[01:52] arynwyn: Natalie: <it's lunch time, the bell has just rang, and she's stopped at her locker to dump her books before wandering to the cafeteria. It's her second day here and she hasn't spoken to anyone who hasn't spoken to her, but she's not really bothered. Most of the girls are vapid and overly-tanned, and most of the guys don't pay her much attention. She's very pretty, but she hides behind curtains of her black hair, and she's too pale for sunny Florida. And she wears too much black. She fidgets with the lock on her locker - it figures she'd get the locker where the lock sticks - and tries to get it unlocked>

[01:56] Socks: <Suddenly her immediate area darkens. There's a mixed assembly of muscular male and slim & tanned female seniors standing there. The girls look down their noses at her; the boys are smirking at her>

Jock boy 1: Well, lookit this. New little goth girl in town, hm?

Preppy girl 1: Ugh, it's like a PLAGUE of them.

Jock boy 2: I dunno, bet she cleans up nice if we could get her to stop writing bad poetry all the time and actually come out with us.

<the girls all laugh. The guys chuckle>

Preppy girl 2: Careful, she'll probably put a hex on you or something. <snickering all around. And did I mention that they form a neat semi-circle around her? She's pretty well hemmed in>

[01:57] arynwyn: Natalie: <turns around to face them, her face grim. She eyes them one by one> I'd rather be goth than a plastic Barbie or Ken doll. <turns back around to work at her locker some more>

[02:01] Socks: Preppy girl 2: Oh she did NOT just do that.

Jock boy 1: <Frowning> You gotta learn your place in the pecking order, little girl.

<Suddenly there is a popping sound and brief flash of light, then smoke. It's behind the seniors, and they all turn to look at it, some of them stepping towards it. A quiet voice - it could almost be in Nat's head, but surely it isn't, right? - says> *Make a break for it; there's an opening now. Come to the end of the hall and around the corner - quickly!*

[02:02] arynwyn: Natalie: <doesn't need to be told twice. She ducks past the seniors and jogs down the hall, turning the corner quickly before anyone spots her. She leans against the wall and looks around>

[02:08] Socks: <There's a boy of average height, sort of gangly boy there. He's not quite as pale as Nat, but he's far from the tanned masses either. He's got messy red hair - it's short but has longish bangs that tend to fall into his eyes. They're an odd color - sort of a light hazel? He's wearing a t-shirt with an odd logo on it, and over that a black vest. Dark blue jeans and sneakers complete the image, though he does have a single, small gold hoop piercing his left eyebrow. He has a gray messenger bag slung over one shoulder, resting against his hip> This way <he jerks his head down the hallway> You permitted off-campus for lunch? 'Cause if you are, this'd be an excellent time to take advantage of that.

[02:09] arynwyn: Natalie: Yeah, I guess. <she looks him over> Is there anywhere within walking distance?

[02:11] Socks: The standards: McD's, Toxic Hell. If you're up for a walk, I know a place offers some decent vegan and vegetarian food, in addition to damn tasty burritos of the regular meaty type. It takes a little longer to get to, but they're quick about getting the food to you, so if we double-time it back, we should be okay.

[02:12] arynwyn: Natalie: <considers this for a moment, glancing back in the direction of the lunchroom> Yeah, okay.

[02:15] Socks: C'mon if we take the door at the end of this hall, we'll get there quicker. <he smiles and lopes off> We can discuss a strategy for dealing with those assholes over lunch, hm?

[02:16] arynwyn: Natalie: <follows after him, still holding all her books> Thanks. For helping me get away. However you did that.

[02:17] Socks: <his smile breaks into a grin> Magic, madamoiselle. <as he hits the door - holding it open for her, of course - he tosses something from his right hand. On impact, it flashes, pops and releases smoke>

[02:18] arynwyn: Natalie: <chuckles> What is it?

[02:20] Socks: I could tell you but then I'd have to kill you. ...just kidding. <he drops whatever it is back into his pants pocket and then pulls out....a pink carnation. An actual one. He presents it to her with a flourish as they walk> To make up for the rude welcome some of my fellow students have given you.

[02:20] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes slightly> Thanks. <she peers at him with her very green eyes> What's your name?

[02:21] Socks: Theo Lennox. Nice to meet you, Miss....?

[02:22] arynwyn: Natalie: Natalie James.

[02:22] Socks: Theo: And what brings you to our fair city of suntan oil?

[02:23] arynwyn: Natalie: My dad's place burned down so we moved. <shrugs a little>

[02:24] Socks: Theo: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. No one hurt in the blaze, I hope?

[02:25] arynwyn: Natalie: No. We all got out in time. <shifts her books from one arm to the other>

[02:26] Socks: Theo: Oh good. Oh, here, just cut through these trees and we're there. <there's a small copse of trees ahead of them, but a road and the vague outline of a strip mall sort of looking thing is on the other side> We're heading for Laughing Planet Cafe.

[02:27] arynwyn: Natalie: I'll buy you lunch, as a thank-you.

[02:28] Socks: Theo: <smiles at her> You don't have to. In fact, I'll bet you I can get our lunches for free.

[02:28] arynwyn: Natalie: <arches a brow skeptically> How?

[02:29] Socks: Theo: Magic. What do you wanna bet me? <grin>

[02:30] arynwyn: Natalie: <smiles faintly> I doubt I have anything that would interest you.

[02:30] Socks: Theo: A kiss then, from the fair maiden? <he stops and bows melodramatically, then straightens up, adding> Doesn't have to involve tongue or anything. <which kind of kills the chivalrous mood and tone a bit>

[02:31] arynwyn: Natalie: <her eyebrows shoot up> I'm not sure I want my first kiss to be lost in a bet. <but she seems amused>

[02:32] Socks: Theo: <he arches an eyebrow> Your first? You mean you don't have throngs of desperate boys beating down your door? Or didn't, back in your old town?

[02:33] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes and looks away, regretting telling him that> Generally I'm... invisible to people.

[02:35] Socks: Theo: Neat magic trick, if you're doing it deliberately. Well, you're the new girl here now, so you're not going to be too invisible around here for a bit, whether you like it or not. <he considers> How about a date then? If I can get our lunches free, we'll go out on Friday? Or Saturday? Whichever is better for you. Or next weekend if this one's bad. <he was doing a good job of sounding smooth until now>

[02:36] arynwyn: Natalie: <her cheeks pinken and she smiles shyly> Okay. You're on.

[02:41] Socks: Theo: <beams and nods his head towards the strip mall> C'mon then; the game is afoot! <and he takes off jogging towards the Laughing Planet Cafe (( (Link: http://www.thelaughingplanetcafe.com/in-house-menu.html)http://www.thelaughingplanetcafe.com/in-house-menu.html 'cause no, I didn't make this place up.)) He holds the door for her. Inside, it's all bright colors: one wall a cerulean blue, the next a sunny yellow, each wall a different color. The tables are hand-painted, each one also different, but most featuring bright colors and geometric designs. There's some rock song playing from a group Nat doesn't know. It's hard to make out the words through the throngs of chattering lunchers. There's a counter at the far end and a ginormous chalkboard with the menu written on it behind them. It's Subway style sort of thing: place an order at one end, pay at the other>Go on and order whatever you like. <he smiles and weaves through the tables and chairs towards the counter>

[02:43] arynwyn: Natalie: <follows after him and reads the menu, then steps up to order, asking for a greek salad and a bottle of water>

[02:46] Socks: Theo: <orders a Jimmy the Greek burrito with an orange cream soda and walks down to the cash register> Hey, Monica. I'm getting the lovely Miss James's lunch as well today. <grins>

Monica: <she arches an eyebrow and looks at Natalie> What'd you bet him? <She has reddish-brown hair and golden eyes. Her skin's a little more olive-colored, and she's taller than either of them, but then she also appears to have about 10 years on them too>

[02:47] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes a little> A date...

[02:49] Socks: Monica: <laughs and reaches over the counter to thwap Theo upside the head> You can't get a date the NORMAL way?

Theo: Ow! Hey! Normal is boring, okay? <their food is given to them on green trays> 'Sides, I like going for the sure thing.

Monica: <she shakes her head and rolls her eyes, then informs Natalie> Our uncle owns this place, and my little brother takes advantage of it every chance he gets. He's shameless; just don't hold it against US, okay?

Theo: <sniffs, offended, holding his tray> There's family loyalty for you.

[02:50] arynwyn: Natalie: I knew there was a catch. <but she's grinning>

[02:52] Socks: Theo: C'mon, I think there's a table free by a window...<he heads over that way - after sticking his tongue out at Monica. It's smallish, with just two chairs, but the sun is warm. The music drowns out more of the chatter over here too, though it's still not real audible. He sets his tray down, pulls off his messenger back and puts it between the chair and the wall as he sits> Dig in, we've got about half an hour before we have to be back.

[02:53] arynwyn: Natalie: <sets her books on the floor and sits down across from him> Do you come here every day? <munches salad>

[02:56] Socks: Theo: Pretty much. I work here after school a couple times a week too. <takes a huge bite of burrito and chews>

[02:57] arynwyn: Natalie: <smiles and looks down at her salad> Friday works. If you still want to... go out.

[02:58] Socks: Theo: <beams and, once his mouth's clear> You're still interested, even though you know I cheated?

[02:59] arynwyn: Natalie: You're the only person that's been nice to me here. <shrugs a little, still not looking at him>

[03:00] Socks: Theo: <his smile softens and he's quiet a moment, looking at her> You got a curfew or anything that I should know about?

[03:00] arynwyn: Natalie: I dunno. I'll have to talk to my dad. It's never really been an issue.

[03:02] Socks: Theo: Well, let me know. I'm thinking you meet me at Club Dante on Shoreline and 7th around 9, and after the show we'll get dinner? Let him know I can have you home a little after midnight - 1 AM at the latest, really! <smiles hopefully>

[03:03] arynwyn: Natalie: What's Club Dante? <looks a little wary>

[03:08] Socks: Theo: All ages club. There's a $2 cover charge, I'm afraid, but I'll get dinner - and it won't be here, I promise. <he grins> Oh, and they ID for drinks, but you don't seem like the type to try that.

[03:08] arynwyn: Natalie: <shakes her head> I'll talk to my dad about it. Do you have a cell?

[03:10] Socks: Theo: Oh, yeah. <he digs it out> You wanna write it down or just put it straight into your phone?

[03:11] arynwyn: Natalie: <pulls out her own, very basic, phone (much to Pyro's dismay)> I'll just put it in.

[03:12] Socks: Theo: <gives her number> May I have yours as well, or must I earn your trust as well as your digits? <grins>

[03:13] arynwyn: Natalie: <rolls her eyes and gives him her number> Just don't call me at weird hours, okay? And don't text me during class. Please.

[03:14] Socks: Theo: No, no, I promise. <he types it in and puts the phone back in his messenger bag> So, we have one important order of business left to us before we head back. <takes another huge bite of burrito>

[03:14] arynwyn: Natalie: <finishes up her salad> What's that?

[03:15] Socks: Theo: Those asshole seniors who were hassling you earlier. They're NOT going to be pleased that their prey escaped them. During class is one thing, but they find you in the halls and it's not gonna be pretty.

[03:16] arynwyn: Natalie: <grimaces, then shrugs> What can I do? I'll just try to ignore them and hope they get bored easily.

[03:22] Socks: Theo: If they weren't seniors, maybe. But they're pretty much done with high school, just biding time until college. So they've got all kinds of free time on their hands to make OUR lives miserable. <he leans back in his chair> I don't think the smoke bomblet will work again. <he glances towards the counter quickly, then pulls something out from under his shirt. It's a simple chain, the same sort used for dog tags, but a little longer, and it has this pendant on the end of it: (Link: http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/11Rf1QxCZSL.\_SL500\_AA300\_.jpg)http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/11Rf1QxCZSL.\_SL500\_AA300\_.jpg It feels warm - and not just because it was next to his skin all this time, but it doesn't burn or anything. It feels good. He pulls it off over his head and hands it to her> Wear this until Friday. Hopefully by then we can figure something else out.

[03:23] arynwyn: Natalie: <her brows knit together in puzzlement> What for?

[03:24] Socks: Theo: It'll protect you. <finishes off his burrito>

[03:24] arynwyn: Natalie: <she runs her fingers over the pendant, then looks up at him with wide eyes> Are you a witch?... <slightly dismayed>

[03:25] Socks: Theo: <he stills briefly then swallows his food> Why do you ask?

[03:26] arynwyn: Natalie: <shifts a little> Why else would you be giving me a pendant that can supposedly protect me?... <looking more dismayed>

[03:28] Socks: Theo: <he arches an eyebrow> If I'm a witch, is Friday off?

[03:29] arynwyn: Natalie: <sighs and rubs the bridge of her nose> No, it just makes things more complicated.

[03:30] Socks: Theo: <his brow furrows> Why? What's complicated about it? Your dad some crazy fundie or something?

[03:30] arynwyn: Natalie: No. Nothing like that. <she looks back up at him> Why aren't your eyes gold?

[03:33] Socks: Theo: Ah. <he bends over one of his hands and when he comes up, his left eye is gold again. He holds one finger out towards her> Contacts. Less hassle at school, you know. <he goes to put it back in, commenting> This is sort of a hippie place; even people who don't know about witches just roll with anything different that comes their way. You've seen how people who are different get treated at school. <he blinks a few times until he's sure the contact has settled back in> So if it's not that your dad's a fundie - and I'm guessing you aren't - then why....? <he pauses, something occurring to him> Oh shit. Tell me he isn't.

[03:33] Socks: ((<coughs> this is the authoress remembering that people know about vampires in this version of the world. <facepalm>))

[03:33] arynwyn: (( xP ))

[03:34] arynwyn: Natalie: <she looks down at her empty plate> I don't think it would bother him. He's really cool like that, very accepting. I just thought it would bother you. And judging by that reaction, I'd say it does. <she signs and looks out the window. *So much for having a friend.*>

[03:37] Socks: Theo: <he leans back in his chair and says> Shit <again, under his breath. He looks out the window for a moment, then back at her> Look, I don't care that you're a dhampir. My mother would hit the CEILING though. So we'll just have to keep the whole "your dad's a vamp" quiet, right? <smiles>

[03:38] arynwyn: Natalie: <shifts again, looking back down at her plate. She sighs> If it's worth it to you.

[03:42] Socks: Theo: <he grins> I think it is. <he winks at her (even if she's not looking) then sits up straight> We should head back. We're gonna have to jog to make it on time. <he stands and stacks their trays> C'mon - and don't forget to wear the pendant. Unless....it makes you uncomfortable? I...I've never met a dhampir before.

[03:43] arynwyn: Natalie: <she slips it around her neck and smiles> I like it. Thanks. <she picks up her books>

[03:44] Socks: Theo: Oh good. <he puts their trays on top of a trash can, waves to Monica, and heads for the door> Lunch again tomorrow? <he grins> I mean, it's hard to beat "free", right?

[03:45] arynwyn: Natalie: <grins back> Sure. As long as you won't get in trouble.

[03:46] Socks: Theo: Nah, it's fine. I'll meet you at your locker then.

[03:47] arynwyn: Natalie: You're committing social suicide. You know that, right?

[03:48] Socks: Theo: <he laughs and stops jogging for a moment to bow theatrically> I, Madamoiselle James, am a lone wolf. No clique will have me, and I shall have no clique.

[03:49] arynwyn: Natalie: As long as you know. <she grins and gives him a gentle push> C'mon, we're going to be late.

[Friday]

[04:04] Socks: <9 PM on Friday, and Club Dante is loud and packed. It's an old warehouse, next to the Community Center. There's even a bouncer at the door, collecting the cover charge and checking those who seem inebriated or stoned for booze or drugs. When you walk in, there's a bar to the left and a bar to the right; the bouncer at the door would've told Nat to stick to the left (the right bar has the booze and checks IDs; the left bar has sodas - including flavored ones like vanilla cokes - floats, coffees, teas and juices, along with some simple snacks like pretzels. In between the two bars is a dance floor, lit by dancing spotlights of various colors, whirling and spinning all over. The music is the same sort of rock that was playing in the Laughing Planet, provided by the band currently on stage.

It surely will not go unnoticed by Nat that the lead guitarist is Theo. The lead singer has purple hair to her shoulders, wearing a tight black leather skirt and knee high boots and a silver sequined tank. Bass guitar is another guy, more muscular than Theo; there's a girl who could be the lead singer's twin on keyboards - except her hair is pink - and a rail thin little whippet of a guy on drums. They all have golden eyes - even Theo, who seems to have foregone his contacts. He's in tight black jeans, these shoes (( (Link: http://www.hottopic.com/hottopic/Shoes/Boots/Demonia-Knee-High-Buckle-Boots-192296.jsp)http://www.hottopic.com/hottopic/Shoes/Boots/Demonia-Knee-High-Buckle-Boots-192296.jsp dunno why they say knee high, there's no way they are)), and the same white t-shirt and black vest that he was wearing when she met him. Come to think of it, everyone in the band has that symbol on them somewhere: it's in white on the black skirt of the lead singer, drawn over the knee of the bassist's faded blue jeans, etc. >

[04:09] arynwyn: Natalie: <pays the cover charge and steps inside, grinning as she spots Theo. She's glad she didn't overdress - she's in (Link: http://www.feelfitwear.com/images/D/Sparkle%20Tank%20Black%20442%20x%20524.jpg)http://www.feelfitwear.com/images/D/Sparkle%20Tank%20Black%20442%20x%20524.jpg that she bought just for this night, unbeknownst to Pyro (who would not approve of all the visible skin), though the full effect of the tank is currently lost because over that she wears (Link: http://www.muubaa.com/public/pictures/product/standard/m1973\_blk\_1.jpg)http://www.muubaa.com/public/pictures/product/standard/m1973\_blk\_1.jpg . She's got on black skinny jeans, and for shoes, she's got on (Link: http://www.coggles.com/product-media/2ON2/1000/1000/Fly-Shoes-womens-Riff-Black-Martini-Boot-1.jpg)http://www.coggles.com/product-media/2ON2/1000/1000/Fly-Shoes-womens-Riff-Black-Martini-Boot-1.jpg . The only jewelry she wears is the pendant that Theo gave her, and silver studs in her ears. Her hair is down, but she's curled it a little. She's put on some makeup too, though not much (she doesn't NEED much, she's pretty enough without it), just some black eyeliner and mascara, and some shimmery blush. She makes her way toward the stage, eyes on Theo>

[04:20] Socks: Theo: <occasionally sings a backup vocal line or two - usually when the rest of the band is singing it too. His guitar looks like this: (Link: http://www.electricguitarstring.info/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/electric-guitar-1.jpg)http://www.electricguitarstring.info/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/electric-guitar-1.jpg and the band's logo has been carefully painted on it in purple. He looks up as he plays a chord and spies Nat as she comes close. He grins and tosses a wink at her as the song winds down>

<the lead singer gives a load roar into the mic, tossed back to her by the crowd> Okay, we got one last song.... <the audience boos and she holds up a hand> ...from the new album! <the crowd cheers! She grins and tosses some of her hair out of her face, then nods at Theo>

Theo: <and now begins the shredding. From what Nat's heard in the Laughing Planet Cafe, it's mostly prog rock, some symphonic metal, some alternative. This is definitely more metal than anything else. The crowd is hopping, literally in some cases. Theo's pretty good, though most of the songs are still pretty simple chords>

[04:21] arynwyn: Natalie: <cheers along with the crowd, though she doesn't dance when they play, just stands back and listens and watches and grins>

[04:24] Socks: Theo: <the song finishes up triumphantly, with the lead singer raising her arms to the sky. As she stops, the crowd applauds. They bow, the lead singer thanks everyone and says good night, and they step off the stage. After a couple minutes, a door opens to the left of the stage and Theo comes out, pushing through the crowd. He's sweaty from the heat of the lights and the effort of playing, but he heedlessly throws his arms around Nat to hug her hello> You made it! Have any trouble finding the place? <he's still a little breathless from the exertion too, while we're at it>

[04:25] arynwyn: Natalie: <is a little taken aback by the hug, but she returns it. She smells good, too> No. You should have told me to come sooner! I didn't know you were playing. <she narrows her eyes at him accusingly>

[04:28] Socks: Theo: <he shrugs> I don't think that's a good idea of a date. To just expect you to stand there and watch me. I wanted to actually spend TIME with you. 'sides, you've heard my music every day at lunch time. <grins and runs a hand through his hair> Though I could use a bit to freshen up. I can get you backstage so we can talk while I do it?

[04:29] arynwyn: Natalie: Sure. Lead the way. <smile>

[04:35] Socks: Theo: <beams and takes her hand to pull her back through the door. "Backstage" is really just the rest of the warehouse on the other side of the wall here. There are stairs up to the stage, some restrooms at the back and a few mirrors and desks, along with props and instruments. The rest of the band is standing around backstage, laughing, talking and drinking water>

Whoa-ho! Who's this? <the lead singer asks, eyeing Nat with a grin> Theo, you didn't tell me you had a DATE tonight!

Wait, since when does Theo DATE? <comments the keyboardist with a giggle. She drinks more of her water>

Hell, since when does Theo know HOT chicks? ...besides you two? <the bassist asks. The lead singer rolls her eyes and punches him in the shoulder>

<the drummer just sort of waves at her>

Theo: Guys, this is Natalie James. Nat, this is "Squaring the Circle": <indicating the lead singer>Eve, <the keyboardist>her twin sister, Dawn, <the bassist> Freddie, and that quiet thing there is Mickey. Now, if you don't mind... <he starts tugging his vest off>...I am a sweaty mess and I don't want to drive her off with my stage stink.

[04:37] arynwyn: Natalie: <waves at everyone, going quiet as she always does when presented with lots of attention>

[04:43] Socks: Theo: Don't worry, they don't bite. <he reassures her>

Freddie: Unless you want us to!

Eve: <punches him again> Shut up, Freddie.

Theo: <with his back to Nat and the band, he tosses his vest onto his messenger bag, tucked up against a desk, then pulls his shirt off over his head. He's got a tattoo of the band's logo in the small of his back. He's in decent shape, but he doesn't have defined muscles or anything - except in his arms, a bit, from all the guitar playing.>

Mickey: <the drummer comes up and taps her on her shoulder as Eve and Freddie bicker and Dawn watches, amused> Don't worry, we're nice. <he drops his voice> And don't fawn over Theo's playing. He gets self-conscious. Nice compliment or two's okay though. <he smiles and retreats back to his bottle of water, practically hiding behind the rest of the band>

[04:44] arynwyn: Natalie: <smiles shyly> I wish Theo had told me to come sooner. He told me nine. I'd've liked to have heard you guys play more.

[04:49] Socks: Dawn: We're here most Fridays, from 7 - 9.

Eve: Theo's had too many girls just want to date him 'cause he plays in a band.

Dawn: 'Cause he plays in THIS band, I like to think.

Theo: Shut Up, you two. <he calls over his shoulder, splashing his chest with water and rubbing the back of his neck with it too. He grabs a towel to dry off>

Freddie: You're taking her somewhere NICE, right? <he asks Theo>

Theo: <turns to Freddie> Well, I figured we'd hang out here for a bit, since she's never been, and then Waffle House.

Freddie: ... ... ...WHAT?

Theo: <he laughs> I'm joking! We're going to Vincenzo's. ...at least, assuming you like Italian? <he asks, turning back to Nat now, still toweling off>

[04:50] arynwyn: Natalie: <she nods, blushing a bit>

[04:52] Socks: Theo: <smiles, relieved> Great. <he pulls a black, short-sleeved shirt out of his bag and pulls it on, buttoning it up. (( (Link: http://www.globalrebels.com/englishlaundry/WIMBERRY-IN-BLACK/productinfo/XELW1108B/)http://www.globalrebels.com/englishlaundry/WIMBERRY-IN-BLACK/productinfo/XELW1108B/ ))> What do you think of Club Dante? It's pretty much the only place in town where your clique doesn't matter. <he grins> I mean, the jocks and preps don't really show up here, but other than that...

[04:53] arynwyn: Natalie: It reminds me of home. Which is probably the highest compliment I can pay it.

[04:56] Socks: Theo: <beams> Well it's open every night except Sundays, 6 - midnight. C'mon, <he says as he finishes buttoning up his shirt> I'll introduce you to the manager. <he picks up his bag> Hey, Freddie, look after Boudica for me, okay?

Freddie: Sure thing. I'll watch her as if she were my own.

Theo: <he laughs> Watch her better than THAT! <he grins and, slinging the bag over his shoulder, offers Nat his arm> Shall we?

[04:57] arynwyn: Natalie: <slips her arm in his and smiles> Sure.

[04:58] Socks: Theo: Just a quick drink, chat with Ms. Owens, and then we're off. You look INCREDIBLE, by the way.

[04:58] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes> Thanks. I had to wear the jacket 'cause I didn't think my dad would let me out if he saw the tank. <grins>

[05:00] Socks: Theo: <chuckles and leans in to comment quietly> So vampiric dads are just as protective as living ones, then? <still grinning> I'll take that as a warning.

[05:00] arynwyn: Natalie: <elbows him in the ribs>

[05:04] Socks: Theo: Ow, hey, watch out! <he doesn't seem really injured though. He takes her over to the non-alcoholic bar and waves at the woman working it> I work and I slave and I can't even get a decent drink in this hellhole?! <he moans dramatically>

Ms. Owens: Not 'til you're 21, you don't! <she singsongs back. She's in her early 40's maybe, wearing a black tank top and blue jeans. She pulls out a bottle of Jones soda and slides it down the bar to him. She smiles at Nat> And what can I get for you, miss?

Theo: <nods by way of thanks> Ms. Owens, this is Natalie James, a new girl here in town, and, I'm proud to say, my date tonight.

[05:05] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes> Sprite, please.

[05:08] Socks: Ms. Owens: <smirks and says> Coming right up! So, new in town, hm? Well, I think you fell in with the right crowd, if you're gonna date Theo.

