Set at the end of Season 7 Episode 1:

The Mystic Falls crew have seen some powerful and old immortals. The Original vampires, Silas, etc. They thought they had defeated the oldest and most powerful of all in Silas. But Silas was but a taste. Because now, in their search for an ally in defeating the Heretics, they have unwittingly walked into the middle of the internal affairs of the white walkers, the oldest beings on Earth. (Again, it has nothing to do with Game Of Thrones. The naming similarity is purely coincidental)
Creatures In The Night

Mystic Falls 2015

The night was chilly, but Alasdair didn’t mind. In fact, he relished it. He strolled down the empty
town’s main road, handsome with his raven black hair and almost unnaturally blue eyes. He
wondered for a moment at the lack of people, but then remembered reading in the paper that there
had been a mining fire that had caused a town wide evacuation. He smiled. That was very likely a
lie. In his long life he had often found that when a town was evacuated, as this one had been, its
cause was usually of the supernatural variety.

As he passed the local bar, he heard footsteps behind him. Turning around to see who it was, he
found himself facing a man with brown hair, wearing a blazer and collared shirt.

“Nice suit,” the stranger drawled. Alasdair smiled, adjusting his all white dress attire slightly.
Looking at the stranger’s own choice of clothing, Alasdair sighed, “I wish I could say the same to
you.”

The stranger’s smirk curdled like sour milk. “What’s your name, friend?”

“My name is Alasdair,” Alasdair replied evenly, “And what is yours, friend?”

“My name is Malcolm,” and suddenly Malcolm snarled, growing fangs and charging Alasdair with a
supernatural blast of speed, closing down his jaws on Alasdair’s neck, intent on sucking the life out
of him.

Except, nothing happened. There was no blood to drink from. Alasdair sighed, as Malcolm staggered
away from him in horror. Before he could react, Alasdair had him by the throat, and Malcolm was
dangling in air.

“You know Malcolm,” Alasdair lamented, looking at the ruins of his neck that were already healing,
“that was my favorite jacket.” He plunged his hand into Malcolm’s chest, grasping his hand around
his heart. Desperate, Malcolm tried to quell Alasdair with magic, summoning up a spell that would
incapacitate any supernatural creature.

Alasdair stared at Malcolm. What was he doing with his hand? He wondered. Then it hit him, “You
can do magic,” he breathed, amazed, “As a vampire? Incredible. Unfortunately for you, it won’t work on me. I assure you it’s a common mistake however.”

Malcolm struggled in Alasdair’s grip. “Please,” he choked out, begging for his life.

Alasdair simply shook his head. “Not only do you attack me, with no provocation, you ruin my favorite jacket. And you do all this without the slightest notion of who I am, or my power.” He drew Malcolm closer, his voice becoming a snarl. “I am the oldest creature on this planet. Show me some damn respect!” And with that, he ripped Malcolm’s heart out, dropping the body in the middle of the street, and continued with his walk. His night suitably ruined, his thoughts went to the night so long ago, when he had become what he was today…

Scotland 1046 BC

The night was frigid, and Alasdair hated it. He hated the cold. He longed for the few short days of summer, when the Highlands were warm and the flowers in bloom. Muireall would always tease him, telling him what a terrible Pictish warrior he was, for loving the flowers so much. He didn’t see what was so bad about it. Between all the blood and chaos that followed the life of a Pictish warrior, a little natural beauty was to be appreciated, he felt. It didn’t matter anyways, it was the dead of winter, and he was no longer fighting for clan and township, he was fighting invaders.

They were passing below them now, marching in neat columns. Invaders were nothing new, but no one had ever seen invaders like these before. Invaders usually came from the East, and were not that much different from the Picts themselves. These invaders, however, had come from the southwest, and they looked as foreign as could possibly be imagined. Riding golden chariots, their warriors initially wore nothing on their upper bodies. A Caledonian winter had quickly changed that. The few times the clans had engaged these foreigners in the open field, the result had been disastrous. Whatever these foreigners lacked in outdoorsmanship, they made up for in strategy. Half the clans’ best warriors had been struck down in one afternoon. That didn’t happen again, as the clans had adopted a kind of forest warfare, one that had been far more successful against the invaders. The force below them was small, only a few chariots, which had become a theme lately with the invaders. After losing a few large forces, the invaders had gotten smarter, committing less and less forces to patrols. Unfortunately for them, it wouldn’t stop these patrols from getting slaughtered.

The leader of Alasdair’s clan raised his axe above his head, and with a roar a dozen Pictish warriors charged onto the unsuspecting invaders. That is, until a new roar could be heard from behind Alasdair. Turning around, he realized with horror that the invaders had actually ambushed the entire tribe. They had used the small patrol as bait. Dozens of invaders were surrounding the Picts. Disgusted, Alasdair’s chief threw his axe on the ground. They had learned that the invaders took prisoners, and would frequently use the prisoners to exchange for land and other services. As Alasdair’s clanmates began throwing their weapons on the ground and kneeling, a commotion occurred from the back of the invaders war party. A woman, stunningly beautiful with a large
A witch, Alasdair realized. He’d heard tales of the powerful sorceresses of the invaders, yet had never seen one face to face. Looking over the assembled faces of the Pictish warriors, her gaze lingered on Alasdair. Something about the look in her eyes made his skin crawl. Nodding, she pointed at him. Two of their warriors went and started dragging him in her wake. Behind him, he heard the screams of slaughter as his fellow warriors were cut down. All he could think was, Why me?

Mystic Falls 2015

The door to the Salvatore house swung open with a bang. Nora and Mary-Louise rushed in, carrying the body of Malcolm between them.

“Valerie! Beau!” Nora cried, the brunette vampire-siphoner distraught with grief and confusion. The dirty-blonde and the mute pounded into the room.

“Oh no Malcolm!” Valerie cried, rushing to her dead friend’s side.

“We found him like this in the middle of the street.” Mary-Louise stated, the blonde tearing up as she made eye contact with Nora, her lover.

“We mustn’t let Lily see him like this,” Nora insisted, but it was too late. Lily Salvatore had at that moment just entered the room. Seeing her favorite “child” dead, she rushed to his side, sobbing, stroking his face and repeating the same phrase over and over. “Who did this?”

“There’s only a few people who could have done this,” Nora declared, “And all of them are affiliated with your sons.”

“They will pay for this,” Lily swore, “They will pay, in blood.”
Alasdair awoke in a tent. He was chained to a post, other than that there was nothing in the tent. The air was still cold. He shivered, recalling the way his fellow warriors had been cut down. Behavior like this was unlike any that had been exhibited by the invaders before this. They were unexpectedly merciful when they had arrived, and had continued to be so. The only thing different this time around-

“I hope you are doing well,” the witch said, entering the tent. She was still wearing the snakeskin coat.

“Why did you kill my friends?” Alasdair asked, still groggy from sleep.

“What we are doing here needed to be a secret,” the witch replied. “I am Nefetari.”

“And what are you doing here?” Alasdair returned, “And what does it have to do with me?”

Instead of answering his question, Nefetari tilted her head and wondered, “How much do you know about my people?”

“Not much,” Alasdair admitted, “You came from the Southeast, you take prisoners, usually.”

“Where I come from, there is no winter such as this,” Nefetari explained, “It is hot all year round. My homeland is known as Egypt, and it is as far away from here as you can imagine.”

“Then what are you doing here?” Alasdair asked.

Nefetari sighed, “We were exiled from our homeland by a tyrant. We lived for a while in Iberia, a land in between ours and yours. Eventually however, we heard rumors of a magical artifact that could provide us with unmeasurable power, enough to retake our homeland. Legend had it that it was in your land, and so we set sail to find it.”
“And?” Alasdair asked, “Did you find what you were looking for?”

“We did,” Nefetari informed him, taking out a pure white stone the size of his fist. “And I am going to use it to make you into the weapon that will restore Egypt to its true power.”

**Mystic Falls 2015**

Damon and Stefan Salvatore hummed along the empty streets of the abandoned Mystic Falls, bickering as usual.

“So you are seriously telling me you just gave in to a bunch of Heretics and handed them our town?” Damon sputtered, incredulous.

“It was the only way,” Stefan insisted, “we needed to protect the humans until we could figure out a different solution.

“Well you’d better hope we find that solution, brother,” Damon mused, “Or else I might do something I’ll regret.”

Suddenly Beau stood in front of their car. Damon slammed the brakes. The mute stood in front of the car, silent and immobile. After a few seconds of waiting, Damon threw up his hands silently in confusion and disgust, and both brothers got out of the car.

“Can I help you, Helen Keller?” Damon joked.

“No no Damon,” Stefan interrupted, “Helen Keller couldn’t see either. Beau here can see, can’t you Beau?” and Stefan waved his hand in front of Beau’s face a few times. Suddenly both Salvatore brothers were incapacitated by the mute.

“Sorry, you’ll have to excuse Beau,” Lily rounded the car, “He’s not in the mood for glib jokes. None of us are.”
“Ok I’ll bite,” Stefan said, struggling to his feet, “What’s going on. Why are you guys so upset?”

“Someone killed Malcolm last night,” Lily announced, “and considering the only people here are us and your group, one of you has to be involved.”

Stefan, confused, looked to Damon. Damon briefly considered telling the truth, then realized that there was an opportunity to be gained, and put on his trademark smirk, “Alright mother, you caught me. I killed your little plaything. He looked at me wrong, what was I supposed to-ahhh!” He was interrupted by the splitting headache he was receiving, courtesy of Beau.

“You think his death was a joke?” Lily spat, furious, “He was my-

“What nonsense is this!” A stranger strode into their midst. He was tall, black haired, with an all white suit and blue eyes that were like chips of ice. “Can a man not enjoy his morning walk without a vampire fight disturbing it?”

“And who are you?” Lily wondered, outraged by the stranger’s demeanor and strongly considering having him for lunch.

“Hello, my name is Alasdair,” Alasdair replied, bowing, “And I, not this pathetic pretender,” he gestured contemptuously at Damon, “killed your beloved Malcolm.”

“You what?” Lily hissed.

“Well, he attacked me for no good reason, ruining a perfectly good suit I might add,” Alasdair informed her. “I think I had good reason.”

Beau snarled and turned his magic towards the mysterious murderer, extending a spell to break his arm. Nothing happened. Alasdair chuckled.

“I will never get over how weird it is to see a vampire doing magic.” he commented. “How do you do it?”

“Their siphoners,” Damon provided. “Apparently that ability doesn’t go away when they die.”
“Fascinating,” Alasdair smiled. “Now I’ve been around a long time, but I’ve never seen that. It doesn’t work on me of course. Your friend Malcolm learned that the hard way.”

Lily’s rage had been building during this entire exchange, and upon hearing her precious Malcolm discussed in such cavalier fashion she lost it, flying towards Alasdair as fast as she could. He caught her quite easily, and hoisted her in the air.

