

Damon POV

"Damon, what am I hearing?" Monica said to be, her voice sharper than I liked. "How could you place a bet for her? Do you know how this will blow? We are betrothed to each other and your action today is going to be detrimental. I won't be able to stop the rumor mill!"

I stepped nearer to her with a rumble that was trapped in my chest for a long time. Her expression of anger changed that to defiance. I could hear her increased heartbeat and I could smell her fear.

"Damon?" she said in a low voice. "What—" She gulped when I lifted her hand with mine.

Very slowly I opened her palm and caressed the skin inside. "Your hands need rest, I think," I said in a voice that was close to lethal.

She gulped as her fear heightened. She tried to snatch her hand away from me, but I stopped her. "Damon, let us just sit and talk to each other about the problem that you are facing." She pointed at a lonely table in the corner.

There was a small crowd left in the basement. They were hovering around the cage, laughing, drinking and making

bawdy jokes. When I looked at them, they became quiet. Some of them left. I saw Monica's friends, Gloria and Nancy. They were sitting quietly on one of the tables, staring at us. Joey was with Killian who was counting money. I wasn't interested in the money because I had won the bet for what it was worth.

"No, we can talk here as well," I replied with the same lethal voice.

She placed her hand on her hips and said, "Then you better listen to me, Damon. What you have done has tarnished my reputation. You are so immature that you go around taking decisions of fighting against Alpha heirs like Gandal for that wolf-less bitch, Poppy? You have insulted me to a level that I am forced to think about breaking our engagement!" Her chest was rising and falling as I continued to see her fingers and trailed my thumb over their outline. "You better stop this nonsense, throw her out of your apartment and apologize to me and then only I will come back!"

"Who said that I want you to come back?" I said, maintaining my low tone as I gazed into her eyes.

Her eyes became wide as she gasped. "Wh— What? Excuse me?" She couldn't believe what I said to her. Good. "I am going to tell it to your parents," she threatened. "I will not accept this nonsense. How dare you treat me like trash?"

"Do I look like I care, Monica?" I said and then closed her

hand in mine.

She jerked her head back in disbelief. "Damon!" she said, her body trembling under my stern glare. "You can't say those words to me. I am your fiancée. I know you care for me. That girl is just a small distraction. We are both going to get over it."

I masked my surprise of how soon she changed her demeanor. Just a moment ago she said that she didn't want to be treated like trash, and now she was saying that she wanted to get over this distraction of mine. "That girl is not a distraction," I growled, hating the word.

"Then are you serious?" she said, not believing me. "You can't be! Your family wanted me to marry you. What are they going to say if you marry her? This is going to be such a scandal!"

"Are you threatening me that you will tell my family about this?" I growled, feeling my fangs lengthening.

She started shivering because I accidently spilled my Alpha aura.

"N—no, b—but you have to stop it. You have to throw her out of your apartment. Even if we don't stay together, you can't keep her. It would tarnish my reputation. I would be known as the girl who was rejected by you. Not just rejected, I would be known as the betrothed who was rejected by you,"

she squeaked.

I took a step towards her and she stepped back, her body shuddering like a bird soaked in water. "If you think that I care about your reputation, you can go to hell." I squeezed her hand in mine. "But from now on if you touch Poppy, you will be answering me."

Blood drained from her face. "I— I didn't touch her. Why would I? She is of no importance to me!"

"Then who slapped her?" I growled, my voice going higher.

Monica's friends who were sitting quietly, rushed to her aid. They came to stand behind her. I snarled at them and they too started shaking in fear.

"I know that Monica slapped Poppy and you two were with her when that happened!" I said.

"No Damon!" Gloria breathed. "We didn't—" My free hand went to her throat and I started squeezing it. Gloria shrieked and grabbed my wrist. Nancy screamed and she ran away from there.

I was so angry that I didn't realize that I had picked her up by her throat and her feet were hanging in the air. She sputtered and coughed as tears ran from her eyes. "Nooooo!" she wanted to say something but her oxygen supply was fast

cutting off.

"Please Damon!" Monica pleaded. "We didn't do anything. Poppy must have given you wrong information. She just wants to frame me because she wants me to leave you. Can't you understand her schemes?"

Rage blasted inside me. Poppy hadn't said a word about them and this was how they were framing her? I left Gloria's neck and she fell on the floor with a thud. I saw Killian and Eliza rushing towards me but I was too enraged to stop myself. How dare this bitch say anything against Poppy?

"Her schemes?" I growled as I took both her hands in mine. "You slapped her with your hand. But this wasn't the first time you hit her. You sent Gloria and Nancy to hit her before also. Why?"

"No Damon, I didn't!" She denied outrightly. "Poppy is making you a fool. She wants you all by herself because you are the strongest Alpha, even stronger than your father. She is creating discord amongst us to separate us! You have to teach her a lesson so that she doesn't do this again. I am going to give her a severe beating if she has the audacity to speak lies—"

That was it. I tightened my grip on her fingers so hard that the bones cracked. She screamed as pain blasted in her fingers. "Remember this whenever you think of harming her, Monica!" I growled and left her hands.

She was still shrieking in pain as she looked at me with wide eyes, disbelief all over her face. I looked at her fingers where swelling had already started. I knew that she would heal in two days because werewolves healed very fast. But my mate was wolf less. If she was harmed, then she was going to take a long time to heal. Not as long as humans but longer than werewolves.

"Treat this as my warning," I growled, satisfied with my punishment. "I don't give two chances." It was a miracle that my wolf didn't shred her to pieces because he wanted to come out and kill her for touching his mate. I knew that it was Monica who slapped Poppy because when I went close to her, I could whiff Monica's smell on her. Moreover, Poppy spoke about Monica the moment I asked her who slapped her. It wasn't too hard to guess.

I gave her one last glare and strode out of the basement. I had to go to Poppy because I had seen her leaving and she didn't look nice. I tracked her by sniffing her arousal. I think she was nesting in my apartment. She was on the peak of her heats.