

MtF VAMPIRE BODY SWAP

DARK LORD'S
Mistress
PART 1

WWW.MTS

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Dark Lord's Mistress

Part 1 of 4

by M. Wills

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Table of Contents

[His Dark Lord's Mistress 1](#)

[Thank you](#)

[Also by](#)

His Dark Lord's Mistress

Prologue

The two vagabonds were in high spirits when they tromped into the tavern around sunset. They bellowed a friendly greeting to the familiar tavern keeper who stood behind the bar. The keeper was absently polishing a glass and he failed to return their greeting. He stared, transfixed, across the room. The two men followed his gaze to find a woman seated at the corner of the tavern farthest from the window.

Not only was she unchaperoned and unfamiliar to the two men, but her manner of dress was much too fine for the rustic establishment in which she sat. Her dress was a symphony of opulence and refinement, a masterpiece crafted from the finest silks and satins. Its bodice was a work of art, meticulously tailored to accentuate her figure with an air of sophistication. Pearlescent beads and intricate lace cascaded down the front in delicate patterns. The hoop skirt and bustle puffed out behind and around her.

The neckline was an exquisite balance between modesty and allure, a gentle curve that revealed just a hint of collarbone, leaving the rest to the imagination. A necklace of blood red rubies hung around her throat, glinting an evil light as they reflected the fire in the hearth. The fire was modest, it being the height of summer it was necessary more for light than for heat in the dingy tavern and even then it did a poor job.

The dress flowed from her waist in a cascade of fabric, a river of silk that pooled at her feet in graceful folds. Its color, a deep obsidian hue that bespoke of wealth and power, seemed to absorb the light, leaving only the faintest glimmer upon the delicate silvery embroidery that adorned its hems. The filigree of intricate patterns seemed to catch the firelight and make her outline sparkle.

The sleeves, though modest in length, were a canvas of artistry. Sheer ebony fabric was delicately embroidered with silver motifs of flora and fauna, their beauty frozen in time as if plucked from a secret garden. Her raven-black hair was pinned back and covered by an eloquent coiffe set at an angle atop her head. Her head was down, staring at her hands in her lap and unmoving, looking for all the world as if she were asleep.

She appeared regal and very much out of place in the dark confines of the dingy tavern. Though the room was not large, the few others sitting in the room gave her a wide berth. Their mumbles of conversation seemed muffled and uncertain and they kept casting glances her way. She kept her pale face down and did not seem to acknowledge the attention her simple appearance was bringing.

The two men who'd just entered, Bogdan and Sergiu, were not known for their intelligence nor their manners, and were quite unaffected by the solemn air that seemed to emanate from the strange woman.

"Who's that then?" Bogdan asked the tavern keeper, jerking his thumb back towards her.

The tavern keeper shook his head but didn't answer and continued drawing the cloth around and around the glass in his hand.

"He's been struck dumb," Sergiu cackled.

"It's not every day a fallen woman falls at our feet," Bogdan snickered.

“And look at her clothes,” Sergiu grinned. “She’s got money, she does.”

“Maybe that speaks to the quality of her services,” Bogdan quipped before roaring laughter.

Bogdan wove his way around the tables towards the woman, Sergiu following behind. The two men were experienced in burglary and theft, and were already tallying up the woman’s worth in their heads as they approached. Bogdan wiped his sweaty hands on his already-greasy trousers and then pushed back his hair. Upon reaching the table where the woman sat he leaned on it, staring down at the woman, eyes probing her figure, gaze seeking entry down the curve of her neckline.

“Hello, lovely,” he grinned, before stringing together a phrase that had never yet been uttered in history. “What’s a woman like you doing in a place like this?”

She looked up at him slowly, the movement of her neck fluid and graceful. Bogdan’s grin faltered as she stared into his eyes, a hint of a smile playing upon her lips. Her pupils were pitch black, giving her the cold, dead eyes of a shark. Her face was elegantly crafted, fine chin, sculpted cheekbones, tiny nose, ruby red lips, smooth pale skin. She didn’t appear to be much more than nineteen-years-old but there was a worldliness about her that insinuated she was vastly older than that.

“Maybe I’ve been waiting for you,” she purred.

“Oh ho!” Sergiu exclaimed, poking Bogdan in the ribs. “Waiting for us, hey?”

“Name your price, love,” Bogdan said, boldly reaching for her breast.

He never made it. One moment the woman was sitting placidly and the next instant she was gripping his arm. She hadn’t even appeared to move. Her grip was vice-like and her long nails dug painfully through Bogdan’s shirt and into his skin. She smiled a horrible wicked smile and Bogdan was suddenly afraid.

“I don’t think you’re prepared to pay it,” she said, in a voice that was now deliciously smoky.

“Let go of me,” Bogdan said, fear making his voice quake.

Sergiu still hadn’t quite grasped what was happening and he looked at Bogdan curiously. Bogdan grappled for the knife he kept in a sheath around his waist. Grabbing it, he tried to stab the woman. The blade flashed towards her and stopped just as suddenly as she caught his other hand and laughed. Her fingers were wrapped around his, giving them both a death grip on the knife.

“Hey,” Sergiu yelled, finally noticing his friend’s predicament. “Let him go.”

They were his final words as he lunged towards the woman. The woman spun Bogdan around with his knife hand so that it plunged up and into Sergiu’s neck. His eyes went wide and he gargled as a stream of crimson spurted from the wound and onto Bogdan, who was still trapped in the woman’s impossibly steely grip. Her hand kept his wrapped around the knife that was now plunged into his friend’s neck. When she pulled his hand back and withdrew the knife Sergiu

gurgled and fell to the floor.

Bogdan went weak in the knees and was held up only by the woman's strength. She brought his hand with the bloody knife closer to her face before sticking out her tongue and licking the knife from base to tip. The blood flowed down her tongue and a beatific smile appeared across her face.

"Delicious," she moaned.

When she opened her eyes the pupils were rimmed yellow, like a demon.

"Let me go! Let me go!" Bogdan bellowed.

Now the whole tavern was watching them. The darkness of the tavern made it difficult to see what exactly was happening. They'd only seen Sergiu fall to the floor but didn't see the blood spilling from his neck, otherwise they would have panicked and ran earlier.

"You can't leave. You're the main course." The woman said.

"What are you?" Bogdan whimpered, as he flooded his pants in fear.

The woman didn't answer. She just grinned. As Bogdan watched her incisors elongated to sharp points. Her jaw opened impossibly wide, like a snake. She

pulled him down towards her and plunged her teeth into his neck.

She closed her eyes in ecstasy, moaning as she drank his hot, rich blood and the heat of his body became hers. She drained him in seconds and let his pale corpse collapse to the floor. Now the other patrons were on their feet, running towards the door and away from the evil that had launched itself out of the corner and was busy latching itself on to every warm body in the place.

But it was far too late for escape.

Layton

Layton Nicholson was in his bedroom buttoning up his vest when a quick rap came at the door. He crossed the small room in two strides and opened the door to find his best friend, Adrian, in the hallway. Adrian grinned at Layton good-naturedly.

“Come, Layton, I’m ravenous.”

“You’re always ravenous,” Layton teased him.

“Yes, but this morning I’m particularly ravenous,” Adrian replied, slipping casually into Layton’s room.

Layton finished buttoning his vest and then rolled up the thin sleeves of his shirt, which revealed his brawny physique. Even though Adrian was only a year younger than he, Layton towered over his friend. Layton was in the fifth year of his apprenticeship to a blacksmith and his body had rapidly responded to his daily toils. In the course of his time in this village he’d already twice had to let out his shirts due to his growing stature. Meanwhile, Adrian had remained small and wiry, though his fingers were more nimble than Layton’s from his apprenticeship to a leatherworker.

“And you know how Mrs. Albescu refuses to let one eat unless all of us are at the table,” Adrian said, crossing to the window and peering out.

It was a peculiar habit of their landlord that she claimed to have picked up on a trip to England in her youth, when her status as well as her possessions were much grander. A series of deep misfortunes had settled on her and showed in her craggy, lined face, leaving her with only this house in the small town deep in the heart of Moldvinia which she had no option but to rent out to boarders to make a living. As neither Layton nor Adrian had ever gone beyond the mountains that ringed this town, they just had to take her word on the customs of other countries. And, as they were at her mercy when it came to all things related to the boarding house, they had to follow whatever customs she chose to enforce.

Layton took one last look at himself in the looking glass, trying and failing to tuck his blond curls back out of his face. Vanity was a sin, but one the fresh-faced twenty-year-old could not escape. It was no secret that women of his age around the village found him pleasant to look at, and would sometimes find excuses to run an errand down to the smithy where he apprenticed for an excuse to watch him at work. If only he were as easy with his words as Adrian, but something about female attention made Layton's mind go blank. He was in awe of them, every single one, as if doubtful such beautiful creatures could ever be attracted to him.

The floorboards creaked as the two made their way down the narrow staircase and into the small kitchen. The other three boarders were already seated and they looked up in annoyance as Layton and Adrian entered. Layton smiled reassuringly as he sat, feeling his linen trousers climb up towards his shins and noting that it was time to replace those as well.

Mrs. Albescu eyed the two warily as they came in, her arms folded across her black corset and simple cream-colored dress. When they sat she slopped watery porridge into small, misshapen bowls and the boarders passed them around the table. They all tucked in. Adrian finished first and his attempts at making conversation were rebuffed by the others around the table, who were intent on

finishing and leaving as quickly as they could. It didn't make much difference to Adrian; he was happy enough to hold a conversation with himself.

Layton and Adrian had never said much except in passing to the other boarders, who were much older than the two friends. But Layton and Adrian were both happy in their own company. They had much in common, both of them having been sent to apprentice from families that had scrimped and saved for a chance to push their children up the economic ladder. Their sensibilities fit together in harmony, with Layton being the more serious of the two and Adrian eternally finding the joke in every story and, where there was none, providing his own.

Still, it was a lonely life, with their families a long ride out of town and their work taking up most of their days. They would (more often than Layton would care to admit) wind up at the tavern after a long day at the smithy where they would laugh and commiserate with the other young apprentices in similar predicaments. Layton would never stay too late, always of a mind to return home for sufficient sleep and prayer as befitting a young man in his situation (according to the local reverend).

When they'd finished eating, Layton and Adrian said goodbye to Mrs. Albescu and proceeded out of the house towards their respective masters. Their paths took them down the cobblestoned road, where they would split up at the first intersection, where the bakery sat.

As they were saying their goodbyes, Nicoleta paused from sweeping the stoop of her father's bakery to greet them. Her petticoats stopped their mad dance as she leaned on the broom and waved.

"Good morning, Layton," she said, coloring brightly as he looked at her.

