

# THE ANNIHILATION

[Book Three of the Blood Cure Trilogy]

By

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**Notice\*\*** Portions of this story may prove too graphic, sexually explicit, or violent for sensitive readers. This novel is intended for the mature adult.

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Two weeks passed since I'd been rescued from that vampire who, somehow, knew about my blood being lethal to those evil bloodsuckers with no further incident. I spent almost every waking minute working with herbs as I did my best to create a cure for vampirism.

With Rick's help, I'd managed to reproduce the potion that made human's blood lethal to vampires after only a few tries. It was the remedy for vampirism that was causing the hold up. That and the fact that we still hadn't worked out how we'd manufacture sufficient amounts of the toxic potion and disperse it so as to effectively annihilate the vampires.

The hours were long and tough on me, but not as tough as the days were on poor Jared. Having escaped the New Order, he was now a fugitive in hiding. This made it impossible for him to stay put in any one place for more than a day or two for fear of being discovered by the incessant searching being done by the vampires at night and the collectors during the day. Almost daily, either Bethany or I expressed both our frustration and our earnest desire for them to give up looking for him.

"If this keeps up much longer," Bethany said to her grandson, "you'll either run out of hiding places or run out of luck. You'll have to go to Canada."

“I heard rumor that the New Order was working its way across the border,” Jared said as he helped himself to the light lunch she’d provided.

My heart sank at his words.

Wanting clarity, I ignored the fact that it might make me sound dumb and asked, “Do you mean they’re in Canada now?”

“It does,” he said with obvious regret.

“Sara hasn’t said anything about it,” Bethany offered with a thoughtful frown. “She’s so paranoid these days that, I imagine, if she thought that Peter or Rita were in danger, she’d contact us with her concern.”

“Where is the cabin that they’re staying in located?” I asked.

“It’s in Maine, right next to the Canadian border,” she replied.

“Maybe the New Order hasn’t gotten there yet,” I offered. “If it’s sparsely populated, I doubt they’d find it too appealing.”

“We need to find out exactly where the Canadian hubs are,” Jared suggested. “There shouldn’t be too many of them yet.: Then, looking at his grandmother, he asked, “Have you been able to make the connection with the underground?”

She pursed her lips and replied with, “I’ve put some feelers out, but I haven’t really gotten serious. I’m worried that if they find out about the formula, they’ll push the issue before we’re ready.”

“You mean, before I’ve come up with a reversal for vampirism,” I said with trepidation.

“It’s only been a few weeks,” Bethany said with a soothing tone. “We want you to work steady, but don’t put pressure on yourself.”

“I’m frustrated,” I insisted. “Now that my memory has, for the most part, returned, I’m unable to make things work with the plant life I have available to me here.” Looking at Jared, I said, “I might have to return to Oklahoma or at least in that vicinity to look for the herbs that I need.”

Bethany thought for a moment.

“That might not be a bad idea,” she mused. “With Jared having to hop around from place to place, maybe heading to Oklahoma with you would be enough to get them off his back.”

“It would get him out of the area,” I thoughtfully said, “but if there are vampires along the way, it might not be any safer for him.”

“Didn’t you get here without mishap?” she asked.

“Oh, there was mishap,” I informed her. “It was just with mutants and not vampires.”

“But, you made it here unscathed,” she insisted.

“I can’t guarantee that would be the case going back,” I firmly stated. “If I had my druthers, I wouldn’t go. It wasn’t the best or easiest of trips.”

“You came on foot,” Jared said. “We could go by motor vehicle. It would make a much quicker and certainly much easier trip.”

“Quicker and easier, but more dangerous,” I said with disapproval.

“It has its pros and cons for sure,” Bethany said.

“I don’t feel good about it,” I firmly informed them. “I like the idea of making the journey on wheels, but not with a fugitive vampire. That’s just asking for trouble.”

Heaving a sigh, Jared said, “She’s right. I would be a detriment to her.”

“It’s not that,” I quickly said. “It’s just that I can’t believe the New Order is keeping their search for you to this area. A vampire escaping them is a huge deal. I don’t imagine they’re taking it lightly.”

