

What Is Real

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Fandom: Cinema Bizarre

Pairing: Kiro/Strify (mentions of others)

Rating: PG13

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Warnings: mention of multiple partners

Summary: There are rules, even to being a vampire and it can make life lonely.

Author's Notes: Thanks to Laura and Soph for the beta. This is Laura's fault; she made me dream of vampires and Cinema Bizarre all night.

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Playing at being twenty something again was fun, but sometimes the hiding wore a little thin. Of course, being over four hundred years old meant he was quite used to it, but he still wished he didn't have to do it sometimes. When he'd set up this identity he'd had no idea where he'd end up; he'd just felt like using his young looks to go through school again and have some fun; becoming part of a band hadn't really been on the cards. He didn't regret it of course, but it was a long way from where he had expected to be.

He smiled to himself and looked down at the head resting on his stomach; definitely not where he had expected to be. That was the trouble with mortals though; they were so engaging and he'd never been able to shake his fascination with them. Some of his brethren lived apart and only interacted with mortals when they needed to feed, but he loved being with them.

He stroked his fingers through the blonde and black hair and tucked a stray strand behind Strify's ear and then ran a nail lightly over the side of his companion's face. He loved Strify, really he did, just like he loved all of the others as well, but there on Strify's neck were the signs of his betrayal. They would fade soon, disappear as if they had never been there and Strify would never remember what had happened, but he still knew it was wrong. He had to feed of course, and he was good at sex, but that he could not tell his friends the truth bothered him like it had never done in the past.

There was something about this group of people that fed part of his psyche that had been sleeping for a long time. He had not felt such camaraderie since he had been mortal.

Someone snuffled in their sleep and he peered over the edge of the bed to see Shin edging closer to Yu and curling round the other naked man. How the pair had ended up on the floor he didn't really remember, but he glanced over at the other bed in the room to see Romeo and Luminor curled just as closely together.

Kiro hadn't set out that evening to entice all his band mates and former bandmate, in one case, into bed, it had just sort of happened. They were in a hotel because they had a show to do the next day and Luminor had dropped in to say hello and things had just gone from there.

That was the trouble with having a vampire in the band, bonds tended to be a bit deeper than they might normally have been. It had been quite obvious how much

everyone missed Luminor when their friend had arrived and Kiro had seen how much they all needed the connection they shared and he hadn't been able to stop himself. Sex just happened to be a medium that vampires were good with.

In a little while he would sneak the others back to their rooms and put them in bed and they wouldn't really remember what had happened other than a good time and too much alcohol. The group dynamic had been reaffirmed and everyone would feel the high from it and he had no doubt that the performance would be amazing, but he still wished he could tell the others the truth.

Pulling one of the pillows from behind him, he placed it on the bed next to him and gently urged Strify off of him and onto it instead, then he quietly stood up and stretched. There were clothes all over the room, so the first thing he did was sort them out into what belonged to whom. He was lucky he had a really good memory and a keen eye for fashion or he wouldn't have had a chance. It took him ten minutes of careful searching before he had a little pile for each of his friends. They were all as naked as the day they were born, but he was not going to bother even partially dressing any of them; when they woke up naked in the morning they could make of it what they liked.

It took a little bit of convincing to get Shin to let go of Yu, which was really rather cute as well as being a pain in the rear, but that was the only hiccup. With the speed he could move no one had a chance of catching him in the corridors and he put his friends to bed, fed them one drop of vampire blood so that they wouldn't have any mysterious aches and pains in the morning and then locked the door on the room he was sharing with Strify.

What he didn't really expect when he walked over to the bed to pick Strify up and put him in the other one was for clear eyes to be looking at him from the pillow. Vampire allure made mortals high, that was how it worked, but Strify didn't look remotely intoxicated as Kiro gazed down on his friend.

"You're not human are you?" Strify said quietly, voice husky.

Kiro glanced down at his naked body and then back at his friend; he looked human, but it was only a disguise.

"No," he said and sat down on the bed, reaching out and playing with Strify's hair again.

With all the styling it had he never expected it to be as soft as it was and he loved touching it, not that he was usually allowed to.

"Not for over four hundred and fifty years," he added and smiled a little as Strify's eyes widened, "I'm a vampire."

"But I've met your family," Strify pointed out.

"And they really do believe they are," Kiro explained, letting his eyes wander over his bed companion and wondering if maybe he didn't have to end this quite yet. "The eldest son died just before I found them and I simply became him. They had chosen to cut all ties with their previous life and it was not difficult to fake records. I love them dearly and they will never know the pain of their son's loss again."

Strify didn't seem to know what to make of that, but then Kiro really couldn't blame him; it was rather a strange concept for a mortal. Some vampires would

have found it odd as well, but Kiro used what had once been a hunting technique to make lives for himself and it suited him. He did not like being alone.

