

Lisa Dawn



A tale of two witches

A contemporary fantasy

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By: Lisa Dawn

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I dedicate this book to my amazing daughter and my wonderful husband. Without their encouragement, love and support, I would have never wrote this story. I love you guys.

One

Murky clouds dress the sky and the ocean sends bleak winds warning us that a storm is approaching. I laugh to myself thinking how fitting that this type of weather appears today of all days.

It's a cliché really.

Today I am sixteen and am considered an “official witch”—well I will be after my receiving my special amulet. Even though each witch is given an amulet, mine will give me the power to do more than your average caster. I have always been able to do magic, a rarity since most enchanters can't until they receive their amulet, and because of this, my parents have made it known that I am the one that all of the witches have been waiting for.

For centuries now, witches have been at war with vampires. A powerful witch before me named Alexandria, (yes I was named after her), possessed the ability to control the blood thirsty monsters. She believed that vampires could coexist with the mortal world and she cast a spell upon the vampires so they could eat real food, not blood, and live as normal of a life as possible. For several hundred years her plan worked. The creatures of the night were able to walk during the day, and could interact with humans without tearing into them. Some of them owned their own businesses, found love, and most of them seemed happy—all except for one.

Leticia was one of the oldest vampires, one of the originals. For as long as she could remember, human blood was their food of choice. She desired it. Leticia, not able to control her lust any longer, set forth to steal the amulet Alexandria wore around her neck. She waited until deep into the night's silence, and snuck into Alexandria's room. She thought it would be as simple as slipping it off of Alexandria's neck—but the amulet was too powerful. As soon as Leticia touched it, her hand ignited into flames. The amulet was loyal to whoever controlled it, and took possession of their soul. If your heart was pure and good, the amulet expelled good magic, if your heart was black and full of hate, it would cast out black magic—that is the worst kind.

The only way to successfully take the amulet was to kill Alexandria. Leticia persuaded two other vampires to hold Alexandria down while she used a long iron rod to remove the

talisman. Alexandria awoke to see Leticia in possession of her charm, and with longing pleasure, Leticia slowly bit into Alexandria's neck drinking her blood, killing her (so she thought). She placed the amulet around her neck, and it glowed black and she became the most powerful vampire. She was so lost in her new found powers and freedom, she didn't realize Alexandria vanished—nor did she care. Leticia used her sovereignty to sate her malevolent appetite and destroy the happiness of others. Witches have since been waiting for the most powerful witch to arrive and defeat the vampwitch.

No pressure right?

I live with my family and my coven in the small town of Melba Oregon, population two thousand. Out of that two thousand, twenty four are witches—my coven. Melba hugs the pacific coast and is six hours away from San Francisco. There isn't a whole lot to do here, most likely the reason my father moved all of us here. The commoners think we are crazed religious types, I guess in a sense we are and they pretty much leave us alone.

My father, Wesley, is the leader of our small group. He comes from a long line of old school witches. When I say old school, I mean believes in the old ways. You are only allowed to marry another witch, preferably within your coven. Marry a commoner and you will be banished from all covens and never allowed to practice magic again. I understand the reasoning, outsiders wouldn't understand who we really are and would judge us, and then there is that whole chatter about continuing the blood line. But, the heart wants what the heart wants and who are we to say otherwise? Which brings me to this complaint—not only will I receive my amulet tonight it will reveal my future husband.

So not thrilled.

I want my own fairytale with a prince that comes and sweeps me off of my feet. I often dream of another life, meeting my soul mate, falling madly in love, and having a lavish wedding—like in the books I read. If I am the one chosen to be the most powerful witch, I wonder if I would have the power to change this ridiculous rule and lead the witches into our modern day and out of the eighteenth century. I didn't think that was too much to ask.

Everyone was running around with their heads in disarray preparing for tonight. I know I should be grateful, it is my sixteenth birthday and all, but this whole amulet and marriage thing isn't sitting well with me. I can hear the younger girls giggling, excited about tonight, wondering which of the boys will be chosen for me to marry—jealous because it's not time for them. While the older boys are squabbling amongst themselves, showing their arm muscles and strength, the way boys do when they are trying to prove who is the mightiest. I desire maturity in a boy, an attribute these guys have not yet acquired.

“Lexi stop daydreaming and hold still!” My mother snarled as a sewing pin pierced her finger.

“Mom, I've been standing for hours.” I groused. My legs were starting to ache and felt like they were about to buckle.

“You have not been standing for hours, quit being so dramatic.”

I let loose a long sigh.

“Mom, did you like my dad when you found out he was the one you were going to marry?”

She chortled. “Lexi, it's normal to feel nervous.”

“I am not nervous! I just don't want to marry any of these buffoons!” I hissed through gritted teeth.

“Lexi, we have been over this a hundred times. It is what it is, so deal with it.”

That was how my mother ended conversations she didn't wish to continue. A strong venomousness feeling slithered its way through my veins, making my blood boil. The glass from the closest window pane shattered.

I was angry.

“You need to control your anger my dear.” She chagrined and draped a piece of fabric over the window, grabbed a staple gun from one of her drawers, (although I am not sure why one was in her sewing room), and secured the fabric over the now broken window.

