



FANG CHRONICLES

*Amey's Story*

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# Chapter 1

*Two hundred years ago...*

The time had come. Marcus turned to Ivan. "Take the Pack away and don't return until tomorrow night."

"I don't think that's a good idea, Marcus. You need me here; you need us here."

"This will be my last night with Victoria and I want to be alone with her," Marcus said in a soft voice.

"Can you keep the promise you made?"

"Yes, my friend, I will keep my promise."

"I will return tomorrow, as you ask. Send the call if you need me. I love you, my brother." Ivan turned and left the room with one last glance at the woman on the bed, the woman he loved as well.

Marcus sat on the bed, where Victoria lay. He took her hand. Frail, covered in age spots and wrinkles, the most beautiful hand he had ever seen. He touched her white hair and ran his fingers through it. She was the love of his life. Sixty years was too short a time. Eternity wouldn't be long enough.

Her eyes opened. They had a white sheen...the look of death. He smelled it on her, but it didn't yet overwhelm the unique scent that was all hers. The perfume of the life she'd lived so gallantly still filled his senses.

"I love you." His heart broke, he knew this might be the last time he told her.

"And I love you, my heart," she whispered.

"Are you in pain?"

"No, that is why I'm sure my time is at an end. I just feel peace."

His hand tightened ever so gently on hers. Marcus didn't think he would make it through the next hour, much less the lifetimes he would be forced to live without her.

They'd had this conversation many times, she gazed into his eyes. "Someone is out there for you. Someone special who wants to spend eternity with you and I am sorry it wasn't me. You have given me a love I thought I would never have. My heart will follow you even after my body is dust. I want you to love again. Give yourself the time. I will not rest peacefully until you are happy."

Before he could reply, Victoria inhaled sharply, took his hand in both of hers and asked, "One last gift I want you to give me. It's unfair of me to ask, but I'm a selfish woman."

"Anything," he whispered.

"Take my blood as my heart stops."

Marcus' breath caught. He had not tasted Victoria's blood in almost fifteen years. She had become too frail to sustain him, and he'd wanted her with him for the beautiful love she gave. It was more powerful than all the blood in the world.

"I cannot, Victoria, I cannot."

"Marcus, I have not shared with you in so long. I'm not asking this second. You will know when, you will feel my last heartbeats."

Victoria closed her eyes and fell into a quiet sleep. Her face was at rest, without the pain that had followed her for weeks. The time had finally come and he didn't think he would survive.

When Victoria next opened her eyes, they were panicked. There was no air for her to draw. She looked to Marcus and calmed instantly. He struck.

As he drew the last of her life's blood, Victoria's breathing stopped. He withdrew his fangs and memorized her face. She had a smile on her lips. He laid his head on her chest and cried. He cried because of his promise.

## Chapter 2

*Present day...*

Amy Stiles was a journalist with a master's degree in journalism and wanted to be taken seriously. It was hard though because her appearance was more that of a teenager.

The mantra "serious journalist" played through her head constantly. This might be her only chance to prove what she was capable of. In her career, she always tried to portray herself as older. This time she was trying to appear younger. Amy glanced in the mirror. An oval face with pure blue eyes and lush brown hair in ponytails with a slightly crooked part reflected back at her. She wore no makeup. Her shorts were skimpy to say the least. Her tight shirt revealed the flatness of her small breasts. She never thought this quality would help her career given that boobs got the jobs. It was sad, but she knew the field she worked in. She snorted. No kidding she knew this profession. Her mother lived this life until her death from cancer when Amy was seventeen. No doubt about it, she was her mother's daughter when it came to a story.

She smoothed her hands over her almost flat chest. She was ready to tackle the story largely ignored by the media...a series of young teen killings in the lower south side of the city. The young girls appeared to be prostitutes. Their ages varied from fourteen to twenty. Some had yet to be identified and their ages were only forensic guesses at best. Testing proved a variety of drugs in each girl's system.

She sauntered to the front door of her apartment, hips swaying and getting into her roll. Before she could grasp the door handle, her ankle twisted slightly and she almost went to the carpet.

"Damn, these fucking heels are going to break my neck." She muttered as she used the door knob for balance while rubbing her sore ankle and staring daggers at the four inch torture devices on her feet.

She stepped out the door, looking to the right and seeing the elevator sign. With a sigh of longing she turned her back on it and went to the left, practicing her acrobatic walk, down three flights of stairs. She made it to the ground floor with only a few ankle wobbles and then caught a bus into the inner city.

Amy could see the stares of men and boys as she exited the bus. Yep, her disguise was working. They were thinking just what she wanted them to. She needed another fix and she was willing to work for it. She lucked out. Her friend, Brian, a police detective, allowed her to view a few interrogation videos from his vice squad days. She needed to appear as desperate as the girls interviewed. It wasn't a far stretch. Her desperation for a story was just a different kind of drug.

Amy wasn't foolish enough to want to actually find the killer. She planned to stay close to people and not go off with anyone. This, with any luck, offered a degree of protection. No, her story would be about life on the street, the shortage of shelter, food, and yes, drugs. It was about why, with a killer on the hunt, these women continued to live their lives and serve the streets.

