

Poppy POV

In the evening, when I went for a swim with Damon, Eliza and Killian, I saw him sitting over there in his trunks along with Cynthia.

I stayed on my side while he stayed quietly on his side, but he would jump out of the pool every now and then, walk around the pool, rolling his shoulders to showcase his muscles. What the hell was he doing? Something inside me stirred and that surprised me a lot.

Suddenly, he dived in the pool and when he emerged up, his eyes fixed on me. He gave me a sexy smile and then dived in the opposite direction to swim. And as he swam, I could see his water slicing over his naked buttocks. Goddess! He leaned over the edge of the pool and pulled himself out. He looked down and casually said, "Oops, where is my swimming trunk?"

There were quite a few girls sitting on the chaise lounges who started giggling as they watched him walk in front of them without shame.

Damon pulled me out of the pool and we went back to the apartment. "That was gross!" Eliza spat.

The next day, I was holed up in my room. Damon was pacing the living hall while Anna was with me. The poison that Hilda had given me had affected me to the level that even my sexual health had suffered.

"Poppy, please don't worry. That antidote is going to help you," Anna assured me.

My eyes were red after crying for the last hour when I heard Anna's latest report. The tea had so many poisons that they were not only suppressing my wolf, but many other things. They suppressed my growth, my abilities as a shifter and also my sexual health. I didn't know what Hilda had in mind, but one thing was for sure. She wanted to put her son, Sinclair in the eyes of my grandfather as the future Alpha of the Shadows pack. She suppressed my wolf in such a wicked and clever way that no one would be able to suspect her.

She started giving me tea right from an early age so that my wolf never showed up. That was a red flag to my grandfather and so he picked up the cane to beat me. While I was suffering his abuse all the time, she was putting her son in his eyes. It was a subliminal way that I now knew so well.

I didn't want to see Sinclair, but I decided that I should. "You must confront him, Poppy!" Damon growled when he came up. He sat next to me. "In my opinion, you must point this shit out to your grandfather!"

I shook my head. "Do you think my grandfather would

believe it? He hates me so much that he would never believe me. He is going to believe Sinclair more than me."

"Then what are you going to do?" he asked.

I turned my head away and looked at the bleary morning. With a shaky breath, I said, "I don't know..."

Sinclair came two hours later. I didn't go to receive him. As soon as he came to know that I was living here, he came to meet me, but there was apprehension in his eyes.

"Poppy!" he said with a toothy grin. "How are you?" He scrutinized me from top to bottom and added, "You look... lovely!"

"Thank you, Sinclair," I replied with a smile plastered on my face.

Hilda was an omega and her wolf wasn't that strong, but it was pretty interesting to note that Sinclair was quite a robust werewolf. He had broad shoulders, was a few inches shorter than Damon and his skin had the glow of a shifter. Standing in front of me, he looked sleek. His dark hair was combed to perfection. There was a glint in those deep-set dark eyes. His thin lips curled into a smile. He peered behind me and rubbed his neck at the back. Very awkwardly, he gave me a box of cookies. "Mom sent them for you."

"Thanks," I said and took the box from him.

"Why don't you come in?" I said, knowing why he was so apprehensive about me staying with Damon.

"Umm... I..."

"It's fine, Sinclair," I said. "Damon won't eat you up."

Damon who was standing right behind me, a little away, was looking like he could exactly eat Sinclair down to his bones.

Sinclair let out a nervous laugh. "It's not that. I mean alliances are good. And—" he stopped when I narrowed my eyes on him. "I guess I will come in!"

I stepped aside and waved. "Please."

Killian and Eliza were also present there. After I introduced them to Sinclair, his body became tightly wound. He was exuding tension. "How is Hilda?" I asked as I sat down opposite him next to Damon.

"She is very fine and she was asking me to send our pictures together to her."

"Sure!" I got up, sat next to him and clicked a selfie and sent the picture to her.

"Oh, thank you! That was quick!" he said feeling all the more perplexed.

Eliza came with coffee and the cookies that he had brought. "Why don't you have some?" I said, offering the cookies to him.

"I—" he licked his lips. "Those are for you. Besides, I don't like that flavor!" He gave a nervous glance to Damon whose arm was now curled around my shoulders possessively.

"That's sad," Anna's voice came from the door. She crossed to the living hall and placed a box in his hands. "I am Anna, Poppy's bff," she said seductively. "And would you like to have these cookies?"

Sinclair's mouth dropped open. Anna was looking so beautiful that he stared at her without blinking his eyes. It was as if he was hit by a train. "O—of course!" he said, enchanted, ensorcelled.

Anna opened the box and offered it to him. "Would you like to eat, Poppy?"

"No, I don't like that flavor," I said.

Anna's lips downturned. "Would you take these with you to your dorm, Sinclair?"

"Yes, of course!" he rasped.

"Such a sweetheart!" Anna said. She got up. "I have to leave soon, Poppy. Can we meet in the evening?"

When I nodded, Anna gave another one of her sweet smiles to him and left like a whirlwind. Sinclair was blown. He continued to stare after her. "Is she a witch?" he asked.

"She is," I said. "You be careful."

He chuckled. "I need to talk to you in private, Poppy. There's a message from your grandfather."