

One of These

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By : **xXGlitterGirl101Xx**

Rue is an ordinary girl except for one little thing. The fact that she is actually a demi-god a shard of the star that created the universe. Now she only has a short time to discover her identity with her mentor Alastair in a race against heaven and hell to save the universe or forget it all together.

Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/xXGlitterGirl101Xx

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Prologue

He pulled me close as his lips caressed my cheek. His lips were velvet brushing my skin. Blood rushes to my cheeks as my face gets hot. The feeling was familiar as his hands wandered. My heart pounded in my chest as I ran my fingers through his hair. I pulled his head closer pulling myself into a surge of warmth over taking me in a passionate kiss. My mind floated in and out in a state of ecstasy as we stood together in the dark. New warmth took over my body as we remained that way for a matter of seconds. I couldn't believe this was it every heartbeat seemed distant and far away. His chest was cold as stone and smooth as marble with his sweet hot breath in my ear as we stood closely together in the darkness. The coolness mixed with the heat sent shivers I could never imagine reassuring me it wasn't a dream. I looked up to see the faint dark shadow of his arms wrap around me secure in his strong embrace. His teeth grazed my neck gently. It was at this moment the reality of things set in and I realized that this *all of this* was real. My voice was weak and faded I felt I couldn't speak I wanted to step away I needed to think but I couldn't bring myself to separate from him. As if reading my thoughts he clung to me tighter in a way that made my knees weak. He whispered the word in my ear cruel words he knew I could not disobey. "Stay" he purred. He flashed a smile, his fangs glowed in the dim light. *Ok. I'll stay for you*

Morning

The dark heavy canvas pressed deep into my shoulder rubbing my skin. My muscles sank beneath the canvas strap accustomed to the worn notch in my shoulder made by the all too familiar canvas bag. I could feel the gentle bounce of the sketch pads, paint tubes and charcoal pencils. Typically one would not use a shoulder bag for art supplies but I find the bag charming and can't bear to part with it. It's fabric is worn so it's soft, the smooth silk lining still intact always smelling like cedar from my pencils. The tassels shining brightly. Cobble stones crunched beneath my boots heavy dark leather laced with silken bead covered ribbons. My blue tights stood out beneath a black lacy skirt and leather jacket nothing but a thin, blue, fluttery tank top covered my pale white skin. The ice cold silver choker strangling my neck crossing like intertwined branches. The chill of the air surrounded me causing goose bumps. I watched my breath creating icy foggy clouds in the grey morning. The breath rolled off my lips gracefully like billows of smoke into the cool morning air. December had passed but there were still many cold mornings to endure as I walked to school. My school is known as Finely Attributed Talents College of Assembly to Teach Students also known as F.A.T.C.A.T.S. Today on this fine bone chilling morning I was off to attend Sciences, Visual art, Music, Construction and other core classes. It is my freshman year of college and I suffer no less for it. Alastair didn't approve of school. I thought as I pictured my sour faced guardian sitting in my apartment. Today is Monday an innocent Monday nothing particularly special. Monday as opposed to Sunday is much less hectic for me and though I admit my academics are above standard my habit to procrastinate keep me about all day on the weekend. I looked around me with a smile surveying my surroundings. It was rather exhausting but it was also rather nice the falling snow and the early hour conspired to paint silver hazes and gentle milk white jewels blanketing the world in a thin film of an imaginary canvas. I saw dark bold lines rising to the sky drawing your attention missing the true beauty that lay hidden away deep within the milky white. On the crowded streets of the morning hustle you would be surrounded as trams, and buses roared past grounding the day in the present twenty-first century, but deep within the city limits there are secret paths that place you in a wintry peace that may have hailed from a different century. The peace was so deep you could almost sense the patience of great

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mountains and harmonized life on earth. The lanes are quieter, safer somehow and a little comforting. Over time I had learned and memorized the paths snaking through the city like secret portals avoiding the public eye. I loved the ghostly almost saintly grey light through the morning fog. I loved the way the light gave such a peaceful aura to the morning the startling honks, horns and sounds of the city were blocked by the miles of brick buildings. The sounds of the city were non-existent, far away in a different universe just where they belonged. Snow, Stone and Ghost light this was what filled my world, this was what I longed for preferring the silence rather than human life. These elements were my home, and my family. The simpleness of my world attracted me no fake smiles to kindly strangers waltzing by with children and petticoats. No advertisements or bothersome looks from street vendors just meant just another day with no real worries. I had no worries that is... until a giant rush of wind gusted behind me the scuffling of footsteps on the cobbles jerking my jacket askew along with my bag. The attacker gripped me hard from behind pinning my arms. My muscles contracted desperately trying to break free from the attacker's grip. Dark brown suede arms brought my world to a standstill. I knew that coat anywhere the patterned stitching scratching at my eyes in the rustle. I attempted to shake him off attempting to not drop the bag that was now slowly sliding down my shoulder.

