

From Blood and Magic

Chapter 2

RerRerReRRRR BRRROOOM Harry's brand-spankin' new 1983 Honda Civic roared to life. It was the best eight hundred bucks he had ever spent. Sure, it was an ugly pea-green color and the parts were held together with rust and twenty years of crud, but at least it ran relatively well. The best part was that it kept him from being constantly wet. He had never lived in a place that rained so damn much. Even England's notoriously bad weather wasn't that bad.

Harry had developed a bit of a reputation in town as a very hard and fast worker. As such, whenever someone had any type of hard work that needed to be done, they called him. He wasn't getting rich by any means, but he earned enough to keep himself fed. Unfortunately, he was also drawing the attention of the local Chief of Police. Due to his rapid healing ability, it appeared that Harry never aged. He still looked like the same seventeen-year-old that defeated Voldemort all those years ago. Sure, he had grown taller and had gained quite a bit more muscle, but Harry suspected that that was due to his magic being trapped within him. Even so, he still had the same, charming, boyish face that he had always had, and Chief Swan had been pestering him about his past. He seemed to think that he was a runaway or something and that he belonged in school. He was a nice guy, but Harry tried his best to avoid him.

During his long bouts of free time, Harry would often wander off into the forest, scouring the soggy ground for any signs of magical plants. He didn't think that there was enough ambient magic to produce any magical flora, but he still checked just to be sure. Harry also supplemented his income by picking edible mushrooms when he came across them. Fancy restaurants in Seattle paid big for fresh mushrooms, and a guy in town often went out searching for them. Any that Harry found were sold to him at a lower price, then he turned around and sold them to the restaurants at a bit of a mark-up. It was a win-win for both.

Harry left the local food market and drove back toward the area where he had been staying. Driving down E. Division Street, he pulled over into a near-hidden logging trail and parked his car. The house he was staying in was only a few minutes down the road. He opened his trunk and pulled out his bucket. With his bucket and knife in hand, Harry slipped into the thick forest. After a couple of hours of searching, he had nearly a bucket full of different types of mushrooms. Seeing a large growth of Chicken of the Woods at the base of a tree, Harry moved over there and began cutting it carefully. He was halfway through when he heard a rustle of leaves. Looking over his shoulder, he didn't see or hear anything. Shrugging, he went back to cutting. That was when he heard thumps of something running across the ground getting louder and louder. He turned back around only to see a brown flash before feeling intense pain.

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Alice Cullen had gone out to hunt a deer. She and her siblings were planning on taking a longer trip further north that weekend to do some real hunting, but she was getting very thirsty. She

figured a deer ought to keep her going until then. She left her house and went east to the denser part of the forest. It was here that she smelled something wonderful. In fact, it was a mixture of smells. The most overpowering was the scent of a human, but it wasn't any normal human. She had never smelled something like it. There were the normal human notes, but they were mixed with something unrecognizable. Whatever it was, it didn't throw her into a feeding frenzy thankfully. It made her mouth water but also kept her calm and collected. Deciding to follow the scent, she silently crept through the forest. It was then that she found a young human poking around the brush. In his hand was a large, plastic bucket that was filled with mushrooms of various types. Alice watched him going about his business. She was so entranced by his scent that she failed to notice another scent growing stronger, nor did she hear the muffled patting of large feet against the soft forest ground. She blinked her eyes and snapped out of her daze just as the boy turned and was hit by a charging grizzly.

He screamed as the grizzly bit down on his shoulder and shook him like a ragdoll. Tossed aside, he hit the ground and tried to push himself up, but the bear was immediately on his back, biting and swiping at him with his long, ferocious claws. Alice was stunned. Afraid of getting too close to his delicious-smelling blood, she had no idea what to do. She could hear the sounds of clothes and flesh ripping apart. She could hear the pained screams of the teenage boy being mauled by the large, angry bear. The bear flipped him over and started biting his stomach as it pushed down on his face with its massive paw. Alice heard the cracking of bones as his skull was pushed deep into the soft ground. Finally, the bear took a step back and sniffed the downed boy. Drool was hanging from its mouth in a long line. Then the boy groaned and tried to push himself up again. The bear roared angrily and bit down on his leg. Once again, the bear swung its head from side to side, swinging the body as though it weighed nothing. When he stopped moving, the bear sniffed him again. Content that the boy was no longer a threat, the bear began to run off.