Theo: She just says that 'cause we're the best act in the club. <he comments around his bottle>

Ms. Owens: You are, but that's not why I say it. You're all good kids, got your heads on straight. <she slides a small bottle of Sprite down to Nat> On the house, for your first night here. <she winks. And no, she's not a witch. In fact, no one else here seems to be though in this crowd, who can tell?>

[05:09] arynwyn: Natalie: Thanks. <she sips her drink, leaning against Theo as though for protection>

[05:11] Socks: Theo: <puts an arm around her shoulder as he drinks>

Ms. Owens: So what're your plans for tonight then?

Theo: Vincenzo's then I'll walk her home. You know, as a kid with his head on straight. <he grins>

Ms. Owens: Very nice. <she looks at Nat> Since you're new here, you probably don't know much about the club, do you?

[05:11] arynwyn: Natalie: <shakes her head> No, I don't.

[05:13] Socks: Ms. Owens: It's owned and run by the Community Center next door. It's a designated Safe Place, as is the Community Center. So if you ever need us, we're here.

Theo: I think she's legally obligated to say that. <he comments, setting his mostly empty bottle down>

[05:14] arynwyn: Natalie: <smiles> Good to know. Thanks.

[05:16] Socks: Theo: We can walk to Vincenzo's from here. It's just a block and a half. I mean, I know I should probably have a motorcycle or something, but I really just walk everywhere.

[05:17] Socks: \*Or get rides.

[05:17] arynwyn: Natalie: Walking is fine with me. <she finishes her Sprite>

[05:19] Socks: Theo: <waves to Ms. Owens>

Ms. Owens: Have a good night, you two. <she leans close to Nat and whispers> We have condoms available too, if you need them. <she straightens up, winks, and goes down the bar to another customer>

Theo: <doesn't seem to have heard her; he just offers his arm to Nat again>

[05:19] arynwyn: Natalie: <goes crimson. She ducks her head to hide her face and takes his arm>

[05:23] Socks: Theo: <leads her out into the much cooler night air - not cold, but compared to the heat of the club, it's refreshing> If you really want to come for a whole set, we'll be playing again next Friday, like Dawn said.

[05:24] arynwyn: Natalie: <looks up, forgetting her embarrassment> Yeah, I do. You guys were good. What I heard, anyway. You have a lot of fans. <smile>

[05:26] Socks: Theo: Eh, we're big fish in a small pond, is all. But I'm glad you liked it. And the place we're going is really nice. Local joint, really good pasta and outstanding garlic bread. <he clears his throat, the only sign so far that he is nervous>

[05:26] arynwyn: Natalie: I hope it's not expensive. <she gives him a sidelong look>

[05:27] Socks: Theo: Well, it's not McDonald's. And anyway, you're not to worry about that. I promised to pay for dinner, right?

[05:28] arynwyn: Natalie: We can go Dutch. I don't mind.

[05:28] Socks: Theo: No, I promised. I am a man of my word. <he picks up her hand and presses a kiss to the back of it>

[05:30] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes again but smiles> If you're sure.

[05:31] Socks: Theo: I am. So. I'm guessing that there's no long-lost love who might have followed you here from your hometown to reclaim you?

[05:32] arynwyn: Natalie: <snorts> Yeah, right.

[05:33] Socks: Theo: See, you think that. But I bet you left a string of broken-hearted boys behind you, whether you know it or not.

[05:34] arynwyn: Natalie: I really doubt that. I wasn't exactly popular.

[05:36] Socks: Theo: That doesn't mean anything. The quiet yet beautiful girl, the air of mystery.... <he smiles softly> It's like honey to bees. Er...well, maybe not to bees, they MAKE honey, I guess, they don't eat it. Bears? Honey to bears? Argh. <he clears his throat again>

[05:37] arynwyn: Natalie: <giggles softly, then falls quiet for a minute. When she speaks again, her voice is serious> So, what's the catch this time? <she looks at him out of the corner of her eyes> Ulterior motives, I mean. People aren't this nice for nothing.

[05:39] Socks: Theo: <he stops, the restaurant just across the street from them, and turns to look at her> You really believe that?

[05:39] arynwyn: Natalie: <she eyes him warily, looking tired> It's my experience.

[05:43] Socks: Theo: <he frowns> Then I'm sorry for what you've gone through. My ulterior motives? I think you're pretty, and you're sweet and fun to be with. So I want to spend more time with you. That so terrible? <he sort of half-smiles hopefully at him>

[05:44] arynwyn: Natalie: <studies him for a long moment> No, it's not. I'm sorry.

[05:45] Socks: Theo: Don't worry about it. I know I have to prove myself to you. I'm not going to press you about anything. <he squeezes her hand> Except I might insist a little that we go eat - I'm starved.

[05:45] arynwyn: Natalie: <smiles> Yeah. Sorry.

[20:00] Socks: <Vincenzo's is a bit on the small side, with old-fashioned red-and-white check tablecloths and little candles in small, green or clear glass jars (each table has one or the other). There's light jazz playing softly and the lights are dimmed a little (though you can still see well enough). The walls are exposed brick and there are framed poster size pictures of various Italian landscapes up on the walls. The maitre'd smiles at them> Good evening, 2 tonight? <the place is pretty packed, but not terribly; this time of night, the dinner rush is starting to die down>

Theo: We have a reservation, under Lennox. <he smiles>

<the maitre'd checks and nods. He picks up two menus> This way, please. <he leads them to a quiet little table with a reserved placard on it, which he picks up. He lets them get seated and hands them each a menu> Your waitress will be along momentarily. <and he heads back to the front. The menu is mostly pasta dishes, some things like chicken parmesan and salads and of course some luscious sounding desserts. The prices aren't too expensive, but it's definitely a lot pricier than Fazoli's>

[20:02] arynwyn: Natalie: What do you recommend? <she smiles, trying to make up for her previous bad behavior and accusations>

[20:05] Socks: Theo: Anything. Everything. <he grins> I haven't had a meal here yet that wasn't delicious. I think I'm getting the ravioli. Oh and they'll bring us...

<a basket of garlic bread appears on the table, set there by their waitress>Good evening. Our special tonight is lasagna with side salad, if either of you are interested? <smile smile>

Theo: <he shakes his head a little> I'm here for the ravioli, with marinara please. And just a coke to drink.

[20:06] arynwyn: Natalie: The lasagna sounds great. <she hands the waitress the menu> With a Sprite, please.

[20:08] Socks: <the waitress nods, collects their menus and heads to the kitchen>

Theo: So, I take it you didn't tell your dad that you're going out with a witch tonight?

[20:09] arynwyn: Natalie: He was upset enough that I was going to a club. I didn't want to push it.

[20:10] Socks: Theo: Yeah, smart move. But who knows? Maybe we can be the Romeo and Juliet who finally unite the two warring factions through love! ...or...well, not Romeo and Juliet, they DIED...

[20:11] arynwyn: Natalie: <grins> We can rewrite Romeo and Juliet. Give us a happy ending. <she folds her hands on the table>

[20:12] Socks: Theo: So no poison, okay? For either of us. And stay away from daggers. <he grins back>

[20:12] arynwyn: Natalie: I'll have to get rid of my collection then... <chuckles>

[20:13] Socks: Theo: <blink> Do you actually have a dagger collection?

[20:13] arynwyn: Natalie: <shrugs> It's not huge. And I lost my favorite two in the fire. But I still have eight. <looks down at her hands, flushing a little> I just think they're cool.

[20:14] Socks: Theo: ...that. <staring at her> Is so COOL.

[20:14] arynwyn: Natalie: <laughs, looking up in surprise> Why?

[20:16] Socks: Theo: You collect weapons. I mean that's just...I'd love to see them sometime. I promise not to touch them, I just want to see them.

[20:17] arynwyn: Natalie: You can touch them. They're daggers, not crystal. Just don't stab anyone.

[20:17] Socks: Theo: I promise. Scout's...well, I was never a scout. Uh...<he thinks>...I swear on Boudica not to stab anyone with them <he vows, hand over his heart>

[20:18] arynwyn: Natalie: <grins> That's probably the most solemn oath you could give me.

[20:20] Socks: Theo: <nods> You know if I'm swearing on my guitar that it's serious business. <he grins>

[20:21] arynwyn: Natalie: So tell me about your family. <leans on her hands, elbows on the table>

[20:37] Socks: Theo: Well...<he rubs the back of his neck and clears his throat> I don't know how much you know about witches...

[20:38] arynwyn: Natalie: Not a lot. Mostly I was told that they dislike vampires and I should stay away from them. And that witch blood is poisonous. If it makes you uncomfortable, we don't have to talk about it. I'm just... curious.

[20:43] Socks: Theo: No, it's fine. Well, my mom is one of the leaders of the clan - not the Matriarch though. Witches are very matriarchal. The women choose the men they want to be the possible fathers of their children and there's a...a ritual involved, that I'd rather not think about. <he's blushing> But anyway, Monica was my mom's first child, by Alexander. Some rituals...er..."took" and some didn't. I have another older sister and a younger brother. Half-siblings, technically, since we all have different fathers, but we don't really think of it that way. My father is Vincent. <he sort of sits up a little straighter> Younger than most of Mom's partners, but very strong in the magic. They're expecting I might be one of the leaders of the menfolk someday, 'cause Vincent's working his way up to that pretty quickly.

[20:44] arynwyn: Natalie: <studies him for a long moment> Strange. I thought my family was odd. <smiles a little> Are you the one that did this pendant? <she fingers the necklace he loaned to her> 'cause it works great.

[20:46] Socks: Theo: <beams> Therese, my other sister, made it in metalworking class, but I enchanted it. And...oh, damn I'm stupid. I forgot. <he presents a red rose out of thin air for her> This is for you. <it does look a wee bit crushed, but it's still in mostly good shape> And before you ask, this is just good old-fashioned stage magic. If you can do this stuff well enough, I figure, people don't look so hard at the genuine article, hm?

[20:48] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes a little but accepts the rose> I'm not sure I deserve this, but thank you. <she sets the rose down and pulls off the necklace> Here. You loaned it to me until Friday, and it's Friday. <she holds it out to him>

[20:48] Socks: Theo: Well....have we thought up any better way to get the seniors to leave you alone?

[20:49] arynwyn: Natalie: No. But I can't keep it forever. For all I know, you're getting the crap beat out of you every day by seniors because you don't have it. <she lays it on the table in front of him>

[20:50] Socks: Theo: <he chuckles> Do I look beaten up? Nah, they've gotten so used to leaving me alone that they just do it now. I have trained them well. So you keep it until we figure something out. <slides it back across the tablecloth towards her>

[20:51] arynwyn: Natalie: <frowns for a few seconds, then shrugs and puts it back on> Thanks. I really like it. It makes me feel... <blushes a little> Nevermind.

[20:53] Socks: Theo: No, no, tell me. Maybe there's some odd side effect that I don't know about.

[20:54] arynwyn: Natalie: It feels nice, to wear. I don't think I can explain it more than that. And it makes me feel cared about. <blushes more> And it reminds me of you.

[20:56] Socks: Theo: <blushes a little in return> Well, I don't think that's a side effect of the magic itself then...but it's still good to know. <something occurs to him> Y'know, perhaps I shouldn't bring this up on a date, but...<he's cut off when the waitress brings their food and drinks out (bad waitress, no tip >.> I forgot about her bringing the drinks out)>

[20:57] arynwyn: Natalie: <takes a sip of her Sprite and looks at him expectantly when the waitress is gone>

[21:02] Socks: Theo: ...well...I'd love to try some spells on you. Nothing bad! <he rushes to assure her> I'm just curious to see if the effects are any different on a dhampir. <he gives her a "please don't walk out on me" look and sort of bites his lower lip>

[21:03] arynwyn: Natalie: <looks surprised, then grins> That'd be really cool, actually. What kinds of things can you do?

[21:04] Socks: Theo: <looks immensely relieved. He grabs some garlic bread> I could change your hair color - that's how the twins do it, they don't dye, something about it frying their hair or something - or cast illusion spells. The healing spells would be really interesting, but they'd require an injury....so we'll just say next time you get a papercut, come see me, hm?

[21:07] arynwyn: Natalie: Okay, but you'd have to cast it really, really fast. My papercuts heal in seconds.

[21:08] Socks: Theo: <blinks>Wow, really? <he stabs some ravioli and shoves it into his mouth, along with a bite of bread>

[21:09] arynwyn: Natalie: <starts in on her lasagna> Yeah. There are some perks to being half-vampire.

[21:13] Socks: Theo: That is so unbelievably cool. <nom chew nom> I could test out some basic elemental spells...the air ones are really fun, but you might not want to wear a skirt. Though if you do, I won't protest.

[21:14] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes and laughs. Oh, did I mention she pulled off her jacket to reveal the sexy top underneath?> When do you want to?

[21:15] Socks: Theo: ...after dinner? <he asks hopefully>

[21:15] arynwyn: Natalie: <her eyes light up> Sure! I didn't know if you had something else planned. <she starts to eat a little faster>

[21:17] Socks: Theo: Just rampant sex in the backseat of my Porsche. Oh wait, I don't have a Porsche. So I guess that's out.

[21:18] arynwyn: Natalie: <goes crimson and looks down at her food>

[21:20] Socks: Theo: <chuckles> I was just willing to go along with whatever you wanted to do. The band that comes on after us at the club is good, so we might've gone back there.

[21:21] arynwyn: Natalie: <noms> My dad had to check the club out before he'd let me go. <embarrassed> He owned a nightclub back home, so he was all paranoid about it.

[21:22] Socks: Theo: Oh, one of those blood bar sort of things? Did you ever get to hang out there? What was it like? <nom>

[21:23] arynwyn: Natalie: Yeah, it was really upscale. But no, I never hung out there. Actually, I've only known my dad for about two months...

[21:24] Socks: Theo: <he blinks> ...you're awfully tall for a 2 month old infant.

[21:25] arynwyn: Natalie: <makes a "duh" face> I grew up away from him. They thought it was better if I grew up as human as possible, whatever that means. But a couple months ago... <she trails off, staring at her food, willing her tears back>

[21:27] Socks: Theo: ...<realizes they've hit something bad and clears his throat> How's your lasagna?

[21:27] arynwyn: Natalie: <blinks a few times, grateful for the change of subject> It's really good. This place is great. <she doesn't look up though>

[21:28] Socks: Theo: Yeah, I don't come here often enough. I'm just too used to stealing free food from the Laughing Planet. <grins> Can I depend on your company for lunch on school days?

[21:29] arynwyn: Natalie: Until your uncle gets tired of me leeching off him, yeah. <she takes a drink and finally looks up at him>

[21:33] Socks: Theo: Eh, he'll be fine with it. <he smiles at her reassuringly> So after dessert, what would you like to do? Spell practice in the park? Back to the club? Movie? My wish is your command.

[21:33] arynwyn: Natalie: I don't care. You pick. <smile>

[21:35] Socks: Theo: Well, I'm biased towards spell practicing, but I don't want you to feel I'm only interested in you for your body's reaction to witch magic. <grin>

[21:37] arynwyn: Natalie: Why are you interested in me? <she narrows her eyes, but smiles>

[21:40] Socks: Theo: Well it started with "hey, that new girl is a knockout! And the seniors are hassling her, so she's clearly not one of them." Really, that's usually enough for me; I'm easy that way. And then, hey, it turned out you're fun to talk to and hang with, so - bonus. <smiles>

[21:40] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes a little> So basically you think I'm hot. Greeeat. <rolls her eyes>

[21:42] Socks: Theo: Hot and smart and nice! And you don't think I'm a freak for being a witch, even if it is something of a complication.

[21:42] arynwyn: Natalie: I think I'm more of a freak than you. At least you're... I dunno, part of nature. I'm an abomination.

[21:43] Socks: Theo: <his brow furrows> You are NOT. Why would you think that?

[21:45] arynwyn: Natalie: <fidgets a little, then shrugs> I'm not human, I'm not a vampire. I'm the love child that should never have been. I started reading my mom's journals after... <exhales a little> My dad was going to turn her, she wanted to be a vampire, but then she got pregnant with me. <leans back in her chair and looks down at her hands, shrugging again> I don't belong anywhere. At least you have a real family. People who care about you.

[21:46] Socks: Theo: ...but you have your father, right? I mean, he cares for you, right?

[21:46] arynwyn: Natalie: I've known him for two months. It's sort of too little too late, you know? <shrugs again> He didn't want to be part of my life until I forced my way in.

[21:47] Socks: Theo: <winces> Well that doesn't make you an abomination. Lots of kids end up in worse situations and come through okay. It makes you...<he ponders> Human Plus. <smiles>

[21:49] arynwyn: Natalie: <smiles a little and takes a drink> Sorry, I didn't mean to shove all my problems at you. Normally I don't talk to people about stuff like that. <looks a little puzzled, wondering why she did talk about it>

[21:50] Socks: Theo: It's okay. Everyone needs someone to talk to.

[21:50] arynwyn: Natalie: <makes a face> I already have a therapist. I don't need to drag you into it too.

[21:50] Socks: Theo: ...you do?

[21:51] arynwyn: Natalie: <looks extremely embarrassed, going red> My dad makes me.

[21:52] Socks: Theo: Ah. Presumably because he's heard you call yourself an abomination. And, understand, you're NOT. But even if you were, you're definitely the prettiest abomination there is. <wink>

[21:53] arynwyn: Natalie: <she sighs a little> If you're not careful, I'm going to fall really hard for you. <smiles> And I'm pretty sure your family would not approve. Besides, don't you have... obligations? Your ritual or whatever?

[21:57] Socks: Theo: <blushes again and clears his throat> I'm not eligible for it until I'm 18, so I've got two years left. And...well, the clan would be disappointed in me if I left, but I can't really believe that Mom wouldn't want me to be happy. Hell, in the end, I'm going to do what I want anyway.

[21:58] arynwyn: Natalie: <nods a little> Are you going to college or are you going to try and hit it big with your band?

[22:03] Socks: Theo: I don't really know. Dawn and Eve are the matriarch's daughters; they've got a LOT of expectations on their shoulders. I mean, we - the band - we've talked about trying to go national, or going to college together or whatever. It always ends up in a fight. <he shrugs> I haven't even really decided what to do with my life. I know what Mom wants me to do, but...<he looks at her> well, sometimes I think there are better options out there that I just don't know about yet. <grins> If you're done, you wanna hit the park?

[22:04] arynwyn: Natalie: Yeah, sure. <she takes a last drink> What does your mom want you to do, if I may ask?

[22:05] Socks: Theo: <he looks at the bill, which we will say was brought with dinner, and leaves the appropriate amount plus tip on the table as he stands> Family business, that sort of thing, you know how it is. Well, maybe you don't. <he chuckles and offers her his arm>

[22:06] arynwyn: Natalie: You sure you don't want me to help pay? <links her arm in his>

[22:07] Socks: Theo: Positive. And now I must show you off around town. I will be the envy of all who pass us! <beams>

[22:08] arynwyn: Natalie: <elbows him in the ribs> Funny.

[22:08] Socks: Theo: Who was joking?

[22:09] arynwyn: Natalie: <she leans up and gives him a quick peck on the cheek> Thanks for being so nice to me.

[22:10] Socks: Theo: <he smiles> Thanks for being such good company for me. And for going out with me, even after I tricked you into it, basically.

[22:10] arynwyn: Natalie: <grins> If you wanted a date bad enough to trick me into it, I'd be heartless to say no.

[22:12] Socks: Theo: Charitable as well as beautiful. I'm beginning to think you are far, far out of my league.

[22:14] arynwyn: Natalie: Hardly. You took pity on me at school, remember? I could have ended up with pig's blood all over me. And you gave me this. <reaches up to touch the pendant> Which is far more charitable than me going on a date with you where you pay. Plus you get me free lunch. I think you're out of my league.

[22:18] Socks: Theo: It wasn't pity. It was reaching out to what I hoped would be a kindred soul. And guys are supposed to pay on dates....aren't they? That's what I heard.

[22:19] arynwyn: Natalie: Maybe fifty years ago. <grins>

[22:19] Socks: Theo: <frowns thoughtfully> So you can pay next time? How's that? Does that even things up?

[22:20] arynwyn: Natalie: That sounds fair. But you'll have to pick out the place. I'm still lost here.

[22:22] Socks: Theo: Heh, maybe I should've just shown you around town for our first date. Oh, the park's just over this way. <turning in that direction> You'll like it: there are night-blooming flowers.

[22:23] arynwyn: Natalie: Wow, really?

[22:23] Socks: Theo: <nods> Well, there will be. <grins>

[22:23] arynwyn: Natalie: <laughs> I wish I could do what you do.

[22:25] Socks: Theo: You have your own talents, I'm sure. What do you want to do with your life?

[22:26] arynwyn: Natalie: <shrugs> I dunno. I don't... <she stops herself, shakes her head> I dunno.

[22:27] Socks: Theo: You don't know?

[22:28] arynwyn: Natalie: <sighs> I haven't had a lot of hope for the future lately. I don't even know if I want a future. <looks down at the ground> But you're not my therapist so we don't need to talk about that.

[22:28] Socks: Theo: <stops and turns to look at her> What do you mean, you don't want a future?

[22:29] arynwyn: Natalie: <glances around to make sure there's no one watching> I dunno. Nothing. Just forget it, okay?

[22:32] Socks: Theo: Natalie, you can't really mean to kill yourself? I mean, even if you don't have something you want to do now, you've got all kinds of time to figure that out.

[22:32] arynwyn: Natalie: <snorts> Like it's that easy. <she pushes past him and starts in the direction of the park> Just forget it, okay?

[22:34] Socks: Theo: <catches up with her and reaches out to grab her arm to pull her around to face him> No, no I won't forget it. Promise me. Promise me you won't kill yourself.

[22:36] arynwyn: Natalie: <she stares at his chest, unable to meet his eye> Like I said, it's not that easy. I'm half-vampire. <there's an edge to her voice>

[22:36] Socks: Theo: Nat, look at me.

[22:37] arynwyn: Natalie: <sighs and looks up at him for a few seconds, then looks away> I can't believe we're talking about this. I have to be the worst date ever. <she tries to joke but it falls flat>

[22:41] Socks: Theo: You're not. <he reaches out to turn her face to his> Your being a half-vampire doesn't make you unholy. It doesn't mean you can't do whatever you want in life, if you work at it.

[22:42] arynwyn: Natalie: <she blinks back tears> I didn't know until a couple months ago, when my mom died. I knew there was something different about me but... <sighs> I can't cope with all of this. There's just too much. <she leans her forehead against his shoulder>

[22:45] Socks: Theo: <he wraps his arms around her> I'm sorry to hear about your mom. I'd be lost without mine too. But she wouldn't want you to give up. <he rubs her back consolingly>

[22:46] arynwyn: Natalie: I'm sorry. I don't normally... even with my therapist... You're just so easy to talk to.

[22:48] Socks: Theo: <he smiles faintly> I'm glad to hear it. <he kisses the top of her head> Life is precious. Yours is precious to lots of people. It was precious to your mom; it has to be precious a least a little to your dad. And it's precious to me. I know guys aren't supposed to cry, but I would weep like a baby if you killed yourself.

[22:50] arynwyn: Natalie: <she takes a deep breath and exhales, then pulls away and gives a small smile> C'mon. I don't want to completely ruin our date. Let's go to the park and do something fun.

[22:50] Socks: Theo: Promise me you won't kill yourself, and I'll pull out the really fun stuff at the park.

[22:51] arynwyn: Natalie: <her smile falters a bit but she nods> Okay, I promise.

[22:54] Socks: Theo: <he breaks out into a wide grin> Thank you. C'mon! <he grabs her hand and starts running>

[22:55] arynwyn: Natalie: <chuckles and lets herself be tugged along, leather jacket and rose in her other hand>

[22:56] Socks: Theo: <the park's a couple blocks over. It's pretty empty this time of night on a Friday. There's a big fountain with some benches around it, and lots of flowers and shrubs arrayed around that> Close your eyes, just for a moment.

[22:57] arynwyn: Natalie: <smiles and closes her eyes>

[23:00] Socks: Theo: <still holding onto her hand, he murmurs under his breath. A strong breeze comes up, chilly with night air, and the feeling of the ground beneath her feet falls away. After a minute or so, Theo says> Open 'em up. <they are several feet off the ground, with an excellent view of the entire park beneath them. The breeze still swirls around them, but it's not loud; you can feel it more than hear it or see it.> Oh, almost forgot. <Theo's free hand, tinged in golden sparkles, sweeps across the park and as it passes, the flowers open up. His hand stops glowing when he's done and he turns to check her reaction>

[23:01] arynwyn: Natalie: <gasps a little and clutches his hand more tightly> Okay, this is trippy.

[23:03] Socks: Theo: <he chuckles> Don't worry, you won't fall unless something happens to me. So as long as I don't get SHOT or something, you'll be fine. <he starts walking, just as if he were on the ground> See? <he holds his other hand out to her> Shall we dance? <he grins>

[23:03] arynwyn: Natalie: <glances at the ground, wide-eyed> What if someone sees us?

[23:06] Socks: Theo: <he chuckles> They'll have a story to tell their grandkids. If the height bothers you, I can set us down.

[23:06] arynwyn: Natalie: No. <she takes a hesitant step forward, toward him> I want to dance. <shy smile>

[23:11] Socks: Theo: <he smiles and, still holding her one hand, wraps his arm around her waist to draw her in> I learned how to waltz for an elementary school production of Cinderella. <and 1, 2, 3; 1, 2, 3...>

[23:12] arynwyn: Natalie: <she smiles and rests her head on his chest, listening to his heartbeat> You are full of surprises.

[23:15] Socks: Theo: Hopefully all good ones?

[23:15] arynwyn: Natalie: Yes. You're amazing. <she doesn't really know how to waltz so she just sort of follows him around>

[23:16] Socks: Theo: Here. <teaches her box step, which is easy to do but hard to describe>

[23:17] arynwyn: Natalie: <gets it quickly> I was never very graceful...