“Good morning, Nicoleta,” Layton replied.

The smell of fresh bread wafted out onto the street. In the window behind her, Layton could see the loaves that were even now coming out of the oven. He stood for a beat looking at Nicoleta and struggled to think of something to say. The situation grew more awkward with each passing second. Why was he only this tongue-tied when speaking to the fairer sex? In contrast, Adrian had no problem replying to her.

“Your father’s bread smells fabulous,” Adrian smiled. “Share with us his secret, won’t you?”

“The secret is patience,” she responded.

“Ah, something I have far too little of.”

She tittered at that but directed her next question to Layton. “Would you care for a loaf? Fresh out of the oven.”

“That would be something of which I would be...” Layton faltered under her adoring gaze.

“Perhaps another time,” Adrian said, saving him and turning him in the direction of the forge.

“I think an introduction with her father is in order,” Adrian whispered to Layton.

“I think you’d best concentrate on your own affairs,” Layton responded.

“What I wouldn’t give for my affairs to involve her.”

“Your words will get you in trouble one day,” Layton admonished his friend, but he couldn’t keep the grin off his face.

“Oh, Layton,” Adrian said, slapping him on the back heartily. “My words will get me out of trouble just as easily as they get me in.”

“Until this evening, then.”

“Join me at the tavern tonight. If I have to eat one more of Mrs. Albescu’s leftover mutton I shall go mad.”

After some back and forth Layton finally agreed and the two friends parted ways.

Layton arrived at the smithy to find the young assistant stoking the fire. Layton said his good mornings to the young boy and grabbed his leather apron off a

hook on the wall. He wound it around his waist and tied it at the back just as the master blacksmith, Mabon Howell, appeared, a load of cast iron castoffs in his hands.

Mabon's black bushy beard and wild, arched eyebrows gave him a constant look of surprise. He was skilled as a blacksmith though lacking in charm. He had a gruff manner and was stingy with his compliments, though he'd never gone so far as to beat Layton. This morning his shirt was already streaked with coke dust from the fire.

Mabon looked Layton up and down and handed him the load of cast-iron.

"Nails," Mabon grunted. "Fifteen of them. I will be checking."

As Layton got to work picking out his tools and his casts, Mabon folded his arms and watched him. He'd taken an inordinate interest in his young apprentice ever since Layton had begun working the forge himself. The more Layton's shoulders broadened and his biceps grew, the more critical Mabon had become of him. It was as if he was punishing Layton, but for what Layton had no idea.

Mabon had no wife and had so far resisted all attempts at female companionship. The reverend had repeatedly tried to play matchmaker but to no avail, and had by now given up in despair.

Layton set to work, instructing the young assistant on how hot to stoke the coals before beginning the long process of melting down the cast iron to re-shape it into nails. It was good, honest work and Layton enjoyed the feel of his body, the play of his muscles as he hammered the iron into shape, the heat from the forge

coating him and making him shiny with sweat.

He loved the rhythm of it, keeping four or five irons in the fire and rotating them out. Then came the precise strikes, the blows hammering down on the metal with a satisfying crack. The heating and the shaping and the quenching had a predictability that was calming. The results of his work lined up on the bench, the pile of nails growing steadily as he worked.

Mabon soon left him to it and continued his work on another anvil crafting an intricate cast iron gate for one of the larger estates in the village. The assistant ran back and forth between the two to ensure the fires remained stoked and the floors were swept and all the other minutiae of the shop was taken care of.

There was very little talk in the forge as the two men concentrated on their tasks. Every now and then Mabon would reach a pausing point and come inspect Layton's work. Layton was well into his apprenticeship and needed less and less instruction. Still, the master would point out something here or there for Layton to improve. Mabon was miserly with his compliments but his absence of yelling was a compliment of itself.

In the afternoon a young woman came into the smithy with her father. Her figure was quite fetching in her long forest-green dress. The crinoline skirt swished around her legs and her bustle bobbed behind her. The older gentleman was dressed in a grey frock coat, vest and trousers. His mustache bounced amusingly as he gave orders disdainfully to Mabon.

As her father spoke to Mabon, Layton and the young apprentice kept turning their eyes to the woman. She watched them work, fluttering her eyes in a way that made Layton self-conscious and red at the collar. Women were attentive to Layton but he didn't know how to respond. Certainly some of them were well

above his station, but around even those that weren't he was often tongue-tied. He forced his attention back to the work at hand, concentrating on striking the precise blows, his solid muscles working as a beautifully oiled machine.

"Layton," the gruff voice of Mabon interrupted his rhythm.

"Aye?"

"This gentleman requires your assistance with shoeing his horse."

Layton finished his last nail and set his tools down before accompanying the gentleman and his daughter to the small stables behind the forge along with their horse. Mabon did brisk business as a farrier and had Layton well-trained in most of the art himself. Some days he spent more time in the stables than the workshop.

The stables were small but well kept. They were tacked on to Mabon's own house. A hayloft above stored the feed, and sloping channels in the floor allowed for drainage. There were four stalls, three of which were empty and the closest of which held Mabon's own horse, a solemn chestnut creature who never seemed much bothered by Mabon's temper.

Layton cleaned and trimmed the hooves of the gentleman's horse while he inspected each shoe. He was aware of the young woman's eyes on him and she peppered him with questions about the work which he did his best to answer. He didn't know whether she was truly interested in the business of shoeing horses or whether she just wished for an excuse to speak to him. Layton wished he were as clever with his speech as Adrian, but his straightforward answers seemed to

please the young woman, and her pleasure pleased Layton. It was when her questions seemed to skate a little more personal that Layton tensed up and his mouth went dry. It was as if the mere thought that she was attracted to him made his tongue useless.

Two of the horseshoes needed to be replaced, but the man had business in town that couldn't wait and reluctantly agreed to leave his horse with Layton. They bid him farewell, the young woman casting him one last lingering glance that Layton tried to capture in his memory, before strolling off.

Layton sighed. He wanted to be witty and quick like Adrian but that was not his lot in life. Perhaps it would have been much easier if he had stayed in his small provincial village with his mother and sister. There wasn't much choice there in the way of matrimonial selection but what choice there was would have been made by his mother. Perhaps the outcome would not have been so fine as he would have wanted, but at least it would have spared him the difficult process of courtship.

After housing the horse in the stall he returned to the forge to work on a set of horseshoes. He bent to the iron and sank into the rhythm of heating and pounding that made sense to him. Next year he would begin working to fashion his own set of tools in preparation for becoming a journeyman. Maybe once he had his own business he would have the confidence he currently lacked.

He did not know that before the next evening he would no longer be an apprentice or, in fact, a man.

Sanda

Sanda strolled down the darkened cobblestone street as if she didn't have a care in the world. The rustling of her crinoline was loud on the quiet streets. The flickering street lamps illuminated only the areas directly beneath each and were stationed far apart to act more as beacons than anything that would light the street. Their light made greasy shadows of the few people out this late. Here and there a lantern burned in a nearby window but otherwise all was dark.

Sanda felt the attention on her as she passed people. Her midnight-black dress hemmed with filigreed silver made her stand out in this provincial town. She was fortunate her dress was black as it hid the blood stains that had splashed across the chest from her adventure in the tavern. That had been so many miles and too many nights ago. The hunger had come upon her again.

It had been foolish, Sanda knew. Word had spread and had drawn the attention of her Lord to her location. She'd moved on to this larger township to blend in. But she couldn't help herself. Chaos was in her nature. Even now, as she thought the Lord's enforcers were on her tail, she had to stop and indulge her craving. It was dangerous and unnecessary to do it here with the enforcers so close. Which was another reason it was so tempting.

As she traversed the darkness between street lamps she picked out a sound. A heartbeat. No, two heartbeats. The heavy step of a footstep trying to stay muffled. The sound of steel sliding from leather.

Sanda continued walking, seemingly oblivious to the two lumbering fools

behind her who were doing their best to stay quiet. In the darkness between streetlamps one of them reached out and caught her shoulder. She let him stop her.

“It’s dangerous for a lady to be out so late at night,” a male voice said.

Sanda turned, clutching the ruby necklace at her throat as if scared. The two thugs wore grimy clothes and equally grimy grins. The one with his hand on her shoulder held a knife in his other hand. They were both bigger than she, but scrawny. Not a lot of meat on their bones or blood in their veins but they would do. She just needed to feel that warmth running down her throat.

“I shall be careful,” she said.

They laughed and the one with his hand on her shoulder continued, “Perhaps for a small fee we could guide you to safety.”

“And for a larger fee we could ensure you remained safe while we do it,” the other growled.

“That won’t be necessary,” Sanda said.

“Oh ho!” The one touching her laughed. “Won’t it then? Perhaps we shall see what happens to a woman on her own.”

“Perhaps we shall,” Sanda agreed.

The man released her shoulder and grabbed for her necklace. His hand never made it. His arm was suddenly bent back so that his forearm bone jutted out and the crack seemed to come a second later. The man’s eyes went wide and before he could scream Sanda clamped a hand over his mouth, gripping his jaw shut. Her incisors sharpened, her eyes yellowed at the edges, and she latched her mouth on to his neck, piercing his skin and sliding into his heat. She luxuriated in the warm, viscous blood accompanied by the man’s weakening gurgles.

She drained him in seconds and turned to his compatriot. He was already fleeing back down the street. Sanda laughed, her dress rustling as she gathered herself to leap. He was half a block away but she landed on him in a single bound. Her fingernails were claws, tearing at the skin of his back as he fell, splashing flecks of delicious warm blood across her face.

She was on his back, her dress nearly covering him as she pinned him down. He’d smashed his head on the street and was disoriented, clawing uselessly at the ground. It had been a poor fight but she still deserved her victory. She clamped her lips on his neck, teeth piercing his skin, and drank him down. He was a poor meal. Scrawny and weak. All in all a disappointing night.

She was interrupted by a gasp and she looked up. She’d landed near enough to a streetlamp that the onlooker could see the rivulets of blood running down the sides of her mouth.

The onlooker was a brawny young man with blond curls. He wore the dark trousers and light shirt of a working man. The sleeves were rolled up, revealing immense biceps.

She leaped on the young man, bringing him to the ground. He struggled, putting up more of a fight than the two hoodlums she'd just taken down. She could feel the strength in his body and let him struggle like an insect in a spider web. He grunted as he tried to free himself. She stared down at him as he wriggled. He was gorgeous. Her eyes traced his chiseled jaw and the fine cheekbones. His muscles strained against hers and she could feel the power within him. Strong. But not stronger than her. And such fight in him!

Sanda lowered her mouth to his neck and his masculine scent hit her nose. It was alluring, and she inhaled deeply, teeth hovering just over his sensitive skin. His heartbeat pounded through him and she slowly sank her incisors into him.

