

# vampire gods



**Live For Blood**

“Arise, my new delicacies.” A deep voice roared and bounced off the walls of the cave as both the Shadows brothers opened their eyes. “It's time to roam the earth in your new form.”

By the time their motor skills kicked in the dark silhouette that was standing above them had disappeared just as fast as it appeared. Zane rolled over on his side at the same time as his older brother Zek stretched his arms out. “Are you okay?”

Zek grunted softly and rubbed his eyes, ignoring his brother's question completely. “What the fuck happened to us?” He glanced around at the cave they were trapped in and his eyes widened. “Why does my mouth hurt this bad?”

“I don't know, but mine does too.” Suddenly, Zane's hand involuntarily lifted to his mouth from the immense pain he was presented with and shrieked when he felt his canine teeth were longer than they had originally been before. “What the fuck is wrong with my teeth?”

Repeating the same action as his brother, he sighed and ran his fingers through his long black hair as he slammed his fist on the cold ground. “I don't know, but it's wrong with me too.”

The both of them stood up and an overwhelming feeling of hunger took over the both of them. Zek glanced at his brother and caught a glimpse of his teeth. At that moment, a shadowy figure appeared before them once more, but all they could hear was the whispers of what could have been a voice because their hunger was the only thing on their mind. “You must feast upon the blood of animals and humans to survive or the blood lust will consume you.” Their voice sounded as if they were floating within the air above them, but when they gazed at the figure at the it was moving like there was actually a person standing there. “You are now what some wish they could be and what most think don't exist in their world.”

“What are you talking about? Who are you?” Zek glared at the figure on the wall with daggers shooting out of his eyes and ran towards it, only to find out that there really wasn't anything there. The figure was like a mirage or a painting affixed to the wall when he slammed into the rock solid wall at full force. Only, it wasn't the normal speed he typically had, it was an ungodly speed, even for the god that he already was. What surprised him even more was the fact that he felt barely any pain from the harsh impact. “What's going on here? We may have been gods before, but all this is something else.”

“You need to feast.” The figure raised an arm and pointed towards the barely visible opening at the end of the cave. “There is something waiting for you. Drink now and drink all, for vampires need all they can get.”

The figure dissipated once again and both brothers stood in curiosity as to what the hell the mysterious voice had meant, since they weren't aware of many other creatures other than the ones from their godly realm. “We're demons. It has to be!” Zek held back from screaming as Zane put up his hand to silence him.

“No, I've heard of a vampire before. They feed on the blood of animals and humans to survive. It's either you're born one or you turn into one by being bit.”

Letting his hand reach up to his neck, he felt around on his skin until he felt two circular slits with dry blood stained around it. "Someone bit us."

Zek felt his neck and nearly ripped at his neck once he confirmed what his brother had said. "What the hell! So what are we now? Vampire gods?"

"That's exactly what you both are." A feminine voice popped up behind them, causing them to jump back when they turned around to face her. "Oh, sorry to startle you. I forgot your abilities won't kick in yet until you've at least had your first drink."

Acting impulsively, Zek jumped at the young woman standing cheerfully, but before he even came in contact with her, she slid out of the way of his attack, almost as if she had vibrated at the same time. Without fast her movements were, you wouldn't be able to blink because you would miss the gesture no problem. Zek smacked his face off the ground, but quickly rebounded with the power of his new form and spun around wanting to try his attack again. "Who the hell are you and why the hell are you here?!"

"Oh! Where's my manners? My name is Cora and I've been sent here to guide the both of you into learning how to function in your new form. I see your fangs grew in already. Usually, it takes new comers about a day or two before their fangs grow in."

Feeling ashamed for his accusation, Zek shoved his hands in his pockets and shrugged his shoulders as he spoke. "Sorry, I just...I'm sorry."

"It's perfectly okay! It happens whenever I'm in a situation like this. Anyway, I know your both a special kind of god, and you will be happy to hear that your titles carry over into this realm as well."

"Awesome, at least we mean something in this world still." Zek seemed to feel a bit better knowing he was still a god, even though he was a vampire now.

Zane sighed deeply and chuckled at his brother's comment, but turned his attention back to Cora who was waiting patiently for the both of them to follow her lead. Once they both gave her the confirmation of their focus, she headed towards the opening as they followed her footsteps until they reached the outside of the cave. Zane and Zek both took a deep breath of fresh air and they both began to realize that their sense of smell was heightened to the point they could pinpoint each woodland creature scurrying around. As a deer crossed their path, they both felt their mouths begin to water and the hunger they felt earlier skyrocketed, so they both lunged for the creature, unable to control their urges. They tore away at it's flesh and drank the blood as it trickled down it's body. The deer's body went limp and both their mouths were stained red with the proof of their satisfaction.

"Well, I guess I don't have to show you that. On to the next thing!" She assumed a stance as if she was going to take off running and with a playful grin on her face she whispered, "Now it's time to show you everything else we can do..."

Zane waited for his brother at their rendezvous point, but for some odd reason, he had been taking longer each time. He was already over an hour late and even though he was used to it, Zane was beginning to worry about his

brother. He was a couple years younger than Zek, but in most occasions, he always felt like he was the older and wiser one out of the both of them. Finally, he heard a knock on the door which signaled that Zek was outside waiting to come in. Zane opened the door for his brother and instead of greeting him, he pushed passed him as if he wasn't even there. "You're late."

"I know." Zek took off his jacket and threw it carelessly on the torn couch as he headed to the kitchen to make something to eat. "What about it? I'm the older one."

Zane followed him into the kitchen and sighed heavily as he leaned against the unstable counter top they took from a junk yard. "Who cares about who's the older one? I don't think we should stay here anymore. People are getting suspicious of us."

Zek turned around and shrugged his shoulders, giving Zane full view of the blood on his shirt. Pretending he had no idea as to what Zane was looking at, he asked him what he was staring at. He looked down at his chest finally, but that didn't stop him from being a smart ass about it. "What? I got hungry."

Zane slammed his fist on the table and from the force of his strength, the table snapped in half and crumbled to the floor. The pieces of wood echoed as they slammed against the floor and Zane let out a disgruntled puff of breath. "You got hungry? You can't just kill whoever you want!"

Chugging down the rest of his drink in a timely fashion, he threw the bottle at the far wall and but didn't pay any mind to Zane's words. "Relax, I just killed some livestock. It's not like they are anything important."