[23:20] Socks: Theo: No one's judging your performance, Nat. <he spies something in the distance, behind her> Uh oh. <they start to sink down, gently but at a not-so-slow pace, like an elevator descending>

[23:20] arynwyn: Natalie: <grips him a little tighter> What? Someone coming?

[23:22] Socks: Theo: Yeah. But fear not, madamoiselle. <as they sink below the treeline, his hand gets glowy briefly - and they both turn invisible. Which would be great, except they can't see each other either. He squeezes her hand and his voice whispers in her ear> *Don't freak out. I'm still here.*

[23:23] arynwyn: Natalie: <whispers back very softly> Why do we need to be invisible?

[23:25] Socks: Theo: *So we're not discovered. Here.* <he tugs her back towards the bushes and there's a faint rustling as he crouches down>

[23:26] arynwyn: Natalie: <still confused, she follows him and crouches down next to him> Are we not supposed to be in the park?

[23:29] Socks: Theo: *...let's just say this is safer.* <there're strange sounds behind them, from the other side of the treewall of the park: a roar and a whoosh and a hiss. Theo's arm wraps around her shoulder in part for comfort and in part to keep her from turning towards the sounds> I hate to cut the evening short - believe me, I do - but I should get you home.

[23:30] arynwyn: Natalie: <frowns, not that he can see, and tries to see what the sounds are despite his arm around her> What's going on?

[23:34] Socks: Theo: *Something you don't want to see.* <the sounds die down, and after a moment, the invisibility spell fades. He stands up> We should go; it may not be safe here.

[23:34] arynwyn: Natalie: <her mouth is set in a frown> Okay. If you take me back to the club, I can get a ride.

[23:35] Socks: Theo: I'm willing to walk you home...unless you think that's a bad idea?

[23:36] arynwyn: Natalie: No, it's just a long walk. I live on the other side of town. <the rich side of town>

[23:37] Socks: Theo: Well, it's fine with me, but if you're tired, Ms. Owens can get you a ride from the club. They have volunteers who'll take club-goers home if it gets late or they're drunk or whatever.

[23:37] arynwyn: Natalie: We can walk. I don't mind.

[23:39] Socks: Theo: <smiles> Good. I'm greedy; I'll take as much time with you as I can get. So lead the way.

[23:40] arynwyn: Natalie: <she pulls her hand away to slip her jacket on, buttoning it back up, then takes his hand again> I don't want my dad to see this tank. <grins guiltily>

[23:46] Socks: Theo: Yeah, good call. He might never let you out of the house again. And it's safer too: you'll stop traffic otherwise. Might cause an accident.

[23:46] arynwyn: Natalie: <elbows him in the ribs> Only because my skin is so white it reflects light.

[23:47] Socks: Theo: Or because you look incredible. I'm inclined to believe the second.

[23:48] arynwyn: Natalie: You're biased, though I don't really know why. <smiles>

[23:48] Socks: Theo: I don't think of it as "biased". I think of it as "having eyeballs". <he grins>

[23:49] arynwyn: Natalie: You know, you're not so bad yourself. One of your bandmates said you have girls throwing themselves at you. I'm surprised it hasn't gone to your head.

[23:53] Socks: Theo: Oh jeezus. <he groans> The groupies. They just want me 'cause we're getting popular. I never had girls throwing themselves at me before we started playing at Club Dante every weekend. And now all of a sudden it's <affects a smarmingly feminine voice> "Oh, Theo, you're SOOOOOOOOOO good with your hands tee hee" <he rolls his eyes and resumes his normal voice>. Whatever. They're not interested in ME, they want to be able to say they're dating a guitarist - probably just to piss off Daddy and get him to buy them that car they've been pouting over. <grumbles>

[23:54] arynwyn: Natalie: <giggles softly> So I shouldn't say that it's hot you play the guitar?

[23:55] Socks: Theo: <he blushes a little> No, no, from you, it's nice. Because you liked me enough to consent to a date even before you knew I was in a band.

[23:56] arynwyn: Natalie: You're really good, too. I don't know much about guitar, but you sounded good.

[23:58] Socks: Theo: Thank you. Mom always said I should learn a musical instrument; I think she was hoping for piano or violin though. <wink>

[23:59] arynwyn: Natalie: Don't they always? My mom tried to get me to play the flute. I was terrible. <shakes her head. They head into the ritzier part of town, full of big houses with large lawns>

[00:01] Socks: Theo: So much for my idea to get you into the band. <he grins> So which mansion is yours?

[00:03] arynwyn: Natalie: <blushes deeply> It's not mine, it's my dad's. <she points at the end of the street to the house sitting on the end of the cul-de-sac> That one. <it's large but not ostentatious or pretentious. The yard is well-kept and tidy but lacks the statues and sculpted bushes the other houses have. Cass's Porsche sits in the driveway>

[00:04] Socks: Theo: <chuckles self-consciously> Maybe I shouldn't have joked about the Porsche earlier.

[00:05] arynwyn: Natalie: That's not ours. That's my dad's business parter-slash-friend, Cassandra. <she pinches the bridge of her nose nervously as they walk up the driveway> Do you want to come in?

[00:07] Socks: Theo: ...is uh...is it safe to?

[00:08] arynwyn: Natalie: Yeah. Even if my dad hated witches, he wouldn't hurt you 'cause I like you. <smiles a little>

[00:10] Socks: Theo: Oh, uh, right. So now all I have to worry about is the standard "Touch my daughter and you die" thing. <clears his throat and runs a hand back through his hair> Well, at least I know he won't bite me...oh. Should I...put in my contacts? <pointing to his obviously golden eyes>

[00:10] arynwyn: Natalie: It's up to you, but he's going to find out eventually. <she shrugs>

[00:11] Socks: Theo: <considers it, then, swallowing harshly, foregoes putting them back in> Okay, let's do this.

[00:13] arynwyn: Natalie: <squeezes his hand and opens the front door>

Cass: <darts into the hallway> THEY'RE HEEEERE!! <calling to Pyro> So this is the boy that -- <she pauses for the briefest of seconds as she spots his eyes but smooths it over quickly as if nothing happened> has got you twisted into knots, huh? He's cute. <grins>

Natalie: Cass! <she turns scarlet>

[00:16] Socks: Theo: <smiles at her, clearly a little nervous, but doing his damnedest to hide it. He offers his hand for a shake> Nice to meet you, ma'am.

Ryann: <comes downstairs, in a nice t-shirt and jeans> Welcome back, you two. Did you have fun? <smiles>

[00:18] arynwyn: Pyro: <follows Ryann down, hands in his pockets, looking wary>

Natalie: Yeah, it was fun. We went to a fancy Italian restaurant.

Cass: <shakes his hand> Cassandra. <grinning at him>

[00:20] Socks: Theo: Theodore Lennox, but I prefer Theo. <smile smile smile don't kill me smile>

Ryann: Ooo, what's it called? I'll make Pyro take me there sometime. <shoots him a grin, then, seeing his wary attitude, shoots him a Look>

[00:22] arynwyn: Pyro: <quells under Ryann's Look and steps forward, extending his hand> Pyro, Natalie's father. <catches Theo's eyes and goes very still for a couple of seconds>

[00:23] Socks: Theo: Nice to meet you, sir. <swallows hard but gives a good handshake> I'm sorry to hear your old home burned down, even though it means I got to meet Nat because of it.

[00:25] arynwyn: Pyro: ...<glances at Natalie, then back to Theo> Yes... Well, it seems that only good has come of it. <offers a geniune smile> I hope you don't find my question rude, but perhaps if you see it from my perspective... Does your family know about my daughter? <glances at Nat and then back to him> About her relation to me?

[00:27] Socks: Theo: I understand, sir. And...no, they don't. I mean, they know I had a date tonight, and what her name is, but I didn't tell them about...her heritage. <he clears his throat>

[00:28] arynwyn: Pyro: <looks relieved> Would you mind very much if you didn't tell your family? You understand I only have Natalie's well-being at heart.

Natalie: Pyro... seriously...

Pyro: <holds a hand up to quiet her, his gaze on Theo> You understand, don't you?

[00:31] Socks: Theo: More than you can know, sir. They won't hear it from me, I promise. I...uh... <he glances over at Nat briefly and sighs a little, then steels himself to look back at Pyro> Even if I weren't completely terrified here - and I admit I am - I think I should warn you about my clan, sir.

[00:37] arynwyn: Pyro: <his brow furrows a little> What about it?

[00:39] Socks: Theo: ...the Greenbriar clan is particularly...concerned with, uh...the eradication of vampires. <swallows hard and rushes to reassure> I don't mean anyone here any harm MYSELF! But just...be careful, yeah? <tosses a wary look at Nat>

[00:42] arynwyn: Pyro: I see. <frowns a little more> Thank you for the warning.

Nat: <goes a little wide-eyed and looks down at the ground>

Pyro: <smiles at Theo> Well, we'll let you two say goodnight. It was very nice to meet you, Theo. <he turns and heads out>

Cass: If you guys ever want to borrow my Porsche, just let me know, okay? <grins and turns to follow Pyro out>

[00:44] Socks: Ryann: <follows after Pyro, shooting a look back at Theo>

Theo: <clears his throat at that and looks at Nat> I...didn't want you to be worried all through the date. I was hoping for a...nice, fun night, you know? Something like normal kids have.

[00:45] arynwyn: Natalie: <she sighs heavily> But we're not normal. This is a bad idea, Theo. <she doesn't look at him>

[00:48] Socks: Theo: Probably but...I had a good time anyway. <he reaches out and rubs her arm> I won't tell anyone - not even the band - about what you are. You know I won't. <smiles hopefully at her, moving his head to try and get within her view>

[00:49] arynwyn: Natalie: <before she can help herself, tears start rolling down her cheeks. She turns away, embarrassed, trying to wipe them away> Sorry...

[00:51] Socks: Theo: Nat. Hey, c'mere. <he walks up behind her and hugs her from behind> I'd like to keep seeing you. No one's gonna know what your dad is, and it'll be okay. Really. <he kisses her head again> Okay?

[00:52] arynwyn: Natalie: <shakes her head, whispering> It's too much. I can't handle all of this. I'm sorry. <she pulls away> Please, just go. <she pulls off the necklace and shoves it into his hand> I'm sorry.

[00:54] Socks: Theo: Nat... <he watches her go, sighs and then sets the protection charm down on the nearest table/flat surface before walking out, quietly closing the door behind him>

[Monday]

[13:35] Socks: <Monday, in the period just before lunch, the class is assigned to find partners for a report project. Someone taps her on the shoulder> Got a partner yet? <Dawn is smiling down at her. Her eyes look more green than gold and her hair is brown now instead of electric pink. She's in a hot pink hoodie though, over her white tank top and blue jeans. She's used little sticky silver gemstones to put the band's logo on the hoodie. She clutches her books to her chest and looks at Nat curiously>

[13:36] arynwyn: Nat: <blinks in surprise> Oh. Um. <looks torn for a moment> No, I don't. Are you sure you want to work with me?...

[13:38] Socks: Dawn: Absolutely! <She sits down in the recently vacated desk of a student who'd moved to join their own partner, and leans close> Not the least because I'm DYING to know how Theo screwed things up with you.

[13:39] arynwyn: Nat: <flushes> He didn't. I screwed things up. <she opens her notebook> So, I was thinking if we <launches into a talk about the project, though only half-heartedly>

[13:41] Socks: Dawn: <frowns but gets to work on the project for awhile. After awhile, just before the end of class, she comments> ...he's broken up, you know.

[13:42] arynwyn: Nat: <her stomach knots> It was just one date... <but she sounds unsure, like she knows exactly how he feels>

[13:44] Socks: Dawn: Yeah, but he liked you a lot. Likes. He's never introduced a girl to "Squaring the Circle" before. Are you going to meet him for lunch today?

[13:46] arynwyn: Nat: I dunno. <she bites her lip, then sighs> I guess. I'm a glutton for punishment.

[13:50] Socks: Dawn: <she smiles, relieved> Good. When you see him, give him this. <pulls a folded triangle of paper out of her jeans pocket> Set list for this week.

[13:51] arynwyn: Nat: Okay. <tucks the paper into her pocket> You know, you might not want me dating him if you knew more about me... <watches Dawn closely>

[13:53] Socks: Dawn: You planning to hurt him? <her tone and face indicate that she doesn't think it likely>

[13:54] arynwyn: Nat: <quietly> No, I don't want to hurt him. But I have a feeling that it's going to happen anyway.

[13:57] Socks: Dawn: <she cocks her head> Yeah, we call it life. But you wouldn't do it deliberately. And as long as you wouldn't hurt him deliberately, then I have no problem with you dating him.

[13:58] arynwyn: Nat: <the bell rings and she gets up> The longer he and I date, though, the worse it's going to hurt.

[14:00] Socks: Dawn: <rolls her eyes and darts in close> For you or for him? <she straightens up, gathers her books, and turns to head for the door. She turns back and says> Don't forget, you have pages 20-40! <she waves and ducks out>

[14:01] arynwyn: Nat: <drags her feet getting to her locker, putting off the confrontation with Theo>

[14:07] Socks: Theo: <is leaning by her locker when she gets there, watching her, arms crossed>

[14:07] arynwyn: Nat: <she stops a few feet away from him and her hand goes to the pendant at her neck. She doesn't look at him> Hey.

[14:08] Socks: Theo: <he looks where her hand is> You're wearing it again. Good. <he stands up straight> Coming to lunch or gonna suffer through the cafeteria food?

[14:09] arynwyn: Nat: <she unlocks her locker and shoves her books in> Are you pissed at me?

[14:10] Socks: Theo: No, Nat. <he sounds hurt> Why would I be pissed?

[14:10] arynwyn: Nat: Because I was a jerk. You should be pissed at me. <she looks at him> I'm really sorry. I just... panicked, I guess.

[14:11] Socks: Theo: Dare I hope that you want to date me again after all?

[14:12] arynwyn: Nat: <she steps over to him and leans her head against his shoulder, sliding a hand into his> I never stopped wanting to date you.

[14:16] Socks: Theo: <he squeezes her hand and wraps his other arm around her for a hug> So don't stop dating me, hm?

[14:18] arynwyn: Nat: <kisses his cheek> Do you forgive me?

[14:20] Socks: Theo: Is it pushing it to ask for more kisses? <grins>

[14:21] arynwyn: Nat: <grins back> I have to make it up to you somehow. <she kisses each of his cheeks> C'mon, we've got to get lunch before lunch is over

[14:23] Socks: Theo: Good call. <grins> Besides, you said you'd pay for the next date.

[14:23] arynwyn: Nat: <arches a brow> A date over lunch? Where are we going?

[14:25] Socks: Theo: Well, I was planning to just mooch food off of Laughing Planet...unless you're willing to play hooky from school for the rest of the day? <grins at her>

[14:26] arynwyn: Nat: That sounds awesome. Lead the way, White Knight.

[14:28] Socks: Theo: <beams and pulls his messenger bag over his shoulder> C'mon then. <he heads for the door> Oh, Dawn say hi to you? She said she thought she had 4th period with you.

[14:29] arynwyn: Nat: <grumbles> Said more than hi. But that reminds me... <pulls out the note> She said this is the set list for this week.

[14:32] Socks: Theo: <his brow furrows as he takes the note; he unfolds it, stops walking to read and then laughs out loud before handing it to Nat. In a neat cursive script, writ large on the page, are the words "Do Whatever You Have To Do To Get Her Back, DOLT.">

[14:33] arynwyn: Nat: <facepalms, but grins> Can I keep this?

[14:35] Socks: Theo: Please. Or I might ball it up and throw it at her head next time I see her. <he looks at her> We worked out our set list for Friday yesterday. It's where she heard that things weren't...exactly well with us.

[14:37] arynwyn: Nat: <nods> We're partners for a project in 4th period and she dropped a few hints. She seemed to think it was your fault, what happened. I had to correct her.

[14:39] Socks: Theo: Feh. It is my fault. I shouldn't have said anything. <holds the door open for her>

[14:40] arynwyn: Nat: No, I'm glad you warned my dad. It's not your fault. It's just... sucky circumstances. Thanks. <she steps outside and into the sunshine> Is Dawn part of Greenbriar?

[14:42] Socks: Theo: <nods> She and Eve are the matriarch's daughters. We've...never talked about vampires though. I have no idea what they think about them.

[14:43] arynwyn: Nat: <sighs> I tried to tell her she wouldn't want me dating you if she knew more about me but all she'd say was that as long as I wasn't planning on purposely hurting you, she didn't care. I don't believe that though.

[14:44] Socks: Theo: No? She doesn't normally lie. In fact, she never lies. I asked her to one time, to cover for me, and she still wouldn't.

[14:45] arynwyn: Nat: I didn't say she's lying. She just hasn't thought about all the possibilities. She might not want you to date me if I were, say, wanted in five states for murder.

[14:48] Socks: Theo: I dunno....she might. <he chuckles> You don't know her. Now then, I know a lovely playground, and a fanTASTIC pizza joint right near that.

[14:49] arynwyn: Natalie: Lead the way. <smile>

[14:52] Socks: Theo: <grins and heads off, grabbing her hand and tugging her along>

[Saturday]

[15:15] arynwyn: Nat: <shows up a little early. She's got on a tshirt and jeans and flip flops, a beach bag slung over one shoulder. Her hair is pulled back into a ponytail for once, and she's makeup free>

[15:21] Socks: Theo: <shows up in his white StC (Squaring the Circle) t-shirt and http://www.swimoutlet.com/product\_p/21762.htm?color=28768 , along with some blue flip-flops. He's got a towel flipped over one shoulder> Hey beautiful. <he kisses her cheek

[15:22] arynwyn: Nat: <smiles and returns the kiss> Hey. <she blushes a little at the compliment> Are we walking?

[15:27] Socks: Theo: We could, but the bus'd be faster. <grins> The stop's just over here.

[15:27] arynwyn: Nat: <slips her hand in his and lets him lead the way> I've never been to a beach before.

[15:33] Socks: Theo: Really, never? Well, this should be fun then.

[15:34] arynwyn: Nat: I'm buying lunch, and supper, if we're out that late. <sounds non-negotiable>

[15:43] Socks: Theo: Yes'm. <pulls out a bouquet of wildflowers for her, from thin air>

[15:44] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes and takes them, smiling and smelling them> You're such a sap. <but she's pleased>

[15:45] Socks: Theo: You love it. <he teases her. They get to the stop just as the bus is pulling up>

[15:45] arynwyn: Nat: Yeah, I do. <she kisses his cheek and steps onto the bus, paying their fares>

[15:48] Socks: Theo: <swings into a seat and smiles up at her> So, we'll swim and collect seashells and build sandcastles and eat ice cream. Sound nice?

[15:49] arynwyn: Nat: Sounds awesome. <sits down next to him and takes his hand> Are we meeting anyone there or is it just us?

[15:50] Socks: Theo: Well, lots of people will be there but I didn't ask anyone to meet us there. I kind of like having you to myself.

[15:53] arynwyn: Nat: <smiles> Sap. <she squeezes his hand and looks out the window>

[15:54] Socks: Theo: Only for you. <kisses her cheek again>

[15:55] arynwyn: Nat: <leans against him, tracing circles on his hand with her free hand> Um... <she clears her throat nervously> I was wondering... would you mind if I sketched you today?

[15:57] Socks: Theo: Sketched? You draw? <he beams>

[15:57] arynwyn: Nat: <shrugs> I try. I'm not very good.

[20:19] Socks: Theo: You can draw me whenever you like. Should I pose all sexy for you? <tickles her>

[20:20] arynwyn: Nat: <giggles and squirms away> You can if you want. <pokes him in the ribs>

[20:21] Socks: Theo: You tell me how you want me. Your wish is, as I've said, my command. <grins. The bus driver calls out "Haven Beach" and Theo stands> This is our stop, beautiful.

[20:22] arynwyn: Nat: <grabs her bag and follows him off the bus. She digs in her bag and pulls out a pair of sunglasses to put on>

[20:27] Socks: Theo: <the bus drops them by a sidewalk that borders the beach. It's a beautiful sunny day, and the tide's low at the moment. The sun sparkles on impossibly blue waters, clear and gorgeous. The cries of seagulls occasionally pierce the air. There are quite a few people strolling along, families with kids, women sunbathing>

[20:28] arynwyn: Nat: It's just like on TV! <she grins> This is great. Where to first?

[20:30] Socks: Theo: Well, first we set up our beach towels to claim some real estate. Then...whatever you want. There's a snack shack over thataway <he points along the beach> or we can go into the water or...or do whatever you want.

[20:31] arynwyn: Nat: <slips a hand in his> Okay, real estate. Do you have a usual spot?

[20:33] Socks: Theo: <shakes his head> Nope. All the good make-out spots are taken. <he winks at her>

[20:34] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes and starts toward the sand, tugging him along> I'm going to need your help with sunscreen. If you don't mind?

[20:37] Socks: Theo: I absolutely do NOT mind.

[20:38] arynwyn: Nat: <grins. She picks a spot of sand sort of out of the way of the beaten path> How's this?

[20:39] Socks: Theo: Perfect. I mean...if it makes you happy. <smiles and lays his towel down. He pulls his t-shirt off and stretches, looking out across the ocean>

[20:40] arynwyn: Nat: <pulls her towel out of her bag and lays it next to his, watching him stretch. She glances around self-consciously, then pulls off her t-shirt and jeans, stuffing them in her bag. She's wearing (Link: http://files.brandflakesforbreakfast.com/uploaded\_images/model-in-blue-bikini-745137.jpg)http://files.brandflakesforbreakfast.com/uploaded\_images/model-in-blue-bikini-745137.jpg and yes, she totally has the body for it>

[20:42] Socks: Theo: <takes a deep breath and turns back towards her> So, I am here to hel...<stop, S T A R E. He might've stopped breathing, even>

[20:43] arynwyn: Nat: <flushes BRIGHT red and wraps her arms around herself as if shielding herself> I know I'm really white...

[20:44] Socks: Theo: ...that is NOT what I'm thinking. <he murmurs distractedly, quite obviously staring at her chest, and then her legs, and then aaaallll the way back up to her chest>

[20:45] arynwyn: Nat: <still blushing deeply, she steps over to him with her bottle of sunscreen> What are you thinking?

[20:47] Socks: Theo: ... ... ...I would never in all my life have thought that you'd have a suit like THAT....

[20:48] arynwyn: Nat: It was Cassandra! She wouldn't let me get a one-piece. She said I had a boyfriend who wanted to see... <swallows, looking down>

[20:51] Socks: Theo: ...I will have to pay her back somehow. <looks down at her too, then clears his throat> Uh....sunscreen? <tries to sound nonchalant about it>

[20:51] arynwyn: Nat: Do you still want to help? <peeking up at him>

[20:52] Socks: Theo: Now moreso than ever before...<cough clear throat>

[20:52] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes again and hands him the bottle> Do you want some too?

[21:00] Socks: Theo: Oh Absolutely....I mean....<squeezes his eyes shut a moment and shakes his head to clear it> Yeah that'd be good, I'd hate to get burned.

[21:02] arynwyn: Nat: <giggles softly and squirts a little sunscreen into her hand> You first then. <she rubs her hand together and then puts them on his chest, rubbing it in slowly, blushing>

[21:05] Socks: Theo: <smiles at her as she rubs sunscreen on him> You could do this professionally, you know. <grin grin enjoy the view>

[21:06] arynwyn: Nat: <whaps him gently> Hush you. <she slides her hands down to his stomach, looking up at him shyly. She takes a breath, leans up on her tiptoes, and presses her lips against his, holding the breath as she waits for his reaction>

[21:10] Socks: Theo: <kisses her back slowly, threading his hands into her hair. He's definitely breathing NOW>

[21:14] arynwyn: Nat: <lets out a shaky breath and runs her hands up to wrap around his neck. Heedless of the sunscreeen, she presses up against him>

[21:16] Socks: Theo: <deepens the kiss cautiously, but keeps his hands where they are, so she doesn't get the wrong idea and kick him in the nads before fleeing him like he's some sort of sexual pervert>

[21:18] arynwyn: Nat: <returns the kiss with lots of feeling, then pulls away just enough to catch her breath. She opens her eyes slowly and looks into his eyes, blushing>

[21:19] Socks: Theo: <catching his own breath> Thank you. <smiling at her>

[21:19] arynwyn: Nat: Don't thank me. God, Theo... <she leans her forehead against his> I'm falling so hard for you. It's going to kill me when I crash.

[21:21] Socks: Theo: Crash? <he rubs her back>

[21:22] arynwyn: Nat: <she kisses him again, quickly> Forbidden love never works out.

[14:44] Socks: Theo: Nonsense. You're only saying never because it never has. <grins> First time for everything.

[14:52] arynwyn: Nat: <goes back to smoothing on the sunscreen, her hands brushing against his stomach> I can only pray you're right.

[14:53] Socks: Theo: Here, give me some of that <holding his hand out for some sunscreen>. You're paler than I am; you're gonna end up burnt to a crisp if we don't get you protected.

[14:54] arynwyn: Nat: <grumbles> I'm going to burn with or without the sunscreen. I'm half-vampire, remember?

[14:56] Socks: Theo: If that's true, then (A) why'd you come and (B ) why'd Cass buy you the bikini?

[14:59] arynwyn: Nat: I came because I've never been, I wanted to see you in swim trunks, and because I like spending time with you. As for Cass, well, like I said, she thought I should show off as much skin as possible. <blushes>

[14:59] Socks: Theo: She wouldn't put you at risk though, right? So now hand over the sunscreen. Some protection's better than nothing, hm?

(12:59:44 PM): Nat: It's not like I'm going to get skin cancer. <grins and hands him the bottle> But I'd rather not be bright red for school on Monday. 'sides, I've felt you up, and fair's fair, right?

[15:09] Socks: Theo: <beams> Justice, I like that. <squirts some into one hand, rubs his hands together quickly and starts rubbing it into her shoulders, stopping only to dab some cutely on the end of her nose>

[15:10] arynwyn: Nat: <sticks her tongue out at him and slides her hands around his neck to rub some into his neck and upper back>

[15:12] Socks: Theo: <laughs quietly and nuzzles her neck. With his arms around behind her, he puts more lotion on one hand and rubs it up and down her back>

[15:13] arynwyn: Nat: <presses against him again, sighing softly> Let's run away together. Somewhere where we can pretend to be normal.