I rolled my eyes as she knelt down in front of me to finish placing the stick pins where they were needed to hem my gown for tonight.

My mother, Cameron, is gorgeous. Her beauty surpasses any commoner with hair the color of gold, and dazzling green eyes. She shows kindness to everyone and you rarely see her upset. My mother co-leads our coven with my father, as well as home schools us future witches. With the help of Marybeth, they teach us what we need to know, like in a normal school, as well as our mystical world.

“Okay, I’m done. Now go and stay out of trouble while I sew. Be back in two hours so you can get ready.” My mother chirped.

I grabbed my favorite book and headed to my special spot by the ocean. No one knew about my secret place and I intended to keep it that way. It was the only place I was free from everyone and could let my imagination get lost in a book.

The winds grew stronger by the minute, not by my doing, almost like they were warning me about something. I wished I could stay fifteen longer. While normal sixteen year olds were getting cars and sweet sixteen parties, I was getting stronger powers and a husband. I wallowed in my self-pity for a few moments before I buried my nose in my book. This book was different from the fairytales I usually read, this book was about two witches realizing they were destined to be together while they battled against the villainous vampires. I chuckled *Ashley picked this one out for me on purpose* I thought. Ashley Jones owns the local library and she was very insistent that I read this particular book—probably because her son Kevin has been in love with me since he was born.

Talk about meddling.

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“Sebastian, I really don’t understand what all the fuss is about, just take a sip.” Julian urged.

“After all of these years, why can’t you just let me be? I won’t nor will I EVER drink human blood!” Sebastian snapped. Although the smell of human juice smelled more appealing

than the deer he just finished hunting. His eyes started turning the color of sanguine and his throat was blazing like he just ate the spiciest salsa. He shook his head to rid himself of the raging desire and dove into his deer.

“Creepy weirdo. I will never know what Leticia saw in you.”

“That makes two of us.” Sebastian murmured.

Sebastian Andrews remembers vividly what his life was like before turning into a blood thirsty monster. He was born on February 19th, 1913, the same day the first prize was placed into a box of Cracker Jacks. He grew up on a farm in East Lake, Texas; his family was poor, but they were very happy. He always dreamed of taking over the family farm, and having a family of his own. Family to Sebastian was more important than money or material things.

The girls that were his age in East Lake were okay, but not what he was looking for. Sebastian wanted someone who was beautiful both inside and out—a kind, loving soul. One day a new family moved into his small town, The Walkers, and their daughter caught Sebastian’s eyes.

Josephine Walker rotated many heads as she strolled by—she was absolutely breathtaking. Her hair was the color of a warm chestnut and her eyes as green as an emerald. Sebastian’s heart stopped beating when she glanced his way blasting him with the most pleasing smile. It was at that juncture Sebastian knew she was the one for him. He would create reasons to see Josephine, and soon she was coming up with reasons to see him too. Some time passed and they decided they were tired of sneaking around. Sebastian built up enough courage to approach Josephine’s father, Thaddeus, asking for his blessing to court his daughter.

Thaddeus could see the purity in Sebastian’s eyes, and agreed to a supervised courtship. Sebastian was elated, shook Thaddeus’s hand vigorously, causing Thaddeus to belt out a deep routed chuckle. Thaddeus liked Sebastian, he reminded him of himself when he was sixteen.

Sebastian and Josephine saw each other constantly, and with each passing day, Sebastian became more enamored with her. He saved up every last penny he earned doing odd jobs for the people of East Lake, so he could buy Josephine an engagement ring. He was planning to ask her hand in marriage at his eighteenth birthday dinner.

His heart jumped into his throat as The Walkers arrived for dinner. Josephine looked stunning in a dazzling aquamarine colored dress, and her eyes sparkled with delight when she saw Sebastian. He knew without a doubt in his mind, she was the one for him. The Andrews and The Walkers got along extremely well, and dinner was full of laughter and love—everyone enjoyed each other’s company. Everyone chipped in and helped clear the table and Sebastian’s mom brought out his birthday cake that Eleanor Walker helped her make. On top of the cake stood eighteen flaming candles waiting for Sebastian’s wish. Both families broke into song: *Happy birthday to you, Happy birthday to you, Happy birthday dear Sebastian, Happy birthday to you.* “Make a wish and blow out your candles my love.” Martha Andrews said sweetly smiling proud at the man he has become.

Sebastian looked around the room; all eyes were on him, anticipating what his wish could be, waiting for a slice of that wonderful looking cake. His face brightened when his eyes reached Josephine; he closed his eyes to make his wish and blew out all eighteen candles with one breath. They all clapped in delight and one by one hugged Sebastian.

“What did you wish for?” Josephine whispered into his ear.

Her breath sent chills throughout his spine. He grabbed her hands, knelt down on one knee, pulled a velvet blue box out of his pant pocket, and looked lovingly into her emerald green eyes.

