cluster around them and that one of them was Hugo. Quickly and disappointedly I realized the antidote did not work on blood vampires.

“Why are they in town and how did it slip by me?” Tom must be here as well. I could feel him in my gut and heart before I saw him walking about 20 paces behind them. He must also know I'm here.

Roberto moved out from a crowd of friends at the bar to welcome them and invited the group to go upstairs to his rooms. I watched Tom. I felt him searching and knew he had not found me yet, looking momentarily surprised as he clocked Scott and Andrew coming out of the play area. They saw him as well and stopped. Scott had a worried look on his face and started to look for me.

My breathing and heart rate stayed low plus there were too many human hearts pumping on the dance floor for me to be discovered so easily. Tom leaned forward and said something to the other two. They followed Roberto and two of his guards up the wide staircase. I watched Tom's muscular legs move slowly up the stairs. It was the closest he came to me. He halted for a couple of seconds, but moved on joining the others overhead.

When I sensed them all move well away, I came out and found the boys.

"Fuck man, Tom has gotten even bigger," said a worried, but obviously turned on Scott.

"Down, Tigger," said Andrew. "What do you want to do now, Chris?"

I looked around assessing the crowd.

"I've got to find out what's happening upstairs. I'm going to get up as close to them as I can to figure out exactly what they're planning."

"That's just insane, Chris!" exclaimed a worried Scott. "Did you see the size of those six blood vampires? The two females scared me more than the guys!"

"Look, I lost valuable time in New York last year and I'm sure The Council already knows if they're planning something. When are we going to get this opportunity again?"

I knew they wanted to go with me, so I implored,

“You can’t come up those stairs with me. It will look too obvious. Wait here and watch out. I’ll get back down if there is the slightest problem. I promise.”

Andrew had been holding my arm and let it go. He resigned himself and nodded to Scott. I smiled at my friend’s worried although reconciled face and said. “Just button your fly up, dude. Gross.”

People were coming and going to the first floor rooms to fuck or feed. I got past them and made it up to the second floor. As I slowly looked around the corner to see if I could get closer, I saw the guards standing outside what had to be Roberto’s private rooms. There was a loud burst of fireworks going off nearby in the streets and both vampire heads turned to look at them. With the fastest speed I could muster I moved to a room next to Roberto’s, opened the door and slipped inside. I went still. I was safe for now.

Then with full concentration I projected my hearing through a vent in the wall.

“Are you happy to be back, Adriana? It’s certainly cooler here.”

“What does it matter? I’m dead, Roberto, remember?” I heard her sit in a chair.

Unperturbed he responded, “Perhaps this will become more important to you when you can walk in the day, no?” I could see that smile on his face.

“Our plans for that are on hold for the time being. We need to get to South America and make contact with the source of our power. She, our true Maker, may have what we need now. Several of us have begun to feel her presence and...” she was curtly interrupted by Carlos.

“I think we can keep those developments to ourselves, my darling.” He moved closer to Roberto and went on, this time with unveiled accusations.

“We heard a rumor there’s a fake vampire who has a serum that could spell trouble for ‘our’ kind. He’s taken a human from us and two inculco vamps were killed and one especial brother was murdered. Is that not true?”

I sensed Roberto bridling at being called out by this Central American thug, but he smoothly replied, “We’re still investigating the situation. There’s no proof beyond the addled brain of the one who got away about who did it. I might add, the rescued human, now gay vamp, is here tonight and may be able to tell us more.” I breathed sharply realizing Roberto also was trying to save his own skin.

I then heard Tom give more details. “I saw him downstairs and he’s obviously with his Maker. He’s an ex-New Yorker and a doctor so he would have had a part in this.”

“Adriana and I will stay up here. Go! All of you! This may mean war between those perverted vamps and our kind! Let’s get them up here and get the truth out of them!” demanded Carlos.

I knew the door vamps would look to them coming out so I quickly opened the door and shot out and got downstairs. I had to warn the boys.

“We have to go! Now! I’ll tell you about it when we’ve flown to my place. It’s Halloween so no one will notice us outside.”

We moved toward the front doors but something told me we were too late. Two of the guards landed at the exit 12 feet in front of us and I heard Tom’s voice as he came down the stairs. Turning slowly I watched him step onto the ground floor and walk towards us, four large viral blood vamp guards flanking him. The crowd fell back on either side.