This one was worthy. Delicious. The righteous ones were the best of all.

Sanda was interrupted by a stabbing pain in her side. She roared and spun around to find a metal hook, studded with silver, protruding from her side. The man holding it was covered head to toe in black leather. He yanked the hook towards him and the pain shook her.

She let him propel her closer and then, when she was almost on him, extended her claws and swiped at his heavy leather armor. She slashed through the material, felt his blood stain her hands red, and then two massive cold hands grabbed her from behind.

She was crushed up against a broad chest and struggled to free herself, but the giant who held her had ten times her strength. She looked up into the face of the pale mountain of a man and her own blood kin who'd been sent to track her down.

“Paine,” she whispered, still struggling to free herself.

“Ilana,” Paine rumbled, looking down at her and keeping hold of her as easily as a mother might cradle an infant. His skin was paler than hers, his eyes an icy white, and his white hair was swept back over his head. He leaned closer to her ear and rumbled. “You can never run from me. I can sense you anywhere. And you will pay for killing Sanda.”

The enforcer in black stepped forward and snapped silver chains around each of her wrists. Sanda collapsed in the giant’s embrace and then the vision ended, snapping Sanda back to the present.

She was still crouched atop the second thug and looking up at the broad-shouldered young man with the blonde ringlets. Rivulets of blood ran from her mouth. She hissed at the young man, then gathered herself and leaped to the rooftops and into the safety of the night even as she heard Paine’s footsteps rounding a nearby corner.

Sanda flew through the night, leaping from roof to roof until she was well enough away and crouched behind a stately chimney. Her visions were helpful but uncontrollable, coming at random times usually, but not always, when she was in danger. It was but another side effect of her flawed bloodline.

How had Paine found her so quickly? She knew that he was closing in. Her deeds couldn’t be hidden. But she thought he was miles away in the countryside where she’d left the last corpses.

In her vision, Paine had said he could sense her. Perhaps it was time to find a new host. That man from the vision, the broad-shouldered youth who'd watched her catch her kill. His taste still lingered on her tongue, even from the vision. Yes. Perhaps it was time to find someone new.

She could follow the youth's scent. Find him. Take him. Start over fresh.

Layton

Layton had remained at the tavern later than intended and had more ale than he planned and was returning to the boarding house. He was meandering through the near-dark streets when the woman in the fancy dress leaped onto the man out of nowhere. Her ebony hoop skirt swept out over the man's body and she'd leaned down as if whispering something in his ear, but when she raised her head she had blood either side of her mouth. She'd stared at Layton, her face a ghastly mess of blood, then cocked her head and jumped into the air, higher than the rooftops.

Layton blinked and rushed to the man lying on the street. He was pale, and though Layton expected the streets to be soaking with blood there was only the barest patch beneath the smear of gore on the man's neck.

"Stand aside," a rough voice rumbled, pushing Layton out of the way.

A man dressed entirely in black and wielding what looked like a silver spear knelt over the dead body. He poked at the body's neck, peering at the two small holes in the skin. He pressed his fingers against the holes and then stiffened. After a moment he relaxed and looked over to Layton.

"It was Ilana," he said.

Layton opened his mouth to respond when a low voice rumbled from behind

him. “Of course it was.”

The voice was so low it made Layton’s body vibrate. He turned to find a huge mountain of a man standing almost behind him. The man’s skin was deathly pale and his hair was snow white. A black cloak was wrapped around him and he wore the rough clothes of a working man, though entirely in black.

No man had ever made Layton feel small before but this man was easily three times Layton’s size. Each hand was the size of Layton’s head. His face was sharp and craggy, as if chiseled out of stone. He was a statue come to life. When the man turned to gaze at Layton, Layton was struck by the icy white of his eyes.

“What’s happening here?” Layton asked.

The giant advanced upon Layton and he drew back, only to bump into the chest of the man in black. He glanced between the two of them and the giant reached for Layton’s head.

“Nothing you need concern yourself with,” the giant rumbled

The giant’s hand closed about Layton’s head.

Layton woke with a start and bolted upright. He was in his room in the boardinghouse, the morning sun just beginning to peak through the window. His heart was racing and he was sweating. The room was already quite warm but not enough to justify the sheen of sweat which covered Layton’s body. He couldn’t

think what had got him so scared. He had vague memories of meeting Adrian at the tavern and later walking home through the streets and then...

Had there been some sort of fight? Did he see someone injured? Layton couldn't recall and the feeling faded with each passing second until he was left with nothing but a slight sense of unease.

Adrian remarked on his apparent distress when they made their way down to the kitchen (on time this morning).

"You look pale, was it too much for you last night?" Adrian asked.

"Yes," Layton forced a grin. "I can't keep up with you."

"I shouldn't let it worry you. Not many can," Adrian quipped.

If Adrian noticed that Layton was uncharacteristically quiet on their walk to their respective places of apprenticeships he didn't remark on it. Mabon was in a particularly foul mood this morning, losing his temper twice at the piece he was working on. Layton was glad when another horse was brought in and he quickly took the opportunity to care for it. He led it out of the shop and put it up in the stables, taking his time so as to allow Mabon to calm himself.

Mabon's horse was restless this afternoon, whinnying slightly and shifting to the side of the stall nearest the door where the summer sun shone brightly through the open entrance. The other horse that Layton was leading seemed calm

until they approached the next stall, at which point he, too, began to hesitate. With some difficulty Layton got him into the stall and closed it.

There was a rustling in the darkness at the far side of the barn, beneath the ladder to the hayloft. Layton turned and was astonished to find a young woman of exceptional breeding. She wore a midnight-black dress filigreed with silver designs that seemed to sparkle even in the depths of the shadows. The dress flowed out around her and was trimmed with pearl lace. A ruby necklace clasped a delicate neck. Her face was exquisite, with finely crafted cheekbones and a perfect line of the nose.

“Hello, young man,” she said, in a voice like satin.

Layton was instantly smitten. She exuded an attraction that he’d never experience before, as if she’d reached into his body and tugged on his very soul. He stood a little prouder and affected a small smile, suddenly desirous that she should want him. Such was his all-encompassing attraction that he failed to question why a woman of such apparent high status would be seeking refuge in the darkest corner of the small stables.

She took a step towards him and gestured for him to come closer. He obeyed without hesitation, stepping out of the sunlight. He was rewarded with a smile that showed her glistening white teeth. When he was close enough she reached out and gently stroked one of his biceps, letting her finger trail down his arm slowly in a way that sent icy shivers through him. His mind, ordinarily jumbled when dealing with the fairer sex, was sharpened to a lusty point that was completely unlike him.

“Such a handsome boy,” she purred, letting her finger glide up to his face, tracing the outlines of his jaw and his cheeks as he stood, smitten, before her.

“My name is Sanda Covaci. And you are?”

“Layton. Layton Nicholson.”

“Layton Nicholson,” she repeated softly. And – oh! – to hear his name from her lips. She was everything he’d ever dreamed of. “Handsome. And strong,” she said, her light fingers gently prodding at his arms and then his chest. “Yes, you will do nicely. Come.”

Sanda beckoned him further into the darkness of the stable and reached for him. His body responded instantly, his pants suddenly tight from his manhood as she slid her hands into his hair and guided their lips together. Her unexpected coldness was wonderful in the thick summer heat and he melted into her. Her tongue flicked out and drew across his teeth. He tasted her then, icy and sharp like sherbert, which only served to sharpen his desire.

Layton reached for her, caressing her back, hands roaming up and down her body. His bashfulness was gone, replaced with hard desire. He felt her slim figure beneath the tight bodice of her dress. Her hands explored him in turn, dragging across his chest and with a sudden jerk she ripped his shirt open and pressed her bare hands against his flesh.

Layton sighed into her mouth, eyes closing as he inhaled her scent. Their hands moved faster across each other, grabbing, reaching, exploring. His breath came quicker, matching hers. When he pulled away and stared into her eyes he could see her pupils were wide with excitement, pure black orbs which desired only him.

It was quite unlike him to give in to his desires like this, but it was as if the woman were giving him permission to unleash his fantasies. His hands moved faster up and down her dress, squeezing the delectable figure beneath. She kissed his chest, her hands moving around his chest and down his stomach. She released him only long enough to tug apart the ties of her bustle.

Layton was burning with desire and he reached up, almost as though watching from outside himself, and grabbed the silver filigreed trim of her bust in both hands, yanking it down and revealing the split bust corset that hugged her trim figure. She gasped in pleasure and delight and helped him unbutton the corset until he could slip his hands beneath the fabric and caress her tender breast.

Now it was Layton's turn to sigh as he touched her, hands greedily exploring her curves as their warm mouths pressed together again. Sanda was paradoxically soft and hard, delicate but rough, and his hands hefted each wonderful breast as their breath combined. Layton was at full mast, his need urgent. Sanda snaked her hands down his trousers and grabbed his manhood. He jumped in surprise but she held firm, stroking up and down his length in a way that made the world spin.

A desperate need was building at the base of his shaft, growing with each stroke of Sanda's delicate fingers. His hand grew quicker on her breast, squeezing harder as she urged him on, seemingly in love with the pain of his brute force. Her nipples were taut and she gasped into his mouth as he pinched each one beneath his fingers, spreading his hand to cover her whole breast. He'd never felt anything so wonderfully perfect before.

He leaned into her, pressing her back. She took two steps back and hit the wall of the barn. He pressed himself closer, hungry with need to be with her, to be inside her.

There was a rustle of skirts and he realized she was raising her dress. In a frenzy of desire he released her so he could help grab hold of the layers of crinoline and petticoat and caging and lift it up between them, exposing her undergarment. She unbuttoned his trousers and slipped them down, then took him in hand again and guided his erection against her own entrance.

Layton's cock met Sanda's warm heat. He could feel her spreading for him as they met, his urgency rising. He grabbed her buttocks and thrust inside, sheathing himself inside her to the hilt. A fluttery sigh escaped her lips as he filled her. She was heaven. Her warmth surrounded him, temporarily sating the sharp desire in his core. But the need rapidly reappeared and he slid out before thrusting in again.

They moved into a quick rhythm, Layton bucking his hips as she rocked with him, desperate to fill herself as he was desperate to fill her. She clasped him closer, their bodies moving in tandem. Her fingernails dug into his back, sharp bursts of pain that only doubled the pleasure he now felt. He grabbed her tighter, practically lifting her in the air as he plunged into her, stroke after stroke while his passion rose. The ache in his core wound tighter, the urgency making him thrust faster, monstrous with need. Sanda opened her mouth wide and breathed him in deeply, inhaling forever as if she had a hook on his soul. He could feel himself cresting, the tension at the breaking point, and just as the crescendo was about to rise to a glorious climax the world flipped.

