

Like a Double-Bladed Knife

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A story I'm working on just because the idea of this story refuses to leave me alone. But, unlike my other stories, this one is rarely light-hearted or joyous.

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**Chapter 1 - The Beginning of the Journey
(Angeline)**

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1 - The Beginning of the Journey (Angeline)

When I was very young, my father gave several rules to live by. The first was to do everything myself, because no one would help me. Secondly, be kind, courteous and humble to everyone, even to the lowest of beggars and criminals. Do not think that this rule was created to make me gentle natured and modest. My father believed that I was scum that didn't deserve the sewer I should lay in. In his eyes, I was lower than everyone else in this world, so I should give them all the greatest respect. There were several more rules and regulations, but the last one was the one that I remember and hate the most. The last rule was that should I want freedom from all of these rules, I would have to embrace my "gifts", my darkness that I had inherited from my father at birth. Once I found out what the darkness was, I detested it immediately. I wasn't gifted at all; I had been cursed. I was cursed with a darkness that would haunt me for all of eternity. It was later that I found out that my curse had a much more sinister purpose, and that I was not alone in it.

After I left my parents, I found out that the rules my father created would ensure my survival in the wide, dangerous, unfeeling world. I did many things on my own, but I did have some help here and there. I tried to be kind, courteous and humble to most people, but there were some times when the rule wasn't applicable. Like, let's say, when you have an organization hunting you down every day? That's how my journey to finding my curse's purpose began, and a fine example of how the last rule was applied in the real world. Now, I never fully embraced my curse; I never could. I promised myself that I would not become what my father wanted me to become. If my father was ever proud of me, I'd hang myself. However, I did use my curse when the need came, like the night when two men from an organization tried to take me in to their leader.

It was at dusk. The sun finally started setting, and I could come out of my hiding place, an old abandoned house, like so many other buildings in the old neighborhoods of the city of Torpeo. Unfortunately, when I could come out, so could they. A pair of people had been following me for about a week. I never had to look for them; I could feel their presence. I slowly crept out of the house and used many shortcuts until I exited an alleyway on the sidewalk a good distance from where I had started. It didn't keep them from finding me again; the town was far too small for me to lose them for long. Yet, it did keep them from knowing where I lived, and that was important. I had to leave the house as soon as the sun started setting, and I could only come back when the sun was over the hills. My followers were so obsessed with tracking me down when I came out, they never looked for where I had been. I suppose they weren't terribly bright, but that worked to my advantage. I had all of my things packed, and I was ready to leave in the morning. Unfortunately, my plans were interrupted that night.

I began my evening walk and briskly made my way into town. It was a Friday night, and all sorts of Christmas sales were starting up, even though it was barely October. That was good for me though, because the sidewalks were packed. There were plenty of chances for me to get away. For several hours they tried to get me, and for several hours I succeed in evading them. At around eleven, my luck did run out. I had tried escaping through the alleyways when they got too close, but I ran into a dead end, and they had me cornered. I finally saw my followers, and I instantly wanted to rip those smug look off of their faces. They thought they had me, and started talking of giving up and coming with them quietly. Uh-huh, like that was going to happen. They were disrupting my attempts at a normal life; I was in no mood to surrender. I had been living quietly, and they were trying to kill me. Typical reaction when my kind walks into their towns, but it was still unacceptable. So when the smugest of them smirked and

asked me for my reply, I simply smiled back at him. Then, I unleashed a small amount of my power and anger. Both of them were instantly launched back and were slammed against the opposite wall. Wow, I was angrier than I thought. I had expected them to only be knocked off their feet, but the actual result was so much more satisfying. Before they could recover from the impact, I was sprinting across rooftops and into the night.

I made my way to the park and fumed there. Several trees were scraped and dented in the process, but no serious harm. It would have been a lot worse if I had tried to seal my anger off again once I had released so much. The pressure would have become too great, and with a weak point now existing, an explosion could have occurred. Trust me, my kind of "explosions" must be avoided.

My stormy, angry thoughts were suddenly interrupted by the sounds of a scuffle not too far away. I moved quietly towards the sounds. As I did, more feelings of presence hit me. They were not dark and mysterious like the ones I had felt before. No, these were hot and cold at the same time, and rough. I knew this feeling; I was about to run into an enemy of my enemy. But the enemies of my enemies are certainly not my friends. Those two natural enemies actually have one thing in common; they hate me. I felt one dark presence among them, but it was weaker, throbbing, and fading. I knew what was happening instantly. I no longer moved slowly; I ran to the scene. My anger flared a dark, bloody flame at the sight.

It was a fight of five against one, and the one was on the verge of death. They weren't going to make his death quick, oh no. They were torturing him first. My anger swirled and expanded. I could feel the pressure building. I saw one of them holding something above their heads. It glinted in the moonlight, and I knew what it was. It was a silver, vampire-hunter's knife. Now after torturing him, they were going to stab him and let the poison of the silver slowly burn through his veins. Now, getting involved in scuffles is something I don't usually do, but the idea of leaving someone to be tortured to death is very against what morals I do have. So, my anger broke free once more.

I don't remember exactly what happened. All I remember is walking past the five vampire-hunters to the vampire. Whether his attackers were alive or dead, I didn't know or care. I just wanted to finish the vampire's suffering and get out of the area quickly, before more vampires flocked to the scent of blood. I took a silver blade out of the still hand of one of the vampire hunters. As I held the blade above the vampire's still heart, I made the mistake of looking into his eyes. They were green eyes, like a cat's. I saw a dull glow in them, a flickering flame that was fighting not to go out. He looked back into mine, perplexed and weary. He looked familiar to me. Had I met him before? I shook my head: I was wasting time. More vampires would be here in minutes. But I couldn't steady my shaking hand, and my breath stopped in my throat. I couldn't believe I was hesitating. I could smell silver burning at his skin. It was already moving through his bloodstream. He wouldn't survive this, unless...

"No!" I thought. "No way! I am not doing that for a vampire!" But, as I looked at him again, and I knew that my decision was already made. I gave a frustrated sigh and picked him up. Then I broke into a run back to my house. I looked into his eyes again as we left the park.

"My name is Angeline," I said quietly to keep him focused. "I'm going to help you, but I need you to stay with me, okay? What's your name?" I smiled gently. He gave a weak smile back.

"X-xander," he replied weakly. The clock tower's bells began to ring, reminding me of how pressed for time I was to save him. Twelve times, solemn as a funeral. I quickened my pace; we were getting close. "Angeline," Xander pondered in a whisper, "I was supposed to find you." Surprisingly, I didn't feel outraged. I just felt relief that he was still trying to talk. "Are you still going to help me?"

"Of course," I replied.

"But," he continued, "Why? I'm your enemy." His question hit me. Why was I doing this? *Dong*, tenth ring. No time to think about that now. I just smiled at him again.

"Well then, think of convincing your people to leave me alone as payment for me saving your life." I

entered the house and placed him on the sofa. He sighed and closed his eyes.

"Fair enough," he whispered, just before he passed out.

So, I had a dying vampire in my house, that needed blood desperately, and I had no idea how long it would take for him to recover. I looked down at my own wrist and saw blue veins under my ghostly white skin. My blood, half vampire, and half human. If I wanted him to live, did I have any other choice? I cringed, but made a small cut on my skin with my nail and held my wrist out underneath his nose. Well, so much for leaving in the morning. He owed me so badly for all of this.