“You know,” he said, smiling, “This is the exact same position I held Malcolm in as he begged for his life. Will you beg?” he wondered.

Beau tried to rush him, to save Lily. Alasdair caught him too, and had both of them dangling in the air.

“I’m sorely tempted to kill you both,” Alasdair admitted, “but I think I’ll leave you alive with little more than a bruised ego to tell all your friends.” And with that he threw them clean through a house. Nodding to Damon and Stefan, he started to walk away.

The brothers, exchanged looks, then hurried to follow the walking immortal.

“Hey so that was pretty cool,” Damon remarked, “What would you say to sticking around and throwing the rest of them out of town.”

“Not interested,” Alasdair replied.

“Hey man look,” Stefan insisted, “We really need you. Please help us get our town back. They killed an entire class of cadets.”


“Name your price,” Damon proclaimed, “We’ll do anything.”

Alasdair stopped, “Anything?”
“Anything,” Stefan confirmed.

Alasdair smiled, “Well gentlemen, I might be able to help you after all.”
“You want us to go to Egypt,” Damon stated, unsure if he had heard Alasdair correctly.

“There’s a suit of pure white armor there, in Alexandria,” Alasdair confirmed, “Two suits, actually. I need you to retrieve them both.”

“Why us?” Stefan asked, “I mean, why can’t you just waltz on in and take it yourself? I mean you’re impervious to magic, and you just overpowered two powerful vampires like it was nothing. What’s stopping you?”

“Irrelevant,” Alasdair answered, “All you need to know is that there are two suits of all white armor in Alexandria, and I need you to retrieve them and bring them back to me.”

“I’m sure that’s something we can manage,” Stefan agreed, “Now, first, we need you to drive the Heretics far away from here.”

“Absolutely not,” Alasdair replied, “You will retrieve my armor from Alexandria, and only after both sets are safely returned will I drive these Heretics out.”

“We can’t do that,” Damon insisted, “We’d be leaving the town defenseless. Who’s gonna protect trespassers? Deputy Doofus sure ain’t gonna cut it.”

Alasdair considered their protest, “Very well. I will protect any humans that wander onto the town’s premises, and you will retrieve my armor.”

The Salvatore brothers considered his offer. Making eye contact, both brothers could tell they were in agreement, and, in a rare moment of unity, they both nodded. “You have a deal,” Stefan announced.

“Excellent,” Alasdair smiled. “Now I believe you have some packing to attend to, and I will go off to protect the strays from getting put down.” And with that he started strolling through the abandoned
“Well brother,” Damon sighed, “let’s pack for Egypt.”

“Nah,” Stefan said, “I’m not going.”

“What?” Damon sputtered, “If we don’t go, he’s just going to leave us, and we’ll be right where we started.”

“I know,” Stefan replied, “That’s why you’re going to Egypt. Take Bonnie and Alaric with you. I want to stay here, keep an eye on him, make sure he stays on our side.”

“Alright,” Damon grumbled, “Call me if he starts misbehaving.”

“Will do,” Stefan replied, both of their eyes glued to the retreating white back of their new mysterious ally.

Scotland 1046 BC

The wind was howling outside Alasdair’s tent. Shivering, he wondered why he wasn’t provided with any adequate clothing. He wondered why he was chained up in his own tent with nothing else in it. He wondered if Nefetari’s story was true. And for the millionth time since his capture, he wondered why he specifically had been chosen to be “spared” from the slaughter.

Two soldiers walked into his tent, interrupting his musings. The invaders, no, “Egyptians”, that’s what Nefetari had called them, went and unlocked his chains. Grabbing him by the arms, they dragged him out into the blizzard.

“Where are we going?” Alasdair asked. “What are you going to do to me?”

The Egyptians gave no indication they even heard him, much less understood him. The wind whipped around them, making Alasdair long for the now cozy seeming confines of the tent. He was led towards a crowd of Egyptians. As he drew closer, he could see that they were arranged in a circle. He was unceremoniously dumped in the middle of this circle by his two escorts.
“Hello again Alasdair,” Nefetari purred. She was dressed in her usual attire, holding the white stone from before, “ready to see the show?”

“What is that?” Alasdair wondered, gesturing at the stone in her hand.

“This is what’s known as the Stone of Winter,” Nefetari replied, “it is the physical source of all winter in the world. It is one of the most powerful artifacts on this world.”

“What does it have to do with me?” Alasdair inquired, his fingers beginning to numb from the cold.

Nefetari smiled at his question, “I guess you’ll just have to wait and see.”

Nefetari placed the stone in the center of the circle, directly between her and Alasdair. The witch began to chant, and the winds surrounding the group of Egyptians began to pick up. Nefetari raised her hands above her head, and snow picked up by the winds began to gather above her head. At the same time, the stone began to rise off the ground, eventually coming to head height. With a final phrase the snow rushed at the stone, and with a loud crack and a blinding flash of light the stone split into four parts. The nearest part to Alasdair began to move and shake, and then suddenly it flew towards Alasdair’s head.

Mystic Falls 2015

Alasdair strolled through the empty streets of Mystic Falls, whistling a tune. As he made his third lap of the cemetery, he couldn’t help but wonder if this was all just a waste of time. Then he heard the sounds of shuffling feet. Looking, he found the culprit, a young man with flowers wandering towards a grave.

“Oh look,” He muttered to himself, “an imbecile.”

Suddenly one of the Heretics, a blonde one, appeared out of nowhere and attacked him. Alasdair judged the distance. He realized he wouldn’t be able to reach the man in time before he died. He thrust his hand in the direction of the river. Some of the water flew out of the river toward him, solidifying by the time it hit his hand into a spear of solid ice. Taking aim, he hurled it at the blonde siphoner, spearing her, and pinning her to the ground.
“Now that,” Alasdair remarked, “Is no way to treat guests. What’s your name young man?” He asked the bleeding mourner.

“Adam,” he replied.

“Well Adam,” Alasdair declared, compelling the kid, only he didn’t have to look him in the eye, “Why don’t you go back home, tell everyone you cut your neck falling on a rock, and then never come back here again.”

“Ok,” Adam replied, hurrying off towards the border.

“Now that that’s settled,” Alasdair announced, turning back to the blonde vampire who had just been able to extract herself from his ice spear, “What is your name, my lovely.”

“Go to hell,” She spat.

“Oh and wouldn’t you like that,” Alasdair sighed, “I won’t ask a second time.”

“Mary-Louise,” she muttered.

“Well, Mary-Louise,” Alasdair murmured, leaning in close, “Why don’t you go back and tell your friends that any humans that come into town are under my protection, and if I catch one of you jonesing for a snack again, I will make you feel pain in ways you cannot imagine.”

“Now run along,” He continued, “And pray you never have to hear from me again.”
Alasdair awoke, different. He didn’t know how to explain it, other than it was obvious he was no longer the same. For one thing, he was no longer cold, even though he was still in a blizzard. The second thing he noticed was that he felt something he had never experienced before. It was hard to explain. He felt almost a connection to the swirling snow around him. Like it was pulling him.

He was so engrossed in these new sensations that he almost missed Nefetari standing a few feet away from him. He looked at her with an almost clinical curiosity. “What did you do to me?” he wondered.

“I fused a section of the Stone of Winter with you,” she replied evenly, “using a spell I had only heard of in passing. I’m shocked it worked, honestly.”

“So, it worked,” Alasdair muttered, “what does that mean for me?”

“Ever wanted to live forever?” Nefetari asked him.

“Not really,” Alasdair responded.

She shrugged, “It’s moot now. That stone is tied to this world. As long as this world exists, you will live. Congratulations.”

“Ok, so I can’t be killed unless the world ends,” Alasdair stated, “Anything else?”

“Yes,” she answered, “you have dominion over the snow and ice.”

“What does that mean?” he sputtered.

Again, she shrugged, “I’m not sure, that will be for you to figure out.”
He stared at her incredulously for a second, before realizing something. *Is that what this connection is?*. He focused on the feeling for a second, trying to intensify it. Suddenly the snow around his hand condensed into a ball of ice. He dropped it like it was molten lava, backing up hurriedly, looking at Nefetari almost in horror.

She smiled, “Good, it works. Now you can get to serving our interests and restore us to the throne.”

Alasdair frowned, “Why would I help you. You killed all my friends. I am unkillable. I’m walking out of here and going home.”

“No you are not.” Nefetari snarled. “*Kneel.*”

Before he had quite realized what was happening, Alasdair was on his knees before her. He stared at the Egyptian witch in horror.

“Yes Alasdair,” She answered his unspoken query, “I modified the spell slightly. You are now under the obligation to obey the orders of anyone of Egyptian blood. If I say make snow angels in the snow, you will do it. If one of the guards outside asks you to carve a sentence into your body, you will do it. You serve Egypt now, get used to it.”

“No then what are your orders for me?” Alasdair asked, accepting his fate.

“Go to your village,” she instructed, “kill everyone but one person, and bring that person to me.”

*Mystic Falls 2015*

Alasdair was getting tired of walking around the town in circles. He found the local bar, raiding their liquor department to make himself some drinks. He was halfway through his gin and tonic when he heard a gun cock behind him.

“Who spends all their time around witches and vampires and bothers with guns?” He wondered aloud.
“I’ve found they work fine, especially when they are equipped with wooden bullets,” the man behind him replied. Alasdair turned around to get a better look at him. Tall, dirty blonde, wearing a sheriff’s uniform.

“Nice to meet you Matt Donovan,” Alasdair greeted him.

“Do I know you?” Matt replied, confused.

“Oh your friends didn’t tell you?” Alasdair asked, “I’m your new helper.”

“What do you mean?” Matt inquired, again curious.

“Well,” Alasdair explained, “In exchange for doing a little favor for me, I will drive your little Heretic problem out of town. For now, while some of your friends do said small favor, I will aid you in protecting trespassers.”

“Ok,” Matt deadpanned, once again confused, “How will you help me. These guys are more powerful than any vampire.”

Alasdair chuckled, “And that, right there, is the flaw in your choice of weaponry, Matt. You are assuming every opponent is a vampire. True, wooden hollow points are an effective way to kill and disable vampires, but that’s where their limitations lie. A witch, for example, could incapacitate you before you could shoot with barely a flick of their wrist. And as for me…”

He snapped his fingers. A nearby water jug emptied itself and suddenly flooded Matt’s gun. Alasdair snapped his fingers again, and the water froze, jamming every opening in the gun. Matt dropped the now useless weapon.

“Well guns don’t really bother me,” Alasdair finished with a grin.

“What are you?” Matt wondered, slightly horrified.

