

Christina Graves

Nashville, Tennessee

October 25, 1998

Dearest Antonio,

I know you asked me never to use that name, dear sire, but I feel I must address you thus as this letter is from my heart to yours. Please understand why I asked you to leave Nashville and go to Helena for me, why I didn't want you to be here when I met my final death.

You alone know what Talon meant to me, and you also know what his death has done to my soul. Brenda Moorecock has come to me with certain accusations concerning Jason Klein's death. While you have never asked me if I killed the vile creature, we both know that I did. Klein killed my Talon, and so I destroyed him.

I have tried to do as you have asked these last months: I have tried to live without my husband, without my soul. I have to admit defeat on this one, Antonio; my heart just isn't in it. When Talon died, so died all the joy in the world. Colors are dull, sounds are muted, even blood doesn't taste the same. I no longer wish to pretend I am living when I am as dead inside as my Talon.

I denied the accusations Brenda brought before, but I know it will be only a matter of hours before she has a warrant for my death. I want you know that I will not fight her when she comes for me, Antonio, and I didn't want you here to interfere. I welcome death for it will let me be with him again, let me bask in his love once more.

Please don't try to avenge me, sire. I could not bear it if that horrible creature Klein caused another death among those I loved. Let this be enough. Let my soul rest well with that of my heart, my husband, my Talon. Let this be the end of it.

I am leaving this letter and those I have written to my brother with Raphael Brown. He will make sure that you get them when you return to Nashville.

Remember me well, my sire, for I will never forget you. Thank you for the life you gave me, for the love you allowed me to share with Talon without turning an awkward situation into a bad one. I will always adore you for that, Antonio, if for nothing else.

Love,

Christina



Christina Strong

3847 West 27th Street Helena, MT 12345

June 18, 1993

Rob,

I met the most intriguing man today. Should I call him a man? I know that Papa would not approve, but he is certainly fascinating. And I'm sure its more than just the mind tricks that they say vampires use.

He is tall and dark and has the most amazing accent. I don't know what his real name is, but everyone calls him "The Spaniard." Isn't that to die for? Jane and I went to one of the restaurants in Nashville, and he was there. I wish we had more time to spend here, but we are supposed to fly back to Helena in two days. That means only one more night with the Spaniard!

He told me that if I came to his house around 3:30 pm tomorrow afternoon (would that be this afternoon? It's almost dawn.) that he would be waiting for me. I guess Papa doesn't have to know everything! Wish me luck, Robert.

Love

Tina

Christina Strong

3847 West 27th Street Helena, MT 12345

June 19, 1993

Rob,

It's dawn again and I had the best night with the Spaniard. He is so kind and gentle despite his bad boy front. I never realized how much excitement the night could hold!

I'm going to call Papa this morning and tell him I won't be coming home with Jane today. I know things are going a bit fast but you only live once, right?

Love

Tina

Christina Strong

3847 West 27th Street Helena, MT 12345

June 23, 1993

Rob,

I am sitting under an oak tree at some park in downtown Nashville. The Spaniard has asked me to join him to become one of the undead. His touch sets me on fire, and his eyes burn me, Robert, but is it love? Do I care?

I know now why Papa wanted me to stay away from vampires. Their world is so tempting so full of life despite the death they endure to exist as they do. The Spaniard took me to The Church of Eternal Life down on 5th street and it was amazing. All those humans wanting to be vampires, or to feed them. Afterward I begged the Spaniard to drink from me. He didn't want to, but in the middle of making love, I felt his teeth sink into my neck. Words cannot describe the ecstasy, they just can't.

Even if I choose not to join him, I will always have the scar to remind me of our time together. Perhaps knowing that I have had sex with him would shock you more than the blood. Would you understand if you knew?

Love

Tina

Christina Strong

3847 West 27th Street Helena, MT 12345

July 4, 1993

Rob,

Today is a fitting day for it is my Independence Day. Last night Antonia (that is the Spaniard's real name) brought me into his world. Tonight I rose and fed for the first time from a handsome young man who practically begged for it. I could feel the power inside of me and almost hear his thoughts as I drank.