[15:17] Socks: Theo: Nice idea. Where would that be? <kisses her cheek>

[15:18] arynwyn: Nat: Anywhere. I don't care as long as you're there. <she sighs again, closing her eyes and leaning her forehead against his> Such sweet torture...

[15:24] Socks: Theo: I don't like the idea of torture. I...I'm not sure if I like the idea of running away either...though I do like the idea of being with you. <he sighs> No family pressures. Just the two of us. <he looks up at the sky> It'd be really nice....until your father hunted me down and tore my head off. Possibly literally. <shivers>

[15:26] arynwyn: Nat: He wouldn't if I told him not to. And actually, he really likes you. He said that if you were smart enough to understand the danger I could be in from your clan, then you're smart enough to be trusted with other important things. <blushes a little> The example he used was not getting me pregnant. <looks down at the sand>

[15:27] Socks: Theo: <coughs and clears his throat> Yes, well, see, he is a DAD. And fathers are genetically programmed to warn away their little girls' suitors. And by "Warn away", I mean "scare the shit out of."

[15:41] arynwyn: Nat: But he's hardly older than us! He knows what it's like. And he's not a regular dad. He's only been my dad for a couple of months. <she shrugs> He knows I'm not - we're not - stupid. He gives me a lot of freedom, more than most kids get. He's more like an older brother than a dad. <sighs> Nevermind, I'm sounding whiny.

[15:42] Socks: Theo: <kisses her temple> Do I get to sunscreen your legs too?

[15:42] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes> You can sunscreen all of me, if you want.

[15:45] Socks: Theo: <raises his eyebrows> ...I think...<clears his throat>...that I'm not good enough a sunscreen applier...person to, ah....sunscreen ALL of you. At least, not in PUBLIC. I'd need to practice first. Y'know, in private. <Ooh, she didn't sunscreen his face; it's going all red. From the sun. Yes. Of course.>

[15:47] arynwyn: Nat: <giggles softly> Well, you only need to apply it to places the sun touches. But I'll take a rain check on the rest. <grins and kisses him gently>

[15:49] Socks: Theo: Don't say that; I'll hold you to it. <'nother kiss> Have a seat <nodding at the indicated towels spread out on the sand> and we'll get you slathered in protective goo. <grin>

[15:50] arynwyn: Nat: <kisses him again, then turns and sits down on the towel, stretching out her long legs>

[15:53] Socks: Theo: <drops to one knee next to her on the towel and gets his hands properly lotioned up before starting with the closest foot and ankle to him and slowly working his way up from there. The way he's kneeling is so like a knight swearing fealty to his queen...though there's the telltale signs of a half-mast in his shorts. His eyes are on his..ah...work atm.>

[15:53] arynwyn: Nat: <lays back on the towel and closes her eyes> You could be the professional. Mmm...

[15:55] Socks: Theo: <chuckles> No, no I definitely need practice. <he comments as his hand slides up over her knee> Lots and lots of it. <he looks up at her, grinning> I'm sorry but you'll have to wear the bikini more often.

[15:56] arynwyn: Nat: <shivers a little> We could tweak this scene you know. Get a little more privacy. Lingerie and lotion would give the same effect. And we wouldn't have to be on a beach. <peeks at him, grinning>

[16:04] Socks: Theo: <freezes, his hand on her thigh, and swallows hard. After a moment, he holds out a breath he didn't realize he was holding, and licks his lips> That....sounds....incredible. Uhh....I should say...even though this wasn't my first kiss, I haven't ever...um....done more than that...

[16:06] arynwyn: Nat: <slowly turns scarlet> Me either. I didn't mean... It was just a silly idea. I'm not, like, throwing myself at you. I just... <trails off, feeling stupid>

[16:10] Socks: Theo: <looks confused> It...it's okay if you are. <clears throat> and it's okay if you aren't. I...I'm easy...er...<blush gets worse> that's not how I wanted to phrase that...

[16:11] arynwyn: Nat: <giggles despite her embarrassment and opens her eyes to look at him> Do you like me that much?

[16:12] Socks: Theo: Oh yeah, definitely! <grin>

[16:14] arynwyn: Nat: <looks slightly surprised> Why? You've only known me for, like, two weeks!

[16:17] Socks: Theo: Aside from you being a knockout with apparently great legs? <looking briefly at the mentioned legs. He shifts to sit next to her> You're great to just be with. To just hang out with and talk with. You're not stuck up and you're sweet. Who wouldn't want to sleep with you? <grins and whispers> 'Sides, I can say I banged a half-vamp chick. <he's clearly teasing and doesn't mean it; he kisses her cheek>

[16:34] arynwyn: Nat: Those are terrible reasons! <she nuzzles his neck> You're supposed to have sex with someone you love. <blushes> Not that I expect you to love me after two weeks.

[16:35] Socks: Theo: <he shrugs> Witches don't really...go about it that way. I'm happy enough to have my first time be by MY choice with a woman I care about and am comfortable with and attracted to.

[16:36] arynwyn: Nat: <her blush deepens> Oh, I forgot about that. <she rubs her forehead> Yeah, I guess we don't think about it the same way. <sounds a little disappointed>

[16:38] Socks: Theo: <he sits up straighter> Nat? Did I say something wrong?

[16:44] arynwyn: Nat: No, of course not. <small smile> I just... fooled myself for a moment that we're normal and we only have to worry about normal things. I forgot about your... obligations. <she doesn't look at him>

[16:45] Socks: Theo: I don't have any obligations except for school and the band and you. For now, anyway. Two years from now, it's a different story. <he leans in against her ear to whisper> you have two years to convince me to run away with you. <he smiles and kisses her cheek>

[16:58] arynwyn: Nat: <wraps her arms around him and pulls him down so he's laying half on top of her> You'll get sick of me before then.

[16:59] Socks: Theo: Well, the only way to prove that is to hang out with me for two years and find out. <grins and kisses her again softly>

[17:00] arynwyn: Nat: <returns the kiss and curls up against him> Mkay.

[Time Passes]

[22:57] arynwyn: <So, it's school again after a long weekend. Nat and Theo didn't get together on Sunday for some reason, I dunno. Anyway, it's lunchtime and Nat's at her locker putting her books away. She hasn't seen Theo yet today, as she was late for school. She's in jeans and a cute, pink tanktop, her hair braided back out of her face>

[23:00] Socks: Theo: <sneaks up behind her and pulls out a red rose, reaching around in front of her to present it with a flourish> M'lady. <he kisses her cheek quickly, grinning. He's in one of his multitude of StC (("Squaring the Circle")) band t-shirts, this one black with the logo outlined in purple flames on it, and, of course, jeans and sneaks> Shall we be quit of this dreary educational institution and hie ourselves thither to yon Laughing Planet?

[23:02] arynwyn: Nat: <jumps about a mile when he sneaks up behind her> Theo! Jesus. Don't do that. <she looks like she didn't sleep the night before - huge dark circles under her eyes, and she's pale, even for her> Um, yeah, I guess. <she doesn't take the rose>

[23:03] Socks: Theo: <frowns and stops acting goofy> You okay, hon?

[23:04] arynwyn: Nat: <glances behind her like someone might be sneaking up on them> Yeah, I'm fine. Just... tired. <sounds like a lie, and it is> Let's go.

[23:05] Socks: Theo: <resituates his bag and offers the rose again> Here, this one's just for you. I keep carnations for showing off for others.

[23:06] arynwyn: Nat: <manages a smile and takes the rose, then leans up and kisses his cheek> Thanks.

[23:07] Socks: Theo: My pleasure, as always. <holds the door for her as they head outside> So, really now, what's going on, Nat?

[23:08] arynwyn: Nat: <starts toward the cafe> I didn't get much sleep last night.

[23:10] Socks: Theo: Stress? Schoolwork? Something wrong at home? Tell me what I must do to make things bright and sunny for you again, my sweet!

[23:11] arynwyn: Nat: <shoves him playfully> I'm fine. <she tries to smile, but it doesn't go to her eyes> How are things with your cl- ...family?

[23:12] Socks: Theo: Oh, same as always. Mom's BEGGING me to bring you around for dinner, but I keep coming up with excuses. <he sighs> Not sure how long that's going to last, but I have to think of something.

[23:14] arynwyn: Nat: <her smile falls and she looks down at the ground> Don't you wish you had a girlfriend you could take home to your mother? <she sighs> A girlfriend you didn't have to be ashamed of?

[23:15] Socks: Theo: <stops walking to look at her> Ashamed? Nat, the last thing I am is "ashamed" of you! I want to show you off to the WORLD and just SCREAM that you consented to date me. I would be the envy of every straight man alive! But I'm worried Mom'll figure out that you're a dhampir and I...I don't want you to get hurt.

[23:17] arynwyn: Nat: <she blinks rapidly, her eyes shining, but no tears fall> Maybe we should just... maybe it'd be for the best if we didn't... <she sighs and rubs her eyes>

[23:18] Socks: Theo: Oh, Nat, don't start this again. <he pulls her in for a hug> I know it's hard, but I'll protect you, okay? I swear, I won't let anything happen to you.

[23:18] arynwyn: Nat: <she wraps her arms around him tightly> What about you, Theo? I don't know if I can protect you. <she sighs against his neck>

[23:19] Socks: Theo: I'll be fine, so long as your dad still likes me. <grins>

[23:20] arynwyn: Nat: I'm not worried about my dad. <she pulls away and starts walking again, shoving her hands in her pockets and shivering a little (We'll say she stuck the rose in her locker 'fore they left)>

[23:22] Socks: Theo: Then...who are you so worried about? Cass?

[23:22] arynwyn: Nat: No. <shakes her head> It's nothing. Just forget about it.

[23:23] Socks: Theo: Is it the same "nothing" that's keeping you up all night?

[23:24] arynwyn: Nat: <steps into the cafe> I'm hungry. Let's eat before it's too late and we have to go back to school.

[23:26] Socks: Theo: <frowns again> Yeah, sure. <he resettles his school bag on his shoulder and heads to the counter, watching Nat as if she'll slip up and reveal all her secrets via a casual shrug or something>

[23:27] arynwyn: Nat: <orders her usual greek salad and bottle of water, then heads to their usual table, head down>

[A Few Weeks Later]

[15:00] Socks: Theo: <he's watched Nat get quieter and more withdrawn over the last couple of weeks. He tries not to press too much, but he can't help being concerned. He beats her to her locker for lunch today>

[15:00] arynwyn: Nat: <she's started wearing mostly black, despite the heat. She gives Theo a distracted smile as she approaches, books in hand> Hey Theo. How's it going?

[15:02] Socks: Theo: Nothing...much...to complain about. You hungry; it's burrito special daaaaaay. <forces a smile>

[15:03] arynwyn: Nat: Excellent. <she shoves her books in her locker> Want to cut out after lunch? It's Friday and it's sunny and I'm sick of being cramped inside. <Not like her to suggest they skip>

[15:04] Socks: Theo: Uh....sure. <he smiles> If you want. Have something special in mind, dare I hope?

[15:05] arynwyn: Nat: Not really. I just want to get out of here. <she closes her locker and shrugs> Don't you get sick of it?

[15:08] Socks: Theo: Of what? School? Well, yeah, sure, but we've only got a year and a half or so left....unless we go to college...

[15:09] arynwyn: Nat: <snorts quietly> Just another way they keep us chained down. <heads for the door>

[15:10] Socks: Theo: <follows after her> "They"? ...uh....adults?

[15:11] arynwyn: Nat: ...yeah, adults. <slightly sarcastic tone>

[15:11] Socks: Theo: <his brow furrows> Hey, share the joke?

[15:12] arynwyn: Nat: Society. Aren't you sick of having to hide who you are?

[15:16] Socks: Theo: <shrugs> Well, I mean the contacts can get annoying sometimes, but in general, I think of it like....being undercover. Top secret. <mimicks karate chop hands> It's kinda cool.

[15:16] arynwyn: Nat: <snickers a little> You would think that. <but it's more amused than annoyed>

[15:21] Socks: Theo: Yeah, I know, I'm still a little kid at times. Y'know they say men mature slower than women. <holds the door for her as they reach Laughing Planet>

[15:21] arynwyn: Nat: I believe it. <grins>

[15:23] Socks: Theo: <claps a hand to his chest> Oh, I am wounded. Why don't you find a table, and I'll get our food - assuming you're getting your usual?

[15:24] arynwyn: Nat: Yeah, thanks. <she picks their usual table by the window, stretching before she sits down>

[15:27] Socks: Theo: <comes along in a few minutes with a tray> Madamoiselle <he says in waiter-ish tones> [Your salad and a bottle of the finest water there is] <he pronounces in high school French, setting it before her. He grins and slides into the other seat with his tray>

[15:27] arynwyn: Nat: <chuckles> Merci beaucoup. <in fairly good French>

[15:29] Socks: Theo: So, what shall we do with our impromptu afternoon off? <he asks before taking one of his standard huge bites of burrito to chew on>

[15:31] arynwyn: Nat: <shrugs> I dunno. Go to the mall? Though you're a guy and don't like shopping... I'd say go to the beach but my suit is at home and Ryann would catch me if I went back to get it. You got any ideas?

[15:33] Socks: Theo: Borrow Miss Cassandra's Porsche for an illicit rendezvous? <he laughs> Just kidding. I don't see why we can't go to the mall, if it's what you want to do. Honestly, if I play hooky, I usually go to the club or just...wander around.

[15:33] arynwyn: Nat: What do you do at the club?

[15:34] Socks: Theo: Usually <ticks them off on his fingers> get chewed out by Ms. Owens for not being at school, help set up for the stage show that night, and make jokes about trying to steal booze. Well, okay, I do the jokes through the whole thing, really.

[15:35] arynwyn: Nat: <chuckles> I'm not feeling like getting chewed out... Mall or wandering works for me.

[15:36] Socks: Theo: Cool. We can wander by Victoria's Secret and I can imagine you in all kinds of lacy things....if I don't choke and die on the perfume first.

[15:37] arynwyn: Nat: <her eyes light up> Or I can buy some of those lacy things and you can see me in them for real. <mischevious grin>

[15:38] Socks: Theo: <chokes on his burrito a little. He coughs and drinks some of his soda to wash the food down>

[15:38] arynwyn: Nat: <smirks> Don't like that idea much, hm?

[15:38] Socks: Theo: No, no, I like it! I mean...uh...if..if you like it....

[15:39] arynwyn: Nat: <noms on her salad, still smirking> I dunno. Maybe we shouldn't... <devious>

[15:50] Socks: Theo: Well...ah, no, no we don't have to, strictly speaking, but I mean, if you wanted to, I'm happy to...I mean, if it'd make you happy, not that it wouldn't make me happy too, but... <stammer babble>

[15:51] arynwyn: Nat: Where would we go? <nonchalant> My dad might notice a charge for a hotel on his credit card bill... and I don't have enough cash to pay for something nice. And I'm not going to -- not in a flea-bag motel.

[15:54] Socks: Theo: No, no, that wouldn't...um. <he takes a smaller bite of burrito and chews thoughtfully> I don't know how...how safe you'd feel, but....there's almost never anyone home at my place.

[15:55] arynwyn: Nat: <her eyes light up again, but this time with something different, something calculated> Alright.

[15:56] Socks: Theo: <grins, sort of nervously; given the subject matter, he's not really noticing the type of light in her eyes> Uh, so...did you still want to go to the mall first, 'cause we can if you want, but...honestly, you're stunning in everything...

[15:57] arynwyn: Nat: I suppose that's up to you. Lingerie is for guys, though women are the ones who wear it. <chugs half of her bottle of water>

[15:58] Socks: Theo: <chuckles> You don't think I'd look hot in a teddy? <poses in a preening way, like a VS model, puckering his lips up to look all pouty>

[15:59] arynwyn: Nat: <facepalms and laughs> Images I did NOT need.

[16:00] Socks: Theo: <grins and drops the pose> So, uh....done with lunch? I mean it's okay if you're not...

[16:01] arynwyn: Nat: <picks up her half-eaten salad> Yeah, I'm done.

[16:04] Socks: Theo: <has 1/4 of his burrito left, but he stands right away> Here, I'll bus, madamoiselle.

[16:04] arynwyn: Nat: <lets him take her tray> You're so old-fashioned. Is that a... family thing?

[16:05] Socks: Theo: Not really. <he gathers the stuff up> Our old-fashionedness is entirely different.

[16:06] arynwyn: Nat: What do you mean? How so?

[16:08] Socks: Theo: Our traditions are more....ritualistic. They date back centuries. Things like the spring ritual <clears his throat>, the heirarchy, etc. We don't have the whole chivalry thing. But I read about it and I like it. <he smiles> 'sides, the chicks dig it, hm? <he winks at her>

[16:09] arynwyn: Nat: Hey! Are you trying to pick up chicks? <pokes him in the side> Maybe I should reconsider going home with you...

[16:09] Socks: Theo: I was trying. And then I got lucky, and I have not tried since. <he kisses her cheek>

[16:10] arynwyn: Nat: Better not. <she slips a hand in his> So, mall or not?

[16:11] Socks: Theo: Mother's less likely to be home now. Besides, I don't want you to think you have to dress yourself up in expensive lacy bits to be attractive to me. <smiles>

[16:11] arynwyn: Nat: Good answer.

[16:15] Socks: Theo: <wraps his arms around her waist and nuzzles her cheek again> You're beautiful, you know that, right? In hoodie and sweats, you're wonderful.

[16:22] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes a little> Thanks. <she nuzzles back and kisses his ear>

[16:25] Socks: Theo: So, into the lion's den then? <grins>

[16:25] arynwyn: Nat: Rawr. <grins back>

[16:40] Socks: Theo: <the Lennox house looks like this: (Link: http://www.freegreen.com/\_media/Views/Options/04-004-10LG-P0.jpg)http://www.freegreen.com/\_media/Views/Options/04-004-10LG-P0.jpg Only with a lot more plants between the outer wall and the porch area: mostly herbs, but also some pretty flowers. There're some flowers on the outside of the wall, on either side of the path. He unlocks the door and holds it for her. Inside is mostly Crafstman style furniture, and there's a lot of light and air. It looks like a charming, normal house. There're stairs in the foyer going up to the bedrooms.

Upstairs are four bedrooms, including the master at the end of the hall. Theo's door is obvious: it has the StC logo BURNED into the wood. Indoors, it's....cleanish. Cleaner than most teenage boys' rooms. His hamper's overflowing with laundry, and his desk is a mess of sheet music and homework. The bed's lightweight blue sheets are still thrown around in this morning's disarray. There's a stereo near his bed, with a stack of CDs in front of it. He's got a short bookcase filled mostly with books on stage magic, science-fiction, and some childhood favorites> Sorry about the mess...

[16:42] arynwyn: Nat: <grins> It suits you. <she flops down on the bed and rolls over to look at the CDs> I've been wanting to see your room for a long time.

[16:44] Socks: Theo: <the CDs are an assortment: prog rock, symphonic metal, some classical, and, of course, some StC CDs. He shuts the door behind them and tries, in vain, to stuff the laundry down into the hamper> So <giving up on that>...well, this is it. Not much to see, really. <clears his throat>

[16:45] arynwyn: Nat: <sets the CDs aside and rolls onto her back, looking over at him with a faint smile> I like it. It's cozy. <she kicks off her shoes>

[16:46] Socks: Theo: Well, I...I'm glad. <he shifts a little then takes her example and sits on the bed to untie his sneaks>

[16:47] arynwyn: Nat: We don't have to do this, you know. <watching him, feeling as nervous as he looks>

[16:48] Socks: Theo: Uh...do you...do you want to? I mean...

[16:48] arynwyn: Nat: <she's quiet a minute, looking up at the ceiling> I don't want you to regret losing your virginity to a dhampir... since we're supposed to be mortal enemies and all of that.

[16:50] Socks: Theo: <whirls towards her> You think I'd REGRET this? No, no, Natalie...<he takes her hand in both of his> I'm just nervous 'cause I don't want to screw this up. I would never ever regret this.

[16:51] arynwyn: Nat: <studies him a long moment, then tugs him toward her by his hand> You're not going to screw anything up. It's not like I'd know, anyway. <blushes a little, but smiles>

[16:53] Socks: Theo: <he chuckles once, and kisses her softly, lingeringly>

[16:53] arynwyn: Nat: <exhales shakily and returns the kiss, sliding her hands around his neck>

[16:55] Socks: Theo: <kisses her for long minutes, then kisses down to her neck. He puts on hand on her waist, very much in "safe" territory>

[16:56] arynwyn: Nat: <she slides her hands down his chest to the hem of his shirt and tugs upwards, her hands shaking a little with nerves>

[16:58] Socks: Theo: <breaks away so she can get his shirt off, ducking his head through the hole at the top; as soon as he can, he returns to kiss her lips again. He slides his hand up a little, just barely under the hem of her shirt so he can touch skin, but he doesn't go higher than that just yet.>

[16:59] arynwyn: Nat: <runs her hands over his skin, shivering. She pulls away from kissing his lips to kiss down his jaw and down his neck, across his collarbone and to his shoulder>

[17:02] Socks: Theo: <his breath picks up a little and he pets her skin softly. He bends down, using his other hand to shoo some of her shirt away from her shoulder to kiss the revealed skin there>

[17:05] arynwyn: Nat: <slides her hands up his back and pulls him closer, pressing her body against his>

[17:09] Socks: Theo: <shifts around so he's laying on the bed next to her. He starts attempting to wrest her shirt off of her>

[17:10] arynwyn: Nat: <giggles softly and tugs it off, tossing it aside. She's got on a lacy black bra underneath. She runs a finger down his chest and stomach>

[17:17] Socks: Theo: <pauses and grins> See, we didn't even need to go to Victoria's Secret; you're already wearing lacy nothings....lucky me. <he kisses her neck and pets more revealed skin>

[17:18] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes a little but grins back> So are you a boxers or briefs kinda guy? <she hooks a finger in his jeans and pulls them out, peeking down at his underwear>

[17:21] Socks: Theo: <blinks> Uh... <he's a boxers guy, as it turns out, wearing a sort of silver-gray set today. He shifts a little, blushing lightly> Hey now...turnabout is fair play, y'know. <he starts to attempt getting her jeans off, but he's not really good at getting someone else's pants open>

[17:21] arynwyn: Nat: <giggles softly and turns scarlet, but doesn't move to help him. She watches, amused, as he struggles with her jeans>

[17:26] Socks: Theo: <growls a little at the back of his throat and devotes his full attention to the jeans, finally getting them open. He sort of makes a "whew" of relief and sits up to try and tug her jeans down her legs>

[17:27] arynwyn: Nat: <helps him get them off. She's wearing lacy black underwear, though it's not a thong or anything. Prepared much?>

[17:29] Socks: Theo: <shifts a little again and bends to kiss her knee playfully> You are SO out of my league, you know that, right? I need to burn offerings to the Goddess or something, to thank Her for sending one of Her avatars to me.

[17:30] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes deeply> Don't be silly. You're the one who's not trying to kill ME. <she sits up and pushes him back into a laying position, half laying on top of him> And why is that? Why don't you hate vampires like the rest of your clan?

[17:38] Socks: Theo: Well, I used to. Was raised to it, y'know. But then the vampires sort of...came out of the coffin, as it were, and the DoVE stuff was passed. And we watched, 'cause we were sure this was gonna be the end, y'know? Like vamps would take over the Earth now. But...they didn't. They started businesses, or else it came out that they were already running some. Some were assholes and some were just decent people. And I thought, "You know, they used to be human. They used to be normal. And maybe some of them wanted this, sure, but a bunch didn't, and they're just trying to survive, same as we are." <he shrugs> I dunno. If you were a full vamp, I might feel a little odd, 'cause I'm used to thinking of vampires as walking corpses. But you're not. And you didn't ask to be what you are, and even if you could have asked and even if you'd chosen to be half-vampire...<he brushes some hair away from her face> You're wonderful. You're sweet and you're kind and you're smart and fun to talk with. And you're a knockout with terrific legs, which helps. <he grins a little at the end there>

[17:41] arynwyn: Nat: <she kisses him gently, then nuzzles his neck, sighing softly> I wish people didn't think I was a monster. I wish I could meet your family like a normal girl. I wish I were a normal girl, and all I had to worry about were boys and school and not tripping in heels.

[17:43] Socks: Theo: <he rubs her back consolingly> I wish you could meet Mom. I think you two would get along. But I can't be sure that she wouldn't be able to tell, y'know. And I can't stand the thought of you being hurt.

[17:45] arynwyn: Nat: I know... It just pisses me off, I guess. It's stupid. There's nothing wrong with me. I'm better than 90% of the girls at school you could be dating. <some of that gang/club stuff coming through>

[17:46] Socks: Theo: <blinks. That's a little out of character for her> Well. You're wrong. <he grins> You're better than 100% of the girls at school, as far as I'M concerned. <kisses her shoulder>

[17:47] arynwyn: Nat: So, to use your own words against you: turnabout is fair play. <grins and slides her hands down to unfasten his jeans>

[17:49] Socks: Theo: <clears his throat a little, reminding himself, that she's going to see the slowly growing boner at some point, but it doesn't help him not blush> I'm warning you, my legs aren't half as sexy as yours. Not even a quarter.

[17:51] arynwyn: Nat: Let's leave that to me to decide. <she kisses his neck and pushes his jeans down, much more easily than he got hers off, though part of that is 'cause women wear tight jeans>

[17:52] Socks: Theo: <he pets her skin, trying to calm his breathing; it's not ragged, but it looks like he's been jogging. He tosses some of his hair out of his eyes and licks his lips a little> Just you, and no panel of judges, I hope?

