

## Poppy POV

After the Shaman had announced me as the Alpha of the Shadow pack, the first thing I did was to go and see where Hilda and Sinclair were lodged. They were in the dungeons that had a bed of hay and a toilet. I ordered them to be moved to a worse place. In their current dungeons, they had to sleep on damp and cold stone floors and a bucket was given to them for toilet purposes.

“Poppy!” Hilda yelled as I started to leave after seeing that she was in those dungeons. “You are going to regret this! You think that by putting us behind the dungeons, you have punished us. But no. The ball has only begun to roll and you will come under it sooner or later. When that happens, I will be here waiting for you!”

I narrowed my eyes as I turned to her. “Who says that I am going to keep you alive for so long?” I crossed my arms across my chest as I tilted my head. “I am going to kill you, very slowly and very painfully and I am going to enjoy seeing you suffer. I am sure you already know how the feeling is? Don’t you?”

She growled at me as she threw her hands out of the bar, her claws protruding sharply.

“Save them Hilda,” I said in a cold voice. “Who knows they are here today and gone tomorrow? Why don’t you take a good look at your son?”

"Poppppyy!" she shouted. "You are going to pay for this. Both you and your mate. You have set something very big in motion and they are coming for you!"

I chuckled and soon my chuckle morphed into a full-fledged laughter. "You are so funny, Hilda." I took a lazy breath in. "You think I am afraid of your threats? You know what you should do?" I raised my eyebrow to mock her state. "Count your days of living on this planet." Saying that I spun on my heels and walked out of the dungeons even as she shouted and screamed. On my way out, I ordered the prison in-charge to turn off the lights. She should stay in the darkness that she had created around me. I was going to make her life darker than the night sky. And I am going to make Sinclair watch her slipping into that darkness. Or the other way round.

The pack needed a lot of reforming. The population had dwindled to just a little over one hundred. It was a small pack as compared to the Umbra pack, but it was my pack and I felt responsible for it.

I asked the existing council members to arrange for a meeting as soon as possible. When I was in the house, I realized that it had started crumbling in many places. Where was all the money my grandfather made? I knew he was in several businesses across the packs. So what were those businesses and what about their profits or losses.

The only place where I could uncover his secrets was his office which he kept closed always and only Axl was allowed to get inside it without restraint. Even I had to make an appointment to meet him.



"Poppy," Damon called me as I was going to his office. He had taken a bath and shaved. He was wearing black jeans with a light blue shirt whose buttons were open till chest and the sleeves were rolled to expose his muscular arms. Goddess, he was so handsome. "Where are you going?" he asked as he intertwined his fingers with mine. He leaned over and pressed a kiss on my forehead.

After we had come back to the house, I had slept for so long that Damon laughed when I woke up. It was 2 PM in the afternoon. After that I took a bath and went to the dungeons.

"I was going to James Vincent's office," I replied, closing my eyes as I reveled in his kiss, his nearness.

"Why do you call him by his name?"

"He lost all respect from me when he confessed that he had killed my mother."

"Oh Poppy!" Damon pulled me closer to his chest, embracing me tightly. "I am so sorry."

"It's fine... I just hope to find my father, only if..." A shudder passed through my body.

He curled his fingers beneath my chin and tipped my face up. "I know you want to find him, Poppy but don't keep your hopes high..."

I nodded. I knew that if a mate died, the other one followed him or her to the Fade. That's how mates were. Their souls were tangled in the most complicated manner. "Would you like to come with me to the office?"

"Sure," he replied, releasing me.

As we walked to James Vincent's office, I asked, "Where is Anna? And what about our return to the Umbra pack? They must be looking for both of us."

"Anna returned to the house just before the sunrise. She had turned two people into rats during a drunken brawl. So I had to plead with her to release them from her magic!" Damon said, shaking his head. "She is a spoiled brat!"

I couldn't help laughing at my friend, but I had to ask her to stop using magic on my people. Although I have to admit that it felt heady to have powerful people around me. I think I was going to call her coven sisters here for a party.

Damon continued, "I have already informed my mother that we will be coming two days later. I have already sent Killian back."

"She must be mad," I muttered. I was sure that Mary must be seething because we got married only yesterday and today, I was here, claiming my pack.

"Not at all!" Damon winked. "In fact, she said that she was very proud of you. Having the Shadow pack as an ally is something

big.”

I chortled. “Cheeky!” I smacked his arm in humor.

“Hey, that’s the truth!”

We reached the office and as soon as I opened the door, memories of my last meeting with James flooded and along with them a sliver of something that I would term as... vision.