“Josephine from the first day I laid my eyes upon you I knew you were the one. The one I wanted to pass through this life with, the one to experience everything this life could possibly offer, the one that would complete my heart. Will you marry me?” Sebastian opened the velvet blue box exposing a gorgeous ring as green as her eyes and slid it onto her finger.

Gasps of delight filled the room. Tears began to flow out of Josephine’s eyes as she stared at Sebastian. His heart skipped a beat or two and he squeezed her hands tightly.

“Yes.” Was all Josephine was able to choke out.

Sebastian stood up, hugged her hard and kissed her firmly on the lips for the very first time. He felt an electric surge course through him, and he felt more connected to her than he did before. They both new at that moment, no matter what, they would always be together.

Thaddeus wanted to throw his only daughter an engagement party and when the word spread about the party, the entire town of East Lake wanted to help in any way that they could. The mayor offered them the use of the town hall, the seamstress made streamers to hang from scraps of fabric, the baker made all of the scrumptious goodies, and Sebastian's parents donated a plump cow, chicken and produce from their farm.

Sebastian and Josephine were liked by everyone, and the town wanted to make their party wonderfully special. Each person was dressed in their Sunday best, enjoying themselves and gushing over the bride and groom to be. The town hall was filled with laughter and friendships, completely unaware of the evil lurking outside the door—Leticia and her two minions, Cecilia and Julian.

Leticia listened outside the door to the entire town having a great time. *Perfect* she thought, *the whole town is in there*. Like a strong gust of wind from a tornado, Leticia threw open the solid oak doors. The room became eerily quiet and all eyes were staring frightfully at the three standing before them.

With the snap of her fingers, Cecilia and Julian went to work. Screams echoed through the room as the blitz began, and the town folk scattering chaotically looking for any way out. Mothers were shielding their children while the men unsuccessfully tried to fight them off. In the corner under a table, Sebastian was concealing Josephine the best he could, but Leticia was no fool—she could smell them.

She sent the table flying across the room shattering into pieces as it hit the wall, just as easy as swiping a napkin off of the table. Leticia stood grinning at the two trembling beneath her.

“Wh...what do you want? Why are you here? I promise if you leave us alone we won't tell anyone.” Sebastian pleaded.

Leticia cocked her head back and cackled wickedly. “What do I want and why am I here? Dinner of course.”

Sebastian and Josephine couldn't strip their eyes away from the pure evil that stood in front of them. They scanned the room and quickly realized they were the only ones that were still alive.

"Please, we will give you anything you want, just let us go!" Josephine ordered.

Leticia chewed on that for a moment, acting like she was contemplating Josephine's request. She peered deeply into Josephine's eyes and bounced backwards like someone had punched her.

"It is you!" Leticia growled fiercely. "You will never be powerful enough to, I won't let you!"

"What do you mean? I don't understand?" Sebastian was determined to not let any harm come to Josephine

"I was never given the amulet Leticia, my family had no intention of practicing witchcraft, and we even left our coven. I can't hurt you." Josephine was trying to conceal the fear that rang in her voice.

"You are a witch?" Sebastian gasped.

"You're still a witch, although since you do not possess the amulet you're not as powerful as you could be, but none the less still a threat to me. Say goodbye to your love." Leticia's eyes blazed ruby red.

Josephine stood up and using her mind sent a piece of the shattered table flying into her hands. "Do what you must to me, but do not harm Sebastian. It's me you want not him."

"What do you think you are going to do with that?" Leticia grinned. "Your powers are weak without your little amulet."

Josephine ignited the piece of wood into burning flames and sent it flying towards Leticia's heart. Like the big bad wolf, Leticia huffed and puffed and put the fire out.

"I told you that you weren't powerful enough to stop me."

Leticia glared at Josephine, held up her hand, and Josephine began to gasp for air. She moved slowly towards her. “Oh I am going to enjoy this.”

Sebastian attempted to shield Josephine but Leticia was too fast and in a split second, she snatched Josephine and drained her body until her heart was no longer beating. Sebastian screamed Josephine’s name as he watched her disappear and looked at Leticia with so much hostility that for a brief moment he forgot she was a vampire. He lunged forcefully at her, releasing his bitterness with each punch until his hands were a raw bloody mess.

Leticia laughed. His little outburst amused her. “Do you feel better?” She inquired.

“No!” He seethed.

She bared a nefarious smile and crossed her arms. “I think you will do just fine.”

“For what?” Sebastian was trying not to let any angst show.

“To join my army of course.”

“I will never be like you so just kill me now!”

“Never say never my dear boy.” She jerked Sebastian to her and sank her teeth smoothly and deeply into the pulsating vein in his neck, infecting him with her vampire venom.

When she was finished his body started to twitch like a fish out of water. Sebastian howled in pain as the poison flowed through him. Visions of Josephine played over and over like a faint movie in his head. He felt devastated knowing the only time he will see her, would be in his dreams—assuming vampires slept and dreamed.

“How are you feeling?” Leticia smirked with a hint of sarcasm in her voice.

“I don’t know how yet, but you will pay for this!” Sebastian promised.

Two

I stared at myself in the mirror—I don't look like me at all. My hair is full of tight ringlets, makeup is plastered all over my face, and I'm wearing a soft green ball gown that my mother made. I wasn't ready for tonight. I wish I could just hide until it was over.