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"Damn it Jazz get off," I snarled unhappy for the disruption. "Boy oh boy you're just stone aren't you? Nobody can startle you," He said playfully. I jumped trying to jerk his grip loose finding myself hopeless. Jazz. I felt his teeth graze my neck. I wasn't in the mood the grey light accented his beautiful face in the lamp light now fading from the ever rising sun. Stupid beauty. My eyes flickered to his lips which he was convinced were irresistible. Now if it were any other day in a different time I could describe to you for hours how girls fawned over him. I could tell you of the late nights I spent thinking of his face and his touch. I would have composed an overture in an attempt to capture his smile that no pencil could glorify. I wouldn't have resisted his kiss not many women had. I would have sunk into a lingering kiss licking his bottom lip languorously, gently teasing him with my teeth and lost myself in a kiss that made me melt into his arms in the biting cold. Those days were *so* over and made my stomach jump. "Oh come on now Rue don't get so nasty it's only me," he said smirking. All the more reason to commit first-degree murder I thought bitterly. "Jazz!", I protested growing angrier. I struggled more but was swept off my feet in a sudden move sliding across the ice in a circular direction. He swung his body his frame backing me into the wall his nose inches from mine. The thud of my body echoed the force knocked my breathe a gasp short as my back hit the brick. Jazz's eyes pierced mine I looked away afraid he'd see beyond my annoyance. I could feel the hurt beginning to throb the heartache I loathe so much within me stirring and boiling. *Get a grip.* "Rue", he purred smiling. "Why must you be so cruel?" he snickered as he said this. "Get off Jazz you know technically this is considered stalking right?" I said curtly. He stopped still looking into my eyes thoughtfully almost. a moment passed as a smile spread. He laughed not moving an inch. "Don't flatter yourself I'm not stalking you I happen to be heading this way." I rolled my eyes. Yeah right I thought to myself. With a perfect lack of interest in my tone I'd practiced over and over for situations exactly like this I said "Have fun with that," and with a smile found leverage and ripped myself abruptly from his grasp stalking off into the snow. I did not however leave without returning a blow with a sharp knee to the groin he stopped over groaning. "Don't you want to know where I'm going?" he said looking up at me his mouth hanging open like a cod as he winced. His voice was somewhat breathy and something in his tone made me hesitate as though he were on the verge of laughing which didn't quite fit his current state. I watched as he stood up straighter now. I laughed. "Why should I care?" with a flick of my hair and a snap of my collar I treaded the icy terrain. I looked to see we were a few feet from the school entrance. Art is the only comfort I seem to have these days.

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When I arrived to the art room my best friend in the whole world was waiting for me. "Hey Allie what's up?" Allie jumped from her chair paintbrush still in hand. Blue droplets fell to the floor as she flung her arms around me in a rib crushing hug. The paint splattered the walls. "Oh rue I'm so happy to see you!!!" she cried. "uhh Rue?" I said looking on in horror. "huh?" she looked up doe eyed. She looked around her "Oh, hmm.." she said. The paint had gone everywhere!! I looked at what else it had splattered. Droplets glittered the floor, and the stool as well as my boots but there was something else... Our Instructors painting for the gallery. We both tilted our heads with our hands on our chins. "I don't know I think I like it better that way its rather posh isn't it?" she laughed. I looked at her a moment. I smiled. "I don't know never figured her to be a blue person." I replied. The scene was dark on a starry night and the blue almost looked like rain drops...almost. Allie had always been very outside of the box. I examined her appearance. Allie was beautiful she had long wavy brunette hair framing her face in what almost looked like curls. Though these waves were not like ordinary hair. These twisted about themselves in and out in the craziest of patterns. To most her hair would be unmanageable to her it was a master piece she wore quite well. Looking at it one would assume half way through the genepool she went from curly to perm. Today her head was adorned with a buret and a clip covered in pearls. This was followed by pale tan skinnies with a beige and white sweater. The sleeves were three quarters. Allie's style always reminded me of a very down to earth and classy sort of thing but she always managed to look like an angel. Her earring were silver leaves. "Rue! You're alive I saw you talking with the asshole this morning." She blurted she always one to get to the point. I paused and shuddered. "When did you see that?" I said casually. "Uh duh coming back with coffee from the second floor," she said in a matter of fact tone. I laughed we were both a bit of coffee junkies then again I suppose its one of the burdens of being an artist. In the morning Allie bless her soul always brings me a vanilla cappuccino with one dollop of caramel. Which I spied on the table. She looked me over however my eyes were glued to the floor. Now was not a moment of which my mind was occupied with my need for caffeine. Rather my mind had Jazz tap dancing about it falling off of great cliffs. "You're not going back with him are you!?" She said eyeing me suspiciously crazy as ever good old Allie. I examined her face lost in thought. I met Allie my first day here after moving into town with my "parents" (fake vampires posing as my family) we both took visual arts and were put together for a class project. By the time the gallery opened our art was so great we got hired to paint for a charity over time we became friends. My head felt in a haze when I realized a hand snapping in front of me. "Hello earth to Rue you in there buddy?" My gaze startled back to Allie. "Yeah I'm here sorry kind of spacey." I blushed lightly. Her mouth dropped. "Oh my god you are dating him!!!!!!" Wait what she was "Oh god no! Of course I'm never going back to that garbage!" I said waving my arms. I followed it up with a catholic cross. Allie was of course referring to my former morning attacker Jazz also known as Jasper. For a long time I had been addicted to Jasper like a drug. It all started at a bar I had gone with a few friends and there he was with his friends he was so beautiful being an art student my hands were itching for a piece of paper I had to draw him.

