

# TINA GRAVES

October 12, 1998

Antonio,

I know you asked me not to ever use that name, dear sir, but I must address you thus as this letter is from my heart to yours. Please understand why I asked you to leave Nashville when I did and go to Helena for me, why I didn't want you to be here when I met my final death. You know what Talon meant to me, and you also know what his death has done to my soul. Brenda Brecock has come to me with certain accusations about Jason Klein's death. While you have never asked me if I killed the creature, we both know that I did. Klein killed my Talon, and so I destroyed him.

I have tried to do as you have asked these last months; I have tried to live without my husband, without my soul. I have to admit defeat on this one, Antonio; my heart just isn't in it. When Talon died, so died all the joy in this world. Colors are dull, sounds are muted, and even blood does not taste the same. I no longer wish to pretend I am living when inside I am as dead as my Talon.

I denied the accusations Brenda brought before me, but I know it will be only a matter of hours before she has a

warrant for my death. I want you to know that I will not fight her when she comes for me, Antonio, and I didn't want you here to interfere. I welcome death for it will let me be with him again, let me bask in his love once more.

Please don't try to avenge me, sire. I could not bear it if that horrible creature Kline caused another death among those I loved. Let this be enough. Let my soul rest well with that of my heart, my husband, my Talon. Let this be the end of it.

I am leaving you letters I have written to my brother. It sounds silly, doesn't it, writing letters to a brother who has been dead more than fifteen years. But at times it helped me to think that somewhere Robert knew and helped me when he could. I could only give you the ones I wrote after I met you, Antonio. I would have given you all of them if I could have so that you would know how much you changed my life. It's just as well that Papa never allowed me to retrieve my belongings; you and Talon always gave me everything I needed.

Remember me well, my sire, for I will never forget you. Thank you for the life you gave me, for the love you allowed me to share with Talon without turning an awkward situation into something worse. I will always adore you for that, Antonio, if for nothing else.

Love,

Christina Graves



# Christina Strong

June 18, 1993

Rob,

I met the most intriguing man today. Should I call him a man? Perhaps I should say vampire. I know that Papa would not approve, but he is fascinating. I'm sure its more than just the mind tricks they say vamps use. He is tall and dark and has the most amazing accent. I don't know what his real name is, but everyone calls him "The Spaniard." Jane and I went to one of the restaurants in town and he was there. I wish I had more time in Nashville, but we are going home in two days. That means only one more night with the Spaniard! He told me if I came to his house around 3:00 tomorrow afternoon (would that be this afternoon? I haven't been to bed yet and the sun is coming up) that he would be waiting. I guess Papa doesn't have to know everything! Wish me luck, Robert.

Christina



# Christina Strong

June 19, 1993

Rob,

It's dawn again and I just had the most amazing night with the Spaniard! He is so kind and gentle, despite his bad-boy front. I never realized how much excitement the night held! I'm calling Papa this morning and telling him I won't be home today. I know things are going a bit fast, but you only live once, right?

Tina

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# Christina Strong

June 23, 1993

Rob,

I am sitting under an oak tree at some park in downtown Nashville. Antonio (The Spaniard, he finally told me his name) has asked me to join him, to become one of the undead. His touch sets me on fire and his eyes burn me. But is it love? Do I care? I know now why Papa wants me to stay away from vamps. Their world is so tempting, so full of life despite the death they endure to exist as they do. Antonio took me to the Church of Everlasting Life down on 5th Street and it was amazing. All those humans wanting to be vampires, or to feed them. Afterward I begged Antonio to drink from me. Does it shock you to know your sister wanted to feed a vampire? He didn't want to, but in the middle of making love, I felt his teeth sink into my neck. Words cannot describe the ecstasy, they just can't. Even if I choose not to join him, I will always have the scar to remind me of our time together. Perhaps knowing that I have had sex with him would shock you more than the blood. Would you understand if you knew?

