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The Vampire Bikini

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Introduction

There are beaches everyone knows—miles of sand, laughter under the sun, and the endless rhythm of the tide. But there are also secret beaches, the kind whispered about behind closed doors, where the water hides its true face until twilight. This story begins on such a shore, where the ordinary intermingles with the extraordinary, and something ancient stirs beneath the waves.

On the surface, “The Vampire Bikini” is the tale of a restless summer on Ocean Lane—a boardwalk town whose neon paints over weather-beaten secrets. Tourists drift in, popcorn in hand, believing in the endlessness of youthful nights. Yet, within the laughter and music, an undercurrent persists: an ache for danger, adventure, and belonging that draws the lost, the wild, and those who hunger for more than sunlight.

This novel weaves together the allure of summer and the pull of the supernatural. At its heart stands a girl, a cursed bikini, and a group of friends navigating a world transformed by blood-red tides. Here, every suntan line traces the boundary between mortality and immortality. Every dark corner harbors the possibility of a bite, a promise, or an ending.

“The Vampire Bikini” is fiction—born from the fusion of horror and hope, romance and mischief, the known and the unknowable. It invites readers to question what hides beyond the brightness of the day and what emerges when the music fades and the shadows lengthen. Each chapter uncovers another layer, not just of the town’s mysteries, but of the characters’ own fears and desires.

To step into this story is to be carried away on fragrant, salt-sticky breezes; to linger at the edge of the water, unsure whether to run or to dive in. This is a place where night swims are never quite what they seem—and where the hottest item on the shore might not just be the latest summer trend, but a key to a world more terrifying, and beautiful, than anyone on Ocean Lane ever imagined. Welcome to the beach where the sun may rise, but darkness always finds a way in.

CHAPTER ONE: The Red Tides

The salt air of Ocean Lane had a particular tang on this late June afternoon, a subtle hint of something more than just iodine and ozone. It was a faint metallic whisper, almost imperceptible unless you were looking for it, or rather, feeling for it. Most tourists, oblivious and sunscreen-slathered, just inhaled the promise of a perfect summer.

Chloe Thorne, however, was not most tourists. She stood at the edge of the water, a solitary figure against the relentless expanse of the Atlantic, her toes sinking into the damp sand. The waves, usually a dazzling turquoise or a deep, placid blue, were different today. A faint, unsettling blush stained the edges of the foam, like watercolor bleeding from a forgotten painting.

“Red tide,” an elderly fisherman, Midge, muttered as he reeled in an empty line a few yards down. He didn’t bother to look at Chloe, his gaze fixed on the horizon, where the setting sun began its slow descent, painting the sky in fiery oranges and purples that seemed to mock the ocean’s unusual hue. “Happens sometimes. Just algae bloom. Nothing to worry about.”

But Midge’s voice lacked conviction. His gnarled hands, usually steady as he untangled knots, trembled slightly. Chloe knew Midge had seen a lot of red tides in his seventy-odd years on Ocean Lane, and this one felt... different. It wasn’t the vibrant, almost sickening crimson of typical algal blooms. This was a deeper, richer red, like vintage wine spilled on a pale tablecloth.

She bent down, letting a handful of the tainted water run through her fingers. It felt thicker, almost viscous, and left a strange, ephemeral stain on her skin that vanished as quickly as it appeared. A shiver, not from the cool breeze, traced its way up her spine.

“Freaky, right?” A voice chirped beside her, and Chloe jumped, nearly dropping the handful of water. It was Lily, her best friend, who had a knack for appearing silently and always at the most inopportune moments. Lily’s bright pink beach towel was slung over her shoulder, a testament to her eternal optimism.

“You scared the life out of me,” Chloe said, shaking her head.

Lily grinned, her blonde hair catching the last rays of sunlight. “That’s what I do. But seriously, what is up with the water? It’s like the ocean decided to go Goth for the summer.”

Chloe managed a weak smile. "Midge says it's a red tide."

"Midge says a lot of things," Lily countered, then lowered her voice. "Remember last summer when he swore he saw a mermaid with a glow-in-the-dark tail?"

They both chuckled, but the laughter died quickly as their eyes returned to the water. The red was becoming more pronounced, a subtle stain that seemed to deepen with the fading light. Families who had been splashing happily just an hour ago were now packing up their gear, their voices hushed, their movements quicker.

"Think it's safe to swim?" Lily asked, her usual bravado tinged with uncertainty.

Chloe hesitated. She loved the ocean, the feeling of weightlessness, the cool embrace of the waves. But something about this red tide felt wrong, a premonition buzzing in her bones. "I don't know. Maybe we should just stick to the boardwalk tonight."

Lily sighed dramatically. "Fine. But if I don't get my usual dose of ocean salt, I might just spontaneously combust from lack of Vitamin Sea."

They started walking back towards the bustling boardwalk, the rhythmic clang of arcade games and the distant thrum of a live band slowly replacing the whispers of the waves. As they walked, Chloe glanced back at the ocean one last time. The red was almost luminous now, reflecting the amber glow of the streetlights that were beginning to flicker on.

A lone figure stood at the water's edge, much like Chloe had been moments before. It was a girl, slender and tall, with a cascade of dark hair that seemed to absorb the fading light. She wore a simple, dark bikini that somehow stood out against the vibrant hues of the sunset. She wasn't looking at the red tide with concern, but with a strange, almost hungry fascination.

Chloe nudged Lily. "Hey, look."

Lily followed her gaze. "Who's that? New around here?"

The girl turned, and even from a distance, Chloe could feel the intensity of her gaze. Her eyes were an unusual shade, not quite brown, not quite black, but something in between, like polished obsidian. A faint, almost imperceptible smile played on her lips, and then she turned back to the water, her silhouette stark against the deepening red.

"Never seen her before," Chloe mumbled. Ocean Lane was a small town, especially for year-round residents like them. New faces usually made a splash, especially one as striking as this girl.

“Maybe she’s a vampire tourist,” Lily joked, clearly trying to lighten the mood. “Came for the... red tides.”

Chloe didn’t laugh. A strange chill had settled over her, a feeling that went beyond the cool evening air. The red tide wasn't just algae; she was certain of it. And that girl by the water... there was something about her that pulled at Chloe, a dangerous curiosity that defied logic.

As they reached the lively boardwalk, the scent of sugary funnel cakes and greasy fries replaced the metallic tang of the ocean. The sounds of laughter and music were a welcome distraction, a familiar comfort. But even amidst the cheerful chaos, Chloe couldn’t shake the image of the crimson waves and the dark-haired girl who seemed so at home in their unsettling glow.

The sun finally dipped below the horizon, and with it, the red in the water intensified, a silent, creeping invasion. The last golden light of day shimmered on its surface, transforming the familiar coastline into something otherworldly. It was a beautiful, terrifying sight, a prelude to a summer that promised to be anything but ordinary.

Chloe knew, with a certainty that settled deep in her gut, that Ocean Lane was about to change. The red tides were just the beginning.

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