Most stayed blissfully unaware but not this time as fate would have it he looked up. He held my gaze for a moment. Please stay where you are I prayed silently. But he sauntered over anyway and confiscated my beloved napkin that had so humbly offered itself. He was so flattered by my sketch he brought me over to meet his friends twisting my fingers with his. I didn't fail to notice he didn't let go of my hand once we'd gotten there I laughed all that night. I remember feeling lucky to have someone like Jazz paying attention to me. I hadn't had much experience with love yet. I was new and everything to me was exciting. I used to go around town with him like a love struck puppy in awe of his every move. I'll give Jazz credit he was very romantic long walks at night and dances by the lake but mostly Jazz was about sexual prowess. I

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remembered our first night when I admitted it was my first.

“I’ve never really done this before,” I said nervously.

“So you’re my personal little angel huh?” he said.

He layed me down I remember the way it felt the weight of him.. I shuddered to think I’d given him something so precious and he turned out to be...well him. I shook away the thought as the pain ebbed a bit. That wasn’t the end of the story we went to many a party after. Then came the night he asked me to be his...I’d been so happy we’d gotten in the car after a long night of dancing and I remember relaxing stroking his hand on the wheel!..but- reminisce was not to be my focus at the moment.

Allie sighed a sigh of relief. “Ah good I was getting worried,” She said smiling. We both laughed and set up our easels. “I hear there’s a *young* new model today,” Allie said with a smile. She put emphasis on young because there was our least favorite model Mr. Willickers a wrinkly old man. I took visual portraits and we were covering a newd model section and Mr. Willickers was downright gagging. Though I admit he did wonders for shading practice. We both giggled. “Yeah maybe he’ll be some sexy prince with a twin brother to sweep us off our feet,” I added. Allie laughed. “Yes I can see it now he’ll be some British hottie,” Allie’s eyes were wide and sparkling. “British?” I said. Allie laughed. “Come on Ruah we live in London we have the hottest men on earth here why not? Would you like a scone dear?” she said in a seductive British accent. “Why yes,” I said winking. We both collapsed in laughter. “Girls!! Get a hold of yourselves the model is about to enter ready your pencils.” I turned to Ms. Burns the poor woman was great at art but was the shape of a sphere squished a little too flat she was always very strict. Her short orange hair did not accent her um...Neckline. But my thoughts and laughter were short lived as I turned to see my worst nightmare. The moments dragged by slowly as my eyes fell upon him. Jazz stepped out in a white robe grinning slyly. “Oh. MY GOD!” Allie exclaimed. “That asshole what is he thinking?!” she turned to me for an answer. Her eyes were wide and I could see the questions racing around her brain but I couldn’t focus on her for very long I had some questions of my own. Allie was right what was he thinking? It took me a moment before I realized Allie was still awaiting an answer. “It’s his idea of a romantic gesture I guess.” I said feigning disinterest like I could care less. Allie snorted and rolled her eyes. “Yeah nothing says I love you like flashing your junk to your lover.” I giggled at that. “Mr. Langston you may remove your robe,” Ms. Burns said. Jazz stared right at me as he casually shrugged off his robe his muscles taut and refined. It didn’t phase me it wasn’t the first time I’d drawn him nude I lay many a night pouring over my sketch pad. A gasp echoed from several girls. I heard whispers surround the room. “Isn’t that Rue’s boyfriend?” More whispers. “I don’t know I think they broke up,” a guy cuts in. “Sure doesn’t look like it.” I could feel his eyes cutting into me. I tried to pick up my pencil but my nerves made me fumble as the pencil clattered to the floor. I bent to pick it up. “Nice,” Jazz whispered. “Shut up,” I hissed. Hurrying to my seat I pointedly placed my bottom on my chair. I could still feel his eyes but I was almost in the zone I stopped focusing on him and

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remained focused on the page avoiding his eyes completely and the smirk I knew was waiting for me with every glance.

I then noticed the lack of scratching pencils. Were they just staring at him? Some girls and a couple guys looked on motionless the silence was discomfoting. Eventually the room filled with the scratch of pencil and paper and all was well. "One minute poses please," said Ms. Burns with a great deal of authority. He struck his first pose leaning with his hip to the left his muscles bulging. Jazz was a terrific specimen to draw though I hate to admit it. Seconds dragged by like hours. Minutes dragged by like years. Hours dragged on like eternity and I prayed for god to speed up time as quickly as possible so I could get far away from this art lesson that I most certainly didn't want to learn at the moment. Mr. Willickers please come back I prayed silently under my breathe. Finally through the silence the bell rang for dismissal as I gather my small canvas bag once again pressing snugly into my shoulder. I prayed he wouldn't realize he could leave the podium. *Stay where you are* I said willing him to remain far away from me. But he sauntered over anyway smiling.

"Cocky much?" Allie spat glaring.

"You wish," he said grinning sickly.

Allie's eyes grew wide and she looked down grumbling. Allie hated having nothing to say she was queen of the snapbacks anytime she was beaten was simply unacceptable and in her eyes you were satan. I could feel lingering eyes on me as everyone watched. Everyone was slowly unpacking but still within earshot casually pacing back and forth seeming to have no purpose for doing it.

"What did you think of my performance babe?" He smiled wider grabbing my chin lifting my face to his with that look he thought was so irresistible.