"It's not about what you're killing, it's about the fact that you are!" Zane began walking around the room picking up the little bit of belongings they had and shoved them into a black duffle bag as he whispered incoherently to himself. Once he had everything picked up, he returned to the kitchen and threw the bag at Zane's feet. "Get all of your shit out of the bathroom and let's go."

"Where are we going to go now? I think we've hit every major city." Zek smirked at his brother, only further testing his limits, but backed down after seeing that Zane wasn't just going to give into his wants as he typically did. "Fine, I'll go back this up. You pack the food."

"Gladly."

Both brothers walked past each other and bumped shoulders as they went their separate ways. Zane tried to calm his anger, which seemed close to impossible with his vampire form, so he decided to focus on emptying the cabinets and drawers, but leaving the fridge alone. In the far distance of the shack they resided in, Zane could hear the clanking of glass bottles knocking into each other and the noise alone was enough to work his blood once more. He loved his brother dearly, since he was all the family he had left, but sometimes Zek just seemed like a different person completely compared to Zane. He shook his head and sighed softly as he packed up the remaining items of foods in the plastic bags. He glanced down the hallway to see if Zek was ready to leave, but he still saw his shadow coming from the bathroom. He inhaled to relax himself and carried all of the bags to the car, hoping that by the time he was finished loading the car Zek would be finished, but of course he wasn't.

“Zek! I got the car packed. Are you ready or not?” He waited through a couple minutes of silence, until he decided to walk to the bathroom and find out if he was ready or not. Except when he reached the opening, he realized the silhouette he saw earlier was just a stack of skillfully piled items near the cabinet. His eyes shot up immediately and saw the bathroom curtains were fluttering in night air from the open window. “Are you fucking kidding me?”

Zane ran out of the house immediately, afraid of where his brother might be, and used night vision to get a better view of where his brother had ran off to. Running back into the house to grab his wallet and car keys, he cursed slightly under his breath. Within seconds, the engine revved and he raced down the dirt path trying to find his brother. He left his headlights off to draw less attention to himself, but once he rolled down the window, the scent of fresh human blood wafted into his car. From the sudden smell, his fangs automatically shot out, but he was able to focus himself so that his fangs retracted. He knew his brother was nearby, but before he could even pull over to get out, Zek jumped through the passenger window and settled in the seat as he smiled at his brother with blood dripping off the corner of lips.

“I'm ready to go now.”

“I can see that. You just had to get your last kill in before we left?” Zane swerved onto the main road and shot a dirty look at his brother. “You're hopeless.”

“Or maybe you just need some more humans. I know plenty of virgins that would love a few moments with you.” Smirking, Zek pulled the handle on the side of his seat to lay back and put his hands behind his head. “The best thing about human girls is that you can wipe their memory right after. They'll never remember a thing.”

Zane couldn't help but laugh at Zek's mindset because he knew he was more than just naive. “You're ridiculous, you know.”

He glanced over at Zane chuckling and then closed his eyes with a grin on his face. “Isn't that the best part of who I am deep down inside?”

Zane ended the conversation by turning the stereo up and blasting whatever song the radio station decided to play. He glanced at the highway entrance and made a sharp turn onto it as he almost by passed it. He didn't know where he was going just yet, but he knew it was going to be far from the town he was leaving behind. Something just didn't feel right, other than the fact of the rising suspicion of Zek's escapades, and he didn't want to stick around to find out. He always felt like someone was watching them from the woods outside the shack they living in, but when he sent out his senses, nothing was there. He took one last look in the rear view mirror as the town sign became smaller in size and the weight that had been on his chest finally relieved some pressure. He thought of telling Zek of his worries numerous times, but Zek wouldn't have cared anyway. Instead, he figured he could get the both of them as far away from here as possible and tightened his grip on the steering wheel as he sped down the highway.

“Just a few more bags and that should be all of them!” Kate Bleu carefully maneuvered her way through her aunt and uncle's house, trying her best to balance everything in her arms so they wouldn't fall. Her brother Tommy was already upstairs moving everything around in the attic bedroom he pleaded to have, but she still had quite a few more bags to bring up to her room. Her uncle offered to help her, but Kate was more of the type to help others rather than accept it for herself.

Spooked by her brother popping up in the hallway, she nearly fell over trying to catch everything before it slipped, so he grabbed some of her things to lessen her burden. “I told you I would have helped you.” He sounded a bit annoyed with his older sister, but he shortly smiled after she gave him the puppy dog look she always used to make him feel bad. “I just had to finish moving my dresser.”

“It's fine. You should have asked me though and I could have helped you move it.” Kate continued walking down the hallway until she reached her room door and shoved it open with her shoulder. She neatly spread out everything on her bed and directed her brother where to put the rest of her things. “I would have handled it by myself, but thank you.”

“You know sometimes, your a little too nice.” Tommy chuckled softly and rubbed his head as he looked around at her room. “This is going to be a very girly room.” He ran his fingers over the sheer pink curtains on her window and pretended the feel was burning his hand. “Now I have cooties.”

Kate picked up one of her accent pillows and threw it playfully at his head, but before it hit him, he was able to catch it in his hands. “I have to go get my bags, you jerk!” She pushed past him softly and jogged back down the stairs to grab the rest of her bags from the car. As she slammed the trunk closed, she looked out at the scenery and smiled at how beautiful everything looked. They were originally from New York, but with their mother always going on business trips, their aunt and uncle offered to keep an eye on the both of them until they graduated from high school. Coming from a city like Manhattan, she wanted to take a moment to admire the view she was presented with as of now. It soothed her and she found herself slipping away into a dream state, until someone tapped her shoulder and brought her out of it. She turned around and jumped back as her aunt giggled at her reaction.

“I apologize. I just wanted to make sure you were okay! You were standing there like a statue and I thought something was wrong.”

“Yes I'm okay, Aunt Elisha. I was just enjoying the view that's all.” She smiled kindly at her aunt and then continued back into the house to finish with her room. As she walked down the hallway, she could hear her brother shuffling around in the attic and it made her smile as she heard her brother cursing upstairs. She began setting up her room as she pleased, with the organization she wanted and within a couple of hours she was finished with everything.

“Dinner's ready!” Kate heard the voice of her uncle from the bottom of the stairs and she immediately heard the pounding footsteps of her brother running for the table. “Kate! Come downstairs!”

