

Sanguini's Muse

by Alison

Gate-crash Slughorn's Christmas Party and meet the vampire Sanguini! What is he thinking about?

Complete short story

Chapter 1 of 1

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Terms used in this story:

Pomum Blood fruit (derogatory)

Magi Wizard/Witch

Adami Muggle

Vampiri Vampire

Fledgling/s Child/ren

"Harry Potter, I am simply delighted!" said Worple, peering short-sightedly up into Harry's face. "I was saying to Professor Slughorn only the other day, 'Where is the biography of Harry Potter for which we have all been waiting?'"

I tuned Worple out. This was as boring as all the other functions he had dragged me to since his book came out. If it were not for the express orders of my Lady, I would tear the tedious little pomum's throat out.

I imagined it in my mind's eye for a moment before regretfully putting the enticing scene away. For my Lady had been explicit: we of the Vampiri are dying out, the once-mighty clans now scattered and increasingly ignorant of our own history and culture. So it was my job to befriend this Magi, lull him into thinking we are excited about the prospects of cooperation and friendship between our two species and do whatever is necessary to get a favourable account of us into his book. For Eldred Worple is read widely by the Magi. What he writes could be the saving of my species.

To one side, a group of girls was giggling and watching me. So rude! If they were Adami, I would simply bespell them and feast! But the Magi have protection, the burning light of their Patronus. While I doubted these fledglings would be able to cast such a deterrent, I knew for a fact that Worple can. He has used it on me once before, when I lost both patience and control with him. I never want to feel that pain again; the bright magical radiation was almost as bad as the fatal rays of the sun.

Ah, but these sweet little pomums were harmless, and so ripely scented, so full of life-energy ... it had been so very long ...

"Sanguini, stay here!" Worple's voice is stern and I realize that I had been unconsciously edging towards the group of girls. "Here, have a pasty," he said, seizing one from the tray of a passing house-elf and stuffing it into my hand.

I waited until Worple had turned his attention back to the fledgling he was conversing with, and then dropped the offensively dead food onto the floor, surreptitiously wiping my fingers on a paper napkin to remove all trace of the pasty. It is true that we Vampiri can exist for a time on such lifeless matter, but the energy required for its conversion is high and weakens us. Like most of my kind now, I am reduced to living off the blood and life-energy of domestic rodents, I, a noble related by birth to our Lady of the Dracyul line!

Conscious of Worple's eyes watching me, I strolled slowly to a corner of the room that is free of pomums and seated myself. I wished I were outside in the fresh night air, away from the delicious scent of prey all about me. I can keep my instincts at bay, but it is difficult when one has drunk only from rats for the past year! Real food is getting more and more difficult to come by, particularly since Eldred began using me for the promotion of his book and rarely lets me out of his sight.

I let my gaze roam about the room. Over there by the punch-bowl was the fledgling Zabini. When Slughorn introduced us to him earlier this evening I received quite a start, for Zabini is a Vampiri name.

They were a warrior clan of great renown, closely related to the ruling Dracyul clan. I had thought them extinct, so it was with great excitement that I let myself scent the boy. Imagine my bitter disappointment when I realized that while he had a few drops of Vampiri blood, it was greatly diluted with that of Magi, so much so that the last Vampiri in his bloodline must have been generations ago. Zabini is now almost entirely Magi.

I could have cried tears of blood when I realized that. For the fledgling is well-favored and self-confident. He would have made an ideal consort, and I yearned for another of my kind to share my life with.

All Vampiri are hermaphrodite, so gender is no barrier to our reproducing, and there are enough similarities between Magi, Adami and Vampiri that cross-breeding does and has occurred. I am as capable of bearing a baby from the seed of a Magi male as I am of impregnating a Magi female. However, the fact is that most Magi are extremely xenophobic and unwilling to commit to us, afraid, no doubt, of our need for life-energy. And Adami are useless as mates, most children born to or of them having no Vampiri tendencies at all.

Eldred Worple is the only Magi I have found who was willing, eager even, to pursue a sexual relationship with me. The deluded fool thinks I care for him! bah! As if I can't see that he is only interested in what he thinks of as our "exotic sex life" and the fame I can bring him through his book. He would never commit to me fully, his heart is never mine. So I will never bear a child if he is my only choice, although I am the last of my clan.

