(Jacob POV)

I appeared at the designated place. Where I was told that the vampire was sent off for his mission. Now the only remaining thing was to look for clues. That was not hard. It was one of my specialties after all. Being a tracker. And with the help of Odin's eye, it was going to be even easier. I gently lifted the eye patch from my left eye. And immediately the world around me changed. I started to see the world in many different colors. Mana, heat, light..... everything around me became vivid.

The first thing I noticed was the old building. It seemed really old and abandoned. But that was what seemed like to an ordinary person. I was a vampire and on top of that a tracker and the holder of the Odin's eye. I could immediately sense the signs of life even with all the magical defenses in place. But what was someone doing in such an abandoned building? I mean besides being old, I could see a giant hole in the wall near me. The thing was falling apart.

The second thing I noticed was Dracula.

(Oh shit. What the hell is he doing here? Is he by any chance...…)

The thought occurred to me that he was here for the vampire that died but I simply brushed it off. I mean he was the Count Vlad Dracula. The ruler of all vampires. Why would he come to see the death of a single-foot soldier? He had lived a pretty long life and I was sure he had seen many vampires die. So, he could not have come here for a single foot soldier but rather something else.

And it seemed I was right. Because he was so engrossed in doing something that he did not even feel my presence.

(What is he doing?)

I thought as I looked towards him. He was standing in the air looking down at the building.

(is he looking inside the building?)

Till now I had paid no attention to the building but now that I had thought about it. Why had I not paid any attention to the building? Dracula seemed extremely interested in the building and if the vampire was sent on an espionage mission here then I had to check the building. I could clearly detect more than one life form inside. It was bound to raise suspicion.

I had to do what I came for but I could also not show myself to the old man. I mean, we were on the same side but I did not want to face him. He had been going on about the same thing since I had joined the vampires and I had been refusing him. And I never thought that he would be this persistent. According to my calculations, people in high positions, like Dracula, were never this forgiving. They could kill you for something as small as being five minutes late to a ball. But he had never done anything of that sort. I had refused him so many times that I myself had lost count, but the old man had never held it against me. Even I felt a little conflicted.

I did not know for how long it was going to be like this. So, I simply avoided direct confrontation unless absolutely necessary.

I stood there hiding my presence from him for only a short time. After a short while he suddenly turned around and vanished.

(Thank God he is gone.)

I came out. Now I could do all that I wanted without worrying about anyone else.

"So where are you little one." I started to look around. And it did not take me much to discover the dead body. And as I had thought. The vampire had died in a single shot. Its head was severed with a single swing of a really sharp object. Most probably a sword. There were signs of fingers on its neck.

(Hmm weird.)

Someone had grabbed it by the neck and then cut it off.

(So, how was it that it could only send a single signal.)

It was weird. The only possible explanation was that everything had happened in the blink of an eye. If the assailant had grabbed the vampire and killed it fast enough, then both the signals could have gotten mixed causing me to perceive them as a single signal.

"It is plausible." I rubbed my chin.

But these were all simple speculations. Nothing was confirmed. I had to dig deeper into the matter if I wanted some real answers.

"Seems like I will have to go in the building." And with that, I dropped the body and started to walk towards the building. I could sense the life forms inside the building. I just had to follow them. Maybe one of them was the cause of all this.

I entered the building through the hole in the side wall. It was quite big and I could easily walk through the hole. As I entered the building, immediately the senses I was picking up changed. The signals increased. Initially, I thought that there were only four people in the building but now that I had entered, I could count more than thirty presences.

(So, there were magical barriers in place.)

There were probably defenses but the fallen wall had damaged some of them. And if there were defenses then there was a high chance that I had been detected. I immediately looked towards the four presences I had picked up before and surely there were some signs of panic. I could see them more clearly now. The shapes were clear. There were two men, a girl and...…..

(What is that creature.)

