YOU WILL CALL ME MASTER

a Thieves extra

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

LEXI BLAKE
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Thanks for joining me for this series of vignettes featuring the men of Thieves. We all know Zoey’s point of view, but I thought it would be fun to take key scenes from the series and rewrite them from the men’s point of view. I hope you enjoy seeing the series in a different light. I’m enjoying playing around with all of Z’s guys!

This is a scene from Steal the Light. It takes place roughly midway through the book after the fight at the hotel with Stewart, the demon. Daniel has been shot with silver bullets and he’s expended his energy saving Zoey by flying her safely from the top of the building down to the bottom. He wakes up, sure that he’s died only to discover that Zoey won’t let him go….

When you play D&D, you sit down and write out a character sheet. This serves as a kind of notecard while you’re playing, reminding you of your character’s strengths and weaknesses. One of the things I always find interesting and telling is how a player chooses his alignments. There’s good and neutral and evil, but it’s more complex than that. Good doesn’t necessarily mean that everything your character will do is going to be all sweetness and light. Much to the contrary. There’s a certain nature to each character that goes beyond simple morality. Lawful good will let what he loves die because it’s for the good of the whole. He’ll sacrifice. He understands that sometimes you have to make a move that hurts in the short term to save the overall good.

And then there’s the good character that aligns with chaos. Yeah, that’s the wildest of all because she can’t see the big picture. She simply follows her heart and that ultimately leads to complete chaos and usually blows things up, and then her hazel eyes widen and she does that little thing where she gasps and it makes me look at those breasts and she says, “I didn’t mean to do that, Danny.”

I might be talking about an actual person, but it’s still good advice for the gamer. Stay away from the chaotic good characters. Shit goes wrong and you’ll be the one who has to fix it.

Chaotic good characters won’t even let you die when the time has come.

I’ve died a couple of times before. There’s something almost peaceful about it once you get past the pain. I haven’t seen some mystical light, but then I’m a fucking vampire. I don’t think there will be a light for me at the end of my weird ride. I’m pretty sure there’s only darkness because my life, or rather my second life, is so filled with light. Her light.

When I finally managed to open my eyes, I knew the light that nearly blinded me wasn’t heaven. It was Zoey.

I’ve lost count of how many times I’ve felt close to death, but this time is about as close as I’ve ever gotten since that night when I wrapped my truck around a bigger truck and had my insides blended up into a toxic mix that would have meant a youthful death had my vampire DNA not triggered. This particular near-death experience was something different. Silver. I’d had silver shot into my body, close to my heart. The pain had bloomed when that fucker had shot me. Goddamn demons. Stewart. I think that’s the name he gave me before he slammed a couple of silver bullets into my chest. My body is damn good at expelling them, but the silver leeched
into my bloodstream and that caused my ability to heal to slow to turtle-style slow—otherwise known as human. So I was dying and Z, my love, my light, my life, was brutally unwilling to let me go. There was a certain peace to the final death, but all I heard was Z nagging at me.

“Okay, buddy, come on. Wake up. The dinner bell is ringing.”

She sounded far from me, but then that was nothing new. Once we’d been so close that I knew her better than I knew myself, although I was twenty-one when I died, so that’s not saying much. I wasn’t exactly what I would call self-aware. I was in college and Z and I shared a craptastic apartment that was perfect because she was there with me. I’m not one of those guys who ran through hundreds of girls. I’ve known since I was a kid that there was one girl for me.

I just didn’t know why until I was taken to Paris and the truth had been shown to me.

I am a vampire and there is only one thing that can truly bring a vampire to his knees. I say “his” because the truth is the genetic abnormality is seen more often in men, and men of northern European descent. I’ve lived my life in the underworld, one of the few humans to know that the supernatural is real, but I never suspected for a moment that I was a vampire. It’s impossible to know if you have the gene until you die and wake up on an autopsy table with a pimple-faced intern about to slice out and measure your liver. Yeah, that’s personal, too. He tasted like shit, by the way.

