

CHAPTER 7

A woman with blonde hair styled in an updo, wearing a blue, sequined, halter-neck dress with a high slit. She is adorned with multiple gold and blue jewelry pieces, including a tiara, necklaces, bracelets, and a leg cuff. She is smiling and posing on a red carpet that runs up a staircase. The background features a grand, dimly lit interior with a large arched doorway and ornate architectural details.

NOSFERATU
NEXT DOOR

FICTION

Rawly Rawls

Nosferatu Next Door 7

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Written by RawlyRawls

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“Wow ... I was expecting a spooky vibe, not this ...” Isabella took her brother’s hand in hers and squeezed it in wonder. “Look at that chandelier. It’s beautiful.”

“Yeah, this place is impressive.” Tyler was looking less at the castle and more at the people mingling around them. Once past the entry vestibule, they had entered a large space with grand stairs, high ceilings, and a roaring fire in a stone hearth. Tyler recognized many of the two dozen or so people from around town. When Annie Kim smiled at him, he waved. “Hello, Mrs. Kim.”

“Hello Tyler. Don’t you look handsome?” Annie patted the teenager’s cheek and raised her flute of champagne to him. “Gail wanted to stay home. I’ll tell her she missed you.”



“Okay, Mrs. Kim.” Tyler didn’t have a drink to clink glasses, so he nodded and watched the pretty woman wander off. Annie’s daughter, Gail, was in the twin’s class at school. Tyler knew Gail had a crush on him. But with the special relationship he had with his sister, he didn’t have the bandwidth to be anything more than friends to Gail. Still, he wished she’d come. He didn’t see any other teenagers at the party, they were all people roughly his parents’ age. Although, more people were showing up by the minute. Then he remembered the purpose of their visit, and he was glad Gail wasn’t there.

“Oh, listen to the way the music bounces in this space. It’s delightful.” Isabella pointed to the string quartet that was playing Mozart.

“Jensens! You made it!” Cassie was the image of sparkling radiance. Her sequin gown showed off a lot of cleavage and leg. She wore a gem-encrusted tiara, and a massive, jeweled necklace. Her blond hair was expertly pinned, and her smile was wide and bright. “Oh, don’t you all look lovely?”



“Cassie ... my ... gosh ... you look ... stunning.” Stephanie put a hand to her mouth in shock. Her friend had always been so understated. “How did you come to host this party?”

“Oh, Mr. Alucard and I have really hit it off.” Cassie put an arm around her friend’s shoulders and led Stephanie away from her family.



“Well, I see some beer and other dudes clustering over there.” Brad pointed to a corner of the massive room. “I’m going to go be social. You kids stay out of trouble.” He clapped Tyler on the back and walked off.

“We’re alone.” Tyler pulled two champagne flutes off a tray as a scantily clad waitress walked by. He waited to see if anyone would notice two eighteen-year-olds drinking. When no one said anything, he handed a glass to his sister and clinked her glass.

“I guess we should get about it.” Isabella tried to put on a brave face. She took a big gulp of the bubbly. “Oh, this is good.”

Tyler sipped his. “Agreed. Although I don’t have a lot to compare it to.” He took another thoughtful sip. “I think our host has gone all out to impress his guests.”

“Speaking of which, have you seen him?” Isabella cast a worried glance in her mother’s direction. She was laughing with a group of women by the hearth. Her new necklace glittered in the firelight. Seeing that her mother’s protection was in place made Isabella’s shoulders relax a little.

“No.” Tyler scanned the crowd. “No sign of Alucard. Wait ... there he is.” Tyler pointed.

Alucard was descending the stairs with Olivia McDonald. They had their arms linked in a very familiar sort of way.



“Mrs. McDonald looks dazed.” Isabella pressed her lips together. “Like she’s on drugs or something.”

“He did something to her,” Tyler whispered. “Well, it’s not our job to do anything about that. She’ll be alright once Damion and Ursula take care of things. Come on, with our host at the party, it’s time to explore a little.”

Flutes in hand, the twins moved through the crowd and out of the main room. Mozart's notes and the thrum of the crowd followed them down a dimly lit corridor. They opened doors as they went, finding empty, dusty rooms filled with cobwebs. The last door at the end of the hall was locked.

"It's one of those old-timey locks. I bet we could pick it." Isabella crouched and studied the door.

"With what? How?" Tyler grinned at his sister's can-do spirit. "I think -" The sound of footsteps cut him off. Careful not to spill their champagne, the twins scurried across the hall. They hid in the empty room there, leaving the door open a crack.



“‘Evil, enchanted necklace’, he says.” Andy strode down the hall, jangling a large ring with iron keys. He was still in his valet outfit and had a deep frown on his face. “An evil, enchanted necklace that he needs to research right now. Even though I’m in the middle ...” His words trailed away as he stuck a key in the lock, turned it, opened the door, and went inside.



The twins exchanged a look and peered across the hall. Lamplight showed them that the forbidden room was some sort of study or office. There were many books, and a large foreboding desk. A moment later, they watched Andy hurry out of the room carrying an old, leatherbound book. When his footsteps had faded, they moved back out into the hall.