How should I play this out? Tom’s face gave nothing away, but I reasoned he had to want survival of his group.

Light suddenly began to manifest in front of us. Each of us now had a blue and white shield vibrating, protecting us from their approach. They stopped for a moment and watched. I knew Sandor was now standing behind Andrew and Scott.

The music stopped then Tom boomed, "We want to talk to the gay vamp in this room who killed a member of our brotherhood!" There was a shock wave through the crowd of blood vampires and I knew hundreds of fangs dropped down. The air went still, all vamp eyes were on us, the only noise from humans being told to hush and wait.

"Well, Chris?" menacingly asked Tom taking a few steps towards me.

Sandor came up to my side and firmly said, "Tom, we need to have this conversation outside or upstairs. There were actions taken that balance this issue out. Don't be foolish!"

"He was my progeny!" roared Tom and a gasp and hisses went up from the crowd.

Then the night suddenly went into a very different direction as out of nowhere came a screaming voice, a wailing shriek from a blood vampire who was flying fast down the stairs. He was stopped by two of the guards and held but still screamed to the rafters.

"You! Tom! You should talk! I know for a fact that this vampire killed his own Maker!" the vamp screamed. "I just came from Australia where this fact is known by many. It's true!" A female vamp quickly joined him and clinging to him, nodded and screamed, "It's absolutely true. I was part of that coven too! Murderer!" she shrieked.

The room erupted, hundreds of shocked and disbelieving eyes staring straight at Tom. He was god to many of them. "It can't be true!" I heard Andrew exclaim to Scott with disbelief. A shudder went through every vampire.

Tom looked at me. Resignation, pain, love and anger flitted back and forth across his face. I knew his sacrifice. I was the only one who did and it counted for nothing in this room. A part of me turned inward and I called out to The Council. Tom turned to look upstairs.

The guards all looked to the mezzanine where Adriana and Carlos now stood watching. They both adamantly nodded. No one would trust Tom again. The six of them came at Tom and I came at them. The building turned into mayhem.

Tom was tackled directly by a female and male guard. I took the guy nearest me. Sandor came at the fourth. A quick glance showed Andrew and Scott move toward the guards at the front door. They needn't have, as out of a light mist the guards were hit by four beings from the inner worlds. They were dragged out into the street leaving the doors left wide open. People were screaming and most humans rushed to get themselves out into Folsom street into a safer reality.

Again, time stood still for me. As I parried and fought my demon, I watched the two on Tom. Both of them pulled foot-long knives from leg holds made from a strange mixture of steel with wood inlay. I saw Tom's face and heard him call out in agony. He had fierce wounds on his back and front and a full blade jutting out of his left thigh.

I twisted, reached and grabbed the handle. Pulling it out, I swung and drove it into the chest of my assailant. He screamed and buckled. I drove it harder and pulled up. He screamed even louder then imploded splashing dark red-black blood all over the floor. Sandor was sitting on the other guard pinning him down. It wouldn't last for long as he was fierce and struggling hard against his hold.

I went at the female and had her from behind. She was incredibly strong and slammed me back against the bar cleaving me through to the bottles behind on the wall racks. I let go, crashing into a cacophony of glass and saw her take off upstairs. The other guard was close behind her. As I rose in the air I knew they had all left through

the skylight and would be rushing out of the city to a hidden lair.

The boys had been fighting the remaining virus vamps and each blood vamp backed away at the same time scurrying out through the front doors joining regular blood vamps who headed off for home or to safer bars on Folsom Street.

I looked for Tom. He lay flat out on the floor, motionless, his head in Sandor's arms. The wood inlay of the knife bore deep and I could see healing was going to be very difficult.

“Chris, we have to get him out of here to a safe place. Boys, help!”

Andrew and Scott each grabbed a leg while Sandor and I took his trunk and head. As one we lifted him into the cold night air and the safety of the fog bank and moved as quickly as we could landing in the small backyard of my apartment building.

Moving quietly up the backstairs we got him inside and onto my bed. Andrew carefully cut away at what remained of his black shirt. His chest and abdomen were horrific. I could see some lower ribs through to his gut. His blood had thickened, his skin would not close over. I undid his buckle and pants while Andrew lifted his hips so we could slide each leg down and off his massive thighs. The blade had gone through to the bone, hair was matted with blood. The wound stretched at least three inches across.

