

Avenging Trinity

By : **Bridget Shayde**

The twin princesses of Trinity, a vampire ruled kingdom, are evacuated early in the night when a fire breaks out within the castle. Having lost their parents in the flames, a servant of their parents' takes them to Bloodmist Academy. There, the princesses are free to study in the safety of a mysterious academy hidden in the mist of the mountains. Time seems to roll on smoothly until Dusk and Dawn find out about a group of fellow students eager to hand them over to the kingdom of Faelian, the kingdom that took out Trinity Castle.

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~~Prologue

No one could have foreseen such. It would have been impossible for them to. At least, that's what Dawn thought as she peered back to the waves of flame that engulfed Castle Trinity. Her heart beat rampantly in her chest, and she held back the raging waterfall of tears that threatened to overcome her.

Glancing towards her twin sister, Dusk could only burrow her fangs deeper inside of her bottom lip. Blood rose, but she continued to bravely hold her sister close while the man driving the carriage lashed against the horses to charge faster.

"They killed them!" Dawn screamed into her sister's leather jacket. "They killed them!" Dawn's claws sunk deeply into her sister's shoulder until they dug into her skin. Her eyes were crazed and turning from their usual vivid emerald orbs to a wicked black-green. Only the moonlight hitting her eyes could reveal the streaks of green that remained in her eyes.

With a gulp to hold back the tears, Dusk ran her fingers through her sister's hair. "I know, Dawn. I know." Her eyes moved to where the driver of the carriage kept glancing back at the twin princesses of Trinity. The man quickly averted his gaze once Dusk's black eyes made contact with his. "Turn around again, servant, and I'll behead you with your own claws," she threatened with a flash of her wickedly sharp fangs.

The man never turned back around throughout the remainder of the night. That nightâ the one spent comforting the strangled cries of her sister bawling into her jacket and searched for whatever safe haven might be revealed to keep them safe for the coming day was forever engraved into her mind. Never again would her sister scream into her jacket about the deaths of their parents. Never again would Dusk be so unable to fight off her enemies. Those beasts had just screwed with the wrong country and the wrong princess. She would seek out her vengeance.

Bloodmist Academy

Two emerald flames glared towards the gated mass of land called Bloodmist Academy. *A school*, she thought. *A stupid school is what is going to keep us safe from whatever group of creatures had laid fire upon the kingdom.* Dusk heaved her suitcase out from the black Escalade that one of the servants had managed to rescue from the fire and slammed the door shut before whipping around to face back to the ginormous gate keeping them out of the estate.

"It's very pretty," Dawn muttered in an attempt to soothe the fire that was her sister's rage. "At least, we won't be underground anymore." Dusk's innocent sister glanced at her from behind strands of hair that had fallen into her face.

Huffing, Dusk pulled out the handle to her suitcase before grumbling, "Whatever. I'd be happier under a rock than at some overrated, fancy pants school. Do you know how many freaking preppies are going to be in there? I bet not a single one of those manicured females could fight without some oversized dude helping 'em out. I bet our dorm overseer is going to be some Mani Pedi preppy too." She glowered at the woman walking towards them.

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Just as Dusk had guessed, the woman was a preppy-at least by Dusk's standards. High heels, a carmine colored dress, and long hair that hit right at the middle of her back. The woman's walk was a mix of sensual sway and authority embellished marching. Her hair swayed back and forth like some kind of taunting pendulum. Her eyes were feline and daunting to look directly into. One second she looked like a helpless damsel in distress then the next she looked like a tyrant ready to rip out somebody's throat.

"Dusk, you're a preppy too. You know? We are the princesses of Trinity. We're supposed to act that way," Dawn reminded her too knightly sister. When the woman opened up the gates and gave the girl's a threatening grin, Dawn put her shoulders back, head high, and eyes straight ahead. "Good gloaming, ma' am."

"Good gloaming indeed, Princess Dawn. I am headmaster Regina Fall, but please just call me Regina. Titles are too formal for us girls who are going to be spending most of their time together." The woman named Regina nodded politely towards Dusk who just rolled her big, green eyes.

Dusk examined the lady then replied, "Whatever, Gina. Just tell me where I'm supposed to go. Alright?" She snickered at the headmaster's appalled expression before stopping to lean on the handle of her suitcase. When the woman said nothing, Dusk tossed her index finger to the rising crescent moon. "Tick tock, Madame Miss. I don't have all night to get unpacked."

Adjusting her jacket with an irritated jerk, Regina hissed, "Follow me to the Dean's office. He will arrange your classes. I also would like to add that politeness is a virtue."

Dawn shook her head at her twin. Attempting to ease the wrath of the two women, she asked, "When will we get our uniforms, Regina? I used to hear all the time from our old servants that went to school here that they were very cute." She glanced back to Dusk who was gazing up in secluded awe at the vast amounts of stars in the sky.

Obviously, that changed the lady's mood for the better because she clasped her hands together and chimed, "Really? That's so splendid to hear since I designed each uniform for each grade. They're already in your room. Since you are freshman, you will get the cutest outfits in my opinion. I got the designs from some of my old uniforms I used to wear when I was an accountant for your father at the castle."

Breaking in, Dusk snapped, "*You* used to work for *my* dad? There's no way he would have hired such a hussy to do his accounting work for him." Dusk made a gesture to the length of Regina's dress and height of her heels.

Back in a huff, Regina grated, "You will learn to hold your tongue, young lady. There are punishments for loud mouths like you."

"Come on, everybody. Calm down," Dawn eased. "There's no reason for your outbursts, Dusk. I know that you're stressed out. I am too, but you really shouldn't take it out on our headmaster." She grabbed a hold of her sister's wrist only to have it wrenched free from her grasp. Shocked, Dawn only stared as Dusk grabbed her suitcase so tightly that her strength broke the handle. She watched as her sister stormed off in a flurry of shadows just like their father did whenever he was irritated. "Duskâ!" Dawn muttered whenever the wind that had come off her sister's escape stopped blowing.

Leaning her chin on top of her scrunched up legs, Dusk gazed up towards the sky. It was heavy. Stars decorated it like holes punched into a backlit canopy. The moon hung high as if it were held up by an invisible string. She hadn't seen skies like this sinceâ the fire.

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A glossy tear dripped down the side of her face. They weren't coming back-not now, not ever. It was just her and Dawn now. Queen Ilaria and King Daxton, mom and dad, were gone. She didn't want them to be gone. She wanted them back. There wasn't anything she wanted more in the world.

If only she knew who had killed themâ If only the guards would come back with evidenceâ She buried her head against her knees. What was she going to do? She already knew what her parents would want her to do, but that was just so difficult right now. They'd want her to stand up tall and get over it, continue life as if they'd just been sent away on a very long trip.

She didn't know if she could do it. That was her mom and dad. Dad had always called her strong, but she felt that, looking at her now, he'd be so terribly disappointed in her. More tears streamed down from her green eyes as she sat on top of the roof of a gazebo.