Tina



# Christina Strong

July 4, 1993

Rob,

Today is a fitting day, for it is my Independence Day. Last night Antonio brought me into his world. Tonight I rose and fed for the first time, from a handsome young man who practically begged me to. I could feel the power inside of me and almost heard his thoughts as I drank. Papa didn't understand when I called him, but it is done. He kept asking me what you would have thought. You're dead, Robert, you have been dead for a long time. In the end, Papa told me I was dead to him as well. It angered me that Papa thought he had the right to wonder what you would have thought if you were still alive. If it hadn't been for him, you would be able to tell me for yourself. Why do I still write letters to you? Maybe it keeps you close in my heart. I still love you, Robert. I have never forgotten you.

Chris

# TINA STRONG

September 4, 1993

Rob,

Well, it has been two months since I have been turned. I haven't heard from Papa, and I don't think I ever will. I'm learning a lot about my abilities. I like being a vampire, regardless of the fear I see in many humans' eyes. I stay with the Spaniard because he loves me. I am closer to him than I have ever been to anyone, but I know it's not love. Someday love will come for me, and I know the Spaniard will step aside and wish me well. In the mean time, he is the most amazing lover! I never dreamed that it could be like this! Was it like this for you and Melissa? You didn't really talk to me about her, and now I'll never know. I want to believe you had this much pleasure in your life.

Tina

# TINA STRONG

April 2, 1994

Rob.

I met a girl today named Lena down at the Church. I spend a lot of time there, counseling the newly risen, although there are many that would say I am newly risen. My sire is powerful though, so I am stronger than most of the newly dead. Anyway, Lena wants to be a vampire so badly, but her fiance forbids it. I only mention her because of him. I can see his reservations, vampires aren't legal citizens, and they are feared by most of America. By this Jason as well, it seems. Lena tells me he was raised at some monastery in Italy and that he nearly died during a duel between two vampires. She brought him into the church and he gives me the creeps. It's not just the cross he wears, either. It's like a dark finger stirred his soul and he's no longer whole. I'd hate to meet him in a dark alley somewhere. I like this Lena, but she needs to dump the creep. He's going to cause problems. I just know it. I will be watching him.

Tina



# TINA STRONG

May 18, 1994

Rob,

There is a new Master vampire in town. I haven't met him yet, but there is something about him... How can I say it? He is attractive, in a rough sort of way. His eyes kind of captured me; that hasn't happened since I turned, a vampire's eyes capturing me. I mean, What is it about him? Antonio has invited him over to the house tonight, perhaps I'll have a better idea then.

Later

Do you remember when I wrote to you about love? How certain I was that it would come? It has and its name is Talon Graves. This is not just a physical attraction, he is absolutely amazing. He pretends to be hard and cold, but I can see the softness beneath the mask he shows the world. I talked to Antonio after Talon left, and I didn't even have to say anything before he knew how I felt. Talon Graves.. I must find out everything about him.

Tina

# TINA STRONG

June 9, 1994

Rob,

I have been spending every spare moment with Talon. We talk some nights until the sun comes over the horizon and we fall asleep, only to wake hours later and continue on as if we'd never been interrupted. Is that what love is like, Robert? I think it is. He wants to marry me, in the Church. Then he wants to travel for a year, to Europe. He says it's dangerous, because the Inquisition is still so active over there, but he wants to go just the same. It's getting more dangerous in Nashville, a local woman has been executing vampires. Her name is Brenna or Brenda, or Linda, or something like that. I've heard it said that Tina's fiance is helping her. I think Talon and I should go away, and the Spaniard, too. Funny, even though he and I have stopped sleeping together, I still think of him in my heart as Antonio. I'm so glad he accepted Talon and I being together. I would have hated to lose our friendship. It would have been a steep price to pay for Talon's love. Talon wants to leave early next week. I think I'll tell him yes. Bet you never thought your Tina would marry a vampire!

Tina

# TINA GRAVES

August 15, 1996

Rob,

Talon and I just heard the news and I had to write to you about it. America has granted vampires legal rights as citizens!! We are so excited and he is talking about going home. Home for me is Nashville, and he agrees. I think we'll go as soon as he can make our travel arrangements. I have missed the Spaniard, my sire. Home!