Finally snapping out of it, Alice ran over there in the blink of an eye and snapped the bear's neck. The bear dropped dead without making a sound. Its maw and claws were caked in blood. She then ran back over to the boy. Holding her breath, Alice looked down at the body and saw shallow breathing. Her eyes widened incredulously. The boy was alive somehow, and for some reason, he was a blind spot in Alice's visions. Seeing that there was a chance to save him, she ran as fast as possible back home to get her adoptive father, Dr. Carlisle Cullen.

"Carlisle!" Alice called out before she even made it inside the house. Carlisle was standing in the living room when she entered.

"What's wrong, Alice?" he asked, shocked by the impatience in her voice. "Did you see something?" Alice shook her head.

"A teenage boy just east of here. He was just mauled by a bear. He was still breathing when I left him only a minute ago," she quickly told them. Without even replying, Carlisle zipped away and grabbed his medical bag. In less than a second, they were already heading back.

When Alice, Carlisle, and his wife, Esme, made it back to the spot, they were shocked to see the boy standing. He wiped the blood from his face and looked around. He stumbled over to his bucket and knelt down. Putting his fallen mushrooms back into the bucket, he slowly stood up and began walking toward the road. "His heartbeat is getting stronger every second," Esme whispered to them. The other two nodded and continued to watch. He made his way back to an old, beat-up car and tossed the bucket into the backseat. He then got into the driver's seat and started it up with little effort. They watched as he backed out of the trail and onto the street. They followed him at a distance, intent on seeing what he was doing. They followed him down the road a short way before he turned off into a long, overgrown driveway. He parked in front of one of several abandoned homes on E. Division Street. When he got out of the car, he removed his t-shirt and tossed the torn and bloody material to the ground. With their perfect vision, they could actually see the deep gouges on his back healing as he walked. Even Carlisle had to wince at one particularly deep wound in which he could see the white bones of the boy's spine. Less than a second later, the flesh and muscles had grown over, blocking the bones from view. He was still holding his stomach, as that was the most severely damaged from the attack. He was slow to go inside, slightly stumbling with every step. All three looked at each other, confused as to what had just happened.

Inside, Harry sat on the hardwood floor before laying flat on his back. He groaned as he felt his skin and organs knitting themselves back together. It wasn't the most pleasant of sensations. 'I really need to pay attention when out in the woods,' Harry thought to himself. Believe it or not, this wasn't the first time he was badly injured from an animal attack. One time a hippo did a real number on him when he was canoeing down a river in Africa. Another time, he was severely gored by a massive, buffalo-like creature. He survived that, and he would survive this. After a few minutes, Harry stood up and grabbed some clean clothes along with his bathing supplies. He then went to a stream out back that had crystal-clean water and stripped down. He walked waist-deep into the frigid water. The cold didn't bother him all that much. His healing abilities kept him relatively warm. He soaped up and rinsed himself before climbing out and toweling off. He put on his clean clothes and sighed happily. Harry examined his dirty clothes. They were completely soaked in blood and torn into ribbons. Shaking his head, he bunched them up and threw them deeper into the treeline. They definitely couldn't be saved with a simple washing, and even his magic would struggle to fix that bloody mess.

After cleaning himself, Harry went and examined his car. "Shit!" he cursed at the sight of his seat. It was stained with rapidly drying blood. Smacking the roof of his car, he emptied his mushrooms inside before going back outside and leaning in through the window. Hidden from view, Harry waved his hand a few times until all the blood had been cleaned. Seeing that his seat was back to being its normal, grubby self, Harry went back inside.

Three vampires continued to study his every move. "Why does he live like this?" Alice asked, confused, pointing to the neglected house. Carlisle shrugged.

"Perhaps he has no choice. Not everyone is as blessed as we are when it comes to money," he wisely told her.

“What do you think he is?” Esme asked her husband.

“Certainly human. The scent of his blood tells us that much. Beyond that, I’m afraid I don’t know,” Carlisle said, staring at the old house. “I think that we should keep an eye on him and try to find out more.”

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Harry rummaged through the local junkyard, looking for anything worth fixing. Most of it was twisted or rusted metal, indistinguishable from the rest of the useless crap on display. Not finding anything, he moved on to another pile of scrap.

