

Katie Carpenter – Sacred Heart

Protective Vampire Prince

Chandraditya could feel him before he saw him. The fae may have been living in the same palace for little over a year, but his aura, the air around him, had been imprinted into his memory. Into his mind, his skin, and his very soul. The aura was thick with sovereignty, a sense of friendship and loyalty, and a taste of grief. The other supernatural beings in the first hour period, which is Supernatural Studies for them, must've sensed it too. Some of the heads twisted toward the door expectantly. Others simply chose to ignore the door but glance at it from the corners of their eyes. Even the dragonborn, to Chandraditya's discontent. There's a squeak from the doorknob as it turns, the door swinging open. Two supernaturals walk leisurely into the room, one a vampire, the other a werewolf.

If you looked at the vampire, even just a glance, you wouldn't even think that he's a prince. You'd definitely know he's a vampire, though. Just by looking at his eyes. Blood red eyes, like that of freshly spilled blood, scan the room full of young supernaturals. There's a witty, calculating look in the vampire's eyes. He has milky chocolate skin, his short, spikey, shiny black hair lancing into his forehead and neck. A confident, playful grin is on his full lips, two long, pearly white fangs resting on his lower lip. Chandraditya may have only been living in the same palace with this vampire for a little over a year, but he's never forgotten his kind smile. That smile is what saved his life all those years ago.

"Ah, Tsukiyomi. James. So nice of you to finally come to class." The teacher of the Supernatural Studies Class, Professor Montford, says, her voice full of annoyance.

"*Gomen'nasai, Sensei.*" Tsukiyomi apologizes, his head bowing respectfully.

Professor Montford sighs, "English, please, Mr. Kondo."

"*Gome-* Sorry, Professor. James was helping me find the Supernatural Studies room." Tsukiyomi apologizes again, this time in a Japanese accented voice.

"It's forgiven, Tsukiyomi; just never let it happen again. Now, please find open seats so I can begin the lecture," Professor Montford instructs, gesturing to the class in front of her.

Tsukiyomi bows his head again, then his blood red eyes flick to the rows of seats in the small, auditorium-like room. His red eyes find the diamond black ones of Chandraditya, and he smiles. He makes his way to the fae's side, asking if he can sit in the open spot beside him.

"Don't you want to sit with your own kind?" Chandraditya asks, nodding to the other vampires in the room.

"I'd rather sit by a friend, if that's alright with you, Chan-kun?" Tsukiyomi questions with a fanged smile.

Katie Carpenter – Sacred Heart

Chandraditya had seen that smile throughout his stay in the Vampire King's palace. He doesn't feel threatened by it in the least.

"Of course." Chandraditya invites, pulling out the chair beside him. The vampire sets his books on his section of the wooden table, sinking into his chair. His crimson eyes focus forward on their professor. Before Professor Montford even begins, a pale arm raises into the air.

"Yes, Summer?" Professor Montford calls.

The vampiress points to Tsukiyomi, "You said his name is Tsukiyomi Kondo...right?"

Professor Montford sighs again, setting a blue bookmark in the textbook she'd been about to read out of. Chandraditya sees her whisper something under her breath before looking up at the pale girl.

"Yes. It was bound to be said sooner than later. Tsukiyomi is the prince of the vampire kingdom. His father is King Yamiyo Kondo, and he is the eldest of his three children, making him heir to his father's throne," Professor Montford explains with a placid tone in her voice.

Many of the supernatural children in the room turn to goggle at Tsukiyomi with wide eyes. Tsukiyomi doesn't cringe back at the silent inspection, instead staying still and regal looking. Chandraditya swears he sees some of the girls in the room starting to swoon. Another hand goes up, this time from a shapeshifter.

"Tsula?" Professor Montford calls on.

She lowers her hand, asking in a soft and sweet voice, "May I ask Tsukiyomi a question?"

"Go ahead. This could take a while." Their professor says, whispering the last part to herself. Tsula's emerald green eyes meet with Tsukiyomi's blood red ones. They take only a moment to study the other's new and unique features. Chandraditya remembers that Tsula is in his faction group. He remembers seeing her name on his dorm room list. Having her sweet face to her name, Tsula Sequoyah, is somehow comforting. The shapeshifter is small and petite, only looking like a thirteen-year-old. She has long auburn hair the color of fall leaves, her eyes the color of emeralds. She has light brown skin, like coffee with a lot of creamer.

"What is it that you want to ask, Tsula-*chan*?" Tsukiyomi questions, flashing the small girl a smile.

Her smile is sweet like honey as she politely asks, "Why are your eyes red? The other vampires here in this room don't have red eyes like you do."

Tsukiyomi chuckles, leaning back in his chair as he looks at the small shapeshifter. "My eyes are red because I have an ability. Seeing most of the others' confused faces makes him sigh. "An ability is a rare power that

Katie Carpenter – Sacred Heart

a vampire can be born with, as I was. A vampire with red eyes is the symbol of their power, and their eyes glow when their ability has been activated. Does this satisfy your curiosity, Tsula-*chan*?”

