

Mark's lament

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Chapter Eleven

*Cause you're hot then you're cold
You're yes then you're no
You're in and you're out
You're up and you're down
You're wrong when it's right
It's black and it's white
We fight, we break up
We kiss, we make up*

*You, You don't really want to stay, no
You, but you don't really want to go-o
You're hot then you're cold
You're yes then you're no
You're in and you're out
You're up and you're down*

- Hot N Cold, by Katy Perry

It was Sunday evening, just after 6:00 pm. It was already dark out. Lisa, Stan, Scott and Drew were in Mark and Christian's living room playing Monopoly. Lisa had just been sent to 'jail' and Scott collected \$200 for passing 'go'.

Mark felt relaxed in Christian's warm embrace. He was leaned back into his vampire lover. Okay, neither of them were particularly warm, but it didn't matter. "Christian, you know I've read about vampires before. I got the *Twilight* books, and I've read the Tanya Huff books. I

don't get the differences.”

“Like what?” Christian casually asked, rolling the dice, and taking his turn.

“In *Twilight*, the vampires can go out during the day, but sparkle like diamonds. In the Tanya Huff books, the vampires have territorial imperatives. This only one vampire per city. Makes it hard to have a vampire lover.” Mark commented.

Christian gave a small smile. “Once upon a time we did have a territorial imperative. We overcame it because we had to. That said, the Council still controls our population. We need to ensure that the human race is plentiful.”

“Why?” Mark asked and took his move.

Lisa looked over at the two, also wondering what the answer was.

“Part of it is to ensure a steady food supply.” Christian licked his fangs for Lisa's benefit. Lisa just cringed a little. “Also so the humans don't hunt us down, and because it's good policy to keep them alive.”

“Ah.” Mark said. “But what about the daylight?”

Christian nodded a little. “Certain sects, or races of vampires can go out in the daylight. Some are like you and look perfectly normal. Some are like in your book and twinkle light a diamond. The number of vampire races are almost as vast as human races.”

Mark smiled, and relaxed more.

Christian noticed the clock. “Get your coat on, Mark. It's time to go.”

“Already?” Mark noticed it was now around 7:30 pm and they had been playing for an hour and a half. “You guys are welcome to stay here if you want.”

“No, that's okay” Stan said. “We have homework to do anyway.”

Mark and Christian arrived in the Byward Market just after 8:00 pm. They made their way into one of the clubs. Not much was happening for a Sunday night. The two stopped at the bar, and then made their way into the back room.

A vampire with gold filigree-type artwork on his ebony skin sat at one of the tables. He looked over as the two newcomers came into the room, and removed his dark, black sunglasses. He stood up revealing his impressive height as Christian came in.

“Franklin!” Christian said, as he went over to the taller vampire, and gave him a hug.

"It's good to see you too, Christian. Who's the runt you brought?" Franklin asked candidly.

Christian smiled and pulled Mark to his side. "This is my boyfriend, and I suppose you could say son, Mark."

Franklin smiled, and getting down on one knee, kissed Mark's hand. "It's an honour to meet you, Mark."

Mark blushed furiously at that, "Um... thank you." He barely had time to recover before Christian spoke again.

"And this is Lucien Winter" Mark saw a guy about as tall as Franklin, but buffer and better well built. He had a mob-style look to him that sent a chill up Mark's spine.

"A pleasure to meet the only vampire in 2000 years to hold power over *her*." Lucien spoke cryptically.

"Huh?" Mark asked, watching Lucien.

"She came all that way for you, boy. She never travels for anyone. Not in 2000 years. It's always on her terms, but for you, she came." Was the only reply Mark was given by Lucien.

Christian pulled Mark close to him and turned to a petite woman. She was about 5'2" with green eyes, and brown hair. "This is Fiona, Franklin's wife."

Mark kissed Fiona's hand, but didn't get down on any knees. "A pleasure to meet you, Fiona."

"Fiona is the lay person of the family." Christian explained.

"Family?" Mark asked, having no idea what Christian was talking about this time.

"It's a rather long and complicated story, best for another time, sweetheart. But to try and make it short, many vampires, but not all choose to ally themselves with a family. The people you see in this room are part of my family, as you are as well." Christian explained.

"I see..." Mark said unsure, he didn't really understand.

Christian looked into Mark's eyes. "Should we ever choose to marry, you will run the family with me. For now you are just an honoured member. Now, we're actually here to see Fiona."

Fiona lead Mark and Christian over to a wooden round kitchen-style table with chairs. All three had a seat. "I read your e-mail, Christian. This demon seems to be more trouble than we all anticipated."

"Can we get rid of it, Fiona?" Christian asked, worried for Mark and himself.

"Yes" Fiona said, "but there's a catch."

Christian just looked at Fiona, waiting for the rest.

