

## The Human World

I ght through the crowd of people who can't help but rush around, on their phones and laptops, always busy and not paying attention. I feel like a snail, that's how slow I move compared to them. But I have all the time in the world.

Just as I'm about to exit the oor into the elevator, I hear a stern voice behind me. "I've been watching you stroll around this whole time now. Where do you think you're going? Don't you think you have a job to do?"

I turn around and look into the face of an unknown man. I swiftly check his suit and demeanor, he must be a CEO or something like that. "I don't work here," I reply and want to turn around, but he aggressively grabs my arm.

"So what are you doing here? Espionage?"

"What? No!" I try to pull my arm away, but he waves for security.

Fuck. I can't spend my time in this world in jail.

I decide to do the thing I know I can. "Can't we...talk about this in private?" I ask and bat my eyes, push my breasts a little and act cute. "I'm sure I can make you understand my...needs here."

The guy looks puzzled for a moment, letting go of my wrist in shock. He clears his throat, looks around to see if anybody heard that, before his face turns stern again.

It's not working.

I decide it's time for another approach. I swirl around and start running for the stairs. The guy shouts after me, but I just run down fast, taking several steps at a time.

By the time I am on the bottom of the stairs, his shouts and those of security are far away. Instead of going to the lobby, I open the next window and hop out, before blending in with the crowd on the street.

And while I catch my breath, I realize something.

Fuck.

I'm a goddamn shapeshifter, I could have just shifted into *anybody*.

I shake my head and nd a nice place to sit, a bench not too far o . After calming down, I take in the things around me. Bustling crowds, so many voices and sounds, it's all so loud. Des gave me some money, so I buy ice cream and wa es and afterward a burger and fries, just to buy more dessert in the form of cake and chocolate with cream.

I sit in a huge park, walk at a river's shore, watch a street dance battle and enjoy human life for a while. After stu ng my face with a lot of other food, I still don't feel satis ed. I could eat a goddamn supermarket, the hunger won't stop.

The sun slowly starts to set and I'm beginning to walk back to the o ce building. I can't help but wonder...how long have I been away? It seems like so much has changed. The buildings look di erent, the phones they have in their hands, they even talk di erently now, at least the young ones.

I walk around the last corner, but instead of the o ce building, I see something completely di erent. Have I...lost my way?

I turn back around and want to walk back, but run into a person. "I'm so sorry, I...", I start, but when I feel a hand grab my wrist, I freeze.

"Looking so lost, Missy." A relatively young man grins at me. "Need your way back home?"

"No, I just forgot something," I reply and want to pull my arm back again, but the grip gets stronger. "You're hurting me."

Well, not really, but that's inappropriate. "Let me help you nd your way back. It's through here." Before I can react, he pulls me into an alley. The classic, dark one.

You got to be kidding me.

I don't have to fear much, after all I'm a shapeshifter and even if he did succeed in violating me, it won't hurt. But still, I won't let that happen if I can help it. "Hey, back o !" I say, but he keeps pushing me into the darkness.

"Don't be like that. It's a shortcut to your satisfaction, believe me."

"You know what?" I act cute again and brush my hand down his chest so he drops his guard. "Maybe you're right. And I got something special for you."

"I knew you were a kinky one when I saw you." The guy really thinks it's his lucky day, he leans back a little as I'm slowly stroking over his chest.

"Oh, I am." My grin grows wide, while I raise my other hand and let it turn into the paw of a werewolf. "And I'm going to have fun with you."

His eyes double their size and he gasps, stumbles backward. "What...are you?!" he freaks and I chuckle.

"Oh, but I'm a kinky one," I repeat after him and lick my lips, "and I'll show you just *how* kinky."

He tries to run, so I hit him with the paw, throwing him back against the cold brick wall, until he slumps down on the ground, whimpering. "Don't kill me," he begs and I kneel down in front of him, my hand back to normal.

"I won't. But don't you dare touch a woman like that ever again. I will nd you and make you pay." It's an empty threat, but I'm sure it'll pay o .

"I...I swear," he whines and I nod, stand up and walk out of the alley.

When I'm back on the street, I can feel my hands shake. This world is nothing I want to live in anymore. I look around and see beggars on the sidewalk, idiots throwing trash around, I hear cars honking, profanities and insults shouted at each other. I don't want to know how many people are killed in this very second. Innocent people.

And those I spend my time with are supposed to be the monsters?

I scoo and try to nd my way back. After getting lost too many times and eventually asking an older woman if she could point me to the right direction, I am in front of the o ce again.