No, I digress because I don’t like talking about it. I don’t like to admit that my love is an addiction. I am a fucking junkie and Zoey Wharton is my heroin.

Zoey—my everything. Since we were kids, I’ve known I loved her. Before I really knew what the word meant, I dreamed about her. When my father would tell me we were leaving wherever it was we’d lived for a few brief months, I would stand there and will him to say we were going to Dallas because that was where Z was. All my life, for as long as I can remember, I just wanted to be wherever Z was.

Z, with her auburn hair and that smile that lights up the world. I loved her when we were kids and my heart pounded at the thought of just holding her hand. I loved her when my dad died and she hugged me and promised I wouldn’t be alone. I fucking loved her when we were seventeen and I spread her legs and finally, fucking finally found where I belonged.

And I loved her when I discovered that she was a biological imperative for my vampire self.

If the DNA in vampires tends to be on the masculine side, then companions are almost exclusively female. Except I recently discovered that faeries glow, too. Faeries have a beautiful glow that lets a vampire know just how sweet they would taste. Fuckers.

Zoey is a companion. It’s the word vampires use for humans with very specific bloodlines. Zoey’s blood is supercharged, like a smoothie with all the good shit in it. Vampires can tell companions because they glow. How do I explain that? It’s like she’s got a halo that surrounds her and it screams out “love me, drink me, fuck me until your eyes roll in the back of your head.”

But every vampire can see it. They can all see her glow. They want her the way I do. Yeah, I kind of liked it better when I thought I just loved her because she was pretty.

It was almost easy to let go now that I knew she was safe. We’d gotten away from the demon and Z had the Light of Alhorra. That stupid box was supposed to bring us a big payday, but like all looks-like-a-good-thing, it turned to shit. Now she had her soul on the line if we didn’t turn that dumbass box into Lucas Halfer’s claws by midnight tomorrow night.

I could fade away if I was absolutely sure she was safe. I could let go and allow myself to go wherever it was that vampires went if I was just completely certain that Z would be okay. I’ve stayed away from her. Since that moment I realized my love for her could get her killed, I’ve held myself apart. I’ve pretended I don’t ache for her, that she isn’t the only thing that keeps me
walking the earth. And I’ve allowed her to think I don’t want her like I want my next breath. She thinks I don’t crave her like an addict looking for his next fix.

I want to die, but if I do, she’ll be at risk. Every vampire in the world will come after her. My mentor would sure as hell show up on her doorstep, and though I love Marcus like a father, I don’t want him taking my girl. Those vamps wouldn’t ask her permission. They wouldn’t give a crap that she’s a chaotic goddess worthy of utter devotion. They would take her and expect her to submit to their will. They wouldn’t love her for the crazy-ass bitch she is.

I have to live so she can be free.

I remember how weak I was though. I remember wanting nothing more than to sink into the warmth of death. It’s funny. When a vampire gets really low on blood, it’s a little like hypothermia. Cold at first. So fucking cold, and then our brains seem to take over and compensate. A warm blanket comes down that nothing can get through.

Except my wife’s continual harping.

I think of her as my wife. My love. My never-ending nag with the most gorgeous tits I’ve ever seen.

“Come back, Daniel.”

I couldn’t ignore her. If I’m honest, I didn’t even want to. I can complain constantly. I can pretend she annoys me. During the day, when I find that odd death each vampire finds with the dawn, I relive our moments. Good and bad don’t matter. Every moment is meaningful if she’s there.

I managed to open my eyes. It took effort. The world looked a little hazy. Nothing was in focus, but I saw her light. It clouded out everything else. Her light was soft, effervescent. It made the world seem so beautiful.

I zeroed in on her throat

And something was wrong. I forced myself to really look around. Lime green walls. A shittastic door. A TV that was at least twenty years old. Where the fuck had Z taken us and how had she gotten me out of the Benz?