"I'm not your babe and if you don't mind I have some place to be." I huffed. I shoved his hand away without a second glance.

He mocked being shot and stumbled back. I was proud of myself it was the first time I didn't feel as much sadness or the rush of hope I'd grown to know so well. "Come on I said I was sorry," he said. I halted in my tracks. "Sorry doesn't cut it," I hissed. I continued to walk and make a dramatic exit. However it appears I'm not very good at making dramatic exits because I didn't leave without almost tripping on the conveniently invisible leprechaun that had obviously been standing in my way. Today was a good day.

Latte Café

"Coffee?" Allie said skipping happily towards me down the hall. We were out of class by now and the day had been long. "You have to ask?" I said smiling.

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“So why do you think he came to the school today? It’s weird right?” Allie said.

“I have no idea and I don’t want to know or care,” I said with a huff hoping she’d let it go.

“But you do care,” she said her tone mellow and pitying.

“Ugh, don’t make me think about it,” I said.

She was right it was weird. I thought back to the incident it had been shortly after Jazz had landed his new night job running and scaring people silly right out of their wallets. His glamour was almost like a shield from the world. When I was by his side nothing could touch me the world was right and fresh and new colors danced in front of my eyes. I’d always felt so comfortable in that warm pocket by Jazz’s side little did I know that when I was not there to occupy that spot another girl was. One particular night upon going to his trailer I was oh so excited about our anniversary coming up I just had to see him before his shift. I saw boots at the door but they weren’t jazzes they looked small like ones a woman might wear. I stepped into the trailer to be greeted by a sight. When Jazz saw me he didn’t jump up he didn’t deny anything he just looked at me and smiled. “Rue,” he purred. He just motioned me over like he hadn’t just been kissing that girl on his lap who had some serious caterpillar eyebrows. I could feel the tears but I didn’t say anything yet it was quiet. Disbelief crowded my brain as it processed what it saw. How do you react to something like that? What do you say? Or a better question yet what is there TO say? I felt my stomach drop, I shut down but instead of shriveling up it was like someone had pressed my power button. I felt a surge of heat starting in my fingertips spreading ever so slowly I took a small breath. And then.... I EXPLODED. “How could you!?! You dick! What the hell!?” I remember strings of profanity coming out of my mouth I didn’t even know *existed*. Furniture flew to heights it had never gone before. I believe I. That moment I could’ve flung Jazz to the moon in rage as the girl fled the trailer. I believe it’s safe to say he kept his distance after that. Soon after he came back around apologizing. At first it was more of a cordial attitude towards me. But later it was as though he was desperate to get me back and he was never the desperate type. Maybe he was trying to prove something to himself. I didn’t get it he could have his pick of any girl...or could he? Perhaps I was what he wanted to prove to himself that I was still hanging onto his every word and I refusing him hurt his ego. I smiled at the thought his ego could use a couple of hits. Or more like a nuclear bomb I shook away the image of his limbs exploding from my head. As Allie and I entered the café, the bell overhead rang softly announcing our arrival. The café was always rather small but it was the best it was decorated how you might decorate a modern 21st century tomb that is if tombs these days came acquitted with coffee shops, magazines and dreary poetry. The walls and decor were accented with stainless steel appliances and fancy stone walls, triangle light fixtures over an elegant bar lining the front window. There were a lot of hipsters here getting away from the mainstream which meant lots of tea and low fat lattes but that didn’t make it any less appealing. I stood out

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among the high class girls who usually came there. I ordered an iced vanilla latte and waited in our usual corner booth. When the waitress arrived she was all smiles handing us our coffee she mustâ ve been trying really hard. Though this place was crowded Iâ m guessing it didnâ t tip well. It used to be the place was never crowded. But after an expose in the newspaper that all changed. We handed her a seven dollar tip and turned our attention to small talk.

â So what are you doing for the Snowflake festival!?â Allie asked. The Snowflake festival was a ridiculous tradition the town held once a year in January to raise money for spring events. The main focus was a giant ball in the central square filled with drunken men and wild girls. The men dressed as jesters and the ladies in skirts much too short for their own mothers and just enough to keep their grandmothers from having a heart attack. No one seemed to understand the particular ladies tradition because after all it was winter. But none the less sugar plum fairies and frost princesses dance and pranced about the square in a delightful drunken stupor. If such a thing were possible that is. Then there were the children sledding down blocked off streets led by faithful dogs. The dogs being tied to worn rope found here and there mended by strong twine. Back in the day me and Allie would both adorn bright white make up accented blue and silver eye shadows making elaborate costumes people would ooh and ahh over. Silver tipped frosted wings and mesh skirts and tights. We would each find a guy by the end of the night and part on some romantic adventure daring to tread the cold and icy terrain about the city. This had been our tradition for the past five years.

â Honestly I donâ t know I mean is it really our thing anymore?â I said.

â Of course it is! Itâ s the biggest party of the year!â Allie said mouth agape.

â Well yeah but I think weâ re getting a bit old for beer pong and sledding in central square,â I laughed.

Allie giggled. â Youâ re never too old for beer pong but, point taken but what else are we going to do? I certainly donâ t want to be alone for the holiday.â

â There must be something else,â I said.

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“Not really not many parties here are worth going to around this season.” Allie said matter of factly. That was true but hmm.what if...