But there are now so few Vampiri left, and I have been unable to find a life-partner. We are indeed dwindling, flickering out like a candle wick burnt too low ...

No, I doubt there is anything that can save us from extinction now, not even the rise of the Dark Lord Voldemort. Oh, we know of his resurgence. But none of the Vampiri will join him, for he has recruited our mortal enemies, Dementors, to his cause.

There are those who believe Dementors and Vampiri once had a common ancestor, and distasteful as the idea is, I for one believe it. For we share the same prey, we both live on the life-energy of Adami and Magi when we can get it. Our method of ingesting it is of course different: Vampiri bespell our prey and drink the life-energy in the blood, whereas Dementors induce it in their prey through fear and inhale the energy, either from the surrounding atmosphere or mouth to mouth.

But because our prey is the same and our territories overlap, it has been constant war between our two species. The Dementors have over the years become strong, thanks to their pact with the Magi rulers to keep magical law-breakers docile in Azkaban, and Dementor numbers have risen exponentially thanks to that abundance of easy prey.

But now the Dementors have given their allegiance to the Dark Lord, who has promised them a feast beyond their wildest imaginings once he has taken power.

However, we Vampiri will not abide by any ruler who forces us to co-exist with Dementors! And so my Lady has persuaded the remnants of the Elder Clans that we must pin our hopes of survival on the goodwill of the Magi. We need to convince them that we can be valuable allies who will help them in their struggle in the coming War. It is only in this way that we hope to halt the numerical superiority of our evil cousins the Dementors ...

I was so absorbed in my gloomy thoughts that I thought at first I had imagined it: just the faintest whiff of scent, but my head swung about, questing. At first I was positive I must be mistaken but then I scented it again. There was no doubt about it: another Vampiri was somewhere in this very room!

I sat as if frozen to my seat and closed my eyes, focusing all my concentration on that faint, elusive scent. It was light and heady, unmistakably Vampiri. My breathing quickened as I scanned the room by scent alone, letting my sensitive nose do the job of eliminating one after another of the Magi in the room. Finally, I narrowed the scent down to a small group gathered about Professor Slughorn.

Pomum essence filled the air, pungent and meaty, but over that one group the Vampiri signature fragrance wafted gently, zephyr-light. I opened my eyes. I had already been introduced to several of the people in the group, but now there were two others I had not previously seen, and it was about these two that the scent was most strong.

From my vantage point I could see that one was a teenage blonde-haired boy, the other a man, perhaps in his mid-thirties, with long dark hair. I discounted the fledgling as clearly just another pomum Magi, then focused on the man. With a great jolt of excitement I took in his tall lean build, his dark watchful eyes, those high cheekbones, and the sensitive-looking hooked nose. They all proclaimed that here was one who must be half-blood Vampiri at least!

Even as I stared in wonder, the pair left the group, the man in the lead, and any doubts I may have harboured as to his ancestry were swept aside. His walk was the graceful glide so typical of the adults of my species.

I snapped out of my stupor; I couldn't just let him walk away without finding out more about him! Glancing at Worple, I saw him deep in conversation with another Magi. I closed my eyes, leaning back against the chair, confident that Eldred would assume I was sleeping. But sleep was the last thing on my mind. Concentrating, I lifted my consciousness clear of my corporeal body and let it drift over the crowded room below, heading for the door.

Once outside, I glanced up and down the deserted corridor. I could no longer use my nose to scent, but there was a pulsing trail of warmth that could only belong to the young pomum that was with my Vampiri quarry. With their higher metabolic rates, pomum leave tracks that even the most inexperienced Vampiri can follow. I drifted along the warm trail until it vanished behind one of the classroom doors. Silently, I let my consciousness crumple to the ground and I slid under the space at the bottom of the door, reforming my invisible self on the other side.

The Vampiri was leaning against one of the desks facing the young Magi, his arms crossed, a worried frown on his face. The fledgling was standing with a rebellious look on his face, and appeared to be arguing. In my incorporeal form the vibrations from their talk shivered through me, and I could understand some of the words I felt, enough to get the gist of the conversation.