Papa didn't understand when I called him, but it is done. He kept asking me what you would have thought. You're dead, Robert you have been for a long time. In the end, Papa told me I was dead to him as well.

It angered me that Papa thought he had the right to wonder what you would have thought if you were still alive. If it hadn't been for him, you would be able to tell me what you think yourself.

Why do I still write letters to you? Maybe it keeps you close in my heart. I still love you, Robert. I have never forgotten you.

Love

Tina

Christina Strong

685 North Washington Nashville, TN 54321

September 4, 1993

Rob,

Well, it's been two months since I have turned. I haven't heard from Papa, and I don't think I ever will. He won't even let Jane send my things to me.

I am learning a lot about my abilities. I like being a vampire regardless of the fear I see in many humans' eyes. I stay with Antonio because he loves me. I am closer to him than I have ever been to anyone except you, but I know it isn't love.

Someday Love will come for me and I know that Antonio will step aside and wish me well. In the meantime he is the most amazing lover! I never dreamed sex could be like this! Was it this way for you and Melissa? You never really told me about her, and now I'll never know. I want to believe you had pleasure like this in your life. I have to.

Love

Tina

Christina Strong

685 North Washington Nashville, TN 54321

April 2, 1994

Rob,

I met a girl named Lena today at the Church. I spend a lot of time there counseling the newly risen, although there are many who would say that I am newly risen. My sire is powerful, though, so I am stronger than most of the newly dead.

Anyway, Lena wants to be a vampire very badly, but her fiance forbids it. I only mention the girl because of him. I can see his reservations, vampires are not legal citizens and they are feared and hunted by most of America. By this I mean as well, it seems.

Lena tells me he was raised at a monastery in Italy and that he nearly died in a duel between two vampires. She brought him to the church tonight and he gave me the creeps. It's not just the cross he wears, either. It's like a dark finger stirred his soul and now he's not whole. I'd hate to meet him in a dark alley somewhere. I like Lena but she needs to dump the guy, he's going to cause problems I just know it. I'll be watching him carefully.

Love

Tina

Christina Strong

685 North Washington Nashville, TN 54321

May 18, 1994

Rob,

There is a new Master vampire in Nashville. I haven't met him yet but there was something about him when I saw him at the Church tonight. How can I say it? He is attractive in a rough sort of way. His eyes captured me from across the room. No vampire has captured my eyes since my embrace what is it about him? Antonio invited him to the house tonight perhaps I'll have a better idea then.

Later

Do you remember when I wrote to you about Love? How certain I was that it would come? It has and its name is Talon Graves. This is not just a physical attraction, he is absolutely fascinating. He pretends that he's hard and cold, but I can see the softness underneath the mask he shows to the world.

I talked to Antonio after Talon left, and I didn't have to say a word, he knew. Talon Graves: I must find out everything about him.

Love

Tina

Christina Strong

685 North Washington Nashville, TN 54321

July 19, 1994

Rob,

I have been spending every spare moment with Talon. Some nights we talk until the sun comes over the horizon and we fall asleep, only to wake hours later and continue on as if we'd never been interrupted. Is this what love is like, Robert? I think so.

He wants to marry me in the Church. Then he wants to take me to Europe where it is safer for those like us. It's getting dangerous in America, especially in Nashville for vampires. There is a local woman who has taken up hunting. Brenda, or Brenda or Linda - something like that. I've heard it said that Lena's fiance is helping her. I think Talon is right to want to leave, and Antonio should go with us, but I don't think he will.

Funny, even though we have stopped sleeping together I still think of him in my heart as Antonio. I'm so glad he accepted Talon and I being together. I would have hated to have lost our friendship. It would have been a steep price to pay even for Talon's love. Talon wants to leave early next week. I think I'll tell him yes. But you never thought your Tina would marry a vampire!

Love

Tina

Christina Graves

August 15, 1996

Rob,

Talon and I just heard the news and I had to write to you about it. America has granted vampires legal rights as citizens!! We are so excited and he is talking about going home.

Home for me is Nashville, and he agrees. I think we'll go as soon as he can make our travel arrangements. I have missed the Spaniard, my sire. Home!