Suddenly, Layton was being gripped tight, his back up against the wall of the barn. His body was still aflame with desire but it was different, as if the ache in his core was deeper. His body seemed to be suddenly covered with layers of fabric, the crinoline and lace and petticoats pushed up against him, spilling down across his bare skin while a stiffer fabric held him tight from his waist to his chest. And there was something inside him. Warm and hard and alien but wonderfully exciting and welcome, filling and emptying him, driving the aching need in his body higher. Before he could even begin to think the need broke inside him, flooding his body with sweet warmth and he shook and cried out. His

voice was higher pitched and delicate, sounding for all the world like Sanda.

He felt the warm thing inside him throb, heard a man groan and slide deeper into Layton's welcome void. Heat burst within him, sending sparkles through to his brain and making him cry out again in a woman's voice. Huge hands clutched his backside, not letting go as the warmth inside him pulsed and filled him with bursts of wet heat that were delicious despite their strangeness.

When he came back down he became aware of a thousand different strange sensations. Something held his bust tight. Fabric traced across his arms and his legs. Something silky draped down his cheek and spilled across his shoulders. His body wiggled and moved in different places, felt lighter and smaller somehow.

The man holding Layton pulled away and Layton felt the hard warm delight disappear from between his legs while something warm dripped down his thighs. But he was too concerned about the man above him to worry about much else. The man grinned down at him and it took a second for Layton to realize that the man was him.

Layton uttered a strangled cry – again, high-pitched and feminine – and looked down at himself. On his chest was a semi-unbuttoned corset, the lace of an ebony-black dress untied, and a bare breast hanging free, the round pink nipple on the end still spiked with excitement. Somehow he was in this woman's body.

Layton gaped at his old body as it moved without him inside. Sanda dropped his dress and let the fabric cover him up before she reached down to put her own trousers on.

“This will do nicely,” his former body said.

Layton was frozen with fright and bewilderment. He raised his hands to his face, felt the soft contours of his skin and cheeks and lips. When he brought his hands down before his eyes he saw the fingers were delicate, the nails long and curved, the hand and arm shapely and fetching.

“What--? How did--?” Layton gasped.

“It doesn’t matter,” she waved him off. “You are Sanda Covaci now. I suggest you leave town as soon as possible. Certain people are looking for you.

She turned and moved towards the barn door, pausing just at the end of the shadow, where the sun’s rays hit the floor of the barn. Slowly she reached out her hand and thrust it into the light. A grin lit up her face and she stepped into the rays of the sun, closing her eyes.

“So warm. I forgot what this was like,” she whispered.

She began to hitch up Mabon’s horse, taking the saddle down from the stall and tightening it up.

Layton took a step towards her. The horses whinnied and shied away from him. “What are you doing?”

“I’m leaving to find my fortune as befits a young man of this stature,” she grinned at him.

She led the horse out of the stables and into the courtyard. Layton hastily stuffed his breast back into his corset and, still disheveled, began to follow her. “Wait, you can’t—” He started, reaching out for her.

His outstretched fingers hit the shaft of sunlight and a sizzling pain shot through him. His fingers felt like they were on fire and he yanked them back, staring in wonder at the blackened tips of his nails as smoke rose from his skin. Even as he watched the blackened skin fell off, revealing new pink skin beneath.

She looked back at him from outside, grinning from his own body. “There are a few rules which I’m sure you’ll discover soon enough. It has been a pleasure Layton Nicholson. Or rather, Sanda Covaci.”

She mounted the horse and rode away, leaving Layton astonished and alone in the dark of the stables. He gazed down at himself. His bodice was still torn open, along with his corset, revealing half his chest. God, he was looking down at the very breast he’d been so smitten with just moments ago. He hefted it into place and yanked the corset together enough to snap it shut. Then he tied the filigreed lace back together and closed the bodice. At least now he had some degree of modesty.

What kind of sorcery had she used? What was she? What was he? Layton had heard stories about such creatures of the night. Demons who sucked blood and preyed on innocents. But this changing bodies? This was new. Oh, why had he given himself to her so readily?

Movement across the courtyard caught his eye. It was Mabon, striding towards the stables, perhaps to see where his young apprentice had disappeared. Layton panicked. He couldn't let his master see him like this.

He ran to the ladder and climbed up to the hayloft. With the layers of clothing, not to mention the crinoline cage of the dress, it was an effort but he scrambled to the top and lay still in the hay while he listened to Mabon mumbling and swearing down below. Lying on his stomach like this left the back left the bustle stuck up in the air. If anyone saw him like this he would appear absolutely ridiculous and the only way he could possibly remain hidden was if he stayed motionless.

"Where's that damn boy?" Mabon muttered below.

Mabon's footsteps clomped off back towards the smithy and Layton cautiously peeked around the hay. From here he could see most of the courtyard and the back of the forge. When Mabon had disappeared from view Layton let out a breath. He struggled to sit up in the outfit but eventually managed to get himself upright. It was clear he wouldn't be able to leave the stables in the daylight, which gave him plenty of time to think on his predicament.

Sanda

What a fierce joy it was to be trotting about in the sun! Sanda let the horse wander through the town streets, grinning at all who passed like a fool. Her mind was as sharp as ever. Her body was young and virile. She'd not yet taken stock of which abilities she'd traded for this body, still too enamored with the feel of the bright sun on her bronzed skin.

The boy whose body she was now in commanded an odd kind of adoration. Whereas before Sanda had relied on using her powers of attraction to draw people to her, now she found them drawn by themselves. Mostly the young women, to be sure. She had a sense that her sensual attraction was still within her, albeit greatly reduced. It came out when she smiled or nodded, or said good day to the people she passed. They would turn and be captivated for an instant. It was not like the active power she'd used to attract Layton in the stables but something much more passive.

The horse walked steadily on beneath her. It was another unfamiliar sensation. Before, animals would shy away from her, terrified, as if she would ever be so desperate as to drink them dry. Only the specially bred horses of her Lord's castle would suffer her presence.

The trip through town wasn't just to enjoy her newfound freedom. If she wanted Paine off her trail she would need to offer him a sacrifice. And, of course, she couldn't resist the temptation to cause trouble. The horse's response told her everything she needed to know: she was unrecognizable.

She stopped to ask directions of several young women, heedless of how it would look for a man to do so. The women didn't seem to mind. They tittered and blushed under her attention and Sanda quite enjoyed flirting with them, the sharp scent of their desire still noticeable through her heightened senses. Finally she made it to a grand hotel. Two stories of imposing stonework and oak that imposed its dominance over the smaller, squatter buildings around it. Sanda tethered her horse outside and strolled in to the dark wood-paneled interior.

"I'm looking for someone," she inquired of the manageress who greeted her. "A large man, larger than two men. White hair. Is he here?"

The woman's look softened when Sanda spoke, captivated by her youthful good looks and the sexuality pouring from her in waves.

"Aye," the manageress replied. "He is here. But he's sleeping and gave orders not be disturbed under any circumstances." She leaned closer and whispered. "Truthfully, he scares me. Sleeps all day and then stays out all night. A brute. He says he's looking for monsters but I fear he is one."

And – oh! – the scent of the woman was delightful, teasing Sanda's new body into the beginnings of desire. Still, she stuck to her mission.

"I must see him," Sanda insisted. "Which room is he in? I shall suffer his temper alone."

"Oh no!" She replied, wide eyed. "You mustn't! I would hate to see you come to any harm."

The manageress covered her mouth as if she'd just let something slip. Sanda began to press the subject but then thought better of it. Who was she now but some random village boy? She couldn't make demands of him. Much as she hated it, she would have to wait for him to rise. Besides, the manageress had now captured her full attention. She seemed a simple woman. Soft of body and full of figure, with a round honest face and soft lips Sanda reckoned would feel wonderful against her own.

Sanda allowed the manageress to convince her to wait in the small dining room. The manageress – Silvana – plied her with food and ale. When she found Sanda had no money she let her off with a smile. Sanda found it easy to entice Silvana to shirk her duties and join her at the table, and even easier to convince the young woman to slip upstairs into a spare room. Sanda's mission to find Paine was forgotten in the moment as she sought out pleasure.

Sanda grew more excited as she followed behind, her eyes on Silvana's dancing buttocks. When the door closed behind them she took the young woman in her solid arms and held her close. Their lips met and Silvana sighed into Sanda's mouth as her soft body pressed against Sanda's hard one. Sanda had all the ardor of a young man and grew hard as Silvana's scent teased her nose, and her taste filled her mouth. Sanda's hands traced the woman's body, gripping the soft curves, the meaty waist, fingers digging into the plump bottom beneath the skirts.

As they kissed, Sanda untied Silvana's simple cream bodice and helped her slide out of the dress, followed by her undergarments. Silvana didn't protest as Sanda stripped her naked, indeed, she seemed just as excited to show off her body for her lover. Sanda's male desires were sharpened by sight, and she gazed lustily up and down Silvana's curvy body. Sanda unbuttoned her own trousers and dropped them to the floor. Her manhood was risen and the both stared at it, Sanda with curiosity, Silvana with wild lust.

Where Sanda's feminine lust had been slow and subtle, her masculine ardor was demanding and intense. The sight of Silvana's naked skin set off a frenzy within her and Sanda pounced on her, pelting her with kisses up and down her neck and across her breasts while Silvana gasped and wriggled. Sanda reached for her plump breasts, enjoying the soft play of her lover's tits beneath her calloused hand. As Sanda lay atop Silvana, her cock crushed against Silvana's stomach and she began grinding herself on her lover's soft round curves.

Sanda's manhood was soon even more demanding. She had an urge to conquer, to thrust, to fill. A deep aching itch right in the middle of her groin that demanded she take. Sanda nudged Silvana's legs apart and aimed herself at the woman's entrance. Sanda felt the head of her manhood press apart Silvana's nether lips. Sanda rolled her hips and burrowed herself inside, moaning as the woman's wild wet heat gripped her cock like a glove.

Sanda buried herself in side, driving in as far as she could go, sighing as their groins connected and she was held fully inside Silvana's warm embrace. Sanda began rocking in a gentle rhythm, resuming her kissing, her groping, her mouth and hands making their way across Silvana's ample breasts, back up to her lips, wanting her everywhere all at once. Sanda moved faster, need gripping her core, making her wild with lust. Sanda still had somewhat heightened senses, and the mixture of Silvana's tangy musk and her growing need were divine.

