



Nick  
Hook '05

# Unwelcome Attentions

I am almost a prisoner in my own home. Every time I go out he is waiting somewhere out there for me. He is never in the same place twice. I just never know where or when he will pounce. His dark hypnotic eyes, the sharp fangs, his ugly visage that even haunts my dreams, he is not satisfied with troubling my waking hours.

But now I must go out. I need food, I am so very hungry and my strength is failing. There has to be a way. I will wear a black dress; that's it black, the colour of the night, so that I can blend in with the shadows and go unseen. Perhaps tonight that hideous creature will not find me.

I stand at my doorway for several minutes looking this way and that before I am satisfied that he is not there.

Already my nerves are torn to shreds. Then I must go out and across the road before darting into the wood. This is the shortest way into town and the trees will offer me some cover. Once out of the wood there is just a short dash into town and he will never find me then. And then I will be able to get some food.

In the wood I slip from tree to tree, each time peering into the gloom to make sure he isn't there. Now I am almost out of the wood and ..... oh no, there he is beside that big tree. But has he seen me? I hold my breath and slowly, slowly lean back behind the bushes next to me, careful not to make a sound, his senses seem so acute like the wild predator that he is. I can see him as I peer between the dense branches of the bush. Perhaps I am still safe. He is looking all around and I know it is me he is looking for.

Suddenly his gaze is fixed in my direction. Oh my god, he knows I'm here. He takes a step towards me. He is only about thirty feet away, what shall I do?

I begin to run as fast as I can. I mustn't let him catch me, anything but that. He seems so strong, to run so fast, whilst I am weak from lack of food. I am no match for him but I must try to escape. I can hardly catch my breath, I don't think I can run anymore. I will have to try to hide, to conceal myself somewhere until I can get my breath back.

The trees here are quite thick so I throw myself behind a particularly large one and press myself against it. If I can just hide for a few seconds perhaps he will run past. I try to breathe silently, though my lungs are almost bursting. I close my eyes and pray that he will not see me. I remain still and silent for what seems an age. My ears strain to hear the slightest sound but I hear nothing. Has he gone away? Am I free at last?

Suddenly an icy hand falls on my shoulder, and a chilling voice rasps in my ear. "Got you!" I turn towards him, his cold unfeeling eyes look into mine. I can't help but look at those long deadly fangs as his putrid breath wafts in my face.

"Oh for god's sake Kevin!" I snap. "You might be my little brother but you are a big boy now, and grown up vampires have to learn to hunt alone. Now go and find your own victim and stop trying to share mine!"

"You know I can't get the hang of it." Kevin pouted, looking decidedly sorry for himself, ... "Go on Sis, show me just one last time. Please?"

"Oh alright then," ... I can hardly contain a sigh of exasperation, "but this is definitely the very last time."

You know, I'm just a fool to myself sometimes.

**J**

# She Walks in Beauty through the Night

She walks in beauty through the night,  
Her face emits a ghostly light.  
The cloak, a shining carapace,  
Then she is gone without a trace.

She walks in silence through the graves,  
The lovely face, that slays, not saves,  
The cloak, a fragile carapace,  
Hides her dark secret from this place.

She walks in search through the town  
The moonlight glinting on her gown,  
The cloak, a deathly carapace,  
To cover her rapacious face.

She walks in pursuit through the gate,  
He knows now that it is too late,  
Her cloak, a spider carapace,  
Reveals to him her preying face.

She walks in victory though the wood  
Slowly then lets fall the hood  
The cloak, a tattered carapace  
Hides no more the bloodstained face.

She walks in beauty through the night,  
Her face emits a ghostly light.  
The cloak, a shining carapace,  
Then she is gone without a trace.

***Claire Cozler***

# Masquerade

"Come on, come on, answer the phone." the blonde tapped his fingers agitatedly against the desk as the phone continued to ring. "Come on Peaches, answer the phone please!"

"Angel Invest....."

"Sire, he's doing it again. I don't know what to do. Sire, please you have to come and help."

"Spike. Calm down. He's your consort after all. You should be able to control him."

"Control him, you are joking aren't you. How the bloody hell can I control him. Besides he's got help this time."

"Who?"

"Lots of people. Sire, please you have to help."

"What's he doing this time for god's sake?"

"I can't tell you. It's too horrible. Look, Peaches will you please get in one of your bloody fancy cars and get your arse down here. It's only a couple of hours drive after all. And besides it's not as if you're really needed there these days is it."

"Gee Spike, you really know how to get somebody's help don't you."

"Angel, please?"

"Fine, although why, I don't know."

"Because you love me"

"Yeah right. I'll see you shortly, and you'd better have some blood there if you expect me to stay."

"Sure, you can have some of Andrew's if you like. He's gotten off on the whole vampire biting thing. Well, he always was a poof."

"You can talk. I'll see you shortly".

As Spike put down the phone he heard a sound behind him. Turning he saw his consort leaning up against the door smiling.

"I wondered where you'd got to. Who was that on the phone?"

"Angel, he's on his way for a visit."

"Good idea. I think this is likely to go on all night and he'll keep you from getting bored, and we wouldn't want old Spikey getting bored would we." So saying he leaned over and planted a kiss on Spike's lips. He pulled away before Spike could deepen the kiss.

"None of that, I only came up to see where you were. I need to get back to the others". He turned and walked out of the room.

"Oh, babe," he called "could you bring us some beers; people are getting thirsty."