Love

Tina

Christina Graves

September 1, 1996

Rob,

Home again, how good it feels. Antonio hasn't changed a bit he is still deeply handsome. Even after all the time Talon and I spent in Spain, I never tire of hearing him speak.

The church is still on 5th, but much more popular than it was. Antonio tells me that Brenda Moorehead the hunter who has killed so many of us, is now the legal executioner for Tennessee. That frightens me. Listen to me home one day and all I can talk about is bad news!

Talon has agreed to stay here, and we are looking for a house. He is quite a different man than the one I met, Robert. I knew there was a gentleness within him and now it shows. He has changed me as well. I am more confident, stronger than I ever was before. I love him and I know he loves me. I know that we would kill or die for each other. Could I ever ask for anything more?

Love

Tina

Christina Graves

June 30, 1998

Rob,

Lena has returned and there is no sign of the Jason she was engaged to. She will become one of us next Friday, along with nearly a dozen others. Talon has taken a liking to her so he will embrace Lena himself.

Talon is now preaching at the Church, and the response is overwhelming. So many mortals want to join the fold so many regret the pain and suffering they inflicted on the vampires. I help Talon as much as I can, as does Antonio. Occasionally we aid the Executioner in finding a renegade vampire, but for the most part she leaves us alone.

Life has been good to us now, and Talon assures me it will always be so. But some mornings I hear something in the wind, a warning that tells me my life will change soon, that nothing will ever be the same. Do it you, Robert? Are you trying to warn me about things to come? I wish you were here. I wish you could tell me what to do as you used to when we were children.

Love

Tina

Christina Graves

July 19, 1998

Rob,

I'm worried, Robert. Lena has come up, missing and last night I think I saw her ex-fiance watching the Church. Antonio says Jason left town shortly after we did two years ago, but now I think he's back. I don't want to believe that Lena is dead, but is it just a coincidence that he's here and she's gone?

What really worried me was that I remembered Lena telling me about the monastery in Italy that Jason had nearly been killed at. Talon took me to Italy, Robert, and showed me a church high in the mountains where he had gone years ago to try and save the monks from a renegade vampire. Most of them died anyway but Talon was able to destroy the renegade after a long battle.

Could this be the monastery that Lena told me about? If so, is Talon in danger from this Jason? I pray it isn't so. I would rather die than live an eternity without my Talon. I would kill anyone who would dare to harm him. Perhaps I should find this Jason and have a talk with him. What would you tell me to do, Robert? I wish you were here to guide me.

Love

Tina

Christina Graves

July 22, 1998

Rob.

Jason Klein is a fanatic. What Lena ever saw in him is completely beyond me. He practically spat in my face as soon as I approached him, and he argued with everything I said. He's attractive, this Jason but inside I think he is grotesque.

I warned him about hunting any vampires in town. Robert, but I don't think it will do any good. When I asked him about Lena he got this half smile on his face. I wanted to slap him, to kill him then and there. I've never felt that way before, Robert.

Am I losing my humanity? Am I sliding downward toward the beast? Something in me detests that man. I know I won't hesitate if he harms anyone I care about, especially Talon.

Tina

Christina Graves

August 12, 1999

Rob.

I will kill him. I will taste his heart's blood and leave his body for the animals to feast upon.

He has taken my love, my life. Talon is dead

I swear upon my soul that I will not rest until Jason Klein is dead.

Tina

Christina Graves

October 10, 1999

Rob.

It is done. I followed him to his apartment unseen. I stood in the window and watched from the balcony while he knelt before an altar and lit a candle. I can't understand how he could live normally after he ripped my world apart.

He was surprised to see me when he stood and turned around. He laughed, Robert. He laughed when I told him he had ripped the heart from my body.

He told me that Talon died begging for my life. For my life. Didn't he know that I can't live without him? By the time I was done, Jason Klein was begging for his own life. I fed from him as I have never fed from another living being. I didn't protect his mind, Robert. I let him feel the power and the urgency of the blood, let him feel my hunger for his death. He screamed loud and long before he died.

Now I wait for my own death, for I know that the executioner won't let this rest. I will be with you soon, Robert. Take care of my Talon until I can join you.

Love

Tina