Her heart felt about ready to burst. The heavy burden of mourning weighed itself down upon her shoulders like the talons of a siren into her prey. If anyone saw her like this, she would be so embarrassed. No one had ever seen her cry, not her father, not her mother, not the servants, not the guards, and not even her sister whom she shared everything with.

Dusk angrily wiped the tear trails away from her face and curled up impossibly tighter. What was Dawn doing right now? She knew better than to look for Dusk when she was upset like this. She was probably gathering up her stuff along with Dusk's and getting it unpacked into one of the dorms. Where were the dorms anyway?

Dusk had no clue. She wasn't exactly too caring about it right now anyways. Right now, she felt best on her own. She'd find her way back to the dorms sometime before the sun rose.

With her arms wrapped around her blue jean sheathed legs, she peered down at the groups of people walking throughout the campus. Girls wore their breed's color in different style outfits. Boys wore a black suit with hints of whatever color their specialty was inside of it. On each person's upper right arm were their grade and the name of their portion of one of the three houses that made up Bloodmist Academy.

Trinity was the flag of Trinity, a triangular flag divided into thirds of different colors. Red stood for the colony of Chiropteran vampires in the north. Blue stood for the colony of Dracos to the south. Yellow was for the Saurian vampires to the west. Being a princess of Trinity meant that Dusk would proudly wear the flag on her right arm, but being a Draco meant that she-in formal dress-would wear blue to distinguish her breed.

Faelian was a depiction of a wolf howling up at a full moon. They only had two colors for each different type of wolf and didn't rule a kingdom. They ruled a territory. Their colors were white and black. White stood for a Turned wolf whereas black stood for a born wolf, lycanthrope.

Nyx was a grouping of witches. There were so many different kinds of witches here that, it seemed, they all had to share the same symbol. That symbol was of the elements divided by their color. If any of the witches were wearing a certain color, it was cerulean for water, baby blue for air, green for earth, crimson for fire, white for light, or black for darkness.

A bell rang, and Dusk watched as even more students poured from the different buildings that built up the Bloodmist Academy. A few of them noticed her sitting alone on the roof of the gazebo, but most made little note of her. They continued about their business, chatting happily amongst the masses of their friends.

It was odd. Dusk wasn't used to seeing different species interact with one another. Only Draco vampires stayed at the castle, and they had very few visitors from the north and west. The Chiropteran vampires looked highly similar to the Draco and Saurian vampires that walked around. The only reason that Dusk knew what

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they were was because of the trademark shoulder blades that they all had.

Chiropterans had shoulder blades that stuck out further by just the slightest margin as opposed to that of other versions of vampires. The Saurian vampires tended to be just the least bit friendlier than the more reclusive Chiropterans and Dracos. They were more commonly found in politics and business giving them a much more social life despite their ruthless feeding habits.

Most of King Daxton's secretaries and political adversaries had been Saurian bred whereas his soldiers were of the Chiropteran breed. Everyone else had been Draco. That was why Dusk and Dawn socialized with them more so than the others.

It made Dusk even more nervous to go to a school. She had had very little interaction with creatures from her own species and absolutely none with the children of those creatures. Not to mention that there would be wolves and witches here. She had never been around such beings. It made her heart race in her chest.

Sighing, Dusk bowed her forehead back to her knees. What would her father think of her now that she was nervous at the sight of her own kind? He would be disappointed. The last thing she wanted was to disappoint the memory of her father.

At least, Dawn was still with her. Did Dusk regret her hostility towards the headmaster earlier? No. Of course she didn't. That hussy of a female had brought up her parents only a few days after they'd died. The wound was still open, and Regina had dared to pry into it.

With a scowl Dusk stood up and rolled her shoulders. That woman. How dare she even mention the names of her parents! She doubted that the female even really knew them. Not many people that did had the audacity to speak of them now especially not to the twins. Her lip curled, and Dusk spat out her frustration against the golden tiles of the gazebo.

A boy beneath her gave a snort at Dusk's show of irritation, and Dusk shot the male a fang bearing sneer. "Going to stand up there all night and spit on rooftops or are you going to come down here so I can take you to the dean's office?" he asked and flipped long, caramel streaked hair out of his face to reveal high cheek bones, a well carved face, and wicked ice colored eyes that could convince a lycan to change forms.

Feeling aggravation all over again, Dusk hopped off the roof to land with a frighteningly fluid grace that her father had taught her to do. She flipped her long, ebony locks away from her shoulder and crossed her arms as she studied the male's intent. She snapped, "What if I don't want to go to the dean's office?"

His lips upturned into a wild snicker. Moving with the invisible grace of a predator, he appeared in front of her to mutter, "I'd have to insist." Before she could make any sort of defensive motion his arm looped between her own and her side, the new male greeted, "The name is Amaury Bane, leader of the red blood around here. I am to be your personal escort and trainer since you are so far behind."

Wrenching her arm free only to have it tangled back into Amaury's hold, Dusk hissed, her pointed ears flattening against her skull. "Release me, vampiric nuisance!" she exclaimed and spun around to lay her fist against the cradle of Amaury's open palm. Great Daxton, his hold was strong as she writhed to get her hand out of the grasp of the Chiropteran. When he only held her hand in a looser grasp, she reinstated her command. "I said, release me, you vampiric nuisance!"

Amaury flipped a wriggling Dusk over his shoulder and explained, "To be frank, my dear, you did not put the word *you* in your first command." His lithe steps from the base of the gazebo had them on a surprisingly smooth stroll throughout the groups of creatures that whispered, pointed, and snickered.

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Dusk's fangs flashed out to everyone as she wriggled against this strange creature's hold on her waist. Her claws sunk into his hide, and blood oozed like a stream down the fabric of his suit. Her thighs repeatedly moved against his neck, causing her knee to sock him in the chin with every movement.

Everyone stared as she cursed and bit out commands for him to release her. A few of his buddies called out for him to conquer the kingdom and other classless phrases, but Dusk simply raised her regal finger to the moon for all to acknowledge. "Shut up or else I'll garrote you with your friend's spinal cord," she hissed to a male that dared to get close to her.

Her face flushed, and eventually she gave up her wrestling with Amaury's impossible strength. She gripped the belt around his pants to hold her body up then glared out at the massive grouping that had begun to congregate around them.

"Is that a princess of Trinity?" a girl murmured with her hand covering her face.

"I believe it is, but she sure isn't acting like one. I could be a much better princess."

"Are you sure that's the princess? She's acting more like a new born Changed."

"What would you know, mutt? Maybe that's how vampires train their leeches to be."

Pausing in the group, Amaury moved to hold Dusk by her now flailing legs. "Alright!" he commanded with those piercing blue eyes glaring everyone down. "All of you scam! You pests have classes to get to. Go! Get out!" His steady eyes analyzed each being standing. When no one scrambled, he flashed fangs so wildly sharp that the entire crowd jumped.

Once they all faded out of sight, some even leaping over bushes to get out of Amaury's sight, he asked, "If I put you down, will you run off? It looks to be that you've had enough embarrassment for one night."

