

I watched and I waited.

For several weeks, I monitored her evening routine, making sure she was the one. Though the hunger was unbearable, I wanted to be positive she was what I knew her to be – a murderer.

Most nights, she did as others of her profession, standing on the streets and enticing weak men with a bat of her eyes and a swish of her hips as she led them to the mouth of an alley or into a house of ill-repute. But on rare occasions, she would lure one of her choosing to another location, a more secluded and forgotten place where she would take his life.

Between clients, I also noticed the coughing fits she would hide from everyone, going to a private place and barking into a handkerchief. As she tucked it into her bodice, I saw the blood. Consumption could take her sooner than I would.

A couple more nights pass and I find her yet again luring a man to his demise. I follow her, keeping to the shadows and observing her practiced methods. She's done this for a long time. Far longer than I have been watching.

We are alone in this broken, burned structure – she, her victim, and me. I lean against the jagged brick with eyes closed, listening and waiting for her to finish her work. And once I know the deed is done, I move on. I won't attack tonight. She deserves at least one more night.

As soon as the sun falls below the horizon, I slip out into the evening streets, searching for her. I want to be her first of the evening. I want to catch her before she has a chance to take another soul.

I find her on the same corner she is always on. Coming out of the shadows, I casually stroll across the street, not making eye contact and seemingly lost. I dressed in my finest clothes, hoping to entice her.

And it works.

"Are you lost, love?" she asks sweetly as she comes to my side and hooks her bare arm around mine.

"I believe I am," I respond, staring into her stormy gray eyes.

She tilts her head slightly and smiles, stray black hairs falling to one side. "I'll be glad to help you find your way, if you'd like the company," she comments, pressing closer to me and raising her chest as she caresses my arm.

"I would like that," I reply with a smile, ensnaring her.

She is now the prey.

I allow her to lead me, passing all her usual haunts and not stopping at any of them. I give her a confused look, but she continues on, flashing a reassuring smile. She is taking me to the same place as her other victims.

We arrive at the burned-out building, left to weather and decay, and enter, climbing over debris and charred remains of furniture and fixtures stripped of anything valuable. "What are we doing here?" I ask with faux concern. I know her every move before she makes it. I anticipate them.

She leans against a wall, black and cracked, and beckons me closer. As I move toward her, she presses her body to mine, kissing me. I grasp her bare arms, so frail and easily broken, and gently force her away. "Slowly," I whisper, my hand gliding down her arm to her hand.

My finger rests on her wrist, gauging her pulse. Steady and calm, she is maintaining herself around me. That will change soon enough.

I kiss her, my hand leaving her arm as I trace the vein in her wrist up her arm to her chest. My cool fingers glance her skin and I watch it react, but her heartbeat stays steady. I lean in and kiss her collarbone, working my way up her neck, her heart remaining calm as her hand gradually moves to her waist.

I continue along her neck, opening my mouth over her flesh while resisting the urge, and then slowly move to her cheek. "I know you want to kill me," I whisper as my cold lips brushed the warm skin. "Why else would you bring me here?" I question, moving back slightly as I cut my eyes to hers

They widen and her heart beats rapidly as I grab her wrist before she can strike and thrust it against the wall, forcing her to drop the dagger grasped in her hand. It clangs as it hits the ground and her eyes burn with hatred as I restrain her.

"How could you possibly know that?" she questions between clenched teeth.

I lean closer, my lips at her ear. "I've been following you," I whisper with a grin.

Her heart races and her cheeks flush. "They deserved what they got. You're just like them, you pompous bastards with your fine clothes and luxurious homes coming here to use me," she snarls as she turns her head toward me. "Tell me...what lovely, lonely thing did you leave at home to partake in my improper company?" she inquires haughtily.

I smirk. "No one. I'm not like those other men," I reply smoothly as I release her. She glances at the dagger and I grip her face, forcing her to gaze deep into my eyes. "Give in," I whisper and she falls into a daze.

I grin as I lean in and kiss her, my hand slipping to her neck as I tilt her head back slightly. My lips graze her chin as I move to her throat and she lets out an aching breath. I press them against her flesh, the vein under it throbbing fast and hard, calling to me.

She is mine.

Her arms wrap around my body as she begs for more. I open my mouth over the beckoning pulse, my fangs extending and readying for the release. Slowly piercing the flesh, she gasps, clenching tight to me as I hold tighter to her.

She doesn't fight me, giving herself over as I drain her life. Her warm blood flows fast over my tongue and I revel as it fills my body. Her sinfulness, her delicious wickedness. I continue to hold onto her as her grip loosens and she becomes limp.

Just before she dies, I break away and gaze into her dimming eyes as she releases her final breath. She stares back at me, her life fading as she accepts her fate. Bringing my hand over them, I lower her lids, leaving my face as the last she sees.

Resting her body against the wall, I kneel before this eternally sleeping shell. I pick up her knife and quickly drag the blade across her throat, covering my marks. No one can know of what really killed her, leaving them to assume more logical explanations.

As I stand and look at the frail, wasted life before me, I am wrought with guilt. My hunger is satiated, but I am no better than she. Her life was not an innocent one, but it was a life nonetheless.