I could not guess. It was weird. Its body was like that of a human but it stood like some Quadruple. It had claws and its body structure felt odd. I could not guess what species it was only from the silhouette. So I started to walk towards them. They were on the same level but the rest of the life forms were underground. They were children.

(Why are there so many children in the same place.)

Having thoughts like these in my head I started to walk towards them. I hid my presence as much as I could. And walked quickly. As I had suspected the four of them knew that I had entered the building because I saw them moving down where the rest of the life forms were. They were moving away from me. I followed them as silently as I could.

I came to a room and suddenly everything vanished from my vision.

"Huh?" I was flabbergasted for a moment. The silhouette I could see suddenly vanished. I stopped moving and scratched my head. Odin's eye had stopped working for some reason. That could only have meant that they had activated some kind of special defences.

(Seems like they know I am coming and they have started to prepare for it...….. Well not that it matters, I know where to go.)

I lowered the patch back on my eye.

(Seems I don't need this anymore.)

There was no need to spend energy on using my eye when I knew where I had to go. So following my memory and intuition I quickly arrived at a big metal door. The door was like any other door in size but it felt old. And even by looking at it I could tell it was really thick. I tried to open it but the door did not budge from its place.

(Locked... Looks like I am on the right path.)

If there was a locked door, then there was bound to be something of intrest behind it. I tried to push the door but it was tightly locked. I pulled out my wand and pointed it toward the door.

"Alohomora." I chanted and a pale white light emitted from my wand. Nothing happened for a few seconds but then suddenly the door sparked and then exploded.

(What the…..)

I jumped back. The explosion was not something that could have hurt me but it told me that I could not open the door like that.

"Well, that is a problem."

I had no idea what to do. The smoke around the door cleared shortly and I walked towards it again. I sat down near it and inspected the door. There were runes engraved in the thick metal door.

"Runes" I squinted my eyes. I did not like them. I was no good at runes. And these seem high leveled. I had never even seen such complex runes.

"it looks like I have no other way then." I could not open that door. There was no magic that I knew was capable of opening that door. I mean there were some but I did not want to use them. There was another, more simpler way. I was a vampire. I closed my fist and punched the door.

\*BAAAM\*

My fist slammed against the door, it shook violently but nothing happened.

(It's tougher than I thought. But no matter.)

I started to pound the door with punches.

Fist after fist hit the door but it held on. It took me five minutes of constant punching for me to make something happen.

\*CRACK\*

\*CRUNCH\*

The walls broke down and the door fell revealing a staircase that led to the basement.

(Well they reinforced the door but forgot about the walls. It is all half-assed work.)

Before going down I inspected the door that I had broken down. A vampire's strength was nothing to joke about. And I had just pounded the door with a barrage of my full-strength punches for five minutes straight. Yet there was not a single dent in the door. The door was as it was when I started to punch it. The walls of the old building gave in but the door did not budge.

(That's some serious protection.)

I wondered.

(But I do not believe that they would overlook something as serious as this. Such people who made a door like this, forgetting about the walls and hinges! That's odd.)

I could not guess what the reason behind it was but I decided not to pay much mind to it. I started to run down the stairs. There was not much point left in being stealthy. They had known that I had entered the building. And after my noisy performance with the door, Even the neighbors would have known that some one had broken into the building. I felt thabkful that this was the only building in the neighborhood.

I ran as fast as I could. I had to get this matter over with. This was getting more troublesome than I had anticipated.

Soon I reached the basement. It was a corridor that led straight to a door.

(Another door? I hope it's not like the other one.)

I pushed it and it was also locked but luckily an alohomora did the trick. I opened the door and entered.

The air was thick with a haunting silence in there. The only things I could hear were faint, raspy breaths.

"luminous" I chanted and a small light emitted from the tip of my wand. And that light revealed a scene straight out of nightmares.

Rows of small cells lined the walls, each containing a frail figure that seemed to embody suffering itself.

Countless cells were lined across on both sides of the corridor. and each cell held up to five children. There life forces so weak that some of them felt dead.