“I am something you have never seen before, nor are you likely to see again,” Alasdair responded, “And I assure you, Matt Donovan, I am more than capable of dealing with vampire-witch heretics.”
As he said that, a gas flooded the room. Alasdair took a sniff, smiling as he recognized the chemical. *Clever,* he thought before blacking out.
Alasdair awoke to the slightly uncomfortable sensation of hanging from a ceiling. Opening his eyes, he realized that his wrists had been chained to one of the central beams in a room. He briefly tested the chains with his considerable strength, discovering that it was made from one of the very few substances he could not break by brute force. Again, he gave the Heretics +1 for cleverness.

Moving onto the rest of the room, he discovered he was not alone in his entrapment. Hanging about 10 feet away from him was an attractive blonde woman, similarly chained, although her links appeared to be made of simple steel. Her skin was covered in dry blood, as she had clearly been tortured before his arrival. Looking at her appearance, in addition to the fact that, despite the amount of dried blood, there were no scars or obvious wounds, he deduced that she must be Caroline Forbes, one of the local vampires he had allied with.

“Pssst. Hey, Caroline,” he whispered. He wanted to have an idea of where he was before he started the performance.

Caroline wearily raised her head, “You must be Alasdair,” she mumbled, “So much for being the unstoppable weapon that would help us.”

“Oh I would wait before making any judgements,” Alasdair grinned, before continuing, “Where are we?”

“Damon and Stefan’s house,” Caroline answered, “The Heretics are living here now.”

“Where is it in relation to the town?” Alasdair asked.

“On the edge,” she replied.

“Good to know,” Alasdair murmured quietly to himself. “Thank you Caroline. And don’t worry, I’ll be getting you out of here soon enough.”
“I’d like to see you try,” a woman interrupted, striding into the room. She had dark brown hair, and an attractive figure, although her eyes bespoke of a temperament that predisposed itself to craziness.

“And you might you be?” Alasdair wondered.

“I am Nora,” she proclaimed, “And since you put a spear of ice through my beloved, I will be in charge of your interrogation. I’m sure you’ve noticed that you can’t break through those chains, so I’d advise against trying. We’ve also taken the precaution of removing all available water from the house.”

“I very seriously doubt that,” Alasdair stated, “And while yes, I can’t break through these chains with brute force, there are other ways I can escape.” And with that he grasped the chains, and began to focus.

At first nothing outward happened. Then a very thin sheet of ice began to form around them as the water vapor in the air surrounding the freezing chains froze. Alasdair continued to lower the temperature of the chains as low as he could go, to absolute zero. At this point they were blackened and deformed, not to mention quite brittle. He twitched his wrists, and they shattered.

Immediately he grabbed the shocked Nora by the neck.

“Well you were saying that you had removed all the water, but if that’s so, I shouldn’t feel the fact that there is an abundant amount of water running through the plumbing system in the bathroom not 5 feet from us.” And with that he summoned the water, and it busted through the pipe, solidifying into a ball of ice in his free hand. Taking some of the ball, he used it to create icy handcuffs which he used to bind Nora to a chair, and a gag to silence her.

“These are a type of thick ice that will be too strong for you to break,” he informed her. “Don’t worry though, it will eventually melt.”

Alasdair turned to Caroline. “Are you ready to leave my dear?” At her vervain-weakened nod, he quickly broke her chains and picked her up. Slinging her over his shoulder, he considered the remaining ice he had, and decided to go for a small shortaxe. Kicking the door open, he encountered a dark-haired vampire. He sliced his neck open before the man could get a shout out. Continuing down the stairs he encountered the blonde, Mary Louise.

“Miss me?” He wondered before burying his axe into her skull. Wrenching it free, he continued
towards the door, where a woman with soft brown hair and the mute from the other day, Beau, stood
blocking his way. Without much ceremony he threw his axe as hard as he could at Beau, who easily
brushed aside quite easily. Alasdair shrugged, dropping Caroline and unbuttoning his blazer, and
assumed a defensive stance. They were two, and were faster than him, but he was far stronger, and
he had almost 3,000 years of hand to hand combat experience. As he expected, they made the rookie
mistake of taking him one at a time, the mute first. He threw first one, then the girl through several
different rooms in their house. Picking up Caroline he then walked out of the house.

Scotland 1046

Alasdair crunched through the snow. The connection he felt to every little white flake around him
was almost unnerving, but it was preferable to focusing on what he was about to do. Kill his entire
village. People who he had known his entire life. It would be relatively simple, in all honesty. Most
of the men of the village had been lost in the ambush that had resulted in his capture. In fact, the only
reason it hadn’t already been taken was the paths had been covered due to the recent blizzard.

He came upon the village, remembering his instructions. Kill all but one. Who to spare was relatively
easy. His little sister, Muireall. They’re parents had both died when they were very young. He had
raised her, and they were very close. She would not die tonight. Everyone else, however…

The first one he killed was Bouda, who he had once fancied, before she married his cousin,
Donruno. She was out gathering firewood, and he decapitated her before she knew what happened.
After, he was walking out of the woods when Donruno came out to see when she went. After he
saw the blood on Alasdair’s battleaxe, he grabbed his sword and attacked Alasdair. Dodging
Alasdair’s swing, he landed a cut. It burned, as it always did, and as he always did when he got cut,
Alasdair wished he could just eliminate the pain. And shockingly, the pain did. His entire body went
numb, and blood stopped flowing. He looked down in shock at himself, as did his cousin. At least
until Alasdair’s axe buried itself into his torso.

The rest of the massacre was a merciful blur of blood and violence. He discovered many things about
his newfound powers besides his apparent ability to not feel pain, including a frightening amount of
strength that led him to tear off the arm of his former neighbor. In addition he was apparently able to
take normal water and freeze it.

He returned to the Egyptian camp, covered in blood, dragging his screaming sister behind him. He
had found her last, in their old house, holding her axe and shield, ready to fight.

“There’s no need for that little sister,” he informed her, dropping his ice axe.
“What are you?” she spat, “And what have you done with my brother?”

“I’m still your brother,” he insisted, “As for what I am, there’s no way I can explain, but you have to come with me.”

“Why did you kill all those people?” she demanded, “My brother never killed unless he had too.”

“They made me Muireall,” he explained, “I had no choice.”

“There’s always a choice,” she deadpanned.

“Not this time,” he returned, “They told me to spare one though, and I’m sparing you, but you have to come with me.”

“Never,” she asserted.

“I’m afraid you don’t have a choice, little sister,” which led them to their current situation.

He brought her to the tent where he had been held captive, tying her to the same post he had been tied to, then sat down in a heap 4 feet from her. For her part she had stopped struggling once she was tied, and now simply sat and cried silently.

Nefetari then entered the tent. Looking at Muireall, then at Alasdair, she smirked.

“Your sister I presume?” she enquired. Alasdair nodded glumly. Muireall hadn’t stopped glaring at Nefetari since she entered.

“What have you done with my brother?” she demanded.

“What I will soon do to you,” Nefetari replied, “however first, I require two more participants.” She turned to Alasdair, “Now go to your next nearest town, repeat the process, except this time, spare two people, not one. I’d prefer a woman and a man, for symmetry.”
The Heretics sat in the main hall of the house, pondering how to deal with the new entrance of Alasdair. Oscar stood in the middle of the house. After her first encounter, Lily had rerouted his task to finding whatever he could about their mystery attacker.

“It’s not a lot,” the Asian-American vampire said, “I vaguely heard of beings known as white walkers that seemed to match your descriptions. All of the stories about them are Egyptian in origin.”

“Wait,” Valerie interrupted, “did you say ‘beings’? As in there are more of these guys.”

“Supposedly there are 4,” Oscar replied, “2 men and 2 women.”

“And,” Nora pressed, “How are they killed?”

“Supposedly,” Oscar responded, “they are the only truly immortal beings on the planet.”

“That’s impossible,” Mary Louise scoffed.

“I can assure you it is not,” a voice interrupted. All the Heretics wheeled around.

Leaning in their doorway was a man. He had shoulder length ratty hair, and an equally ratty beard. He was wearing a beat up old t-shirt, with a pair of mom jeans to match.

“And who are you?” Lily wondered.

“My name is Kester,” the man replied, “And I am one of the three other white walkers.”

Instantly the Heretics were on the defensive, Beau and Valerie taking defensive positions in front of Lily. Kester snorted in derisive laughter.
“Please, not only is that posturing useless, it’s unnecessary,” he informed them, “I’m hear to help. You want Alasdair gone, I can help with that, for a price.”

“And what price is that?” Nora enquired.

Kester looked around, his next words almost a desperate plea. “End my miserable existence.”
“You just said you can’t be killed, and now you’re asking us to kill you?” Mary-Louise asked, confused.

“Not kill me,” Kester clarified, “End my existence. I admit it sounds a bit melodramatic, but in essence I want you to put me in a coma, forever, using your, particular, talents with siphoning magic.”

“I don’t follow,” Nora stated.

“Really it’s irrelevant,” Kester explained, “all you need to know is I am here, willing to help, provided you agree to help ‘kill’ me. And before you get ideas, no you cannot perform this same trick on Alasdair. I’m afraid it requires the participant’s consent.”

“Very well,” Lily spoke, “Now go forth and drive this monster away.”

Kester chuckled. “I’m afraid it’s going to be a little more difficult than that. You see, Alasdair normally doesn’t take on charity cases. Not only that, but he’s not one for dilly-dallying which confused me when I arrived here. Why help these people, first, and then also delay the execution of a task that I assure you he is quite capable of handling in a speedy fashion. This made me realize that he had cut a deal with your adversaries. Now there is only one thing that they could offer him. One thing he has desired for over 2,000 years, yet never been able to acquire.”

“And what is that?” Valerie wondered.

“His suit of armor,” Kester explained. “And I’m afraid once he has this I will be unable to drive him out, without my own armor. So,” he continued, “I need one of you to go to Alexandria at the site of the Bibliotheca Alexandria and retrieve my armor, so that I may complete the task you have set to me.”

“If what you say is true,” Oscar said, “then the Mystic Falls vampires must already have started out on a quest to find this armor. We are at a significant disadvantage.”
“Not necessarily,” Kester informed him, “you see all Alasdair knows, and by extension his allies, is that the armor is in Alexandria. He’s never actually been in the city, nor does he have a clue where in the city it is. I however, can tell you exactly where to go and how to find it.”

Somewhere over the Atlantic 2015

“So where is this armor?” Bonnie asked.

“No idea,” Damon answered, “Mr. Whiteclothes wasn’t exactly specific. Said all we needed to know was it was in Alexandria.”

“Oh, easy,” Alaric muttered, “I was going to be worried, but now I know that it’s somewhere in a city of 4.5 million people, I feel much more confident.”

Damon gave him an exasperated look. “We don’t have to search the whole city,” he explained, “he said the armor is 2000 years old. We just need to search the area that was there during that time. I say we start with a museum, maybe the university.”

Hearing Damon say university gave Alaric an idea. “Guys, I may have an idea about how to narrow our search.”

