

**“One Bad Night: Carly’s Story”**  
**Written and Copyright by Anna Abner**

~~~This story takes place after [Spellspeaker’s Prophecy #2](#)~~~

Carly Alvah was having a bad night.

Gaining consciousness in an ambulance headed for a Las Vegas hospital wasn’t even the worst of it. Because when she came to, she remembered everything – the overgrown bear shifter named Lukas Larsson she’d been running from, his beefy hand clamped around her throat, and oxygen becoming a limited commodity. That son of a bitch had snuffed her out. *Her*. Like he had any right to raise his eyes off the ground in her presence, let alone put his dirty hands on her.

She was a goddess among mortals, a monster, a blood-worshipping *vampire*, for God’s sake.

Speaking of...

Carly quickly took stock of her current situation. She lay in an undignified sprawl upon a gurney inside a smelly ambulance. A bored EMT swayed beside her with every bump and roll of the vehicle.

“You’re okay,” the man said. “Take it easy.”

Not going to happen. She needed to return to her minions among the Four Sons. *Now*.

She sat up, tearing at the blood pressure cuff around her arm and the oxygen cannula in her nose.

“Nope.” The EMT sighed in annoyance. “Lie back. We’re almost to the ER.” He pressed on her chest and, with an embarrassingly small amount of force, held her flat to the gurney.

She snarled and attacked, striking like a cobra for the tender, blood-infused flesh below his jaw.

Rather than eat his throat out and bathe in a gush of warm, slick blood, Carly lurched half off the gurney and landed with her head in the EMT's lap.

What the hell?

Had she been drugged? Lobotomized? Where were her enhanced speed, strength, and senses? Come to think of it—she ran the tip of her tongue along her teeth—she had no fangs, either.

Stunned, Carly allowed the EMT to settle her back onto the gurney and reattach the cuff and cannula, clucking under his breath the whole time.

*What was happening?*

"What did you give me?" she demanded. God, even her voice sounded pathetic.

"Nothing," he said. "But you were unconscious when we found you. Do you remember what happened?"

"Where did you find me?" she asked, narrowing her eyes.

"In a white van. Is that ringing any bells?"

That tricky, tricky shifter. He must have dosed her with something debilitating and dumped her back in her own vehicle. She'd be tempted to ride out this little annoyance, but she couldn't let anyone draw and test her blood. They'd discover she was infected with vampirism and she'd never see daylight again. The US Army, in particular, was known for imprisoning and experimenting on infecteds indefinitely.

She had an empire to run. She was too powerful for captivity.

The ambulance slowed to a stop and, before she knew what was happening, the doors were open, her gurney was in motion, and she was whisked against her will down a wide corridor lined with ill humans and medical equipment.

"No," she complained. "I'm fine." Her enhanced healing abilities would take care of any lingering damage the shifter had caused in short order. She didn't need help, she needed out. "I can leave."

Carly sat up and attempted to leap from the gurney to land like a cat before sprinting away. The reality was much more humbling. Again, she reeled forward and a firm grip held her down.

"No," she repeated, struggling. "Don't touch me. I'm fine."

A restraint latched around her left wrist, another around her right. "Settle down, honey, we're only trying to help."

"Fuck you," she screamed. "I'll eat your heart. I'll swim in your blood."

"No one's going to hurt you," a calm voice instructed.

She fought so hard against the restraints, her back bowed off the gurney. God damn it, she hadn't felt so helpless in years. "I'll kill you all," she bellowed. "I'm a vampire queen, you bitches. I'll eat every single one of you."

"Five of Haldol," another voice directed. "Call for a psych eval when she wakes up."

Carly was asleep before she knew she'd been pricked with a needle.

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This time, when Carly woke up, she understood the irritating situation she was in. Somehow, the shifter Lukas Larsson had taken away her vampire powers. They had to return soon. The infection flooding her system would put her back to normal in no time at all.