Kate dropped her books on her bed and flicked the light off as she closed her door, running down the stairs before her uncle had a chance to call her again. The four of them gathered around the table and their uncle served all of them, explaining how everyone had to wait until all the plates were filled. Aunt Elisha had made fried chicken, garlic and butter mashed potatoes, sweet corn and baked macaroni and cheese, so the dinner table was filled with various colors of the flavorful food before them. There were two pitchers in the middle of the table, one with fruit punch and the other with a bit of wine. Tommy, being the bad ass he always tried to be, reached for the wine pitcher as if he was actually going to pour himself some. "Hey, you put that down young man!"

"I'm sorry Uncle Christoff. I was just joking." Tommy took a bite full of his food awkwardly, and forced himself to keep from making any type of eye contact. "What school are we going to go to?"

Uncle Christoff took a bite of his food, so as he spoke, pieces of his food were spewing out of his mouth. "I think your mom is setting you up in Mandyma High School. It's only a few blocks away from the house, so you guys can walk there."

"That's good. I'll make sure to wake you up on time, Tommy. We can walk together." Kate cheerfully took a few more bites of her food before saying anything else. "Maybe you can make friends at this new school."

Tommy sat back in his chair and pushed the corn around on his plate with his fork, not saying anything more because of the issue he held deep inside. Ever since he was younger, he always had a problem with trusting anyone and also making friends. Honestly, Kate was hoping that maybe a change of pace in a newer environment that maybe he could break out of his shell and become a social butterfly like her. The rest of dinner was quiet on all four ends, but Tommy's reason was because he felt pressured to change the way he was just because he wasn't the most talkative person in their family. He was perfectly fine with being alone and away from the rest of the world, but that wasn't good enough for anyone in his family. With his last bite of food, he swore to himself that he would make sure he made at least one friend to satisfy everyone else's wants.

Noticing Tommy's discomfort, she felt bad for bringing up the subject of making friends and rubbed his shoulder encouragingly. "Don't worry. I'll be with you every step of the way, little brother."

Hearing his sister's confirmation of protection, the weight on his chest lifted off of him the slightest bit. "Thanks, sis." They shared a brief smile between each other and for once, he was comfortable with the silence between them. "I know I'll be okay as long as I have you there."

"We've been here for a week and you've kept me locked up in this hell hole!" Zek slammed his fists on his sealed bedroom door, which was protected with charms to keep him from getting out. Zane wanted to keep his brother out of trouble so they could stay in the area for a while, before they had to leave again due to his brother's unruly antics. "Let me out! This is inhumane!"

"Good thing your not human, right?" Zane couldn't help but laugh at what his brother's expression possibly looked like at the moment, but had to ignore the

guilt of actually having to lock him up like an animal. "Look, I was thinking about going into town. Would you like to come?"

"Oh, you're actually going to let me out?" Zane heard him walking away from the door and shuffling through his drawers to get dressed. "Give me five minutes and I'll meet you outside."

Zane smiled and nodded, even though Zek couldn't see his gesture. Since there wasn't any windows in his room to be able to escape from, Zane was okay with removing the seals of protection from Zek's door and headed outside to wait for him in the car. Zek pulled on his usual faded black jeans and black ribbed tank top, followed by tying his hair into a low ponytail. Within a few minutes he was finished getting dressed, but hesitated as he tried to open the door still thinking it wouldn't budge. He gave the door one good tug and was content that the door actually opened to the outside. From the fear of it being a trick or something was going to happen to get him back into the room, he ran down the hallway and out of the house in record time. "Nice to see you out in broad day light."

He glared at Zane with a straight face and didn't say anything to him as he opened the car door, emphasizing his hatred for his brother at the moment by slamming it as hard as he could. Zane chuckled once more before getting in the car and then turned to his brother only to burst out in a fit of laughter. "I'm sorry, bro. It's just your face. I can never take you seriously."

"That's because you can't take anything seriously. You're too nice." Zek shook his leg as he waited for Zane to start the car and messed with the radio dial to blast the rock song on the station. "You need to be more like me."

Zane pulled his seat belt, letting it click into place before he spoke. "Or maybe not. There's nothing wrong with being nice or friendly." He put the car in drive and looked over at Zek, realizing he didn't have his seat belt on. "You're not going to put it on are you?"

Zek pulled his shades out of his back pocket and smirked as he slid them on his face. "Not a chance." He pressed the button to roll the window down and puts his hands behind his head, closing his eyes as he rested against the seat. "Where are we going exactly?"

"Food shopping and furniture browsing. Our house is kind of empty and I'm tired of cooking in the microwave." Zane pulled onto the main road towards the mall in the town's center and shook his head. "It's a shame that even as gods, they still don't send someone to do things for us."

Zek scoffed and turned to stare at his brother. "Even if we did get hired help, you would have told them that you can handle it and buy them a pizza." It was Zek that was caught in a fit of laughter, while Zane stayed quiet.

Shrugging, he shot back at Zek and said, "Yeah, and you would have tried to drain their body." Zek's laughter silenced and his grin turned to a straight line as Zane laughed so hard, he pressed down harder on the gas. Both their eyes shot open at the sound of horns and angry drivers, and while Zek laughed, Zane hit his arm saying it was his fault his concentration messed up. "That could have been bad."



"It's not my fault you can't laugh and drive at the same time. Besides, that would have been enough supply to last us for quite some time." Zek's fangs grew in the blink of an eye, thinking of the possibility of having all that blood in his grasp. As they came up to the parking lot, they were stopped by a parking attendant so Zek made his fangs retract from site, even though he thought her blood smelled divine once he caught her scent after Zane rolled down his window. "What can we help you with?"

Zane glanced at Zek, who had the look of hunger in his eyes and punched his arm nonchalantly before turning back to the girl standing at the window already in a half daze from Zek's trance. "Is there a problem?"

She shook her head as if trying to come back to reality, which is when Zek tore his eyes off of hers. "Oh, um, you have to pay to park in here. It's only five dollars and you can stay as long as you want."

Taking out his wallet, Zane came to the realization that he only had hundred dollar bills from the ATM earlier in the week. "Here." He handed her a hundred and told her to keep the change as his ticket printed out. "It's fine, we have plenty more were that came from."

"R-right...h-have a n-nice d-day!" She ran back to her booth happily and raised the bar so they could find a parking spot. "Come back anytime!"

"Oh, I think I will." Zek mumbled darkly to himself and Zane hit him in the chest telling him to 'cool it' or he'd have to deal with him. "I'm just joking..."

