

The Crimson Boy

Part I: Chapter I

Defiantly, he stood in front of the mirror. The mirror and its blankness, the mirror and its unfeeling polished surface of coated glass could not reflect his image, the face whose reflection in water he once looked upon with pride before reaching supremacy, before the dramatic change was thrust upon him. His face was a burned memory, recalled each evening during routine preparations of dressing.

The mirror and its stark absence of his image reminded him he was forever. Nine hundred and twenty-seven years of existence had transformed his face into a taciturn portrait of authority, with long, dark, arching brows highlighting an aquiline nose, the perfect complement to two, full voluptuous lips.

He slid a comb across his scalp, smoothing into his fine hair an avocado scented styling gel, resting against the sink, his chest and feet bare, wearing tailored, pleated pants, his slim waist belted.

In the anterior room, quietly, not moving, two young men waited. An oval, tapered glass rested empty on the nightstand with remnants of red droplets visible on the rim where his lips had touched.

Sir William Simon Hennessy was still very hungry. His belly absorbed the first glass in one swallow, a quick pick-up as a precursor to his nightly feedings of several pints. He stepped out of the bathroom, taking the towel off his

shoulder, damp from shaving, wiping remaining cream under his chin, before tossing it into the tub.

"Bring her to me," he ordered in a lilting voice. He turned back and walked to the dresser, slipping onto his fingers two gold rings, one crested with his family emblem and the second a square, cherry red ruby, one inch, sized to his baby finger. He had little need for watches. To the precise minute, he could accurately estimate the time of day at any given moment. Time was his perennial cloak, worn as an old, favorite, wrinkled jacket, conforming to his body. Time was the crystal clear reflection of Sir William, inescapable and eternal.

From out of the closet, he selected and put on a teal-coloured long-sleeved shirt, leaving the front buttons undone. He stepped around as the young lady was directed to lie on the bed, as a single cotton sheet was draped over her.

"Did you indulge with gusto at dinner, my dear?" inquired Sir William.

"Sure did...like the most expensive stuff on the menu...filet mignon, mussels, escargot drenched in garlic butter and cheese...God it was so fugging good...and a bottle of wine and some smoked oysters...I'm stuffed as a teddy bear. Are those guys your sons?" came her reply and subsequent rapid-fire question as she patted her stomach. Her facial make-up made her appearance three shades older.

"Devotees, you could say, and that is good, my dear, eat heartily while food is plentiful...a woman should cultivate an appetite. I am not impressed with the waif-like appearance of

today's girls, very unhealthy...and besides, if you knew this very evening was the last evening of an extraordinary life, would you not be happier going on a full stomach?"

"That's a crazy fugging thing to say, man, like why would tonight be my last night...an' my life is extraordinary?"

"Extraordinary...yes, because it is a life while it lives and breathes."

"Whatever..."

He smiled warmly at her and brushed his hand down her thigh, bending over to kiss her lips. Sir William preferred young women, twenty-one as the cut-off point and never younger than sixteen. Female blood for Sir William was the pinnacle of taste, how taste should be characterized if taste could be conceptualized with one description. To him, the blood of women was crisp and reminiscent of red raspberries, turning blandness into everything, wanting of nothing else.

A strand of hair wound around her ear, curled on her cheek. Sir William brushed it away. Her name was Hanna. At the Mercury Lounge, some four hours before closing time, she was enticed to come to Sir William's house for a party by two gorgeous men. They took their time chatting with her, until she believed she had made lifelong friends. Afterward, they insisted on dinner prior to departing the Market area, happily offering to cover her bill.

Sir William flew into the City of Ottawa on a private jet from Edinburgh, Scotland. Living quarters had been arranged prior to his arrival.

"Blood is integral to all existence," commented Sir William. Hanna looked down at her exposed nipples, and

looked back at Sir William for acknowledgement of her beauty, her youth. He only smiled. Her eyes scanned the room. The furniture was warm, thick woven dark wicker; walls painted in blushed pink with winter green carpeting. The four-poster bed overpowered the room.

"You own these digs, man?"

"Digs? Ah, you mean the house...renting," came Sir William's response.

"They've got awesome digs in Sandy Hill...like these."

"Yes, the house is suitable for my purposes," said Sir William, seated beside her, dressed, his strong upper torso prominent. Her eyes titled upward.

"Man, you smell fugging great and you've got like this totally hot body," she said as her fingers groomed his chest hair. Sir William was relaxed and ready. As was typically the case, women were delivered to him compliant and oblivious, having been plied with alcohol and the local, available chemical concoction. In the early years, he aggressively pursued prey, relishing the helpless screams and thrashing. But in later years, his much later years, he cultivated a habit of compassion for the weak and settled on gorging his appetite on what he referred to as diluted females.