"Sure luv, I'll be down in a minute." Spike sighed as he heard the other going down the basement stairs. "Why me?" he implored the gods.

Having taken the drinks downstairs Spike lit up a cigarette and went to stand outside.

He didn't understand how it had happened. At first it had been little things that his consort had done. Things that Spike would never have thought of doing. He hadn't put the pieces together until it was too late. The slow gathering of the new group, the almost sneaky way he'd gone out and recruited the other members, not only introducing his own friends to it but Spike's as well, even Clem! Spike missed Clem and their nights together of playing kitten poker and watching duff movies. But he hadn't seen Clem in a long time.

Once the group was together he had started to gather all of the paraphernalia he needed. Spike hadn't realized that quite so many daggers, swords and other sharp implements would be needed. He still missed his favourite knife but like everything else once his consort wanted something he got it.

And, as for the mess afterwards, Spike shuddered. He'd cleaned up many messes in his lifetime, indeed he'd caused a lot of them but the state of the basement after one of their 'evenings' was something else. And he was expected to clean up, his consort always being exhausted when they'd finished.

Spike flicked his cigarette stub onto the floor and lit another one. The other burning question was when had he become the little housewife. He was the Big Bad after all. William the Bloody, part of the Scourge of Europe, killer of two Slayers yet his other half treated him like the little wife! He'd be getting him to wear a little frilly apron before much longer.

It seemed to have been a gradual thing. He'd been asked of course if he wanted to join in with the group's activities but he'd declined. He might be a vampire after all but some things he didn't do. What had surprised him was when Red and the Watcher had gotten involved. He supposed it was down to their shared interest in magic and the Watcher's past as Ripper.

Initially he'd started to go out on their nights they'd got together but he missed his other half. Ridiculous really but he hadn't spent any time apart from his consort since he'd claimed him. So he started to go out for a quick snack and then he'd go home and wait until they'd done; pacing, smoking, drinking, watching TV and generally winding himself up. He'd gone downstairs once to watch but had left soon after. It had been too painful to watch after all and the noises coming out of there were awful.

And so he'd started to take drinks and snacks down to them and generally do the wifey bit, never spending more than 5 minutes down there at a time if he could help it. Talking of which, he supposed they'd be ready for another top up.

He picked up another six pack from the kitchen and some bags of snacks and Twinkies and descended down the basement steps. Reaching the bottom he kicked the door to let them know he was there. He'd learnt to not just walk in. He heard movement inside and a minute later the door opened and his consort stood there, one eyebrow raised.

"Just thought you'd need a top up, luv".

Xander smiled, took the items from Spike and lightly brushed his lips with his own.

"You're the best".

"Do you know how much longer you'll be?"

"Couple of hours probably, Angel here yet?"

"Nope, should be soon though".

"Okay, I'll see you later, gotta go", and Xander closed the door almost smacking Spike in the face in his haste. Spike sighed, turned, went back upstairs and poured himself a very large

JD before sitting down in front of the TV to wait for Angel.

A short while later he was standing outside the backdoor looking at Angel.

"Angel"

"Spike"

"D'ya want to come in?"

"I thought that was the general idea unless you'd like this conversation to take place out here."  
Sigh.....

"Xander still doing that disinvite spell every time I leave?"

"Yep, he still isn't that keen on you and he doesn't like other vamps in the house"

"Even though as a consort he's protected!"

"Look, the only other demons he allows in the house are those down in the basement"

"He's definitely got you well trained hasn't he?"

"Do you want to come in or not or are you just going to insult me?"

"Up to you, but let's not forget you called me for help."

Spike moved away from the door.

"You're invited in, Angel."

Angel walked through into the lounge and sat down. "You can get me a drink, Spike."

"Jesus, mate, you're as bad as Xander."

"You did as I said though," taking the drink from Spike.

"Yeah well you're my Sire and all," Spike threw himself onto the sofa and appropriated his JD.

Minutes passed.

They stared at each other.

Finally Angel broke the silence, "So?"

"So what"

"What do you want me to do?"

Spike winced as a scream, probably of rage, could be heard from the basement. "Red," he said in response to Angel's raised eyebrows.

"Willow....."

"Yeah, she and the Watcher have gotten involved."

Angel shook his head.

"Who else?"

"Clem, Andrew, Willie initially....."

"Willie?"

"Yeah, he thought I would be a laugh, he didn't last long. I haven't seen him for about six weeks now."

"And.....?"

"Xander of course"

"Of course"

"No need to be snarky. The other two are Sim and Sam".

"The Twins?"

"Yeah"

"How long's it been going on this time?"

"About ten weeks"

"How many times a week?"

"Three to four times"

"That's not good, Spike"

"You're telling me. I'd managed to wean him of it for a while but then he got to reading these books and now, now I don't know what to do. I want my Xander back. I want him to come hunting with me again, I want to just snuggle down with him in front of the TV and watch crap movies. And sex, have I mentioned sex, I can't remember the last time he went....."

"Spike enough. Too much information. Okay I'll talk to him. What about if it's only once a week, because to be honest he's addicted and I don't think he'll be able to stop completely."

"Once a week I can deal with."

"Okay, so who's the Dungeon Master?"

"Andrew"

"Figures"

"So what are they playing? D & D?"

"Nope, something called Masquerade. It's a vampire playing game."

Sigh.....

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***(Pushkin666 Nikki Ward)***