"If there's one thing I know best about you it's to know you're never just joking."

Luckily, Zane found a parking spot up in the front near the entrance, so they were inside the mall in no time. The brothers decided they'd go their separate ways and just meet up at the car when they were finished shopping. Zane knew Zek was just going shopping for new humans girls he could have his way with and then make them forget everything ever happened. Wanting to forget about his brother for a moment, he checked out the floor map to figure out where he should go first. He decided he should get some new clothes since they were in a new area, so he headed for the closest clothing store on the first level. Every girl that he passed stare at him with hot intensity, but he wasn't the type to be into the normal 'vampire things' everyone else thought he was supposed to be into. He couldn't help that he was naturally a nice guy before he became a vampire.

The store was less crowded then the mall itself, so he found it easier to get around without a hundred eyes on his back. As he walked down an aisle, pulling various clothes into his cart that he wanted, he saw a brother and sister at the end. When he walked closer to them because his intention was to go to the next aisle over, he caught a glimpse of the sister's face and was stunned almost immediately. She had caramel blond hair that flowed beautiful down her back and hazel-nut eyes that stole his attention, just as much as his heart beat. Her sun kissed complexion glistened under the florescent lights and she had a smile that captivated him to the extent of being paralyzed. He hadn't even realized he was staring at her for as long as he did until the brother came over to him, waving his

hands in Zane's face. It still took a little bit of time for him to form his words properly.

"Why are you staring at my sister like that?" The brother who was standing before Zane appeared to not only be older than her, but also very intimidating had Zane not been the immortal god that he was. "I asked you a question, buddy!"

It was then that she came over towards the both of them and pushed her brother to aside as she spoke with a sweet, light voice. "I apologize for my brother. He's over-protective of me." Her brother walked past the both of them and went over to the next aisle, but still kept a close eye on his sister. "Where are my manners? My name is Kate Bleu and that's my brother Tommy Bleu. You must be new around here too."

"Y-yeah, I am...My brother and I just moved in a week ago. How about you?" His eyes were glued to the movement of her lips, but he didn't hear a word that she said. "I'm sorry, I just...you have beautiful lips."

Her hand reflexively shot to her lips as her fingers spread across them and a tiny hint of pink rose to her cheeks. "My lips? I've never heard that before..."

Zane's eyes popped open in fear that he offended her or made her feel uncomfortable and quickly apologized. "I don't know why I just said that. I'm sorry! I didn't-"

Kate laughed and it was the most beautiful sound he had ever heard from a girl before. "It's perfectly fine. At least I know my lips are beautiful. It's just, if you said that only about my lips, I would hate to think that the rest of me isn't that great."

Again, he apologized with his deepest sincerity. "No, it's nothing like that! I mean, the rest of you is just as beautiful!" Now he was the one that was blushing. "I'm just going to go before I make an even bigger fool of myself."

He started to roll the cart away from her, but her voice made him stop. "Wait, I never got your name!" She ran over to him with a big smile on her face and touched his arm for him to turn around.

Not wanting to pass up another moment of being able to stare at her beauty, he turned around and smiled contently at her. "My name is Zane Shadows and if you ever meet my brother, his name is Zek."

She stuck out her hand for him to shake and flashed her pearly whites. "It was nice to meet you Zane. I hope to see you around again."

Instead of him walking away, she was the one that walked away from him disappearing behind the corner of the aisle, most likely trying to find her brother. Zane was once again stuck in place as he replayed their conversation in his head, focusing his attention on the beauty of her face, and whispered one last thing as if she was standing right next to him. "I hope to see you around too, beautiful..."

Kate jumped on her bed as her best friend Cynthia Bridgette slammed and locked the bedroom door behind her. Even though they had only moved in a little over a week ago, Kate and Cynthia had known each other since they were kids from when they used to visit their aunt and uncle over the summer when they

were younger, so the minute she heard that Kate was in town, she'd been over at her house the whole time. It made school easier for Kate, not having to worry about being alone for the first couple of weeks, but she was still worried about Tommy not having anyone to talk to. "I just wish he would break through his shell and find someone to connect with you know?"

Cynthia twisted her hair into a bun and shook her head as she looked into Kate's vanity to make it perfect. "Girl, you worry too much about him. Tommy's always been like that since we were kids."

Kate sighed and stared up at her ceiling, listening to Tommy moving around upstairs above her. "I know, it's just...I worry about him constantly."

"Yeah, that's because you act like his mother all the time. Let him be him. He'll break out of it when he wants to. Give him some time!" Cynthia threw a pillow at Kate that was on the floor by the dresser and they both started giggling uncontrollably. Once they calmed down, Cynthia jumped on the bed next to her and grabbed her by her shoulders, shaking her while smiling. "So, tell me about this guy that you met at the mall today!"

At the mere mention of Zane, Kate began to blush like crazy and hid her face with her hands. "His name is Zane Shadows and he's a nice guy. He said I have beautiful lips."

They began to squeal, until Kate's uncle yelled for them to quiet down, and Cynthia asked, "Well, what does he look like? Details! I want to know everything!"

Up in the attic though, Tommy was about to have a little party of his own with a new found friend that he kept hidden secretly under his mattress. He locked the opening to secure his privacy and then walked over to his bed to find the little bag of white crystalline powder. Grabbing a hard cover text book off the floor, he threw it on the bed and sat in front of it, lightly tapping the bag so that the powder fell evenly on the cover. He used a razor blade to separate the pile into three even thin lines and reached over to his side table to grab the straw that he took from downstairs after dinner. Remembering that he could only take in two lines at a time so nothing drastic happens to him, he pushed the last line back into the small bag and sealed it before sliding it back under his mattress. He took a deep breath. Then another. And then another, before he finally leaned down and snorted both lines in a matter of seconds so he wouldn't chicken out. With the small remains of crank left on his notebook, he swiped his finger across it and licked them clean, just to be on the safe side.

Laying back on his bed with his hand under his pillow, he stared at the ceiling waiting for the rush of euphoria he received whenever he turned to his bagged up friend. Tommy was always interested in meth, but he never had the guts to actually try it until he saw a few guys at school using it in the bathroom. They weren't exactly his friends, but they all shared a common interest, and that satisfied Tommy enough. He didn't have to trust them to get supply from them, so his usual anti-social self wasn't jeopardized and he was still able to feel that glorious high he desperately wanted. Tommy told himself he wasn't going to let himself become addicted to the drug to the point of dependability, but he found himself wanting to take more than just two hits just to get the initial high that he originally had the first time. Just as he was about to grab the bag to set up

another line, someone knocked at the door, so he set aside his desire and tried to clear his head.