Tina

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# TINA GRAVES

September 1, 1996

Rob,

Home again, how good it feels. The Spaniard hasn't changed a bit; he is still deeply handsome. Even after all the time Talon and I spent in Spain, I never tire of hearing Antonio speak. The Church is still on 5th Street, but now it is much more popular than it was. The Spaniard tells me that Brenda Moorecock, the woman who had been killing so many of us, is now the legal executioner for Tennessee. That frightens me, even though I know she didn't kill near as many vamps as the previous slayer. Listen to me, home one day and all I can talk about is bad news! Talon has agreed to stay here, and we are looking for a house. He is quite a different man than the one I met, Robert. I knew there was a gentleness within him, and now it shows. He has changed me, as well. I am more confident, stronger than I ever was before. I love him and I know he loves me. I know that we would kill or die for each other. Could I ever ask for anything more?

Tina

# TINA GRAVES

June 30, 1998

Robert,

Lena has returned, and there is no sign of the Jason she was engaged to. She will become one of us next Friday, along with nearly a dozen others. Talon has taken a liking to her, so he will embrace Lena himself. Talon is now preaching at the Church, and the response is overwhelming. So many mortals want to join the fold, so many regret the pain and suffering they inflicted on the vampires. I help Talon as much as I can, as does The Spaniard. Occasionally we aid the Executioner in finding a renegade's camp, but for the most part she leaves us alone. Life is good to us now, and Talon assures me it will always be so. But some mornings I hear something in the wind, a warning that tells me my life will change soon, that nothing will ever be the same. Is it you Robert? Are you trying to warn me about things to come? I wish you were here, I wish you could tell me what to do as you used to when we were children.

Tina

# TINA GRAVES

July 19, 1998

Rob.

I'm worried, Robert. Lena has come up missing and last night I think I saw her ex-fiance watching the church. The Spaniard says he left town shortly after we did two years ago, but now I think he's back. I don't want to believe that Lena is dead, but is it just a coincidence that he's here and she's gone? What really worried me was that I remembered Lena telling me about the monastery in Italy that Jason had nearly been killed at. Jason took me to Italy, Robert, and showed me a church high in the mountains where he had gone to try and save the monks. Most of them died anyway, but Jason was able to destroy the other vampire, the monster who wanted to kill everyone. Could this be the monastery that Lena told me about? Is Jason in danger from this Jason? I pray he is not. I would rather die than live an eternity without my Jason. I would kill anyone who would dare to harm him. Perhaps I should find this Jason and have a talk with him. What would you tell me to do, Robert? I wish you were here to guide me.

Tina

# TINA GRAVES

July 22, 1998

Robert,

Jason Kline is a fanatic. What Lena ever saw in him is totally beyond me. He practically spat in my face as soon as I approached him, and he argued with everything I said. He's handsome, this Jason, but inside I think he is grotesque. I warned him about hurting any vampire in town, Robert, but I don't think it will do any good. When I asked him about Lena, he got this half smile on his face. I wanted to slap him, to kill him then and there. I've never felt that way before, Robert. Am I losing my humanity? Am I sliding downward toward the beast? Something about me detests that man. I know I won't hesitate if he harms anyone I care about, especially Talon.

Tina

# TINA GRAVES

August 12, 1998

I will kill him. I will taste his heart's blood  
and leave his body for the animals to feast upon.  
He has taken my love, my life. Talon is dead.  
I swear upon my soul that I will not rest until  
Jason Kline is dead.

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# TINA GRAVES

August 20, 1998

It is done. I followed him to his apartment unseen. I stood in the window and watched from the balcony while he knelt before an altar and lit a candle. I can't understand how he could live normally when he has ripped my world apart. He was surprised to see me when he stood up and turned around. He laughed, Robert. He laughed when I told him he had ripped my heart from my body. He told me that Jason died begging for my life. For my life. Didn't he know that I couldn't live without him? By the time I was done, Jason Kline was begging for his own life. I fed from him as I'd never fed from another living being. I didn't protect his mind, Robert. I let him feel the power and the urgency of the blood, let him feel my hunger for his death. He screamed for a long time before he died. A long time. Now I wait for my own death, for I know that the executioner won't let this rest. I will be with you soon, Robert. Take care of my Jason until I can join you.

Tina