Scotland 1046

For the second time, Alasdair walked to slaughter. This time, however, he did with a much less heavy heart. This village and his had a history. They were constantly at each other’s throats. In fact, it had been a raid from this village that had resulted in the death of his parents. Safe to say, he was not in a pitying mood. There were some he didn’t mind he supposed. Some of the men his age weren’t so bad. Kester in particular was one of the funnier ones. There was a reason he was known as Kester the Jester. If he could, he’d try and spare him. She had asked for a woman too, and in honesty he hated their women the most. Their spear maidens had a propensity for cruelty, and Muireall in particular had some bad experiences with them.

He came upon the village with a fury, with a better understanding of his powers. This village had its full strength, and so there was more resistance. It didn’t help them. He cut them down like so many stalks of wheat. Eventually they tried to run, and he pursued them like a storm, finding them and
ending them with a methodical furiosity that any serial killer would have admired. Eventually he found the person he had been most looking forward to killing, Rhona. Known as the most beautiful of their women, and the most cruel. It had been she who had tortured his sister for two whole days, and left Muireall with a permanent fear of the color red.

He found her behind a hut, with Kester, hiding.

“Hello Rhona,” he grinned, “I’ve been looking forward to this.”

“Very well,” she replied, expressionless. “End it then.” A small part of Alasdair admired her for her bravery, but nevertheless, raised his axe to avenge his sister’s suffering.

But he could not bring it down. For some reason, his arms would not move. Suddenly, he realized the reason. No, he thought.

“Fuck!” he yelled, slamming his axe into the ground. He could not kill her. She and Kester were the last two living members of their clan. He had to spare their lives.

“Luckily for you,” he said to the confused companions, “someone wants you alive.” and he grabbed both and began dragging them back to the Egyptians camp.

Mystic Falls 2015

“Thank you,” Stefan said for about the fourth time that day, “she might not say it, but I appreciate what you did, getting her out of their.”

“Ah well,” Alasdair smiled, “I couldn’t exactly leave one of my brand new allies just sitting in the clutches of our evil opponents, now could I?”

“Ah I am so moved by your chivalry,” Caroline smirked. They were all sitting in the park, enjoying a brunch, Stefan’s thank you gesture to Alasdair. Stefan had been desperately planning a rescue attempt when Alasdair had arrived at his doorstep, dumping a comatose Caroline at the doorstep.

Stefan found his new ally curious. So clearly all powerful, yet he somehow needed their help to
complete a simple task. There was also his insistence to dress in the all white suit everywhere he went. Alasdair reminded him of Elijah in this aspect a little bit, although Alasdair had a sense of humor that Elijah lacked.

“My god you look ridiculous,” a voice interrupted Stefan’s musings. Alasdair’s eyes shifted slightly, and lost their playful attitude that he had shown since his arrival. Standing up, he turned around to face the intruder.

“Says the walking homeless impersonator,” Alasdair fired back. Stefan and Caroline, sat back, thoroughly confused by the whole encounter.

“Oh well,” the man shrugged, “at least I don’t stick out like a sore thumb. You ever going to introduce me to your new friends?”

“Caroline, Stefan,” Alasdair stated flatly, “meet Kester, one of the other white walkers. Yes there are more of us.”

“Much obliged,” Kester bowed to the two vampires, before turning back to Alasdair, “Where’s Rhona? I thought you two were attached at the hip.”

“Rhona’s….been in a bit of a mood for the last 50 years or so,” Alasdair replied, “I’ve been giving her some space, you know how she can get. What about you, find a noose big enough to cut through the Stone yet?”

“Something like that,” Kester replied, and they both gave each other a wry smile, one that never reached their eyes. Stefan was suddenly very aware that both of them held an intense dislike for the other.

“Oh really?” Alasdair continued, “anything I should worry about?”

“Not necessarily,” Kester replied, “it’s the kind of thing that requires consent.”

“How law abiding of you,” Alasdair joked, “mind telling me what it is?”
“Why would I?” Kester wondered, voice growing bitter, “When have you shown anything but hostility towards my goal?”

Alasdair’s eyes flashed, real emotion coming through for the first time since Stefan had met him. “You would portray yourself as the victim? You? After what you did to Muireall? That’s funny. You’d ask me to do you a favor, to help you with your ‘quest’? Like I said, that’s funny, because I distinctly recall coming to you, with a favor. I begged you to take Mehmet as your sponsor, to spare Muireall the possible danger. And you agreed, you lied, to my face, and yet you expected me to follow through with my end of the deal. Absolutely not.”

“Alasdair.” Kester pleaded.

“No, you know what? Something’s been eating at me, these last few millennia” Alasdair interrupted him, eyes bright with bitterness and anger, “I want to know. What changed? We had an arrangement. Mehmet wanted to end us, you knew that, and you wanted to end yourself. What was the hold up? What made you change your mind?” he demanded. Kester just stood there, gaze with an unreadable amount of emotion. Alasdair’s, however, were becoming more and more blue, if that were possible. “TELL ME!” he shouted.

Kester finally shrugged. “Hard to kill yourself from the bottom of the ocean,” he muttered.

Alasdair stood motionless, his breath coming in haggard gasps as he processed what he had just heard. “You knew?” he asked, dangerously calm. At Kester’s nod, Alasdair flew into such a rage that his previous anger looked to Stefan to be inconsequential. “You knowingly consigned my little sister to a fate far worse than any death?” he demanded, his voice growing louder and louder.

“Alasdair I am sorry,” Kester stated, but it had no effect on Alasdair.

“She showed you nothing but kindness,” he shouted. Stefan shivered. The temperature had been steadily dropping, and the grass in the town square was starting to frost. “She loved you,” the immortal was practically sobbing. “Even so, she alone helped you find new ways to kill yourself. And how did you repay her? By dispatching her to the bottom of the Mediterranean. No you will find no release from this immortal coil from me Kester. In fact, I will actively seek to prolong your suffering, just as soon as I have honored my promise to these people. Because, Kester, unlike yours, my word still holds value!”

“I’m afraid you won’t get that chance, Alasdair.” Kester replied, “my end actually requires the presence and assistance of the Heretics. It is no longer a bunch of younglings you face Alasdair. Soon I too will have my armor, and then you will find it much more difficult to honor your promise.”
“Get out of my sight.” Alasdair hissed, his eyes practically glowing blue.

“Until next time, Alasda…” Kester began, turning to leave.

“I SAID GET OUT,” Alasdair screamed, collapsing to the grass. “Oh Muireall,” he sobbed quietly to himself.

“What was that all about?” Caroline demanded, ignoring Stefan’s attempts to remove themselves, “what did he mean about a challenge?”

“I don’t want to talk about it,” Alasdair stated, devoid of emotion. He strode away before Caroline could press her point. Taking out his phone, he dialed the one number he had besides the Mystic Falls people. As expected it went straight to voicemail.

“I don’t care if you’re still mad at me,” he declared. “I need you to meet me at Mystic Falls, Virginia. It’s urgent.”
Rhona

Alexandria 2015

“So you’re telling me there’s more of these freaks?” Damon asked, incredulous.

“Apparently 4 more,” Stefan replied over the phone. “After Alasdair calmed down, he said if this Kester was helping the Heretics, he would be sending someone to retrieve the armor as well.”

“Got it,” Damon answered, “We’ll keep an eye out. Take care brother.”

“You too”

Damon hung up, and walked over to Bonnie and Alaric.

“What’s the word?” Alaric wondered.

“ Apparently we may have company?” Damon stated. At Alaric and Bonnie’s confused looks, he clarified, “I’ll explain later, just keep your eyes open for any of our Heretic friends. You want to tell us your enigmatic idea there Ric?”

“Right,” Alaric sighed, “Look, I’ve got a friend at Alexandria University. Specializes in Bronze Age Egypt. If anyone knows anything about these guys, it’ll be him.”

“Well then,” Damon smiled, “let’s pay him a visit, shall we?”

They got to the university no problem. Alaric then gave his name and asked to be buzzed in to Dr. Hisham Aziz. After a slight delay, they were ushered into a cluttered office where they were greeted by jovial, if slightly stout, balding man.

“Alaric Saltzman,” he smiled, throwing his arms open wide, “To what do I owe this unexpected pleasure?”
“Good to see you again Hisham,” Alaric replied, returning the embrace. “Allow me to introduce my friends, Bonnie and Damon.”

Hisham observed them closely, before cracking a wry grin. “A human, witch, and a vampire walk into a bar. Oh don’t give me that look,” he admonished, “you live long enough, you pick up on things. Last time you were here, you wanted information on how to kill vampires, now you walk into my office with one as your friend.”

“Things change,” Alaric shrugged.

Hisham nodded. “That they do. Now,” he continued, “what was it that you wanted to talk to me about?”

“What can you tell us about beings known as the white walkers?” Alaric asked.

Hisham chuckled. “What, like Game of Thrones?”

“I’m serious Hisham,” Alaric. “All we know is they’re very old, very strong, and they have something to do with water and ice.”

Hisham’s face had lost all of its previous humor. “By the grace of Allah, what have you gotten yourself into?”

**Mystic Falls 2015**

A woman walked down the central avenue of Mystic Falls. Caroline found it curious that the woman never stopped to wonder at the lack of people, despite it being the middle of a Saturday. The empty streets sometimes even creeped out Caroline. There was a stillness to them, as if they were watching, waiting for something to happen.

Caroline looked around, and seeing nobody else, decided she should probably get this lady off the streets before something happened to her. Stepping onto the road, she approached the mysterious intruder.
“Excuse me miss?” she called out, “the town isn’t safe right now. Didn’t you read the signs?”

The woman stopped, eyeing Caroline up and down. “My aren’t you pretty?” she observed. Caroline took a moment to assess the woman as well. She was gorgeous, dark curly hair tumbling around shapely shoulders. That hair framed a pretty face with a generous helping of freckles. She was wearing some very expensive clothing and- was that a Louis Vuitton purse?!?!

“Thank you,” Caroline replied, “you are quite beautiful yourself, but like I said, the town isn’t safe, so if you would just follow me-—”

“I assure you, I’m more than capable of taking care of myself,” the woman said, giving Caroline a piercing blue eyed stare. Wait, Caroline thought, those eyes, I’ve seen them before. Then she made the connection.

“You’re one of them,” Caroline breathed.

The woman chuckled, “Yes darling, I’m one of ‘them’. My question is, who are you?”

“You’re Rhona, right?” Caroline asked. At Rhona’s nod, she continued, “Don’t worry, I’m one of Alasdair’s friends.”

That didn’t seem to reassure Rhona at all. If anything, the immortal became more on guard, more predatory. “Alasdair doesn’t have friends,” she informed Caroline.

“Fine, not friends. Allies, whatever you want to call it. The point is, we’re on the same side, so you can stop staring at me like I’m a piece of meat.” Caroline finished pointedly.

