

## ***Moonlit Rendezvous: A Shifter Short Story***

***by Eden Chase***

When a reluctant human finds herself drawn into a supernatural auction, she accidentally ends up buying a night with a shifter who's more than meets the eye. What starts as a bid to help a friend soon turns into a moonlit encounter that's too tempting to resist.

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### **Part 1: The Auction Mishap**

Lila Bennett had no intention of attending a "Shifter Bachelor Auction" that night, but when your best friend begs for backup, you say yes – against your better judgment. So, there she was, squeezed into a crowded warehouse turned "exclusive" supernatural nightclub, clutching her glass of wine like it was a lifeline.

"Come on, Lila, just have fun," her friend Sasha encouraged, bouncing with excitement. "It's for a good cause. All the proceeds go to protecting shifter habitats."

"Yeah, yeah," Lila muttered, eyeing the stage warily. "I'm all for the cause. It's the half-naked men I'm worried about."

Sasha rolled her eyes. "Please, you've been dying to see what a real shifter looks like. And these guys are top-tier. Just look at them!" She gestured to the muscular, bare-chested men lining up on stage, each of them exuding an aura of danger and seduction.

Lila tried to feign disinterest, but one shifter caught her eye – a tall, dark-haired man with a chiseled jaw and a roguish smile that could melt glaciers. He stood apart from the others, arms crossed, his gaze sweeping the crowd with cool indifference. Unlike the other shifters, who were flexing and flirting for the crowd, he seemed almost... bored.

"What's his deal?" Lila asked, nodding toward the mysterious shifter.

Sasha grinned. "Oh, that's Aric. He's a wolf shifter, and rumor has it he only shows up to these things when he loses a bet."

Intrigued despite herself, Lila found her gaze drifting back to Aric. There was something in the way he stood, like he was both daring someone to approach and warning them to stay away. She didn't know why, but it made her want to do the exact opposite of both.

And that's when the auctioneer started the bidding. "Ladies and gentlemen, next up for bid – a night under the moon with Aric the Untamed! Who will start the bidding at one hundred dollars?"

Sasha nudged her. "You should bid."

Lila laughed. “Yeah, right. I’m not spending my hard-earned money on—”

“One hundred dollars!” someone shouted.

“One-fifty!” another voice called.

“Two hundred!”

“Three hundred!”

Lila was about to make a snarky comment when Sasha elbowed her hard, causing her to spill her wine. “Ow! What the—”

“Four hundred!” Lila yelled in reflex, her voice echoing over the crowd. Her eyes went wide as the room fell silent, all eyes turning to her – including Aric’s.

“Sold! To the lady in the back!” the auctioneer declared with a flourish.

Lila felt her stomach drop. “Oh, hell no.”

## **Part 2: The Moonlit Meeting**

After the auction ended and the shifters were claimed by their respective bidders, Lila tried to make her escape, but a firm hand on her shoulder stopped her. She turned around to face a smirking Aric.

“Well, aren’t you a bold one?” he drawled, his voice a low rumble that sent a shiver down her spine. “Didn’t think anyone would be brave enough to bid on me.”

Lila swallowed, trying to regain her composure.

“That was a mistake. I wasn’t actually—”

“Too late now,” he cut in, his eyes gleaming with amusement. “You bought yourself a night, sweetheart. Might as well make the most of it.”

Sasha appeared at her side, grinning from ear to ear. “Oh, you should, Lila. It’s not every day you get a date with a werewolf.”

Lila shot her friend a glare, but Aric’s lips twitched with a half-smile. “What’s it going to be, princess? Afraid of a little adventure?”

She wasn’t sure if it was his teasing tone or the challenge in his eyes, but something in Lila snapped. “Fine. Let’s do this. But if you try anything funny, I’m calling the cops.”

Aric chuckled. “Deal.”

They walked outside, where the moon hung low and full in the sky, casting a silver glow over the city streets. Aric led her to a secluded park nearby, his posture relaxed but his eyes sharp, watching her like a predator sizing up his prey.

“So,” Lila said, breaking the tension. “Is this where you shift and howl at the moon, or is that just a stereotype?”

Aric laughed, a deep, rumbling sound. “Depends. Would it scare you off?”

Lila met his gaze, her heart pounding for reasons that had nothing to do with fear. “Not much scares me.”

“Good to know,” he murmured, stepping closer.

### **Part 3: Sparks and Secrets**

The closer he got, the more Lila’s pulse quickened. She should’ve felt intimidated, but there was something undeniably magnetic about him – something that pulled her in despite all her instincts screaming at her to run.

“So, what’s your deal?” she asked, trying to sound casual. “You don’t exactly strike me as the ‘charity auction’ type.”

Aric tilted his head, studying her. “Let’s just say I’m here against my will. Lost a bet.”

“Must’ve been some bet,” Lila quipped.

“Must’ve been,” he agreed, his eyes darkening with an intensity that made her breath hitch.

For a moment, they just stared at each other, the air between them charged with an electricity that felt almost tangible. Then, without warning, Aric reached out and brushed a strand of hair behind her ear, his touch sending a jolt through her body.

“You know,” he said softly, his voice dropping to a husky whisper, “there’s something about you that’s different.”

Lila swallowed hard, her heart racing. “Yeah? And what’s that?”

His gaze bore into hers, his lips curling into a slow, seductive smile. “You don’t run from danger. You walk right into it.”

Before she could respond, he leaned in, his breath warm against her skin. For a moment, time seemed to stand still, the world narrowing to just the two of them under the moonlight.

And then he kissed her.

It wasn't a gentle kiss. It was demanding, hungry, and Lila found herself responding with a fire she hadn't known she possessed. She gripped his shirt, pulling him closer, and he growled against her lips, a low, primal sound that sent a thrill racing through her.

When they finally broke apart, both of them were breathing hard, eyes locked in a heated gaze.

"Didn't see that coming," Lila panted.

Aric smirked. "You're not the only one who likes to take risks."

#### **Part 4: A Night to Remember**

They spent the rest of the night walking, talking, and, yes, kissing under the stars. For a brief moment in time, Lila let herself forget about all the rules and let herself enjoy the wild ride she'd unexpectedly jumped onto.

As the night faded into the early morning hours, Aric turned to her with a grin. "So, what's next, fearless human?"

Lila laughed. "Maybe we'll find out on the next full moon."

Aric's eyes twinkled with mischief. "I'll be waiting."

And with that, they parted ways, but Lila knew one thing for sure – this wouldn't be the last she saw of Aric the Untamed.

*The End*

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