

Damon POV

Nash Dawson was her mate and he rejected her? The idea of rejection was so painful that I felt my chest tightening. It was as if I couldn't breathe. At the same time, several images of Nash Dawson in a tangled mass of blood and flesh crossed my mind. My wolf was getting overly possessive about Poppy and one person he didn't want near Poppy was, Nash.

It just meant one thing – the Moon Goddess had given me a second chance. I was Poppy's second-chance mate. My breath lodged in my throat. Poppy had undergone so much pain that I wanted to hug her and assure her that I was with her. She should know that I am her mate. But how do I tell her this?

She was wolf-less which meant that she couldn't smell her mate. So that means that Nash must have smelled her and then rejected her. And this was the reason why she was running away from me. She didn't want to have any relationship with other men after her experience. She was trying to build a wall around her heart, but... but Fate gave her to me. If I told her that I was her second-chance mate, I was sure she would run away from me. The only way left was to make her fall in love with me and then slowly reveal that I was her mate.

And my mate was in heats because of me. The fact that she was in heats because of me, made me feel... proud. Strange. But I loved the feeling too much to let go of it.

I took my hand to her cheek and wiped her tears. "I've always wanted a female of my own. The one who belongs to me, you know? Only mine."

Poppy's lips started quivering as she stared at me with her beautiful dove gray eyes that rounded at the corners. My heart tugged towards her or was it the mate bond?

"But aren't you betrothed to Monica?" she asked a valid question.

"I told you before," I said, leaning towards her. Her rosy lips were calling me. Siren. "And I repeat—I am no longer with her."

She brought her hands to my chest as if trying to push me, but failed miserably. She wanted me as much as I wanted her.

"I've heard that you hook up with every female you can in the academy."

"I used to until you came. They offered and I rarely turned it down."

Poppy looked hurt. Or was she jealous? I didn't want her to hurt. Jealous? Well that would be nice. "I am being honest with you. Do my past hook-ups upset you?"

"I am not concerned. It's not my business."

That hurt me.

"It is your business," I said as my chest rumbled. Why wasn't she feeling as possessive about me as I was? "And that was

all in the past. You should know it, okay?"

"Damon, I don't want a fleeting relationship with you and certainly I won't stop you!" Her face was on fire and that meant that she was saying just the opposite. Women. I chuckled on the inside. She was so cute.

"You don't have to stop me, Poppy. I won't go to other females now." There was a confused expression on her face. "You don't have to understand. I will wait." Her jaw dropped. I reached for her braid and twisted it around my fist, yanking her head slightly up. She was so beautiful. I had to tell her something that was close to letting her know that I was her mate. In a hoarse voice I said, "What I feel for you is never like I felt before."

Her lips parted in wonder and I went nearer. So near that I brushed her lips with mine. My cock responded to it immediately. It had got a semi when I was near her, but now it was hard. She pushed herself away and I let her braid fall. She appeared too uncomfortable. I tensed as I felt heat radiating off her skin. She was in the peak of her heats, of her mating. My fangs elongated as my mouth filled with my venom. My wolf was howling on the inside to mark her. Goddess, give me strength. If I marked her now, she would hate me for all her life.

She kicked the quilt off her. It was as if she was unable to bear any clothes on her body. I bent over her and flicked the lamp on. Her gaze landed on my naked torso and then on my erection that was tenting the quilt. It twitched under her gaze and that day I realized my cock had a brain of its own. It wasn't in my control around her.

Her chest was rising and falling as she tried to adjust her bra. I leaned over her and made her lie on the bed. She squirmed beneath me, her eyes fixed on me. She looked so wanton, so lusty. This was all for me even if she didn't realize it now. Her look was going to be forever etched in my memory.

And my bed was her nest.

The moon was full and high.

Slowly, I unbuttoned her shorts and opened her zip. I pulled her shorts out and my gaze went on her already wet panties. A rumble of approval vibrated my chest. "It's so damn hot here," she panted. Her body was like live wire. And I wanted to get electrified. Charged.

I wanted to rip off her panties but I peeled them off slowly. Poppy was squirming so much in anticipation that I had to keep my wolf under a lot of check. My claws elongated slightly and scratched my female. I froze, seeing those red marks on her peachy skin, but she moaned. She had to stop moaning or I won't last in my pants for three seconds also. My eyes landed on her wet pussy and I groaned, lowering myself to her sex. I took a deep inhale of her sex, calming my wolf. My fangs lengthened and I grazed her mons. Fuck. This was going to be so painful. My balls were tight and my erection rock-hard.

When I looked up, I found her looking at me with droopy eyes that were full of desire. I slid my hand beneath her back and snapped open her bra. Her supple breasts spilled out. They were so full and tender. I cupped them and she purred in response.

"Damon!" she rasped. "If you don't stop, this is going to be very dangerous. And— and I am hurting."

"You are hurting because you are heats."

She cried, "It's the worst thing a she-wolf can get."

"No dove. It's the best thing a she-wolf can get."

Her eyes brimmed with tears. "I am getting these cramps. I have never felt this painful."

My chest squeezed. "I am so sorry." I kissed the tears from her eyes and I looked down at her beautiful face. She moved beneath me. Our naked bodies glided over each other.

Her skin was so peachy, soft and flushed and hot. She stretched her arms over her head, arching her back. Her nipples raked the skin on my chest and my wolf rumbled. My gaze raked the slopes of her nape, her soft mounds, the little swell of her tummy and the way her hips flared from her waist. I ran my fingers on the sides of her breasts, belly and thighs. My cock was so hard that my wolf growled. He wanted his mate. Right now.

I was so needy for her that the veins in my biceps popped. I realized that I had suffered so long for my mate. I wanted to taste her now.

I lowered myself to her breasts and latched onto her nipple, sucking it hard. Sucking it deep.

"Ah!"