“You’ve got quite a mouth on you,” Rhona observed, “And I respect a sassy bitch. Once again, however, I find myself doubting your story. You see, not only does Alasdair not have friends, he doesn’t work with anyone besides me. Never has, not for 2,000 years. So I will ask you one more time. Who. Are. You.”

Caroline sighed, “I’m telling the truth. If you don’t believe me, just ask him. How are you guys related anyways? You his sister or something?”
Now Rhona really laughed. “Far from it. As for your request, no I will not go with you to him. That son of a bitch wants me here, he can damn well come find me.”

“3,000 years,” Alasdair remarked, emerging from the shadow of the nearby tree where he had been observing the exchange. “3,000 years, and you are still as petty as ever. Hello my love.”

Alexandria University 2015

“What the hell does that mean?” Damon wondered. “So you have heard of them?”

Hisham sighed. “Most of what I’ve heard is myth and legend, and I’m not even sure they’re real.”

“Oh they are,” Damon interjected, “trust me.”

“Well then I will give you the best knowledge that I have.” Dr. Aziza replied. Pulling a file out of his desk, he opened it onto the desk.

“Well according to the legend, the seasons of the Earth are harnessed into living embodiments, known as the Seasonal Stones. Summer, Winter, Fall, and Spring. Now these Stones are scattered throughout the world at different places, originally where their power was strongest. Now, about 4 thousand years ago, an Egyptian witch found the Stone of Summer. This witch, with the help of the darkest magics then known, fashioned a spell which could fuse the power of the stone into a human. Now due to the extreme power present in the Stone, it had to be broken into 4 separate parts, and then fused into 4 people. The idea was to create supersoldiers, so they would not need to have a standing army. And it worked, almost. According to the myth, supersoldiers were created, however they became unstable and ended up causing more destruction than they were worth. Records from that time are understandably scarce, so that’s all I can tell you about that.”

“Doctor,” Damon interrupted, “this is all very interesting, but can we skip to the part that involves us.”

“Trust me,” Hisham insisted, “All of this is relevant information. Anyways, after the failure with the Stone of Summer, the project was abandoned, and almost forgotten in the ensuing centuries. However, around the 11th century BC, there was a power struggle in Egypt. A small sect, exiled from Egypt, sought a way to claim power. A witch, known only as Her Greatness, had gotten her hands on the spell used to fuse the Stone of Summer. With her supporters, they set out in search for the Stone of Winter. Their search eventually brought them to modern day Scotland.”
“Hold up,” Alaric interjected, “Egyptians in Scotland? Come on Hisham, are you being for real right now?”

“Like I said, before today I thought it was just myth and legend,” Hisham maintained, “Now, when they were in Scotland, they somehow got their hands on the Stone of Winter. Now Her Greatness had apparently made some modifications to the original spell, so when they tried it again with 4 of the natives, it worked. These became the white walkers. 4 supersoldiers, and within 30 years they had reconquered Egypt. It came at a cost, however, as the amount of power needed to complete the spell killed Her Greatness. For years these 4 were the protectors of Egypt, then, around the rise of Rome, they disappeared.”

“Damn,” Bonnie said, “talk about a long history.”

“I’m sure that’s barely scratching the surface,” Hisham clarified, “Like I said, it’s mostly myth and rumors that I never really took seriously. Now that you’ve been able to verify their existence, however, I may need to revisit my studies of them.”

“That’s great doctor,” Damon broke in, “but there’s one small piece of information specifically that we were hoping to get from you.”

“And what’s that?” Hisham asked.

“We’re here to pick up their armor,” Damon answered, “We would like to know its location.”

Once again Hisham’s face grew solemn. “No matter what price they are paying, nothing is worse unleashing that evil onto this world.”

**Mystic Falls 2015**

“Well you got me here,” Rhona stated, “Now tell me what urgent means, or I will walk away as fast as I came.”

“You’re not actually still mad at me are you?” Alasdair asked.
“Why wouldn’t I be?” Rhona demanded.

“Rhona, it’s been over 50 years,” Alasdair protested.

“I don’t care,” she insisted, “You killed him. I don’t know if I can ever forgive you.”

“Oh don’t blame me because he chose to break the rules,” he scoffed.

“Um excuse me,” Caroline interrupted, “Confused vampire here, can someone fill in the blanks.”

“Well,” Rhona huffed, “If you hadn’t figured out by now. Alasdair and I are lovers, have been for thousands of years. Eternal love, never dimming or all the superlatives Al loves to drape on it.”

Alasdair chuckled, “You do too, when you’re not pretending to be mad at me.”

“I am not pretending,” she asserted, “Anyways, that’s all well and good, but eternity is a long time to remain faithful, and at times we’ve both the pull of others. For a time we’d get jealous and kill each others lovers.”

“However,” Alasdair broke in, “We both realized that this was pointless and hypocritical and, at Rhona’s suggestion I might add, we came up with a set of rules for any affairs. Namely, don’t flaunt the affair in the other’s face. And, despite whatever we would feel for a time, sometimes even decades, we would always return to one another.” he finished with a loving smile directed at Rhona.

“What our current dispute stems from,” Rhona continued, choosing to ignore him, “Is about 50 years ago, I met someone truly special, Brad. We were very much in love, so much so that I considered finding a vampire to turn him so I could have him for longer. But then Alasdair found out, and killed him.” Her face twisted with rage, “With the fucking Blood Eagle no less.”

Alasdair snorted with derision, “Please, Brad was an arrogant ass who thought he could flaunt the rules in my face, and that your love would protect him. The bastard tried to cuckold me, Rhona. He openly mocked me, as if you hadn’t had hundreds of other lovers before him. He broke the rules, so I did what I wanted.”
“He was special Alasdair,” Rhona insisted, “you should have come to me, and I would have set him straight, but instead you let your jealousy run free when you had no reason to. Anyways, I need more than 50 years to get over it, so unless urgent meant something besides this pathetic attempt at reconciliation, I’m leaving,” and she turned to go.

“I found a way to get our armor out of Alexandria,” he stated quietly. That stopped her in her tracks. “Also,” he continued, “Kester is back and Rhona…” his voice broke.

Rhona whipped her head around at this last comment, her eyes going wide. “What is it, Al?”

Alasdair drew in a ragged breath, “He knew Rhona,” he breathed, “He knew about Mehmet’s plan beforehand.”

Rhona’s previous angry facade had been completely dropped, and her expression held only shock and concern. “Oh Al,” she murmured, stepping forward to embrace her lover, letting him sob into her soldier, “I’m so sorry Al.”
Heartbreak and Revenge part 1

Upper Nile 524 BC

A hot wind swept across the army as it marched, coming down from the desert. War was coming to the Egyptians again. This time it was the Persians, bringing a massive army. The Egyptians didn’t have nearly the army that the Persians had, but they didn’t need it. They had a secret weapon, four of them to be exact. They were calling them the Instruments of Wrath. Their power was legendary. There was only one slight problem. The nobility of Egypt knew their one weakness; that they were bound to the orders of anyone with Egyptian blood. This wouldn’t normally be a problem, however the Persians had hired a sizable contingent of Egyptian mercenaries willing to fight their countrymen for a share of the loot. Those Egyptians had been placed at the front lines, according to the Egyptian spies. This led to a dilemma for the Egyptian command, because their 4 super soldiers could not harm, and indeed were required by their very nature to prevent harm to, the front lines of their enemy army.

All had seem lost when one of the Pharoah’s prized witches had come up with a solution. There was a loophole, he insisted, in the spell that had created them that allowed the Instruments to be bonded to one person, and obey their commands above everything else, including the spell that prevented them from harming Egyptians. This would allow them to be unencumbered to lay waste to the enemies of the Pharoah. The Instruments would be bonded to the 4 commanders of the army, Setep, Nefrenu, Mehmet, and Nitocrisis. It had been the idea of the witch that found the loophole that the Instruments choose which noble they bond too. Something about how the spell would work better that way. This idea had led to straws being drawn among the Instruments and the order of Alasdair, then Rhona, then Kester, and finally Muireall. In addition to having the first choice, Alasdair was also the most popular among the nobles. Which led to the ridiculous display currently happening in his carriage.

“All noble, fearsome Alasdair the Mighty,” Nefrenu droned, gesturing his flabby arms as servants brought in trinkets of various sorts. “All of this and more shall be yours, should you choose to be bonded to me. You have a want, I will provide it.”

Alasdair sighed. He had no idea how Nefrenu had come to hold such a high position in the army. The man was a fat, simpering fool, more concerned with slave girls than war, and constantly surrounding himself with sycophants. Alasdair had absolutely no intention of picking him, but still, Nefrenu had insisted on this display. It had no effect on Alasdair, but he was sure that it would be enough to win Rhona over to his side.

“Is that all Nefrenu?” he asked tiredly. He wanted to stretch his legs, and the army had just started to pitch camp for the night.
Nefrenu dropped his arms deflatedly. “Why will you not at least consider me Alasdair? I can offer you more goods than any other, plus I thought we had a connection last week at dinner.”

Alasdair rolled his eyes, “You told one funny joke Nefrenu, get over it. As for the other stuff, if we really had any type of connection, as you put it, you’d know I don’t have much use for gold or material goods like that. If it’s anything, I’m sure Rhona will be more receptive to your ‘charms’.”

Nefrenu sighed. “Ok Alasdair, I’ll talk to her. In the meantime I need you to draw a design of what your ideal armor would look like. Don’t bother asking why, just do it. It’s for when we meet the Persians in battle.”

Alasdair shrugged, drew a quick drawing combining some elements of the armor he’d seen here and some of the armor he’d seen on raiders from Europe. Then handing his sketch to Nefrenu, brushed past the noble out into the hustle and bustle of the camp.

As he strode through the tents being set up, he noticed a welcome figure also stretching her legs. Muireall was observing a few of the laborers setting up one of the nobles tents.

“Seen your fill?” Alasdair teased as he came up beside her.

She gave him an exasperated look. “You’re not going to go all protective big brother on me are you? Because at this point in our lives the age difference between us is pretty inconsequential.”

“Are you seriously telling me you’re going to fuck one of the slaves?” Alasdair wondered.

“Maybe I am, maybe I’m not,” she smiled. “The point is you better not try to kill them if I do.”

Alasdair snorted, “If you want to sleep with the trash be my guest.”

“Speaking of sleeping, has Kester woken from his nap yet?” Muireall asked, “I need to show him something.”

“Kester, much to his disappointment, woke up very recently,” Rhona informed her, coming up to them. “He then headed to get a bath, muttering something about drowning himself in the Nile.”
Muireall gave her a scathing glare. “I wasn’t asking you,” she spat. Nonetheless she headed in the direction of the river, leaving Alasdair with Rhona.

Rhona smiled the sort of smile people smile that implies they know they’re under the skin of someone and that’s exactly what they want. Turning to Alasdair, she remarked, “Ya know, I just got a visit from Nefrenu where he lavished upon so many pretty things. He happened to mention I had you to thank for my latest necklace. Is that so?”