“You bought Mark's soul from his parents. You must freely return it to him, as a physical object. Mark must then give that object to the demon. I rather suspect that the demon is simply another part of Mark that has been loose for 10 years. By returning it, it should banish the demon.” Fiona said simply.

“And if it doesn't?” Christian asked, unsure of this plan.

“Then we go to plan B, but you won't like plan C at all.” Fiona explained.

Mark looked from Fiona, to Christian, then to Franklin and Lucien. “Why won't we like it?”

Fiona sighed a little. “Plan C is to kill you Mark. That would banish the demon for sure. But, I doubt anyone in this room wants to do that. Nyarai would have a fit if anyone killed you. She threatened Lucien with a beheading if so much as a hair of yours was out of place the next time she saw you.”

Mark looked shocked at that revelation. He really didn't know why Nyarai fussed over him so much.

“Plan B involves ritual, magic, wizards, and ways I don't even understand. We would probably have to involve Nyarai, and it could be even more dangerous than killing you outright.” Fiona explained.

Christian shifted in his seat a little. “How do I turn an object into Mark's soul?”

“Do you still have the contract which sold you his soul?” Fiona asked as plainly as possible.

“Yes” Christian said. “It's locked up safely.”

“Simply do another giving his soul back, and staple them together.” Fiona replied. “It's that simple.”

romeomustdie: How did everything go with Fiona?

vamplover92: It went ok, Romeo but sometimes... Is there something I *need* to know?

romeomustdie: There are many things you *must* know, Mark. Now isn't the time to tell you, however.

vamplover92: Great, thanks. Just what I need. Cryptic vampires who know more about me than I do!

romeomustdie: Go and visit your family tomorrow after school.

vamplover92: Good idea

Mark went into his parents house, for the first time since he had been turned. He hadn't seen his sister Ashley since then. Now she was sitting on the sofa, watching *Degrassi*, or *90210*, or some boring teen show like that. Mark decided to use his newfound vampire ability of stealth to quietly sit next to his sister.

A few minutes after he was relaxed, Mark smiled a little. His sister still didn't know he was there, even though he stopped using his stealth ability just after he sat down. A commercial finally came on. "So how's school going, Ash?"

Ashley jumped up from the sofa, scared at the sudden sound. She looked at her brother, and gave him a great big hug. "Mark! I missed you sooo much! Where have you been hiding?"

"I've kind of been living with Christian. Didn't Mom and Dad tell you that?" Mark asked, confused by his sister's reaction, but returning the big hug.

"Yes, they mentioned something about it, but not why. They said it may be a long while before I saw you again. It was sad. We wouldn't get to watch *MuchMusic* together." Ashley say back down, looking a little depressed.

Mark looked over at his sister. "Things changed in my life, Ash. You know that Christian's a vampire, right? I'm pretty sure that Mom and Dad told you."

Ashley nodded a little. They had told her, not all that long before Mark had been turned. Probably because Mark and Christian were around each other *a lot* and Ashley was bound to find out. Better for it to be controlled than to hurt Mark and Christian.

"Well something happened that night I went skating with Christian on the canal. We were attacked by a demon that's been causing problems for a while. I was mortally wounded. So I live with Christian now, because he *thinks* he can protect me. You see, everyone decided, even Mom and Dad, that to save my life, I had to also become a vampire." Mark finally said, letting out a breath. He waited to see how Ashley would respond.

"But..." Ashely started to speak, "it's only 4:00 pm. The sun's still out. How can you be a vampire?"

Mark showed his fangs to his sister. "No one can tell me how I'm out with the sun still out. Some vampires can do it, apparently I am one of them. You've seen me at school, including today. I still plan to graduate."

"Will I ever see you again?" Ashley asked, suddenly upset with tears on her face. She loved her brother, not wanting him to go away.

"Of course!" Mark hugged his sister again. "I'm here now, aren't I? It may get strange though. You'll continue to get older, and age. I will always look like this. Nothing will change between us, Ash. I still love you, and I'll still look out for you. Vampire or not, I'm still your brother."

Ashley sniffed a little. "Good, I expect you to be here for dinner every week."

Mark scrunched his nose a little. "I don't eat food, Ash. It makes me vomit."

"You can still keep us company." Ashley said. She then more quietly said, "And if you ever need blood, don't be afraid to ask me. I love you and I will give you as much as you need."

Mark just hugged his sister closer. "Oh Ash, that's so nice of you. Don't worry, there are lots of safe, clean donors out there. But I'll remember that if I need you, you are here."

"So how did you adjust to... blood from being a vegetarian?" Ashley was curious.

"It took time. But since that's all I can really digest, it's that or die. Survival has a way of changing a perspective." Mark replied, happily.

"I'm glad you think that. Do you remember my friend Todd Caaitel? He's in counselling. He was abused by Father Clarence. He's the Priest at Christ Church Cathedral." Ashley said to her brother.