The Vampiri was concerned for the youngster, I could tell that much. The fledgling had apparently done something foolish, and the man was trying to warn him against any further breaches of conduct and offering his help. But the boy was prideful and stubborn, like so many of the Magi, and refused to be swayed from his path. There was also something about the Vampiri having sworn a vow to protect the boy, and the fledgling clearly did not appreciate or welcome this.

Finally the fledgling's face twisted when his father was mentioned, and he stormed out of the classroom, slamming the door hard behind him. The Vampiri gave a sigh, and covered his eyes for a moment with one long-fingered hand as if tremendously weary. I wondered at his relationship with this young Magi, and daringly, I hovered invisibly before his dark eyes and let my consciousness merge with his briefly so that I could see his memories. Like many of my species, I am a master at the art of Legilimens and I was in and out again in a fraction of a second, but even this brief contact was enough to make the Vampiri start violently. Oh, but his mind was sensitive; sensitive enough to have felt my brief touch! He stared around him wide-eyed for a moment before finally shaking his head. Then he wiped all emotion from his face and slowly left the classroom.

I drifted for a moment, sorting through the kaleidoscope of memories. Amazing! The Vampiri had no idea of his heritage, he knew he was a half-blood, but believed his father to be Adami, or as he put it, "Muggle".

As I looked at the memories of his father, I could clearly see that this man was totally Vampiri. He had apparently managed to bespell a Magi woman and married her. I had to surmise that somehow this "Da" as he was called, was managing to live off his Magi wife's life-energy, though how was anybody's guess. Perhaps he only drank from her when they slept, when his instincts overwhelmed him and his barriers were down. I saw that "Da" worked night-shift at the local mill and slept during the day, telling his son that he had a medical condition that stopped him from going out during daylight hours.

His son, though, was protected by his mother's Magi blood, and could stand the touch of the sun, although he didn't like it and stayed indoors or in shade as much as possible, the fine porcelain tone of his skin another mark of his heritage.

As for the blonde boy, he was the child of a friend, and the Vampiri had a strong protective impulse towards him. It was with relief that I saw he had nothing other than a purely avuncular affection for the fledgling, along with exasperation at his headstrong ways.

It was then I think I realized I was already a little in love with this enigma of a half-blood Vampiri. What a life-partner he would make, engendering strong, almost pureblood Vampiri children with me!

Musing, I drifted my consciousness back out into the hall and returned to the party. I gently let myself back into my body and opened my eyes, stood up and stretched, then rejoined Worple, who was standing by the punch-bowl with a glass.

"Ah, Sanguini! I saw you having a little nap over there! Would you like a drink?"

I suppressed a shudder at the thought of drinking cold rotted fruit juice, but managed to shake my head with a slight smile. "Not at the moment, thank you Eldred." My gaze swept the room and I saw the Vampiri was talking to Slughorn again. "Tell me, who is that man over there?"

Worple looked where I indicated, frowning. "Him? One of the teachers here, I believe. His name's Snape, I think, Professor Snape. I don't know his first name. Why?"

I pretended to examine a tray of animal remains spread onto biscuits; pate, I believe it is called. "Mmm, no reason," I lied. "His face just seems ... familiar to me ... "

I kept my face calm but inside my mind was seething. The name had a Vampiri ring to it. One of the long-lost clans, perhaps, thought to have disappeared amongst the Adami generations ago!

Worple slipped his arm about my waist. "Oh good. I don't have to be jealous then," he teased, and I repressed a shudder. I could tell from his tone that I would need to perform my duty with him again tonight, a chore which was required to keep him docile. I smiled, but it was not, as Worple thought, directed at him.

Instead, I was thinking of dark hair and eyes. In a few months, six at the most, once the book's publicity has died down, my little pomum Eldred is going to suffer an "accident". I'm sure my Lady will agree that I have done my duty to my species and allow me to finally be free of him, particularly if I make it appear to the Magi media that I am "grieving the loss of my Blood Brother". Good publicity, the Magi love such shallow sensationalism.

But then I'm going to contact this lost half-blood Vampiri, let him know who he really is, and tell him that he does not need to be alone in this cruel world. I will guide him and protect him, and we will be life-partners together.

Oh yes, it might be Worple in my bed tonight, but it will be Snape in my head ...

The End.

Author's note: If you liked this story, please have a read of my original story "Love Inhuman" at this link:

<http://www.thepetulantpoetess.com/viewstory.php?sid=11932>

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