"I'm feeling no pain," said Hanna with a giggle. "I glug-glugged way too much vino at the Lounge and rest' rant...and I dropped some 'E' right after and it's kickin' in, so I'm like totally blissed out...what happ'ned to th' boys?" she asked.

"They wait for us elsewhere."

"Whatever...I gotta pee, something fierce like," said Hanna. She staggered, naked, to the bathroom and plunked

her thin body on the seat, not bothering to shut the door. Sir William leaned against the bed's headboard. He watched her shoulders slouch as she urinated, a quiet stream built into a force of loud trickles, hitting the porcelain. Women fascinated Sir William, especially the young who had few inhibitions and even fewer expectations. He was content to watch. Waiting was neither an effort nor a bore for him. He waited until she flushed, buttoning his shirt, gradually working upward, closing the holes mindlessly, then slipped into a pair of blended wool, black socks.

"Do not forget to wash your hands," he reminded. Hanna giggled. He heard the faucet come on and splashing as she washed up, grabbing the towel and drying her hands before re-entering the room. Sir William noticed the towel was left eschew on the rack.

"Care to take a short walk to the basement with me?" suggested Sir William.

"But I'm totally buck naked, man," came Hanna's reply.

"Mmm, and a fine body you do possess...all the more reason why I want you and your youthful nakedness to join me."

"If that's where the party is, that's where I'm goin'," said Hanna. The alcohol and pill had worked their magic, slurring her speech and dulling her thinking. Her glassy eyes amused Sir William as he stood up from the bed, holding out his arm. Hanna gave him her hand as he walked in front. She patted his bum, laughing.

"Fer an ol' guy you're fugging hot to look at," observed Hanna.

"That is very kind of you to say so again. I have never thought of myself as old, however. When speaking of age, I prefer to use the terms evolved or refined."

"Refined...yeah, that's what I should say to mom and dad...they're refined, not old...like, how refined are you?"

"Precisely?" asked Sir William, turning back his head.

"Give or take a few years," she replied.

"Nine hundred and twenty-seven years." Hanna roared with disbelief.

"Come on, man, tell the truth. You like close to sixty, maybe?"

"Nine hundred and twenty-seven years, to be exact. In seventy-three years I will reach the milestone of one thousand...who counts after the first thousand years?"

"You're too funny, man. Don't sweat it, tho', I don't care if you're old enough to be my ol' man," came Hanna's reassurance. "I like old fellers...they're easier to please." She teetered as they entered the short hallway, wobbling to the outer basement door. Sir William opened the door and motioned her to go in ahead.

"After you, my dear."

"Why thank you, kind Sir," she mockingly replied, still laughing, unaware as to what awaited her down below.

The damp, cold basement closed in tightly like a clenched fist, with narrow, claustrophobic cement walls, retaining dampness and darkness. The oak wood floor was old and scratched and worn, and creaked with every step, making it impossible to skulk unbeknownst. Empty Jack Daniels

bottles, from top counter to ceiling, lined a sturdy rosewood bar; with full bottles of unopened wine and cases of beer stacked on either side. Clean goblets and beer mugs hung from curved hooks above an old-style Coca-Cola mirror, promoting the benefits of consuming a smooth and refreshing drink. Sir William avoided standing in front of the mirror.

"Wow, man...like you've got a shit load of booze to party with...right on!"

"Red wine or beer, my dear?" asked Sir William.

"Both fer sure," came Hanna's slurred reply. "My bro' says I'm not suppos'd to mix hops with the grape but I could give a flying fugg 'cause alcohol doesn't affect me the way it fuggs up my girlfriends." Sir William wasn't impressed by her vulgar speech. Saying nothing, he smiled and walked around the bar.

"Sit, my dear...over there...on the leather chair."

She plunked her naked body into the chair as Sir William uncorked a bottle. Hanna didn't notice the men standing quietly in the corner. Neither moved.

"What happ'ned to those hot boys, man?" she asked.

"Right behind you," said Sir William. Hanna turned, leaning out of the chair, twisting her body around to look. She couldn't focus.

"It's too fugging dark, man." A switch clicked on and the brightness forced Hanna to squint tightly until her sight became clear.

"Oh, man, there you guys are...why the fugg are you hiding?" Saying nothing, they looked to Sir William for guidance.

"They will not address you until I say so," pointed out Sir William.

"Why the fugg not?"