Alasdair smirked, “Well I know how much you like sparkly objects.”

Rhona mock gasped, “You know me so well,” she simpered, over exaggerating a flirtatious batting of the eyelashes.

Alasdair chuckled. His relationship with Rhona had gotten off to an extremely rocky start, what with her torturing his sister and all. After a length of time though, along with the explanation that she had been so cruel to Muireall because Muireall had killed her little sister, they had begun to open up to one another, eventually becoming friends. As much as he would repeat to himself what she had done to Muireall, it was hard for him to ignore how much she would make him laugh, the way she seemed to instinctively know how to put him in a good mood. This was in addition to her obvious beauty, the feeling he would get when she smiled, not to mention the feeling he would get when she would “accidentally” bathe in the same place as him. Yeah he was pretty sure he was in love with her, and if he was any judge, she returned the sentiment. Yet he would not progress things with her beyond what they already were. He could not bring himself to hurt Muireall like that, for while eventually he had forgiven Rhona, Muireall and Rhona still hated each other with a passion.

“So, are you going to choose Nefrenu?” Alasdair asked her.

She nodded, “Assuming you choose Setep…” at his nod in confirmation she continued, “then yes I think I will choose him. He can give me the lifestyle I want, and he’s certainly better than the alternatives.”

Alasdair sighed. “So that leaves Mehmet and Nitocrisis for Kester and Muireall.”

“You’re hoping that will have a respectively at the end of it, don’t you,” Rhona surmised.

Alasdair nodded. “Nitocrisis has a death wish, but she at least sees some use for us. Mehmet...Mehmet hates our existence with a disturbing amount of passion and ferocity. I’m worried
he’ll find a way, somehow.”

“Then Kester should be all too happy to pick him,” Rhona reassured him, “Everything you just said, Kester knows. He wants to be gone just as badly as Mehmet wants us gone. There’s no way he’ll pass the opportunity up.”

“Yeah,” Alasdair said without confidence, “I don’t like the risk though. Kester’s a madman. He’s too much of a wildcard.”

“So talk to him,” Rhona suggested. “Make sure his mind’s right.”

Alasdair nodded. It was a good idea. He would talk to him tonight.

That night, as fires burned around the camp, Alasdair found Kester sitting by the edge of the river, dejected in the dark.

“Rhona mentioned you were trying to drown yourself in the Nile,” Alasdair opened after Kester refused to acknowledge his presence.

“You know very well that it didn’t,” Kester muttered.

Alasdair sighed. So much for small talk. “So we arrive in Memphis tomorrow. You know what that means.”

Kester chuckled. “The bonding ceremony. So that’s what this little visit is about.”

“Yes,” Alasdair confirmed. Why was it always so awkward with him? “I just wanted to confirm that in the event that I choose Setep and Rhona chose Nefrenu, you’ll choose Mehmet.”

“So your sister will be safely out of danger,” Kester finished Alasdair’s unspoken thought.

“Yes,” Alasdair nodded. “I’m glad we’re on the same page.”
“And why would I do this?” Kester asked.

Alasdair frowned. “Because you want to die and Mehmet wants us dead.”

“No I meant why would I do you a favor?” Kester asked. “You and Rhona have done nothing but laugh at my goal.”

Alasdair sighed. He was doing a lot of sighing today. “I know, and I’m sorry for belittling something you clearly care so much. So how about this. You pick Mehmet, and I will actively support your search for a demise. I’ll help you in any way I can. I promise. Will that work?”

Kester considered it, then nodded. “That will do Alasdair, that will do.”

Alasdair smiled, relieved. “Thank you Kester. This means a lot to me.”

The next day they arrived in Memphis. The sprawling city was decked out to celebrate the arrival of the army. Citizens cheered the nobles at the front, especially Mehmet. He was especially popular, known for giving out food to the poor. In fact by all accounts he was a kind man, however he believed the Instruments were abominations and hated them with a passion.

They continued through the city, ending inside the royal palace. There the witch awaited them, along with the Pharaoh and some of his trusted advisors. There they promptly began the spell. When the time came for Alasdair to choose, he chose as he’d always planned to, with Setep. Setep was a classic military man, and one of the fewest Egyptians that Alasdair respected. Rhona, as expected, chose Nefrenu. Then Kester stepped up.

“For the role of my sponsor, the person whom I will bind myself to, I choose…” here he paused, looking at Alasdair who nodded, before proceeding to shatter Alasdair’s world, “…Nitocrisis.”

Alasdair’s jaw hung open, he did not have the strength of mind to close it. Rhona had an equally shocked expression as Muireall chose Mehmet and the spell was complete. Even Mehmet and the rest of the commanders were mildly surprised. Both Mehmet’s distaste and Kester’s suicidalness were well documented.
After the ceremony, a prisoner of Egyptian descent was brought in to test the spell. Alasdair volunteered to test it, as a terrible anger had been building in him since Kester’s choice, and he proceeded to tear the prisoner apart with a ferocity that shocked even the hardened soldiers in the room. As he walked back to his place at Setep’s side, he paused while passing Mehmet.

“If you harm her,” he stated with an icy calm, “you’re next.”

Alexandria 2015

“Hisham, what do you mean?” Alaric asked. “It’s just a suit of armor, and he’s immortal. It really doesn’t mean anything. I’m shocked his price was even that low.”

“Alaric my boy,” Hisham replied, “this is much more than a simple suit of armor. The white walkers when they were created have the ability to mold water to their will, to freeze it at any temperature they please, to lower the temperature of anything they touch, and to control human minds, not to mention tremendous strength. This armor amplifies their power.”

Damon scoffed, “like what, they can create big snowballs now?”

Dr. Aziza frowned, “I assure you this is not a joke. Without this armor, the white walkers are the strongest creatures on Earth, but they still are just that, creatures on Earth. With this armor, they become gods. The Gods of Winter. They can turn a sunny day into a blizzard. They can move an ocean. There’s an old Egyptian tale about when they first got this armor, they wiped out an entire army in less than an hour. The army generals, recognizing the danger, hid the armor away and placed the most important and powerful witches in charge of guarding it.”

Damon shrugged, “So they’re very powerful. So what? As long as they kick the Heretics out, not our problem.”

“Yes, they might honor their deal with you,” Hisham continued, “but what next. What if they destroy your town in the process. What if one of you die in the process? Human life isn’t very high on their priority list, by all accounts.”

“Doctor, I understand and sympathize with you,” Bonnie cut in before Damon responded with another quip, “but we wouldn’t be doing this if we had any other choice. Now do you know where it is or not.”
Hisham sighed, “Legend has it was located in a secret room underneath the Library of Alexandria. But I would think long and hard on whether you want to unleash that kind of power on this world again.”

**Nile Delta 524 BC**

The army continued its march across the delta, towards its adversary on the Sinai. The army had split into 3 parts. Mehmet had taken his portion and headed towards the coast. Nitocrisis had taken hers to the edge of the delta while Setep and Nefrenu had taken the bulk of the army at a continued direct approach. The idea was for them to surround the Persian army with a pincer move while their focus was occupied by the main portion of the army.

The center portion was currently setting up camp for the night, and as usual, Setep and Nefrenu were arguing.

“I don’t understand why I must divest myself of my slaves,” Nefrenu was protesting.

“Nefrenu,” Setep almost shouted, desperately trying to control his temper, “I’m not saying get rid of all of them, but this is a war camp, by the grace of Ra, and you cannot keep traveling with a full harem! They’re eating through half our supplies!”

Alasdair and Rhona were watching this argument for the 6th time with all the amusement of a couple of parents watching an older sibling trying to negotiate the TV so he could watch the Super Bowl while the younger desperately wanted to finish the episode of Scooby Doo.

Their nightly entertainment was interrupted when a messenger rushed in announcing an urgent message from Mehmet.

Setep unfurled the scroll, reading it. As he got to the end of the scroll his hands began to shake, and he crunched up the scroll, slamming it on the table.

“That bastard!” he shouted. Nefrenu, Alasdair, and Rhona all surged to their feet.

“What is it?” Nefrenu asked.
“The son of a bitch found a dark object,” Setep began, casting a worried look at Alasdair and Rhona, “and he used it to trap Muireall at the bottom of the Mediterranean, forever.”


“Why do you think?” Setep spat. “We always knew he hated them. I never thought he’d go to these lengths…” he gave a concerned look to Alasdair, who had gone whitefaced as soon as he had heard the message, and hadn’t moved a muscle.

“This cannot go unanswered!” Nefrenu demanded, his many chins shaking with his outrage. “We must execute Mehmet!”

“No,” Alasdair interrupted with a quiet rage, “We must execute Mehmet. Let me and Rhona wreak vengeance on him.”

Setep considered him for a moment, then nodded. “Very well Alasdair, you will have your revenge, but first,” he clapped his hands, “we wanted to unveil these as a celebration, but I feel an execution will have to do.” and the servants brought in two suits of pure white armor. “These were fashioned by combining steel with shards of the Stone of Winter. They should serve to not only protect you against anything, but amplify your power. In addition, a cut from these weapons is so painful that it would hurt even you.”

Alasdair recognized his from the haphazard drawing he’d made. At the top, a round half-helm with eye guards was attached to a scaled neckguard to form a hood. This then attached to a breast plate with scaled sleeves and leg guards. His weapon was his preferred method of death, a massive two-handed battle axe.

Rhona’s was as flashy and ornate as she was, with a full helm complete with cheekbones and stylized wings that rose above her head. The rest of her armor had similarly ornate designs, but Alasdair could see that none of them impaired her movement. Her weapon was a double sided spear which she was frighteningly effective with.

“Wear these,” Setep announced, “Find Mehmet, and end him. Kill anyone who tries to stop you.”

“Setep?” Alasdair asked, “Permission to make him suffer?”
“Granted,” Setep answered, and for the first time since he had heard the news, Alasdair smiled.

Later that night, Alasdair and Rhona stopped to make camp. As they sat by the fire in dejected silence, Alasdair began to break down. His body was racked with huge sobs. Rhona rushed to comfort him, and he gratefully held her with the desperation of a drowning man.

“Shh,” Rhona hugged him, “I’m so sorry Al. I know she meant so much to you.”

Gradually, Alasdair’s sobs slowed. Taking a ragged breath, he looked into Rhona’s eyes, twin blue gazes seeking comfort in the other. “Thank you,” he told her with such vulnerability and sincerity that Rhona’s heart broke for him. Then he shocked her by leaning in to kiss her deeply. Rhona returned the kiss, losing track of the time as she leaned into the lips she’d wanted to kiss for literally hundreds of years.

Eventually they came apart, both out of breath. “Why now?” Rhona asked.