Damn. I remembered that my Benz had a sunroof that it didn’t before. That was my only fucking car. The vampires on TV always have money, but the truth is I’m only as good as my last damn job, and somehow I didn’t think insurance would cover the fact that a weretiger had taken apart my roof.

“What are you doing, Zoey?” I had to ask because I had zero idea how I had gotten from the parking garage where I’d nearly died into this horrific motel. There was only one place that had this color carpet and that was a motel. Even though I was weak, I let my senses open.

My eyes were useless. They could only see her light and the graceful line of her throat. My ears heard the gorgeous sound of her heartbeat. It was louder than usual, making up the rhythm of my life. Sometimes when I listen really hard, I swear I can make my heart beat in time with hers. I shoved away the romantic thoughts and forced myself to focus. What else could I hear? A person retching in the next room and a hooker telling a john she got seventy-five for a blow job. I thought that was inflated, but my nose told me that the dude was going to pay and the chick who was vomiting should switch to a gluten-free diet. Sometimes it sucks to have supersenses.

But then I caught the sweetest smell of all.

Z. Fuck. Z was naked. I could smell her arousal. Sweet. Spicy. Fucking perfect. It caused my eyesight to focus. I zeroed in on soft flesh and her breasts. You gotta understand. Zoey’s tits are fabulous. Real. So soft and with these pretty little upright nipples. They’re brownish-pink and
big. So big. I could suck them and play with them. I remembered licking those nipples. She was sensitive and sometimes just pinching them could get her off.

I smelled something else, too. I smelled the glorious coppery scent of her blood, and my whole body came to very little life. I was totally weak, but I perked up the tiniest bit at that scent. And I was wary.

“Saving you.” She shoved her wrist at my mouth. I could taste a hint of her blood on my lips and it made my beast flare.

One hint, just one little taste. It couldn’t be wrong. I was dying anyway. Shouldn’t I die with her taste on my lips, my body in her arms?

All those years ago right before my human death, she was my final thought, my only thought. Zoey is reckless. She’s a force of nature, but chaos seems to follow her. As I saw the light from the other truck and realized what was going to happen, I just prayed she would find someone to watch out for her.

If I died now, she would be at Halfer’s mercy with only a fuckbag to protect her. I didn’t trust Devisnhea Quinn as far as I could throw him, and trust me, I can throw that fucker halfway across Texas if I want to. I can fly. It might be fun to see how high I could get and then see if he bounced when I dropped him. Wouldn’t be such a pretty boy then, I bet. When he was flat as a Fae pancake, maybe he would learn to keep his hands off my wife.

Zoey pressed her wrist to my mouth and I finally remembered all the reasons it was a bad fucking idea to let myself have a taste.

I flashed back to that first night. I’d been so scared when I woke on the slab, metal at my back, harsh lights above. Somewhere in the background I’d been able to hear a Pink song playing. *Please Don’t Leave Me*. Where was Z? It was my first thought before the hunger hit me. It was crazy at first, but I got it under control.

Have I mentioned there was a skanky dude trying to perform a *Y* incision on me? I woke in a morgue. Yeah, I ate that fucker and he tasted gnarly. Seriously, he tasted like shit. I’d managed to leave him alive and then make my way home. I’d found her and she was…well, if I had changed, then so had Z. She glowed as bright as the damn sun. When I looked at her with vampire eyes, I knew I’d found heaven. She was why my heart was beating, why my body functioned. It was for her. And when I’d tasted her, oh, I’d found my heroin.

And then the Council took me away and I knew what it meant to be alone. I’d been sick for days. I had no idea why. At the time, I’d thought I was dying. I’d wanted nothing more than to see her one last time. I’d wanted to be home so fucking bad. I remember Marcus walking into my cell.

“Such a shame to begin this way. Who was she? Why did they not bring her back here with you?”

I’d stared up at him, my whole body shaking. “Because when they suggested that they bring my girl with me, I killed them.”

