

Blood That Binds Ep 14 - My Vampire, My Vampire, and Me

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Dolan begins chatting the moment the car door opens. Maeve doesn't look at him. Not yet. She sits there, with the door open, facing forward. Her head buzzes so loud she can't hear her own thoughts, and slowly gets louder and louder with every heartbeat. Her heart. It pounds loud and fast even in her own ears. It must be thunderous to him. Maybe that's why he finally asks her,

"Maeve? Maeve!"

And places his hand on her knee, shaking it slightly. Maeve blinks once, slowly. Or maybe she blinks at a normal speed. Everything feels hypersharp and in slow motion. She turns her head to look at his face, and the buzzing in her head stops. In the sudden silence, she can hear every sound, each snowflake falling against the car's windshield.

His eyes are on hers. Those glowing eyes, pupils dilated, focused. His fangs glisten and his tongue reaches out to touch one absentmindedly, like an afterthought. Why didn't she see it before? All her life, she looked into this face and never realized how predatory his features were.

Suddenly, something snaps. Maeve rips away from him, running for the house. He is out of the car before she makes it two steps, and when she slips and falls on her back he is over her before she has registered the pain. He kneels above her, his hands holding her wrists, fangs bared in a snarl.

"Let go of me!" She pants through panicked, hyperventilating breaths, "I want to go inside!"

"Of course, Maeve."

His voice is low and calm, as though everything is perfectly normal.

In a sudden, speedy motion he pulls her to her feet. She turns towards the house again, but only gets past his shoulder when she feels his grip still on her left wrist.

"...as soon as I feed."

With a gasp she spins her head to look at him. He steps in close, his breath brushing her ear.

"You haven't forgotten your *one job* have you? Your first priority?"

With a force that leaves her physically winded, those words take her back over dozens...hundreds of memories across her entire life time.

You know why your mother had you, don't you, Maeve?

Don't forget to eat your veggies. You have to grow up big and strong for Uncle Dolan.

I will take care of you now, little one. And someday you will take care of me.

You're such a sweet girl, Maeve. I could just eat you up right now.

Pain and anger and rage rise up in her once more, all of the magic of the wintery landscape around her gathering and welling until she feels she will burst. The truth comes out of her in a whisper like wiping frost from a window,

"You groomed me, too. The same as her."

With those words, the magic around her opens and Dolan flies backwards, his body pummeling against the ground like a rag doll. She doesn't just feel the flow of magic, she *is* it. It flows out of her, pouring through her, pinning his body to the ground, overwhelming him. Maeve looks down and realizes her feet were no longer on the ground, and her hair whips around her slowly with the flow of energy.

A sound draws her attention and she vaguely recognizes another car coming down the driveway. Someone gets out of it. Someone she recognizes.

"Rona?"

And with that distraction, the flow of energy suddenly ends and her feet hit the ground. Maeve nearly crumples, barely regaining her feet. She sees Dolan stumble up and take a step towards her. He looks weak, but the anger in his eyes runs a shiver down her spine.

Before he can take another step, Dolan is hit by a blonde freight train and a puff of white flies into the air as the two figures hit the snowbank.

"Maeve!"

Rona grunts as two sets of limbs move in a flurry too fast for the human eye.

"Get in the house!"

Maeve blinks, and then there is a sound from the house, and arms pulling her up onto the porch and back inside.

Maeve and her mother stand in shock for a moment, staring through the kitchen window at the blur of two creatures fighting outside. Umbrosia, Kate and Bex rush downstairs, having seen the entire affair from the upstairs window.

"What the hell is going on?"

Hekate blurts, her eyes wide in fear. The sound breaks Maeve from her shock and she lurches towards the door.

He'll kill her!

"Maeve no!"

Her mother yells, but Umbrosia is there first, fast enough to grasp Maeve's shoulders before the smaller woman can leave the house. Maeve manages to get the door open though, just as Dolan breaks free from Rona's grip. He is at the door in a matter of seconds, slamming against the invisible barrier that keeps him out. Rona runs up and attempts to drag him back, but he hears her coming and spins his leg out behind him, kicking her off the porch and down the steps.

"Stop!" Maeve screams, "He can't come in, Rona he can't come in the house!"

Umbrosia keeps her grip on Maeve's shoulders gentle, but firm, slipping an arm in front of her friend's chest and holding her close.

Rona gets her feet under her and slowly rises from a crouch to standing. A spark of recognition lights Dolan's eyes and he turns slowly on his heels, rocking a step back so he can easily see Rona on the steps as well as Maeve framed just on the other side of the doorway.

"Well...if it isn't my second in command. Agrona, it is so nice to see you. How long has it been? Two hundred years? Three?"

"Eat shit, Dolan."

Dolan clicks his teeth, "You were ever the eloquent one, Agrona. And you have very little room to throw stones, given you didn't even stop by to say hello and tell me you were dating my niece."

Rona attempts to speak, but he turns now to Maeve.

