

CTOR STERLING: THE RETU



The Mortal Heart of Victor Sterling

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Rediscovering the Hu



Victor woke up to a sliver of golden morning light hitting his face, but instead of turning to ash, he felt a gentle warmth. His skin didn't smoke, and his heart gave a sudden, heavy thud against his ribs. The curse was broken, and for the first time in three hundred years, he was truly alive.



He rushed to the ornate mirror in his hallway and gasped at the sight of his own face staring back. He traced the lines of his jaw and the softness of his cheeks, mesmerized by the reflection he hadn't seen since the eighteenth century. He wasn't a monster anymore; he was just a man with messy hair and tired eyes.



At a local bakery, Victor sat by the window and took his first bite of a buttery croissant. The explosion of flavor and the heat of the coffee on his tongue brought tears to his eyes. To the other patrons, he was just a pale man crying over breakfast, but to Victor, it was a miracle of the senses.



He visited the dark underground club where his old vampire acquaintances gathered to share his incredible news. They only chuckled, patting him on the shoulder and complimenting his convincing human costume. No matter how much he insisted he had a pulse, they simply thought he was committed to a very long-term joke.



Desperate for validation, Victor visited a clinic and asked the nurse to check his vitals. When the machine beeped with a healthy blood pressure reading, the nurse just smiled and told him his vampire cosplay was very impressive. She even asked what brand of pale foundation he used, leaving Victor speechless with frustration.



In the middle of the city park, Victor spread a blanket and lay directly under the midday sun. People walked by and whispered about the goth guy finally getting some Vitamin D, completely unaware that he was celebrating his survival. He closed his eyes, soaking in the heat that used to be his greatest enemy.



That evening, Victor pulled out his old leather-bound journal to record the day's events. He wrote about the irony of being a human trapped in a vampire's reputation, his pen scratching rhythmically against the paper. The ink felt permanent and real, just like the life he was trying so hard to claim.



While browsing the library, a young woman named Clara noticed his intense focus on a book about human biology. When he sheepishly admitted he used to be a creature of the night, she laughed and said she loved his method acting approach to life. Even though she didn't believe him, her smile felt warmer than the sun.



Victor accidentally nicked his finger on a sharp book page and watched as a bead of bright red, warm blood welled up. He stared at it in fascination, a symbol of his mortality flowing right there in the open. A librarian walked by and handed him a bandage, telling him to be more careful with the archives.



As the sun began to set, Victor stood on his balcony, watching the sky turn shades of pink and orange. He realized that it didn't matter if the world saw him as a human or a lingering ghost. He felt the steady beat in his chest and the cool evening breeze, finally at peace with his secret, mortal life.