Silvana's body rocked with each thrust and her throaty voice grew higher in pitch as she neared the crescendo. Sanda gripped her tight, latched her mouth around Silvana's nipple and drove deep inside. The ache in her core shattered and she grunted, climaxing along with Silvana. The woman bucked up, driving Sanda deep, deep inside as Sanda emptied her desire in throbbing blasts of heat. God, it was perfect being inside Silvana, their bodies connected as they moved together as one, passion making them moan in harmony, bodies rocking back and forth as each slowly came down in their own time.

Sanda lay with her nose pushed deep into her lover's hair, luxuriating in the scent of her once more even as she cooled. Finally, she slipped out of Silvana and rose to redress. She helped Silvana back into her clothes, Silvana giggling and coloring like a schoolgirl, still smitten by the remnants of power echoing from Sanda's new body. They returned downstairs to wait.

Sanda was restless and the sun had fallen an hour ago when thudding footsteps on the stairs signaled the arrival of Paine. He came down the stairs, accompanied by an enforcer dressed in black. The manageress spoke to him. Sanda was too far away to hear what was said but Silvana gestured towards Sanda and Paine approached her grimly.

Sanda tensed and prepared to flee but Paine showed no sign of recognition.

"Why have you enquired of me?" Paine rumbled, taking up a position across the table where Sanda sat.

"I've heard you are looking for monsters."

"Aye."

"I found one this afternoon. A blood-drinking demon dressed in a woman's finery. She accosted me in my master's stables."

“Where?”

She could sense the eagerness in his voice. Sanda’s own fear had eased. She was giddy at the prospect of being so close to her blood kin and having him completely unaware of her presence.

“I will take you to her.”

Paine and his enforcer each had two black mares with coal black eyes, which they mounted. Paine’s animal was enormous, commensurate with Paine’s size. Sanda led the way back through the crowded streets towards the smithy. The crowd parted for Paine’s enormous mount, and people stopped to stare.

The sun had been completely down for some time when they reached the small stables behind the blacksmith. The rhythmic pounding from within the smithy told her that the blacksmith was still hard at work, apparently so engrossed in his task that he did not bother to speak up to the trio when they passed by the open doors.

The three dismounted in the courtyard and Paine led the way inside the stables, the enforcer following behind, his silver hooked staff at the ready. The other two ignored Sanda as she followed last. The stables were dark and empty.

Paine crept slowly through towards the back, one hand outstretched in front of him, waving it slowly around the barn like a dowsing rod.

“Hmmm,” he rumbled, his voice so deep it reverberated in Sanda’s own chest. “My blood-kin was indeed here.” His hand paused at the rear of the stables, where Sanda had swapped bodies with Layton. Paine’s brow wrinkled. “Something powerful happened here. The world has been warped.”

“What did she do?” the enforcer asked Paine.

He shook his head. “I’ve not seen anything like it before.”

“Perhaps she’s hiding in the hayloft,” Sanda suggested, eager to rouse Layton from his hiding place.

Paine gestured to the enforcer, who scrambled up the ladder. A few moments later he came back down. “Nothing.”

Sanda gritted her teeth. If only she’d gotten here before the sun had set. Paine, meanwhile, had his hand out and hovering in front of him, he turned and slowly made his way to the stable entrance, as if following a hidden trail. He paused when he neared Sanda, his hand wavering towards her briefly, then back to the courtyard.

“I can sense her trail. She was on foot. Perhaps whatever magic she used has drained her. This way.”

This last was said to the enforcer but Sanda crept along behind them as they wound their way to the smithy. She held back as the other two went inside,

fearful of being recognized by the blacksmith. She needn't have worried.

The coals were giving off the last of their warmth and Sanda's new eyes were not accustomed to the darkness inside, so it took her a moment to spot the blacksmith, who was standing in front of his anvil pounding on it with his hammer in a steady beat. The metal on the anvil appeared to have cooled, and it was unclear what good the blacksmith's effort was doing. He didn't react as Paine and the enforcer entered, just continued with his steady hammering at nothing.

The enforcer peered closely at Mabon. "He's been enchanted."

"Poorly, though," Paine agreed. "See if there's anything there."

The enforcer gripped both sides of Mabon's head and stood for a few seconds while he continued hammering, seemingly oblivious to everything that was going on. "She was here. But...he is filled with confusion. There is nothing useful here."

Paine sighed. "Wipe him and send him on his way."

The rhythmic pounding of the blacksmith's hammer mercifully stopped. He dropped the hammer and left the smithy in a daze, returning to his own house with heavy steps.

Paine turned to Sanda. "You. Boy. What is your part in all of this?"

“What do you mean?” Sanda replied with an easy smile.

“What do you remember of last night?”

“I was out late and came home to bed.”

“How do you know about me?” Paine said, advancing towards her.

“I heard the stories in the streets of the tragedy that occurred last night,” Sanda said, thinking fast. “They said that you fought monsters so when I found the monster in the stable I came right to you.”

Paine folded his arms and considered her. She stared back at him brazenly. Finally, he rumbled, “Hmmm,” and turned to the enforcer. “Come. We shall follow her trail and see where it leads.” Turning back to Sanda he added, “You come with us. I wonder what part you have to play in all this.”

“I am but a humble messenger.”

“My blood-kin has a connection to you somehow. First last night and now this. You are either a victim or a perpetrator. We shall soon find out which. Mount your horse.”

Anyone else would have been mad with fear at such an accusation from such a man. But to Sanda, the thrill of being able to cause more chaos and confusion for her own blood-kin more than made up for any danger she believed herself to be in. She dearly desired to see the look on her former face when she was brought down.

“Of course,” she smiled. “Let us find our monster.”

Layton

Layton had heard Mabon cursing his absence from where he hid in the stables. As soon as the sun disappeared behind the horizon Layton made his way down the ladder. Perhaps his friend, Adrian, could help him, or at least shelter him for a time.

The clink of Mabon's hammer could still be heard from the smithy as Layton edged his way past the terrified horses and out into the evening air. He was unused to walking with such a layer of petticoats and chiffon and crinoline decorating him, rustling with each step. The corset clutched his chest tightly, making him feel constricted and hampering his movements. He learned that he had to grip the layers of his dress and hold it up as he made his way over the hay-strewn ground or else the dirt and detritus would sweep along in front of him.

His body was lighter, as well. Shorter and with a different balance. Smaller in many places, bigger in some others, bouncy in all the wrong places. And yet he moved with a feminine grace. His hips swayed easily back and forth. Each step was confident. Seductive, even, despite himself.

The only way out of the small stables was past the smithy. Layton moved quickly by, hoping that Mabon would not see him. Alas, Mabon chose that moment to pause in his work and wipe the sweat from his brow as he looked up. Layton froze, staring into Mabon's eyes. What would he say to his former master? Did he have any idea where the body thief had gone?

As Layton stared into Mabon's eyes from outside the smithy, he sensed a warmth in the air greater than the summer and which connected the two of them. A shiver passed through Layton that Mabon seemed to share and he dropped his hammer but remained frozen, staring at Layton as if struck dumb.

"Madam!" Mabon called out in a hoarse voice. "I would be honored with your presence into my humble smithy."

Layton hesitated, still not prepared to break with the pleasantries of society and ignore an entreaty. He entered the smithy, his dress sweeping before him, the bustle bobbing behind. Mabon, usually taciturn and silent in the presence of women, now stared at him with such longing bliss on his face.

"Thank you, ah, good sir," Layton said, still adjusting to the unfamiliar purring voice spilling from his new lips.

The closer he got to Mabon the more he could sense the other man's attraction and...something more. As Layton returned his master's gaze he realized that the quick thudding heartbeat was not coming from his own chest but from Mabon's. And beneath the undertones of sweat and iron and smoke inside he could make out a coppery scent. It was heavenly and it struck a hungry chord deep inside him.

Something shifted inside Layton's mouth. His teeth were moving and as he flicked his tongue along to discover what was happening he felt his incisors growing to sharp points. He quickly covered his mouth with his dainty hand and looked away from Mabon.

“I’m looking for Layton Nicholson. Have you seen him?”

“No. He was my apprentice. But he has run away this very afternoon. Perhaps there is something I can do for you my lady? Please, may I do something for you?”

Mabon stepped forward until he was up against the small wooden barrier that separated the forge from the area where customers waited. His attention was focused solely on Layton. Layton realized that Mabon was acting just as he – Layton – had done when accosted by this woman in the stables. He’d lost all sense of propriety or decorum, his only want was an intense desire to fulfill her wants. Mabon was incapable of lying to Layton now, and if he said he knew nothing of the body thief’s whereabouts that meant he was speaking the truth.

“No. Thank you, I shall...I shall look elsewhere.”

“Wait, madam!” Mabon spoke out. His desire was so sharp it was like a physical thing between the two. Even though the disheveled grumpy blacksmith was well below the station of Layton’s new body, Mabon was desperate to have him.

“No,” Layton said sharply. “No. I must go. Forget that I was here. Return to your work.”

Mabon obediently returned to his anvil and hefted his hammer, striking rhythmic blows as Layton hurried out of the smithy and into the street. He walked back through the darkened streets to his boarding house. The gas lamps stationed every sixty feet usually gave off barely enough light to navigate by, particularly with cloudy skies like tonight. But Layton realized his new body had much

clearer night vision. He could pick out the outlines of buildings in the gloom as if there were a full moon. He could hear the heartbeat of people who passed him, all his senses attuned to the warm bodies like the predator he now was. It didn't even occur to him how odd it was for a woman such as himself to be out alone without a lantern.

Mrs. Albescu answered his knock at the boardinghouse door.

"Oh! My lady," she said, sweeping into a low courtesy. "To what do I owe the privilege?"

"I wish to see a young man named Adrian Lee. Is he here?"

"Adrian? Why...I believe so. Please come in."

Mrs. Albescu stood aside and Layton rustled into her small parlor. While Mrs. Albescu went to fetch Adrian, Layton remained standing, unsure how to sit properly with the bustle and dress protruding as they did. When Adrian entered the parlor his eyes went wide and he bowed low.

"M'lady. I'm afraid I haven't the pleasure of your acquaintance." His voice took on a formal air, not all like the jocularly he had expressed when Layton was a young man.

Adrian had clearly returned recently from his place of apprenticeship. His work shirt was rumpled and stained. The dark coarse trousers were too big for him, the

bottoms clumping awkwardly atop his simple and well-worn leather shoes. It all made Layton mindful of the apparent high status of his body. He was standing across from his friend in a silk dress that probably cost two years' wages. And even though Layton was older than he, Adrian now stood at least a head above his friend's smaller stature.

"Adrian," Layton said, stepping forward until the crinoline cage made his dress bump against his friend's legs. "I need your help." God, Layton's voice was like silk, deep and mature, particularly contrasted against Adrian's boyish manners.

"How may I serve you?" Adrian asked.