Scott grabbed towels from the hall closet, we lifted and placed some under his back. There were two deep gashes across his shoulder blades but they were not as deep as on his front. Scott tossed me a wet towel and I washed Tom's face and as much of his body as I could without going into his wounds. He was in some sort of coma and far, far away from us.

“Who knows what poison is on those blades,” muttered Sandor sniffing. He signaled us to leave and go to the living room.

CHAPTER 30

“Chris, you look terrible, come sit down,” said Sandor.

I sank into the big chair. “He’s going to die, isn’t he? This is all because of me. He killed his Maker because the guy was going to kill me!”

I looked at all three faces for solace, but all I got were blank, concerned stares.

“Surely that intergalactic virus will heal him?” offered Scott.

“If the physical truth is that the wood will not let him heal, then it won’t allow the vascular system and tissue to work together,” Sandor explained. “You saw how thick his blood has become? I fear he’ll drown in it.”

He then knelt in front of me. “Chris, I’ve asked The Brotherhood for help. It’s the only possible solution there is, but I think there are two possibilities we can try for tonight. First get him healed then get rid of the virus in his body.”

I looked up in surprised panic as my mind raced. “Do you think he’ll have to leave America and disappear into Europe somewhere and there live a regular blood vampire life? But at least he’ll be okay?” I desperately asked.

“They’ll always come after him now. This news will go around the globe and he’ll be hunted forever,” replied Sandor. “But, look, one step at a time. Let’s get him healed and virus free, if we can, and he can stay a vampire. Then it’s his decision where he goes.”

Andrew had been looking out the window and suddenly whispered, “Look! Out on the median next to the palm tree!”

We saw a small figure standing on the grass with a hand up in greeting. He was flanked by two of the beings Sandor always called upon to help or watch over us.

Scott moved fast to open both the front door and bottom gate for them to come up to us. When this being came into the sitting room, the lights flickered slightly and there was a sudden, strong smell of a summer’s day in North Africa on a beach – jasmine, hay and body oil. I shook my head clear.

They were gender neutral and appeared as one being, neither male nor female. They had three fingers on either hand and wore dark blue tunics in two pieces. I could not see feet.

“Good evening, gentlemen!” The voices were one but separate and wonderfully hypnotic. “In English my name translates into Toman and I’m embarrassed to say we’ve been listening in on your conversations and to most of what has happened this hallowed night. When Sandor asked for guards to appear, it opened a channel for us and some members of The Council thought it wise to follow events. We trust you see this as a friendly act rather than intrusive.”

With that they bowed slightly, signaled to Andrew to follow and disappeared into the back bedroom to look at Tom.

Scott had an astonished look on his face. I had already sat down again and Sandor started to pace up and down in the hallway. I looked up at him pacing and silently thanked him in my heart for calling out to The Council for help. He turned and smiled back.

After what seemed like an eternity, they came back to us.

“Yes, it’s serious. In many ways his lives are over as they exist now. If it is your wish that he regains earthly consciousness, then he must take a journey to a specialized healing facility on a rather distant planet, a mysterious place called Dalion,” they advised. “But only two of you can accompany him. Andrew cannot go. As a doctor he must stay with the human vessel and keep it regulated and safe. We will facilitate the journey. You’ll only be away for about two hours in earth time if everything goes well.”

I jumped up and Scott came straight to my side. “I’m coming with you! No argument.” He looked defiantly at Sandor, who smiled and nodded his head.

“You’re perfect to go with Chris, Scott,” he said. “I need to slip away and find Roberto before dawn to manage the next few days. The Council believes Tom could play a very strong part in the demise of the evil that has infected blood vampires on earth. Nothing is certain but his successful return may allow us an added dimension of power. So my friends, do your best!”

“Also, young man,” Toman looked straight at Scott, “we want you to gain certain powers on this journey so it’s timely for you to accompany Chris.” Scott looked a bit surprised and said, “Why me, I’m just a newbie?”

“We watch over all of you and help you develop all your powers individually,” Toman continued. “The giving and receiving is over time and it allows you to absorb and understand your strengths and purpose in this sphere. You’ve received the gift of eternal life on earth but there comes a time when you will want more. You must be very strong to take that step.” Toman put their strange hands together then looked at Sandor and they both smiled.

“We can get you to Dalion, the planet and city, where the healing facility is found, but finding it is not always easy,” Toman explained. “There is a barrier to overcome, and through it added strengths to be earned. It’s all devised to help you learn how to travel in the inner worlds.”