The people of Forks, Washington weren’t wealthy by any means. His old, beat-up car wasn’t out of place in the slightest. As such, everyone was looking for a deal. That meant that if Harry could find anything good that he could magic back into working order, there would be someone willing to buy it. Harry picked up an old bumper from a truck that must have been at least thirty years old. It wasn’t the cheap fiberglass crap that was on modern vehicles. The bumper was at least fifty pounds of raw steel. Harry tossed it aside as if it weighed nothing. After another thirty minutes of searching, he decided to leave. The only thing worth taking was a hundred-foot-long, metal chain that was quite rusty. People didn’t realize how expensive thick, metal chains were. After a few Reparos, Harry would be able to sell it for at least fifty bucks. Harry carried his heavy load up front where he paid next to nothing for it. The man looked at him funny as he carried the obviously heavy chain as though it were a bag of groceries. At his car, he tossed it in the trunk and carried on with his day.

The biggest hurdle upon entering a new world was getting identification. This was only a problem if the world that he was in was more modern. Computers really mucked things up. He couldn’t just magic a driver’s license and birth certificate since all relevant information was stored in government databases. If he tried to rent an apartment with a fake ID, they’d call the police after doing a simple background check. This wasn’t really a problem in the past, since he was usually eager to move on to the next world after finding no adequate amount of ambient magic. Since he was planning on staying on this world, he’d need to take care of that problem eventually. First, he needed to figure out how.

As he drove home, it began raining. The amount it rained in Forks could drive a person mad, Harry thought as he switched on his windshield wipers. They squeaked to life but thankfully stopped their annoying squeaking after a few seconds. It wasn’t long after turning down E. Division St that Harry spotted a car parked on the side of the road with its hazard lights blinking. The car looked almost brand new. He couldn’t spot a single flaw on its silver-colored body. Next to the car was what Harry at first thought was a young boy waving his arms. As he pulled over, he saw that it wasn’t a young boy. It was a teenage girl with very pale skin and short, messy, black hair. She was short, even for a teenage girl. She had a jacket on to protect her from the

rain, but her hair was quickly becoming soaked as the rain picked up. Harry manually rolled down his window and asked, "Having some trouble?"

The girl bounced up to the window and smiled beautifully at him. She was very pretty, Harry thought. "My car died as I was driving. My house is right down the road. Do you think you can give me a ride?" she asked nicely, trying to shield the rain from her head with her hands. With no reason not to, Harry nodded and told her to jump in. She ran around the front of the car and hopped into the passenger seat.

"Thank you so much!" she said, wiping the water from her face as Harry began to drive.

"No problem," Harry smiled at her. She quickly returned his smile.

"I'm Alice ... Alice Cullen," she chirped, sticking her hand out. Harry shook her hand and felt how cold it was.

"You're freezing," Harry stated, turning on his car's ancient heater. "If you're not careful, you'll catch your death out there," he warned. She just let out a tinkling laugh.

"Maybe you're right ... umm ...?"

"Harry Potter," Harry introduced himself.

"Harry," she nodded as though making sure to remember his name. "Turn right up here. It's kind of hard to see the turn."

He did as he was told and turned right down a near-hidden, dirt road that was lined with magnificently tall trees.

"Do you go to Forks High? I'm a junior," she asked, her body angled in his direction. The dirt road was quite long, leading him deep into the woods. Harry shook his head.

"I don't go to school," he simply said. She studied his face.

"Well, do you have a job or something?" she asked. She seemed happy enough to fill every quiet second with a question.

"I do odd jobs around town. It's enough to get by," Harry responded, telling her only enough to be polite. When the house came into view, Harry whistled appreciatively. "That's a nice house."

"My mom completely renovated it," she told him. The house appeared to be at least a hundred years old and was painted white. It was three floors with a large, covered porch that enveloped the entire front of the house.

“Give her my compliments. She did a good job.”

Alice laughed again. “She’ll be glad to hear it. If you want, you can tell her yourself. She’s right inside. You can come in and meet her,” she told him. Harry just gave her a small smile.

“Maybe another time. I really have to get going,” he lied. He wasn’t opposed to making friends, but he was pretty dirty from digging around the junkyard. Besides, he had a job in about an hour. He was being paid two hundred dollars to help move the furniture from a house owned by an elderly man who had recently passed away.