“How about throwing our own party?” I said smiling devilishly.

“You mean a campus party!?” Allie exclaimed. “Of course we’d be the new hit for the season and out do Melanis party by a mile.” I said poised. “That would be...so great! wow!”

“Of course it would we’ll invite our entire class to my flat since I got upgraded,” I said.

“Well we’re gonna need lots of food,” Allie said. “And desert,” I winked.

“And I’ve got it covered,” I said.

“Cream puffs and ice cream with tarts!” we said in unison getting some looks from other people around us. We both laughed and turned our attention to our coffees that were getting cold.

“Rue when did you become such a rebel?” she said teasingly.

“Baby I was born this way,” I cooed rolling my shoulder flipping my hair in my face.

This resulted in another fit of hysterical laughter.

“Yeah okay watch it tiger I don’t want you out and about having fun without me,” she said teasingly.

“Never dream of it.” I said closing my eyes briefly returning with a smile.

That’s when I lifted my cup to find a rather interesting slip of paper. The paper itself was nothing special thin and rigid. It was in a typewriter kind of font that I would recognize anywhere. The paper read:

[Hey doll, alacazam let’s scam.]

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The paper flashed into a pile of smoke and fire disappearing creating small ashes on my plate. This escaped the eyes of Allie as she chattered on. I just rolled my eyes *show off*. I brushed the ashes into the napkin on my lap nonchalantly looking about the room. He was always one for the theatrics. "Hey Allie I have some stuff to do around town today can we meet up later?" I asked smiling. Allie eyed me suspiciously. "You always have to go at the most random of times," then she smiled. "Do you have like a secret boyfriend or something?" *something like that*. I thought to myself. "No, Iâ€™m meeting some vampire hottie," I said sarcastically. Sarcasm was a way to tell the truth and have people think youâ€™re lying. When I said this Allie laughed. "Busted!" she said. "You are totally telling me all about him tomorrow!" Allie said. "Make sure to call me later about the plans for this party you wild thing you." I said with a wink. "Haha okay." With that I hugged Allie goodbye.

As I exited onto the sidewalk I looked for any sign of him. Then it hit me exactly where he was.

Alastair

She shouldâ€™ve been here by now oh where could that girl be? I paced the floor the room smelled of dead skin. There was a lone bed against the cheap yellow plaster of the hotel walls. The headboard was a dark mahogany sort of wood. The sheets were cotton, my thoughts were soiled with the images of murders and dead bodies that had lain there most likely in the past. I pictured left over blood unwashed from the sheets. I could see business men leaving abruptly from their rooms bearing their mistresses and men. I imagined family and young girls bouncing about a lot of things can happen in a hotel room. Things one wouldn't really think about. There is a small scratch on the wall above the left handside of the atrocious headboard. It indicates some sort of struggle a fight even. A small shard of glass untouched in the carpet looking to be from a bottle of alcohol. In the carpet there are countless shadings from wine spills and cigarette burns. When you open the dresser drawers they smell like gunpowder, smoke and cedar. In the drawer on the top of the nightstand there is a pad of paper and a pen. Most of the paper is missing. The T.V has exactly six channels five of them are porn one of them is news. Beneath the room you could hear the shuffle of ice from the cafe and the blending of drinks. Outside is the ding of the elevator. But the walls are most interesting to me the walls bear the signs of life other than your own if I had one that is. I hold my breathe for seven minutes I count each and every second. Through the wall now I can hear a particular couple going about their activities. I could hear the heartbeats thrumming through the walls enough noise to make any ordinary man go mad. Lucky for me I'm not an ordinary man. The mans low muffled voice is followed by shrill sighs of a female. I hear the blood rush to her face the thud of shoes on the floor. An intimate moment passes before the soft creak of the bed begins it is at this point I turn up the news only interrupted by a few loud shrills from the miss here and there over the volume of the weather. Humans. I look down in disgust at the stained carpet taking another long drag on my cigarette. I drop the flaming morsel to the ground crushing it with my shoe where I then reside in a soft armchair. It wasn't ordinary for her to take this long what could she possibly doing in her human life that could be more important than obeying orders? How I did love Rue her graces and her body. I let my mind wander over her face. I could hear her laugh as she danced in my mind but my temporary peace is interrupted by a knock. I fling my hand behind me as the door clicks open. "Come in, its about time where have you been?" I said tiredly. "Alastair it's good to see you." rasped a familiar voice. I froze. Finally I turned around. "What on earth are you doing here?" I said in disbelief at the sight before me. His name is Laurel the scum of