As Toman spoke a vision appeared in front of my inner screen across my forehead. I assumed Scott saw this too. It was a bleak place, gray and metallic devoid of vegetation. Then it was gone.

Toman signaled to us both to walk back into the bedroom. Once there they told us to kneel on either side of Tom’s body. He looked like a great Viking king stretched out on my bed. Andrew had put his arms down and across his hairy stomach, one hand in the other. Toman found a chair and sat at the end of the bed taking Tom’s feet in their hands. Scott, who now had a fierce and determined look on his face, and I, took a hand each in ours. The last thing we heard was, “Close your eyes.”

I found myself at the bottom of an enormous space out in the vastness of the Galaxy itself. I moved up slowly, as if drawn toward the ‘top’ and realized I was in an enormous cone. I saw a thin filament like a transparent skin stretching for hundreds of miles and it formed a massive wall around the area I was in. Toward the top were rounded edges, up close these were gelatinous, yet still very transparent.

As I came out and over the immense wall I heard a rushing sound like a waterfall, then a being close to my ear spoke.

“You need to lie out flat, bring your feet up and into your chest, then flip over once and come back into a flat position. Then move straight ahead.”

I did as I was told and took off, picking up speed as I moved myself forward. Immediately I saw I was moving into another cone and into a different dimension.

As I sped forward, faster and faster, I began to see tiny pixels of color and light. As I moved, thousands of these pixels began to firm up and flood into my vision. I began to see a shape in the distance that soon became a planet and I hurtled towards it.

Scott was on my right and I knew he was experiencing the same journey. As the planet appeared through the mist and cloud, we joined up landing 20 feet apart from each other.

It was an arid landscape, an undulating vision of grays and dirty whites with black streaks that helped define the horizon and the shapes of buildings far off in the distance.

As we walked toward each other, Tom, as an inner body appeared between us, floating in the same Viking pose. We knew instinctively he would move with us as if attached to our bodies by invisible threads.

“Wow, we look amazing!” exclaimed Scott. Both of us were in a soft, but tough silver gray metallic material, skin-tight, covering us from our feet to our necks. We had no headgear and spoke without verbalizing.

“There are buildings towards those hills. I guess from this entry point we have been put down close to the place we need to find,” Scott surmised.

We rose up about five feet and moved toward the hills. “We’re not getting any closer!” I exclaimed after what seemed like 30 minutes of very fast vampire travel. “It looks close and yet stays far away!”

We both landed, silently looking around us. Scott suddenly shot around in every direction.

“Hey! Do you remember back at your place when we had a glimpse of this place as a vision?” Scott asked.

“Uh huh, right, so what?” I was getting frustrated. I couldn’t get the image of Tom’s exposed ribs out of my head and I kept checking to make sure his light body was still attached to me.

“Well, I think we have to keep it that way in our heads. Not look for a way across to the building as we think it is. Let’s try it.” He came up close to me while standing on the other side of Tom’s body. “Shut your eyes and tell me what you see.”

“My eyes are closed,” I said, “and I can see the hills and buildings ahead just like I do when my eyes are open.”

“Okay, now, keep your eyes shut, turn around, look to your left and then turn around again and look behind you.” I did as instructed and realized I saw the same vision in every direction. Coming full circle I called out, “There’s no ‘where’ to go to! We’re here!” I opened my eyes and looked at Scott. “This still doesn’t get us to the healing site.”

“Shut your eyes again.” I did. There in front of me was a large, smooth, gray door and I heard Scott say, “Okay, now together, open it.” I reached out to the large handle, eyes still shut, and pulled down.

As I opened my eyes, I was moving into a large building with soaring ceilings and a wide, multi-tiled foyer.

“Hey, man, when did you become so smart?” I asked Scott.

The air was tinged with an acidic odor. I quickly adjusted my body’s systems to the differences I felt from the air and temperature outside.

In the foyer coming down from the back of the building was a group of extra ordinary beings. None were alike, two of them amorphous, and all with a transparent film material very close to their bodies that separated them from us and each other. I realized they needed protection from anything we may have unconsciously brought in with us to Dalion.

A being, encased in yellow gas inside its bubble, broke away and moved close to us. It raised a small limb in hopefully a friendly greeting.

“Thank you for receiving us and for hearing our plea to find a healing for our friend,” I said. “We are from a distant world and know that you receiving us in this fashion is an enormous gift.”