“Wow! You look beautiful honey. My little girl is all grown up.” My mother swiped a tear off of her face. She beamed, looking quite proud.

“Thanks but I feel ridiculous.” I glowered at her.

My mother took deep breath and held it for a second. “Lexi, can you please just be happy for one night? It's not often that I get to see you all dressed up.”

“I don't mind getting dressed up, I'm just not enthusiastic about a husband being chosen for me.”

“Lexi how many times must we go over this?” My mother crossed her arms and frowned. “The amulet always picks us the perfect match.” My mother whirled around and stormed out.

The perfect match?

How can the amulet pick a boy that is the ideal match for me when all of the boys around here are so...repugnant!

“Lexi, it's time.” Announced my sister Abigail.

I closed my eyes and counted slowly to ten. I could hear music blasting downstairs waiting to strum to the rhythm of my feet, people chattering about clanking their glasses toasting, waiting to see me walk down the stairs.

I visualized myself climbing out of my bedroom window, running, and never looking back. But that thought disheartens me, I would miss my family too much. I let out a deep breath, chin up, chest out, back straight, and walked out of my bedroom. I froze at the top of the stairs while a million angry bees attacked inside my stomach.

“She’s coming.” I heard someone whisper and the room fell silent and all of their eyes were fixed on me. “Just beautiful” some of them spoke in awe, “I hope I am the one the amulet picks” the boys taunt to each other.

I have to admit everything looked amazing. I couldn’t help but feel a tiny bit smug, knowing this was all for me. I reached the bottom of the stairs and my father was there waiting for me. He reached out, grabbed my hand, and led me to the front of the room.

“Tonight we are here to celebrate my daughter, Lexi Reed’s sixteenth birthday. We all knew the day she was brought into this world and into our coven, that she was a special girl. We knew that she would be the one. Lexi, your mother and I love you very much and we know that you will accomplish wonderful things.”

My mother placed a gorgeous, flaming, emerald green amulet into my father’s hands. Loud gasps filled the room and everyone oohed and ahed. My father held the amulet high and proud for the whole room to see. He slid the chain that is attached to the glowing talisman over my head, letting it hang from my neck. A surge of energy tore through me and the amulet illuminated so brightly, like the brightest star in the sky. A variety of images flashed in my head, different women and different places. I could feel the pain of each powerful witch before me being tormented.

Tears flowed steadily down my face. I tried to remove the amulet but it zapped my hand. Chairs and food trays were floating high above like a tall ghost was holding them up. “STOP!” I screamed loudly. Windows that surrounded the living room shattered one by one, the hovering chairs and food trays came crashing down, covering everyone in a colorful mess. The entire room was frozen with fear and stared at me like I was going insane.

If they only knew...

“Lexi honey, are you okay?” My mother asked in a worried voice.

I needed to get out of here, away from everyone. I flew as fast as a falcon to the door and ran until I was out of breath. I glanced around realizing that I ended up at my spot. I sat down taking in the beauty that surrounded me—at least of what I could see. My intense anger and fear created fog to move in at a rapid pace, thick as mud.

I pulled my knees to my chest, holding them tightly against me, buried my head into them and cried. I thought about every witch I saw, how each of them felt, and how I watched each one of them disappear—I felt like I was there.

I must have stayed that way for a long time because when I raised my head from my lap it was pitch black. The only light trying to escape was of the haunted looking full moon. I leaped up quickly and started heading in the direction of home—at least I hoped I was. The emerald ornament that hung around my neck began to radiate light. The bright green glow cut through the fog, exposing a path that leads back to my coven.

As I approached our village, I could see eyes peering out from everyone's windows, watching for my return. My mother saw me walking towards our house, ran out almost knocking me over with her forceful embrace.

“Lexi are you okay? I've been worried sick! The boys and your father are out looking for you!”

“I'm fine mom, just tired. I think I am going to take a hot bath and go to bed.”

“But we should talk, don't you think?”

“Can we talk in the morning mom? I am beat.” Plus I don't know how to explain what I saw.

I turned hastily away from her and darted upstairs to the bathroom before she had a chance to say anything more. I began filling the bathtub with as hot as I could stand water, and my lavender bubble bath. I sank my tense body into the heated lavender water, encouraging the stress of the day to vanquish. I closed my eyes, laid my head back onto my tub pillow, and dozed off.

A very pretty girl with red hair and green eyes stood before me. “You are the only one that can destroy her. Please save him!” She begged.

“Who are you?”

“My name is Josephine.”

I bolted straight up quivering. I grabbed my towel, dried myself off and threw on my pajamas. While I was standing in front of the mirror, brushing my long hair, the reflection slowly changed appearance. The image was of the girl I saw in the bathtub—Josephine. I jumped dropping my brush, ran to my room and hid under the covers on my bed. After a few moments, I sat up looking around. Everything seemed to be where it belonged and no one else but I appeared to be in my room. Today has been a very tiring day and I chalked all of these weird events up to the most logical conclusion—my mind was playing tricks on me and I should get some sleep. I lie back down, immediately fell asleep, unaware of the dreams that would occupy my psyche.