“He didn’t relock it.” Isabella tried the heavy handle, and the door creaked open.

“Let’s be quick.” Tyler looked around, but there was no one. Only the sounds of the distant party.

“It’s dingy.” Isabella ran her finger along the desk, collecting dust on the tip. She downed the rest of her champagne so she wouldn’t have to worry about spilling any. She handed the glass to her brother and pulled a



book from the shelf. “I can’t read the title.” She opened it and paged through. “It’s not in English. Um ...” She adjusted her glasses. “It’s not in any language I recognize.”

“I wish we had a camera.” Tyler walked along the bookshelf. Many of the obscure titles were in English, or other Latin languages. But many were not. “I’ll check the desk.” Tyler carefully opened drawers and examined their contents. “There’s a notepad ... but, I can’t read it.”

“Come on, let’s go. This room is a bust.” Isabelle picked up the flutes he’d left on the desk and pulled her brother to the door. “We’re supposed to find where he sleeps, anyway. All this other detective work is useless.”

“You’re right.” Tyler nodded. They went back to the party, smiled at some acquaintances, made sure their parents were still safe, got a refill on their drinks, and then surreptitiously took the stairs down to the basement. They descended and descended.

Still holding a half-full flute, Isabella hugged herself. “It’s cold down here.”

“And dark.” The only light came flickering from the occasional oil lamp on the wall.

They passed several empty rooms with hooks on the walls that looked like they might be used for cold storage. Eventually, they arrived at a locked door. When Isabella jiggled the handle, there was a deep growl from the other side of the door.

“The dogs!” Isabella whispered, her eyes getting round with fright.

“There’s something worth guarding down here,” Tyler said through chattering teeth. He pulled his sister away from the door. They were both shivering by the time they arrived back at the main hall and the party.



It took them some time, and several tasty bites of tapas, to calm down enough to think about exploring further. Eventually, they summoned the courage to climb the stairs, in full view of the party, and explore up above. They found another flight of stairs ascending a tower, but didn't follow those. Instead, they walked down a cheery, well-lit hall. They discovered that the rooms were mostly empty up there, too. When they found a furnished room, they stepped inside. The bed was made, but the blanket had wrinkles like someone had been sitting on it.



Isabella opened the closet. "These are Mr. Fearn's clothes." She looked over at her brother with an eyebrow raised. "It looks like his whole wardrobe is here."

"Is he living here?" Tyler walked up next to his sister, his mouth hanging open in shock. "Where's Mrs. Fearn's stuff?"



Isabella didn't have time to reply. There were voices in the hall, and the room's door handle shook.

The twins dove into the closet, leaving the door open the barest crack.

"I'm so happy to hear that you're enjoying your evening, Mrs. Kim." Alucard, dressed impeccably in a dark suit, entered the room. He escorted Annie Kim inside and shut the door behind her. "I appreciate your offer for real estate services. But I'm very happy living on Drusilla Way."

"Oh, yes, of course."

Annie blushed. "Well, you never know. If circumstances change, you can let me know." She made a move toward the door, but he intercepted her. "Um ... excuse me ... if we don't have any business to discuss, I'd like to get back to the party. My husband will be looking for me." She had to crane her neck to look up into his dark eyes. "Mr. Alucard?"

"Your husband is currently distracted by the beautiful Cassie Fearn." Alucard put long, sinuous fingers on her shoulder. "We have a few minutes." He stared deeply into her gaze.

"I'm married," Annie whispered. "I mean, I hope I'm misreading the vibe in the room, but ... oh ... oh ... my ... my head is spinning." She leaned against his hard, unforgiving body for support.