Tsula nods her head, her eyes bright with this new knowledge.

“Does anyone else have questions for the prince that is present in the room?” Professor Montford asks exasperatedly. When no one raises their hands, the blonde dragonborn reopens her book to the page she bookmarked, “If you would please open your textbooks to page one hundred and seven. Tsukiyomi, please start us off by reading the top paragraph.” The vampire opens his textbook, flipping through the pages until he reaches the designated page. When the flipping of pages stops, he starts reading aloud.

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Luke Helena has to say he is tremendously surprised no one has yelled at him yet. Not that he deserved it or anything, it's just...mostly everyone had been in the war against the dragonborn. He had not been in it, and what he mostly did was join the resistance in the dragon army. He doesn't have the scars that he sees his classmates with. All pale and horrible and marring their skin. He doesn't have the fighting experience most of them do. If he got in a fight, least to say, he would be beaten into a pulp. That is, if any of the dragonborn found out he was a part of the dragon resistance instead of the dragon army.

“Look there! It's the vampire prince!”

Luke tilts his head back to look at the door with many of the other students in the second-period History class. His blood freezes in his veins in awe and fear. A Japanese teen walks into the room with an Indian fae at his side, talking like they've known each other for the longest time. Luke recognizes both of them. Tsukiyomi Kondo and Chandraditya Shyama. Both of them are in his group, as it's known as the Nyx group, named after the Greek goddess of night. Everyone knows that the vampire prince is in the Nyx group, so they will know that Luke is also in his group. That vampire is a really good way to draw attention to himself. Unwanted attention.

Luke quickly swivels his head so it's facing forward, hoping that neither of them has noticed their dragonborn groupmate. Again, Luke doesn't like to stand out, but his features defy him. He knows he has platinum blonde hair with small streaks of white all through it. His eyes are a cloudless sky blue, bright and big and full of paranoia. His wings are pure white, the membranes translucent silver. The claws poking out of his fingertips are a

Katie Carpenter – Sacred Heart

shiny, metallic gray, not yet tainted or stained by blood. Luke sheathes his claws carefully, drawing his wings as close to his body as possible.

“It’s Luke, right?” A Japanese accented voice questions kindly and softly.

The dragonborn sighs. Does nothing escape this vampire’s blood red gaze? “Stellaluna Adolpha is over there if you want to sit by her,” Luke answers instead, nodding to the she-werewolf sitting alone in the corner of the auditorium-like room.

The vampire looks as if he’s considering calling out to the werewolf, but quickly shakes his head, looking back down at Luke. “Only a few groupmates at a time, please. I am still a little new to this...English. I kept trying to slip into Japanese while reading from the textbook last period.” Tsukiyomi explains sheepishly, rubbing the back of his head while chuckling.

Luke glances at Chandraditya, finding the fae’s withering glare. He smothers a yelp, his sky blue eyes snapping back to Tsukiyomi’s crimson gaze. *Chandraditya hates me...and he hasn’t even met me! Does he have something against us dragons? Did the dragonborn do something to his family and that’s why he hates all dragons? Guilt worms into Luke’s heart, guilt that his kind caused his groupmate to suffer so much that he hates all dragonborn, even if he hasn’t met them yet.*

“Will...Chandraditya be joining us?” Luke asks nervously, his eyes flitting between the soft, blood red ones of Tsukiyomi and the stone hard, diamond black ones of Chandraditya.

Tsukiyomi’s smile turns into a tight frown, glancing at the fae. “...only if he wants to,” Tsukiyomi replies carefully, red locking onto blue again.

Chandraditya looks around, then scowls at Luke. “I’m only sitting with my friend, Tsukiyomi, not you. Dragonborn.”

Luke winces at the venom in Chandraditya’s voice, wishing he could run back to the resistance. Back to the people he calls his family after his own died in the war. He bites back the impulse to apologize, knowing that Chandraditya would never forgive him because of his heritage. The dragonborn is all too grateful when they finally sit down, Tsukiyomi beside Luke and Chandraditya on the other side of Tsukiyomi.

For the first few minutes of class, everyone is silent as the professor for this class reads from the textbook. Then a hand goes up. “Asher, you have a question?” A red winged dragonborn stands up, glaring at the professor. “Professor, are you saying that the dragonborn started the war?” Asher demands, his voice cold with anger. The

Katie Carpenter – Sacred Heart

room falls silent, and Luke jumps when a hand slams down on his desk, another following it from the corner of the room. He looks over, seeing that both Chandraditya and Stellaluna have stood up, glaring darkly at the dragonborn named Asher.

“Yes! The dragonborn were the ones to start the war with the werewolves and the vampires!” Stellaluna barks, her normally dark brown eyes starting to glow golden honey.