Sinking her claws into his sides, Dusk growled, "I never wanted to be up here in the first freaking place, leech."

With a wince Amaury released Dusk only to have his face left with the burning sensation of her palm swiping across his face. Streaks of crimson dripped down his face, and he licked the blood off of his lips. "Guess I deserved that one." His arm outstretched for her to loop it with his. When she glowered, he added, "Want me to carry you again?"

Her hands balled into fists, and she obliged. "Keeping tabs on me," she noted at his need for their touching bodies. "Don't want me to bolt again. Did Regina send you?"

"No, Ms. Cross, I do not answer to the headmaster of the females. Headmaster Kaine sent me as soon as he traced me to the front entrance to meet you." His eyes looked up to a large tower that they had paused at in the center of what seemed to be the school's commons area. "I'm sure that your sister has already met Bara Lynd. She is your sister's tutor and roommate. She's also the leader of her Sorority, Aderfi Ema. They're the sisterhood to my brotherhood, Aderfos Ema." His pale eyes measured Dusk. He added, "Hold onto me." At her baffled expression, Amaury scooped her up over his shoulder once more.

Claws sinking into his back, Amaury snagged a hold onto one of the ledges of the massive tower then flung himself up with his powerful legs. "Ah, this is so much better than taking the stairs," he mentioned as an awestruck Dusk clung to him. His feet finally landed on an open window, and Amaury gently flipped Dusk from his shoulder to the cradle of his arms where she wrestled with all of her might to get away. With a

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nonchalant shrug he dropped her flat on her back then knocked on the door of a room entitled Dean's Office.

Hissing, Dusk rubbed her backside before glancing up at a beige hallway trimmed in white and red. A red painting of a rose hung right beside the door that Amaury was waiting beside. Golden brown chair railing lined the expansive hallway, and a grey stone tile decorated the floor. A red chair sat in the corner across from the brown, wood door. Its thick cushioning was like a beacon to the already gone pain that had been at Dusk's backside. White lined beneath the crown molding against the ceiling.

Despite having the tears and bloodstains on his clothing Amaury stood like a patient soldier in front of the door. His brown hair was cut short and stayed away from his piercing blue eyes that looked more fiery than icy. It was slightly spiked, naturally though. No gel held up those caramel spikes. His broad shoulders were plated with muscle that could be shown from underneath the fabric of his informal suit. Dusk blushed at the memory of being flipped over those shoulders.

His large hand reached out and revealed callouses from some sort of training or workout Dusk was sure. "Come on and get up. I don't want it to look like I've been bullying you," he stated. From the looks of things, Dusk had been the one doing all of the bullying. Amaury's clothing had shreds and tears all over it. Blood dotted his belt and sides. The simple black fabric of his button up was bloodied and torn from Dusk's black painted claws.

Huffing, she rose up on her own and dusted her blue skinny jeans then crossed her arms beneath her chest. "Really? Like I've been bullied?" she retorted then glanced to where the door was being opened by a six foot five Saurian male with dull human fangs, hiding the retractable fangs that were sure to be alerted at the sight or smell of blood.

The man opened the door even wider and leaned up against the doorway to snicker at Amaury's beat up suit. "I thought I sent you out to retrieve a princess not a lion," he wondered then made a head motion to greet Dusk. "Get that thing off, and I'll give you another."

Amaury opened up his shirt then peeled it off to reveal a plain red V-neck undershirt. His strong arms bulged beneath their skin, and Dusk attempted not to notice them as he moved to sling his ruined garment over his shoulder.

"So, you are the notorious Dusk Cross of Trinity. Pleasure to meet you, little lioness. I am Kaine Lance of the Western Saurian Vampires," he greeted then moved out of the way for Regina, some tiny Saurian girl, an old man, and Dawn to see them.

Familiarity clicked at the sound of Kaine Lance, and Dusk murmured, "You were my father's second in command." Her big, emerald eyes looked innocently up at the only Saurian that she'd ever come in contact with before this school. "You sent the guards after my parent's killers after they were caught in the flames." Bowing her head, Dusk added, "Thank you."

A friendly palm covered up Dusk's head, and Kaine mussed her hair. "It's the only way that I can repay an old friend and his beautiful family, little lioness." His familiar smile lit up his face, and Dusk noticed a winding scar down the side of his face. That scar was the mark of silver, one of the few materials that could leave a permanent mark on the flesh of an immortal such as Kaine. That scar came from the blade of one of the rebels that Kaine had fought off during an attempt at overthrowing her father's control.

Smiling, Dusk looked up at her elder then towards a man grinning kindly from behind his desk. The man had a mane of silver hair that wound down his head, signaling that he was from the snowy Kingdom of Eternity. His eyes were full of ancient wisdom and commanded respect no matter the distance she had from him. They

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were of the palest purple while still being wickedly vibrant. His lips were averagely shaped with a grin that seemed to lighten up the entire room. His long hands were interwoven between each long finger, one of which bore the ring of the kingdom of Trinity and another of Eternity. Those two rings in combination signaled of his hailing of two different nationalities, neither of which he would refuse to lose.

"Welcome to Bloodmist Academy," he chimed. "It seems that you have already met up with your tutor Amaury Bane." His eyes looked up and down the tattered clothing of the tall boy. "It also seems that you gave him a run for his money. I am Vincent Bane, Amaury's father and Dean of this academy. Before you were even set to come here, your parents planned for your entrance to this academy; therefore, I have already chosen your classes for the semester. You may choose which ones you want to take next year." His long hand stretched out, and Dusk grabbed a folder.

Opening it, she noted the subjects. At eight in the morning would be Calculus on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Second was Homo Wampyrus History, the history of vampires, on Tuesday and Thursday. Third was Defensive Structure, Tuesday and Thursday as well. Fourth was Tutoring every day of the school week. Dusk glowered at Amaury's shadow glancing over her schedule then to his glancing at his father with a raised, caramel eyebrow.

"Yes?" she asked with a sarcastic hiss to her tone that got her a mix of reactions from the small crowd. The girl that she assumed was Bara blushed and shyly glanced around as if she was worried for Dusk's safety. Dawn shook her head with a grin. Regina glowered. The dean snickered. Kaine grinned as he watched Amaury.

"Nothing much. We just have the same classes." He glanced back towards his father who was looking particularly mischievous this evening. "You planned this?"

The dean nodded his head. "Of course, I gave Bara and Dawn the exact schedule as well. I would hope that the two of you get over whatever troubles you may have had in the short past and work well together seeing that you'll both be trapped together."

Chapter 2: New Girls

New Girls

Dusk gave a quick look towards her twin who just shrugged. There was nothing Dawn could do about this, and there was nothing that she would do about it. Dusk knew how Dawn was. She was always saying that they go out and do more things outside of the comfort of the castle gates. Dusk on the other hand couldn't have cared less about the outside world. She was perfectly comfortable in the sanctuary of her father's military arsenal, the guards' barracks, and the sword room. It was why her father gave her the title of her sister's protector. Since Dawn was the firstborn, she would be the queen when she married, and every queen needed a guardian, a title that Dusk happily accepted.