“J-just a minute.” He hopped off his bed and softly walked over to unlock the door. Pulling it up from the floor, his sister's face appeared with a grin on her face. For some reason seeing her in such a happy mood, it annoyed him more than it should have. “What do you want?”

With such an aggressive tone, Kate was startled into thinking she did something terribly wrong to her brother. “I was just going to ask if you wanted anything from the store. Cynthia was going to get something from her house and she was going to the store on the way back.”

The longer she was in his face, the angrier he felt. All he wanted to do was lock himself back in his room and enjoy the high before it slipped away from him. “If I wanted anything, I would have said something to you.”

Kate didn't know what to say to Tommy, but she wasn't going to let him speak to her like that either. “I'm going to politely ask you to tell me what's going on with you?” Upon close inspection, she saw that his eyes were slightly glossed over as if he was high off of...something. “Why do your eyes look like that? Are you smoking in here?”

“Can you just leave me alone? Go back to your room and stop acting like my mother! If I wanted to see her I would have gone to New York.” He didn't say anything further because he slammed the door down, leaving his sister standing on the stairs dumbfounded as to why her brother was acting such a way with her.

She climbed back down the stairs, glancing at Tommy's door numerous times, but eventually she went back to her room to tell Cynthia what just happened. “He was completely out of character. He never gets like that with me.”

As she was putting her jacket on, Cynthia turned to her and shrugged her shoulders. “Maybe he's just in a bad mood right now.”

Kate threw herself back on her bed and hugged her pillow to her chest as she stared at the ceiling lost in her own thoughts. “I guess.” She rolled over on her side and smiled contently at Cynthia while she opened her bedroom door. “Don't forget my chocolate!”

“I won't. I'll be back.”

Cynthia was careful not to make much noise as she snuck downstairs, but Kate jumped up to close her door after she listened for Cynthia's departure outside. Since she was now alone, Kate was able to freely think of her brother and his actions without Cynthia telling her she was making a bigger deal than what it really was. Kate knew it wasn't just her mind playing tricks on her, and that was what worried her most of all. Everything was pointing to him getting involved with some very bad decisions, but if he didn't talk to her then she would be able to properly assess the help he would need. She didn't mean to act so motherly towards him, but the habit of taking care of him while their mother was away became something she couldn't break out of. The fact of his inverted behavior meant he wasn't speaking to anyone else about what he was doing, and Kate didn't want her brother to feel alone. She decided she'd talk to him in the morning to make sure he was okay, even though sleep wouldn't come easy to her until she knew that Tommy was okay.

“You haven't stopped talking about this girl since we got home. You talked about her while I helped you set everything up.” Zek angrily spoke to his brother while they were unpacking the rest of their things and then stood up shaking his head. “I'm sick of hearing Kate Bleu after every sentence.”

“I can't help it. I've never seen a girl so beautiful before.” Zane picked up the towels from the floor and shoved them into the drawers hurriedly, so he could get back to the living room. “There's just something about her that's different compared to every other girl I've dated in the past.”

“Maybe she's a virgin and you smelled her blood.” Zek smirked as he grabbed his jacket and strolled towards the door. “I'll be back later.”

Zane grabbed his jacket from the back of the couch as well and threw it on so they could walk out of the house together. “I think I might go find her. Or at least find where she lives.” Zek looked at his brother questioningly, but Zane just waved him off as he walked down another path away from Zek.

Using his night vision to be able to see clearly, he let the view of the night consume his vision and realized how breathtaking it all was. There was nothing else that lit up the streets except the moon and the stars above, along with only the sound of the night breeze. Zane felt something off as he came closer to the main streets; something rather unsettling about the beautiful scenery. Immediately, he went into defense mode and his senses heightened, so he was able to pick up on the slightest hint of Kate nearby. Thinking she was in trouble somewhere in the area, Zane used his stealth to maneuver around buildings unseen and came face to face with an incident across the street from him. When it came to humans, Zane wasn't fast to interfere unless it was a matter of life and death, but once he saw that it was three guys attacking one girl, he was ready to attack.

His fangs grew sharp and his nails following in suit as he ran at full speed towards the attackers, trying to protect the girl. He stood in front of her, spreading his arms out to keep her back, but she quickly fell to the ground unconscious. He realized that the scent of Kate was heavy on this girl, so he knew she had something to do with Kate and swore he'd protect her under any circumstances. “Leave her alone!”

The three guys screamed at him, trying to be intimidating, but once his eyes changed to all black, their hard exteriors seemed to die down. Still one guy stood his ground as if he wasn't afraid and lunged at Zane, but with one swift movement, he dodged his attack and flipped him on his back. As if that wasn't enough, the next guy tried to reenact the attack, but Zane ended it in the same result. The third guy didn't even try to jump at Zane, staring at him with wild eyes, but instead he told the other guys that they should go. A few minutes later, they were running down the road until they became little specs in the night. Once they were far enough away, he turned his attention back to the girl on the ground going in and out of consciousness. He knelt down and pressed his fingers to her neck trying to feel for a pulse, but it was barely there, giving him no other option than to save her life in the only way he knew he could.

The girl coughed and tried to move around as she felt Zane's hands on her neck. "Kate? Is that you?" Everywhere was swollen and her face was bleeding profusely. "I have to get to back to Kate. I need to tell Kate."

"Are you talking about Kate Bleu? Are you a friend of hers?" Zane wanted the confirmation that she knew the same Kate as him, but he was worried about the time left for her. "Just nod your head, don't speak."

She nodded and said, "My name is Cynthia Bri-" Her body began to shake violently and Zane knew it was time. He pushed her hair off of her neck and immediately lunged at her jugular vein to begin the transformation. Since he was a god on top of being a vampire, he was able to use his ability to speed up the process so she could turn faster and less painfully. After he made sure there was an even transfer of blood for the both of them, he set her down gently on the ground and waited for the final steps to take place. He knew she was going to be both scared and hungry just as he had been when he first awoke after his change, so he grabbed all of her belongings and then threw her over his shoulder, racing off to the woods nearby. He could hear the blood rushing through her veins once more, but it would still be some time until she woke up.