No one gave any expression of welcome and I tried to be as formal as I could to gain acceptance. I was unsure if we were indeed welcome at all.

There was movement and some sort of communication flow from one to another. The being near us began to move into a large space to the left of the foyer. We followed in anticipation that we were making the right decision.

The room, the size of a football field, blew Scott and me away. It was like a Gothic cathedral with enormous creation murals climbing around the walls. I was sure some of the images were part of the same story I had seen last year in the room where I first met The Council. I felt a pull in my heart and had a quick image of myself flying through the air to that location I continued to long for all of my life.

There were three areas in the middle of the room, each defined by what looked like large, floating tables of gently moving organic material bathed in a soft, but intense light coming from a source high above near the top of the vaulted ceiling.

Tom’s body image tugged away from us. We felt a small break as he floated slowly toward the middle table. As if invisible hands assisted him, he slowly rose up and onto the surface sinking about an inch into the moving matter. I drew a breath back in surprise as a silver gray skin moved up from his feet and covered his entire body. It was glistening and looked wet and scaly.

Toman appeared out of the dim light from across the room then they all made their way to us. Although I felt a jolt seeing them here, I was not surprised. As they approached us Scott said, "Look, Chris. There!"

Another figure, ancient and gaunt wrapped in a large, dark red cloak moved toward Tom from the same place Toman had appeared and knelt down. Placing his lips on Tom's wrist, he bit into him giving him his blood. After finishing, he stood up, his fangs bloodied, and stared at the body for a second or two. He cocked his head, glancing at us momentarily and moved back into the gloom. When I met his eyes I knew I was looking at one of the oldest beings from earth. Why was he here?

Then the Dalion beings moved across to the three tables. Two of them floated up and sank into the left and right tables. The others stayed back and moved to make as much of a circle as they could around the complete structure. Suddenly all the light went out of the room.

As my eyes adjusted, I watched as a powerful, deep blue mist came down from the ceiling. It split about 20 feet above Tom and went left and right to the accompanying beings. The color penetrated the three of them together. Following the blue came orange and as it hit the three of them, light went from the two side tables into Tom's table and he was lifted up hovering above it.

Scott and I quickly glanced at each other. We were both in awe, our hearts wanting to burst with the immense emotion we felt in this glorious space.

Tom was suspended for about five minutes then slowly came back down to the table. The light started to retract then all lights in the room went out again.

I waited. I felt Scott waiting. I couldn't touch into Toman's space. We were all there, waiting what seemed a lifetime.

The soft, white lights then emerged out of the darkness. Tom now sat up on the edge of the bed, his head down, his hands gripping the sides. The healing beings had gone as well as the ancient vampire and Toman. Only the three of us remained in the room.

We rushed to him and he looked up in shock and confusion.

“Where am I? What the fuck is going on?”

CHAPTER 31

He stood up and felt his body. He now wore the same suit Scott and I were in. Even though I wanted to hug him so badly, I knew I might cause him pain.

“How do you feel, Tom?” I asked gently.

He looked at me still reeling from what had happened. “I don’t really know. All I do know is I’m no longer in any pain!”

“Well that’s a great sign,” said Scott. Tom, still confused, looked at Scott and then again at me. “Where the hell are we and why are you two with me?”

After we explained to Tom what had happened, we decided to make for the entrance. He appeared strong enough to travel. No one was around. We had no idea how to get back. Scott went to look for help. In seconds we heard him call out and Tom and I made for another room down the back of a long corridor leading away from the foyer.

We came into a regular sized room. In the middle was a dais about 10 feet wide that had a soft glowing light contained within the space. The light vibrated and hummed. A lever stuck out of the floor of the dais. We knew exactly what to do.

Scott plunged the lever forward with us aboard. There was a sucking noise and I felt as if my consciousness was being torn away from my entire inner body. I felt momentary nausea. Suddenly we were again in another room just like the one we had left.

“Did we go anywhere?” asked Tom.

Jumping down we made for a double door and pushed through. The spectacle that lay before left each of us momentarily stunned.

We had arrived at an enormous intergalactic aerodrome. Using our vampire vision, we looked across and saw it was about three earth-miles to the other side. It was a domed space, a good mile high. There were multi-levels containing offices, restaurants and accommodation facilities. Some were made out of odd shapes, jutting in and out to satisfy different travelers’ needs.