"Because, my dear, your purpose is to attend to me now that half of their role has been successfully completed." She took a moment to consider his words with a foggy mind. She turned her head away.

"Whatever, man...it's your fugging party."

Hanna could not see her, could not glimpse the prone body laying on the floor behind the bar, the dead, desiccated body of a young woman whose head was twisted behind her back with mouth agape in exclamation and eyes frozen into holes of horror. One clean puncture to her arm was evidently fresh. Sir William remained inside the bar as he poured a healthy serving of wine. He stepped out from behind and handed Hanna the full goblet. She brushed the crotch of his pants, giggling.

"Like...do you expect me to suck you off or something like?"

"I screw women blind," Sir William said pointedly. Hanna laughed.

"Ya mean a fugg from you and women can't see any more?" she qualified.

"In a manner of speaking...that is correct," answered Sir William.

"Yeah, right. You guys are all alike...think you're God's gift to women just 'cause your dicks get hard." The combination of alcohol and chemical obliterated all pretence with Hanna. Her head tilted downward, heavy and laden by

the combined effects of both substances. Sir William helped steady her glass.

"I do not jest," said Sir William. "If I were to have intercourse with you, here and now, you would undoubtedly receive the best screwing of your life but unfortunately you would be rendered helplessly blind after the deed was over."

Hanna laughed as she gulped; her raucous laughter hit the low ceiling and bounced off the surrounding walls, reverberating in Sir William's ears. Wine snorted out of her nose, the remaining spilling onto her breasts. Sir William laughed along. He looked at the men whose eyes registered the thrill that was to come. Still, they would not speak or move. Neither appeared to be breathing.

"Even when plastered, there is sublime beauty to be appreciated in the naked female form...you would put many women to shame by yours."

"Whadd'ya say?" asked Hanna. She downed the remaining wine, and tilted the goblet upside down for the last droplets, dribbling them on to her extended tongue.

"Pay attention, my dear. I said you are beautiful. Was your mother or father from the Philippines?"

"Yeah, man, how'd you guess? Mom's a Phlip and dad's a Brit."

"I have a good eye for heritage. Women...young women are my specialty, you see. I am particularly enamoured with females and to-date I have indulged, so to speak, in one female of each race, with the exception of some of the surrounding islands in the South Pacific...I'm not fond of competing with

cannibals...albeit the few tribes that remain as active cannibals in this day and age," said Sir William with a sardonic smile.

Hanna was close to passing out. His words did not register. Sir William wanted her lucid. He held the back of her head, sternly smacking her cheek with an open palm, startling her to consciousness. "Fugg off, man! That stung."

"Yes, that was my intention, to shake you awake," said Sir William.

"Are we going to fugg or do I have to beg your boys?" Sir William glanced back. Both men smiled, standing at attention, their hands and arms straight against their bodies, intently observing.

"Are you feeling more alert?"

"After your whack, yeah...hit me again mother fegger and I'll kick the crap out of you." He thought her aggressiveness delightful. He wanted to continue engaging her in conversation. Sir William was a master conversationalist, able to converse in over fifty languages. The change for him resulted in developing a facility for language, notwithstanding acquiring immortality and extra-sensory abilities.

"My dear, allow me the pleasure of offering you the benefit of choosing between two options. For the first, you may enjoy the bodies of my devotees, either one or both, which I have no doubt will also be to their gratified enjoyment, after which you and I shall dance the eternal dance. Or two, you may forego indulging in these fine, young men and move straight to me. However, I should point out the first option guarantees satisfaction and I strongly recommend taking what pleasure there is to offer before the

inevitable arrives." Hanna said nothing. She looked into her empty glass and turned it over.

"Does anyone want an empty glass?" asked Hanna.

Sir William smiled. He was impressed with her surly attitude and spunk. He rose from his kneeling position and returned to the bar. As he stepped behind, he glanced at the lifeless woman. He stopped and observed the pallid colour of her cheeks and how the contrast brought out the brilliance all the more with blood dried on her flesh. Flashing back, he remembered how she struggled, and got loose, panicked and made a valiant effort to escape, enticing Sir William to break her neck.

Hanna was not afraid or visibly perplexed by the scene. Sir William thought it amusing she could not comprehend the awaiting danger. He continued to learn and adapt to the societal changes of the human species, particularly the drastic changes to females in the last one hundred years. Sir William mused that if he were a woman of Hanna's youth and beauty, he would not accept any form of gratuity from two, anonymous men, regardless of their attentive or giving natures. He looked hard at Hanna and accepted with equanimity that it was already too late for her.