“I’ll take you up on that,” she said sweetly, opening the door. “Thanks for the ride, Harry.”

“You’re welcome,” he told her right before she closed the door. As he turned around, she waved at him, so he did the neighborly thing and waved back. He looked through his rearview mirror and saw her going into her house.

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As Alice entered the house, she already knew that they had been watched by the rest of her family, all except Carlisle who was at the hospital. As soon as she entered, Jasper was by her side. He hadn’t wanted her to go without protection, but of course, Alice insisted.

“Find out anything good?” Rosalie asked, sitting on the couch with her legs crossed. She was examining her freshly painted fingernails and giving off an air of being uninterested. Alice rolled her eyes.

“His name is Harry Potter, and he doesn’t go to school,” she told her. This time it was Rosalie who rolled her eyes.

“We already knew that he didn’t go to school,” she reminded Alice. The boy’s scent couldn’t be found anywhere near the school.

“We knew that he didn’t go to Forks High,” Alice reminded her. “He could have been going to school in La Push or somewhere else.”

“Anything else?” Edward joined in. He was eager for any kind of information. As with Alice, his powers refused to work on this Harry Potter character. It wasn’t something that he was used to. It was like suddenly being deaf. It was a jarring experience.

“Not much,” Alice admitted. “He said that he does odd jobs around the town to get by. He didn’t seem all that eager to spill the beans.”

“What kind of odd jobs?” Esme asked. Alice shrugged.

“Mostly manual labor. We’ve watched him chop firewood and clear overgrown brush. He even dug a huge hole for a septic tank. He dug for three hours straight without taking a break,” Jasper told her.

“Interesting,” Esme responded, tapping her chin.

“He was nice and polite,” Alice added. “I’ll try and get to know him better. Maybe he’ll open up once we become friends.”

Rosalie scoffed. “How are you so sure that he wants to be friends with you?”

“Because I’m irresistible,” Alice smirked, spinning around like a ballerina which made Esme laugh.

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Later that day, Rosalie was taking one of her daily walks as she called them. In reality, she would run almost a hundred miles away from her home, wanting some personal space. She would often sit upon a large boulder with a stunning view of a small waterfall. She would use her free time to decompress and think.

It wasn’t a surprise to anyone who knew her that she hated being a vampire, and thinking about how she came to be this way would make her blood boil. Oh, how she wished that Royce was still alive. She’d like nothing more than to kill him again. Unfortunately, she would have to be content with the fact that she had already murdered him once. Rosalie would sometimes sit and wonder what her life would have been like had she never met that despicable man. She would have surely gotten married. Would she have had children? The answer was almost assuredly yes. There would have been a chance that she would still be alive today, surrounded by children, grandchildren, and maybe even great-grandchildren. The thought of how much that man had taken from her made her burn with rage. Rosalie picked up a small rock and hucked it at the water’s surface. It skipped once across the surface and rocketed to the other side, hitting a tree and tearing a chunk out of the bark.

This time, however, she hadn’t come to her spot to rage about Royce. She went there to get away from her family’s obsession with this new boy. Rosalie didn’t care if he was strange or not. He was human, and as such, she wanted her family to stay away from him. She was willing to admit that this Harry Potter guy was strange and possibly even fascinating on some accounts, but that didn’t change the fact that he was still human. Nothing good could come from the situation. Rosalie was at least slightly placated by the fact that this boy was smart enough to stay clear of her family. The fact that he turned down an invitation from Alice to join her in her home was surprising. Not many boys his age would turn down such an invitation from a beautiful girl.

Even though she didn't want to admit it, the boy had dredged up a painful memory from her past. When she heard that he had been mauled by a grizzly, it made her think of what had happened all the way back in 1935. She had come across a young man while hunting. He too had been mauled by a bear. When she looked into his bloody face, she was instantly reminded of her best friend's little son, Henry. Rosalie picked up the young man in an attempt to carry him back home to Carlisle. Sadly, the young man passed away only minutes into her journey. She didn't even know his name. All she could do was bury him deep in the woods in an unmarked grave that she had dug with her own bare hands. It was just one more failure that she had to live with. It frustrated her that this new boy had brought those memories back.