Beings shot by us, racing to get to take-off points or to meet friends. The noise was deafening.

“I get it,” said Scott, starting to move out into the crowds, “but it’s a little bit bigger than O’Hare!” We smiled at each other looking around. We had no idea what to do next. “Guys, we will work out our next step. We will get home. All we have to do is keep moving and someone will help us,” continued a comforting Scott. He had taken on the leadership role in these worlds. I knew he could work it out. Tom looked better and smiled a little more, but was still weak and probably still healing. Nodding, I noticed there were beings like us and some I could not describe. Someone just passed me and I simply caught a glimpse of a pair of enormous eyes.

Scott stopped a couple in virtually the same suits as us but they had never heard of Earth. They were from a planet like ours, were almost the same in looks but came from a system none of us could name or knew the whereabouts of. We moved across the enormous disc, past luggage and noisy children. Then I saw them waiting for us.

Seated on enormous sofas in a major configuration of places to stop, rest and get food were the two Beings from The Council meeting I was first at. This time I could see Them more clearly outlined, but They remained ethereal. I now saw Their dark clothing hid the fact They were joined. They really were two and one at the same time. I introduced Them to Tom and Scott.

“Welcome, Chris, and to your friends.” My insides went warm as I sat, feeling wrapped up and safe. Around Them at the back and sides were about six guards. People rushed by looking in awe at The Beings perched regally on the double sofas. The boys found chairs nearby as well and pulled them close forming a small intimate circle.

“Tom, how are you feeling now?” They asked. Scott and I turned waiting for his response. This was the first time I had a good chance to really look at him since his healing process was finished. He glowed. I knew we were not in our physical bodies. I knew I did not have earthly emotions or passions. I could look at this gorgeous man with a serene and beautiful face without any gay vampire desire in any way. I was full of joy and loved him completely. Scott smiled at me and then looked at Tom with awe. We both wondered what now made him up?

“I have no virus in my earthly body and I sit in a strange place between being a vampire and being human again. What has happened to my system?” Scott drew in a breath.

The Councilors nodded. “You are right my young friend. Toman, as our agent, went to the Hallein Lake district to the ancient caves where vampires were first created on earth. There he found a willing vampire of the First Order, a pure blood, to come and donate his purity to you. It has killed the virus with help from the healing lights of Dalion and together have given you the opportunity to have your body healed, your blood cleansed completely. You will be a human being again when you awaken in your physical body.” Something in me faltered.

“Why didn’t the Ancient just kill me?” cried out Tom with anguish. He jumped up and caused a guard to move closer.

“I killed progeny! Perhaps someone of his line! He had every right ...”

“My boy, my boy, what you did was make the greatest sacrifice for the deepest kind of love, something not lost on the purest forms of the Vampire world from the earliest days.” As They spoke I know they looked at me with immense love.

“The inner worlds had stronger conduits to the earth planet millennium ago. Some of the early vampires were a part of this connection. Your decision to kill your Maker was known by our powerful old friend who came tonight. The decision to save you was based on his desire to release you from the love of human blood. There are many ligaments that stretch silently with full knowledge through time and place in this enormous universe of ours, connecting us all when necessary. This, and you right now, happened to intersect at just that time. Finally, there is something more he has given you that will protect you once you are back in your body. You will understand at that time.” They sighed deeply while Scott and I began to breathe again. I realized looking at Scott, he now wanted to go home with them!

I continued looking at Tom. He stared at me and said, “I don’t know what to do.” I got up and took him in my arms and everything began to fade fast.

CHAPTER 32

We were back in my bedroom on Dolores Street. Scott and I looked across at each other, then both looked at Tom. Andrew took his hand away from Tom's forehead. Tom sat up and sloughing of the effects of entering his physical body, slid off the bed and walked around the room, then walked out and up to the front. His body was completely healed. He was shirtless and wearing only his white briefs.

I raced after him, grabbing some pajama bottoms for him and found Toman and Sandor sitting on the sofa waiting for us. Tom pulled on the pants in front of the fireplace looking sheepish and confused.

Toman asked him how he felt.

"I am experiencing the craziest emotions right now, feelings I haven't felt for years. My heart is pumping again and I'm tired all over!" He looked into the big mirror. "I look like I did before I fled Melbourne." He fell silent and turned to look at us.

"Oh, oh, I'm in a room full of vampires!" He laughed and not without a slight increase in his heart rate.