The day was warm like a beautiful spring day. The birds sang their musical tune, while the flowers danced to the song the wind serenaded them with. People were prancing around in an abundantly joyful mood, and you could feel that love was in the air. Each person was fluttering about getting ready for the evening's festivities. My eyes feasted upon a very handsome boy. His hair was the color of shiny gold, his eyes were as deep as the blue sea, and he looked like he was overjoyed. His face lit up like a Christmas tree each time he caught a glimpse of a particular beautiful girl. Quickly I realized that the girl was Josephine.

I watch intently feeling almost like a stalker, but I was curious about them—especially Josephine. The darkness began to shade the colorful sunny sky leaving room for stars to radiate its beauty and a sharp breeze graced them with its presence. The entire town stuffed themselves into the town hall building ready to embark with music and laughter spilling into the night. Right next to the town hall was a forest of tall trees and I hear rustling amongst the green plants. A sick feeling plunged itself deep in my gut and I became nervous and uneasy.

The sounds of frightful screams echoed from the party, and then there was a moment of silence right before an earth scattering scream that made me jump high like a kangaroo.

“JOSEPHINE!”

I woke up startled and upset. I never saw what happened to Josephine. I figured I would find out soon enough exactly what happened that night. I guess it wouldn't kill me to try and be patient.

Patience has never been one of my strong talents.

Over the past few days, my parents had me on lock down. I was not allowed to leave our farm and to ensure that I stay put, my father had the entire coven watching me. I guess I freaked them out a few days ago when I got my amulet and the whole being gone for hour's thing. Besides the intense visions and strange dreams about Josephine (which I haven't told anyone about) not much else has really happened—my magic was pretty tame. My mother cancelled school today; she wants to solely focus on me, mainly because my powers were growing stronger.

I swear she makes me feel like a lab rat.

“Lexi it's time.’ My mother beckoned for me.

I know she is trying to help the only way she knows how. I wasn't in the mood to practice magic so I thought a distraction might work.

“Mom, have you ever heard of a girl named Josephine?”

My mother gazed at me with horror streaming in her eyes. “Yes. She was a young witch born with abilities just like you were. Word spread that Leticia was killing powerful witches, so her parents thought in order to keep Josephine safe they would leave their coven and attempt to try a normal life—a life without magic. They moved to a small town where she met a nice boy named Sebastian. Eventually they fell in love and Sebastian asked Josephine's to marry him. On the night of their engagement party Leticia crashed the party slaughtering the entire town, including Josephine. Before she died, she begged Leticia not to harm Sebastian and promised her that she would come back to avenge her death. That was over eighty years ago and that is all I know.”

My jaw hit the floor. That story was pretty identical to my dream. I was flabbergasted and for once, speechless.

“Enough with all of this jibber jabber and let's get to work.” My mother points to the chair she would like me to sit in. “I already know that when you are angry the windows break, but let's see what else you can do.”

My mother hands me a tapered candle, the wick still fresh and new, begging to be lit.

“Why don’t we see how strong your pyro kinesis is? Using your mind light this candle, flames burning high, and then make the flames soft almost flickering.”

I held that candle tightly and focused. Nothing happened.

“Think of nothing except for fire.”

I visualized flames dancing around angry in my head and eyeballed that candle, seeing it lit in my mind. I guess I thought a little too hard about fire, the drapes covering the window in the classroom were blazing. Thank goodness my mother had a few fire extinguishers—she must have anticipated something like this could happen.

She spent most of the morning working with me, helping me learn to control fire. By the time afternoon arrived, I was exhausted. I would have never thought being a witch would be so draining. I could barely keep my eyes open during dinner and was grateful that my sister offered to do the dishes—even though it was my turn.

That night while I slept, Josephine once again appeared in my dream.

“Lexi I have been watching you. I can tell you are getting more powerful with each passing day. Leticia can sense it too. Please be careful.”

I woke up and looked around my room. No one was there. I didn’t feel scared anymore, just angry. I went downstairs to the family computer and searched for articles about the East Lake Texas massacre of 1931. A picture of a gorgeous couple filled the computer screen with the caption underneath, Sebastian Andrews and Josephine Walker. After the town massacre each body was accounted for except for Josephine and Sebastian.

My amulet started to vibrate and glow as an iced chill ripped through the air. A hologram poured through my amulet producing a grotesque figure before me.

“So you are the one.” An eerie voice rang.

I saw intense red eyes glowering at me.

“Wh...who are you?”

A pal skinned, dark haired woman moved closer to me never taking those evil glowing eyes off of me. “I am Leticia.”

All of the blood left my face, leaving me to look like a walking corpse. A chattering noise swept through the room and I slowly became aware the sound was my teeth beating against each other. I didn’t know what to do, and like an idiot I just stood there looking at this vision that invaded my room.

“What do you want?” My body trembled as if cold air touched me. Could I sound confident please and less like a coward? Remember...show no fear.

“I wanted to meet the person that will be giving me more power.”

“What makes you think I would be giving anything to you?” There you go Lexi.