I’d ripped their throats out. Only one of them had managed to grow it back. He’d promised to not touch Z and he’d been the one who got me to Paris. He’d been the reason I’d been placed in a cell and left thinking I was going to die.

Marcus had been the one to put a hand on my back. “I know it hurts now, Your Highness, but it won’t always be this way.”

The first time I’d been called a king.

I shoved her wrist away because there was so damn much Zoey didn’t know. So much I could never tell her. She thought she knew me. She had no idea.
She pulled me back into the present. I tried to focus. I could still smell her. So fucking good. She stared at me with her hazel eyes, but it was hard to see past her tits. I hadn’t touched her tits in years. If I’d had an ounce of blood in my body, I would have reached up and played with those nipples. God, I loved her breasts. I loved to suck on those nipples while I played around in her pussy, getting her ready for a long, hard fuck.

She didn’t look happy enough with me for even a little tiny fuck. “Do you really want to die that badly? Or is it me? Do you not want me? Do you want me to get you some hooker, Danny? Would a prostitute be more acceptable?”

I had to laugh, but it hurt my chest. “Not want you? That’s a laugh.” If I’d had any sense, I would have stopped there. I would have laid down and let myself fade the way I should have if she hadn’t been there. I was a monster, but I was a monster with an angel to protect. “I can’t help but want you. Even if I hated you, I would want you. I…Zoey, you don’t know what you’re doing.” I had to find a way to make her understand without letting her know how fucked we both were. I’d spent years protecting that secret. She never had to know my love for her wasn’t exactly pure. “You don’t know what you’re asking. Get my cell phone and call the club. It’s where you should have gone in the first place.”

I hated the club. It was a depressing reminder of how shitty my life was without her. Once a night I went into that club and I fed from a woman I didn’t love. I practically fucking cried on her shoulder every night. I was pathetic, but I wasn’t about to give it all up now. Zoey was alive and that was a miracle. She was alive and she wasn’t under some vampire’s influence.

“No.” Zoey wasn’t giving up, but then I should have guessed that. “I’m the only one who can help you.”

I managed to shake my head but it was hard. I could feel the beast trying to rise and I had to fight it. I call it the beast, but it’s really that piece of me that’s pure vampire, the part of me that wants to kill and kill until no one questions that I am the fucking king. That piece of me wants to dominate my queen, to get her beneath my fangs and cock where she belongs.

Yeah, he’s an asshole, and I try not to listen to him too much.

“No, I won’t take you. Not like this.”

“We did this before and everything was fine.” She was moving and her tits wiggled a little.

My cock actually can work with almost no blood. I felt it trying to stir to life. “I was an idiot. I could have killed you.”

“But you didn’t, and you won’t kill me now.” She stared at me for a moment and I could see her brain working. I closed my damn eyes because I didn’t need more temptation. Just looking at her made me want to give in.

“I can hurt you in other ways, Z.” I leaned my head back against the bed. Just keeping upright was draining me. I had to figure out a way to make her understand that this was a horrible idea. We couldn’t go down this road again. I couldn’t do it. I remember so vividly how it felt to detox the first time. “When we did it before, we didn’t know what it meant. If we did this now, it would mean something. It would bind us in ways you don’t want.”

“You have no idea what I want.”

“You don’t want this.” I tried to make my words forceful because my brain was already toying around with the idea. I’d been good for so long. Maybe she hadn’t tasted as good as I remembered. She’d left me with no choice. Really, my soul whispered, it’s for her own good.

I hate myself sometimes. Taking a long breath, I swore to fight it. I would fight the need to take her and drink my fill. I would fight the instinct to take her and let everyone know that she belonged to me on a primitive level. She was mine by strength. Mine. Fucking mine.
I was just about to go into another plea to have her call the club when I felt her straddle me. My eyes flew open and told me what my other sense had already picked up. Zoey was close and she’d brought out the big guns. Her clothes lay on the floor beside me and she was beautifully, glorious naked. I just breathed her in a minute, letting the scent of her fill my world, and once I’d smelled her my hands got greedy and I had to touch her. It took effort, but I managed to make my arms move, bringing my hands to circle her waist. I loved how warm her skin was, how fucking soft. She was so fucking soft.