[17:53] arynwyn: Nat: Oh no. You're all mine. <she grins and leans up to kiss him, tossing the jeans aside. Her breathing has picked back up as well>

[17:55] Socks: Theo: <holds her close to him, playing with her hair with one hand and letting his other slip all the way down her back>

[17:57] arynwyn: Nat: <exhales and closes her eyes, pressing her body against his again, their legs twined>

[18:04] Socks: Theo: <his <ahem> interest in things is growing and, this close to each other, obvious w/o looking. He moves to her neck again, kissing and occasionally licking at skin. He's got one hand on her ass at this point, still over her underwear though, but he seems to enjoy petting the...lace. Sure. That's why he likes running his hand over it, of course>

[18:14] arynwyn: Nat: <slides a hand down his back and catches the top of his boxers. She slides her hand under the fabric and around to his hip, but doesn't do anything except rest it there. Her breathing is somewhat ragged, her eyes closed, expression blissful>

[18:25] Socks: Theo: <going with their theme of turnabout being fair play, he does likewise with his one hand and HER panties, but he doesn't stop at her hip. Given that (A) he's only seen a clitoris in medical diagrams (B ) he doesn't have a good view of it now, and (C ) he has exactly NO experience at this, he's sort of fumbly and hopeful that when he finds the right spot, she'll let him know somehow>

[18:27] arynwyn: Nat: <gasps softly and shivers, pressing her face into his neck> We don't... you don't have to... <trouble forming thoughts> If you want to just...

[18:29] Socks: Theo: <judging these to be good reactions, he keeps going> I'm good for now. <he grins at her and kisses her shoulder>

[18:30] arynwyn: Nat: <she groans and it's not long before she clutches at him, her body shuddering in pleasure>

[18:34] Socks: Theo: <smiles and nibbles lightly at an earlobe, waiting a moment before slipping his hand out of her panties. He reaches for a ((conveniently placed by the authoress)) towel on his bedroom floor as she catches her breath>

[18:34] arynwyn: Nat: <half-collapses back onto the blankets, her eyes still closed> Where did you learn to do that?

[18:36] Socks: Theo: ...divine inspiration? <he chuckles> I've never done that before, but it's good to know I seem to have a knack for it.

[18:37] arynwyn: Nat: Mm. I'm not sure I can... reciprocate... but I can try.

[18:39] Socks: Theo: You don't have to, if you don't want to. I'm happy making you happy. <rolling onto his side to look at her and bend to kiss her shoulder again> And seeing you mostly naked is a nice perk too. <grins>

[18:40] arynwyn: Nat: <she wiggles out of her underwear and reaches behind her to unsnap her bra> What about totally naked? <grins>

[18:41] Socks: Theo: Yeah that...that's good too...very...<staring at different parts of her>...very good...<he was already pretty...well, ready, but if he hadn't been before, he certainly is now>

[18:42] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes a little, then runs her hands down his sides, catching the top of his boxers> Are you sure...?

[18:45] Socks: Theo: <nods silently, still sort of dumbstruck>

[18:46] arynwyn: Nat: <slowly turning more and more red, she tugs his boxers off and tosses them aside, biting her lip nervously>

[18:47] Socks: Theo: <comes out of his "I have a hot girl naked on my bed" daze to the realization that he's naked now too. his blush returns, but he just leans forward and kisses her on the lips in what he hopes is a reassuring manner (for both of them)>

[18:48] arynwyn: Nat: <lets her eyes fall closed as she returns the kiss, scooting closer to him> You <kiss> are <kiss> amazing. <kiss>

[18:52] Socks: Theo: You are more amazing. <he pets one breast softly, gently, as if afraid he'll hurt her, then says> Oh, hold on. <he gets up off the bed and pads over to his dropped school bag. He pulls out his contacts case and goes through the routine of filling it with fluid and dropping in his contacts. He looks back over his shoulder at her> You don't mind, right? <pointing at his now golden eyes>

[18:53] arynwyn: Nat: I love your eyes. <she smiles, curling up a little>

[18:54] Socks: Theo: <beams and then finds his jeans wherever she tossed him. He digs out his wallet and pulls out a wrapped condom> Thank you, Ms. Owens, I finally have a use for this. <he murmurs>

[18:54] arynwyn: Nat: <giggles softly>

[18:57] Socks: Theo: <he comes back to the bed, crawling over to her from the edge to kiss her cheek and her neck and her lips and her shoulder - just anywhere he can land his lips>

[18:57] arynwyn: Nat: <wraps her arms around him tightly and whispers in his ear> I'm ready.

[19:02] Socks: Theo: <lets out a shuddery breath> Right. <he smiles and tries to work the condom wrapper open. This...seems to be a production number>

[19:02] arynwyn: Nat: <giggles again and grabs the wrapper from him, tearing it open with her teeth> Shall I?

[19:03] Socks: Theo: Oh, uh....yeah, you seem to be better at it than I am. <chuckles self-consciously>

[19:04] arynwyn: Nat: <pulls out the condom and hesitates> ... <she puts it on his (( <giggle> first thought was "weiner" )) dick, unrolling it slowly>

[19:05] Socks: Theo: <catches his breath a little, unused to this sensation. He swallows a little harshly and kisses her when she's done>

[19:05] arynwyn: Nat: <returns the kiss and lays back, pulling him down and on top of her>

[19:08] Socks: Theo: Are you...oh wait, you said you were. Ah, right. <he takes a deep breath, to try and steady his nerves, then comments> You know, I don't know WHY I didn't think of this before.

[19:11] arynwyn: Nat: <frowns a little> What? What's wrong?

[19:13] Socks: Theo: <he chuckles> If you'll permit me, I can make us a whole lot calmer.

[19:13] arynwyn: Nat: Oh? How? <looks a little relieved>

[19:15] Socks: Theo: Magic, as always, hon. <he grins and his hand seems to gather blue and silver sparkles out of the air. He brushes his hand over her forehead softly and in the wake of his fingers comes a wave of calm - not sleepiness, but a soothing of nerves. He pretty much just claps his hand to his forehead and closes his eyes as he sighs in relief> Feel better?

[19:16] arynwyn: Nat: <much more relaxed> Yeah. Man, I wish I could do that. <she kisses his neck> Like I said, you're amazing.

[19:18] Socks: Theo: All in the blood. <he chuckles, kissing her more confidently. He lets a hand slide up along the outside of her thigh as he does ('cause he is definitely a leg man)>

[19:18] arynwyn: Nat: <shivers at his touch> Okay, now I'm ready. <she smiles and returns the kiss, pulling him close again>

[19:20] Socks: Theo: <slides into her slowly - though nowhere near as hesitant as it was going to be, not that she knows that - and groans softly against her lips>

[19:21] arynwyn: Nat: <exhales shakily, her eyes falling closed. She licks her lips and wraps her legs around his> Oh...

[19:24] Socks: Theo: <he drops his head to the crook of her shoulder and neck and drops kisses there when he's not trying to breathe. He withdraws as much as he dares before going back in, and he's moving very slowly, savoring the sensation>

[19:25] arynwyn: Nat: <groans softly, threading her hands into his hair and whispering his name>

[19:28] Socks: Theo: <he can't keep things slow forever; his biological imperative demands otherwise. He starts to pick up the pace, keeping his weight (what there is of it) off of her with his arms, and his eyes are closed due both to the feel of this and because he's trying to keep himself in check>

[19:31] arynwyn: Nat: <she buries her face in his neck, breathing hard and fast, moving with him. She drops kisses on his neck when she's not breathing, and as her orgasm ripples through her, she inadvertantly bites his neck, drawing blood>

[19:35] Socks: Theo: <hisses in pain, but he was so close to climax anyway that he can't stop. And then, of course, his brain has to restart. He barely remembers to collapse off of her and he watches her, though he's only vaguely, somewhere at the far distant part of his mind, aware of why he's worried since the rest of him is in happyafterglow>

[19:36] arynwyn: Nat: <her brain restarted much faster than his and she looks at him, horrified, blood still on her lips>

[19:37] Socks: Theo: <sits up and swallows, looking at her. His neck is still bleeding a little, but he's not paying it any mind> Nat...? Nat, are you okay? <he moves to wipe the blood off her lips with his thumb>

[19:38] arynwyn: Nat: <she scrambles away from him> Don't -- <she looks at his neck, pain in her eyes>

[19:39] Socks: Theo: Nat, we have to get the blood off your lips. Did you swallow any?

[19:39] arynwyn: Nat: <she wipes her mouth, looking down at the blood smeared on the back of her hand. She blinks a couple of times, then jumps up and hastily starts to get dressed>

[19:41] Socks: Theo: <gets up also, though he has to stop to carefully remove and throw out the used condom (ew). He pulls on his boxers before going to her> Nat, it's okay. I'm okay, so long as you are.

[19:42] arynwyn: Nat: <she looks up at him, tears in her eyes> No, it's not okay! Look at you! <she wipes some of the blood away from the bite>

[19:42] Socks: Theo: It's fine. It's nothing. I'm okay. It was an accident, Nat.

[19:43] arynwyn: Nat: <she turns away and starts getting dressed again> I should have listened to them. I should have... <shakes her head>

[19:44] Socks: Theo: Them? Who? Society? What?

[19:44] arynwyn: Nat: <shakes her head and pulls on her shirt>

[19:45] Socks: Theo: <grabs her arm> Nat, what's going on? It's a bite. It's fine. If it weren't for the fact that my blood's potentially lethal to you, I wouldn't even be worried about it.

[19:46] arynwyn: Nat: It's fine? Theo, I BIT you! There is nothing fine about that! I've never tasted human blood before and I wanted to keep it that way but apparently I'm too much of a monster to be able to control myself! <getting slightly hysterical>

[19:48] Socks: Theo: It doesn't make you a monster! There are lots of normal, perfectly human people who think biting is hot! It's just something we have to be careful of in the future, that's all.

[19:49] arynwyn: Nat: How are you going to explain that to your mother? <she pulls on her jeans>

[19:51] Socks: Theo: Tell her the truth: my girlfriend got a little carried away and thinks I'm tasty. <hopeful grin> Witches aren't as uptight about sex. She will laugh it off and things will be fine. Not every bite on the neck is vampiric.

[19:52] arynwyn: Nat: <she scrubs at her face, then stops, hands still covering her face, whispering> But I liked it, Theo... <she shudders>

[19:54] Socks: Theo: So? Like I said, if my blood weren't toxic to you, it wouldn't even be an issue. You discovered you have a hidden kink. So what? Lots of people have it. <he puts his hands on her shoulders> Nat, it doesn't change anything in my book. <he looks at her, hopeful that she won't just run out and never want to see him again>

[19:55] arynwyn: Nat: It wasn't the biting I liked, Theo... <she sounds drained and on the verge of tears>

[19:57] Socks: Theo: <sighs> Other people have blood kinks. Non-vampiric people. And given that you are half-vampire, it's really not any surprise. <he pulls her into his arms to hug her> It doesn't make you a monster, and it doesn't make me care about you any less, Nat. <he kisses her temple>

[19:58] arynwyn: Nat: <she doesn't return the hug, just buries her face in his neck for a few moments, then pulls away, not looking at him> I need to go. I need to... <shakes her head and turns for the door>

[19:59] Socks: Theo: <sighs> Nat...

[20:00] arynwyn: Nat: <she looks back at him and shakes her head, then steps out into the hall and closes the door behind her>

[22:09] Socks: Theo: <hurriedly gets dressed and follows after Nat....invisibly>

[22:11] arynwyn: Nat: <wanders around town for a while, until it starts to get dark, which it's doing earlier and earlier now. Then she crosses the tracks into the industrial part of the city and stops in front of a warehouse. She hesitates for a minute, then pushes a door open - a door marked with the same symbol she's been drawing everywhere>

[22:12] Socks: Theo: <frowns and hurriedly conjures a wind to blow the door open a little longer....so he can sneak in after her>

[22:14] arynwyn: Nat: <inside looks like a shitty make-shift apartment. There's a couple tables with hot plates and a microwave, a fridge, and on the other side of the room there's a TV, couch, and a couple of cots. The place is dirty, and there doesn't seem to be a bathroom. Nat shuffles toward the couch, where a mid-20s guy sits watching a fuzzy TV show>

[22:15] Socks: Theo: <crouches and heads toward the couch as quietly as he can>

[22:20] arynwyn: Nat: James? <she rubs her hands together nervously>

<the guy turns around and looks at her> Natalie. <his hair is black and longish, and he's got a couple day's worth of stubble. He's in a dirty black t-shirt and jeans, no shoes or socks. He catches sight of her face and stands up, brows drawing together> Is something wrong?

Nat: <she exhales shakily> I... bit my boyfriend. ...during sex. <she doesn't look at him> I should have listened to you. I thought I could control it -- ...

James: You shouldn't have to fight your true nature. <he steps over to her, wrapping his arms around her> Why do you tie yourself to a mortal? We are so much better. <pets her hair> What did he do?

Nat: He... he acted like it was no big deal. <she rests her head on his shoulder> Even when I told him I liked it, that I liked his blood.

James: Natalie, you need to stop torturing yourself. You know the two of you won't be able to stay together. Even if it lasts for years, he's going to die eventually.

[22:26] Socks: Theo: <clenches a fist, but is carefully quiet. Still, unable to resist, he has the wind come up and rap against the side of the warehouse sharply and suddenly>

[22:29] arynwyn: James: <glances toward the noise, then turns his attention back to Natalie>

Nat: <sighs heavily, rubbing her eyes> He's just so perfect, perfect for me. <she pulls away and goes to slump on the couch> I don't want to give him up.

James: <sits down next to her and rubs her shoulder> You haven't even given the guys here a chance, Natalie. You might find someone even more perfect, and someone who is equal to you. You think biting is bad, you could hurt him, kill him, with your strength, if you're not careful, if you lose control during sex or when you're angry. It's happened before.

Nat: <looks up, horrified>

[22:31] Socks: Theo: <the wind BANGS on the door, hard, like a policeman knocking on a parole jumper's door>

[22:32] arynwyn: James: <scowls and gets up to look outside> Must be a storm coming in... <he locks the door, since it doesn't latch very well>

Natalie: <drops her head into her hands and moans miserably> I don't know what to do...

[22:35] Socks: Theo: <*Damnit, Nat.* He sneaks over to her, since this James character is at the door. He sends a whisper to her, the same way he did the day they met> *We'll figure it out. Just don't give up.* <technically it's not solely in her mind, but someone would have to have exceptionally good (vampiric/were) hearing to pick it up if they weren't right next to her>

[22:37] arynwyn: Nat: <jumps about a mile and looks around, petrified> Theo? <so surprised, she doesn't bother to whisper>

James: Theo? Who's that? Your boyfriend? <he goes to the make-shift kitchen and searches the fridge for a couple of sodas>

Nat: <clears her throat> Um, yeah. <still peering around for Theo>

[22:38] Socks: Theo: <backs away a little, cautiously>

[22:40] arynwyn: Nat: <shakes her head, seeming to think that she hallucinated hearing him>

James: <comes back over and offers her a soda, which she takes, and sits back down on the sofa next to her> I think you should go out with Evan, at least once. I think you'd like him. He's a fun guy. And you'd be with an equal. You could be yourself with him.

Nat: <stares down at the unopened soda> I can be myself with Theo...

James: Really? Seems to me you came over here freaked out because you bit him. <arching a brow at her> You wouldn't have to freak out if you bit a dhampir, you know. We like it. <he grins a little>

[22:44] Socks: Theo: <closes his eyes, running through repetitions of "women are not objects or possessions, she can see whoever she wants, I don't have a claim on her just because we slept together...and have been dating for a while now..." interspersed with "violence is not the answer, it is a last resort of desperate, stupid people">

[22:48] arynwyn: Nat: <she leans back against the couch, looking upwards but her eyes are closed> He... <she shivers> He tasted so good. I mean, the sex was awesome, but all I can think about is his blood. I feel like such a freak.

James: <leans over to her, brushing his fingers across her neck, where her jugular is> You're not a freak. It's natural for us. And trust me, dhampirs taste ten times better.

Nat: <opens her eyes and looks at him> They do?

James: Cross my heart, hope to die. <he smiles> Want to find out for yourself?

Natalie: <hesitates a moment, unconsciously licking her lips>

[22:53] Socks: Theo: <his eyes fly open and so does his mouth. His upbringing wars with what he wants to do. But without even meaning to do it, the wind outside whips up and knocks the door off its goddamn HINGES, locked or not. He jumps when it happens and swallows a little guiltily, barely remembering to keep his invisibility intact>

[22:56] arynwyn: James: <jumps up> What the hell? <he growls and marches over to the door, slamming it back up> God damn wind. God damn piece of shit door. <he wrestles with it a minute, then props it up with a door, since the hinges and lock are no good anymore>

Natalie: <watches him work, the wheels in her head turning, unsure what to do about his offer>

[23:00] Socks: Theo: <risks another whisper> *Nat, hon. Please...*

[23:04] arynwyn: Nat: <jumps again, going very pale. She hops off the couch, tossing the unopened soda aside> I need to go.

James: <looks up from screwing with the door> Think about what I said, Natalie. Really think about it. You could be so much happier. <he moves the chair and door aside with a grimace so she can go>

Nat: I will. Thanks, James. I'll consider your offer, too. <her eyes linger on his neck for a moment, then she steps outside>

James: Hey, we're having a bash tomorrow night. You should come. It'll be at the Metro Nights Club, couple of streets over. <Theo probably knows that the Metro Nights Club is a dodgy, creepy place with lots of alcohol, drugs and sex>

Nat: I'll try. <gives him a faint smile and turns to go>

[23:05] Socks: Theo: <follows her to the door, and considers doing some more elemental mischief on his way out, but decides not to....barely>

[23:06] arynwyn: James: <but before he can exit, he steps in front of the door...hole...thing..., blocking the escape, and turning to face the seemingly empty room> Come out, come out, wherever you are, witchy. <grins evilly>

[23:07] Socks: Theo: <backs away...and to one side. *Shit.* He stays quiet, wanting to send a whisper to Nat, but not daring>

[23:08] arynwyn: James: <crosses his arms over his chest> Come now, don't think you can take on a wee dhampir? I can smell your stink.

[23:09] Socks: Theo: <looks around for alternate ways out, and considers just taking the roof off the place. Speaking of which, how much room is there between the ceiling and the floor in here? Proper warehouse height?>

[23:11] arynwyn: James: <there are windows, most broken, but no doors in the immediate area. He taps his foot impatiently>

[23:12] Socks: Theo: <calls up enough wind to levitate himself, just to be safe. This is costing him, magically-speaking, but he's okay....for now>

[23:12] arynwyn: James: Coward. <sneers> Come out and fight me.

[23:13] Socks: Theo: <rolls his eyes and sends a whisper behind the dhampir's head> *Is violence and blood all you think about? Is that all life is to you?*

[23:14] arynwyn: James: <he stiffens but doesn't turn> Why should I have to deny my true nature? Because society says I should? Because you say I should? I'm not afraid of a fight, witch.

[23:16] Socks: Theo: *I'm not saying anything. I'm asking. I don't have a problem with your heritage. I have a problem with you being a douchebag.* <he can't help smirking, since he's invisible, though he probably wouldn't be able to help it in any case>

[23:18] arynwyn: James: No, you're not a douchebag, you're a coward, too afraid to show yourself, too afraid to fight me like a man. I'd rather be a douchebag, thanks.

[23:22] Socks: Theo: *Suit yourself, bro. You're just mad 'cause you can't get your rocks off fighting me. So, lemme ask you, you ever wanted a skylight?* <and before James can answer, there's a sudden loud WHOOSH! and a new hole is punched in the ceiling> *Enjoy it, really - consider it my gift.* <he comments as he heads for the hole>

[23:23] arynwyn: James: Son of a bitch! <he picks up whatever is within reach and throws it at the hole/where he thinks Theo is>

[23:24] Socks: Theo: <barely dodges it. he floats out and away, down to the sidewalk and takes off running while still invisible. He makes it a block, maybe two, before he has to drop the invisibility and the speed; he walks along like a man having a heart attack, wheezing and breathless and pale> Too much...damnit...

[23:25] arynwyn: Natalie: <is walking about a block ahead of him, her head down and hands shoved in her pockets>

[23:26] Socks: Theo: ... ...<realizing he's not going to make it, he tries to send a whisper, but fails. He pulls out his cell and hits her number>

[23:27] arynwyn: Nat: <picks up after the second ring> Hello?

[23:28] Socks: Theo: Nat...stop...help...back..track...I need to...rest...<falls against one of the warehouse buildings, which makes a sound she should be able to hear w/o the cell. He slides down it into a crumpled mess, trying to breathe>

[23:29] arynwyn: Nat: <turns, spots the slumped figure, and dashes back to him> Theo? Theo! <she kneels beside him> What are you doing out here? <fighting panic> What can I do? What do you need?

[23:31] Socks: Theo: Rest. Just...help me get home... <he can't speak any longer; his air has to go to supplying his body with oxygen>

[23:32] arynwyn: Nat: <she slides an arm under him and hoists him to his feet, rather easily, then supports him with his arm over her neck> Breathe, Theo, breathe... <she starts toward his house>

[23:33] Socks: Theo: Can...call...someone...Ms. Owens or....or someone...with car...

[23:34] arynwyn: Nat: Right. <she pulls her cell phone back out and calls Cassandra, talking quickly and keeping it short> She'll be here in a couple of minutes.

[23:37] Socks: Theo: <nods> 'm sorry.

[23:37] arynwyn: Nat: <she sits him back down> For what? For following me? Eavesdropping on my conversation? Or for collapsing? <she sits down next to him>

[23:38] Socks: Theo: Mostly...the first two...

[23:39] arynwyn: Nat: <she scowls a little and looks away from him, wrapping her arms around herself> I told you this couldn't work, Theo. We live in two warring worlds. <she sighs>

[23:41] Socks: Theo: I...don't care...about that. <starting to get his breath back> I care...about YOU.

[23:43] arynwyn: Nat: And I care about you! Damn it, Theo, you're not being reasonable. <she turns to look at him, leaning in to kiss him gently> I'm trying to protect you. You're going to get hurt. And I don't mean emotionally. <she looks into his eyes, pleading>

[23:45] Socks: Theo: <his eyes narrow> Protect me from...the douchebag who tells you to dump...<coughs>...to dump me? 'Cause I gave him a very...nice skylight just now.

[23:46] arynwyn: Nat: ... <blinks> You... you did what? <she groans and knocks the back of her head against the wall of the building a couple of times>

[23:48] Socks: Theo: Stop that. Don't wanna hurt yourself. And I...I wouldn't have if he'd let me out the damn DOOR.

[23:48] arynwyn: Nat: <goes wide-eyed> He knew you were there?

[23:49] Socks: Theo: <nods> He...can sense magic, I guess? I dunno. He claims that I stink. though I didn't shower before...before chasing after you, but still...

[23:51] arynwyn: Nat: Some of us have gifts, or so I was told. But you can't stink or he would have smelled you on me. <shakes her head> Please promise me you'll stay away from him. Please, Theo.

[23:51] Socks: Theo: Will YOU stay away from him? <he asks, looking at her curiously>

[23:52] arynwyn: Nat: <looks down at her hands> Theo... <she sighs> I don't expect you to understand. You're part of a family of people like you. Me? I'm all alone. I don't have anyone to ask questions or to hang out with when I'm feeling out of place and odd and different.

[23:53] Socks: Theo: <sighs and is quiet a moment> Do you know about this Metro Nights place? <he sounds less breathless and more tired now, like he's fighting to stay awake>

[23:54] arynwyn: Nat: No. Do you?

[23:55] Socks: Theo: <nods weakly> Booze and drugs and sketchy hookups. I...I can't tell you not to go, but I don't want you to.

[23:56] arynwyn: Nat: <watches as Cass's Porsche pulls up> C'mon, Theo, let's get you home so you can rest. <she sounds just as tired as he feels, and defeated. She stands up and helps Theo to his feet>

[23:57] Socks: Theo: <waves weakly to Cass> G'evening, Miss Cassandra. Thank you for the rescue. Now, drive straight ahead and find the warehouse with no door and just smash it down, if you please?

[23:59] arynwyn: Cass: <arches a brow as Nat helps Theo into the car and climbs in behind him> Smash it down with what, my PORSCHE? Surely that's not what you're suggesting. <she grins but her eyes look worried> Why do you need me to smash down buildings?

[00:00] Socks: Theo: To cut down on a plague of rampant douchebaggery...<he comments, rolling his head back against the seat. By the by, he should be REEKING of witchy magic to vampiric noses>

[00:02] arynwyn: Cass: Ahh, douchebaggery. Yes, the plague of mankind, right behind stupidity. <she grins and puts the car into gear, speeding off>

Nat: James isn't a douchebag, he just doesn't like witches, and for good reason. Witches killed his father and his mother.

[00:04] Socks: Theo: I'm sorry to hear that. I truly am. And I know...I know what I'm about to say isn't very witchlike of me and if Mother heard it, she'd lecture me for a month straight, but....<finally giving vent> DAMNIT, HE NEEDS TO KEEP HIS HANDS OFF MY GIRLFRIEND. <exhales as if that took the last of his strength, which it may have> OKay, sorry, my machismo is soothed now. I have very little of it, after all, so it doesn't take much...

[00:05] arynwyn: Nat: <rolls her eyes> Theo... Yeesh. He didn't hit on me or anything.

Cass: <arches a brow as she looks at them through the rearview mirror>

[00:06] Socks: Theo: trynna...<falling asleep>...trynna set y'up wi' some..other guy...<yawn>...wants ya to suck on his neck...<eyes fall shut>

[00:08] arynwyn: Nat: <sighs softly and leans over to kiss his temple> No idea how we're going to get him inside. He doesn't want me around his family and you certainly can't take him in. <talking to Cass>

Cass: Aww, it might be fun. <wiggles her eyebrows>

[00:08] Socks: Theo: <sort of falls into snuggling Nat>

[00:10] arynwyn: Nat: Well, let's take him home with us, I guess. He'll probably freak out when he wakes up in a vampire's house but... well, he deserves it, after following me and eavesdropping on my conversation! <indignant, but she still wraps her arms around him>

Cass: <changes course with a nod> Sure thing.