Snarling, she flipped the folder shut then crossed her arms. Vincent and she gave one another measuring looks, each studying the other's strengths and weaknesses. Just from the look he was giving her, Dusk knew that there were no changing classes this semester not even this year. It wasn't as if she didn't like her classes. It was just the simple fact that Dusk had no clue in this realm or the next one over what she was going to do with anything like Defensive Structure.

Being a princess, she was suspected to wear dresses like her sister, act civil like her sister, and be more educated like her sister. Back when she lived in the castle, those weren't the three tiers of royalty that her father taught her. Back when she lived in the castle, her father would frequently sneak her out of Mrs. Giada's private lessons class to take her to the barracks or on long journeys in war laden territories.

After a short silence, Vincent mentioned, "In your folder is the key to your dorm room. You will be in the central located clock tower's western wing, and your room will be beside your sister's." Breaking his statement was the sound of thundering feet then a winded girl ran straight through the door, her body completely coming through it like she was a materializing ghost.

Man, I wish I could do that, Dusk thought as the very gothic looking female held her silver ringed hand up in the air. She panted, "Abigail Whiteraven at your-service, Dean. Is this my-new-roommate?" Her bright crimson and heavily black lined eye glanced in Dusk's direction, and she gave Dusk a pierced smile along with a leather covered hand.

Snickering, the female took it. "So, is it room 529?" Dusk asked to the pale and strangely beautiful girl grinning at her.

"Sure is, partner. Smack dab in the middle of the Pretties in Pink and the Maidens of Trinity. I like to call it cellblock 529. Call me Abby, new kid."

Vincent looked to two women over as Abigail threw a tattooed arm across Dusk's shoulders. "Well, I'd say that's that," he concluded. "Abby and Bara, please show the princesses to their rooms. Dusk and Dawn, don't be shy to ask any of the authority for advice. My door is always open." He glanced at Abigail. "Whether you run through it or not."

The girls, Regina, Amaury, and Kaine all nodded at the indirect dismissal then made their way in a line out of the door. Right after Kaine faded into a misty substance that dissipated through the open hallway window, Amaury called, "I'll meet you outside the clock tower and show you the classes tomorrow. Ours run on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from gloaming to midnight." With that, he fell back with his arms straight out on either side of him and began to descend down the side of the tower that made up the central authority building.

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Dawn gave her sister a wink once Amaury's falling body was gone from sight. Sticking her tongue out, Dusk groaned, "Oh, whatever, Dawn. Don't even try to play matchmaker."

Butting in, Abigail cried, "You have got to think he's hot. Amaury Bane is one of the coolest and strongest guys here. Heck. I've got a boyfriend, and I still wouldn't mind having him come to my castle beheading dragons."

A pale rose blush topped Dusk's skin as she attempted to free herself of blood red faced Bara, winking Dawn, and instigating Abigail. "Yeah, whatever, I don't have time for that kind of stuff. I have some parental deaths that I need to avenge first," she evaded in an attempt to get them off of her case.

Abigail quieted after that, and Dawn cast her gaze the other way. If anything was going to be a social silencer, it was definitely the princesses' parents' deaths. Still, Dusk had already done enough mourning for today. There was no way she was going to crawl into some new bed with their death on her mind.

As much as she didn't want to be here, Dusk was no idiot. She knew what knowledge this place could give her, and she knew that her basic fighting skills would be no match for the people that killed her parents. If there was a way to avenge them, she would do it or go down fighting.

Once the fresh night air ran its cool fingers through Dusk's hair, she looked forward unto the stone pathway that arched and swayed to create the many pathways that were Bloodmist Academy. Everything here was some form of stone. The buildings, the walkways, even the signs, they were all carved. This place was Ilaria Cross's baby.

Dusk and Dawn's mother had been a scholar and had been the student of Mrs. Giada's, which was no coincidence as to why she was their tutor before she also died in the burning of Castle Trinity. It had been Ilaria's idea back when Daxton took power to design a college that would house the two mighty countries of Trinity and Nyx with the territories of Faelian. She wanted the wars to cease between the three countries. She believed that those who learned together grew together. It had worked until the castle burned down. Gazing upon the stones that her mother had strategically made by her own architectural design, Dusk could see the pride that her mother had felt after the creation of this majestic academy. This was Dawn's territory, and Dusk was lucky enough that Queen Ilaria respected soldiers enough to give them a home here.

Causing Dusk's thoughts to burst into thin air was the sound of Bara's sweet, melodic voice. "Always check these signs. See? The tricolored one points to the Trinity House. The black and white one points to the Faelian House. The elements colored one points to the Nyx House. Always be sure to stay on your path during the full moon. If you accidentally wander to one of the other houses during the full moon, they might not be as forgiving if you were to stumble around there any other time. Emotions run high here during that time with the wolves' changing uncontrollably, the witches' powers growing stronger, and the vampires' getting stronger." The small female held her waving hair out of her eyes as a gust of wind attempted to blow it in her face, and she yipped when a warlock appeared out of the air.

"Ozzie!" Abigail exclaimed then flung her arms around an equally as pierced and tattooed male who just wrapped a single arm around her, keeping his other hand in his pocket. "I never thought that you'd show up!"

"And miss the grand entrance of the twins of Trinity?" He outstretched his tattooed hand to Dawn who brazenly took it without hesitation despite the many chains, threatening runes, and spikes that decorated him. "My name is Osiris Lamia. I am the patron saint of the Nyx House and would like to extend my upmost kindest greetings to the most influential characters to ever set foot in this great stone haven we have aptly named Bloodmist Academy." He extended his hand to Dawn who shyly took it in an uncomfortable and loose grasp. Holding back a grin at her reluctance, Osiris waved his hand as a tattoo on it glowed. The winds rose up

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around him and the rest of the group until they were hovered a few feet off of the ground. "I really do hate walking." He turned towards Bara who was so pale it looked as if she was a reverse vampire. "Now, now. Carry on with your little tour. I will only be providing you all with transportation. Courtesy of House Nyx, of course."

She stammered, "Ah-of-of course, Osiris."

"Call me Ozzie, love."

She gulped. "As I was saying, the full moon is a dangerous time around here, and all of the guards are on duty whenever it comes around. With this realm having two moons, one real and one a gift from King Ezra of Eternity saying that he approved of his second-in-command working of this establishment, we have a full moon every two weeks."

"May I cut in, dear?" Ozzie asked as he held up one, long tattooed finger. When she paled further and nodded rigidly, he added, "King Ezra of Eternity created that moon by collecting a large mass of white rocks that he then had compacted by ogres, orcs, earth sorcerers and giants. It was by Queen Raella Cross's-no relation to you girls-design that he did so. If one was to have the power to open such a great mass, it would send Armageddon hurdling down upon the realms and all would cease to exist." When Bara stared at him appalled, he simply said, "Fun fact for the night. Anyhow, where shall I direct this cloud next, love?"