Despite my lethargy, I found the will to reach up and palm her breasts, let my thumbs circle those nipples I loved so much. They peaked for me, making hard, pretty pink nubs that I wanted to suck on more than I wanted to breathe. “God, I can smell you.”

My fangs popped out and I bit back a groan. I like to hide this shit, but when my fangs slide out, it’s a pleasurable experience, like something deep inside me wakes up when they’re long and ready to pierce. I left one hand on her breast, but I had to feel her. I had to know that pussy was soft and ready for me. I traced a line from her tits down her torso, my finger moving like a magnet was attracting it.

All I could think about was touching her again, getting my tongue on her pussy and tasting her.

“Touch me, Danny.”

I sank my finger into her labia. Warm and soft, she was liquid around my finger. So ready. I could push her back and get my tongue on her. I could eat that sweet pussy for days.

And the vein that ran next to it. It would taste so fucking good. I could feast on it.

I pulled my hands away, realizing just how close I was to taking us over the edge. “Zoey, please walk away. Don’t do this to us. Don’t bring this out. Don’t.”

“I love you, Daniel.” She leaned forward and kissed me. Her lips were soft on mine and then my girl got aggressive. She licked her tongue across my lips and found my fangs. Proving she had a death wish when it came to me, she ran her tongue over my fangs, giving me just the slightest hint of blood. “Take me, Daniel. Call me by my title.”

My hands shook as they caressed her breasts. I couldn’t hold out. Not on her. I could already feel the beast rising to take my place. How can I describe it? That other part of me? It’s me and then it’s not. When my vampire self takes over, I am irrational, violent. I often think of one thing and only one thing because the beast inside me only wants one thing.

Her.

My left hand slipped back down because I was losing the fight. I slipped my fingers into her pussy as my thumb found her clitoris and started to rub. She was right. She was mine. Why was I fucking fighting at all? Why had I ever fought? I was afraid of the addiction, of the horrible withdrawal that would come when I had to get off her blood. There was an easy answer to that. I wouldn’t get off her blood. I would take her and never let her go again. She didn’t have to know the truth. She just had to know that she was mine. I sighed and felt my strength flare as though the vampire portion of me had brought some with him. My cock started to ache. She’d told me to call her by her title. I could do that. “Companion. Mine. You are mine.”

“Yours, Daniel.” She pressed in, bringing her breasts to my chest, her neck so close I could see her pulse. See that river of life that would soon be mine.

I opened up that part of me that’s uniquely vampire, that piece of magic in my soul that draws a person to me. I gave her my persuasion because I wanted her to scream for me. I would get that sweet blood, that filling force of life, but she would get something, too. She would get as
much pleasure as I could give her. This was the exchange between a vampire and his mate. Life for pleasure. Blood for complete and utter devotion.

My fingers sank into her hair, and I felt more alive than I had in years. Why had I ever thought this was a bad idea? This was my right. She was mine. I drew her head back as gently as I could because need rode me hard. Instinct and lust warred in my system. Nothing would be the same after this, and I welcomed it in that moment. She’d called me Daniel, but in that moment I wanted all the formality of a vampire wedding. Zoey didn’t know it, but tonight was our wedding night. “You will call me by my title, companion. You will call me master.”

I let my fangs penetrate and found heaven once again.
About Lexi Blake

Lexi Blake lives in North Texas with her husband, three kids, and the laziest rescue dog in the world. She began writing at a young age, concentrating on plays and journalism. It wasn’t until she started writing romance that she found success. She likes to find humor in the strangest places. Lexi believes in happy endings no matter how odd the couple, threesome or foursome may seem. She also writes contemporary Western ménage as Sophie Oak.

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