Her first evening proved how little she knew. The corner she chose was next to a dilapidated liquor store with a blinking "OPEN" sign above the front door. Bars covered the windows and a rolled back metal grate was attached to the front door. The trash on the pavement was being gently pushed along by a slight breeze. The waft did little to extinguish the smell of rotting garbage and she wondered if the odors had seeped into the walls of the old buildings. She scanned the area. Two "working girls" were on the next corner. She didn't want to be too close. Amy checked her feet and made a conscious effort to keep the spikes from the large crack in the pavement. She ran her hands down the sides of her body beginning at the top of her breasts and ending at the hem of her shorts. She mentally slapped herself as she stopped her fingers from tugging the shorts lower.

“Think slutty,” she whispered under her breath. She placed her feet apart and cocked a hip. It wasn’t long before a potential customer approached.

He was dirty, smelled of body odor and alcohol. She was prepared for the offer of drugs, but he only wanted her. With a shudder, Amy reassured herself he was too drunk to perform and started acting strung out and wanting a quick high. The man stumbled away.

The second man smelled only slightly better. He wanted Amy to follow him to a cheap hotel where he could make her a “very happy girl.” When Amy didn’t immediately follow, he grabbed her arm. His grasp was firm but she was able to twist away and stumble quickly towards the liquor store.

As she entered, the clerk watched her every move, She was sure he expected her to steal something. That was okay; at this point she just wanted her admirer to go away. Yes, he was promising drugs, but Amy was sure he had more in mind. Other than what happened with her second admirer, no one seemed bent on violence. A few more men approached her; one even gave her a pill he said was “Oxy.” Amy took the pill and pretended to swallow, but kept it between two fingers and made it seem as if it was in her mouth. The man said he would find some more and maybe they could make a trade.

After he left, Amy quickly found another spot on a corner two blocks away. The man never appeared again to make good on his promise. Not paying attention, she went flying onto the cement sidewalk. “What the hell?” was her weak comeback as she lay on the cold ground glaring up at a tall woman dressed in black spandex. Amy’s face was even with the woman’s shoes and the stilettos had an inch on hers. She knew this wasn’t the time to ask for walking pointers.

“This is my turf. If you get near me again, I’ll slit your cunt throat. Now, get the fuck out of here.”

Amy saw the kick coming and rolled to her side. The sharp edge on the woman’s shoe caught Amy in the thigh leaving a deep scratch and what would probably be a bruise. It hurt like hell and a small amount of blood trickled

down her leg. Looking on the bright side, she decided the wound would add to her character. As she limped thirty feet from her attacker, she acknowledged she'd just been initiated in one of the "don'ts" of walking the streets...never tread on another girl's territory.

By early morning, all Amy wanted was a bed, even one in a dingy hotel that probably rented their rooms by the hour. She craved silence and sleep before starting her second night on the streets.

Five hours later, she covered her face with her pillow and screamed. Doors opened and closed continually. She suffered through a continuous barrage of moans from the rooms on each side of hers. She'd given herself two weeks to get her story. At this rate, she wouldn't last forty-eight hours. Then again, she'd really look like she belonged on the streets.

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Amy found a well-lit spot and glanced around. It seemed safe from rough handling and aggressive prostitutes. Looking desperate for a fix was easy. She looked like hell. It hadn't taken forty-eight hours—twenty was sufficient. When a handsome guy smiled at her, Amy tossed her longing for sleep aside and coyly smiled back. He approached her and all she could think was how surprised she was that he needed to pay for a woman. She swayed up to him.

His eyes traveled over her lean frame. Boldly, he placed his hand on her breast, rubbing his thumb over her nipple. Amy internally cringed, not allowing her disgust to show. She exhaled; relieved her recorder was safely sewn into the hem of her shorts and would provide a record of her experiences.

Amy scanned the area and saw plenty of people. Though they weren't watching her, she surprisingly felt safe. Maybe because she knew she wouldn't go anywhere with this guy. His eyes and the way he stared at her gave her the creeps. He gently pushed her back toward the brick wall of a

downtown store. The rough surface bit into her arms. She kept her eyes on his face.

At the sting of the needle, she opened her mouth to scream. His strong hand covered her lips as his other hand caught her arms.

Terror washed through her—overwhelming and immobilizing as the effects of the drug hit her system. Amy was frantic, her eyes seeking anyone who might notice what was happening. Her last thought as her mind went blank was that she was nothing. Just like the other girls, no one would notice her disappearance even on a street filled with people.

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Amy awoke, groggy and barely able to keep her eyes open, her limbs heavy and unresponsive. She gasped at the slap across her face. Gradually, her vision began to clear. Her earlier panic and horror swept through her, followed by a tightly leashed fury.

While displaying a menacing smile, the man slowly lowered his zipper. He straightened and kicked her legs apart before stepping between them.

Amy's breathing accelerated as the zipper stopped its rasping descent. As he tugged at her shorts, her brain finally kicked into gear with the realization that rape was the least that could happen. This might be a fight for her life. Sudden, crippling pain in her eye stopped her cold. Shit, she hadn't even seen his fist coming. Throbbing traveled from her eye and radiated through her head. Everything began to go dark. Barely conscious, her shorts and underwear were now dangling around one leg. All she could focus on were her shoes being hiked into the air on either side of the man's hips. She almost laughed at the picture they presented though a lone tear trailed down her face. Just before her world completely faded, another man appeared out of thin air. Her attacker was jerked away and suspended in the air by his neck. A few minutes later he was thrown across the alley. The profile of the man standing over her was one she would never forget, even with her drugged

brain barely functioning. Piercing Amber eyes stared down at her. Her last thoughts as she passed out were that even with blood smearing his face, this man was beautiful.