Their frail bodies were nothing more than skeletons. Their faces with marks of red and purple spoke of the tortures those children had suffered. No one could tell if the children in the cells were alive or not.

The bars of the cells were rusted and feeble but none had the will left to try and break them. They were simply curled on the ground waiting for their deaths. I closed upon them and grabbed a bar of the cell. Upon close inspection, I could see all the wounds. Each child had atleast one or two bones broken. Hearing the noise a child raised his head and looked at me. And the eyes that I saw.... Those eyes. They ripped through my undead soul. Those haunted and sunken eyes plead for help even though the body and mind had let go of any hope. They were so dehydrated they could not even cry.

"wh...…" I tried to speak something, but a lump formed in my throat as tears welled up in my eyes. They were children. No older than Nathan. They were children and they deserved nothing more than to study and play. They were children and their basic right to even live was stripped of them by these people.

Maybe if I had gotten here faster, maybe if I had done something sooner, Maybe if I had known where my subordinate had gone...… just maybe I would have saved them sooner.

"I will...….." I tried to speak again but my voice was not helping me. I swallowed the lump and held back the tears. I was a vampire, this much should have been nothing to me.

"I will get you all out of here." I spoke resolutely.

Many faces moved after that line. They looked at me with no emotions on their faces. My chest tightened even more.

(WHATEVER MONSTERS DID THIS...… I WILL KILL THEM)

"HEY." I said a little loudly. Even more, faces turned.

"I am here to save you...….. don't you all want to go out," I asked but none of them responded.

(Their spirits have been broken completely.)

This was not my forte. I did not know what to do. So I simply followed my instincts and did what came to mind. I grabbed the bars of a cell and as I applied pressure on them the bars bent and then they gave in. They were already rusted, and they could not withstand the pressure from my strength. I pulled them out and threw them away.

"See, you all can go out now." I said. On this, the children from the cell looked toward me.

"c....a.....n w...e" I heard a really rasped voice. I could not believe my ears that the voice belonged to a child.

"Can we really?" Another one spoke. It was more of a whisper.

"Yes, you can!" I exclaimed. "And I promise no one will hurt you anymore." I reassured them.

The children all looked at each other.

"You are laying." I heard one of them say.

"What?" I could not believe what I was hearing.

"You will not take us out of here...….. They will find us...….. And when they find us...…. They will hit us even more." A girl in the far corner replied.

"So, we will not go...…" Another one said.

"Because if we stay, they will not hit us." A third child completed the sentence.

I could not believe what I was hearing. Just what had these children been through? Their minds were gone. They believed that the only way they could be saved was if they remained in their cells.

"NO" I shouted. "I WILL MAKE ALL THE BAD GUYS GO AWAY AND I WILL TAKE YOU FAR AWAY FROM THIS PLACE. THAT WAY NO ONE WILL EVER HURT YOU." I wanted to kill whoever did that to them. "I WILL SAVE ALL OF YOU I PROMISE." I vowed.

"big brother." I heard a girl's voice.

"I looked where the voice was coming from. She was in another cell. I went closer.

"What is it," I asked gently.

"Will you really save us?" That was the first ray of hope I had seen in that place since I had entered. The only child who had responded. Maybe...… just maybe they could all be saved just like this girl.

"YES, I WILL. I PROMISE." I raised my small finger towards her to make a pinky promise. I waited for a bit but she did not respond. After a minute or so she raised her head. Her eyes had tears in them.

"Will you save linen too?" She asked.

"Yes, I will save linen too." I said even though I did not know who it was.

"Really?" She asked.

"Yes really." I smiled gently at her.

"Thank you." She tried to smile back.

"Now tell me who in linen." I had to know what I had promised.

"She is behind you." The girl pointed.

(Behind me? But I don't feel...…)

That was when I felt the danger behind me. I did not know how it had sneaked up on me without noticing but it was there right behind me. I turned as quickly as I could but the last thing, I saw was a claw coming at my face and then the world turned dark. I had lost my eye.