"And you go out in the sun and you wear crosses," his friend said, clearly confused.

"Superstition and propaganda," Kiro explained, mostly because he didn't want to just put Strify back to sleep and spend the rest of the night awake and alone.

He could rarely sleep after feeding and after feeding and sex it was impossible; his system was alight with energy and it wasn't going to let him shut his eyes. He would have to work harder to make Strify forget after a talk like this, but he felt like indulging himself.

"Did we really all just have sex?" Strify asked, moving on to a new subject it seemed.

"Yes," Kiro replied, smiling at the memory; he liked sex almost as much as blood, "my fault entirely, but it was fun wasn't it? The friendship bond needed reaffirming; everyone missed Lumi so much. Everyone will feel better in the morning, they just won't remember why."

Strify sat up slowly and, much to Kiro's disappointment, dragged the duvet over himself at the same time.

"And we've done this before, haven't we?" Strify said, clearly remembering something.

"Several times," Kiro admitted, feeling a little guilty, but pushing it aside with practiced ease, "and yes I do feed from all of you."

Strify's hand went to his neck.

"The marks fade completely in an hour or so," Kiro explain, licking his lips at the memory of his friend's sweet blood.

He was old enough to have complete control of his instincts, but he felt his fangs aching as he remembered the delicious flavour. Contrary to what most morals would have thought, blood did not all taste the same, in fact every mortal had their own particular taste. Kiro liked the taste of all his friends for different reasons; Strify had a very indulgent, rich flavour.

The whole conversation seemed to be making Strify very uncomfortable and so Kiro shifted to his hands and knees and made sure they were eye to eye.

"Would it help if I said I love you?" he asked, not liking the fact that his friend seemed anxious around him. "I love all of you."

"But you play with our minds," Strify pointed out.

"I have no choice," Kiro replied, trying to convey his sincerity in his eyes; "mortals are not allowed to know about us. If any of the others found out you knew they would kill you or make me turn you. Neither of which would be good at the moment. I cannot endanger any of you like that, so I hide. You will remember a good night with friends, but no more."

There was a very pronounced frown on Strify's face after he had explained that.

"If you love us so much," was the beginning of the next question, "why do you make us forget the sex?"

Kiro sat back and thought about that; he hadn't really considered that part of the equation. It was easier to redirect whole memories rather than partial ones, but he was going on five hundred years old, it wasn't beyond him.

"It seemed like the best way," he admitted with a small shrug. "Why? Do you want to remember it then?"

For a few moments his friend did not reply, but then Strify nodded.

"I have to feed," Kiro said, leaning forward again and placing his hand against the side of Strify's face, "and I need the sex almost as much, I can't change what I am, but if you want to remember it, I can give you that much, but not what has already happened tonight. It would raise too many questions. Do you understand?"

Strify looked into his eyes then and nodded.

"I wish I could let you remember," he said, meaning every word and kissing Strify very lightly, "I wish it every day, but you are not ready yet. One day I will give you the choice, I decided that when I first came to know you, but that is all I can offer."

"What's it like?" Strify asked quietly.

"Amazing and wonderful," Kiro replied with a small sad smile, "and terrible and heartbreaking. That is why you are not ready to know yet."

Strify took a moment to digest that, but their eye contact never faltered.

"Will you ask the others as well?" was the next enquiry.

"No," Kiro replied honestly, "well maybe Yu, I have not decided yet, but the others would not make good vampires. I would have offered it to Lumi, but fate has other ideas; he can never be a vampire. It nearly broke my heart when I realised I was partially the cause of his fragile health; we are fundamentally incompatible on a metaphysical level."

"But you still influenced him tonight," Strify said, pulling back.

"Occasional contact will not hurt him," Kiro said, moving with his friend and not allowing the connection to be broken. "It was living in each other's pockets that did it. He will feel better for tonight, just like the rest of us."

He did not want to have to redirect Strify's memories with them in conflict; his friend would feel it even if he didn't know why and he wanted the evening to end as well as it had begun. In the morning he would pretend to be human, pretend to be ordinary, or at least as ordinary as a pop star could be, but he didn't want that right then.

"Kiss me," he said, tiring of the conversation, "and let me give you something to remember tomorrow."

Letting his vampire nature rise, he let the room become brighter to his vision and he knew his eyes would be glittering. He did not use his power to influence Strify, but he wanted his friend to see him for what he really was, at least for a little while. When Strify finally moved and their lips met it sent thrills down his spine and he pushed forward. Sex would add a complication to their relationship, but Kiro didn't care; at least it would be honest and real, which was what he longed for more than anything else.

The End