“Oooohhhh a spicy witch. I love a good fight.” Leticia taunted.

I wish she would go away.

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Sebastian’s eyes swelled with longing at the image in his head.

“Josephine.” He whispered.

He sees Leticia’s ugly face standing to the side of her and his heart slumps a little. That girl isn’t Josephine.

“You must go help her Sebastian.” A soothing familiar voice echoed around him.

He knows without a doubt, that’s the sound of his Josephine.

“Please my love, go help Lexi.’

“Who is she? Where do I find her?” Sebastian asked.

But she was gone. He hung his head down letting a few tears fall. Even though it's been eighty two years, it feels like yesterday that he lost her. Around his neck he wore a locket that holds the only photo he has of him and Josephine—the picture that was taken at their engagement party.

He plopped down onto his bed getting lost in the photo, closed his eyes, and imagined the life he would have had with her. "I will help her Josephine."

Leticia slithered into Sebastian's room. "Who were you talking to?" She demanded.

"No one." Sebastian replied curtly.

"We're going to have a meeting so be in the study in five minutes." She ordered and swirled around leaving the room just as smoothly as she entered it.

What does she want now? Sebastian thought and reluctantly headed to the study. He really wasn't in the mood to listen to Leticia. After all he despised her, but he didn't want to disobey her either. Leticia's punishments were cruel. As he entered the room, Cecilia and Julian were smirking like they knew something. Leticia announced herself with a dramatic entrance, displaying an impish smile.

"I have found the one we have been waiting for."

"Where is she?" Cecilia asked with excitement rising in her voice.

"What do we get out of this? If you are the one that gets all of the power, why do we have to help you?" The army of vampires cheered Julian on.

"Silence!" Leticia commanded and the room fell quiet. "You get immortality and the freedom to roam whenever you wish. The sun will no longer pose as our enemy. As soon as I possess the power from this new, young witch, I will be the most powerful one in the universe. And if you behave and do what you are told, I will give each of you immortality." The thought of being immortal pleased Leticia deep to her core.

Sebastian wasn't as excited as the others. He didn't want to be a vampire and would rather die than stay this way forever.

“And don’t think for one moment we would not include you Sebastian.” Leticia glared.

“And if I don’t help you?” Sebastian glared back.

“I don’t think you really want to find out.” Leticia barked.

There have been multiple times that Sebastian tried to end his life, but Leticia kept bringing him back. It was like a game to her watching him suffer. He never understood why she turned him instead of leaving him to die. She just kept telling him he would be useful. Josephine’s face filled his head and he knew that despite how much he loathed Leticia, he needed to go along with her plan. That was the only way to help Lexi. But he was only doing this because Josephine asked.

“Get your panties out of a bunch Leticia, I am not going anywhere.” Although, he wanted to be as far away from this life.

“Watch your tongue or you will find yourself back in the basement.”

At this point, Sebastian thought being tortured in that basement was better than having to deal with all of them. At least then he would be able to feel something besides emptiness.

Three

A vast current ricocheted through my body feeling like tiny needles piercing me. I was attempting to move the book that was over on my table by the window, to where I was sitting on my bed—clearly I did something wrong.

Knock Knock

I looked at the time; it was eight in the morning. “Who is it?” There was a massive amount of irritation in my voice.

“It’s Kevin. I just wanted to make sure you were okay.”

Kevin Jones has been infatuated with me for a very long time. He is cute in some ways I guess. His hair is as dark as chocolate, and deep whiskey brown eyes that sparkle each time he sees me. When he smiled he showed off dimples that would make any girl melt.

Any girl except for me.

“Come on in.” Sounding as upbeat as I could.

“Lexi you don’t need to pretend with me.” He slowly opened the door and walked into my room.

“I’m not pretending anything, I am going through some changes but I will be fine. I just need some time to deal with it all.”

“I am here for you if you need me, whether it is to talk or just someone to be here when you need someone close. I care about you a lot Lexi.” Kevin hesitated then he leaned down and kissed my forehead before leaving me alone with my anxiety.

I watched Kevin shuffle out of my room. I do need someone to talk to, but would Kevin really understand and be here for me or would he run for the hills? Frustrated with it all, I shouted loud enough to knock some pictures off of my wall.

“Soon Leticia you will pay for all of the harm you have caused.”

“We shall see about that!” Leticia roared violently.

“Lexi you are the only one that can save us all.” An unfamiliar voice rumbled.

“Alexandria?” I asked

A thunderous vibration shook my room.

Okay, I am thoroughly freaked out. I zoomed out of my bedroom as fast as a lightening flash almost knocking Kevin to the ground. He grabbed me and held me in a secure embrace, not letting go until we both had our balance.

“Careful Lexi. You almost sent us flying down the stairs.” Kevin noticed he was holding me tightly, loosened his grip and backed away from me.

“I am so sorry.” I began to quiver.

“Lexi what is wrong?” Kevin placed a hand on my shoulder, looking into my eyes as if they would tell him everything he wanted to know.

