

Auren POV

I knew that James Vincent didn't think much of me the moment I shifted. And I also knew that wolves respected strength and dominance. I had to prove that yet. Seeing his wolf, I can't say that I wasn't afraid, but a tendril of thought trickled in my mind through our mate bond in which Damon reassured me that I could do it.

I was sure that if I won, I would not take the Alpha's position, but I would demand James' banishment from my pack. Yes, it was my pack. I had to stand up for its people. High time.

James lunged at me and slammed me into the ground. I was beneath him but on an instant thought, I bit him on his chest. He whimpered and stumbled and I got the chance to get up. Without wasting time, I slammed into him with all the force I could conjure. There were grunts and growls as James went down, sliding on the wet mud some ten feet away. I didn't lose time and I leapt in the air to attack him. James had enough time to get up and face me with shock in his eyes.

He appeared shocked when I had shifted for the first time. He had never expected it because Hilda had convinced him thoroughly. She had brain washed him and I knew that James was a gone case. I had sensed that all he looked at me was like a challenge. He felt threatened. I smelled his fear and his hatred. He seemed to convey to me that he would never allow me, his son's daughter, a weakling, to ascend to his throne. And I had to prove him wrong. At any cost.

Seeing that I was a golden wolf, which was extremely rare, he still didn't melt. Yes, golden wolves were rare. There were no golden wolves in all of America. I don't know what my specialty was, but I was going to find it in time. If James wanted, he would have used me to his advantage just by being nice to me. We would have been a strong team. But then I reminded myself that he killed my mother and set my father on a wild goose chase.

He leapt in the air, shifted into his human form and punched me hard on my face the moment he landed. I howled at the impact as blood splattered and I tasted metal. So he had resorted to cheating? Well, good he broke the rule, because I wasn't going to stick to it now.

He stood there with his muscles bulging as he glared at me with pure loath. "I am going to kill you, mutt!" he growled. "Even if that means that your mate will kill me."

I think James had crossed the edge of sanity. He was officially insane, blinded by his ego and hubris. He charged at me all over again but instead of confronting him, I dodged. He grunted as he fell to the ground. The next moment he got up and leapt in the air, shifting all over again to attack me. I moved from his path and he landed on his paws. With a frustrated growl, he turned and dashed at me with his claws in the front, but I sidestepped, evading him.

The evading part carried on for the next twenty minutes and I was surprised that James didn't understand what I was doing. He continued to attack me until he was tired. His wolf panted as he lifted his face with his lips peeled back to glare at me. Saliva dripped from his tongue and I knew that he was exhausted. His

eyes went to Hilda who was watching us both with fear in her eyes and demeanor. As for Sinclair, he was trembling.

I focused my attention on the wolf that I had to defeat. I grazed the earth with my front paw's sharp claws, stones and mud flying in its wake, as I lowered my head. With a snarl I exposed my canines and then I lunged at him. James was too slow for me. I aimed at his neck and sank my fangs in his flesh, tasting the blood. I heard a loud whine but I continued to sink my fangs in his neck until I reached his bones. There was no stopping now. I snapped my jaw together and then with a ferocious snarl, I twisted his neck in a way that it severed from his body. Blood sprouted like a fountain, bathing me in its wake. James Vincent lay dead on my feet.

Hilda cried as Sinclair scrambled back, shocked at the very sight. I lifted my head to see them. They were of no significance to me now. The reign of terror was over. I had won and now I would reclaim my pack.

I picked up the head of James Vincent and slowly padded my way to my mate. I dropped the severed head to his feet as my offering. Damon sank on his knees on the ground. He caught my face, his fingers digging in my fur. He brought me close to him and hugged me, wrapping his arms around my neck. "I am so proud of you, Poppy," he murmured. "I am so proud of you!"

I let out a whimper and gave Poppy the way. My bones rearranged and Poppy hugged her mate closer, tighter. She was shaking. Damon picked her up in his arms and nodded at Anna.

Anna smiled. She snapped her fingers. Strong winds whirled around us and moments later we were back in the temple of the Moon Goddess with James Vincent's head.

Anna didn't get his body back because like I said earlier — she loved the drama.

Hilda and Sinclair stood somewhere out there, surrounded by the wolves of the pack. The pack that Poppy had reclaimed.

Damon released Poppy from his embrace. She picked up the head of James Vincent and held it high in the air for everyone to see that she had returned. There were loud howls as all the pack members sank on their knees to the ground and acknowledged Poppy as their Alpha.

Everything was going well until what Hilda did next.

I think Auren deserved her POV here.