[00:11] Socks: Theo: <murmurs her name in his sleep>

[00:14] Socks: Theo: <wakes up just after nightfall the next night, blinking and confused about where he is ((and why he's naked - j/k j/k...))>

[00:21] arynwyn: Nat: <he's in her room, which is sort of hodge-podge-ly decorated. She has a canopy bed with sheer black curtains that are pulled to keep most of the light out. The bed is tall and very plush, with satin sheets. There's a messy desk with several sketch books and pencils laying atop it, along with school books and a journal. There are several bookcases filled with all sorts of books - everything from leatherbound classics to murder-mysteries by bestselling authors. The carpet is a deep red, and the walls are a creamy white, with black accenting on everything. There are several posters on the walls - favorite bands (including Theo's band), pictures of her mother, a couple of Pyro and Ryann, one of Cass, and a couple of Theo and her together. There are sketches pinned up too - a couple of Theo's face, one of her mother that looks like it was drawn from one of the photos, a few landscapes - and yes, she is very good. There are three doors - one to the hall, one to her closet (walk-in, of course), and one to her bathroom>

[00:25] Socks: Theo: <sits up and immediately his stomach grumbles> Yeah, yeah, I hear you... <he fumbles with the curtains a bit until he finds his way out, then picks a door, trying to find the bathroom. Sorry - this is the closet! He backs out and picks a second door>

[00:25] arynwyn: <Voila, the bathroom. Very big and spacy, with a large pile of laundry in the corner>

[00:27] Socks: Theo: <avails himself of the facilities (putting the seat up beforehand and down after), washes his hands and splashes some cold water on his face and rubs it on the back of his neck. He dries off and heads for Door Number 3, hoping he can find the kitchen here>

[00:28] arynwyn: <The door opens to a long hall, at the end of which is the stairs down. At the bottom of the stairs, he can hear the sound of the TV from the living room, which is straight ahead, though he has to go around a wall to get to it. The kitchen is to the right, down a hall and through a swinging door>

[00:29] Socks: Theo: <heads for the stairs, using the railing to be sure he doesn't topple over> Hello? <he says as he reaches the bottom>

[00:30] arynwyn: Nat: <appears from the living room. She's in short, tight shorts and a tanktop> Hey, I didn't hear you, sorry. How'd you sleep?

[00:31] Socks: Theo: Like the dead. <checking out the outfit, obviously>

[00:31] arynwyn: Nat: Hungry? <she, oddly, keeps her distance>

[00:33] Socks: Theo: Starving. My wallet should be around here somewhere, if you want to order say...three pizzas, I'll cover it. <smiles>

[00:34] arynwyn: Nat: Pizza, sure. <she pads back into the living room for her cell phone> What kind do you want?

[00:35] Socks: Theo: I'm not picky. Pick out what you like or whatever's on special or something. <he pulls out his wallet, 'cause, yes indeed, it's in his backpocket>

[00:37] arynwyn: Nat: <waves his wallet away and goes into the kitchen for the phone number. She dials, orders three large pizzas - one pepperoni, one cheese, and one supreme - and pays with her credit card. She wanders back into the hallway> They said it'd be half an hour. You want a soda?

[00:38] Socks: Theo: Oh, Goddess, yes. <he follows her around like a puppy dog> So, is there an occasion for the outfit or do you just always sit around your house looking devastatingly sexy?

[00:42] arynwyn: Nat: There's Coke and Sprite. <she grabs a Sprite for herself and steps aside so he can help himself, ignoring his comment>

[00:43] Socks: Theo: <grabs a Coke and pops it open, chugging some of it quickly> I don't think I ever knew you HAD shorts that short. Does your father know about those?

[00:44] arynwyn: Nat: <shuts the fridge> They're just pajamas. <she shrugs> My dad doesn't usually see me in pajamas, considering he goes to bed before I get up and he's up and gone before I go to bed.

[00:45] Socks: Theo: <blinks> Those are your PJs!? Is it pushing it to ask to sleep over then? <grins and drinks more coke>

[00:47] arynwyn: Nat: You did sleep over, and you were unconscious the whole time. <heads back toward the living room>

[00:48] Socks: Theo: Well, yeah...I couldn't enjoy you in your PJs! <following after her - and burping quietly, with murmured "Excuse me" 's>

[00:49] arynwyn: Nat: <flops down on the couch - which is not a bachelor couch anymore :P - it's a cream-colored fabric couch, and it's very nice> You needed the sleep.

[00:50] Socks: Theo: Yeah, I waaaaaaaaay overspent my magic reserves. <he sighs> I am sorry for invading your privacy. I was worried. It doesn't excuse it, but...I wouldn't have otherwise.

[00:50] arynwyn: Nat: <she sighs heavily> I know.

[00:53] Socks: Theo: <he looks at his soda can> I...I kinda feel torn about everything that went in on there. On the one hand, you're your own woman. You can go where you like and see who you like and do what you like, and I have no call or reason to stop you. I don't own you, and I don't want to. I want you as an equal, and if that means you...<he swallows, staring at his soda can> ...you need to go suck on that dou...on James's <he corrects> neck or whatever, or see that Evan guy...that's your call. But on the other...

[00:53] arynwyn: Nat: <arches a brow and prompts him> On the other...?

[00:56] Socks: Theo: <drinks more of his coke before finishing> ...well, the other part of me says, damnit, you're my girlfriend and I'm your boyfriend and I don't want you having anything to do with James or Evan or any other guy. Maybe it's being stupid and selfish and...and patriarchal, but every time I think of you sitting there with him, I just...wanna punch him in his goddamn face. <he exhales and makes himself calm down> Which is everything my mother, my family and my clan taught me NOT to do, but...I just don't like the thought of it. <he sighs>

[00:57] arynwyn: Nat: <she sets her soda on a coaster and curls up next to him, leaning against his arm> I don't want to be with anyone else. I want you. I just have such a bad feeling. I'm so afraid something bad is going to happen to one of us, because of what we're doing. I mean, what would your mom say if she knew you spent the night at a vampire's house?

[00:58] Socks: Theo: Oh SHIT, my mom! Where's my cell, I gotta call her so she doesn't freak out....

[00:58] arynwyn: Nat: <she hands him her cell phone> You don't have yours? I didn't empty your pockets.

[01:02] Socks: Theo: <pats down his pockets> Oh wait...<pulls out his own phone, sheepishly> I'm a moron. I blame my lack of blood sugar. <he makes the call> Mom? Yeah, yeah I'm sorry. I just...look, I was out with Nat and things got late and I just crashed at her place. I was so zonkered, I literally just woke up. ... Yeah, I know I should've called, I'm sorry. ... What? NO, MOM! <he's bright red> Wait, you what? <yeah that's not helping> Mother, you didn't need to do that. No, I know...yes, thank you. No, please don't talk with her dad about it. ...not everyone's US, Mom. Yeah huh. Well, I don't really know what my plans are for the night now... <looking at Nat uncertainly> but we just ordered pizza, so... okay. Yeah, yeah thanks, Mom. <he ends the call and flops on the couch, still burning red in the face>

[01:02] arynwyn: Nat: <arches a brow> She's going to call my dad?

[01:03] Socks: Theo: No, no - at least, I hope not. I don't think she has his number or even knows his name to look it up. But...she, uh....did laundry last night and went to my room to get my sheets. <coughs> The state of the sheets prompted her to check the trashcan too. <still bright red>

[01:04] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes deeply> Oh. Is she mad?

[01:05] Socks: Theo: Mad? Oh, no, she's all "My little baby's growing up!" and "I'm so proud of you for using protection!" and "You're going to make some woman very happy someday!" <facepalms>

[01:05] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes more but smiles a little> Well, you are.

[01:07] Socks: Theo: Yes, well, I was kinda hoping that'd be you. <he kisses her cheek quickly and drinks more of his soda; around the can, he comments> She thinks I stayed over here last night so we could boff each others' brains out and that I'm staying over AGAIN for more hot nookie. Which...<lowering the can> I certainly wouldn't say no to, after I have the blood sugar for it. But I'm not really holding my breath after what all went on last night. <he sighs>

[01:08] arynwyn: Nat: <her brow furrows> Theo, it can't be me. Not after next year. Remember? You're a witch, I'm a dhampir? You have obligations to your clan.

[01:10] Socks: Theo: <cocks his head> What happened to running away somewhere together? And don't you remember my saying I'll do what I want with my life anyway? The clan'll carry on without ME.

[01:11] arynwyn: Nat: <blinks a couple of times> You... you were serious? I thought it was just talk. I didn't think you - anyone - would give up that for me....

[01:12] Socks: Theo: You need to learn to trust what I tell you, hon. <he snuggles up next to her> So what do you say: when we turn 18, I go solo if StC won't come with me - and I doubt they will - and you can draw all my album covers?

[01:14] arynwyn: Nat: <she exhales slowly and closes her eyes, wrapping her arms around his middle and snuggling under his arm> Promise?

[01:14] Socks: Theo: I promise. I'd offer to make it a blood oath, but I don't want you to get sick. <doorbell> I'll get it! <he jumps up>

[01:15] arynwyn: Nat: <chuckles and lets him go> Abandoned for food...

[01:16] Socks: Theo: Only temporarily, love of my life. <he answers the door, hands over some bills, singsongs> Keep the change! <and bumps the door shut with his hip, holding a stack of pizza boxes> Do we want paper plates or just eat from the boxes like wild savages?! <he grins>

[01:16] arynwyn: Nat: We don't have paper plates, just regular ones. But we have napkins. <she pads into the kitchen to grab some>

[01:17] Socks: Theo: <sits down, tears open the first box and grabs a slice to nom>

[01:20] arynwyn: Nat: <returns with napkins and grabs a slice, just as her cell rings> Damn. <she picks it up and looks at the ID, frowning> Hold on. <she answers but goes back into the kitchen> James? What's up? No, I don't think I'm going to make it tonight. I dunno, other stuff. Yeah, more important stuff. No, I'm still thinking about it. Yeah, I'm with him, why? It's none of your business. Well tell Evan to get over it. <she sighs> I've gotta go, okay? Enjoy your party. <hangs up and returns to the living room>

[01:21] Socks: Theo: <can't help grinning around his second slice>

[01:22] arynwyn: Nat: <grabs her slice of pizza again> What are you smirking about? <she bumps him with her shoulder as she takes a bite>

[01:23] Socks: Theo: Oh, just a stupid, masculine feeling of having triumphed over your other suitors. I know, I deserve to be kicked. <grabs another slice of pizza>

[01:25] arynwyn: Nat: <she leans over and kisses his cheek, then noms on her slice thoughtfully> It really doesn't weird you out that I like blood?

[01:26] Socks: Theo: No. <he shrugs> You're half-vampire; I'd be more surprised if you didn't. What surprises me is that you like *my* blood - it ought to be poisonous to you.

[01:27] arynwyn: Nat: I looked it up today. It's not lethal for dhampirs. It'll make us a little sick but it won't kill us.

[01:29] Socks: Theo: <he smiles> Good to know. So I won't have to freak out if you get just a little in you. Oh goddess, I was so worried you were gonna get really sick or die or something.

[01:30] arynwyn: Nat: I barely got a taste. I don't think I actually swallowed any. <finishes her slice and takes a drink>

[01:31] Socks: Theo: So I actually AM tasty though? <he grins, going after another slice>

[01:31] arynwyn: Nat: <groans softly> The best. Oh man, I thought I was going to go into some blood frenzy or something.

[01:33] Socks: Theo: <chuckles> Well, I can't let you drink as much as you want, but the occasional nip now and then is okay.

[01:33] arynwyn: Nat: <shakes her head> No. I don't want to. You may taste great but it's... it's weird. It's freaky. I don't like it.

[01:34] Socks: Theo: <he shrugs> What's freaky about it? <he asks around a mouthful of 'za>

[01:35] arynwyn: Nat: It really doesn't bother you? <can't seem to get past it>

[01:36] Socks: Theo: <clears his mouth> It bothers me that you might drink off someone else, but that's 'cause it's...it's sort of...intimate, you know and it's Someone Else. Which is stupid and possessive and so damn MALE of me, but I can't help it.

[01:38] arynwyn: Nat: <she turns his head so she can't see where she bit him the night before - the bite is scabbed over but it's badly bruised> It looks terrible. It's like... abuse. <runs a finger over the bruised skin>

[01:39] Socks: Theo: <he shrugs> It was your first time and it was...like a reflex, yeah? I bet with practice it won't bruise or hurt or anything. <picks up another slice of pizza and noms>

[01:40] arynwyn: Nat: <unconsiously licks her lips and makes herself look away> It probably hurt like hell. It's not like I have fangs...

[01:40] Socks: Theo: It was...a surprise. But I don't really remember much too specific 'cause...well, my brain was sort of somewhere else at the time. <grins and gets another slice, 'cause, yes, he already finished that one>

[01:42] arynwyn: Nat: <she runs a finger down his neck, gazing at him with an odd expression on her face>

[01:42] Socks: Theo: Whaf? <mouthful of pizza>

[01:42] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes and smiles a little, looking away> Nothing.

[01:43] Socks: Theo: <clears his mouth> What? No, tell me. Tell me or I tickle it out of you.

[01:43] arynwyn: Nat: I was just thinking... I dunno, it's silly. <she looks down at her hands, turning redder>

[01:44] Socks: Theo: <tickles!>

[01:44] arynwyn: Nat: NO! <laughs and tries to squirm away> Stop stop stop!!

[01:44] Socks: Theo: Tell me, or the tickling continues!!!

[01:45] arynwyn: Nat: <she buries her face in his neck and says, almost inaudibly, all in a rush> Iloveyou.

[01:45] Socks: Theo: <he stops tickling> Really? <he beams>

[01:45] arynwyn: Nat: <doesn't look up or pull away, just stays buried in his neck> Yeah.

[01:47] Socks: Theo: <presses a long kiss to her cheek and sends a whisper> *Well, you know, I wasn't kidding when I called you "love of my life" earlier.* <he pulls away (or tries to - your call) so he can eat more>

[01:48] arynwyn: Nat: <lets him pull away, leaning back against the sofa, smiling faintly, still very red> Are you going to eat all three pizzas?

[01:49] Socks: Theo: <goes to the next box> I doubt it, but better safe than sorry. <grins>

[01:50] arynwyn: Nat: <chuckles and shakes her head> I'd call you a pig but you're not even close to fat. <she pokes his ribs>

[01:52] Socks: Theo: It takes a lot of energy to do magic! And I did a LOT yesterday! Invisibility for that long, all those wind tricks, the whispering, the levitating....but you are worth every last drop of strength I have, love.

[01:52] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes a little> Just for that, you get an invitation to stay the night again. <she kisses his neck>

[01:53] Socks: Theo: <chuckles around a mouthful of pizza> Do I haf ta be unconciouf again?

[01:53] arynwyn: Nat: Not until I'm through with you. <grins>

[01:55] Socks: Theo: <chokes on his pizza a little at that, but manages to get it down> Uh...I only had the one condom in my wallet, so if you don't have any, we should hit the drugstore or go to the.. <blinks> Shit! What time is it?

[01:55] arynwyn: Nat: <glances at her cell phone> It's almost 10, why?

[01:57] Socks: Theo: Awww, hell, Eve is going to EVISCERATE me. <he pulls out his cellphone again> Eve? <he holds the phone away from his ear as loud yelling can be heard. Eventually it dies down and he cautiously resumes listening> Uh, E...oh, hi, Dawn. Yeah, look, I'm sorry, I've only been awake, like...half an hour. Yeah, sorry, jeeze, my MOM wasn't that pissed. No, I'm cool, I'm with Nat. <he tilts the phone away from his mouth> Dawn says Hi.

[01:57] arynwyn: Nat: <smiles> Hey Dawn. Please don't eviscerate my boyfriend.

[01:59] Socks: Theo: She says Hi and begs for my life. <he chuckles> Well, we did get sort of...caught up in things....No, don't....Hi, Freddie. No, you can't have a turn with her, you pig! Put Dawn back on. Hell, I'd take Eve and her screaming over this. Hi again, Dawn. Yeah, I am so sorry. You guys still at the club? Can you hand me to Ms. Owens? Thanks. <he covers the mouthpiece> Should I ask about her condom supply while I have her on the phone, or are we good for now? <grins>

[02:00] arynwyn: Nat: <blushes deeply> I guess you should ask her.

[02:03] Socks: Theo: Right. <uncovers the mouthpiece> There she is, the beauteous, most wonderful all-ages club manager in the world! <clears his throat - apparently, Ms. Owens isn't buying that> I'm sorry. I was overcome with young love's passion. Speaking of which, is it too late to hit you up for more of that stuff you're always peddling to us wacky teenagers? Hrm? Well, yeah, we used that one already. No, we've behaved since then, but we're fueling up on pizza now, so... Yeah, the question is, if I show up there to collect, will Eve take my head off? <he laughs> Yeah okay, fifteen, I can make that. Thanks. <he ends call> You gonna stay here or come with, 'cause if you're coming with, you'll need actual clothes...<takes in her PJs again> ...sadly.

[02:04] arynwyn: Nat: I'll go get dressed. I can't send you into the lion's den unprotected. <grins and gets up>

[Next Monday]

[22:21] Socks: <Monday, lunchtime! Theo's in a plain heather gray t-shirt and blue jeans today. He got a haircut over the weekend, though his bangs still fall in his face. He shifts his messenger bag on his shoulder, hands in his pockets> You think it's too redneck to get a tat with your name on it on my bicep? <he asks Nat, chuckling>

[22:23] arynwyn: Nat: <She's got her hair pulled up into a ponytail today, since it's so hot. She's in a spaghetti-strap tank and low-cut jeans, with bangle bracelets, and of course, the pendant, which she only takes off to shower> Only if I can get a tat of your band symbol. <grins and slides her hand in his. She's been much happier and more herself since their talk on Saturday night>

[22:26] Socks: Theo: Well, I know a great parlor for that, they did mine. Did you wanna get yours in the spot mine's at? We can go get them done together, hm? <they enter the woods>

[22:32] arynwyn: Nat: No, I want to be able to see it. And yeah, maybe we can go this weekened. Make it a date.

James: <materializes out of the trees, smirking> How sweet. A date. Isn't that sweet, Evan?

Evan: <steps out from behind James, scowling> Yeah, my heart is swelling. <he's husky, built like a football player, and obviously more brawn than brain. He cracks his knuckles as he eyes Theo>

Nat: <grabs Theo's arm and pulls him back, stepping in front of him protectively> What are you doing here?

James: Now now, where are your manners, Natalie? Aren't you going to introduce us to your boyfriend? <his eyes glint maliciously>

[22:34] Socks: Theo: <his eyes narrow at James> Wow, they can come out during the day, too. And here I thought douchebags were allergic to the sun. Speaking of which, enjoying the skylight? It has to have raised your property value by...a factor of 10, at least. Though <pause as if thinking> 10 x 0 is...lemme think here...

[22:36] arynwyn: James: <growls and takes a step forward, his fists clenched, but he speaks to Natalie> You know who is mother is, Natalie?

Nat: <doesn't answer, just keeps herself between Theo and James>

James: She's the bitch that killed my parents. <he spits on the ground> Did you know you're dating the heir to the vampire huntress? He's going to grow up and hunt down your daddy.

Nat: <her spine stiffens and she goes very still>

[22:37] Socks: Theo: <rolls his eyes> You don't know a thing about me, least of all what I'm going to do with my life. And <resting a hand on Nat's shoulder and squeezing reassuringly> I am NOT going to be a vampire hunter.

[22:40] arynwyn: James: <still talking to Natalie> Don't you have any self-respect? You're dating the spawn of a vampire hunter. <he looks disgusted> And what's worse, a witch! I thought you were better than that.

Nat: Go away, James. Leave us alone and we'll leave you alone.

James: <smiles a little> It's too late for that, sweetheart. Your fuck-buddy's mother killed my parents. I'm going to return the favor by killing her son.

[22:42] Socks: Theo: Try it. <even through his contacts, his eyes glint gold> I don't want to hurt you. And whether you believe me or not, I AM sorry for your loss. But damnit, I didn't do a damn thing to you except blow down your crappy door and put a hole in your crappy roof. <Nat can feel a sort of tingle start up through his hand. And it's possible James might be starting to get a "whiff" of it, but it's very very faint>

[22:45] arynwyn: James: <starts forward, Evan close at his heels>

Nat: <surprising even herself, she bares her teeth and growls at the back of her throat>

James: <continues walking forward and when he's close enough to Natalie, he backhands her hard across the face> You're a disgrace to dhampirs. Get a grip on yourself.

[22:46] Socks: Theo: <the wind comes up and "backhands" James (given that it doesn't have hands) - and HARD. Theo's glaring at James hotly>

[22:48] arynwyn: James: <staggers a little to the side, returning the glare>

Nat: <her face is red and already bruising where he hit her, but when he stumbles, she pounces, shoving him to the ground and pinning him there, her teeth aimed for his throat>

Evan: <barrels into the fight, headed for Nat and her hostage, fists already swinging>

[22:50] Socks: Theo: <concentrates, his eyes glowing brightly from behind his contacts, and the air starts to leave Evan's lungs. It's sort of like...involuntary exhaling>

[22:52] arynwyn: Nat: <she ducks a fist and rips into James' throat, until James gets his knee up into her stomach and shoves her off>

Evan: <lunges at Theo but collapses before he gets there, his hands clutching at his throat>

[22:54] Socks: Theo: <keeps drawing air out, watching carefully for unconsciousness so that he can stop it at that point, not wanting to actually kill him if he doesn't have to>

[22:59] arynwyn: James: <reverses the roles, now on top of Natalie. He punches her in the face a couple of times; there's the sound of her nose cracking and breaking, but she doesn't make any sound of pain> Stupid bitch, I could have made you into something great. We could have been the leaders of the South Florida movement.

Nat: <spits blood out of her mouth and glares at him, her nose crooked> I'd've never been your whore, James. <she gets a hand free and grabs his throat, shoving him back off of her. She gets on top of him again, punching like no girl should know how to punch, until she actually knocks him out. When she sees he's unconscious, she stops beating on him, but leans in to put her mouth back to his wound>

Evan: <finally passes out>

[23:01] Socks: Theo: <stops drawing air out of him and whirls to the other two> Na...t... <blinks at what she's doing, at the state of both of them. He walks over to her cautiously, watching her drink James's blood>

[23:02] arynwyn: Nat: <seems to be really out of it, acting on instict rather than rational thought. At this rate, she's going to drink until he dies>

[23:03] Socks: Theo: Nat! Nat, Nat...<he comes around behind her and kneels down, putting his hands on her arms> Natalie, you gotta stop now, okay, love?

[23:04] arynwyn: Nat: <she growls at the back of her throat as she turns to look at him, blood running down her chin>

[23:05] Socks: Theo: <looks at her eyes - mostly 'cause he doesn't want to look at the rest of it> Nat, it's me. It's Theo, remember me? I love you. C'mon, we gotta get you cleaned up...and I have got shit I HAVE to take care of. And I need you. I need you to be YOU again, okay?

[23:06] arynwyn: Nat: <she blinks a few times, then sort of half-collapses off of James' body, shaking>

[23:08] Socks: Theo: Shit. <he picks her up, levitates and starts floating them towards the cafe, but not towards the front, heading for the back> Nat? <he asks while he floats them that way rapidly> Nat, honey, you okay?

[23:08] arynwyn: Nat: <groans as she returns to her normal state of mind> Oh God, did I kill him? <she tries to wipe the blood off her chin and lips>

[23:10] Socks: Theo: No, I don't think so. And I'm going to do something that's going to be a little scary for you, but please, please trust me? <he lands them at the back door and sets her down in the cleanest part of the alley back there> Okay?

[23:10] arynwyn: Nat: <she nods, still looking dazed, confused, and scared>

[23:17] Socks: Theo: Wait here. Rest. I will be RIGHT back. <he ducks into the back door and, within minutes, Monica and an older man with golden eyes and a gray ponytail come out. Monica gasps audibly when she sees Nat>

Monica: OH MY GODDESS....

Theo: Monica, we don't have time. Call Therese, call Michael, and call Mom. NOW. We need them out of the house. Um...Tell them to meet at [Nat's address] and keep a low profile. <When she continues staring at Nat, he says> DAMNIT, NOW!

Monica: <scurries back inside for her cellphone>

Theo: Uncle Martin, I need your keys, I canNOT fly us all the way there, please?

Uncle Martin: <looks between Nat and Theo and says> Yeah, they're inside. I'll get a washcloth and towel for your girlfriend there too. <disappears back into the store>

[23:18] arynwyn: Nat: <weakly, wearily> Theo, what's going on?...

[23:21] Socks: Theo: They know about Mom, and that means they might come AFTER Mom, and she needs to know that. And if he's willing to come kill ME, he might go after my brothers and sisters, and they need to know that, too. So, it's time Mom got brought up to speed.

Uncle Martin: <comes back out. He hands the keys to Theo and then squats down to offer the washcloth and towel to Nat> You'd be a lot prettier without all that blood on your face, hm? <smiles a little uneasily>

[23:22] arynwyn: Nat: <she avoids looking at him, whispering> Thank you. <she takes the washcloth and wipes at the blood, wincing when she wipes at her nose>

[23:24] Socks: Theo: <runs off and drives back up in Uncle Martin's car, which is a Prius. He hops out> C'mon, love, we're getting you in the back seat. Thank you, Uncle. <he says as he picks Nat up> MONICA!

Monica: <runs out, tossing her apron at Uncle Martin> They're on their way. Where are we going, exactly?

Theo: Last place they'll look for us. <he says as he lays Nat carefully on the backseats> I hope, anyway. <he bends to kiss her forehead quickly>

[23:25] arynwyn: Nat: 'm okay, Theo... <she mumbles as he carries her to the car> I should call Ryann and my dad so they don't freak out when people show up unexpectedly. Witch people. <she pulls out her cell phone and hits a speed dial>

[23:27] Socks: Theo: Are they even awake?