I was unsure what his decision would be and a part of me was quietly flipping out. I could lose him again. I turned to Toman.

“What did the old vampire give him with his blood? As I see it, Tom will still be hunted by the blood vampire community. He will be a great prize to turn again or to kill.”

“As a human again, Tom will find himself in an awkward predicament. How did he, an Australian come to be in the US? There’s been no record of him for over 10 years anywhere on the planet.”

“Maybe he could plead amnesia and take himself to the Australian consulate and throw himself on their good graces?” Andrew looked lame as he said this but his suggestion was not without possibility. We were all clutching at straws.

Sandor stood up and walked up to Tom, who was leaning against the mantelpiece. He put his hand out onto Tom’s arm and said, “The gift is this: If Tom decides to become a vampire of his own free will, either gay or blood, his blood and tissue will repel all blood vampires and stop any attacks. This antidote lets them know he has the highest support in the Vampire Empire and that Tom is partly an ancient. It also gives him strengths untested on earth as the gift was given on Dalion and is surged by their lights.” He looked into Tom’s eyes and smiled.

“Your smell is delicious to us and we all want to eat you, you know that.” All four of us could smell his intoxicating, sweet aroma. “But you are protected and you must make up your own mind and then let us know. As long as you stay in the US as a human, we will watch over you, but you are on your own once you leave our shores.”

Tom threw a quick look at me. I nodded, trying to look confident. I said something about food and headed for the kitchen. I was hollowed out inside. Tom had been turned against his will that first horrific time and now had a chance to live out a full human life. Did he want that? How much did he retain from being a blood vampire with all the savagery it had entailed? Would he want that again? I leaned against the sink and looked deep down into the drain.

I felt his hands on my shoulder. He pressed himself tight up against my body. He kissed me on the neck, rocking me back and forth, my crotch growing more tight each time I pushed into and away from the metal and chrome.

“I want you, Chris, that’s all that matters and it didn’t take me five seconds to realize by joining you in your world allowed me to possibly have an eternity with you.”

“You mean it?” I eagerly asked. I turned and looked him dead in the eyes.

“I do,” he replied. “And I want you to be my Maker.”

Everyone left and Tom fell back into bed sleeping as a human for the next 30 hours. I cooked him a huge meal the following day after racing to the Safeway to buy food I had not thought about for years.

I watched him eat as we laughed and joked about the old days and how far we had come. He wanted to see The City once as a human, not as he arrived the first time as a seriously fucked up blood vampire. We caught the cable car from the bottom of Powell and ended up at Ghiradelli Square along the Bay. We walked as far as we could to the Golden Gate Bridge.

As the sun set I leaned in and said, “I can’t do this for much longer. I’ve got a serious case of precum going on.”

“Jeezuz, that’s a beauty of a hard-on I feel, my man.” He was pressed up against me looking deep into my eyes.

“Okay, let’s do this.”

I don’t remember getting back to the apartment but I had him up those stairs so fast he yelled out, “You’re hurting me!” and laughed. I was naked as he was finally pulling off his boots and socks then he leaned up from the floor and took my solid, dripping cock in his mouth. My body went electric and I couldn’t move.

Tom came up on his knees sucking hard. I stopped him and told him what I needed to do. He jumped up and went into the living room and got down on all fours. He arched his back and as I looked down at his beautiful hairy ass, my groin moved on the inside. Something in my brain softly exploded and I felt hot liquid pour down through my body to my gut. All of my past with Tom showed up on my inner screen rushing by like a film on fast forward: the scene when we first saw each other in the quadrangle at school, the first time he kissed me, the time in Sydney when he made me his. I knew we were destined for this moment in time.

I felt an immense rush from my tightening balls as I plunged deeper into him and began to shoot what I imagined felt like liquid gold deep into his ass.

Tom kept calling out loudly so I slid down along his big back and covered his mouth with my left hand. My right hand was down on the carpet near his shoulder supporting me and I drove myself in and out of him from a frenzied place in my whole being. He grunted hard bucking with me.

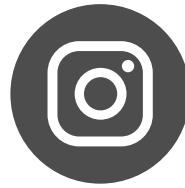
I loved this man, wanted him to have all of me and for us to become one. Finally, we collapsed together. Tom's last splash of humanity now all over the carpet, my new life force growing deep inside his body. As he passed out, I wrapped myself around him and held on tight.

THE END

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