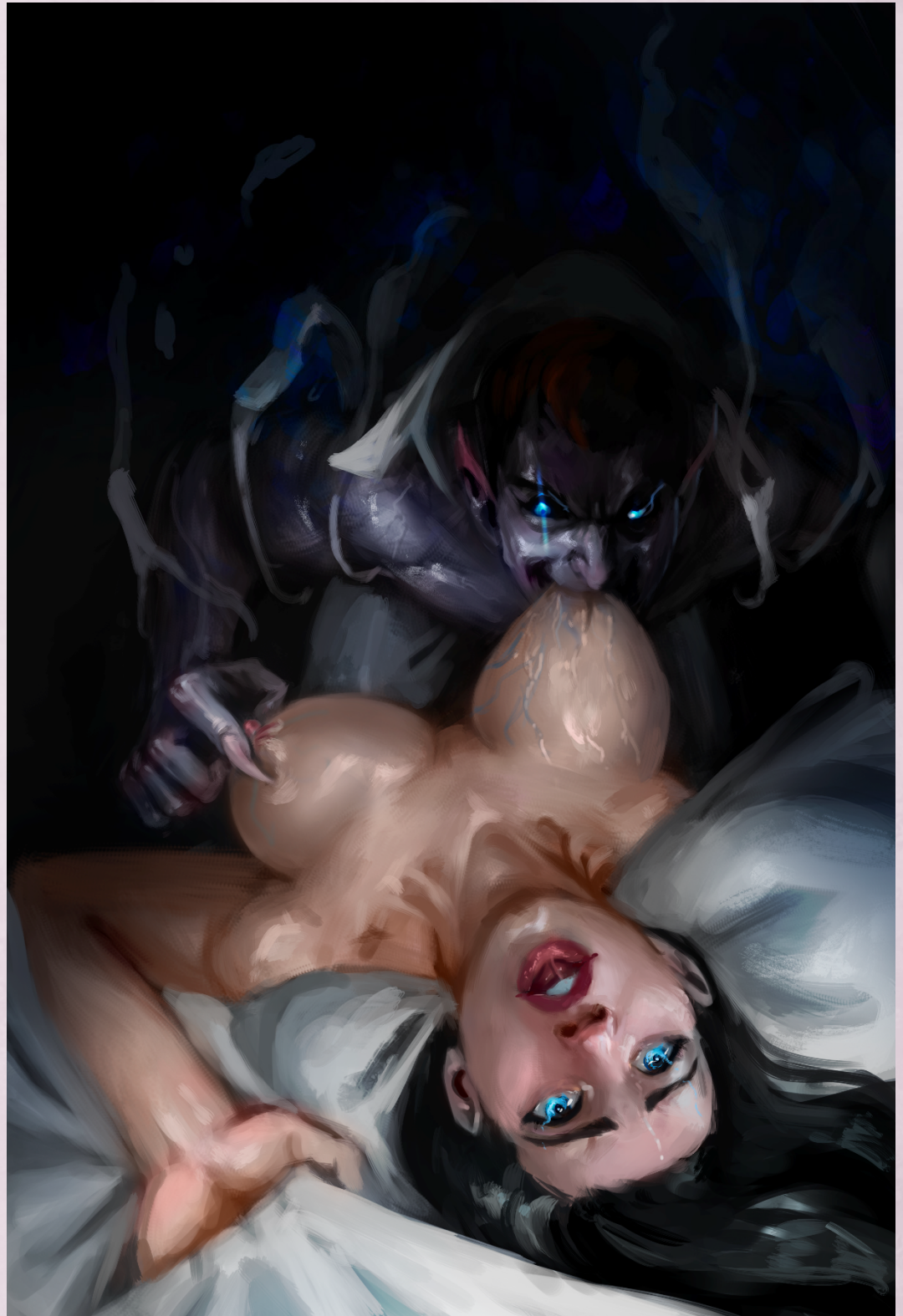
"You've overexerted yourself. You need to breathe." Alucard picked her up and carried her to the bed. He gently laid her down, brushed her black hair off her throat. He pushed the straps to her dress over her shoulders. In one quick motion, he lowered her dress and unclasped her bra. "You must let yourself breathe freely. Do you feel better?"

"I ... I ..." Annie was too stunned to answer. "My boobs!" She stared down at her exposed chest. When Alucard cupped her breast with hungry fingers, she saw that his alabaster skin was even paler than hers. "This is very wrong, Mr. Alucard. My husband will ... oooohhhhhhhhh." Her body writhed, and she clutched the blanket as his mouth clamped onto her breast. Her wedding ring twinkled while she twisted the covers with her fingers.

Isabella made a hissing sound, and her brother covered her mouth to keep her quiet. They both stared with wide eyes as Alucard drank from one of their friend's mothers.

"Ohhhhhh ... what are you doing? Ooohhhhhh ... I feel something ... something ..." Annie was lost in a fog of pleasure. When she came out the other side, she found that Alucard was no longer at her breast. Trying to collect her wits, she sat up and clasped her bra. "Oh, gosh. Oh, gosh. Oh, my. What will Chris think? I

can't believe we just ... I mean." She let Alucard help her get her dress back in place. Then, on wobbly legs, she let him lead her out of the room. When they were gone, Tyler removed his hand from his sister's mouth. "What ... the fuck ... was that?"



“Did you see the two red marks on her boob?” Isabella worked hard not to panic. “We just saw a vamp vamping out. Shit.”

“We better get out of here.” The twins had had enough exploring. They raced back to the party, gathered their parents, and shepherded them to the car.

“Slow down, slow down.” Brad hadn’t remembered his daughter ever pushing him out of a party before. “I didn’t get a chance to say thank you to Mr. Alucard.”

“What’s gotten into you two?” Stephanie didn’t want to make a scene, so she let her son pull her back out into the snow.

“Leaving so early?” Andy had already fetched their minivan. It was idling, ready for the Jensen family. “I know, Lord Alucard wanted to have a conversation with you, Stephanie.”



“Next time.” Isabella said. “We have to get going.”

“Say goodnight to Cassie for me.” Stephanie gave Andy an apologetic smile.

“Will do.” Andy nodded. He looked relieved.

On the way home, the road was still miraculously free of snow. The twins sat in the back seat, looking back up the hill at the castle. Their sweaty palms were clasped, and their grip was tight. It was one thing to know you had a vampire in town. It was another thing to see one in action.