Abigail turned towards whom Dusk and Dawn were beginning to believe was her warlock boyfriend and requested, "Can we take them to the pier? Show them where we all go swimming. I'm sure that some of the Faelians, Nyxens, and Trininites will be happy to see the new girls." Remembering that Bara was supposed to be the guide of this tour, she added, "Only if that is okay with, Bara."

The white headed, petite female nodded with her lips so flat that they were like an unregistered heartbeat at the hospital. Her little heart was pounding so loudly in her chest, and Dawn held her icy hand to bring some color back into her body. It was obvious that Abigail's boyfriend was a little less that welcome in Bara's eyes.

With a gentle wave of Ozzie's hand the wind enclosed them like the inside of an invisible tornado, and they were thrust gently forward across the pathway of the school. Taking over Bara's tour guide service was Ozzie as he stated, "That large clock tower with the golden archways is your dormitory. On the western wing are the girl's dorms, and on the eastern wing are the boy's dorms. That grand masterpiece was inspired to represent the strength of time against all of us immortals. It is also notorious for male's sneaking into the female's dorms and midday partying while the headmasters and guards are asleep."

Dawn gazed up in awe at the great expanse of gold and crimson stones that made up the grand clock tower. Her green eyes twinkled in the darkness like an animal's as the light reflected off of them. The clock tower was a beautiful creation. Blocks of crimson brick lined each arching window. Dead center of the massive building was hundreds of long windows that met and grew to form a spire's tall peak. From there the majestic clock hung proudly in its several foot radius.

"Looks like something Mom would make. Doesn't it?" Dusk asked as she watched her sister gaze in adoration at the beautiful campus bestowed upon them. It did though. Each brick that was laid upon the massive campus represented their mother in such a way that only the twins could appreciate. Daxton had ruled their kingdom as a single man for two hundred years before Ilaria showed up, and in the short expanse of time that they had spent together, the two had devised such a beautiful haven for scholars.

Strange. Dusk had never had an appreciation for learning back at the castle, but hereâ something about it just seemed different. It was probably because of the strange draw that this place was suddenly giving her. It

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was like their mother was watching over them here, and that she would never let anything bad happen to them here. For once, she felt safe.

Grinning, she looked towards the pier that continued to come closer and closer to them. The sounds of splashing and laughter carried through the stones, and the clouds of wind beneath their feet dissipated as they were lowered to the ground. "Welcome, Dusk and Dawn, to Pier Ema. This is the Trinity pier. The Aderfos and Aderfi Ema groups come here to host social parties and sometimes to incorporate new members into their groups. When it's not being used for that, you can usually find friends from each house swimming."

Abigail ran towards the pier and leapt against the damp body of some massive, muscular male. "Everybody, I would like for you to meet the Faelian House's most popular jock, Zev Lycan. He is their best hockey player and best full contact martial artist." She patted the tanned male on his massive chest. "He's also one of the biggest teddy bears around here."

With a snicker the giant shook his mane of russet hair, spraying Abby with a mist of the crystal clear water that he had just leaped out of. "Don't give out my secrets so willingly, Gail," he stated with a foreign accent the twins had never heard before. "So, you must be the wily one that my brother was makin' fun of with yer squabble with that vampire fella? Pleasure to meet ya, miss."

Dusk nodded and introduced, "This is my twin sister Dawn. It's also a pleasure."

"Zev here is probably the least judgmental of all of the lycans. He's for sure the only one that can say that he has just as many friends with the vampires and witches as he does the wolves." She gave him an absolutely adoring look as he returned it with the same enthusiasm. "He's the only one who accepted me right off the bat. A true southern gentleman of Tennessee."

"You ladies feel free to ask me and Gail if ya'll need help with anythin'. We're always around somewhere." His head cocked to the side, and he whipped around to snag a rock that had been flying towards the back of his head. "And, let me introduce my pack mates. Forest, Ember, and River. Forest and Ember play against me on the hockey team, and River is the only guy to ever tie with me in martial arts."

Three half naked males looked towards the group, and Dusk watched her sister's face redden when one stood up, revealing a six pack and thighs that someone could bounce a quarter off of. "Just to clarify," a blonde warlock said as he tossed a towel around his neck, "I'm Ember." His fingers snapped, and a rune lit up on the back of his hand as flames flicked away from his hands. His long hand reached out towards blushing Dawn, and she took it in a nervous grasp. "It's a pleasure to meet a princess as beautiful as you, Ms. Dawn." His strange, black eyes glanced towards Dusk. "The same to you, Ms. Dusk."

"The pleasure is mine, Mr. Ember. I would assume that you were a fire warlock?" Dawn wondered as she slipped her hand away from the male. The warm sensation that was left in the center of her palm assured her that he was, but with a warlock that was always a conversation starter.

"Yes, Princess, and I would assume that the two of you are Draco vampires on a tour of the campus." At her nod he grinned. "I would love to take you on a tour of Nyx, but that will have to be saved for the next game. Speaking of, we all need to get to practice before Coach comes down here and makes us practice in our shorts like last time." His steady gaze landed on Forest who pulled himself up on the pier to pick up his towel. "Have a good night, Ms. Dawn." His hand gingerly slipped up Dawn's and he pressed his smooth lips against her pale hand.

River pulled himself up on the pier and tossed his soaked black hair away from his eyes. "So, you're his next victim," he pointed out before joining the group. "The name's River. I'm a part of the fifty percent that calls

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their selves werewolves in the territory of Faelian. Zev is my blood brother."

"Nice to meet you, River." Dawn bowed her head politely, and when River's gaze slipped to Dusk who was staring off into the distance, she only gave him a nonchalant shrug.

"So the rumors are true. The two of you really are like night and day," Osiris cut in, breaking up the greetings with his observant nature. Bara and Dawn both jumped at the sudden sound of his voice then his appearance in front of them. "I wonder how many more of the rumors will become truth with your appearances," he said more to himself than anyone else. "I have things that I need to research. Have a good day, princesses." With a bow the tattooed male went up with the wind then faded into nothing.

Turning towards everyone, Bara said, "It is getting early. We should all head in before the sun comes up. I'm almost immune to it, but that's not the same for you Dracos. Abby, if you want to stay out just make sure that you come in before daylight."

It wasn't the sound of Abigail singing in the shower nor the cacophony of the warlock band called Death Grip permeating through the walls of the bathroom that had Dusk's big, emerald eyes breaking free of their slumbering chains, it was the sight of Osiris hovering over her bed. Swirling purple eyes met with bright emerald, and she had to hold back a scream when his shimmering ivory teeth flashed upwards in a lip pierced grin. "So," he analyzed, "this is what a princess of Trinity looks like first thing in the morning." His feet moved him further along the ceiling until he was standing on the wall, his face mere inches from Dusk's. A sweet, wintery scent bathed Dusk's face as Osiris opened his peppermint scented mouth, and he added, "How veryâ typical. Interesting."