“It was the dragonborn who attacked fae villages and the shapeshifter clans!” Chandraditya adds, and Luke hears his hands start to pop. When he looks at the fae’s hands, sparks of light are bouncing off his palms and the underside of his fingers.

“Adolpha, Shyama, calm down.” Their professor orders.

“Only because we were attacked first! By your people, the fae!” Asher spats, pointing an accusing finger at Chandraditya, “We were merely striking back against our enemies!”

“That’s a lie! The fae are noble creatures of light and peace! Not like dragons, who rule the darkness and resort to violence!” Chandraditya defends, his voice sharp with anger and hate.

Luke knows he has to do something, or they will continue to fight. “Stop it. It was us, Asher.” The dragonborn hates how everyone’s eyes land on him, locking him in place with their judgemental stares. Chandraditya turns to stare at the dragonborn who had spoken against the other dragon. He stares at Luke for a full moment, his diamond black eyes wide with shock. *Wait...aren't the dragonborn supposed to be on the same side? Why is this one on my side? Why? He's supposed to be bad like Asher over there!*

Asher’s lips pull back over his teeth, revealing bloodstained fangs, “I thought we had a resistance member in the first-year class. I just didn’t know who. And I didn’t expect him to reveal himself so openly.” The other dragonborn suddenly vaults over his desk, his feet leaving the ground with strong beats of his wings. Chandraditya’s eyes go big with fear and a sudden protectiveness as the dragonborn’s claws reach for Luke. As sudden as the dragonborn leaped, he’s rendered immobile in the air. He’s still able to flail and fight and curse colorfully against the dark, shadowy tendrils wrapping around his limbs. The dark tendrils then shove Asher’s arms behind his back, forcing his red wings to fold against his body. The dragon’s agate eyes lock hatefully on something between Chandraditya and Luke. Chandraditya’s gaze follows Asher’s until he’s staring at a calmly raging Tsukiyomi. The vampire is standing, his hand raised to the dragonborn as if he’s lifting a chalice stiffly. His crimson eyes are blazing a bright ruby red.

Katie Carpenter – Sacred Heart

Tsukiyomi honestly thought he wouldn't have to use his ability so early on in the school year, let alone on the first day. He did expect to use it on a dragonborn though. The vampire prince sighs internally, regrets flying by in his mind. He's had the power to control and manipulate the shadows ever since he was little. His father was beyond pleased when his power manifested at the young age of twenty, or, in vampire years, five. When he had been thirteen years old (in vampire years, of course), he'd been given his own squadron of vampires to lead into battle. He has immediately been made a commander, due to his royal status and the advanced training his father had put him through.

Tsukiyomi had only used his power during the war a few times, carefully thinking it through to make it seem the cause was natural. Maybe if he had used it more...and not cared who saw him...maybe he could have saved a lot more of his friends and family on the battlefield. *That's why I promised myself that I would use my power to protect my friends at this school. I won't let them get hurt, and I'll stop anyone who tries.* Tsukiyomi reminds himself quietly in his head, glaring at the dragonborn he currently has trapped in tangles of shadows.

"Hasn't enough blood been shed, Asher-senpai? Do you really think the death of one dragon and fae will add up to something good? Aren't you tired of fighting?" Tsukiyomi questions.

The dragonborn freezes, but the anger remains the same as ever.

Tsukiyomi curls his fingers tighter, causing the dragonborn to wince as more shadows slip around his lashing tail, holding it still. "I will release you once you apologize to my friends for trying to harm them. That includes the werewolf named Stellaluna, the dragonborn named Luke, and the fae named Chandraditya. If you don't, I will leave you hanging here until class ends." Tsukiyomi conditions.

"You can't do that!" Asher roars, his eyes glowing with rage and hate. His teeth are bared fully, showing his bloodstained teeth.

"I assume you won't offer an apology, so have fun with sore limbs after class." Tsukiyomi shrugs, dropping his arm, keeping the dragonborn suspended in the air by the shadows with his mind. He's about to sit back down when the dragonborn yells out again.

"Wait! I'm sorry! Just get me down from here!" Asher demands, flailing again.

"Say their names and apologize again." Tsukiyomi orders, standing up straight again.

Asher grits his teeth together, then hisses out, "I'm sorry, Chandraditya, Stellaluna, and...Luke."

Tsukiyomi smiles gratefully, "Thank you for your cooperation, Asher-dono."

Katie Carpenter – Sacred Heart

The shadows around the dragonborn slowly bring him back down to the solid ground. He growls at the shadows as they sink back into the ceiling, dissolving back into regular, harmless shadows. Tsukiyomi silently thanks the shadows, closing his eyes and letting his power disperse. When they reopen, they're back to being a crimson red like blood. Vampires, werewolves, shapeshifters, dragonborn, and fae alike all stare at Tsukiyomi with varying levels of worry, fear, awe, and anger.

“One thing you must know about me,” Tsukiyomi addresses the supernaturals staring at him. They all perk up in interest and fear, “I am protective of those whom I call my friends.”

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End

...for now...