Looking directly at him, I filled my lungs with air to help give me the strength to say what I knew needed to be said. We’d yet to act upon it, but the love that I felt for him had finally come to the surface. The idea of him leaving the country and losing my connection to him was something I wished didn’t have to happen.

Even so, I firmly said, “As much as I hate to say this, I don’t think you’re safe as long as you’re in the country. I think Bethany’s idea of you going to Canada is the right thing.”



“Even if they are crossing the border,” Bethany offered, “Canada has an enormous amount of wild country for you to get lost in.”

“What about blood?” he asked. “If I go into an unpopulated territory, how do I tend to my blood need?”

“I’ve got an idea for that,” I softly said. When he looked at me with surprise, I immediately added, “Not the part about you leaving the country. I’ve been spending time contemplating about your blood source. I’m thinking that I might be able to alter the type of blood you need for survival. After all, you’re already much changed.”

Bethany was the first to say, “I’m not following you,” with Jared repeating it right after her.

“What if you could survive on animal blood?” I asked. “You would have to kill for the meat anyway. What if you were able to sustain the need for blood replenishment with animal blood instead of human blood?”

“Instead of returning to being human?” he asked with a hint of disappointment.

I shook my head.

“Until I can come up with the solution we need,” I said, “if I can create something that alters a vampire’s blood enough for them to live off animal blood instead of human blood, it would do two things. First, it would take the pressure off me to find a vampire cure before we can kill the evil bastards that insist on preying on humans. Secondly, it would allow us to put our annihilation scheme into action.”

Bethany stood up and rubbed her hands together.

“See what I mean, grandson?” she asked with a smile.

“When they made this one, they broke the mold.”

Beaming with pride from her complement, I addressed Jared.

“I know that you want to be human again and I promise you that I will not quit until I’ve figured out how to do it,” I said. “I seriously think that I need the plant life from Oklahoma to accomplish that. With vampires abound, the trip would be dangerous with or without you. Let’s not forget that the vampire you killed mentioned that he knew my blood was toxic. Just because they haven’t come after me yet, doesn’t mean they won’t or that they won’t spread the word. I’d feel better if we got rid of the bastards before I went back for those herbs.”

“The blood of animals, eh?” he mused.

“It’s a great idea,” Bethany eagerly said.

“Yes,” he said with a small gleam of approval in his eyes and a slight nod of agreement. “It might just work.”

I spent the next few weeks focusing on creating a formula that would alter Jared's body composition enough for him to receive the blood benefits that he'd been getting from drinking human blood to that of an animal. It required that I study the blood of both a human and several species of beasts, along with Jared's. I'd be lying if I didn't confess that, in the beginning, I had absolutely no idea what I was doing. I just did what I guessed was right. Eventually, as discoveries were made and information came together, I was able to recognize what was needed in order to accomplish my mission.

There were multiple failed attempts which proved excruciating for Jared as his body rejected the blood of a cow and sheep that he was tested on. When he was finally not only able to keep it down, but actually felt normal to the point of declaring that he felt good, we celebrated with the hard cider that Rick kept stored in his basement.

I was disappointed when Jared made his excuses and left before our celebration began. I was hoping to find time to be alone with him. Even though he had yet to act upon his love for me, he'd declared it on more than one occasion. I could also feel it whenever he was close.

He hadn't explained, but I knew that he was abstaining from becoming intimate for fear that he might get carried away and contaminate me with his vampire venom. I

was lucky that he'd been able to withhold it during my time as his captive. It was either because he felt he had stronger will prior to having his body altered by my blood or he just cared for me a bit more now. It could even have been a bit of concern about possibly piercing my flesh while in the throes of passion and ingesting a bit of my toxic blood. Whatever it was, I'd planned on convincing him that he could at least give me a simple, affectionate kiss with safety.

Or, at least I hoped he could.

I was surprised at how quickly I felt the effects of the cider. With my head swimming amidst a world that wouldn't stand still, I made my way to my favorite chair on the porch.