Alasdair smiled, caressing her face. “Well, I’ve been reminded that even we are not invulnerable, so I didn’t want to waste any more time. I don’t want any regrets.” And then he kissed her again.
Heartbreak and Revenge part 2

Nile Delta 524 BC

Mehmet was a happy man. He felt like he was walking on clouds. He had done it. He had actually removed one of Them from the world. For 500 years They had walked this Earth, untouchable in their power and agelessness. No more. Now there were only 3 to worry about. True, the other commanders could send the others after him, but he doubted they would dare risk the lives of Mehmet’s army. Not when the all-important battle with the Persians was so close.

Still, it paid to not be too reckless. He had placed himself in the center of his wing of the army. This would give himself an angle of escape should They attack. He would be a liar if he didn’t admit the cold menace in Alasdair’s tone at the ceremony haunted him, and he sometimes woke in a cold sweat with the words “You’re next” ringing in his ears.

The army was approaching the next river crossing. In truth, if They did choose to attack, this was the place Mehmet feared the most. The sides of the path were lined with thick vegetation, creating the ideal chokepoint for an ambush.

And sure enough, when the army approached the river, a figure in white armor emerged from the river. Mehmet didn’t need to see the axe to know which of Them had come. Alasdair was known for his closeness to his sister. It was no surprise he had come to avenge her.

For a moment the army stood still, regarding the white figure warily. Eventually a figure from the army strode forward. Mehmet’s breath caught in his throat and he felt the cold hand of fear grip his heart. His son, Hemet, was in command of the vanguard. Hemet had inherited all of his father’s hatred of Them, but in his youth he had none of the patience and cunning that Mehmet possessed, and Mehmet feared he had already lost his baby boy.

Indeed Alasdair mouth drew into a smirk as he recognized the brash young man. He could not have asked for a better opener to the show he was about to put on.

“You’re a long way from home, filth,” Hemet spat.

“And it’s getting late squirt,” Alasdair returned cheekily, “Isn’t it past your bedtime? Tsk tsk, such a lack of discipline. I blame the father, really. Why don’t you run along and fetch him? The grownups need to have a discussion now.”
Hemet’s face darkened with rage, “I am a man, thanks to your sister. And it is me you face today. You are not worthy of my father’s presence.”

Alasdair was dangerously close to ripping this twerp to shreds. “What did you just say about my baby sister?”

Hemet smiled, “Oh you didn’t know. Thanks to my father’s orders, your sister helped make me a man, and let me tell you, abomination she may be, but she is exquis-”

Hemet suddenly couldn’t finish his sentence. Indeed, he found he couldn’t move at all. Alasdair leaned forward, as if to listen for more. “No, go on. You were about to tell me how nice it felt to rape my sister. Come on, finish the tale. Oh that’s right, you can’t move. You see,” Alasdair continued, raising his voice to address the entire army, “the human body is made up of mostly water. So I can control the movements of anybody I want.” And he levitated Hemet’s motionless form so it was easily visible to the whole army.

“I want you to watch, Mehmet,” he shouted, “As I freeze your precious brat from the inside out. Watch as he consciously loses the use of his faculties, and know that it is your fault that this has befallen him.” And indeed Hemet did watch as Hemet desperately tried to struggle, and then as his movements became slowly stiff until his eyes were frozen, his veins bulging, body bloated and purple. Alasdair then let him drop where he he swung and hit the falling body with the flat of his axe, sending him flying over the army, where Rhona caught him by stabbing him out of the air with her spear from her position at the back of the army.

“No, go on. You were about to tell me how nice it felt to rape my sister. Come on, finish the tale. Oh that’s right, you can’t move. You see,” Alasdair continued, raising his voice to address the entire army, “the human body is made up of mostly water. So I can control the movements of anybody I want.” And he levitated Hemet’s motionless form so it was easily visible to the whole army.

“Now I never liked Muireall much,” she told the frozen corpse. “But even I wouldn’t wish that upon her.”

Now Mehmet was worried. His army was pinned on two sides by thick forest, and in the way of either escape were two of the most powerful beings in the world. Alasdair raised his axe. “Now Mehmet, you and your men will pay the price for your treachery.” He then slammed the axe to the ground, and suddenly the entire army was engulfed in a swirling blizzard.

Mehmet couldn’t see anything. All he could hear was the screaming of men as they were exposed to howling winds and freezing temperatures that they were woefully unprepared for. Mehmet stumbled from his horse, searching for some vegetation, or something to shelter from the swirling snow. He suddenly realized he wasn’t cold or wet. The snow was swirling around him, but never touching him. That’s when he realized. Alasdair was tracking him. He was in such total control that he could use the snow to track where Mehmet was.
Mehmet started sprinting, trying to get as far away as possible, stumbling over the frozen corpses of several of his troops. He could tell he was getting to the edge of the storm when suddenly his legs were kicked in, and he fell to his knees. Looking up, he saw Rhona standing over him, looking like a white winged portend of death, the leaves of her spear stained a deep dark red with frozen blood.

“Going somewhere?” she asked with false sweetness. Alasdair joined her in Mehmet’s view, and suddenly the storm abated as suddenly as it had come.

Mehmet looked at the landscape. Piles of snow that covered the frozen bodies of his men were already beginning to thaw under the Egyptian heat. A few of his men were alive, those that had made it to the trees looking around at the scene with the same horror that Mehmet viewed it with.

“All you did today was prove me right,” Mehmet stated defiantly. “You may kill me now, but I will die knowing my cause was just, that I was in the right. You are an abomination.”

Alasdair leaned in close. “I may have done the deed, Mehmet,” he assured him, “but make no mistake. It was you who sealed their fate when you consigned my sister to the bottom of the ocean. You will suffer.” And with that he flipped Mehmet over, pressing his face into the dirt. Taking his axe, he slowly cut open Mehmet’s back.

At the first touch of the enchanted weapon, Mehmet began to scream. The agony was indescribable. A white hot freeze of pain, cutting into his skin. After cutting the skin of his back, Mehmet had blacked out. Alasdair continued however, peeling back the skin and hacking the ribs away from the spine, allowing them to spring out and create bloody wings. He then drew out the lungs, draping them over Mehmet’s shoulder’s. Taking two pikes from the soldiers, he tied Mehmet’s arms to them, letting his body sway in the breeze and completing the blood eagle ritual. Sitting back, he admired his handiwork, before he and Rhona rounded up the survivors and headed back to the main army.

Alexandria 2015

Alaric was dusty, and bored. They were in the ruins of the Original Library of Alexandria, and they were searching for some way of finding this supposed Armor of Doom. Damon and Bonnie were bickering, as usual, while pretending to search for it. They had searched all of the rooms, but barely had any idea what to look for, much less if it could be found. Plus, as Damon was fond of reminding him, Hisham could have lied to prevent them from finding the armor. Alaric supposed that was true, but he doubted it.
He sighed, and bent to sit on a nearby rock. The rock promptly collapsed, and Alaric fell into a cave with a crash. Groaning, Alaric sat up, trying to get his bearings as the dust settled. Looking up, he saw Bonnie and Damon’s concerned faces looking down.

“Ric you good buddy?” Damon asked.

“Yeah I’m ok,” Alaric said, briefly shining his flashlight around the room he had fallen in. What he saw made his jaw drop in shock. “Guys,” he called up, “you’re gonna want to come see this.”

After Bonnie and Damon climbed down into the room, they too shined their flashlights around to illuminate the room. In the middle were three stone racks, with the surrounding walls all carved with engravings of various designs.

“Snowflakes,” Bonnie breathed. “The carvings are of snowflakes.”

“Those racks could hold armor,” Alaric mused, “That with all the winter references, at the Library of Alexandria. This has to be it. We found it!”

“We found where they were,” Damon corrected, “News flash detectives, the armor isn’t here. It’s been moved.”

The group sat down, defeated. They had one lead on where the armor was, and they had lost it. Then Bonnie perked up.

“Wait,” she stood, and started to pace. “What if the armor was moved because the library was destroyed?” She mused.

“Ok,” Alaric stood, catching on to her theory, “so where would they have moved it?”


Bonnie smiled, “Let’s go get ourselves a suit of armor.”
“Yes,” Alaric agreed, “but first, a shower.”

Nile Delta 524 BC

“How could you do this?” Setep berated Alasdair and Rhona.

“I don’t understand,” Alasdair protested, “You said to kill anyone who tried to stop us.”

“Yes kill some guards at the tent, or maybe his son,” Setep clarified, “Not wipe out an entire wing of the army! By the Grace of Ra, Alasdair, you took out a quarter of our army!”

“You don’t need the army,” Rhona broke in, “With this armor-”

“No,” Nefrenu interrupted her. “Giving you that armor was a mistake. We see that now. You are far too powerful with that on. You could end up taking us out along with the Persians. You are perfectly capable of taking on the Persian army without the armor.”

“Come on,” Alasdair pleaded, “Setep, see reason. You’re making a mistake here, you can trust us.”

“No,” Setep shut him down coldly, “our mistake was trusting you in the first place. You have no regard for human life. That part, Mehmet was right about at least.”

Alasdair straightened, as if slapped. “What do you wish for us to do with the armor, then?” he asked, flatly.

Setep eyed him, warily. “Go to Memphis, both of you. Entrust your armor to the witches.”

Rhona made one last attempt. “Please don’t do this.”

“Get out of my sight,” Setep commanded, before turning to his table, hunched over as if taking a beating.
Alasdair tugged at Rhona’s arm, and they left, grabbing two horses and galloping back in the direction of Memphis, barely a days ride away.

At the halfway point, as they stopped to sleep, Alasdair turned to Rhona.

“I don’t recall him ordering us to do anything other than return the armor,” he observed.

Rhona cocked her head, “Neither do I. What are you getting at?”

“What I’m saying, is there’s nothing forcing us to go back after we return the armor,” he explained, “nothing to stop us from leaving Egypt forever.”

“Leave?” Rhona asked. “Why would we leave?”

“Why wouldn’t we leave a place where we have no free will?” Alasdair countered. “What’s to stop what happened to Muireall from happening to us?”

“Alasdair Mehmet was a crazy man,” Rhona reassured him. “Setep and Nefrenu would never do that.”

“Wouldn’t they?” he challenged her, “Come on Rhona, you saw them today. They were practically agreeing with Mehmet. And even if they didn’t, what’s to stop the next nobles they bond us to from doing the same? As long as we are here, we are in danger.” He cupped her face. “Think about it, my love. An immortality without the burden of servitude hanging over our heads. All of our benefits, none of our weaknesses.”

Rhona smiled. “Ok let’s do it. I have one question though?”

“And what’s that?” Alasdair wondered.

“Where do you want to live?”
Alasdair sat on a park bench, shoulders slumped, gazing vacantly at the grass. From a distance away, Rhona leaned against a tree, watching him. Caroline stood awkwardly, wondering if she should leave.

“How many people has he killed?” Rhona asked, “Since he’s been here I mean.”