Zane came up to a clearing that he sensed was safe enough, so he set her down next to a few trees and raced off to find a lone animal somewhere. He dragged it back to the spot where he had her and left it laying to the side ready for her to drink from. Her phone vibrated in her pocket, so he pulled it out and saw it was a text from Kate asking where she was. He decided to text her back with a lie, saying that Cynthia wasn't feeling to well and decided to stay home. Suddenly, her eyes fluttered opened and she groaned as she stretched out her arms. "Where am I?"

In the most calming and soothing voice, he spoke to her. "You're in the woods right now." He reached over to check the pulse on her neck and realized how strong it was, so he was extremely satisfied. "How do you feel?"

She struggled to sit up, but managed to do so without to much of an issue. "Groggy. Hungry. Confused." Cynthia was taking it all a lot easier that what he thought she would, but suddenly she jumped up and stared off into the woods. "Why am I so hungry?"

Zane pointed to the deer laying next to them and said, "Plenty for you to drink." He bit open the neck for her and let the blood drip down it's neck as he drank some himself.

At first, Cynthia was utterly disgusted by the scene, but she couldn't help but feel a magnetic pull for the blood inside that animal. That's when it finally hit her and she scrambled back from him. "What did you do to me?" She tried to get as far away from him as possible, but stopped once she slammed against a tree. "You're a vampire. You're a vampire!!"

Zane paused momentarily as he looked up at Cynthia and licked his lips. He gave her a friendly smile and took a deep breath. "Yes I am and now, so are you."

Zek lurked in the shadows of the night, concealing his presence as nothing more than a passing breeze through the city. Since Zane was

preoccupied at the moment with his eye candy, Zek decided to have a little bit of fun while he could and drove the car to the nearest big city, which just so happened to be New York. He knew he could easily find anyone and no one would pay much mind to their disappearance because it was so common that people went missing or run away when in that city. He had the car parked by an abandoned factory and secretly made his way to Times Square, the best place to search out his prey. He hated how bright the place was because it would have been harder to find a dark place, but he soon came up to a strip club which had a dark alley way leading behind it to a sewer. He could use that drainage pipe to hide the bodies when he was finished drinking away their life source. Zek was in the mood for some killing and now there was no one to stop his quest.

It wasn't easy at first to be allowed into the strip club because he had no valid form of identification, but after messing with the bouncer's mind for a bit, he was allowed to step inside. He ordered a few drinks, making sure to keep his face hidden from the night vision cameras hidden in the low sky lights, and made sure to pay with cash, so there was no evidence of him being there at all. He didn't care if anyone found out; he just didn't want to hear Zane's mouth about the responsibilities he had to abide by. Sipping on the tonic, which tasted nothing like the way he would have made it, he watched the show trying to figure out which girl would be his first victim of the night. It was then that a petite brunette stepped to the stage and began to strip while she danced and he knew it was the perfect match. He downed the rest of his drink and made his way through the crowd to get to the seats in front of the stage.

There weren't any empty seats, so he had to convince a guy to give up his, which was easier because he was drunk, and then focused his attention on her. If he wasn't looking for an easy kill tonight, she would have been the ideal girl for him to go after, but his priorities were set on blood lust. He waited for her to make eye contact with him and once she did, she immediately fell under his spell. He called her over to him and she crawled in all her glory, leaning her ear down to his mouth. "You're coming with me tonight."

"Anything you want..." She was in a daze, and even though she was robotically agreeing to him, her sultry tone was still very erotic. After her dance was over, she jumped off the stage and grabbed his hand, leading him to the back rooms where strippers could have their private dances. "I've never seen you before."

Zek didn't speak. He just stared ahead and rushed them into the closest empty room. She locked the door behind them and began to dance for him, running her hands down her body. He watched for a moment, but right after his fangs grew, he lunged at her neck and silenced her before she could even scream. Against his lips, he could feel her heart beat for the last time and after dropping her to the floor, he left through the window before anyone could suspect foul play. "Definitely not a virgin."

The rest of the scenery was too much for him, so he decided to end his night early by trying to find one last victim at the bar. The bartender didn't give him any trouble with ordering a drink and in no time he was already talking to a business woman who came to sit next to him almost right away. She didn't ask

for his name and he didn't ask for hers, but she did ask him to walk with her back to her hotel room. He took that as the perfect opportunity to take her to a dark alley and drain her before the sun came up. "I know a short cut down the alley to your hotel. It leaves you right behind it."

"That's great. I just want to get back and rest my feet." When the time came for them to turn down the alley, she hesitated for the slightest moment. "Are you sure we can take this way?"

"Yes. Follow me and I'll show you." He stepped to the side to let her walk ahead of him so he could check if anyone else was around and once he confirmed that the coast was clear, he ran at her, slamming her against the wall as he ripped at her jugular vein. They both slowly sank to the floor and after he was sure she was no longer breathing, he let her fall out of his arms. He reached into the purse and pulled out her wallet out of the curiosity of who she was, and nearly lost his balance when he realized who it was that he had just killed. "Oh fuck...Zane is going to kill me..." The ID fell out of his hand and glistened under the moonlight as he reread the name at the bottom: Amanda Bleu, as in Kate Bleu's mother.

Deep in the depths of darkened land, Queen Emilia, ruler of all demonic creatures everywhere, strolled through the graves of past rulers and noblemen trying to find the one she had wanted to find. Coming up to his tombstone with *Jakob* engraved across the top, she placed the charm on the dirt and waited for it to divide into the hidden staircase below. Once underneath the surface, the opening closed up as if it was never there and she continued down the path to his coffin. In side his tomb, she slowly and silently made her way to the coffin, chanting for him to awake from his slumber. "Rise, my prince. It is time for my sacrifice." She clapped her hands and her presence turned into a puff of smoke traveling out of the room.

Jakob's coffin shook and soon he pushed open the top of his coffin, rising up from his sleep to fulfill the request of his queen. His eyes were blood red and his hunger for blood was that of one deprived for a thousand years, but he couldn't venture off from his task. He heard Emilia's voice in his head, explaining to details of what she wanted from him and then he was off to find Kate Bleu in the town of Mandyma to take her for his sacrifice. It didn't take him long to locate her whereabouts, so in a matter of hours he was already standing below the window of her bedroom. Following the queens orders, he picked up a rock and threw it at the window so she would know of his presence below. On cue, she came to the window and peered down below with blood that drove him crazy. "Zane? Is that you?"