“Ever since I was given this amulet strange things have been happening. I have seen Leticia standing right in front of me, threatening me. I have seen and felt powerful witches before me being tortured and vanishing, and this girl Josephine keeps appearing telling me I am the only one that can save us all. I am a little freaked out and I feel like I am losing my mind!”

“Take a deep breath and let it out slowly. Would you like to go for a walk and maybe talk?” Kevin held out his hand to me.

I waffled for a moment or two, and then I placed my hand into his. I could feel energy flowing from his touch. I wondered if Kevin could feel it too. He looked at me with those intense brown eyes and grinned.

“Yes. But not here, not around the farm, I have a place.” I can’t believe I am going to take him to my special spot.

We walked through the thicket of trees; dead air lingered between us as Kevin followed close behind me. Finally we reached my spot by the ocean.

“Here we are.” My heart was jack hammering. I brought Kevin to the one place I didn’t share with anyone.

“It’s wonderful.” Kevin was fixated on the magnificent way the sun reflected off the water creating the most exquisitely bright rainbow.

He looked at me while I gazed out to the ocean with a blissful smile that radiated across my face making it glow like the sun. I could sense he wanted to kiss me.

“Kevin, why do you like me so much? I have always been mean to you yet you keep coming around.” I interrogated.

Kevin let out a long sigh. “As long as I can remember something has drawn me to you—like a magnetic force. The more I was around you, *stalking you he thought laughing in his head*, the more I fell for you. You are beautiful, full of life and energy, and you don’t take crap from anyone. All of these qualities you have, whether they are good or annoying, I love. They make you who you are.”

He reached over grabbing my hand, and the amulet began to glow the most ravishing green either of us have ever seen. Is Kevin my perfect match?

“Wow. Does that thing light up all of the time?” Kevin didn’t know if he should be frightened or amazed.

“Lately it does—at weird times. I am still figuring this amulet out as well as my powers. Some are not going so well and others just need more control.” I suppose I would be more ecstatic having all of these powers, but what good are they to me unless I can get them to work right?

“Thank you Kevin. This is the first time since all of this chaos started, that I have felt some peace.”

Kevin’s face couldn’t hide the happiness my words brought to him. “It is my pleasure my lady.”

~ ~ ~

Leticia's amulet beamed brightly like the sun on a cloudless day. She held it up to take a gander and saw Lexi and Kevin getting cozy. She clenched her jaw tightly and growled. "I must stop them at once! Those two and their powers combined are enough to eradicate me." She glared at the two and a light mist encircled her amulet granting her access to talk to Lexi and Kevin.

"Hello there love birds." Leticia spoke in a venomous manner.

I sprung up swiftly looking around with a horrified look displayed across my face. Kevin gazed around looking for the voice that has spoken becoming mortified when he noticed no one was around except for him and me.

"What do you want now?" My hands were on my hips and I was tapping my foot with hostility against the ground. The wind began to blow violently.

Wow I need to really learn to control my emotions or we will be having weather all of the time.

"Nothing much, just your powers"

"You will never get my powers! I will destroy you before I let that happen." I shouted.

Stinging winds blew strong causing giant waves crashing hard down into the ocean. The sky that merely moments ago was bright from the sun started to turn gray and angry as giant rain fell. Kevin held on tight to the tree watching in terror, his mind desperately trying to make sense of it all.

"Silly, foolish girl. You are not strong enough to destroy me. Even if you were, you wouldn't know how. But, I am one that likes to be on the safe side. So to ensure that you cannot do anything to me, I will place a mark on your boyfriend here. If anything happens to me, he will die as well." And with a flick of her wrist motioning her hand like she was dismissing someone, a tree appeared on Kevin's arm.

"Each time you think of killing me the tree will grow and when it reaches his heart, the branches will squeeze until it stops beating." And then she was gone.

The winds calmed down and the rain stopped—only soft waves were slapping the water. I glanced from Kevin’s arm to the look on his face. He was frightened.

I reached my hand out to him. “Kevin are you...”

“GET AWAY FROM ME!” He shouted and took off running back to the coven.

I plopped myself on the ground. “What am I supposed to do now?” I hissed flailing my arms as another bout of angry winds appeared.

A vision appeared over the water watching me tenderly.

“We are all here to help you sweet girl.” Her voice sang like an angel.

“Who are you?”

“I am Alexandria.”

I snapped my eyes shut—my mind felt like it was working double time.

“The answers are within you, you just need to believe in yourself and in your abilities. Leticia is afraid of you which is why she hexed Kevin. In order to free Kevin of her curse, you need to annihilate her.”

“But if I kill her, Kevin will die too.”

“Lexi, you are powerful enough to destroy Leticia and keep Kevin safe. You just need to believe.” And just like the fog evaporates when the sun shined through, she disappeared.

“Lexi you get home now!” A sharp tone pierced the air. It was my father.

I sighed loudly and commenced my journey home. As I walked the anger inside me kept building. Kevin wants nothing to do with me, and all of these voices of the past keep telling me I need to destroy Leticia but won’t tell me how. I feel frustrated and out of control. Dark clouds fill the air and evoked hard rain.

When did I start controlling the weather anyway?

