

I recognized his blurry golden image through the glass even before I opened the door. Jonah stood on the porch with his hands in his pockets and the son over his shoulder. I stood in the doorway, inhaling the sweet smell of his living and breathing body, knowing I should be flattered and thrilled, but instead I felt guilty that I was happy to see him.

"Jonah!" I cried out with a wide smile. "When did you get back in town?"

He gave me his most dazzling smile, "Just now. I haven't even been home yet."

"Really?" I asked, suddenly feeling incredibly uncomfortable.

"I just couldn't wait to see you." Jonah confessed as he leaned against one of the big porch columns.

It felt strange to see him do that, almost like it was disrespectful to Alastor. I shifted in the doorway and crossed my arms.

"Your parents must be anxious to see you." I mumbled, fighting the urge to shove him off the porch.

"I wanted to see you first."

"Why?" I blurted out.

"Well," he began, blushing slightly. "I wanted to see if we would have plans before mom and dad had the chance to plan the entire weekend for me."

I looked at him, confused. "Why would we have plans?"

"I thought maybe you and I could go see a movie."

"Seriously?"

He smiled in that perfect way of his, "Sure, maybe we could even go back to Magdalena's again. Remember our last date there?"

"I remember." I answered flatly.

"So what do you say?"

I heard the floorboards upstairs creaking. Alastor was up there waiting for me, no doubt curious as to why I was down here talking so long to Jonah.

"I have plans this weekend."

Jonah's face fell and clouded over, "Oh, I guess I should've known. A great girl like you wouldn't be sitting home this weekend."

He looked so disappointed; I wasn't sure what to say or do to make him feel better.

"I'm sorry." I mumbled.

With a shrug, Jonah stepped off the porch. "It's okay, some other time perhaps."

"Maybe." I offered as I stepped back to close the door.

I didn't really mean it. It was just something to say, but Jonah stopped and turned back to me.

"What about next weekend?" He asked, looking very much like a dog coming back to be kicked.

I couldn't believe he would even ask. Couldn't he take a hint?

"Oh," I mumbled. "I don't know."

Jonah smile returned, "It's not a difficult question. It's just a yes or no answer."

I leaned against the doorframe, wishing I could just step back and let the door close, but part of me liked his absurdity.

"It's not that it's a difficult question." I confessed, "But it's a little more complicated than that."

Jonah move towards the porch again. "How complicated can it be? Just say yes."

"Jonah, I can't." I whispered.

"Sure you can." He said with one of his brilliant smiles.

"No," I argued, feeling the atmosphere shift as Alastor moved to the top of the staircase behind me. "I really can't."

Jonah stepped up onto the porch, "I'm not leaving until you say yes."

Still I hesitated, not wanting to say yes, but trying to think of a good reason to say no other than the ghost hovering on the stairs.

"Okay," he said with a mischievous wink. "At least then maybe."

I moved the door a few more inches, "Your mom and dad are waiting for you."

"Then just say yes so I can go."

"Jonah –"

He smiled. "Fine, say maybe and I'll leave."

Despite myself, I smiled. "You're not going to give up, are you?"

"Nope." He said with a playful shake of his head. "And I bet my mom and dad are really wondering what's happened to me."

"Fine." I conceded. "Maybe."

I shut the door before Jonah could say anything else. I ran into the shadows, I watched him step off the porch and go. There was no time to wonder if I did the right thing, I could hear Alastor calling to me in his nothing voice.

Climbing the stairs, I felt him come and swirl around me. I closed my eyes and savored this special closeness between us.

"What did the boy want?" Alastor asked.

"I don't want to talk about him." I whispered.

Suddenly, Alastor was standing behind me. I could feel his icy lips hovering near my cheek.

"I also prefer not to talk about him." He said with a sigh, "But you seem upset."

I walked towards my room, ready to shut the door to the outside world. "Alastor, I'm fine."

He appeared in the doorway, smiling and looking very real and very solid.

"You always were a terrible liar." He said, moving aside so that I could walk past him.

I went over to the bed and sat down, "It's nothing, use just so annoying."

"He is just a boy," Alastor soothed, moving beside me and brushing my face with his invisible touch. "Think nothing more of him."

"That's fine with me," I whispered as I close my eyes and gave myself over to his thing touch. "But I'll tell you one thing, when I have a daughter; I'm going toward her how annoying guys can be."

A blast of cold air pushed against me and shook the walls. Alastor exploded out into the air, swirling around me frantically.

"Alastor, what's the matter with you?"

"You know that is not possible." He said from everywhere.

"What?"

He came closer, hovering just over my head. "You said when you have a daughter and you know that is not possible between us."

Blushing, I looked up into the empty air. "I didn't mean it like that."

Alastor's ghostly breath blew against my neck, "Oh my darling, I think you did."