"Yes, it is. I wanted to show you something." He knew how gullible humans were when it came to gorgeous vampires, even if they had no idea of their kind because of the magnetic pull all vampires have. "Will you come with me?"



She walked away from the window and a few minutes later, she was coming out the front door closing it gently behind her. "I really shouldn't go anywhere with a stranger, but a little fun never hurt anyone." Kate had a soft, sweet smile on her face until Jakob came into the light and she realized it wasn't Zane she was in front of anymore. "You're not Zane..."

Before she could even turn back around and run into her house, Jakob quickly wrapped one hand around her mouth so she couldn't scream for help and used his other arm to hook underneath her legs. Disappearing into the night with Kate in his arms, he knew he would make his queen proud. "Don't worry, my sweet sacrifice. It will all be over soon." With the touch of his fingers to her tired eyes, she drifted into a sleep that only he could wake her out of at the moment of her death.

Zane couldn't believe his eyes as he saw something rush past him at a speed that no normal person in the area could have reached as he was taking Cynthia back to his house for her to stay for the night. What startled him even more was that the scent of Kate was heavy in the air and something inside him signaled that there was something wrong. All of a sudden, Cora showed up with distress in her eyes. "Jakob is awake! The queen has awakened him for a human sacrifice!"

"Kate! That must have been him and her! We have to stop him!" Zane picked up Cynthia and threw her over his shoulder as Cora dissolved back to where she came from. "Cynthia, I'm sorry but Kate is in trouble and I have to save her."

"What's going on with Kate? And who was that girl? Can you put me down?" She kicked and punched at his back, but no matter what force she tried to use, he just ran faster to get to his house.

"No, I can't. Look once I have Kate back I will answer all of your questions. For now, just stay at my house and I'll be back." He unlocked the front door and lightly dropped her on the couch. Just as he was about to leave once more, he heard a car pulling up in the driveway, which he figured had to be Zek. He waited for him to come through the door to ask him for his help, even though he knew it would prove fruitless to ask Zek to help a human.

"Hey Zane. Listen there's some-" He paused as he looked at Cynthia who was lounged on the couch with her feet up staring at him with a confused expression as well. "Who's that? She's fresh."

"You didn't tell me you had a brother, Zane!" She quickly sat up and began to fix her hair as if she was trying to catch his attention with her looks. "I'm Cynthia, nice to meet you."

"Charmed. Now, Zane there's something I need to talk to you about." He was about to pull off his jacket, when he saw the pained expression on Zane's face. "What's going on?"

"Cora told me that Jakob has been awakened and he's going to sacrifice Kate to Emilia! We have to stop him. Now, I know this isn't your kind of thing, but I can't fight him off alone, so-"

"I'll do it." Zek sighed because it wasn't exactly his kind of thing to do something for humans as it was, but after killing her mother, he felt like he owed it to her. The situation alone opened his eyes and he didn't want to be that kind of vampire anymore, but Zane was staring at him like he had a unknown deformity. "What? Is it so hard to believe that I'll help you?"

Zane shook his head and turned to Cynthia. "We'll be back. There's food and what not in the fridge, if you can stomach it so early. The bathroom is that way...just make yourself at home."

"Is Kate going to be okay?"

Zane didn't turn around as he spoke to her, but he did pause as he was about to close the door to say, "I hope to god she will be, and that's not something I do anymore."

Kate was tied up in the center of the room, surrounded by a red glowing circle and a barrier that wouldn't let her move even if she tried. She could barely keep her eyes open from them feeling so heavy and she also felt an invisible force pressing her down to the ground as well. Through squinted eyes, she was able to make out a dark figure standing on a platform in the corner, but she couldn't see anything more than that. She wanted it all to be a nightmare she would wake up from, but the pain settling in her body proved to her it wasn't just a mere dream she was experiencing at the moment. "Where...am...I?" She could barely breath as the oxygen felt like lead in her chest, but she was able to form short sentences at least. "Is...anyone...there?"

"I am here, my sacrifice. You will be ready soon." The voice seemed to come out of thin air, and even though there wasn't a person to match the voice, she was still terrified to hear it. "I have decided to wake you beforehand so I could smell your fear."

The voice began to chant words in a foreign language and the outline of the circle began to spew sparks from the ground. Kate wanted to move, but the words were paralyzing her further to the point her breath became sparse too. Suddenly the concentration of the chant was broken by the banging from the pair of double doors off to the side being ripped open. With teary eyes, Kate was able to see the outline of two figures, one which seemed familiar to her. "Let her go, Jakob!"

A roaring laughter filled the room, echoing off the walls, and then the darkened figure jumped down from the platform before the two guys. Kate matched the voice with Zane in her head and tried to smile as if it would help protect her from her inevitable fate. "Zane...you...came...to-"

The figure put his hand in Kate's direction, and it was as if her throat was beginning to close up on her as she choked on her gasping breaths. He balled his hand into a fist and her breath turned to into agonizing screams of pain. "Stop! Leave her alone!" Zane couldn't bare the site of seeing Kate in so much pain, so helpless and alone, scared that her next breath might be her last. "I said let her go!" Zane ran towards the figure, which he already knew was Jakob, and tried his best to attack him, but instead he fell right through him. Zane flipped

over on his back with a confused expression, staring at his brother. "What the hell?"

Zek glanced around the room for a moment and then back at Zane. "It's a glamour. He's not in this room." Zek remembered that Jakob wasn't just a vampire; he was a six thousand year old vampire with powers beyond what even the Gods have seen. "It's just a shadow of him, but it can hurt her."

Zane jumped up and carefully walked back over to his brother, keeping his eyes solely on Kate, worried anything might happen to her at any given time. "So what the hell do we do?"

"We bring him here." Zek took a few steps towards the fired circle and put his hands over the flames. All of a sudden, a barrier shot up completely encasing Kate from ceiling to floor in flames and another figure walked out from the fire. "I knew you'd do something like that. You ancients are all the same with your glamour and shadow bullshits."

Jakob transformed into his true form and smiled a wickedly twisted grin of pure evil. "The Shadows brothers, how nice of you to join me here for the sacrifice of the beautiful human, Kate Bleu. You do know why she's here, correct?"

"Let me guess, Queen Emilia requested you sacrifice her?" Zane stepped in front of his brother and pushed Jakob against the fiery barrier, listening to the crisping sound of his body burning against it. "You want her? You have to come through us first."

"If it's a fight you want, it's a fight you get!" Jakob snapped his fingers and he disappeared once more, leaving Zane and Zek standing around wondering where he was going to reappear. "Keep your eyes open for anything."