Carly tested her right restraint. She sensed it was a fraction looser than the other. She worked at the cuff. Little by little, her hand slipped out. Her thumb ached in pain, and the muscles in her arm quivered in fatigue, but she made progress.

Her right thumb dislocated, and her wrist slid free as a man carrying a clipboard close to his extended belly barged right into her curtained space. Carly cocked her hip to the side, concealing her free hand.

"Hello, young lady," he greeted with a sickly sweet smile. "How are you feeling?" He checked his notes. "I'm Dr. Wayne, who do I have the pleasure of speaking with?" He waited, pen poised for her response.

"Get. Me. Out. Of. Here." She rattled her remaining restraint. "I'm not injured. I'm fine."

A little disappointed, he straightened. "I heard you were shouting about being a vampire."

"Are you deaf?"

He talked on as if he hadn't heard her. "First thing you should know, your blood was taken and tested by the hospital. You definitely do not have the vampire infection. I promise you that. So, why don't you tell me why you *thought* you were infected?"

Finally, reality struck Carly, and she couldn't respond. The shifter hadn't dampened the infection. The bastard had *cured* it.

She blinked numbly at the well-meaning staff member. "You're sure?"

The man seemed relieved he'd broken through her psychosis. "Absolutely, one hundred percent certain."

"You tested my blood for vampirism?" she repeated.

It couldn't be true. There was no cure.

Yet, it made sense. It explained her sudden weakness and the departure of her fangs. It explained everything.

Lukas had had a witch with him. Maybe... Could she...?

"The government," Dr. Wayne told her, "has mandated testing of all drawn blood for vampirism since the early two thousands when several stray infecteds popped up in U.S. hospitals. It's done automatically anytime blood is sent to the lab, and you tested negative for vampirism." He eyed her carefully. "Does that surprise you?"

No. Carly was more pissed than surprised. She barely controlled her rage enough to nod politely. Sanely. "I must have hit my head," she said through gritted teeth. "I was confused. I thought I was infected, but I can see that I was wrong." She forced a sneer of a smile. "I feel much better now."

"I'm glad to hear that." He didn't buy her act at all. In fact, he pulled up a chair and settled in. "Let's talk about why you thought you were infected."

Twenty-four hours ago, she'd have torn these restraints from their anchors and shoved them down the good doctor's throat. But then she'd come across Lukas Larsson, and now she was practically helpless.

Not completely helpless, only *practically*.

She discreetly scanned the room, searching out potential weapons. Not much. A plastic jug of water. The chair the man sat in. The sheet curled around her hips. But

Carly was creative, and she'd had lots of experience killing on the spur. She settled on the IV tubing connected to her arm via a needle.

Carly ripped off the final restraint, and a split second later, the doctor realized she was free. As he struggled upright in surprise, Carly launched herself onto the doctor's chest. She wrapped the tubing around his throat twice and yanked, silencing any attempted call for help and pinching off his air supply. They tumbled to the floor. He tried to kick the chair over to attract passerby, but Carly merely doubled the tubing around her forearm. She glanced at the IV pole that had fallen across the doctor's chest. A nice heavy weapon all its own.

Sneering, she leaned back on the crass garrote, refusing to be fought off until the man went first stiff and then limp. Even then, she waited another fifteen seconds before climbing to her feet and taking the IV stand in hand. Sore thumb be damned, she slammed the base into the doctor's face until his nose broke, his lips split, and one eyelid ripped away.

Alive with adrenalin, Carly swiped a hand through his bloodied face, and licked her fingers clean. Blood still ruled her, vampire or not.

Her heart pounding, she ran for it. Screw any further deception or subterfuge. She simply wanted out.

Through doors, down hallways, and finally into a loading bay. She was free.

And she knew exactly who to punish first.

**The End**

Lukas, Carly, and Roz's story continues in [\*Spellspeaker's Prophecy \(Beasts of Vegas #2\)\*](#).

Find it and more on Anna's [Beasts of Vegas series](#) page!