But fuck. I didn't consider it'd be closed at night! Damn, I totally forgot... "Shit." I walk to the front doors and try to open them, but they won't budge.

There should be a night shift here, shouldn't there? Some life forms that are researched need twenty-four/seven care. I stupidly search my pockets, although it's impossible that my old ID is somewhere in there.

I pat myself down, but there is nothing to be found. Just when I want to give up, I can hear keys in the lock. I take a step back and somebody opens the doors.

"You're late."

A man with broad, impressive shoulders looks at me, dark hair and dark eyes, a cheeky smile on his lips and for a human, he's very impressive. He's wearing a black shirt and jeans, the keys still in his hand. I'm a bit thrown o by the e ect he has on me, I'm at a loss for words and just stare.

"Are you coming?" he asks and his voice is deep and rich, resonating in his immense chest muscles.

Fuck Cat, snap out of it!

"Erm, yeah," I go inside and he closes the doors behind me, locks them again. "I...forgot my work ID at my desk and just went out for a while and lost track of time."

"Mhmm. I'll bring you." The guy starts walking and I look at his back for a moment. Fuck, I can see the muscles through that shirt! His arms are so fucking huge, he looks like a bodybuilder, but more natural.

I bet he could grab me easily with those arms and press me against a wall and...

Cat!

"Are you sure you are okay?" the guy turns around again, and I swiftly follow him.

"Yeah. Just an incident on the streets." I wave it o .

He looks surprised. "What incident?"

"Just an idiot trying to get something I wasn't ready to give," I say, but I don't know why I tell this to a complete stranger.

"Were you hurt?!" This guy immediately gets angry, and I am puzzled, so he breathes deeply. "A family member was once assaulted. I tend to react like that now, sorry."

"It's okay." I can't help but put my hand on his massive arm, and he looks down for a moment before looking back into my eyes. I hold his gaze, and we just stand there for a moment until the lift arrives.

We go inside, and I have no idea which oor, so I just stand there dumbfounded for a second. The guy leans over and is way closer than he would have to be while pressing a button I don't even realize.

"What's your job here?" I ask and clear my throat. "You don't look like a desk job."

"What do I look like, then?" he stays close to me, and I look up into his face, my cheeks blushing.

"Maybe...a night guard?" I evade and he chuckles.

"Something like that."

The lift dings and the door opens. He lets me walk out rst, and when I do, I feel his gaze on my back. Only now, I realize that it's the oor I was originally coming from. How did he know?

I walk close to the door which I need to go through, but then stop. "I'll nd my way from here," I say and turn around to face him. "Thank you for letting me in."

"It was my pleasure," he says and suddenly comes close. I think he wants to kiss me, so I hold my breath and just wait. I feel that weird butter y-like thing in my stomach and look down onto his lips.

But instead, he grabs the door handle and opens the door for me. "I think this is you," he whispers, and I get goosebumps all over my body.

So I just nod, hurry inside, and slam the door after me. I lean against it and breathe deeply a couple of times, until I say what Des told me to. It's some dragon language or something, but it works, so the magical door appears.

When I'm back home, I land directly next to Des's and my small space. "You're back later than expected. Did everything go well?" Des smiles at me and gently pats the cushions next to him, so I sit down beside him.

"Not really."

I tell him about what I felt in the world now and of how much I ate but never felt stu ed. I also tell him about the guy in the alley, but I leave out the fact that I used the werewolf's paw to get him o me.

And I tell him that I got lost and a night guard let me inside. "Okay, slow down," Des smiles. "You kept feeling hungry because you don't need human food anymore to ll you. Around us, you don't need to feed, because it's our presence that's easing your hunger. But any monster semen helps keep you lled for a longer period, should you decide to venture out again."

"That would have been nice to know before," I say, but Des laughs.

"You said you didn't want to sleep with anybody and we all respected that. Talking of respect...how did you get that lth o you?"

"Some empty threats and crazy talk," I say and somehow feel bad about lying, but I'm not sure how Des would react if I told him that I showed a monster body part to a human.

"And that night guard...your eyes shine when you talk about them."

"No, that's not...he was just...", I stutter.

Des chuckles. "You found him attractive?" he whispers and pushes my chin up.

"I...didn't think that was possible," I reply quietly.

Des nods. "Neither did I. But"—Des thinks for a moment—"I did have some supernatural beings in that building. Maybe it was one of them."

"Oh, that's possible!" I sigh in relief. "I thought the whole shapeshifting thing was going away..."

"That's impossible, my love." Des chuckles and kisses my head.