Layton felt his friend's eyes on him, Adrian's lascivious gaze kept in check by simple decorum. But Layton could taste his desire and smell his blood from here. Coppery and masculine. If Layton but said the word Adrian would ravish him right here in the parlor, with Mrs. Albescu peering on from her hiding place in the hall.

Layton took his friend's hands. They were warm in his own, bigger than his now dainty digits. He heard Adrian's heartbeat speed up as they touched.

"This is going to be difficult to believe..." Layton began, leaning close to whisper so that Mrs. Albescu couldn't hear. There was no easy way to say it. "I am not who I appear to be. I am your friend, Layton Nicholson, apprentice to the blacksmith. I have been cursed. My body stolen by a vampire. I am in her body and she is in mine."

"Is that so?" Adrian replied brightly. "Then I dare say you have come out the

victor.”

Layton’s seductive spell held his friend’s attention, prevented him from calling Layton mad and dashing away. He was willing to entertain Layton for the opportunity to stay within the presence of the gorgeous woman Layton had become.

“I must find my body and compel her to give it back,” Layton pressed on. “I shall need a place to stay until I can devise a plan. May I stay with you?”

“My lady that would be most improper,” Adrian said, his eyes growing wide as saucers. He placed his hand on hers. “Which is why I am compelled to say ‘yes’. I would be honored to have your company.”

“Thank you,” Layton beamed.

He stared into Adrian’s eyes, felt Adrian’s heartbeat thumping through his hands. The current of desire connected them both, Layton’s body suddenly fully alive to the delectable young man before him. He leaned forward and saw Adrian reciprocate. Their lips brushed and then Layton skated his mouth down his friend’s cheek to his neck.

Layton’s felt his teeth shifting, incisors growing sharp and wicked. Adrian’s drumbeat thumped in his head. He could smell the rich copper scent of blood running through his friend’s veins. He was ravenous for it. Layton opened his jaws, felt his incisors creep out and press against his friend’s warm neck. Adrian remained still, giving himself up to Layton, caught in the spell.

No. No, I am not a monster. Layton insisted to himself.

With a great effort he raised his head, felt his teeth retract as his belly nearly rumbled with hunger. Adrian still had his eyes closed, head bent to present his neck to his lover. Layton dropped Adrian's hands and stepped back. He could not stay here. Not without giving in to temptation.

Adrian raised his head. "Madam?" He asked, a question and an invitation.

"Never mind. I...I must go." Layton made for the door as Adrian reached out to stop him.

"I can help you," he said.

Layton pause din the doorway. "You can help me best by telling no one I was here."

"Will you return then?"

"Yes," Layton lied.

Adrian took his hand gently and kissed the back of it. "Until then."

Layton raised his dress so he could hurry back into the street and away from the boardinghouse. He was frantic now. Where could he go? Who could he trust to help him? After a moment of thought he set out on the road towards the outskirts of the township and towards the only other people he could trust: his mother and his sister.

The street lamps were lit and it was early enough that a horse drawn carriage or two still ferried passengers here and there. Raucous noise spilled from nearby taverns and lights burned from the houses and shops along the street. Layton hurried through the streets, his dress held high so he could move quickly.

He was aware how much he stood out in his fancy dress and that he was a beautiful woman alone. Men doffed their hats to them but he ignored them and carried on. The beautiful smell of blood and bodies enticed him from nearby inns but he stuck to his goal.

His mother and sister were a fair horse ride across the township, and as the hour grew later the streets grew darker and more empty. By the time he neared his destination there were few lights in the windows and only a drunken straggler or two on the roads.

Layton reached an intersection and turned right, passing a tavern just as three large men came out of it, singing drunkenly and leaning on each other. They fell into step behind Layton, matching his pace and hooting at him.

“Oh, miss! Miss!” One shouted. “Are you seeking company tonight?”

“Because we are!” The second one added to much laughter.

Layton quickened his pace and the trio behind him did the same. They caught up with him in the darkness between street lamps. One grabbed his dress, the other two grabbed his arms. He could smell the ale on them, could sense their thumping hearts. It made him both hungry and terrified.

“No need to keep walking the night,” the one to his right said.

“We’ve got your business right here,” the one on his left said.

“Look at this dress,” the one behind him added. “It seems someone is eager to dress up to play the part of a fancy lady.”

“Let me go,” Layton said, his voice trembling.

He tried to shake off the two men but they held on tight. Layton couldn’t turn off whatever magic in his body made men desire him, and in their drunken state they lost all sense of care. His dress was lifted and heavy hands grab his bottom. At the same he felt time warm, messy kisses across his neck and fumbling hands across his chest. Layton’s teeth shifted, the incisors growing sharp, but he was trapped in their grasp. He’d heard tales of vampire strength and agility but he was still very much a stranger in this feminine body, helpless and unable to draw on his unfamiliar power.

Now the men’s hands pawed at his breasts and his legs and his butt. Something

hard and warm pressed against his backside and his legs were kicked apart while the front of his dress was torn open. Another hand yanked up the front of the dress and found his underpants, the man's warm, moist breath sighing in Layton's ear as the fingers prodded at his undergarments. Layton's body was responding, rising to the sexual signals he was giving off in waves. He didn't want this but he was dripping wet, his body calling to the men as much as his mind rebelled. Behind him, the hard, urgent warmth slipped between the slit in his panties and brushed against his sensitive sex. And then...

Layton snapped sharply back to the present with a gasp. He was at the intersection again. The tavern was just in front of him. Layton retreated into the dark alcove of an empty storefront just as the door to the tavern burst open and three men tumbled out. They turned away from him and walked along the street, singing drunkenly and leaning on each other.

Layton took a moment to catch his breath. It had all felt so real. This was a power he had not heard of in any vampire legends. And, again, it seemed a power over which he had no control. When he'd caught his breath he continued to make his way to his mother and sister, more carefully this time.

Sanda

Paine did seem to be sniffing Sanda out like a bloodhound. They followed Layton's trail out of the smithy and uncertainly through the streets.

"Something is confusing my senses," Paine growled.

He would go down a street, pause, then turn and backtrack, tracing and retracing the trail while Sanda and the other enforcer waited. Always he came back to Sanda, as if her vampire soul in this boy's body was throwing him off.

"What do you know about this monster we're chasing?" Sanda asked Paine, when they resumed their travel.

He fixed her with cold, white eyes. "Nothing you need concern yourself with."

"She seems to me to be a vampire," Sanda pressed. "Such a deathly beauty she possessed."

"She is. But do not let her looks deceive you. She is a demon. One of the wildest I have ever met."

“How many have you met?”

Paine ignored the question. “Tell me again how you saw her.”

“I was in the stables preparing to shoe my master’s horse when she came upon me. I was completely transfixed, thinking her the loveliest creature I had ever seen. It stirred me to great heights. The turn of her neck. The shift of her body beneath the bodice, the...”

“What did she do?” Paine asked impatiently.

“I’m setting the scene,” Sanda asked, enjoying toying with him. “You must understand how exceedingly wonderful she was. She came towards me. Touched me here,” she motioned to her neck. “And I was filled with such ardor for her. I reached for her, but I must have stumbled and fallen back into the light streaming through the barn door. For she stumbled forward as well and began burning as soon as the light hit her. She screeched and jumped back. I could see her red eyes, saw her transforming in front of me into something monstrous. It broke the trance and I fled.”

“You were lucky you did not become her food,” the enforcer in black said.

“Aye,” Paine rumbled. “But it’s strange she would feed in mid-day.”

“Is it?” Sanda asked carelessly. “I don’t know the way of you monsters.”

Paine brought his horse up sharp. "Us monsters?"

"Of course," Sanda smiled disarmingly. "Only a monster could fight a monster. I just trust you are less monstrous than she and will take her away from the good folk of our little town."

Paine opened his mouth to respond but then snapped his gaze to a house nearby. "She was here," he said.

They dismounted and Paine rapped at the door. A few minutes later an elderly, gray haired woman opened it up. She held a small lantern in her hand. As she looked up and up at Paine her jaw dropped.

"I am sorry to bother you madam," Paine said. "We are on the hunt for a fugitive that I believe may be here. A beautiful noble woman in a fine dress with flowing black hair."

"Oh my!" The elderly woman said, putting her hand to her mouth. "Y-yes she was here. She spoke to Adrian, one of my boarders."

"I should like to speak to this Adrian."

"I will fetch him. Please come in."

Paine had to duck and squeeze sideways through the entrance. He took up most of the small parlor as they waited for the boarder to come down. Moments later a young man in simple woolen trousers and a cotton shirt joined them. He was quite surprised to see Sanda and his eyes widened.

“Layton!” He exclaimed. “I do hope everything is all right.”

Sanda hid her shock well as Paine turned to her. “Everything is fine. My compatriots here are looking for the woman who visited earlier. Do you know where she has been?”

“There was no woman here,” Adrian said.

“Do not lie to me, boy,” Paine said, stepping closer.

Adrian took a step back, trembling. “Please sir, I tell you there was no one here this evening.”

“I can sense her! She lingered here. You are lying!” Paine bellowed.

Adrian quivered but remained silent, stepping back until his back was up against the wall. Sanda grinned, thinking perhaps she would get to see some bloodshed tonight. Even better if she could figure a way to join in.

“If I may,” the enforcer in black spoke up.

Paine waved his hand and the enforcer placed his hands on Adrian’s head. Adrian’s eyes rolled back into his head but he remained on his feet. After a moment the enforcer released him.

“He’s been enchanted as well. Just as imperfectly as the blacksmith.”

“Madam,” Paine called out brusquely to the elderly woman who was lurking in the hallway. “Take me to his room. Perhaps we can find a clue there.”

A search of Layton’s room turned up nothing, but while they were there Paine suddenly stood bolt upright and turned to stare out the window.

“I feel her out there,” he said. “She has used her power again. Come.”

Sanda began to follow along but Paine stopped her. “We no longer require your assistance. But do remain here in case we have need of you again.”

“Oh no,” Sanda insisted. “I must see this through to the end. Otherwise I shall be very fearful and stir up such trouble through my story telling as you have never heard. I’m afraid that’s just how I am,” she shrugged.

“Fine,” Paine agreed, eager to be gone.

They mounted their horses and travelled quickly through the dark streets. Paine seemed to have a destination in mind and they moved quickly, soon coming to an intersection near a grubby tavern. Paine dismounted and held his hand out.

“She was here,” he said.

“How do you know?” Sanda asked. “You’ve said this before and we’ve yet to find her. I’m beginning to think the only power you have it all is your size. And I would hardly call that a power. More of a birth defect.”

“You will treat him with respect,” the enforcer snapped.

“Why? He is no lord. He is a mere errand boy tracking down a wayward mistress.”