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the vampire realm a troublemaker, a bounty hunter, and an apprentice of the royal secret order. "Now Alastair you know very well what I'm doing here," he said with a sickly grin. "Honestly," I snorted. Laurels grin grew as he looked around. "We'll I have to say I'm impressed I don't know how you do it," he said with a sigh. "Do what?" I said unmoving. "Stand so close to these meat bags the worst of scum." I laughed. "That's pretty funny coming from you Laurel," I shot. "Oh now no need to be nasty Alastair we're all friends or at least that's what the board would like to believe." "The board is pompous ill have nothing to do with the royalty of the underground." "Ah

yes you're still her precious little guard dog, as a matter of fact where is Rue?" I said nothing. "It's a nice place you've got here Alastair you were always very classy," he snickered. "don't tell me his royal higned ass has come here just to insult me," I said. "I'd watch your manners, Haggard is not happy Alastair. The under world has gone into overtime and beelzebub the doltard bloke is beyond of any help." i rolled my eyes. "Why do the matters of the almighty Satan concern me?" I said. "Honestly let's skip the formalities." He said impatiently. "Oh these were formalities well by all means how are you?" I said mockingly. "Damned it Alastair! Dont you see what's happening? It's starting things has become more intense and heaven is building its armies." "She's not ready Laurel!" I exclaimed. Laurel laughed. "Alastair you can't postpone it forever it's almost time the six moons of Zarthon will be in alignment in six months. When will you start to prepare her?" He said. "Rue is not ready she has no idea who she is yet and the signs haven't started appearing without her magic the circle won't accept her we're not even sure how strong her demigod half might be. She might never gain control of her powers it could throw all of hell into chaos for gods sake!" I said. "Gods sake? Funny words coming from a demon. Look you know what you have to do you are her destined partner if you don't join your souls I'll take her myself to be soul mates for all time," he said laughing. "You won't take her from me Laurel," I said. "Now Alastair don't tell me your attachéd your job is to be her master and use her power to wield the elements nothing more. Tell me Alastair does she still think she's fighting for the good side that this magic of hers is meant to help people? Does she still think she's a guardian?" He said. "No, I haven't-" "Ah she does have SOME powers!" He exclaimed. "Yes but they are only the beginning, she can summon rain and heal with occasional thought processing." "With signs like that no doubt shell be powerful," he said. I glared. "Come now alastair most of us would kill to be in your shoes being chosen after all." I growled. "I didnt askfor this!!" he laughed. "Of course you didnt! neithier did I but at this rate i might just get my wish even she cant hide her lovely scent," "You wouldnt dare!! not so close especially with the board!" i said. he paused everything was very still for a moment. "Youre right I wouldnt ...not right now but soon when you least expect it the fact is Alastair you dont have what it takes to be head of the board, just like your father!" i pounced on him flipping the table as i pinned him to the wall. "dont ever speak of my father again" he just smiled "You know what happens when you fall in love." I snorted. "Surely you can't be so ignorant she's not like the rest of them and you know it," I spouted. "Nonsense the uprising is just a legend a prophecy told by a crazy old demon she's just another one of-" I stopped him. "Don't say it!!! She's not one of Satans whores." Laurel stood for a moment poised. "This is going to be so much fun stealing her away from you, so passionate." He mocked. "You're in no position.." He interrupted. "The deal Alastair! Being demons we are the kings of deals and contracts. If you don't fulfill your part I am next in line and I'll be sure you're present to watch," he said grinning wider now. "See you around dearest Alastair," disappearing slowly. I tried to tighten my grasp to no avail as he fled. "Coward" I spat. The tv drilled in the background...She probably went back to the flat.

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Rue

The Tram rumbled loudly through the station. The ground shook as it growled hungry for new passengers. People crossed me left and right unaware I existed sometimes I entertain the idea of walking into a large crowd and disappearing just going with the flow but I didn't consider that now. Right now I was focused on finding him the silver turnstiles gleamed in the white light of the station. Once I'd reached the booth I happily grabbed the thin paper called a pass and watched the greedy turnstile devour it and spit it back out mangled slightly from its venture I slipped the pass into my pocket. The people surrounded me as I searched for an empty seat once seated I let my gaze drift over the passing track of the tram and closed my eyes.

When I reached my stop I was rather drowsy it took me a moment to collect my thoughts exiting the tram with a yawn. Finally after several blocks I reach my flat top floor with a view out over the city. I was proud of it the lights and buildings stretched for miles and was a great inspiration for when I was working. I jingled the keys into the lock. "Hey babe," said a male voice. "And what brings you to my flat Alastair," I didn't bother to hesitate I looked to see him stretched out over my bed/futon. "I called you, you never came." "Sorry I got held up with Allie I hoped you'd be here." "We'll you found me. You need to keep better track of time I'm relieved you're safe." "Safe?" I said the word relieved sent a little jolt through me. He smirked piercing me with his gaze. Alastair was a vampire but not like most vampires he was a micah an immortal vampire some vampires that are half human and vampire age while others are micah or immortal. Though for a supposedly wise being he was rather immature for his age which was about 1,000 years. I'd known Alastair my whole life he'd been my protector since I was a little girl. I was a rare vampire/human mix and apparently at risk there was only one problem with Alastair which wasn't really a problem at all he was hot, like really hot. Like Super ultra mega hot. And he knew it. Alastair flashed and hugged me from behind. I shuddered and he laughed. "Okay little one now down to business we have a problem" his voice got serious. I stopped Alastair didn't joke about these sort of things. "What kind of problem?" I said nervously. "A territorial problem some other vamps are coming into our territory." I paused that explained why he was here but we'd had instances before with others. "What was the big deal?" "Yeah, so?" I said. "They're hunting here and they don't look like amateurs." "For those who don't know there are several levels of vampire four to be exact. Level one is the royalty vampires. Level two are the aristocrats. Call us old fashioned but we have the old sort of types of class. Next is level 3 which are average vampires. Finally level four are the lost we call them this because its when a vamp totally loses his marbles and his quest for blood leads to insanity and conspicuous murder. They are often criminals its a curse actually and you can be infected by others of the kind the insanity spreads to the brain and you lose all memory, conscious and rational sense. Basically these vampires become beasts who are hungry for power. I am a level 1.5 because I'm a hybrid I have special powers that allow me to heal, I have insane senses that is when I call upon them as well as other abilities even royal vampires don't have. The reason we are above royalty is because we are assigned to protect them as well a levels 2 I haven't grown into my position yet. We can all choose whether to be guardians or not. It's called the passing once we reach our full potential an energy called strastica chooses our fate some of us become guardians others turn human and lose our memory of ever being a hybrid. "What does that mean? If they're not amateurs?" I said. "It means they have a goal and they have had practice these killings look like the work of a level 2 hunter," he said gazing at me. "A level two hunter...hunters are only hired to do one thing, that's kill hybrids like me. Hunters are half vamps and half humans who sell their soul for immortality but it only becomes permanent if they have the blood of a certain number of hybrids their levels drop because of