The barrier surrounding Kate cascaded to the floor and the whole place lit on fire, but Zane's only concern was running to Kate who was still tied up in the center writhing in pain. "Kate!" He dropped to his knees beside her and used his strength to break through the ropes tied around her. "Don't worry, I'll get you out of here."

A hand grabbed the back of his neck and threw him to the farthest wall, causing his bones to feel like they shattered against the rock. Zane ignored the searing pain in his back and managed to get back on his feet once more. He looked over to Zek who was trying to get up as well, and waited until he was back on his feet before giving Zek the signal to attack from both sides together. Jakob stood in front of them, staring at the both of them with greedy hunger in his eyes, as if trying to judge how the attack was going to go. Zek and Zane looked at each other nodding, but didn't lunge for him like Jakob had planned, so when he moved forward to counter their attack, they took their chance to run at him. They were both able to get a few solid hits in before he shoved them both into separate sections of the room, both just barely missing the flames around them.

"This is my playing field. You can't beat me here." Jakob used his shadows to project on top of the both of them to add pressure to their bodies to weaken them. "I have been around longer than you have. I know more than you do. This sacrifice is a special request from Emilia herself." His voice echoed throughout the whole room, bouncing off every corner in the room. "Zane is the reason why.

He's the one that decided to get involved with a human. Emilia thinks those are the best sacrifices.”

Zane cursed to himself, knowing the rules that all creatures of their realm had to follow, but he couldn't help himself from interfering with Kate. He may not have been involved with her in a relationship sense, but he couldn't deny he was feeling something for her even though they had only met earlier that morning. “I won't let you hurt Kate!” He kicked the shadow off of him with all his strength, even though his attempt went right through it, and was back on his feet as if nothing ever happened.

Jakob caused more shadows to crowd around Zane and each of them weakened him as the moment dragged on. “If you won't let me have Kate, then maybe your brother will do!” Jakob laughed and raised his arms above his head, causing both Kate and Zek to raise from the ground. With both of them suspended in the air, contorted from the pain inflicted on them, Jakob turned to lock his eyes with Zane as he shared a sinister grin, amused at his expression. “You must choose who you'd rather save. Your beloved Kate or your only brother.”

Zane glanced back and forth between the both of them, not wanting either of them to get hurt at the others expense. “I'm not going to choose between the both of them. You can't make me do this!”

“I can do...” He made a fist with his left hand, which made Zek's pain accelerate into overdrive and smiled as he rolled his eyes over to Kate. “Whatever...” Repeating the same gesture, Kate's body was nearing it's breaking point and sadly, human's tolerance of pain was a lot lower than that of someone of their species. “I want...” He raised his arms once again and then threw his arms out to the side, slamming the both of them into the wall. “Now choose!”

His voice grew stronger as did the flames, and Zane was beginning to fear what was going to happen. Kate was close to loosing consciousness and her dazed expression tore pieces of his heart right out of his body. Zek on the other hand was still trying to squirm out of Jakob's hold, but he was weakening to exhaustion. He knew his time was limited and the longer he took to decide what his next move was going to be, the shorter time they both had to live. Yet no matter how much he tried to chose what the right decision was, he just couldn't figure out who to save and who to let go of. The obvious choice was his brother because he was the only one who had been there for the past thousand years of his life, but at the same time he couldn't just let go of Kate because he wanted to see what their relationship could possibly blossom into in the future. Something inside him felt like it was awakening, but he didn't know what what going on within himself. He figured it was just another trick from Jakob, but he wasn't even looking at him, but at both of them in the air.

A voice broke out from deep within him and his entire body filled with a warmth like nothing before. “I won't let you hurt either of them!” He felt a power surge through him and suddenly, he was running at Jakob at full speed. Jakob grinned as if amused at his next attempt and sent more shadows to block his path, but what surprised Jakob was that the shadows seemed to explode the minute they touched Zane's body. Zane's eyes turned black as night and his

fangs grew to the sharpest extent they could, while his nails turned into razor-like claws. "I'll rip you apart if you don't put them down."

"You don't scare me." Even though his words were solid, his expression was unclear. Jakob had never seen something like this before with any vampire he'd fought in his lifetime, so he wasn't exactly sure what to expect from Zane next. "I dare you to try!"

An unnerving smile spread across Zane's face as he swiped his claws against and into Jakob's body. He roared out from the pain of his attack, and before he could even counter attack Zane, he was already clawing at him once more. Twice more. Three solid strikes across his torn body and the holds on Zek and Kate ceased, so they slowly drifted back to the floor. "Let's finish this!" One final strike and Jakob fell back from the force of the blow. He didn't move. Zane breathed hard waiting for him to move, but he didn't.

Zek stood up, and coughed as he brushed himself off. "I'm alright! Go check on Kate!" He found a way through the flames and rubble while he yelled to Zane. "What the hell was that? You were like...invincible."

"I don't know and right now I don't care. Let's just get out of here." Zane raced over to Kate and held her in his arms, wishing she would just open her eyes. As if answered from the gods above, she took in a lungful of breath and her eyes fluttered open slightly. "Kate? Can you hear me? Can you see me?"

She opened her mouth slightly and smiled, even through all the pain she was feeling. "Zane. You saved my life." She reached up carefully to touch his cheek and her grin grew even larger. "I owe you my life."

"Let's just get you out of here, okay? We'll talk about the details later." Zane chuckled as she giggled and he put her arm around her neck to lift her from the ground. "Let's get you to my house okay? We'll take care of your aunt and uncle."

Zek put his hand on Zane's shoulder with a new sense of gratitude for his brother and sighed as he looked at Kate who had fallen asleep in Zane's arms. "She's cute, I'll give you that."

He punched Zek's arm playfully and gave him a satisfactory smile as his way of saying your welcome and thank you. "Come on. Let's get this beautiful lady home. We're going to have a lot to talk about when she wakes up."

Zek nodded and the both of them set for their way out of the room, back into the light of the sunrise to start the day. Zane looked up at the sun, letting its rays wash over his body as they proceeded down the path back home. He took one last glance at the tomb he had her in and was still in shock with the fact that they all made it out alive. Once the tomb was no longer in sight, he gazed down at Kate who looked peaceful even though she had bruises and scrapes on her face, and hugged her body tighter to his, thanking god that she was okay. "From this day on, I swear I'll always protect you."