“Just a bad guy,” Caroline replied. What kind of question was that?

Rhona snorted. “You’re such a child.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Caroline asked, defensive.

“It means,” Rhona explained, her eyes fixed on the back of her lover, “that no one is inherently good or evil.” And with that she pushed herself off the tree and walked over to sit next to Alasdair on the bench.

Alasdair looked up when she sat down, then, sighing, resumed his examination of the grass.

“I’m sorry,” he finally said after a long pause. Rhona turned to look at him in surprise. Alasdair never apologized for killing one of her lovers. Alasdair noticed her look and gave her a bit of a wry grin, as if to acknowledge the rarity of his apology.

“I should have went to you before acting on Brad. I underestimated his importance to you.” he admitted.

Rhona shook her head. “No see that’s the thing Al. I think you knew exactly how much I cared for him, and you still did it.” She recalled when she found Brad’s body, and closed her eyes, trying to get the image out of her brain. “Al, you performed the blood eagle. You’ve only ever done that to one other person, and whatever Brad said, he was hardly Mehmet.”
“Wasn’t he?” Alasdair challenged, his jaw clenched.

“No,” Rhona said incredulously. What was he talking about? “Al, what did he say?” she demanded. Alasdair looked down at his feet, then let out an explosive sigh.

“You remember that night,” he began. “We had been invited to a gala, as was often the case. We were posing as Scottish nobles. What was our fake last name? Gordon I think? Anyways, you had invited Brad too. Oh I knew he was your lover, don’t give me that look, I make it my business to know this. But neither of you had broken the rules. Yet.”

London 1957

Sir Brad Taylor was in a foul mood. His friend, the vampire Louis, took one look at his furrowed brow and pursed lips before chuckling.

“I know that look well,” the 200 year old frenchman said, “woman troubles.”

Brad spared his friend a glance, before sighing. “You know that one I’ve been talking to you about? The immortal?”

“Ah yes,” Louis said, “the one you are so desperately in love with you want me to turn you to be with her. Ridiculous.” he muttered.

Brad raised his eyebrows. “I thought the French were supposed to be the people of love and romance.”

Louis snorted. “I’m a vampire Brad. Consider me a cynic. Anyways, what about this one?”

“Well,” Brad said, “she’s here.”

That got Louis’ attention. “Where?” in spite of himself, he was curious. He had never seen his friend so infatuated.
“Over there,” Brad gestured to the dance floor, adding on, almost as an afterthought, “with her husband.”

Louis smiled. So that was what had Brad in a mood. Following Brad’s gaze, he found the Lord and Lady Gordon dancing to the slow dance music. Well, Brad certainly knew how to pick them. Lady Rhona Gordon had been in London for only a few years, and she had acquired a reputation for being the most beautiful woman in the high social circles. Her husband however, was much less well known. A lot of people didn’t even realize that she had a husband. That he was here, at a major social event was a shock enough.

“So she’s here and you’re upset because she brought her husband,” Louis clarified for himself.

“The guy is clueless,” Brad explained, “but because today is her birthday, he brought her to this dance.”

“So?” Louis asked. “He’s her husband Brad. You knew what you were signing up for, pursuing a married woman.”

“Yeah whatever Louis,” Brad muttered. “Can you just eavesdrop on them for me? I want to know what they’re saying.”

Louis sighed, muttering something about what love does to the brain, before listening with vamp-hearing.

“Thanks for coming out Al,” Rhona was saying, “I know how much you hate these type of events.”

“It’s your birthday sweetheart,” Lord Gordon replied, “and if you want to spend your birthday talking with a bunch of empty headed nobles, who am I to prevent you.”

“Al,” she warned him, “You promised you wouldn’t complain.”

Rhona gave him a look, then laughed. “You’re the worst.”

Alasdair smiled. “You remember the first time we danced here?”

Rhona frowned. “You’ve never been here.”

Alasdair chuckled. “Not in this house, but on this spot. Remember? Londinium?”

Rhona gasped, remembering the first time they had danced, at a Roman party to celebrate the founding of the provincial capital. “Is this why you chose this party?”

Alasdair smiled. “Happy Birthday my love.” And Rhona kissed him lovingly, before resting her head on his chest.

“Well?” Brad prompted. Louis grimaced. “Apparently he just made some big romantic gesture.”

Brad’s brow became even more furrowed. Louis sighed, “You are going to have stop glaring at them my friend. He’s going to become suspicious.”

“What the hell’s he going to do. It’s not like he’s a vampire.” Brad muttered, before striding off to the couple.

Louis stared after him. Not a vampire? So what? The man was clearly immortal, what did it matter whether he had fangs or not. Louis sighed. He liked his friend, but Brad was brash, and arrogant, and altogether too confident in himself. It was what endeared him to many a woman, but it also could land him in trouble.

Brad had walked over to the couple. He introduced himself to Alasdair, who for his part was friendly and welcoming and surrendered his wife to dance with Brad. Louis was surprised. He had heard Alasdair’s voice. Someone that in love with his wife was never not jealous of others. Nevertheless, Alasdair surrendered his wife, then headed with a purpose-right towards Louis. It was just coincidence, the french vampire told himself. Still, he could not help a hint of nervousness as the mysterious immortal in the white suit came to the bar next to Louis and ordered a shot of vodka. Turning to Louis, he extended his hand.
“Alasdair Gordon, at your service.” Louis took the proffered hand, before introducing himself. “Louis Marchand.”

Alasdair smiled. “Pleased to meet you, Louis. You’re a ways from home, aren’t you? I bet the weather in Aquitaine is better than this.” Louis’ eyebrows climbed his head. Very few Englishmen would be able his homeland from his accent in French, much less how his accented English sounded.

Suddenly, Louis noticed Alasdair was paying undue attention to his hands. With a shock, Louis realized he was looking for his daylight ring. How had he already figured out Louis was a vampire? Playing it cool, Louis waggled the ring finger on his left hand. Alasdair smiled. “Don’t be too hard on yourself. You live long enough, you recognize the signs.”

Alasdair then turned his attentions to where Brad and Rhona were dancing. With a frown, Louis noticed that Brad was being very handsy, letting his hands drift as low as propriety would allow. Alasdair surprised Louis again by echoing his thoughts. “Well he’s hardly subtle, your friend, is he?” At Louis’ cautious look Alasdair snorted. “I’ve been alive for a long time Louis, I rarely get played for a fool. Not that I needed experience to spot this. Your friend has been about as subtle as a bull in a china shop, what with all the glaring and the handsy-ness.”

Louis sighed. Clueless indeed! “I warned him.”

“Oh don’t worry Louis. He’s toeing the line, but he hasn’t crossed it yet. You both should know, though. Rhona’s had many lovers over the years, yet she always finds her way back to me. She will always choose me.” Gone was the easy joviality of before. The look Alasdair was giving Louis could only be described as icy. “Do you understand me Louis?” Louis gulped, then nodded. Alasdair grinned, the jovial mask back. “Good!” he exclaimed, before downing his shot. He motioned to the door to get Rhona’s attention. She waved him on, letting him know to go and she would meet him later, he nodded, then left the party, leaving a very stunned and worried Louis.

Later that night, Alasdair stumbled home from the bar, quite drunk. Opening up the door, he threw his coat on the rack, then went over to his favorite chair, only to find it occupied. How dare this unnamed person, he thought. Then he realized who it was, and immediately sobered up.

Brad sat in the chair, determined. Louis had told him about the conversation at the bar. The vampire had tried to tell him to drop the issue, to give some space. He had told Louis to go to hell. He understood the vampire’s position, but Louis hadn’t heard Rhona when she talked to Brad. Brad knew when someone cared for him, and there was no doubt that Rhona felt what he felt for her, and what he felt was all consuming passion. He had planned on confronting Alasdair here, after the man did his usual bar run. Rhona was waiting at Brad’s apartment right now, soon to be very upset, but he would explain it to her later.
Alasdair was now leaning against the bedpost, giving him a piercing blue-eyed stare. Those ice chips that seemed so attractive on Rhona were very intimidating on Alasdair. Brad wasn’t intimidated though. He felt confident he could handle the man.

“So,” Brad began, “you know.”

Alasdair raised his eyebrows, “What do I know?”

Brad frowned, “Don’t play dumb with me, Alasdair. You know about me and Rhona.”

“What do you mean?” Alasdair asked, still keeping up the innocence act. “Are you trying to imply something about you and my wife?”

“Alasdair,” Brad said, tired of the other man’s smug attitude. “You know damn well I’ve been sleeping with your wife.”

Alasdair smiled a predatory smile. “You fool,” he said, “I can kill you now.”

Brad snorted. “You wouldn’t dare. You know Rhona would never forgive you. Because she loves me. You’re nothing but a name and a title to her. She’s going to turn me into a vampire you know? So we can be together forever.”

Alasdair had dropped the cocky swagger he’d worn for the beginning of the conversation. A more careful man would’ve recognized the dangerous tone that he had in his voice when he said, “If you think I will allow you to live with us, after tonight..”

But Brad was drunk on love and a lifetime of getting what he wanted, and he drove right over ancient threats with youthful determination, “Oh I won’t live with you Alasdair. I am taking Rhona with me, and we will leave you behind. See unlike you, I have a set of balls, and I won’t share my wife with another man.”

Alasdair’s eyes glowed blue. Snapping, he seized the man from the chair and hoisted him in the air. “YOU WILL NOT TAKE HER FROM ME” he shouted, his eyes continuing to glow with rage and fear.
“You think her love protects you, little man,” he hissed, bringing Brad closer. “You could not be more wrong. In fact,” he continued, drawing a knife from his waist, “I know exactly what to do with you.”

Mystic Falls 2015

“And well, you know the rest,” Alasdair finished.

Rhona sat in stunned silence. This was the first she had ever heard the story. She now understood why Alasdair had reacted how he did. He had lost so many loved ones. The thought of losing Rhona would’ve broken him. Still…

“Al,” she said softly, “you had nothing to worry about.”

“Didn’t I?” Alasdair asked, tears in his eyes, “You said it yourself, he was different from all the rest.”

“Yes he was different, but he was still not you Al,” she explained, “I would never leave you Al. Ever. You had to know that.”

“I don’t know what I knew,” Alasdair said, despondent, “All I knew is in that moment, there was no way I was letting him take you from me.”

“Al,” she protested, “there was no way I would’ve ever gone along with his plan. If you had just talked to me, you would’ve known that.”

“I know,” he admitted, “I’m sorry Rhona. Please forgive me. I couldn’t live-” his voice broke, and he took a moment to compose himself, “I couldn’t live with myself if you hated me forever.”

Rhona cupped his face, “Oh Al,” she sighed, “I could never hate you.” And she leaned in to kiss him.

As the kiss deepened, Caroline decided it was high time she left and gave the two some privacy.
End Notes

Comments and reviews are appreciated and encouraged! Let me know what you thought!

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