

Chapter Seventeen, "Showdown at the Docks"

Camille and Kimberly rolled away from each other as Arthur fired at them, hitting the concrete floor where they had just been lying. Sparks flew as the bullet ricocheted around the warehouse.

"Hold still, whores," Arthur said, "I only have six of these."

Camille landed on all fours, her face to the ground, ass in the air. She growled as hair sprouted from her skin and her legs elongated. She looked up, sharp teeth bared in defiance.

"You should be dead," she said.

"God has other plans for me, spawn of Satan," Arthur said.

Camille's remaining wolves were nowhere to be seen. They had been scared away by Arthur and his savage, horrendous act to one of their own.

He took aim at the werewolf, fired. At the very same moment Kimberly slammed into the man. Arthur was knocked backwards, hitting the open door, his shot going wild in the air. He was knocked unceremoniously out into the cool night air of the docks, tumbling end over end once - twice - until coming to rest in a heap. Kimberly stalked out of the door, hunched over, mouth open, sharp teeth glaring in the moonlight.

"What kind of Devil are you?" Arthur said.

He was sprawled on the wooden planks of the docks, on his side. He rolled over, pointed the pistol at Kimberly and fired again.

Kimberly moved at the last second but the bullet grazed her neck on the right side, leaving a shallow groove in her flesh. Kimberly screamed as the groove burst into flames, the silver in the bullet reacting to her unholy skin. She dropped to the ground in pain.

Arthur laughed and stood up. He took careful aim at her. This time he never got off a shot.

Camille bounded out of the warehouse onto the docks and jumped at him. Arthur spun out of the way just in time. Coughing wildly, he backed away from the werewolf as she stalked him, slowly, methodically.

"Don't you come near me, bitch," he said. "I still got three more of these."

"You're gonna burn in Hell for all eternity," Camille said. "After I kill you, of course."

He seemed more hurt and angry by this simple remark than the hit Kimberly had dealt him. "I am a servant of God, little girl. I cannot be killed by vermin like you. God will not allow it."

There was a sound overhead, a great swooshing sound, as of a great bird passing. Camille ignored it and made to pounce at Arthur.

Arthur raised his pistol to fire once again, just as Camille jumped. Once again, his shot missed its mark, punching a hole in the docks where the She Wolf had just been.

Camille pounced into the air and was immediately snatched out of it by a humanoid bat-like creature, caught in its strong claws. Camille howled and fought against this, wanting to continue the fight. She swiped at the creature, to no avail.

She was gone from the fight, snatched and carried far away. The creature went out over the ocean and turned, heading back towards land from a different angle, making sure not to bring the Beast back to the battle.

"God, why have you forsaken me!" Arthur screamed as Camille was taken from him. "Fuck!"

He kicked at the ground hopelessly, not hearing the vampire creep up behind him. She scratched long, deep grooves out of the flesh of his back with one well-placed swipe.

Arthur screamed in pain and fell to the ground. He was near the edge of the docks. Kimberly jumped on him, ready to finish him off. This was a mistake.

Arthur fiddled with his sleeve and his small, wicked knife dropped into his hand. He twisted in Kimberly's arms and stabbed the blade of the knife into her chest, sticking it in between two ribs. Kimberly gasped in pain and froze for a moment.

The blade wasn't silver or anything special, really; it wouldn't kill her but it left her vulnerable for a moment, which was all Arthur needed.

He pushed her off him, leaving the knife embedded in her chest, got on top of her. He pointed the gun at her head.

"You are one dumb fucking bitch," he said and took careful aim.

"Hold it!" Manny said. "Stop the damn car!"

They were driving along a road that went past the warehouse district and, between two warehouses, Manny saw Wendy, in her bat creature form, swoop down from the sky and pick someone up.

"We don't have time for this," the Toothpick Man said. He was driving.

"Fuck you," Manny said. "Pull down this alley, towards the docks. Something's going on down there."

"I will not."

"If you don't, I'll jump out of this car right now. You think your mistress would like that?"

The Toothpick Man seemed to consider it for a moment. "Very well."

He turned the car down the alley and they approached the docks, just in time to see Kimberly jump on Arthur and get a knife in her chest. Manny grabbed hold of the dashboard.

"That's Camille's friend, Kimberly," he said. "Stop the car!"

The Toothpick Man applied the brakes and Manny rolled down the window. He shouted out the window.

"Hey, man, what the fuck are you doing?!"

Arthur was about to pull the trigger and set Kimberly's face on fire, but when he heard Manny he whirled around, pointed the gun at the car. He fired on instinct.

The bullet smashed through the windshield and hit the Toothpick Man in the face, just below his right eye. His head rocked back, the back of his skull blowing apart. Manny nearly threw up as he saw what came out of the back of the man's head.

Worms.

Nothing but worms and blood. They landed on the back of the driver's seat and all over the backseat of the car, wriggling around in a panic, their parasitic victim now dead. The Toothpick Man slumped forward onto the steering wheel, worms swarming out of the hole in the back of his head. His foot pressed down the gas peddle and the car continued forward, heading for the edge of the dock.

Manny opened the passenger door and rolled out of the vehicle. He hit the dock hard but wasn't hurt.

Kimberly seized the moment and grabbed hold of Arthur's gun hand. She looked defiantly into the man's eyes as she applied as much pressure as she could into her grasp.

Arthur screamed and there was a hideous cracking sound as a bone in his right hand snapped. Kimberly released her grip and Arthur dropped the gun. It landed on the dock with a crash, one silver bullet left in it.

The car driven by the now-dead Toothpick Man reached them. Kimberly rolled out of the way as the car hit Arthur. A strangled, shocked cry escaped the man's lips.

He and the car swan-dived off the docks and plummeted into the ocean below. Arthur's cries were audible for a split second before he sank below the waves, weighed down by the car.

Kimberly stood up to her full height. She seemed taller, stronger. She looked down at the sinking car

and cocked her head to one side.

"Kimberly?" Manny said. "It's Kimberly, isn't it?"

Kimberly snapped her head around to observe him. She breathed heavy, the bloodlust returning to her body, flowing through her veins.

Manny looked her up and down. *He's looking at my body*, Kimberly thought. *I have to feed. Right now.*

Manny shook his head. "What happened to you?"

Kimberly slowly shook her head. "I don't know. But I do know that I'm hungry."

Manny backed away as Kimberly started towards him, fangs bared.

To Be Continued...

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