Monica: THEO. <she demands in her Big Sister voice> Where. Are. We Going?

Theo: To a vampire's house, it's no big deal, get in. <he hops back into the driver's seat>

Monica: ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?!?!?!

Theo: He's probably not even awake yet, it's the middle of the day. Stop freaking out. He's Nat's dad, he's cool. I met him.

Monica: <STARES at her brother like he has, in fact, achieved some new height of mental instability, but gets in the front passenger seat>

[23:29] arynwyn: Nat: <let's the phone ring until the messages pick up, then redials, redials again, until Pyro's groggy voice picks up> Dad, um. I've got some friends coming over. Theo's, um, family. It's a long story. Just try not to scare the crap out of them or start any fights, okay? We're on our way now. Oh, and don't freak out, but I think my nose is broke. No, we don't have time to stop at the hospital. I'll take care of it later. <sighs> We'll be there soon, k? K, bye. <hangs up>

[23:32] Socks: Theo: HE BROKE YOUR NOSE? I should've killed him... <grumbles as he drives>

Monica: When do I get to hear what's going on?

Theo: When we're at Pyro's and everyone's there, 'cause I'm only telling this story once.

[23:33] arynwyn: Nat: <she sighs and closes her eyes, leaning her forehead on the window> Theo, your mom... She's not going to let us be together. You know that, right?

[23:34] Socks: Theo: I'll make her understand, Nat. I will MAKE her and if I can't then...then you get your dream about us running off together, I guess.

Monica: Theo, you can't mean that...we're your FAMILY.

Theo: I do mean it, and I don't want to do it, but damnit, I shouldn't have to choose between the woman I love and my family.

[23:36] arynwyn: Nat: This isn't going to work, Theo. Your mom is going to freak when she gets to my house. She's a HUNTER, Theo. <she groans> I can't lose my dad too...

[23:37] Socks: Theo: Nat, You have my WORD I will not let her hurt your dad. I SWEAR TO YOU.

[23:38] arynwyn: Nat: I'm sorry, Monica. This is my fault. It's always my fault. I've tried to reason with Theo but he won't listen. <she sounds exhausted>

[23:40] Socks: Monica: <folds her arms> You know how Nature abhors a vaccuum? Well Theo abhors reason.

[23:41] arynwyn: Nat: Don't I know it?... <she smiles a little and leans up to comb her fingers through his hair> But I love him anyway.

[23:43] Socks: Monica: ...well. Someone has to. <she smiles over her shoulder at Nat>

Theo: <pulls into her driveway> Okay, inside, and where ARE they?

Monica: You know Mom hates to drive. They'll be here.

Theo: Are you sure? <getting out> Nat, you okay to walk?

[23:44] arynwyn: Nat: Yeah, I can walk. <she gets out, wobbles a little, but seems okay> My dad said he was going to get up. And he promised not to start any fights.

[23:51] Socks: Ryann: <comes running out in an untucked and hastily buttoned shirt and jeans, no shoes or socks on, hair still unbrushed> What's going on?! My god, Nat, are you okay?!

Theo: Inside, please, douchebags apparently don't explode when sunlight hits them.

Monica: <eyes Ryann briefly, but offers her hand briefly>Monica Lennox, Theo's older sister, I'm sorry.

Ryann: <Shakes her hand shortly> Come inside, nice to meet you. <goes to hold the door for them>

[23:53] arynwyn: Nat: <latches onto Theo's arm and doesn't let go. Her face is bruised from the slap and punches and her nose is crooked, swollen and turning purple>

Pyro: <is hovering inside in the hall, just out of reach of the sunlight, squinting so he can see them come in. He's in a tshirt and jeans, barefoot, hair mussed, just like Ryann. He looks anxious and worried>

[00:00] Socks: Ryann: Sit do...<she looks outside> Are we expecting more guests?

Theo: <whips his head around and then sighs in relief> That's just the rest of my family. <he looks back at Pyro> I SWEAR I won't let them harm you, sir, you have my word, but I really couldn't think of anywhere else they'd be safe.

<And indeed, there's a woman, slightly taller than average, with Theo's red hair (though long and wavy) and fair skin. There's another, younger woman with her, blonde haired and suntanned, and a boy about 10 years old, with brown hair and a sort of olive cast to his skin, more like Monica. Speaking of Monica, she waves them in>

Theodore, WHAT IS GOI....<she comes to a dead halt upon seeing Pyro, and her eyes start to glow>

Theo: NO, MOM! <and he steps between the two of them. That stops his mother's creepy eye glowing dead>

[00:01] arynwyn: Pyro: <looks a little awkward but says pleasantly> Please come in. You won't be harmed here. I think Theo needs to talk to all of us.

Nat: <hovers next to Theo, unsure what to do, knowing she looks a horrible mess - not how she wanted to meet Theo's mother>

[00:06] Socks: Mrs. Lennox: <glares at Pyro. She looks at her children, pauses at Nat, and then looks back at Theo> What in the name of all that is good are you DOING, Theodore? <her voice is low and quiet>

Theo: <still standing between his mom and Pyro, he squeezes Nat's hand> Okay, short short version? Nat's a dhampir, and she's not the only one around here, and there's this one named James - he claims YOU killed his parents, Mom, and so just now he and his buddy tried to kill US.

<she sinks onto the couch as if all the wind just knocked out of her>

Theo: I don't know how many more dhampir there ARE here, but he was the ringleader, and Mom, he knew all about you. He knew we were witches, knew you were the head vampire hunter of Greenbriar, he knows my name, which means he might know ALL our names, and I don't know how safe we are. Nat and I took care of them for now - without killing anyone, I don't think - <he tosses a worried look at Nat> but she got the worst of it, I'm afraid. <he looks over his shoulder at Pyro> I'm sorry, sir. <he looks back at his mom, who seems like she just got hit with a truck>

[00:08] arynwyn: Nat: <mumbles as everyone looks at her> 'm fine...

Pryo: <steps over to Natalie and looks at her face carefully> You'll be fine by tomorrow, but we'll need to set your nose so it doesn't heal crooked. <he kisses her forehead quickly>

[00:09] Socks: Ryann: <looks around, shifting> Can I...get anyone a soda? Tea? Water? Milk? I could use a drink?

Mrs. Lennox: ...vodka martini, extra dry, three olives.

Monica: MOM?!

Since when do you DRINK? <asks the other daughter>

Ryann: <nods and hurries off to the kitchen>

Theo: Mom. I know everything you've told me, but I also know that there's at least two vampires who are decent people. Well...<shooting Nat a look> Two and a half. <grins>

Two? <his younger brother squeaks>

Theo: Well, there's Miss Cassandra, Pyro's business partner. She saved our ass..er...butts the other night and she bought Nat this REALLY nice biki...er...swimsuit. <coughs and clears his throat>

[00:17] arynwyn: Nat: <rolls her eyes and nudges him> They didn't need to know that last part, yeesh. Cass and my dad have nothing against witches. <she shrugs> And I obviously don't. <she glances at Theo and blushes a little>

[00:24] Socks: Theo: Mom, please. This war is gonna cost your kids their LIVES if it keeps up.

Mrs. Lennox: They're unholy, Theo. They're abominations. The dead are NOT supposed to be walking around again.

Theo: They can't be THAT dead, Mom, if they can make life. <he gestures to Nat> She's real, living, breathing, and...and I love her. <swallows>

Ryann: <shows up with the vodka martini and hands it to Mrs. Lennox>

Mrs. Lennox: <stares at her son and CHUGS the drink>

[00:27] arynwyn: Nat: <squeezes Theo's hand to show her support> And I love him. I... I almost killed - well, I hope I didn't kill him, I guess I don't really know - another dhampir to protect him. And I'd do it again, if I had to.

Pyro: <closes his eyes briefly as if trying to take in the fact that his daughter got in a fight and sighs heavily>

[00:29] Socks: Theo: She's a hell of a fighter. <he chuckles lightly, for just a sec> If nothing else, we have to deal with the fact that there are dhampir out there gunning for us, Mom. And they probably know where we live. <he sighs, then turns to Pyro> I...propose an experiment, if you trust me?

[00:30] arynwyn: Pyro: <smirks a little and says sarcastically> I'm letting you date my daughter, aren't I? <he pats Theo's shoulder>

[00:31] Socks: Theo: I need to cast a spell on you. I...don't think it'll hurt you. It hasn't hurt Nat, anyway? Though that may not be conclusive.

[00:31] arynwyn: Pyro: <blinks a couple of times> What kind of spell?

[00:34] Socks: Theo: Invisibility. And if I'm right...it'll let you walk into the sunlight.

Ryann: <chokes on her drink> What?

Mrs. Lennox: Are you insane? You're going to take away his one weakness AND make him invisible?!

Theo: Yes, but it's invisibility and protection I can take away again at any time. And then he'd be out in the sun and frying. Does that make you happy, MOTHER?

Therese: ...and it'd let him go with us to find those dhampir. 'Cause knowing you, Theo, you're not going to just sit here and hide, are you?

Theo: <grins>

[00:37] arynwyn: Pyro: <looks uncertain for a moment, then glances at Nat's face, which sets his jaw in determination> Let me get some shoes. <he turns to head upstairs>

Nat: I'm going with you, Theo.

[00:42] Socks: Theo: I never thought otherwise, love. Have your father set your nose first.

Therese: I can do that, if you'll let me. I'm in training to be a doctor. <she rises>

Mrs. Lennox: <clearly thinks her children have all gone insane>

Monica: Mom. <she puts a hand on her mother's lap> I know you've always done what you thought was right for us. But things have changed, and....you did a good job raising Theo. So trust him, Mom, okay? Do you really think he'd put us in danger?

Mrs. Lennox: <she sighs> Fine. But I am coming with as well, and don't you dare try to say No to me, young man, or you will be grounded for the rest of your natural life.

[00:43] arynwyn: Nat: <chuckles and turns to Therese> That'd be great, thanks. I don't want a crooked nose forever.

Pyro: <reappears with socks on and shoes in hand. He sits down to tie them on> Do you have a plan, Theo?

[00:48] Socks: Therese: Come with me, we'll do this in the bathroom. Ah....there WILL be pain, I'm afraid, especially since we don't have anesthetic, but I promise, I'm not going to hurt her anymore than I need to to set her nose. I swear. <smiles a little nervously at Pyro>

Theo: Plan? Uh...I know where James lives? <he shrugs> My plan really didn't extend beyond...y'know...showing up there and kicking his ass until he realizes he shouldn't fuck with us?

Mrs. Lennox: LANGUAGE!

Theo: <winces> Sorry, Mom. <clears throat> I am open to suggestions. Whatever happens though, we've got a few hours until nightfall, so...<he rubs his hands together> You ready to attempt invisibility, sir?

[00:50] arynwyn: Nat: It's okay, I'm expecting it. <she leads the way to the downstairs bathroom> Is it going to bleed again?

Pyro: <clears his throat and looks at Ryann> You okay with this?

[00:55] Socks: Therese: Probably a little bit, like a bad nosebleed. And we should splint it until you can get it healed.

Ryann: <exhales, holding her now empty drink glass> ...No. No, I'm not. The way to end a war is NOT to obliterate the other side. <she looks at Theo> You already kicked his ass today, right? That is just going to make him madder. What does he want?

Theo: He talked about how dhampirs have to hide their true nature from society.

Ryann: <considers this> Let me make a call.... <she wanders off into the other room>

[00:57] arynwyn: Pyro: <when Ryann's out of earshot, he grumbles> The asshole hit my daughter. He's not getting away with that.

Nat: A splint? Ugh, that'll look awesome. <she digs in the closet for an old towel> Okay, let's just do this. <holds the towel at the ready and closes her eyes>

[01:03] Socks: Therese: I apologize in advance for hurting you. <and Ker-SNAP!>

Theo: I know how you feel, sir.

Mrs. Lennox: So...<chewing an olive in one side of her mouth> ...what? We play happy nicey with those THINGS and...

Theo: MOTHER! NAT is one of "those THINGS". I already had this conversation with Monica, but I'll say it again now: I don't want to choose between you and her, but if you make me, YOU WILL LOSE!

Michael: Mama, remember when Billy Jones was teasing me about my eyes? And I was upset? You told me I can't help the way I was born, and I shouldn't be ashamed of it. So...why is it THEIR fault that they were born that way?

Mrs. Lennox: <looks at her youngest, blinking>

[01:04] arynwyn: Nat: <whimpers and presses the towel to her nose as it starts bleeding> I'll thank you when the pain goes away. <she sits down on the toilet>

Pyro: <smiles faintly at the wisdom of the kid, then turns to Mrs. Lennox> I understand your position, Mrs. Lennox, but for the sake of our children, and for your safety's sake, I think we should work together. Also, you have the bonus of knowing where I live now, right? <says this lightly, but there's an edge of worry in his voice>

[01:09] Socks: Mrs. Lennox: I...suppose you have a point. Both of you <she looks at Pyro as she tousles Michael's hair>

Ryann: <comes back in> Okay, we need to buy some time, but I have high-ranking DoVE representatives on their way down here. There's obviously been a major oversight of dhampirs in the new laws and...that needs to be addressed.

Theo: That's nice, but laws don't change people's minds. <he glances at his mother>

Therese: I understand. Make sure to breathe. <she rubs Nat's back> So you love my brother, huh? Even though he's an evil witchyman? <smiles>

[01:12] arynwyn: Nat: <snorts, then groans> Ow. <squeezes her eyes closed and takes a deep breath> Evil is the last word I'd use to describe Theo. But yeah, I love him. Like, crazy, willing-to-die-for-him love. <shakes her head a little>

Pyro: What are the DoVE reps going to do when they get here? <he seems wary> Nat's a dhampir too, you know. Whatever they do could affect her.

[01:18] Socks: Therese: Good, 'cause if you hurt him, I'm obligated to kick your ass, right? That's how it's supposed to work, isn't it? <she sounds genuinely confused>

Ryann: Oh, now, Pyro, I thought you had more faith in me than that. This isn't DoVE enforcement. These are the people who MAKE these laws. <she folds her arms> Like I said, it'll take time. But it's a bargaining chip. They can be involved in shaping the laws that will affect them, or they can have laws forced on them. <she shrugs>

Theo: That's how most people have to deal with laws, isn't it?

Ryann: Have you people considered...you know...going public as well? The more...militant of you could join up with DoVE's enforcement division, and the rest...well...

Mrs. Lennox: That's for the matriarch to decide.

[01:21] arynwyn: Nat: <chuckles> If we were guys, I guess. Maybe you should threaten to ruin my life with rumors instead? Unless you like kicking ass?

Pyro: <he looks at Theo> It's your call, kid. You're the leader of this shindig. <smiles a little> I can't go out for revenge without your help. At least, not until nightfall.

[01:26] Socks: Theo: Speaking of which, how about a test? Hold still and...um, lemme know if it hurts? It...shouldn't? But I've never cast magic on a vampire before. <he looks at his mom>

Mrs. Lennox: <she shrugs> Every spell I've cast has been intended to harm them. I have no idea how they'll react to passive spells.

[01:27] arynwyn: Pyro: <stands up> Okay. Do your thing.

[01:28] Socks: Therese: <she shrugs> Generally, no. I studied healing from the clan elders and now med school, so I'm not really the ass-kicking type. <smiles>

[01:28] arynwyn: Nat: <smiles> Stick to the rumors, then. But I have no intention of hurting Theo. Ever.

[01:30] Socks: Theo: <while Pyro's still in the shade, he casts invisibility on him>

Therese: Good. How're you feeling?

[01:32] arynwyn: Nat: I think the bleeding's stopped. It still hurts like hell though. My whole face hurts. <she pulls the towel away to see if the bleeding's stopped>

Pyro: <vanishes> Whoa. How long can you keep this up, Theo? <there's the sound of him walking around, and footprints in the thick carpet>

[01:34] Socks: Therese: You got some Tylenol around here? <there's blood and snot and nasty shit in that towel, but it seems to be done leaking>

Theo: If I'm not doing anything else? Probably an hour or so? Now, try and take a step into the sunlight? See, the invisibility spell works by bending light away from the subject, so it should bend the sunlight away and keep you from...y'know...incinerating.

[01:36] arynwyn: Nat: Yeah, good call. <she gets up and digs in the medicine cabinet until she finds some painkiller. She shakes out twice the typical dose>

Pyro: Uh huh. <he sounds uncertain again> Okay, here goes. <he goes into the hall and opens the door>

[01:38] Socks: Therese: <tosses her long blonde hair out of her face> Not sure how we're gonna splint it without taking you to a pharmacy...but you should heal it up pretty quickly, right?

Theo: You okay, sir? <sounding worried>

Ryann: Pyro?

[01:40] arynwyn: Nat: <nods> Yeah, the bruising'll be gone by tomorrow morning. The bone'll heal by the day after, I'm sure.

Pyro: Holy shit, Ryann. I'm in the sun! <he leaps outside (though no one can see him) and dances around> WOOOOO!

[01:44] Socks: Ryann: <laughs> I'm kind of sad I can't see him; he sounds so happy.

Mrs. Lennox: <eyes Ryann curiously>

Theo: You'd better come back in; I should save my strength for when we have to actually head over there.

Monica: How long will it take DoVE to get down here?

Ryann: A few hours.

Monica: Well, why don't we just wait? It'll be dark by then.

Therese: <she shakes her head> If we could bottle that and sell it...

[01:46] arynwyn: Pyro: <runs around for a minute more, then comes in, grinning to himself> Man, that was awesome. You could MARKET that, Theo! Vamps would pay out the ass for 10 minutes of that!

Nat: <she kicks the pills back, then grabs a washcloth to wash her face off with> I'd let you use it, if I knew how. But you can heal, can't you?

[01:49] Socks: Therese: Yeah, but I can't really put out a shingle for that. <she cocks her head> I could try and heal it? I don’t know how a dhampir will take to witch magic.

Theo: <laughs> Well, there's a way to make money if my music goes to hell. Uh...are you in a safe place, sir?

[01:50] arynwyn: Nat: Theo's used some on me and it's worked fine. <shrugs> You could try if you want.

Pyro: <wraps his arms around Ryann from behind, kissing her neck> Yes.

[01:54] Socks: Ryann: <gasps and chuckles> You should fee....<she looks over at Mrs. Lennox warily>

Theo: <drops the spell>

Mrs. Lennox: <eyebrow>

Therese: Sure. <rubs her hands together> You tell me if it hurts, and I'll stop. <her hands glow white and gold and she hovers the hand over Nat's nose>

[01:56] arynwyn: Pyro: <grins> That was great. I feel like I should pay you, Theo. <arms still around Ryann>

Nat: Feels kinda nice. Does it look better? <she tries to see the mirror out of the corner of her eyes>

[01:59] Socks: Therese: Yeah, it does. <she smiles> Stand up and look, if you don't believe me.

Theo: Uh, no need, sir. <smiles>

Ryann: Maybe I should get you some DoVE rations today instead of...your usual? <nods at Mrs. Lennox>

Mrs. Lennox: You LET him...

Monica: Oh, drop it, Mom, jeezus. <facepalming>

[02:01] arynwyn: Nat: <glances at the mirror> Ohh, nice. <she touches her face where the bruising was> Feels much better too. Thanks! <beams at Therese>

Pyro: <nods> Sure. That's fine. <kisses her temple and drops his arms>

[02:04] Socks: Ryann: I'll go warm some up for you. <kisses his cheek and heads to the kitchen, but not without shooting a glare at Mrs. Lennox>

Theo: So what do we think? Wait until nightfall to go make our peace offerings?

Therese: Glad to have helped. We should probably get back out there before they think we killed one another. <grins>

[02:06] arynwyn: Pyro: <plops down on the couch, frowning> I suppose that's the best solution, though it's not the one I like.

Nat: Thanks again. <she balls the towel up and tosses it on the floor, then opens the door> I wonder what we missed.

[02:09] Socks: Therese: I can't even imagine...

Theo: Nat did a hell of a job on James already, sir. She's quite the fighter. <smile>

[02:10] arynwyn: Nat: <steps in the living room, and blushes when she hears Theo's praise> He threatened you. What was I supposed to do?

[02:13] Socks: Theo: Well, Miss Ryann seems to think we should offer the olive branch, Nat. She's got some higher-ups from DoVE on their way down here. So what do YOU think, love: go surprise them and kick their asses or wait until nightfall and play nice?

[02:16] arynwyn: Nat: I think... I've had enough fighting for one day. Therese just fixed my face. And James is probably too hurt to fight much anyway.

Pyro: <arches a brow in surprise and curiosity, but doesn't ask>

[02:17] Socks: Theo: Okay. Do you think we stop by his homestead, or is there somewhere better?

[02:19] arynwyn: Nat: He's probably moved, since you put a hole in his ceiling and broke down his door. We could go to Headquarters, but there'll be a lot of dhampirs there.

[02:19] Socks: Theo: How many is "a lot"? <frowning>

Mrs. Lennox: <sits up straighter>

[02:20] arynwyn: Nat: Depends. It's used as sort of a safe house for dhampirs passing through, but it's also permanent living quarters for some club members. Could be 15 or 20 there.

[02:26] Socks: Theo: Shit. <he falls into a chair> Well, between my mom and your dad, if it gets bad, we should be okay, right?

Therese: Who is going on this diplomacy meeting again?

Theo: Me.

Mrs. Lennox: I am.

Ryann: <comes back in with a mug full of warmed blood, and hands it to Pyro> I'm going.

[02:28] arynwyn: Pyro: <takes the mug> Thanks. <takes a sip> I could call Cass; she wouldn't pass up the chance.

Nat: <perches on the arm of the chair Theo sat in> Me. Maybe we could - I could - call James and set up some kind of meeting? Away from all the others?

[02:29] Socks: Ryann: Is that a good idea?

Theo: He still gonna want to meet after you thrashed him at lunchtime?

[02:31] arynwyn: Nat: <shrugs> I'll tell him -- <she pauses> I know what I'll tell him. <turning rather red>

[02:34] Socks: Theo: ...do I want to know?

Ryann: <pushes Pyro towards the phone> Go call Cass.

[02:35] arynwyn: Nat: <glances at Theo's mom> No. <she pulls out her cell phone and heads for the kitchen>

Pyro: <takes his mug and disappears, heading upstairs to find his cell phone>

[02:40] Socks: Theo: <paces and looks out the window to check the daylight left>

Mrs. Lennox: Monica, you stay here with Therese and Michael, okay?

Monica: <nods and looks at Ryann> I hate to trouble you, but...

Ryann: Well, it's really Pyro's house, but the kitchen's well stocked with food. Are you hungry now? I could make something while we wait.

Therese: Maybe some soup? I'm not particularly hungry, but we have to have something.

Ryann: <nods> We have tomato, chicken noodle, and a couple other kinds in there; I don't think Pyro'll mind if you help yourself.

[02:45] arynwyn: Nat: <returns a few minutes later> Okay, he's agreed to meet, well, me. <she looks very embarrassed, and she won't meet Theo's eyes>

[02:47] Socks: Ryann: <comments quietly> Feminine wiles. They grow up so quickly.

Theo: <sighs and goes over to kiss her cheek> When and where are we meeting them?

[02:51] arynwyn: Nat: James' old place. The place you redecorated. And he's going to be alone. Is that okay? It was the only thing I could think of...

Pyro: <reappears> Cass is on her way. I filled her in and she's prepped for a fight, though I told her it hopefully wouldn't come to that.

[02:53] Socks: Theo: It's fine. We already know the lay of the land a little over there.

Ryann: What's the address? <she asks Nat> I'm going to call DoVE back and have them meet us there.

[02:54] arynwyn: Nat: <gives Ryann the address, then turns to Theo, burying her face in his neck to whisper> That was so humiliating. <her cheeks are still very red>

[03:00] Socks: Theo: I'm not going to ask. It's okay. <hugs her and pats her back reassuringly> You said what you had to. He'll be disappointed, but hopefully, by the end of it, dhampirs everywhere - or at least in Florida - will have a better time of things, hm?

Ryann: <is back on her cellphone>

Mrs. Lennox: So it's Theo, his girlfriend, the vampire, his pet...

Ryann: <whips her head around to snap> I am NOT his pet.

Mrs. Lennox: Fine, whatever. Theo, Natalie, her dad, her dad's GIRLFRIEND, me, and this Cass person who I'm assuming is another vampire?

Theo: <sighs> Yes. So two witches, two vampires, a dhampir and a human...with good connections, apparently.

[03:03] arynwyn: Pyro: The best. Though I'm still not sure how she made those connections. <he finished his mug of blood in the other room while he was calling Cass, since he figured it would bother the witches>

Cass: <the door opens and closes> I'm heeeeere! Did I miss the party? <bobs into the living room, smiling>

[03:06] Socks: Theo: Hello, Miss Cassandra. <uneasy smile>

Mrs. Lennox: There is not enough vodka in the world for this. <drops her head into her hands>

Ryann: And I still am not at liberty to explain them, sweetheart. <snuggles Pyro>

[03:08] arynwyn: Cass: Hi Theo! <she goes over to give him a squeeze> I heard you two got into a fight? Tsk tsk tsk. Naughty. <she glances at Mrs. Lennox and lowers her voice to a loud whisper> Should I assume that's your mother?

Pyro: <wraps his arms around Ryann tightly>

[03:10] Socks: Theo: That is my mother, yes. She's a vampire hunter. <he says with forced cheer> And we're going to march into a pissed-off dhampir's residence and offer him peace. I have no idea if this is going to work. <sighs>

[03:11] arynwyn: Cass: Work or not, it's going to be fun. <she turns to Theo's mom> Hi, I'm Cassandra. I'd shake your hand but you probably wouldn't like it, so... <she waves and grins>

[03:14] Socks: Mrs. Lennox: ... ...I assume it's dark enough out for vampiric travel? Let's get this over with. <she stands> Theo, stay close.

Theo: I'm not a baby anymore, Mom, jeeze.