“Lexi this coming and going as you please needs to stop! Where do you go anyway? And...you need to start controlling your moods, this weather forecast you have going on today is disrupting everyone.”

“I can’t stop it.” I said bitterly.

“Yes you can!” My father commanded.

I closed my eyes and concentrated hard—the rain stopped.

“What has been going on with you? Ever since you were given that amulet, you have been acting strange.”

“You wouldn’t understand.” I looked away from my father to hide the tears that were swarming.

“Oh Lexi, you need to trust me. I probably understand more than you think I do. Please talk to me.” My father’s face was soft.

I bit my bottom lip not sure of where to start. Gradually the words came and my father sat there listening to every word I spoke, nodding at certain parts like he understood. When I was finished my father reached for me and hugged me tight.

“Dad you’re squeezing too hard, I can’t breathe.” I choked out breathless.

He pulled away from me and stroked my hair and left the room, returning with a thick, ancient looking book. “This book will help guide you”

I scanned the pages of the book. There were pictures of vampires; one looked like it could be Leticia. Other pictures of witches wearing colorful amulets and a picture of a boy with a tree on his arm. I inhaled sharply.

“That looks just like the branches Leticia put onto Kevin’s arm!”

“Leticia is no fool, this just means she knew before the rest of us did.”

“Knew what?” I shrieked.

“Kevin is your perfect match.”

“WHAT?” I tried to act surprised but the truth is, I already figured that part out.

“We won’t know for sure until we finish the ceremony. Leticia has made it more difficult to destroy her, like infecting Kevin’s arm with a tree that grows each time you think about killing her. However, there is always a way around that. You need to read this book to figure that out. Now I need to go and announce to the coven that tonight we will finish the ceremony so go get some rest.”

I don’t know how he thinks I am going to rest now.

I headed to my room and pooled myself into a chair by the window. The wind was blowing gently, rustling the leaves that were holding onto the trees for dear life. I noticed Kevin gaping towards my window (his house is across from mine, our windows adjacent to each other’s), with misery painted across his face. I spied on him for what felt like an eternity but it’s been only five minutes. Kevin snapped out of his poor me trance and shot me a horrid look.

Why can’t he see that none of this is my fault?

Trying to distract myself, I poured myself into the book my father gave me. It was a slow start giving a history lesson about things I already knew. I wanted to read more about Alexandria and hunted until I found the chapter about to her.

Alexandria Marie Cunningham was born in 1692 to Julia and Becket Cunningham. Julia was a witch but because of the ongoing witch hunt, she was forced to conceal her magic. Alexandria was brought up normal, knowing nothing about her bloodline. She always knew she was different, but it wasn’t until her sixteenth birthday she discovered just how different she was.

Hideous creatures began to roam the earth at night in search of blood. Some people called them vampires and rumors started to fly that these monsters were witches that were either hung or burned at the stake, coming back to avenge their death. And at first, that is why they did. These beasts of the darkness appetite for blood grew out of control. Innocent people were dropping like flies. On a cold winter’s night, three vampires entered The Cunningham’s house in search for their next meal. Alexandria heard them enter and quickly ran to her parent’s room.

There above her parent's bed were two vile looking beings ready to sink their teeth into her parent's flesh, while the other one stood behind her ready to dig in.

Alexandria ran to her mom and dad screaming sending the three vampires: Leticia, Cecilia, and Julian flying into the wall. It was at that time Alexandria realized she had powers. With just her gaze, she was able to paralyze them. Wanting to crush them into dust, but visions flew through her head of a time before they were vampires. She couldn't destroy them, her heart was too good.

Julia in awe of what her daughter could do, reached into her jewelry box pulling out the most beautiful amulet and placed it around her daughters' neck. The amulet glowed proudly clinging to Alexandria like it belonged. Alexandria wished that everyone could live together in harmony and that the vampires would eat normal food and stop these massacres.

The talisman began to vibrate and a light mist engulfed the air surrounding the three vampires. She pointed to the front door and told them to leave. Word got around about Alexandria and her ability to control the vampires. People that were once afraid of witches now accepted witchcraft with open arms. Alexandria was everyone's hero.

Leticia wasn't happy about this new arrangement and right away began plotting her vengeance. She thought about how powerful Alexandria became the minute she had that jewel, and figured that if she took away that amulet and killed Alexandria, her spell would break. As time moved on Alexandria grew stronger, got married, and even had a child of her own—a daughter named Rose.

Rose was just like her mother, feisty and full of life. By the time she was sixteen, she was ready to take over for her mother. Leticia couldn't bear the thought of one more day under Alexandria's control. One night while they slept, Leticia crept into Alexandria's room, overpowered Alexandria and ripped the amulet off and killed her, breaking the spell.

Rose was mortified and used her magic any way she could to destroy Leticia. With each passing day Rose grew stronger and that posed as a threat to Leticia. She cursed Rose's love with a tree on his arm that grew each time Rose thought of destroying Leticia. One day the thoughts were too much, and that tree clenched her love, crushing his heart until it stopped

beating. After that Rose quit eating and secluded herself, eventually dying from heartache and starvation.