

Poppy POV

I walked to the balcony, not wanting to stand in the same space as Damon. When he had left with Monica, I felt jealous, but I shoved that emotion down because I think I was getting interested in someone who was a playboy and just not my cup of tea. He was the heartthrob of every girl in the campus and every girl was infatuated by him.

"What are you thinking?" Gandal asked with a smile as he gave me the wine glass and offered me a stick of grapes and cheese.

There were other couples who were chatting around us, but their sound faded in the background because I was hyper-aware of Damon's presence.

"Nothing," I said, tucking my hair behind my ear. And even as I said that, my gaze went to Damon who was standing on the other side of the tinted glass of the balcony. His shirt clung to every defined muscle and his jeans hugged his thighs making them look more solid. His sculpted shoulders were so broad. With the way he was standing, his gait was more arrogant. It consumed the space. Every girl out there was competing to gain his attention.

He was looking straight at me as if piercing through the glass and the dark of the night. His arctic blue eyes turned flinty.

My face blazed. Maybe, it was the heat in the air that was muddling my brain. And with every passing second, it was becoming more humid. Where was Anna? She said she would be around me, but the moment Gandal promised her that he would be at my side, she disappeared.

"It's a beautiful night," Gandal said as he removed his jacket. "It will get chillier. You should wear this."

Chillier? A flash of heat crossed through me. I was sure it was at least ninety degrees here. "I am feeling hot," I said and instantly realized my mistake. "I mean the weather is hot."



Gandal laughed. "I am not sure about the weather, but you look hot."

My cheeks heated till my ears. I glanced at the other shifter females and saw some of them brushing their arms or snuggling in the arms of their males. And me—I pressed my legs tightly as sweat dribbled them down and also trickled down the back of my knees. I don't know what was going wrong, but I wondered if I was having a fever. Please Moon Goddess, not now. I have to escape tomorrow.

"I heard what happened at the combat class that you all had jointly with the final year students," Gandal was doing his best to further the conversation.

I lowered my head and then looked away. Not my best day.

"Hey!" he said, placing his hand on mine. "It doesn't matter. It's not the end of the world. You are suspended only for two days."

I rubbed my neck. "It wasn't my fault..." I said in a low voice. "I didn't even punch her on the face."

The frown of doubt on his face was enough to tell me that he didn't believe me. "There were cameras everywhere, Poppy."

I pursed my lips. There was no way to prove my innocence. Not that I cared, but I didn't like that no one trusted me. The moon was rising very slowly in the sky and I wanted to expose my heated skin to bask in the moonlight. I felt like running down the woods, naked. I peaked at Damon who was now slowly coming out towards the balcony, staring at me.

Suddenly heat burst from my core and traveled all the way down to my limbs. I held onto the wine glass as if holding for my dear life. Was he coming to me? Couldn't be. He must be mad at me. Or it was possible that he wanted to scold me here, in front of everyone. Goddess, that would be so embarrassing. I hid behind the wide frame of Gandal.

I was extremely focused on the wine glass, not even knowing what color wine was

inside it. My cheeks burned and my heart thumped in my ears. There was a sudden ache at the apex of my thighs.

I licked my dry lips and brought the wine glass to my lips. I didn't want to sound rude and so I turned my attention to Gandal. "So what are your subjects? Let me guess... sociology and political science."

"Business major."

My eyes went wide. He shrugged. This guy was intelligent. "But you are the heir of Norse Pack. I mean, you should..." my voice trailed off.

He chuckled and sipped his wine. "My father was very clear. I could take whatever subject I liked in the academy, but eventually I had to come back and rule the pack."

"So you will be majoring in business apart from all that combat, history and psychology classes?"

"I will."

"That's impressive."

"And you?"

I will be running away. "The usual," I sighed. I couldn't help but peek out of the corner of my eye and found him on the door of the balcony. He looked so pissed. His chest was rising and panting beneath that black sleeveless shirt, stretching its fiber as he breathed. Just watching him breathing was mesmerizing.

"But what are you really interested in?" he asked, snapping me out of my reverie.

I chuckled. "Agriculture."

"That is a niche choice," he sat sweetly. "I don't know when the party gets over, but would you mind if I take you back home?"

"I—" I knew what he meant, but suddenly, the air became thicker with tension. I looked



up and found Damon standing behind Gandal. I became absolutely still. The tension was so thick that it scraped on my skin. The ache in my belly increased. My lips parted.

In Damon's presence I felt tipsy. How was this possible? I inhaled deeply, hoping to shake off the weird sensations running inside my body but then his decadent scent rushed in my lungs. A surge of anxiety mixed with thrill shot in my blood, making the heat in my body rising up and cresting. It crashed through me so wildly that it punched the air out of me.

Gandal looked behind him and jerked his head back in surprise. "Damon!" he said, a little surprised.

Damon crossed his arms against his chest and came to stand beside him, glaring at me, ignoring Gandal completely. His biceps seemed to bulge and a muscle feathered in his jaw.

"Man, it wasn't her fault," Gandal said, trying to protect me. His nervousness was pretty apparent as he shifted on his feet. "Whatever happened in the joint training session was a matter of chance."

Was Damon here to punish me, humiliate me? He inhaled deeply and his eyes flickered amber as if his wolf was trying to push out.

My mind went blank.