Ryann: I told Monica, Therese and Michael they could help themselves to food while they wait; I hope that was okay? <asking Pyro>

[03:16] arynwyn: Pyro: Of course. As long as they don't burn the house down or get into the wine cellar, I don't care what they do.

Nat: <takes Theo's hand> I should show up alone, first. He's expecting just me. I can talk to him and tell him what's going on. If we all show up, he's going to panic and someone might get hurt.

[03:17] Socks: Theo: I'll come in with you. Invisibly, like last time. Just in case.

Mrs. Lennox: <arches an eyebrow at her son's tone>

[03:19] arynwyn: Nat: He'll be expecting that. Especially after the fight today. I'm not sure he swallowed my lie to begin with. And you need to save your strength in case there's a fight. I don't want you passing out on me again. I'll be okay, I promise.

[03:21] Socks: Theo: I just do NOT want you going in there alone, Nat...

[03:22] arynwyn: Nat: I know but we don't have a lot of choice, do we? We're trying to avoid a fight, and if we all go marching in there or he even thinks you're there with me, he's going to hurt someone.

[03:24] Socks: Theo: <sighs> Fine, fine. I'll wait outside.

Mrs. Lennox: How far is it to this place? Are we taking someone's car or using the winds? I noticed my brother's Prius out front. <looking at Theo>

[03:25] arynwyn: Pyro: We can take my SUV too. I can drive Cass, Ryann and me.

Nat: <nods> We should drive. Save your energy, just in case.

[03:27] Socks: Mrs. Lennox: Okay. Theo and Nat, you'll come with me in Martin's Prius. Theo, do you know where we're going?

Theo: Yes'm.

Mrs. Lennox: Then you're driving. C'mon.

[03:29] arynwyn: Nat: <steps over to give her dad a hug before they leave>

Pyro: <crushes her to him, kissing her hair> I'll be right there if something goes wrong, okay? I love you.

Nat: Love you too, Dad. <she kisses his cheek quickly, then follows Theo and Mrs. Lennox out>

Pyro: Here goes. <he pulls his keys out of his pocket and starts for the door>

[21:01] arynwyn: <So, Nat goes to the warehouse, alone. She's supposed to call when she's talked James into a diplomatic meeting. The minutes tick by with no word>

[21:04] Socks: Theo: <paces nervously by the cars> That's it, I'm going after her. <turns invisible>

Mrs. Lennox: <catches hold of his arm before he can skulk off> She'd call if she had trouble.

Theo: <his voice sounds snappish> What if she CAN'T?

Ryann: ...we should've arranged a time limit. You know, "if you haven't heard from me within X minutes"...?

[21:06] arynwyn: Pyro: <looks just as anxious as Theo> It's been ten minutes. I'm with Theo. Let's go. <he starts toward the warehouse at a jog>

Cass: <looks at Ryann anxiously, then follows after Pyro>

[21:07] Socks: Ryann: <follows>

Mrs. Lennox: <sighs> You stay RIGHT NEAR me, young man, and don't think I can't find you if I want to.

Theo: <sighs> Yes'm. <he hurries to catch up with Pyro, fear gnawing at his innards>

[21:08] arynwyn: Pyro: <steps inside the warehouse, knocking down the lean-to door> Natalie? <he glances around>

Nat: <is sprawled on the floor, eyes glazed over, throat bloody and raw from several bite marks. She's breathing, but barely>

[21:11] Socks: Theo: NAT! <his invisibility drops instantly and he hurries to her> Oh goddess...we should've brought Therese...<he puts his hands over her throat and they flare up golden for a moment>

Ryann: <gasps and covers her mouth, eyes wide>

Mrs. Lennox: <she scans the room for (what she considers) their prey, trying to ferret out this dhampir. It's hard with so many other vampires around though>

[21:15] arynwyn: Nat: <groans Theo's name weakly>

<James and Evan are skulking in the background, looking surprised at Nat's search party. They start to edge toward a broken window>

Pyro: <goes into an insta-rage when he spots Natalie on the floor. The couch in front of the two dhampirs catches fire as he lunges at them. He catches James by the throat and snaps his neck with one jerk>

Nat: <her eyes go a little wild as Theo's hand goes to her neck. She jerks a little, then grabs his arm and pulls his wrist to her mouth, where she bites down hard>

[21:17] Socks: Theo: <cries out in pain and surprise>

Ryann: NO! <at Pyro>

Mrs. Lennox: <her eyes snap to her son and then glow golden. She crosses to them in two steps and YANKS Theo up and away from Nat>

[21:22] arynwyn: Nat: <chokes a little on the little bit of blood she managed to get from Theo, her eyes casting around wildly, looking afraid and confused. Even to Mrs. Lennox, it's pretty clear she's not in her right mind at the moment>

Pyro: <tosses the limp form of James aside and starts for Evan, fangs bared. Evan cowers back, bumping into the wall and looking terrified>

Cass: <drags her eyes away from Pyro as she hears Theo cry out in pain. She dashes over and kneels beside Natalie, looking especially pale> She needs blood. <she puts her hands on Nat's wounds to try and staunch the bleeding>

[21:26] Socks: Theo: <trying to squirm out of his mom's grasp; his wrist is bleeding from the bite> I'd give her mine, but...<he shrugs, hating feeling helpless>

Mrs. Lennox: <does not look thrilled with the idea of her son willingly giving his blood to anyone>

Ryann: <as the only completely normal blood donor around here, she's a little distracted> PYRO! <she runs up to him and grabs one of his arms> Pyro, this won't end if you kill them both!

Mrs. Lennox: <she snaps her eyes to the burning couch and, with a wave of her free hand, the fire extinguishes itself, leaving the couch smoking and singed. She refuses to let go of Theo>

[21:29] arynwyn: Pyro: <turns to Ryann, snarling until he comes to his senses. He blinks a couple of times, then touches her cheek in apology. He glances toward Natalie>

Cass: <looks back at Pyro worriedly> Do you want me to...?

Nat: <continues to pale, and her eyes have dulled, confusion and fear slipping away as she does>

[21:31] Socks: Ryann: <turns to look at Nat and pales> Oh god... <she rushes over and presses her wrist against Nat's mouth> C'mon, Nat...

Theo: <finally kicks free of his mother and, eyes glowing in turn, he traps Evan in a box of wind, ensuring he can't escape. He's perfectly fine - he just can't go anywhere. He storms over to the box> What. Did. You. DO TO HER?

Mrs. Lennox: <blinks at Theo briefly, then watches Ryann and Nat warily>

[21:33] arynwyn: Nat: <her eyes sort of wander over to Ryann's face but she doesn't seem to be processing anything>

Evan: <struggles against the wind> It was James! I didn't do nothin'! <blood on his lips says otherwise>

[21:36] Socks: Theo: <the walls of the box start to move in a little and as they draw closer, it seems to get harder to breathe inside> Why would you do this to her? She wanted to HELP YOU! SHE CAME HERE TO HELP YOU ASSHOLES!

Ryann: Damnit...<she offers her wrist to Cass> I don't have a knife and my teeth and nails aren't sharp enough to pierce flesh.

[21:39] arynwyn: Cass: <takes her hand and slices her wrist carefully, then presses it to Natalie's mouth>

Nat: <it takes a few seconds, but finally she starts to drink, her eyes falling closed>

Pyro: <watches from a few feet away, looking terrified>

Evan: <coughs as it becomes harder to breathe> Help us? She - she came 'cause -- 'cause she wanted more <cough> of James' blood!

[21:42] Socks: Ryann: <sighs in relief>

Theo: <glares> She just said that so she could have a chance to talk with him. She's trying to help the dhampir and YOU. NEARLY. KILLED HER!! <his voice goes up with each word and as his voice goes up, the walls move in>

Mrs. Lennox: <she stares for a moment, speechless, then walks up behind her son and rests a hand on his shoulder> Don't kill him, unless you want her suffering to be in vain. <she says quietly>

Theo: <the walls squeeze in once more - briefly - then the box expands again, filling with air and letting Evan breathe - but not letting him go>

[21:45] arynwyn: Evan: <slides down the wall into a sitting position, coughing and taking huge gulps of air, glaring at Theo> We don't need no fucking witch-lover's help.

Nat: <her wound starts to close and heal, and color comes back into her face>

Pyro: <finally drops down beside her, taking her hand in his and looking at Ryann with tears in his eyes> I can't thank you enough.

[21:52] Socks: Theo: <starts forward>

Mrs. Lennox: <pulls him back> I'm Jan Lennox, little man. I take it you might know that name. If I had had MY way, you would all be dead now, including that little girl on the floor, her father, and her father's partner. But my son has been convinced by that girl that dhampir are people worth saving. So I am letting you all live. Now. Do you want Theo and Nat to be correct, or should I act on my ORIGINAL beliefs?

Ryann: I'm sure I'll think of a way you can try. <she comments quietly, smirking up at him>

[21:56] arynwyn: Pyro: <leans over Natalie to kiss Ryann's cheek gently> Anything you want. Everything you want.

Nat: <finally opens her eyes and reaches up to push Ryann's wrist away. She took quite a bit of blood - Ryann's probably feeling a little lightheaded. Her wounds are mostly healed -scabbed and scarring - and she looks like she's going to live>

Evan: <looks at Mrs. Lennox in disgust> You're the one who killed James' parents. <he spits on the ground next to him>

[22:05] Socks: Ryann: I'm holding you to that. <she murmurs, falling back into a sitting position. She smiles down at Nat> Hey, kiddo.

Mrs. Lennox: <her eyes narrow> I suppose that means you want me to continue in my line of work then? <an eyebrow arches, without her eyes widening a millimeter; it makes her look creepy and evil> I...or my son, apparently...could make short work of you, boy.

Theo: Look...<getting a better hold on himself>...she wants to help. I heard James talk about how dhampir don't get to be themselves in society? That you're pushed aside and you have to hide what you are? Nat's trying to help CHANGE that, because she doesn't like it any better than the rest of you. But you didn't stop and ask. You two never gave a DAMN about HER, about who SHE IS. You stopped at "dhampir" and "witch-lover". So now You Tell Me who the bigot here is. You Tell Me who gave more a damn about her: you two who nearly killed her because of who she loves, or me, who loves her and doesn't give a damn who her parents are? Do you really think killing her is going to make things BETTER for you? 'Cause it seems to have done a WORLD of good for James <pointing at the corpse> - and that wasn't me OR my mom. That was her DAD. DId you two morons think about that?! <yes, he's rambling, and no, he hasn't noticed that Nat's okay now>

[22:09] arynwyn: Evan: We can help ourselves! We don't need charity from you or anyone! <he stands back up and presses against the side of the "box"> I'd rather die than accept help from you or from the witch-lover.

Pyro: <leans down to kiss Nat on the forehead> You okay?

Nat: <she nods a little, looking over at Theo. She struggles to pull herself to her feet> Theo...

Pyro: <wraps his arm around her, supporting her as she stands up>

[22:15] Socks: Theo: <whips his head around to look at her> Nat! <forgets about Evan and runs over to her, grabbing her up in a tight hug, completely forgetting that his wrist is still bleeding (though it's not really dripping now)> Are you okay?

Mrs. Lennox: <watches her son run to his girlfriend, then snaps her eyes back just in time to see the box collapse entirely as Theo's concentration drops. She flings out her hand and ice crystallizes over Evan's feet, climbing up his ankles and holding him in place> DoVE is on the way. You assaulted and nearly murdered my son’s girlfriend, and I'm WELL within my rights to have you arrested for it. But that, I think, will not serve their <nods her head ever so slightly towards Theo and Nat> purpose, just as killing you will not. But I will not let you leave until you hear the young lady out, nor will I let you harm another soul.

[22:20] arynwyn: Nat: <pulls away from Pyro to return the hug tightly> All I could think about was that I was never going to see you again. <she buries her face in his neck, tears running down her cheeks>

Pyro: <turns his attention to Ryann> Are you okay? She took a lot of blood.

Evan: <strains against the ice, looking grumpy> DoVE officials aren't going to give a fuck about me.

[22:23] Socks: Ryann: I'm fine. <smiles, but doesn't move from where she's sitting on the floor> Just a little... <she hears DoVE mentioned and looks over at Evan and Mrs. Lennox> Oh, well, see that was sort of the point of calling them. Dhampirs were a clear oversight in the law, and it should be fixed. Because...<rises to her feet and wobbles a little>...whoa...

Theo: Ditto. <pets her hair and holds her as tightly as he dares, still worried about her injuries>

Mrs. Lennox: <eyes Ryann curiously>

[22:24] arynwyn: Pyro: Easy... <he wraps his arm around Ryann now, supporting her> You need something to eat. Protein.

Cass: On it. <dashes out the door with vampy speed>

Nat: <inhales shakily as she tries to stop her tears> I love you, Theo. So much.

[22:27] Socks: Theo: Love you, too. <kisses her ear>

Ryann: Thank you. <she looks briefly up at Pyro with a smile, then back to Evan> Because you're right. You should have the same rights as everyone else. You should be able to be who you are without fear. Society takes time to change, but the DoVE laws should be addressing that. Your rights should be spelled out: what you are allowed - and NOT allowed - to do.

[22:29] arynwyn: Evan: <eyes Ryann warily, shifting, unsure what to say>

Nat: <wipes her tears away> Sorry for biting your wrist. I couldn't -- I didn't -- <sighs> I wasn't myself. It was like instinct took over. Are you okay? <she lifts his wrist to look at it>

[22:34] Socks: Ryann: The people who are coming here are the high-muckity-mucks, not enforcement. I can't promise anything except that they're on their way. <leans back against Pyro and snuggles a little>

Theo: It's fine. It hurt like hell at first, and then I was afraid you'd swallowed too much. <the bite marks are in that tacky blood stage, where it's starting to clot, but he's got red running down his arm and hand from back when it was still flowing>

[22:36] arynwyn: Nat: I'm sorry. <she grabs a fistful of her shirt and wipes some of the blood off his arm> I keep hurting you...

Pyro: <wraps his arms around her waist and kisses her neck>

Evan: <watches the two curiosly for a moment, then shrugs> Fine, I'll talk to these guys, but I can't promise the other dhamps will go for it.

[22:39] Socks: Theo: Well, they say you always hurt the ones you love, yeah?

Ryann: Are you in charge of this...gang, or whatever you consider yourselves?

[22:40] arynwyn: Evan: No, James is -- <glances at the corpse with a grimace> was. Now we'll probably have to fight -- <stops himself, shaking his head> Yeah, I'm in charge. (( Evan: <shifty eyes> ))

Nat: You don't hurt me!

[22:43] Socks: Theo: <blinks and considers this> Should I, to prove I love you? <grins and pinches her side briefly>

Ryann: Well, you're going to have to talk to them then about what it is you want - you being "dhampirs", not just you personally, of course.

Mrs. Lennox: You might want to ask for immunity from prosecution, if you can get it. <she comments. His feet are probably very cold by now>

[22:45] arynwyn: Nat: <smiles faintly and leans up to kiss him>

Evan: I thought you said you weren't going to have me arrested? <too tough to complain about the cold>

[22:46] Socks: Mrs. Lennox: I could change my mind.

Ryann: <clears her throat> Technically, that'd be Nat's decision to press charges or not.

Theo: <kisses her back. He seems to have forgotten anyone else is around them. Y'know, like his mom. or her dad.>

[22:48] arynwyn: Nat: <also has forgotten them or, more likely, just doesn't care. She slides her arms around his neck and deepens the kiss>

Evan: <glances over at Natalie and Theo> She looks a little too busy to press charges. <looks disgusted>

[22:57] Socks: Theo: <I'm sorry, were there other people in the world? Kissing her back>

Ryann: <chuckles> Fortunate for you, then.

<a woman pokes her head in. She's African-American, with hair juuuust starting to go white a little, but she's in decent shape. She's wearing a business suit and an attache case> Is Ms. Frost here...Oh! <as she catches sight of her, but then she frowns> Are you okay, ma'am?

Ryann: Yes, yes, I'm fine. Just a little tired. I have some food on the way. <smiles>

<she straightens up, walking into the room properly. She eyes the lack of door, the busted ceiling, the still-smoking couch, the corpse and the boy frozen to the floor. She arches an eyebrow at Mrs. Lennox, who just nods tightly at her, and smirks a little at Theo and Nat before clearing her voice> Yes, well, Senators McMillian and Johnson are outside, along with Ambassador Domnul.

Ryann: <looks over at Evan> You ready for this?

[22:59] arynwyn: Evan: <shrugs> I guess.

Cass: <comes flying in behind the woman, nearly knocking her over. She's got a McDonald's bag in hand> Sorry it took so long! There was a mile-long line. Oh, 'scuse me. <to the DoVE lady> Here. <she hands the bag to Ryann> I got half a dozen things 'cause I wasn't sure what you liked.

[23:03] Socks: Ryann: <grins> Thanks, Cass. <accepting the bag and reaching in for some fries. To Evan> Well then, it's showtime. Ah, Mrs. Lennox?

Mrs. Lennox: <seems to think better of it, but then the ice shatters> Fine. <she goes over and taps Theo on the shoulder> I think Miss James has something she should be doing besides making out with you.

Theo: <breaks away and blushes lightly> Ah, right. You feeling up to talking with the DoVE people, hon? I don't know that you wanna trust Evan to do this by himself. <shooting the so-named a dark look>

[23:05] arynwyn: Nat: <she nods slowly, but clings to Theo's arm> Stay with me?

Evan: <stomps his feet a couple of times to try and get the blood flowing again> Right. Let's get this over with. <he shoots Natalie a nasty look>

[23:09] Socks: Theo: Of course, love. <he smiles at her and offers her his arm>

((Do you want to RP the DoVE stuff or should we just figure out what the new laws are?))

[23:09] arynwyn: (( We can just figure out the new laws. ))

[23:11] Socks: ((Hrm. The Senators will want to come down VERY hard on dhampirs if Nat tells them (or they suspect) what sort of hoodlums they've been down here. the ambassador - who is a vampire - will be a lot more sympathetic.))

[23:12] arynwyn: (( I'm sure if they talk to more of the dhampirs, they'll get a good idea of what sorts of hoodlums they are. ))

[23:14] Socks: The Senators probably won't want to, but I bet the Ambassador insists upon it.

So let's review what the dhampir WANT first of all.

[23:14] arynwyn: kk

[23:14] arynwyn: Um.

[23:14] arynwyn: Some will want access to the blood bank.

[23:15] Socks: Oh, what about registration? Vampires are required to register with DoVE, after all. IIRC, they either have separate ID cards or a special notice on their driver's licenses (depends on if they drive or not).

[23:16] arynwyn: Yeah, they'll have to be registered when they're born.

[23:18] Socks: <nods> The Senators won't want to back down on that one anyway. And even Ambassador Domnul will concede that one. Now, normally a registered vampire is sent a month's ration of blood (or can go and pick it up) automatically. I'd say a dhampir wouldn't be SENT a DoVE ration automatically, but they could go to ration distribution centers and pick up the occasional bag.

The ambassador proposes an amendment to the existing blood bar laws that would allow dhampir (with their IDs, of course) to enter blood bars and be able to purchase blood and non-alcoholic drinks (but to be restricted from alcohol until 21, of course).

[23:19] arynwyn: <nodnod> Sounds good.

[23:19] Socks: no ID, no admittance, of course, but bars are already pretty much like that ;)

[23:19] arynwyn: Yep.

[23:19] arynwyn: What else? <thinkity>

[23:21] Socks: The Senators will comment on dhampir crime, especially given the types of dhampir they're meeting. The ambassador will be concerned....<thinking through this as I type>

Compromise reached between the three of them: if a dhampir is involved in a non-violent crime (theft, for example) they are tried as a human; if they're involved in a violent act, esp. against another person (assault, murder), they are tried as a vampire (where the penalties are...<ahem> stiffer).

[23:22] arynwyn: That seems fair.

[23:25] Socks: That brings up an issue though: if tried as a human, their age gets brought into it - being tried as a juvenile as opposed to an adult. Being tried as a vampire necessarily negates age. So if they get caught for something violent, they are REALLY going to get the book thrown at them.

This would be an excellent time for Evan (or Nat, if she's feeling generous) to suggest that dhampir's past crimes be considered "juvenile" crimes essentially, and their records sealed. Basically a blank slate from here on out.

[23:25] Socks: but if they commit another crime after this, the "pre-law" records could become unsealed and have an impact.

[23:25] arynwyn: Okay, that works. It'd be Evan to suggest it. Nat's pissed.

[23:29] Socks: Beyond that, they're generally expected to adhere to human laws, I'd think.

[23:29] arynwyn: Mkay.

[23:30] arynwyn: I'm glad you could think through that 'cause I couldn't. >\_<

[23:30] Socks: Now, there's the question of the witches.

[23:30] arynwyn: I kinda went, "Laws for dhampirs? Buh..."

[23:30] arynwyn: Witches, okay.

[23:31] Socks: Witches were originally your baby, IIRC. Do you think the matriarch's real likely to say, "Yeah sure, let's come out of the closet"? I can think of some nice advantages to doing that, but I can also understand if they want to sort of....keep to themselves.

Also, dhampir-recognition on this scale would enable them to file Equal Protection type suits (i.e. harassment, discrimination on the basis of their birth, etc.). Just thought of that.

[23:32] arynwyn: I'm not sure witches would want to come out 'cause then people are going to harrass them for "miracles". But that's just my thougths.

[23:32] arynwyn: \*thoughts

[23:36] Socks: <ponder> Senator McMillian, who is a little thrown off by this whole witches vs. vampires thing, proposes the following: public knowledge of witches will remain hidden for as long as witchkind likes. But DoVE will know about them - and can recruit them.

The ambassador will jump on this with the caveat that word be spread around the various witch clans that if they have a problem with a vampire they either sic DoVE on the vamp in question or else join DoVE themselves to become an enforcer. And to otherwise LEAVE DHAMPIR AND VAMPIRES ALONE.

[23:38] arynwyn: Mkay.

[23:38] arynwyn: I think that will work for everyone in question.

[23:38] Socks: good 'cause the government isn't going to want to entirely ignore witches. Though most of the government won't know about them still.

[23:38] arynwyn: <nodnod>

[23:39] Socks: Jan Lennox will be volunteering to be a DoVE enforcer. Of course that means she's bound by DoVE laws and can't just go knocking off vampires and dhampirs left and right anymore. But hey, it's what she's good at.

[23:39] arynwyn: Lol, okay.

[23:43] Socks: Okay I think we've covered everything. They still have to go back to Washington and put these changes to paper, but they've got enough clout and influence atm to push these amendments through Congress. Everything about vampires has people kinda spooked, so stuff for/about them tends to go through like wildfire.

[23:52] Socks: <Okay, so the senators take off to find a hotel for the night. The ambassador kisses her hand goodnight and takes off at vampiric speed>

Ryann: Well...<stretching; she's feeling better since she devoured most of the McD's and shared the rest with everyone else>...that went rather well, I think.

Mrs. Lennox: <is quietly thoughtful>

Theo: <goes to Nat and kisses her forehead> You look tired, love. We should get you home, let you rest. <brushes some hair away from her face>

[23:53] arynwyn: Nat: <quietly> Is your mom going to be okay with us? <she glances at Mrs. Lennox>

Pyro: Thanks to you <to Ryann; he smiles at her> How are you feeling?

[23:57] Socks: Theo: <tosses a look at his mom and then looks back at her> I dunno. But do you think it'll matter to me? <he smiles> I hope she is...or will be...okay with us, but you're not going to get rid of me that easily.

Mrs. Lennox: <mutters something quietly that Theo can't quite make out; to those with better hearing (like all the vampires/half-vampires around), it's> Make sure he keeps his grades up.

Ryann: Tired. I'm not getting any work done on the B&B tonight anyway, so how about we head back and you can start making it up to me by letting me sleep until I wake up, taking me out for Italian tomorrow night and...<remembers there are kids around>...well, I'll tell you the rest later. <grins and winks>

[23:59] arynwyn: Nat: <glances at Mrs. Lennox again and smiles. She kisses Theo quickly> I hope not.

Pyro: <scoops Ryann up into his arms> Your wish is my command. <he kisses her quickly and then heads out toward his SUV>

[00:03] Socks: Ryann: <loops her arms around his neck and snuggles in, all <3 <3 <3 atm>

Theo: C'mon, you need to go home. <eyeing the departing Ryann and Pyro> We have school tomorrow.

Mrs. Lennox: The hell you do. I'm calling you in sick tomorrow, and I expect you to spend the whole day in bed, mister. ALONE. <significant look>

Theo: <throat clearing> Yes'm. <looks back at Nat> C'mon, I have to pick up my sibs from your place anyway.

[00:03] arynwyn: Nat: <slips her hand in his and follows him out> Alone? I can't see you all day tomorrow? </sad>

[00:06] Socks: Theo: I can call you? <smiles wanly>

[00:06] arynwyn: Nat: You'd better. I'll probably sleep all day tomorrow too, anyway. <she does look rather exhausted>

[00:08] Socks: Theo: well, I'll text first then. <picks her up the way Pyro picked up Ryann> Fly or drive? <grins>

[00:09] arynwyn: Nat: <snuggles against him, wrapping her arms around his neck. She leans in to whisper in his ear> I wish you could stay the night. I'll full of yay-I'm-alive sex drive. <giggles softly> You have to drive to pick up your siblings, remember?

[00:10] Socks: Theo: ...wouldn't your father..um...be upset?

[00:11] arynwyn: Nat: I dunno. He sort of knows about us, now, so I don't think it's a huge deal. Plus, he's just happy I'm alive, right? And he really likes you.

[00:12] Socks: Theo: Hopefully not as much as you do. But...he's still your DAD, and...<ponders the concept of having sex in a vampire's house right under his freakin' nose...and has to admit, it sounds fun>...well, it is my duty to see you safely home....

[00:13] arynwyn: Nat: <feels her stomach turn over with nerves and pleasure. She leans in and kisses his neck softly> Such a prince. <kisses his earlobe>

[00:15] Socks: Theo: <grins>

Mrs. Lennox: <rolls her eyes>