Irritated, Dusk reared her hand back to punch him, but as her fist came within the space between their faces, Osiris froze it in the iron hold of one of his spells. "Wind snakes can be a real pain. Can't they?" he stated, nodding towards the mass of air that began to take the physical form of a constrictor anchoring her wrist into place. "If I let you go, do you promise to be a good princess?"

"Yeah, whatever. Just get this thing off me." Her eyes cut through the snake creation and touched Osiris's purple orbs that were glowing with his powers.

"As you wish, my dear princess," he chimed and released the snake only to have it slither up against his throat then dip beneath the fabric of the black V-neck he had on.

Cracking her neck, Dusk wondered, "Why are you here? In the girl's dorm? Don't you have small, helpless animals to sacrifice?" Her pale arms went behind her and lifted her up while Osiris's face continued to back away until he was standing on the floor like everyone else that couldn't defy gravity.

His nonchalant gaze followed the sharp peaks of his claws with scrutinizing eyes, and Ozzie replied, "Unfortunately, I have already done my sacrificing for the evening. Now, I am to be the loyal bodyguard of Ms. Abigail. In other words, I've been watching the two of you sleep all day and am bored out of my wits. Please, entertain me with your day-to-day activities, princess."

With an ebony eyebrow high atop her head, Dusk mumbled, "What planet are you from?" Her body rose from the bed that Abigail must have decorated especially for Dusk considering the crescent moon pattern in black and white with a deep purple comforter lined in wide, black stripes, and she glanced out of the ivory curtains to see Amaury standing exactly where he'd said he would be the last night.

Great. She really was going to have to meet him. For an introvert like Dusk, meeting new people was most definitely not the top priority on her to do list. Dawn had always taken care of such trivial matters, getting

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Dusk out of class by spreading a rumor that she was a key in her father's arsenal, coming between Dusk and a potential suitor probably coming to steal the crown, and even distracting guests so that Dusk could become another limb on their father's body. There had never really been a need to socialize with anyone but the soldiers, her sister, and her parents. Now, that secure world had come crashing down. She'd always known that there were other people out there in the world. She just never knew that she'd need to speak to them.

Blushing, she glanced down at Amaury's form as he chitchatted with two pretty girls that had to have been cheerleaders with their short skirts and gym bags not to mention the obvious symbol of Bloodmist plastered across their chests. His body was highlighted in the moonlight. Every little indentation of his very masculine, highly muscular build was made all the more impressive as the shadows moved to highlight him. Amaury's broad shoulders were strong and resembled some of the berserkers that Dusk had loved to talk to back home. His legs were long, leaving the cheerleaders standing at his shoulders. Dusk came to his chin, a fact that she was proud to know seeing that he didn't look down on her as he did most other females.

Today was Sunday, meaning that classes wouldn't start until tomorrow at gloaming. Amaury must have wanted to get a read on her, see how far she was from being in his standards. Oh, she'll show him. She won't let her guard down and let him get the upper hand like she did last time. Good looking or not, she'd punch him flat in the jaw if he tried to flip her over his shoulder again then parade her about the schoolyard. Ha! Once she got through with Amaury he'd come begging for her to train him in the techniques that her father taught her. She may have been a little rusty last night, but today she was on her toes.

Bloodmist wasn't just a school for learning. Ilaria had also designed this place to train soldiers for the servitude they would grant towards nobles, princesses, princes, kings, queens, and other royals that were in the lands of Trinity. Since Amaury was Vincent's son and was studying defensive techniques to guide him in battle then that must mean that he had been previously recruited by the kingdom to be a Guardian of the Kingdom.

"Looks like he meant what he said when he wanted to meet you," Osiris analyzed as his towering, lanky form cast a long shadow over Dusk's view.

Back to reality, she spun around to poke the warlock in the chest. "Obviously, he did. Now, move yourself or else I will move you."

With a nod he backed up then flopped himself down across Abigail's bed. "So, does this mean that he will be your Guardian once you leave this fine estate or does this mean that he just has the hots for you my femme fatale?"

Scoffing, she snapped, "Hopefully, neither. I don't need some guy following me around all day every day like my mother's guardian did when my dad wasn't around."

Osiris looked to take mental note of that then he cast those strange purple eyes to Abigail's towel clad form standing in the steaming doorway of the bathroom. "Good morning, Trinity!" she exclaimed with her pale arms up in the air like some kind of performer. "Pleased to see you up and looking gorgeous, Dusk, and it's always a pleasure to see such a man as handsome as you, Ozzie, lying on my what-used-to-have-been ironed clothing." His hands rose up in defeat, and he lifted himself up with those runes glowing just the faintest shade of purple.

Her towel slipped off of her body as she pulled one long leg into a v-string, and she seemed to not take notice of her own nudity as Dusk attempted to hide her eyes from Abigail's nakedness. "What's on the agenda for the both of you today?" she asked while clasping her neon colored bra together.

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"Well, I'll be following you continuously and trying to prevent any mayhem that some sort of evil character may be plotting against you," Ozzie responded. To Dusk's surprise he didn't look anywhere but Abigail's face. It was as if the thought of her nude form didn't do anything for him. Odd.

Red eyes were thrown Dusk's way, and she mumbled, "I'm going to meet Amaury."

Those eyes were big and round as Abby soaked that in, and she chimed, "Oooh! Interesting. Ozzie, it looks as if we're going to have to go spying on Dusk and Maury. You up for it?"

"Your wish is my command, sweet Gail." He gave Dusk a once over before adding, "She'll most definitely want to wear her uniform if they're going parading about the alcoves. Wouldn't want Regina on her ass the first day of college."

Green eyes went rolling, and Dusk glanced to the outfit covered in a thin plastic bag that was sure to preserve it in some way. She growled, "It's not even school hours for me, but I still have to wear the monkey suit?"

"It's only because you'll be on school grounds. If you were both just going to stay in the commons, it would be different," Abigail explained.

Ozzie added, "All of the school's uniforms are enchanted so that the headmaster of each dorm will know whether you have snuck off campus or not." At both of the girls' looks, he added, "When I was a freshman like the two of you, I got caught during the sneaking out process." His unnatural fangs flashed in a smile, and Dusk began to wonder if Osiris was actually just a warlock.

"Well, I guess that you'd better get it put on before the wicked witch of Trinity comes knocking on our cell door looking for you," Abigail laughed then reached to pull the white undershirt from its hanger. "Welcome to Bloodmist, new girl."

Chapter 3: Epiphany

Epiphany

"I was starting to think that you'd stood me up," Amaury called out as he turned to face Dusk. Her long, black hair was twisted up into a braid, and not a single drop of makeup decorated her face. Those big eyes of hers were stormy with anxiety, anxiety that he knew had been because of him.

As she walked by him to take the lead, her shoulder bashed into his arm, and he grinned at the fire inside of her. From over her shoulder, she barked, "Probably would have been a better idea than to walk around campus with someone I barely know."

His grin widened at her sharp words, and Amaury moved himself faster to catch up with her. "I guess that we should change that, princess." Before she had the chance to come up with a response, he said, "I want to get a feel for you in combat. Then we we'll know where to start with your training. Since you have been rumored to have trained with your father's soldiers and since he was the one that came up with our training regime, I think that I'm about to get my ass kicked." He held up the gym bag. "I brought you some clothes to change into."

