

The Suburban Vampire

by

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Act One

Prologue

It was not a dark and stormy night but, with the way her night had been going, it really should have been.

"I've made a mistake," Lily said into a payphone cradled gingerly against her shoulder. Her hand massaged her forehead in a wasted attempt to keep her headache at bay as she continued to explain. "It was a big mistake." Surely there was a better word. Catastrophe?

She didn't know what to say. She'd been running for days now, hiding out in the dark alleys of Detroit during the nights and the sewers while the sun was up. The only thing she knew of that smelled worse than those places was, now, her.

"I'm not giving this mistake enough credit," she said with a snort under her breath. "It was the biggest mistake of my life, Mom."

"It was also my last," she muttered in realization. Her eyes darted over the surrounding crowd, nervously watching out for any sign of trouble. She was as wound up as a squirrel, but not without good reason.

He was here. She could see his silhouette on the roof of a building across from her damp alley, the entrance of which she'd found the payphone. He was watching her, could see her clear as day in the blue illumination of the booth. It was a booth surrounded by people and she should have been hidden there amongst the never-ending bustle that made up the bars and nightlife of nineteen eighty-five Detroit, but still he picked her out. He always picked her out.

"Don't come looking for me, Ma." She shook her head in an attempt to cover her face with her long blonde hair. It was a futile gesture; he'd already spotted her. "It was nice having this talk with you. Our last one," she said with a slight smile. She was crying and smiling at the same time, was that possible?

She waited on the line, though for what she didn't know. Maybe just to listen to the silence through the phone.

"This tape has reached its end," said a mechanized voice, "To continue recording please turn the tape over and hit record."

There was a beep and she hung up. Unlike how it might have appeared, she'd just had one of her best mother / daughter conversations in years. It was her fault they didn't get along. She'd been a difficult teen, never around and yet always the topic of dinner conversation. Eventually she just stopped showing up to the family dinners.

She'd have gone to those dinners now, had she been given the chance at least one more

time. She wanted nothing more than to sit with her family again, but there was no open seat at any dining table in the world that would accept her. Not after what she'd done.

With a sigh, she stepped out onto the loud and crowded sidewalk. She hadn't seen the time in a while, but assumed it was likely well past midnight.

Let him come. She was ready for him. Let him come and take from her everything else that mattered. Let him have it all. She was ready to die. She even knew what her last words were going to be. She was going to tell him finally how she really felt.

Her eyes scanned the rooftops again, but he'd already moved on. He could have been on her at any second. She could have very well been moments from death. That minute might just have been the last minute of her life.

Just that thought alone made her feel sick. It made her think of all the things she still wanted to do. All the friends she could have made. All the love she had to give. All the songs Freddie Mercury still had to write, songs she'd never hear. Suddenly she didn't want to die... suddenly she was second-guessing herself. Again.

Dammit.

She still couldn't see him in the crowd, but she knew which direction he'd be coming from. Turning away from where she saw him last, Lily lost herself in the mass of people. It never failed to astonish her how blind people could be to their surroundings when they were having fun. No one was paying any mind to Lily as she was frantically working her way down the busy sidewalk. No one even spared her a second glance. Even with the blood.

Lily had been just like them once. She'd spent countless Friday nights in her youth among crowds just like these. She'd had the best circle of friends anyone could ask for... and a beautiful golden retriever that looked a little too much like her and brought the envy of every other kid on the street. She'd never really appreciated her friends, her dog, or her life until they were all gone.

That life had been hers only last week. She'd had to give it all up, a move she was regretting with every remaining beat of her heart. Pushing through the streets past faceless strangers and voiceless conversations, she would have done anything to see her family again... but she had nothing to say for herself. What would be the point? She'd only be putting them in danger.

Throughout the vibrant crowd of neon blues and greens, she saw an image to give her pause. The dark figure in black, standing in contrast of the world, alone in a sea of hundreds. He'd found her. She'd have to keep moving and stay where she could be seen. That was the key.

"Hey," said a high pitched male voice from the crowd, "are you alright?" Someone had actually noticed her, much to her surprise. It wasn't anyone she knew. He was a young man with greased black hair, large tinted glasses, and bell-bottoms. Who still wore bell-bottoms in the eighties?

"I'm fine," she told him as she turned her back. She knew why he'd stopped her, but there was nothing he could do. It wasn't her blood after all.

Breaking into a run, she squeezed through and around people, trying to get as far from the dark figure as she could. She barreled into a large bouncer outside a club, knocking the three hundred pound black man to the floor. She didn't even try to apologize, his face frozen in surprise that one so small had walked through him so easily.

She had nothing to do but keep running. The whole world was against her now, she had nowhere to run to and no one left to trust. She couldn't surround herself with people, but without witnesses...

A strong arm grabbed hers, and pulled her into a nearby alley. It was the dark figure. He was so dark, in fact, that he seemed to be nothing more than a shadow. Except for his teeth, shining pearl white in the moonlight. Particularly his fangs.

"I find it curious that you keep running from me," he said with a voice like sandpaper. Her heart skipped a beat. She wanted so bad to make the past week just go away. Why couldn't all this have been a big scary dream? "I had an understanding this was what you wanted."

"Go to hell," she told him.

The light from the edge of the alley reflected in a tear that rolled slowly down the shadow's invisible face. He leaned in close and whispered to her, "I loved you so much." He paused to breathe. "But I guess you're just like all the others."

There was a flash of movement, and what looked like a wooden stake in his hand. He slammed it into her chest. The piercing pain shot through her like electricity, sending spasms through her limbs, and widening her eyes in shock.

She could feel the life slipping from her as the dark figure reached out and held her close. "I'm sorry," he apologized to her, "I really thought things could work between us."

She tried to breathe but couldn't. She didn't have the strength to draw a breath, nor move or scream out. Her vision was swimming, and her life was flashing before her eyes.

It was less impressive the second time.

"You must have known it was coming. If I know you," he said with a sad chuckle, "you've been

planning your last words for a while now. Can I hear them?"

There were no words to fully describe how she felt. Maybe a really hateful short story or long poem. However, she'd been saving something. It was A sentence that really summed up their short lived psychotic relationship. What was it again? Oh right.

"Eckhart," she said in a hoarse whisper, speaking the figure's name so there could be no confusion who her next words would be referring to, "You're a true to life mother f--"