Evanora wanted to push her hair back, and since it was Halloween it didn't cause any problems if she showed the point of her ear. She was still in tight jeans and a grey t-shirt, not wanting to go in full Fae garb, but the ears could still count as Halloween decoration.

Halloween came with its own problems though. There were kids everywhere, tripping over toilet paper used to make mummies and eating candy by the handful before they were even home. The houses were right next to each other on this street, no yards, no room to run, but perfect for Halloween: house after house with little walking in between.

Stephen was struggling to stay up with Evanora: a changeling companion didn't have quite the same leg length as a full fae, and he was short to begin with. Muscular, with dark skin and sharp features, yet still short. But Evanora wasn't about to slow down; Stephen would just have to learn how to keep up. "Will we be able to tell him from everyone else?" Stephen asked.

"Yes," Evanora said, hoping that her clipped tone made it clear to Stephen that she didn't want to talk.

"But how?"

"I can tell," Evanora said. Maybe that wasn't quite true. Fae had no special ability to detect vampires. But she had been fighting them for almost a hundred years, and there was no reason she wouldn't be able to tell one from something as mundane as a Halloween costume. Besides, she had a description of the vampire they were looking for, even if he didn't show in pictures.

"Or maybe I could try to pull off the fake teeth," Stephen said with a large joking grin. He, unfortunately, was from the Southern fae tribe, obsessed with tricks and fun. If Evanora had known other changelings around, she wouldn't have chosen him.

"I wouldn't suggest putting your hands in a vampire's mouth."

"Right, of course," Stephen said. He paused, glanced at Evanora as she strode further, and she sped up. She didn't like being studied by him. "Are you mad at me?"

"No," she said.

"Are you annoyed with me?"   
 "Yes."   
 "Right," he said, and sped up more. "I'll be quiet then."    
 She led them to a cemetery that was generally a quiet, serene place. A place of mourning and of secrecy: too old for many visitors, but from time to time someone sat and ate lunch on a bench or prayed. It helped to be able to find anyone in it. But now, in the beginning of darkness on Halloween night, there were groups of teens, louder than they meant to be, scattered among the gravestones. This wasn't good. There were people to feed on.

"Do vampires really like cemeteries?" Stephen asked.

"Yes. I thought you weren't talking." She moved in and out of the gravestones, glancing down every once in a while, seeing names or moss patterns that let her know where she was. She knew Stephen was looking down to watch his footing instead: there were multiple large trees in the cemetery, and because of that a number of knotty roots.

Evanora knew when she heard him: not as loud as the drunk teenagers, at the end of the crypt, moving towards a group of unsuspecting youth. She pulled a wooden stake out from where it sat in a long pocket sewn on the outside of her jeans and a silver dagger from the other pant leg: the silver not enough to kill, but plenty to maim.

Stephen seemed to pick up on it as he pulled out his own wooden stake and dagger.

The man was pale and slim: dark hair and firm back muscles. Evanora didn't get a long look before he whipped around though. Then she got to see the strong jaw of his face and the color of his eyes.

"Evanora," he said, this word leaving his tongue easier than a word with an S would.

"Richard," she said, then just like that there were fighting, her lunging with her stake and him opening his mouth wide, trying to get a good bite on her neck while turning out of the way of the wooden weapon.

Stephen stayed still for a moment, then lunged from the other direction. Richard wasn't caught easily however, and he pulled out a dagger of his own, swiping in a smooth motion at Evanora, knowing she was the more dangerous option.

Evanora bent down onto the ground and whipped her leg out to try to trip him. Richard jumped over her leg and spun the dagger at Stephen. Stephen put up his stake to block it, and they collided, making them both shake before they separated. The stake had a large knick in it when he pulled it back, and Evanora wasn't sure if would be able to stab into Richard. Luckily, the moment when they collided shook Richard up enough that he was distracted for a moment. She stood and rammed her silver dagger into his side: there was no use to the wooden stake unless it could actually go through the heart. Richard let out a scream Evanora was sure would be attributed to the drunk teenagers. Blood poured out of the wound when she pulled the dagger back. It would heal, but not quickly.

Richard didn't seem overly fazed by the wound. Stephen focused on his dagger now, dropping the useless stake. That meant the kill was up to Evanora. Stephen went around the back when Richard was focused on Evanora and stabbed Richard through the back, right into his heart. Richard took a labored breath and Evanora went to stab Richard through the heart, but the dagger was in the way. "Pull it out," she screamed.

Stephan got the message and ripped the dagger out before Evanora stuck the wooden stake in. Richard screamed one more time, then dissolved into ashes.

"At least we don't have to clean him up," Stephen joked once he disappeared, breath laboring.

"You don't put the dagger through the heart. You *never*put the dagger into the heart."

"Understood."    
 "Is it? Because I remember telling you that once before."

"I'm used to werewolves. I forgot."

"Vampires aren't werewolves."

"Right. I know that. But--"

"No buts. You need to learn to pay attention to me." Evanora knew she was angry because her voice was a soft hiss, but, like normal, she felt far from her emotions. Emotions weren't useful to a northern fae.

Before Stephen could answer, a couple of drunk, rowdy teenage boys came up, and threw an egg into Evanora's long dark hair. Her first thought was that it was some sort of attack, and she turned, dagger out.

"Whoa, lady," the younger looking one said. "It's just an egg."

"That you threw in my *hair.*"

"I think you should go," Stephen said, but she could see the smile on his lips.

The older boy seemed to be the more cautious one, taking in the surroundings, the ashes on the ground and the blood on Evanora and the bloody weapons. "Yeah, let's go."

"Oh come on, you're going to let a couple of boring adults--"

"Darius, let's go," the older boy said, and he turned and walked away. There was a wet sound as another egg hit Evanora, this time on the side of her face. Stephen reached out and grabbed her arm as the younger boy took off in a sprint.

"Don't touch me," she whispered.

"Just making sure. Let's get back so you can shower."

"Really? You think I need a shower? Rude," she said, and Stephen grinned. Every once in a while Evanora could be funny. She just didn't try often.

"You did good, back there," he said.

"I know."

"Right, just thought some people like to hear it."

"You could have done better."

"Rude."

"Just thought some people like to hear it," she said, and she knew he had taken the joke well when he grinned.

"You scared away two boys on Halloween. I would've thought they were stupid enough to take on anything."

"Do you remember being a boy on Halloween?"

"Sure do. I got in a fair bit of trouble. Maybe even arrested one year. Do we have any other kills today?"

"Not scheduled, but we need to keep our eyes peeled around here. There's always more vampires in this area."

"And I need to not put my hand in their mouth."

"Exactly." Evanora knew Stephen hadn’t done as bad as she made it sound like he did, but she didn’t see the point in empty praise. It didn’t make her feel better when he said it, and he didn’t need to have a big head. It was more important to let him know how he could improve