"Are we going to train in a gym?" she asked, abruptly eager to get this whole thing started. It'd been too long since she'd been able to train with anyone her age. All of the soldiers that she used to hang around with were long gone, either dead or on the hunt of whoever or whatever killed her parents and half of the royal court that had been staying there.

He led her down a stone pathway full of lush green grass and thick emerald bushes that kept growing closer and closer to the path the further they went down it. "Nope. I hate training in gyms. You can never get the feel of the surroundings you'll really be fighting in whenever it's you and the enemy on sight. Just keep following me."

Leaping over a fallen log, he glanced back to find Dusk bounding over it right behind him. Despite the black flats she was wearing, the girl could jump. His gaze caught onto where the river separated them from the training area, and Amaury hopped onto one rock then another. The water bubbled at his sides and the wind blew, brushing his skin.

Careful not to get into the deep areas where the rocks would be covered by water, Amaury jumped across five more rocks then turned again to watch Dusk making feminine jumps from one grey mound to the next. "Thought that would get me?" she acknowledged when their eyes met, and she clearing the remaining rocks to land directly in front of him. "Think again, soldier boy."

"Don't get too cocky, princess. Training hasn't even started yet." He moved a curtain of vines away and had to raise an eyebrow at Dusk's abrupt gasp. Then, he noticed it himself.

The Bloodmist Battlefield was an exact replica of the stone training grounds of Trinity's. The training grounds had been the only thing untouched by the flames during the burning of the castle.

Water surrounded the large slab of circular rock and nature covered the area all around. At each exit was a curtain of thick, green vines. In each of the three columns around the stone slab were the markings of the vampiric legions. There was no roof over the slab of stone only night air and plenty of stars. The moon hung its massive entity high in the sky like a guardian over the two of them. It was the most peaceful place on campus, and the most secluded. Only the headmasters over the dorms, the dean, and a few star pupils knew of its existence and even fewer of them were allowed to use it.

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Amaury watched Dusk as she looked up in awe at the night sky then back to her trainer. "How did you know?" Her eyes twinkled as if the gods had implanted emeralds within them, and she stared up at her trainer in awe.

This place, its beauty, it was almost heartbreaking to believe that once upon a time Trinity had owned such a place. The battlegrounds were a place that Dusk lived in, closer to the barracks than the throne room. Those massive stars had once hung themselves high up in the sky above the castle. They were the watchful sentries that Dusk had once prayed to for a better battle, a stronger challenge. The lush greenery of this water encased slab of slate was an exact replica, the same identical kind of twin that she was to Dawn.

A hand's warmth kissed Dusk's hip, and she was pulled out of her reverie to acknowledge Amaury. He looked like he belonged here in the midst of the forest. His caramel toned hair was highlighted in streaks from the moon's glow. His strong silhouette was made even more massive by the stone columns that cast shadows against his skin. A pale hand loosely grasped his training blade, and his fangs, showing just from the parting of his full lips, shimmered beneath the light. Again, she noticed how handsome her trainer was, but again, she noticed that he was a stranger.

He thrust the bag out to Dusk who took it in a snarling grasp. Those red painted fingernails looked ready to be dripping in blood when they shredded the thin, mortal made, cloth of the bag. Grinning, he daunted, "There are some bushes over there. Get changed and get ready to have your ass beat when you get back."

"Oh, we'll just see who gets whose ass whooped tonight, Amaury Bane," she hissed then marched off of the stone steps to go into the enclosed space that she knew had been made to represent a dressing room. A bench carved to replicate a three stones held together by vines greeted her, and she eagerly tossed her oddly heavy bag to it. With an analytical eye, she checked her surroundings, making sure no sign of her could be noted against the breaks in the foliage, and after nodding her approval, she discarded the monkey suit that Regina had so called design for the students.

Once the gym bag was opened up, Dusk growled at the marking of Bloodmist once again. The three interweaving crescent moons shined up at her as she pulled up a pair of highly feminine, highly athletic gym shorts. The tight spandex inside of them provided plenty of room to move while the thin layer gave her thighs fresh air. A blue sports bra covered her up then she topped it off with a thin black shirt trimmed up the sides in blue. Thankful that she'd worn a braid, Dusk flipped her long hair out of the back of the shirt then slipped on the black, grey, and blue sneakers and matching socks.

When she came out from behind the mass of foliage, she found that Amaury had stripped himself of his school uniform only to come back in a thin black, grey, and red shirt with a pair of matching sneakers and jogging pants. His blue eyes scanned her body, and she watched as he curiously went from her bare legs to her face in the most slow of gazes. "Pleased with your work, Amaury Bane?" she bit out, attempting to not give him the same studious glance.

"Quite pleased. Kaine gave me the gym clothes though. It seems as if the two of you have a much deeper relationship than I'd originally got at." He gave her one of those charming half smiles then added, "We'll start with some stretches. Follow my lead."

When she nodded, she copied Amaury as his long arm stretched out. The other followed, and he moved his torso then held. It was a typical stretch. Nothing that required balance. After twenty seconds of that, they stretched out their legs and did a few yoga poses. The stretches felt wonderful, almost as if she hadn't done them in ages. *It's been far too long since I've been properly trained*, she reminded herself.

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Once that was done and over with, Amaury stated, "I want you to come at me. Try to lift me off my feet and smash me against this pillar." He tilted his head back to the pillar directly behind him then moved to plant his feet firmly against the ground. "Oh, and don't think that I won't reciprocate."

Grinning, Dusk got down into a feral position. Her fangs lengthened at the thought of a challenge and her claws sharpened to a point so sharp that even cocky Amaury raised a curious brow. She sized her trainer up.

Yes, he could easily take her down from a frontal assault. Amaury was also an older student, so he probably was used to training newbies. Still, Dusk was no newbie. She was the daughter of the great King Daxton, the Steel Soldier as he'd been called as a prince. With her smaller frame she could easily sneak, and she also knew that once she got close enough those majestic wings of Amaury's would shred through his back. So the best attack would be a

Quickly, Dusk charged forward, and once she saw Amaury's grasp widen to take her in, she bounded up over him. Her body dashed straight up the column in a blur. From there, she vanished from his sight. As he darted around, searching for her, Dusk reached out from behind him, grabbed him around his waist, and used her vampiric strength to raise his feet.

With his body suspended in the air like a helpless toddler, Dusk flexed her powerful thighs and flung Amaury directly headlong into the column, yet just as she thought she could claim victory, Amaury's wings shredded from the slits in his shirt. Those massive wings shot him around the column and directly at her with the fury of a tornado. In mere seconds, Dusk was lying flat on her back with Amaury's fangs at her jugular and his hands pinning hers up over her head.

"Do you give up yet, princess?" he asked. His beautiful wings flexed out, shielding her from the moon, and Dusk was absorbed by how easily she'd been taken out.