"And Maeve, you didn't tell me you were seeing another vampire. Unless..."

His eyes rake over her shocked and defensive expression.

"Oh dear. You didn't know."

"Maeve, I can explain!"

Maeve stands in silence, looking back and forth between the two of them. The desperation on Rona's face. Maeve notices her fangs for the first time, peeking out from beneath her upper lip. They look the same as Dolan's. She looks at his face. He is calm now, his fangs starting to retreat. One is more exposed than the other by his amused sneer. She takes a deep breath, as though to speak, then gently pats Umbrosia's arm to release her.

Umbrosia lets go and steps back. Maeve slowly closes the door, turns away and makes her way into the house. She feels everyone's eyes on her like sticky tentacles.

"I'm going to shower." She says in a low voice, pausing as she reaches Hekate, "Don't let him in."

"Duh."

After Maeve retreats upstairs, Hekate moves to a nearby cupboard and pulls out a long tupperware container from deep in the back. She pops it open and pulls out nine inch long, sharpened dowel rods about half an inch in diameter. She hands one each to the three women standing around the kitchen and keeps one for herself, tucking it into her back pocket.

"Wooden stakes? Will these kill them?" Umbrosia asks.

Hekate rolls her eyes, "Do I look like I have a fucking clue?"

She then moves to the door and opens it. Dolan is leaning against the door frame. Rona sits at the top of the porch steps, her head back against the railing. She sits up at the sight of Hekate.

"Hello, Kate. Care to let your old man in?"

Kate gives him a sour smile and pulls the stake from her back pocket, "Care to sit on a couple of these?"

"Ooh." He wrinkles his face painfully, "You're giving me flashbacks to the Spanish Inquisition."

Disregarding his comment, Hekate turns her attention to the blond on the steps.

"If I let you in, are you going to try and drink any of us?"

Agrona shakes her head.

"I don't know if these can kill you. I don't know if anything can. But if you try anything shitty, I will not stop experimenting until I find out what does."

Rona rises slowly, making no comment.

"Agrona, you...and only you...may enter."

Rona approaches, and Dolan moves to block her path, leaning his body against the magical barrier keeping him out of the house.

Rona's eyes turn dark and she snarls.

"Touchy, touchy." Dolan holds his hands up in defeat and steps aside, motioning her in with mock gallantry.

As soon as Rona is inside, Hekate closes the door again and locks it for good measure. Eliza holds her stake awkwardly for a moment, then with a cough slips it up her sweater sleeve.

“Kate, will you take our...guest to the living room, please? I’m going to make some lunch and then we can all...talk.”

“I’ll come with you, Kate.” Umbrosia says quickly.

Bex moves to Eliza’s side and offers to help, scooting away from the new, female vampire with wide eyes.

Agrona sits awkwardly on the edge of the loveseat, fidgeting with her fingers. Umbrosia stands across the room from her, nailing her to the spot with her eyes. Kate paces the hallway at the bottom of the steps, waiting for Maeve to come down from her shower. After several minutes, Rona attempts to speak.

“I’m sorry, I--”

“Uh-uh.” Sia interrupts her, “You hold onto that. I am not the one you need to apologize to. I don’t even know why Kate let you in the house.”

Kate’s pacing stops with a stomp.

“Because we need answers, and she--” She points with a wooden stake, which brushes Rona’s blonde hair, “is the only one who has them.”

It’s nearly half an hour before Maeve comes down the stairs. By that time the entire household is there, gathered in the small living room, staring at an untouched plate of sandwiches. They’ve saved a seat for her in the Lazy Boy. The one that used to be Linda’s.

Her hair is still a bit damp, but her makeup is done. Sharp black eyeliner over pale blue and white eyeshadow. Blush contoured under her cheekbones to make them look more severe. Shimmery pale-pink lipstick. Agrone didn’t know the meaning behind the look, but Umbrosia and Hekate recognized it instantly. It was Maeve’s ice-queen look, and she only wears it when she is about to go to war.

Maeve takes her seat, takes a deep breath, and makes eye contact with Agrona. The vampire flinches at the things she doesn’t see in those eyes; no pain, no anger. Just ice cold, like the magic Maeve drew up outside is still running through her veins.

“Why did you find me?”

“I didn’t--” Agrona begins to lie but something - a tilt in Maeve’s chin, a twitch of her eyebrow - stops her, “...I didn’t know you were bonded to him. I was searching for conduits.”

“How long have you known I’m...bound to Dolan?”

“Since the first night. When we got to your apartment. I could smell him.”

Maeve’s voice quavers, “Is that why you...kept finding me?”

“No...maybe. I don’t know. We’re drawn to conduits...whether we want to be or not. But...if anything, I sought you out in spite of him. I never wanted to see him again.”

“How long...how long have you known him?”

Rona leans down to the table, picks up a sandwich, takes a bite, sets it back down. It is several moments before her eyes can meet Maeve’s. When they do, her voice is soft, but firm. After a long pause and several deep breaths she begins to tell a story.