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their so called profession theyâre often assassins hired by royalty and aristocrats.â Are you sure?â I said. Alastair nodded. This was bad...very bad.

â So whatâs our next step?â I said curiously.

Alastair stalked across the room god he was beautiful. Though the main code for vampires was to blend in Alastair had a distinct sense of style. He wore a long leather jacket like in a cheesy 50âs movie, a white t-shirt and often faded or ripped jeans. Itâs not that he was particularly noticeable he was just ...well distinct. His long dark hair was cut into layers his bangs fell just above his eyes giving him an intense expression. You couldnât really see his eyebrows so his expression was stuck in a rather seductive expression of bemusement. â We lay low for awhile,â he said matter of factly as though he was speaking to a child. "I thought the point was totals action." He sighed. "Yes but youâre not ready for this your powers haven't kicked in yet.â â I have some!â I whined. â You never teach me anything!â I whined. I Knew I was being childish but I couldnât help it. My expression froze. "What if they never come in?" I said. "They will."he said not looking at me. â Ok so hiding, For how long? Allies recital is tomorrow,â I protested. â Thatâs not my problem you know the rules!â He said. â Thatâs not fair,â I rebutted. â Well lifeâs not fair ya know youâre not exactly a walk in the park to baby sit itâs not easy following around a lively tornado like you,â He said splittingly. Alastair was known for a quick temper. Babysitting who does he think he is? Iâm in college thatâs far from a child then again he *is* a thousand years old. â Iâm not a baby anymore!â I said protestingly. He snorted. â Humans youâre all the same,â he said. â Iâm not a full human and you know it!â â Couldâve fooled me! Who do you think you are fooling waltzing around with this nonsense in your head. Eventually youâre gonna grow to be a guardian all your little blood bag friends will be off living their lives. Theyâll all die and youâll still be alive its unnecessary. Youâre not like them Rue you canât live a normal life like they can this is your destiny!â he sighed. â This is how things are Rue the more you ignore your fate the harder itâs going to be! It still eludes me why you play along with this-this fantasy!,â he spat the word. â and going to college and parties youâre not *like* them Rue you never will be.â I stood motionless. He knew how I felt about mentioning destiny. I didnât want this. Not really anyway. I didnât say a word ...what could I say? That he was wrong? No. He was right ...I just didnât want him to be. "You didnât mean that," I whispered. He groaned. "I played along long enough when you were little Rue but youâre not little anymore, I'm sorry." â There could still be a chance I won't turn,â I said quietly.â If that were true you wouldnât have any powers at all,â Alastair laid a hand on my shoulder and looked at me for a moment I saw care in his eyes. Then his face hardened again but not before he wrapped me up in a hug. I drew in his scent as he did. I didnât melt like I usually did strangely rather than happiness all I felt was a sense of impending doom... He strode away and closed the door I sat. then I sketched and sketched until I passed out.

Alastair.

When I arrived at her flat all was quiet. The air was filled with the light scent of jasmine. I looked over her pieces and sketches. sheâbeen sketching for hours her face lay on a large sketch pad tightly clutching a pencil. It seemed to be a night landscape. The dark colors echoed in shades and shadows. It was a cliff with a lone wolf the moon hung low above. Beneath Were the blackest of flames and a long stretch of woods. Though morbid it still had an elegance to it, the next was a roses with endless petals drawing you in with the