Hissing like the beast she was, Dusk lashed out with her legs. Amaury's abdomen was met with a sharp pain as she cracked a rib then again when Dusk snagged one of his wings to send him to the ground. In a flash Amaury enclosed his wings against himself, pulling Dusk with them. Once she was close enough he was rejected by the sharp slap of her claws raking against his skin.

With a grin spread wide across his face, Amaury spat out his own mix of blood and spit. "Now then, Dusk, you forget that the column is over there," he announced before picking her up by her slender waist. Using the wind, Amaury freed his grasp on Dusk then flapped his wings to send her crashing against the column he had once been pointing to.

"And you forget that you're fighting the king's daughter," she called with her own face spread wide in a sinister grin. Amaury's head spun as he made a 360 to find Dusk perched up like one of his kind atop the Draco column.

"You truly are a work of art," he grunted when she had him pinned against the wrong column. It had only taken a single leap, but she had him braced against the Saurian column. Her strong arms held back his, but it was in vain when those massive wings came back to send them both flying sky high.

Her feet dangled uselessly in the air as she writhed against his iron grip on her wrists, and Dusk cried, "You are never going to beat me, Bane! I will get you against that column if it costs me!" Just when he was about to make a snide comment someone from below began to laugh.

Appalled that someone would find her in such a helpless state, Dusk swung her legs up then used the leverage to sink her fangs into Amaury's hand. With a hiss he accidentally dropped her then gawked as she tumbled to

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the ground. Ready to dive down to retrieve her, Amaury was only halted by the sight of her being gently lowered by a magical wind.

Osiris Lamia and Kaine Lance stood smiling as Dusk landed lightly to her feet then Amaury appeared directly behind her in an almost protective shadow. "That was quite a show, you two. Even more entertaining than the time that Osiris beat you in a mock search and rescue," Kaine pointed out to Amaury's obvious embarrassment.

"Now, now, dearest Amaury, don't give me that famous scowl of yours. It was a fair game, no powers regulated test," Osiris explained with those ever descriptive hands of his waving about in the air.

"Humph, and how well would all the girls you were against believe that when you were busy doing up skirts with your so called powers, warlock?" he interjected with crossed arms and that scowl across his features.

Kaine snorted at some apparent memory then cut in, "Alright, boys. Osiris has graduated from Bloodmist, and you are still a student here, Amaury. By the rules of Bloodmist, I cannot permit you to keep arguing with him." He looked at Osiris who was still glowing from the argument he was clearly enjoying. "Although, I'm sure that the two of you would love to fight all night, that's not what we came for."

Dusk finally cut in, impatience growing at the sight of Kaine. "Well, what did you and the patron saint of lingerie come here for?"

"Yeah, we were in the middle of training," Amaury added with a sharp glower towards Osiris.

Ozzie gave one of his Cheshire grins. "We came to tell the dear princess here that I will also be her trainer since we have reason to believe that the Nyxens have something to do with the assault on her family." He wrapped Dusk up in his long, rune covered arms. "Now we can spend even more time together, Dusk! I'll make you so sick of me that I'll be a leech more so than you." His black claws shined against her skin, and Dusk gave Kaine a don't-tell-me-you're-serious-look.

"Yes, Dusk. Don't give me that look. There's a reason for all of these people assigned to you. We have no idea when the people that attacked your parents will come for you and Dawn. Because of rumors coursing through the academy, we will possibly assign a lycan or were to you as well. Right now, your sister has been given discrete guardians. Some are fellow students like Bara and how Amaury will be with you, and others will be in the classroom keeping an eye on her." When her mouth was about to open, Kaine added, "Your guardians will come in the form of trainers since you are more independent than your sister. If something comes after you, you can defend yourself. She is not so lucky."

From the cage of Osiris's arms, Dusk growled, "Why can't I be with Dawn? Why can't I guard my sister? I have the qualifications! I have the strength! She doesn't need guards. She never has. I've saved her from death plenty of times and don't think I won't go out of my way to do it again. She's my sister!"

Kaine gave her a sad glance. "Orders are orders, Dusk. I cannot change what I have been given to do." Something went off at his side, and he hissed out a curse before saying, "I'll be leaving. Take care of her, you two. She's all any of us have left."

That last phrase left a chill inside of Dusk's mind, and she could still hear in reverberating within her even after Kaine had traced away. He was completely right. She and Dawn were soon to be married off and one of them made Queen of Trinity. It would only be a matter of time. Since Daxton had been prince, he hadn't been required to marry to lead the country, but since Ilaria only had girls and that Dawn had been the firstborn of the twins, one of them would have to be married.

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It was something that Dusk had heard often in the country since the death of her parents. Dawn was the one that everyone wanted to lead, Dusk included. She was meant to be the ruler, by birthright and by intellect.

Dusk had never had time for council meetings or throne room soirees. If anything, she had always hid from the ones she hadn't been required to go to. The soldiers would sneak her out of the ones she had needed to go to after her presence had been made known. Rarely anyone in the country had ever spoken about Dusk, and she liked it that way, less bullshit to cover up if she screwed up.

It was always Dawn this and Dawn that. The entire country fawned over her sister while leaving Dusk in the shadows, but it was because of her reticence and lack of popularity that always kept Dawn safe. While her sister would be parading about on the center stage of the kingdom, Dusk would be stalking in the shadows like a Guardian. Far too many times had Dusk delayed her sister's and perhaps her parent's demise by snitching on suspicious travelers and sneaky assassins. Now though, the country had come to realize that there really was another daughter of Trinity alive. Now, people were also stalking her in the night.

Biting her lip, Dusk looked at the ground. Dawn was in dangerâ a kind of danger that even she wouldn't be able to prevent, and she wasn't even allowed to be in the same classes as her. She knew why. She wasn't stupid.

It was all to make it that much more difficult for the assassins to find them. If they took out Dawn, they would still have Dusk. If they took out Dusk, they would still have Dawn. The royal blood had been spread so thin during the centuries that only the twins were able to rightly gain access to the throne, and the vampires were so obsessed with legitimacy that they wouldn't dare to allow Kaine to take the throne despite his Saurian leadership unless both twins were dead.

Amaury brought her back to her senses with the snapping of his wings as they receded back into his body, and she turned around to find that Osiris had lounged himself out on one of the stone benches.

They were so relaxedâ The kingdom was at stake yet Osiris was lounging and Amaury was pulling his wings back into himself. With a glower she demanded, "Teach me how to kill a warlock!"

Raising his jet black eyebrows, Osiris exclaimed, "I know I can be a bit overbearing at times, but come on now, Dusk. There's no need to kill me yet!" His long legs stretched out, and he appeared in front of Dusk. The clarity in her eyes astounded him. Putting all joking aside, he acknowledged, "What Kaine said hit you."

"Yes. It's either me or Dawn. She may not be strong enough to protect herself, and since I am, I'm going to make myself her guardian on my own time. I'm going to need to know how to kill the toughest of enemies and the ones that are the most likely to attack my sister."

Avenging Trinity

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