Things settled down enough to be tolerable as I filled my lungs with the fresh, cool air.

"So, you're a lightweight," Rick teased as he pulled a chair up close to mine and settled into it.

I'd had minimal to do with him since the night prior to their rescuing Jared. I was grateful to him, of course, but I still hadn't forgotten how he'd tried to impregnate me.

To add to my irritation about his actions that night, he'd been making extra visits to the breeding stables. Admittedly, the collectors' frequent and many visits to witness that he was doing his duty to the vampires played a major role in forcing him, but my gut was telling me that there was more to it than that. There was something, other than the pressure of the New Order to create baby blood, that was driving him to make so many visits each day to the

stables. This dulled, if not killed, the affection that I once had for him.

I attempted to ask him about it only once. He shot me down with a look that was actually frightening while insisting that nothing was amiss. After that, I kept my suspicions to myself and a distance from him.

“I rarely have occasion for drink,” I admitted. “I had wine a few times when I was younger, but, since the New Order took charge of things, it’s mainly been herbal tea or water.”

“Those greedy bastards keep all the good stuff for themselves. They’ve seized control of every damned winery and distillery. It’s something about the alcohol helping them to quench their thirst and need for blood. They claim that, without it, they’d have drained the continent dry by now.” After a brief pause, he added, “They don’t know about the cider. There are a few trees on my property. I collect the apples on the sly.”

“Don’t you need equipment to make cider with?” I asked.

He shrugged as he said, “We press the apples the old fashioned way. It’s work, but it’s worth it.”

“I would have thought you’d use the apples for food,” I mused.

“We used to eat them prior to the mutation,” he said. “You wouldn’t know this, because you didn’t really suffer the mutation, but there are some foods we can no longer

tolerate. Apples being one of them. In fact, fruit in general is difficult to digest. I'm fine now, but Sara and Peter still suffer."

"What about the cider?" I asked.

He shook his head.

"It's for me," he replied. "They can't touch it."

"So it's a recent thing, since I came and gave you the cure?" I said with surprise.

"Yes, and no," he offered. "I had cider in the basement from the old days. I stopped drinking it when the mutation occurred and took it up again after taking your cure. Although, I don't partake in it often."

"It seemed pretty strong," I admitted.

"It was an older batch," he said with a grin. "Good and fermented."

I gave a slight chuckle, "I see."

"It's a shame Jared couldn't stick around and give it a try," Rick said with a sigh that sounded forced. "Vampires can handle fruits just fine. In fact, there is little that they can't eat as long as they keep drinking blood each day."

I knew that he was anything but regretful that Jared hadn't joined us in our celebration. The fact that he pretended to be otherwise only served to add another notch into my *I don't trust you or like you very much* belt.

"He had things to take care of," I said with conviction.

The truth of the matter was that I hadn't a clue where he went or why he hadn't stayed for the celebration, but I

had no intention of letting Rick know that. I wanted to give the illusion to him that Jared and I had resumed our relationship to the point where we were intimate enough to share things with even if we weren't.

"It's odd how vampires can't seem to maintain their blood supply on their own," I mused while I looked at him through the corner of my eye. I waited for him to respond, but he stayed silent while he sipped his hard cider. So, I continued by firmly saying, "Now that Jared's altered and can survive in the wilds of Canada on animal blood, I can focus on making more of the annihilation juice."

He threw his head back in laughter.

"Annihilation juice," he repeated. "I like that."

I don't know why I found his amusement irritating. Then, lately, everything about the man annoyed me. I disliked the incessant way he kept trying to be alone with me. I was annoyed with the coy remarks he'd make about how we used to be lovers and I was especially repelled whenever he tried to touch me. Thoughts of what I'd witnessed the day I'd hidden in the stable while he forcefully bred those women kept popping into my mind.

I was about to respond to his finding my slang humorous when an old station wagon came speeding down the long drive. The evening's darkness made it difficult to see the driver until the vehicle came to a halt just yards away.

It was Sara.