Sanda needled Paine, knowing that he did not wish to draw attention through needless bloodshed while in another Lord’s country. After all, that was why he was hunting Sanda. To reign in her wildness. A death here and there was the normal course of things. But great carnage had the potential to rile up the population into great vengeance. Besides, Sanda was as wild and careless in this body as she had been in her own. She had escaped death twice and fled into a new form. She was getting quite adept at it.

“I can sense the power she used here,” Paine said, gritting his teeth. “And she

left a trail. A strong one. That way.”

Paine pointed. He climbed back onto his horse and the trio resumed their hunt.

Layton

It was late when Layton finally reached his mother's small cottage. The slate tiles were in disarray and there was a distinct lean to the roof. His mother and his sister had done their best since his father's passing to make a living for themselves, even taking in boarders to their already crowded two-bedroom house. Mother and daughter were forced to share a bedroom to make ends meet, and Layton sent home what little extra money he could spare.

He tapped on the door, softly at first but growing more insistent when there was no answer. He didn't know what he expected them to do. He just sought comfort, some oasis of familiarity in the strangeness that had occurred during the day. There was a faint hope that his mother and sister could see through his physical visage to the mind that lay beneath. Maybe they, being women, wouldn't be so taken by Layton's charm.

Layton's mother, Harriet finally opened the door a crack as his sister, Holly, peered anxiously from behind her. His mother wore her threadbare undergarments and held a small candle that gave off a feeble light. When she held it up to illuminate Layton's face she gasped.

"H-how can I help you my lady?" Harriet asked, ducking her head.

"Mother," Layton croaked. "May I come in?"

“Please do,” Harriet said, backing away and holding the door open for him.

The cottage was small and cramped and dark. There was a small sitting room off the entrance which Holly and Harriet led Layton into. Harriet lit a wall sconce and the three settled themselves on the uncomfortable rickety furniture, Layton adjusting his dress as he sat.

Holly and Harriet looked so frail as they stared at him. Their hair was wild and straggly, their gowns threadbare. It made Layton all too aware of the finery decorating his own elegant body. His mother and sister, like everyone else, took him for royalty with his fancy clothes and jewelry. In their impoverished condition they were in no condition to refuse any sort of entreaty from a noblewoman.

“I don’t know where else to go,” Layton began, nervously stroking the ruby necklace clasped around his throat. “I’m seeking your help on a most urgent and...complicated matter.”

Holly and Harriet glanced at each other.

“Of course,” Holly said. “We shall be happy to help.”

Layton picked his words carefully. “I have been...tricked by a terrible person. They have taken everything from me and I have nowhere to turn. May I stay here?”

“Here?” Harriet blinked at him. “Madam, I’m afraid we haven’t the room for a guest such as yourself.”

“You see in my appearance a finer woman than I am. Your meagre offerings will be enough. I mostly just wish your company.”

“Forgive me,” Holly said, “But it is a most strange request.”

“I can pay with this,” Layton said, fumbling with the clasp of the ruby necklace and then handing it to his mother.

“I haven’t the faintest idea how we would accommodate you,” Harriet added as she took the necklace uncertainly.

“I would simply ask that you treat me as you would treat your son, Layton.”

“L-like my...? Layton?” Harriet asked.

“Yes, mother, it is me,” Layton said, mistaking his mother’s confusion for confirmation that they saw who he was. “I am Layton.”

This made the older woman even more perplexed. After a moment’s silence, through which Layton thought he could hear the clank of horse hooves from outside, Harriet’s brow furrowed slightly and her next words were colder. “I am

not sure what you mean, but we will be unable to assist you. I think it may be best if you left. Have you someone waiting for you at home?"

Holly, too, looked alarmed, and grew more so as Layton insisted. "Holly! Mother! Can you not see me in here? I have the body of a woman but my mind is your son."

He jumped up to make them peer into his eyes and both women jerked back. Holly jumped from her seat and retreated to the far end of the tiny room while Harriet clutched the arms of her creaky wooden chair.

"You had best leave before I call for help," Harriet said, staring up at Layton.

"No!" Layton threw up his hands, making the two women flinch.

At that moment the door flew open and Layton's former body swaggered through.

"Ho! What is all this?" The body thief exclaimed merrily.

"Layton! Thank goodness!" Harriet exclaimed.

Harriet and Holly rushed to Sanda and she hugged them briefly, maintaining eye contact with Layton and grinning as she wrapped her stolen arms around

Layton's family.

"Give me back my body!" Layton growled.

Sanda released Layton's family. "Madam, I believe you are not in your right mind."

"You are a demon!" Layton spat. "A blood sucking vampire. You have stolen my life. To what end I do not know and I do not care but I will have it back."

"You will end up in a sanitarium where you belong. I hear they believe fresh air and sunshine would be just the cure for what ails you," Sanda replied with a smirk.

Layton roared and felt a surge of power through him. He smacked the wooden chair away and it smashed into the wall as he leaped on to Sanda, knocking her back up against the wall and holding her there with one hand on her broad chest. His other hand was raised in the air, ready to swipe her down with claws that were now as long and sharp as a lion's. He'd never felt so powerful. It was a raw and wicked power, one that urged him to force his will upon the world, that demanded he slash Sanda to pieces and shower in her warm blood. Her smile had disappeared and, for the first time, she looked scared as she struggled futilely beneath his iron grip.

Harriet and Holly gasped and just as Layton had succumbed to his need and was ready to deliver the killing blow a huge, cold hand grabbed his wrist and an arm snaked across his chest. He was yanked back against something cold and huge. A low voice rumbled in his ear:

“Calm yourself, Ilana.”

Layton was held fast in the solid grip of a giant, yanked backwards and out the door as Sanda recovered her herself and smiled wickedly at him. Layton struggled futilely as he was maneuvered outside where a man dressed in black leather, complete with black mask, was waiting for him. The other man had some sort of silver chains in his hand and the giant forced Layton's hands together so that the man in black could lock the chains around each wrist.

The instant the lock closed around him, Layton felt his power evaporate. He wilted in the giant's hands and was powerless as the man set him gently but unceremoniously atop the back of a giant black mare. Sanda and the giant exchanged some words, then the giant saddled up behind Layton, gripping him in one powerful arm, and they trotted off. The last thing Layton saw was his old body with its arms around his mother and sister, grinning at him from the doorway of his own house.

Whatever magic was in the chains around his wrist muddled all Layton's senses. He was aware of riding long distances. A day or two spent asleep in strange inns, nights pounding through the forests on the massive mare, the giant steadying him in the saddle as the miles flew past. On the second night the man in black brought down a stag and they encouraged Layton to feed. He was so hungry that when the giant gently cradled Layton's head and guided him to the neck of the still thrashing stag, Layton did not resist. His teeth sharpened and pierced the animal's neck. He drank the warm blood, his lips kissing the stag's neck like a lover. It was a poor substitute for what his body really craved, but it was flavored by his all-consuming hunger.

The landscape changed as they flew down winding roads, becoming wilder and more wooded. After some unknown length of time, perhaps nights later, they

reached a grand manor house. The giant brought Layton down from the saddle and guided him up the wide steps and into the entrance hall. From there they proceeded down stone steps, deep into the earth and through a short stone hallway. Sentries in black stood every few feet, remaining still as they passed. The hallway led to an ornate iron and silver door, which opened when they neared.

Layton, the giant, and the man in black stepped into a large chamber carved out of solid rock. Candles burned from every nook and cranny, and a handful of other men in black – sentries, perhaps – stood guard around the cavern. Directly in front of him were three wooden thrones, the tallest in the middle was studded with iron spikes. A man was seated upon each throne, all of them wearing black robes. The two on either side had long, gaunt faces and looked desiccated. The one in the middle was monstrous. The midnight black of the robes matched the color of his slicked back hair. His eyes, too, were black pupils with not a hint of white iris, and his ears were pointed like a bat's. The angles of his face were wrong in a way that made Layton uneasy, like a poorly made carnival mask.

As Layton stepped into the room another man came towards him. This one, too, had jet black hair, though he looked more human. Cold but beautiful, with a chiseled jaw and dark eyes that seemed to draw Layton in. He was accompanied by two women dressed in finery. The blonde had her hair meticulously styled and wore an intricate deep blue gown hemmed with gold, the neck cut scandalously low to reveal the deep valley of her cleavage. The redhead had a hairstyle and wore a gown that was just as intricate, but was a blood red.

“Ilana,” the man sighed, touching Layton’s face gently. He looked down at the chains around Layton’s wrists. “Remove these,” he ordered the giant.

“Yes, sir.” The giant rumbled.

He passed his hand over the chains and mumbled some words. With a click, the chains fell away and the world snapped in to crisp clarity.

“Stand back, Lord Covaci,” the man on the throne rumbled.

“Yes, Judge,” the handsome man – Lord Covaci, apparently – said, and stepped aside, followed by the two women at his side.

“Ilana Petrescu, step forward,” the Judge said.

His voice was icy and sent chills down Layton’s spine. No one moved and after a moment a huge hand on Layton’s back gently nudged him forward. He took a few steps towards the throne and stopped in the middle of a silver circle drawn on the uneven cavern floor. The giant moved around the circle to stand behind Lord Covaci to the right of the thrones.

“You have been found guilty in absentia of the death of Sanda Covaci. Do you have anything to say for yourself before we pass sentence?”

Layton was temporarily at a loss. They did not know who he was. No one had accepted his explanations that he was actually Layton before and he had very little expectation that these monsters would do so here. But what he was accused of did not make sense. He had to explain that they had it wrong. Sanda was definitely what the vampire had called herself when she’d stolen his body.

“But I am Sanda Covaci,” Layton insisted.

This set off a wave of whispering among the three people on the throne. It also made Lord Covaci cast a worried glance Layton’s way but when he turned to look, Lord Covaci’s face was carefully neutral.

“She’s gone mad,” the blonde next to Lord Covaci tittered.

The redhead wrapped her arm through Lord Covaci’s and stroked his arm comfortingly. The giant peered at Layton with an unreadable expression. The Judge waved the other two away and leaned forward.

“Madness is no excuse,” the Judge said. “You have killed a vampire. This is a most heinous crime. If we were to let any vampire do unsanctioned killing we would not have survived these millennia. Or these centuries,” he added with a meaningful look at Lord Covaci.

“I did not kill anyone. I am not who you think I am,” Layton insisted.

The Judge turned back to Layton. “It does not matter who you think you are,” he spat with venom. “The sentence is the same. I sentence you to be buried in a coffin for one thousand years. Perhaps the hunger and isolation will allow you to reflect on your actions. Take her away.”

“No! This is a mistake!” Layton insisted as sentries stepped forward.

