

## CHAPTER 147

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147 Ava: A Vampire's Goodwill (1) 147 Ava: A Vampire's Goodwill (1) The familiar voice comes from behind us. Spinning around, I find Sister Miriam standing in the doorway, exactly as I remember her. Pale skin. Dark hair that seems to swallow light instead of reflecting it. Eerie red eyes that seem to glow in the soft light of the room. It occurs to me that the curtains are all wide open, letting natural light into this space. And she visited during the day when we first met. I really need to learn more about vampires. My lack of knowledge might get me killed. "How did we get here?" I ask, hating the slight tremor in my words. It isn't every day that you open your eyes and realize you've been magicked to another place. Sister Miriam smiles, but there's something unsettling about the expression. It doesn't quite reach her eyes. I remember, now, how her face doesn't really move with her smiles. "You called for me, did you not?" 147 Ava A Vampire's Goodwill (1) Each graceful step brings her closer, and I step back, bumping against the warmth of Selene's body. At least I'm not alone. It's almost as if she's gliding rather than walking. "I must say, I'm impressed. Not many have the ability to reach me in such a way." My brows come together in confusion. "I don't understand. I just lit the candle and thought of you, like you said." "It takes more than just a candle and a thought, child. There must be power behind it. Power that you clearly possess." She moves closer to me, and I fight the urge to take another step back. There's something about her presence that both terrifies and intrigues me. "What do you want from me?" I ask, my voice barely above a whisper. Sister Miriam tilts her head to the side, studying me with those unnerving eyes. "The question is, what do you want from me? You called for me, after all. There must be a reason." Itaka a doan broath truingt la Ave & Vamps Goodwi sent a letter to the Westwood pack, warning me about danger. "That danger is now passed." She looks me over, the gesture more dismissive than anything else. "You seem to have made it out in one piece. There's no need to call me." "Why did you try to save me?" Her head tilts slowly to the other side. Sometimes, she has an inhuman grace. At other times, it's like she's a robot with bad programming, moving in ways that just look unnatural. "Must there be a reason to do a good deed, little wolf?" I'm not sure how to respond. Of course there doesn't need to be a reason, and yet it feels like there is one. Lucas is going to be upset, Selene observes, way too calm for our current situation. Shit. Yeah, he is. Wait, is the candle still burning at the apartment? That's a fire hazard. 147 Ava A Vampire's Goodwill (1) Sister Miriam turns suddenly, waving us in her general direction. "Come. It is time for dinner." There are about five clocks in the room, all showing different times. I reach into my pocket to check, but- Nope. No phone. Of course I don't have my phone. It would be way too convenient to call someone and let Lucas know I'm safe and alive if I had kept my phone on me like a normal person. Instead, I can clearly picture it... on my kitchen table, where it usually is. Lucas is going to microchip you at this rate. Exasperated, I follow Sister Miriam to dinner, even if it should only be lunch time. You watch too much TV, Selene. "Did you know I was coming today?" I ask, remembering that she had the unusual ability to prophesize the future. "No," she says, leading us into a giant room, with a long oak table and chairs. filled only A quick count shows twenty chairs along the sides of 147 Ava: A Vampire's Goodwill (1) the table. Selene shakes her head, sneezing hard. Old blood, she murmurs. It always smells terrible in a feeding den. A shudder makes its way down my spine, and Sister Miriam pulls a chair out at the fair end of the table, motioning toward it. "Sit." Not sitting seems rude. Even so, sitting just seems... awkward. "Sister Miriam, I didn't come for a meal-" "Sit," she says again, with a faint smile. "Don't worry. No one will harm you while you are in my home." Selene hops into the chair beside it, looking incongruous as a dog at a fancy table. Sister Miriam doesn't even blink, only motions patiently for me to park my butt into the chair she's selected. I sink into it as requested, tracking the strange woman as she crosses to the other side of the long table. The moment she settles into her seat, the double doors at the far end of the room swing open, revealing three men. Their skin has an almost translucent pallor, 18:12 5/8 147 Ava: A Vampire's Goodwill (1) hinting at something otherworldly. Each carries a covered platter, the scent of food wafting through the air. "Forgive us. We were woefully unprepared for such esteemed guests," Sister Miriam announces, her voice echoing in the cavernous space. The men approach, each setting an ornate dish before me. "Bon appétit," they murmur, their voices soft yet unsettling. As quickly as they appear, they vanish back through the doors, leaving me staring at an array of covered platters. Suspicion curls in my gut as I eye the spread. Can we trust this? I ask Selene, not daring to voice my concerns aloud. She leans forward, her nose twitching. It smells safe, she admits after a moment. No traces of poison or tampering. Across the table, Sister Miriam watches me, her crimson eyes glittering in the light. "Please, eat," she urges, a smile playing at the corners of her mouth. "The joy of food was lost to me with my rebirth. 16:12 147 Ava: A Vampire's Goodwill (1) Watching others devour an amazing meal is one of the few pleasures I have left." I hesitate, my fingers hovering over the silverware. The aroma is enticing, but the circumstances are far from normal. Dining with a vampire, in a strange place, after being magically transported? It's enough to make anyone lose their appetite. Reluctantly, I lift the cover from the first dish, revealing a perfectly cooked steak, the juices glistening in the light. Roasted vegetables and a delicate sauce complete the plate. I cut into the meat,

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Updates... knife gliding through like butter. Sister Miriam leans forward, her gaze intense as I raise the first bite to my mouth. Flavors explode on my tongue, rich and savory, unlike anything I've tasted before. A soft moan escapes me before I can stop it, and Sister Miriam's smile widens. "Exquisite, isn't it?" she purrs, leaning back in her chair. "The finest ingredients, prepared by the most skilled hands. A true culinary masterpiece." I nod, unable to form words as I savor each bite. Selene watches, her head tilted in curiosity. It's good, 16:13 76 147 Ava. A Vampire's Goodwill (1) then? Better than good, I reply, already cutting another piece. I've never tasted anything like it. As I eat, Sister Miriam continues to observe, her expression one of vicarious pleasure. It's unsettling, being watched so intently, but the food is too delicious to resist. Comment 2 A Rost your first comment! Vote 10WWWw.ñO(v)eℓWorm.c(o)m

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