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brightest of colors. I took the pad and supplies and put them on her desk against the wall which shone a pale blue in the dark. A lamp illuminated a large calendar. I looked around. Art work littered the flat. Little nooks and crannies filled with pencils, giant papers and canvases. Everything out in the open showing a chaotic but beautiful mess. A coat stand by the door adorned in dark burettes and leather jackets, boots littered the floor of her closet. The hardwood was scuffed from wild stumbles and sweeping steps almost like dancing, the kitchen had dark granite, different colors of blue tile back splash, a breakfast bar and stainless steel. Wild prints jumped out at you from pillows and cups everything so out in the open, But despite what it might seem Rue had her secrets ones not meant for the eyes of others. I found these a while ago pacing her apartment. I knew the location of all her "secrets" sketches, letters, pictures. I was surprised to see a lot of me staring back at myself. Love was not unheard of between guard and trainee there was certainly no rule against it but...we weren't really training for guardians. Days like these are the ones I want to tell her...but what can I say? Hey you're doomed? Laurel just waiting to pounce on her I've never seen such an unnatural lust for power and that says something. It certainly did not befit him. Then to add to my problems this hunter...I thought this hunter was bad news he had to be after Rue. Signs hadn't been seen as of yet but it had only been a day. Anger rose as I thought of the vile process of harvesting her soul, her beautiful shining demonic soul. I sighed it didn't matter right now I have a job to do. I looked at her sleeping beside me I looked at her thighs protruding from beneath the too big cotton white shirt. Her sky blue underwear poked out the bottom making a crescent. While wrestling in her sleep the top button had come undone exposing her chest. I averted my eyes but was drawn back to her thighs. I brushed her thigh lightly seeing her shudder. I looked at her smiling face and I couldn't help but smile back. I pushed her hair out of her face gleaming strewn across the pillow. Sleep my princess. "Alastair" she murmured. Wondering was she awake? No she was sound asleep. Rue shifted her body tucking beneath my right arm her head thudded on my chest. I lay surprised for a moment feeling the warmth of her cheek against my chest. I didn't object I simply sat, it's nice I thought to myself. The last thing I saw was her tiny hands clutching the covers thrown aside.

When morning came the sun peaked through the window setting an orange glow across the black granite counter tops and stainless steel even in her sleep she seemed to complete a perfect piece of art. I got up and padded into the kitchen. I smiled and enjoyed the sizzling of a pan. Though beings like me weren't meant to enjoy sensation there are exceptions for a few of us. For most its sex but I myself with that included enjoy the simpler amenities. I'm not entirely blind to the attraction Rue has to this place I admit it has its perks. I cast one more glance back at her feeling her thoughts stir. As Powers grow our connection grows stronger. I can always feel how she's feeling. It makes me uneasy because the stronger it becomes the closer her powers come. One day it will be time. My mind grimaced at the thought of when she discovered Jazz cheating on her. It was like someone had shredded my very being excruciating I could only imagine what Rue must have felt. At first I thought she was in trouble until I found her at an ice cream shop. The only thing she was in danger of was brainfreeze. Double chocolate and vanilla bean her favorite. She just sat quietly eating sad and then she looked up and her face lit up all traces disappeared as she waved me over and told me about it. She'd been so comfortable. But then there were happy ones to be flying as high as the sun. The feeling she got when she saw something beautiful was invigorating like a jolt of adrenaline and ecstasy. It made me hot with a temper every time I felt her in love, I'm not sure why but I felt betrayed. Lust was my favorite it was so warm but fervent I hated to admit it but I've had my own moments seeing Rue. Then there was her insatiable appetite her want for food even made me hungry and I don't eat, at last not often. For a while I found emotions to be an inconvenience now I find them...enjoyable maybe being human isn't so bad after all.

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Rue.

As I woke up the smell of food reached my nose. I perked up on my bed to see Alastair bent over my stove. Alastair's back was to me as I examined his butt. As ashamed as I was it was incredibly entertaining to watch the way it moved I didn't do this much anymore. Over time vampires like Alastair can gain powers and from the way he acts sometimes I think he can read my mind. I blushed as I heard him chuckle. I dove under the covers. After a minute of giggling I peeked out at my flat. My kitchen was an open kitchen with a breakfast bar my bed was opposite the kitchen in one big open space. To the left of my bed and the right of the door were all my canvases and drawings, sculptures like a museum. Paper origami birds hung from the ceiling standing out against the light blue walls. The floors were a honey oak color. To my right the entire wall is a window overlooking the town square with a patio. Below I could see people passing back and forth the cafe was busy. I simply shook myself awake. "Hmm vanilla or mocha?" Alastair said looking over his shoulder. Alastair of course was referring to my coffee he knew me that well. "Vanilla I said cheeks still flushed." When he brought the coffee his hand brushed up my thigh handing it to me sitting on the edge of the bed. A tingle rushed through me. I froze hearing him chuckle. "What?" I said. "Nothing," he continued to chuckle. I shrugged gripping a newspaper and my coffee to the patio wondering if I'd really fell asleep on Alastair's chest last night or whether I'd dreamed it.

"What's our first step?" I said munching on my breakfast. "Hm?" Alastair said staring at me. He seemed so happy his eyes were playful. He said nothing then looked a bit confused. "You know the hunter, what's our first step?" Alastair's face turned grim at the mention of the hunter. "Like I said we lay low," he growled. I nodded. Gee wonder what got into him. Once we finished breakfast Alastair decided we needed to find a nearby set up. "He'll be tracking your scent we'll find a hotel the trail won't be as strong but it has to be close so you don't become suspicious to your friends." I nodded it made sense. When we left the flat I grabbed my bags stuffed to the max. Alastair look at me. "What?" I said. "A girl's gotta travel in style right?" He rolled his eyes and I think he might have chuckled the sound was so light it could've been the breeze. Music from 20 blocks down carried lights notes to my ears, someone was crying another was laughing. That's the thing that sucks about super hearing you can't block out sounds you don't want to hear. I zipped up my black hoodie over my black belly top my black denim skirt gently brushed my thighs with each step. The punk belt in the skirt made the jacket look lumpy towa

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