He turned to face the men who were surrounding him. They all wore full black leather. One had silver chains in his hand. Layton tried to summon up the power he'd felt back in his own home, the rage that would enable him to use this body's power. But whether there was some magic in the air or he just didn't know how to use his strength, nothing came. The sentries easily overpowered him and clamped the chains to his wrists. He sank to his knees.

"I am Layton Nicholson!" He called out as two sentries grabbed his arms and began dragging him out, backwards. "I am a blacksmith! I am not a vampire!" He yelled back as he was dragged out.

The last thing he saw before the chamber doors closed behind him was Lord Covaci and the giant in hushed conversation.

Layton was thrown in the back of a black carriage, which flew through the night. When it stopped the door opened and he was pulled out by two sentries. They were on the top of a desolate and windswept mountain. A large hole had been split from the rock, a pile of stones and debris next to it. And next to that was an ornate wooden coffin filigreed with the same silver symbols that were on his chain.

Layton tried to resist as the sentries dragged him forward but he had no strength. They threw him into the coffin and lowered the lid. Chains clanked around the outside as Layton banged on the lid and howled out, screaming for someone to believe him.

He felt himself lowered into the hole. Then rocks and debris rained down upon the lid of the coffin, the sounds growing more muffled as the pile grew. Layton

struggled futilely in the suffocating darkness, scratching and clawing at the coffin top until his voice was hoarse. Finally, he stopped. The silence was all consuming. He couldn't move. He couldn't breathe.

And yet, he lived.

To be continued...

Thank you!

I hope you enjoyed reading this twisted little tale as much as I enjoyed writing it. If you liked it, please leave a review. They really help. Also, be sure to check out some of my other stories below.

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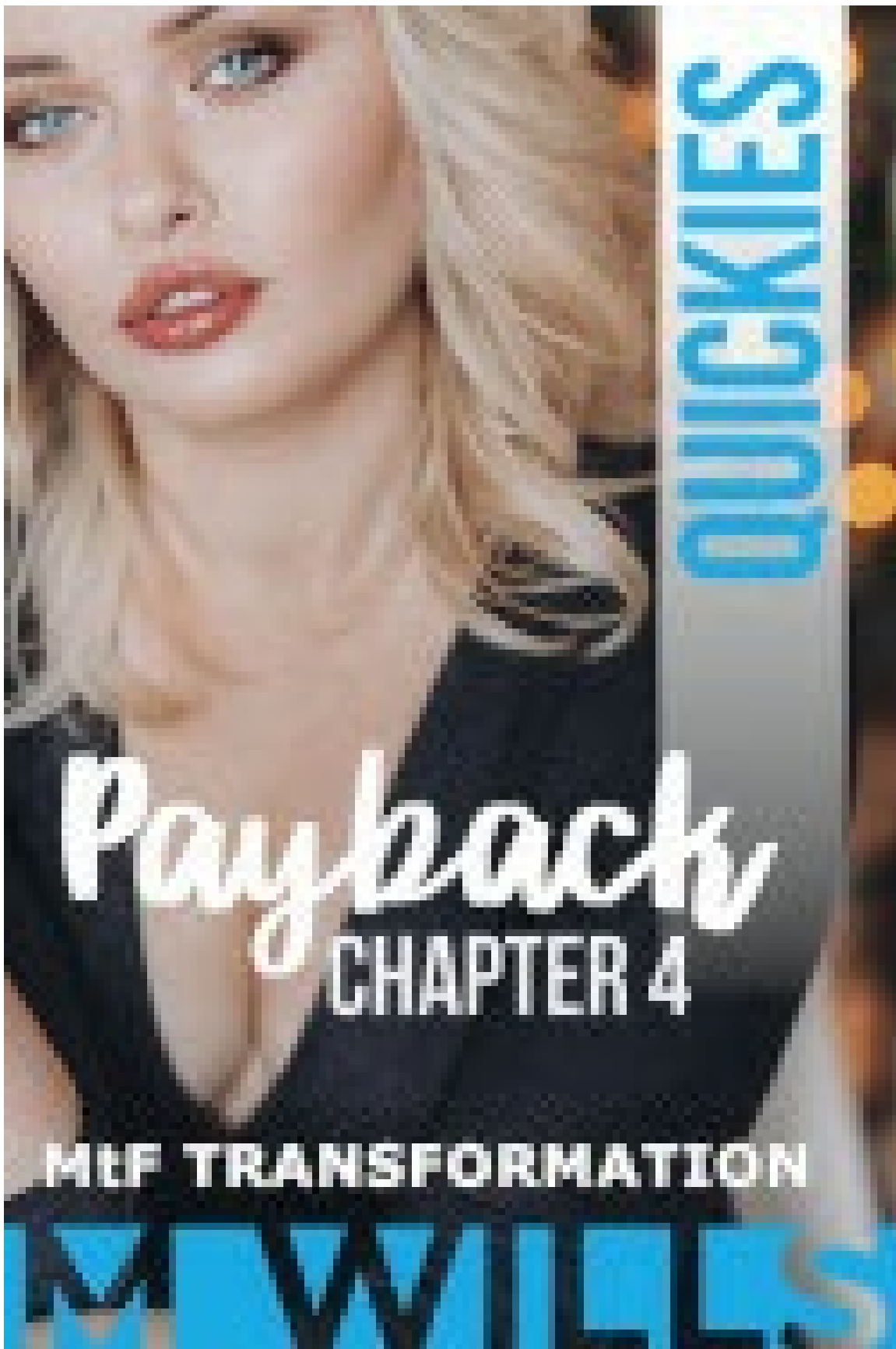
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Payback (Chapter 4)

In Chapter 4 of this multi-part serial about a man forcibly transformer into a stunning woman, Peyton learns how much work he'll have to put in to keep his new body looking good, which he'll need to do to have any hope of breaking the spell.

A person's torso is visible on the right side of the frame, wearing a black bikini top. Their left hand is holding a black bikini top against a blurred blue background. The text "M2F POSSESSION" is overlaid in the upper right, and "ANOTHER Life" is overlaid in the center. At the bottom, the word "NEWS" is partially visible in a large, blue, blocky font.

M2F
POSSESSION

ANOTHER
Life

NEWS

Another Life

I'm meeting up with my longtime crush for the first time in years, and I'm going to use my bodyhopping powers to enjoy her amazing body to the fullest.

A smiling woman with long dark hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a light blue sports bra. The background is a solid light brown color.

**A BODY
TRANSFORMATION
STORY**

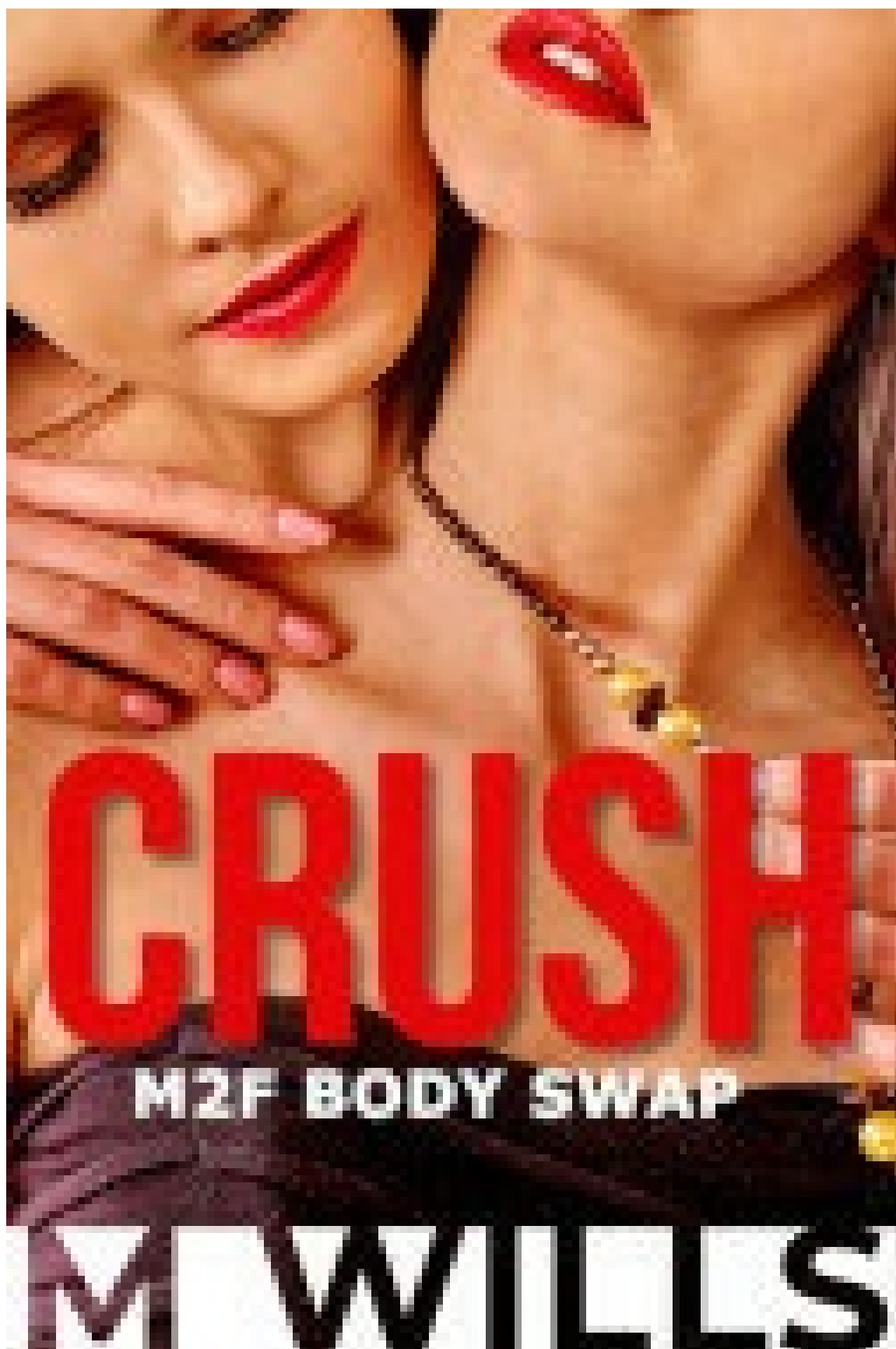
Standout

**A STAND ALONE SEQUEL
TO STAND-IN**

MWILS

Standout

In this standalone sequel to Stand-In, Adam brings a friend in on the secret of the bodysuit, and they have some fun as they live the wild lives of the two sexiest women on campus for a semester.



Crush

A poorly worded wish sees two college guys switched into their female crushes and having to live their lives.

And many more!