

Poppy POV

In a flash of a second, hair lifted around my face and when I whipped my head back, I saw Damon was at her throat. He grabbed it with one hand and lifted her in the air. Her feet dangled about a foot above the ground.

Monica caught his wrist as she sputtered and coughed. Her eyes became red and her cheeks swollen at the want of air. "Damon—" she managed to speak in a hoarse, squeaky voice.

"You dare to threaten me?" Damon growled, his wolf hating the threat. His skin rippled with black fur as his voice turned guttural. "I will kill you!" His muscles bulged at the imminent threat that his wolf sensed. His eyes flickered amber.

Goddess. I rushed to him and caught his thick upper arm to soothe him. I had heard that Damon was the strongest Alpha wolf that existed in this world after his father, but it was the first time I was seeing him this furious. It was as if all his Alpha power was exuding out. Those near us winced and the shifters couldn't move an inch because of how they submitted to him. His neck tendons had corded and his fangs had elongated. I was sure that in his rage if his claws drew out, he could potentially puncture Monica's skin on the neck, rendering her dead in a heartbeat.

"Damon!" I rasped. "Calm down. It is not worth it!" I grabbed his upper arm and tried to pull him away.

Killian came rushing from somewhere and grabbed his waist while Eliza had to hold Monica. "Set her down!" Killian requested.

"Damon, please," I begged him. If he continued to stifle her at this rate, Monica would drop dead and that would ensue chaos. "Leave her." When he didn't listen, I talked to his wolf. "Onyx, you must retreat. It is going to be very difficult for me if Monica is injured."

Onyx listened to me and slowly he retreated. Monica dropped on the floor with Eliza. She crawled back holding her neck and wheezing and coughing as she cried and cried. She leaned against the wall and looked at Damon as her fear solidified. There was not a single person who would come for her help, to lift her and pacify her. She was so scared couldn't even speak.

Damon knelt before her with one arm on his knee and in a very lethal voice said, "If you think you can threaten me by doing that, then you don't know me. Don't— and I mean it. Don't ever repeat the error of intimidating me. I am going to ruin you before you would even know what happened to you. Do you get that?"

Monica nodded lightly, her eyes fixed on Damon. She was crying but she didn't have the power to cry loudly. Silent tears fell on her cheeks as she watched him.

I thought Damon would get up, but he continued, "And this is your last warning. Do not come near Poppy. If she is harmed in any way, I am going to blame you and will hunt you. Do you understand?"

Monica nodded, not understanding what he meant. What Damon meant was that if I was harmed by anyone, he was going to blame

Monica. So that meant that Monica had to prevent every harm that came my way. I felt like chuckling, but it wasn't the time. So I rolled my lips in between my lips.

"Good," he said and got up. He caught my hand and walked with me to the cafeteria with all the students watching us. Killian and Eliza were behind us.

When we reached the cafeteria, I pulled him into a private stall at the back. "Damon!" I chided. "That wasn't required. You could have simply asked her not to go to your father!"

"Poppy," he said. "Monica is not naïve. She is still going to go to my father. But she is going to think twice about it before going and that—" he let out a rough exhale. "That is going to give me time!"

I became quiet. The time that he was talking about—it was what I was dreading. The Umbra pack and the Shadow pack were enemies. His father would never agree to me being his son's bride. A shiver ran down me as the harsh reality of our relationship crashed upon me once again. This time it came down harder. "Poppy?" he sensed my trepidation and pulled me in his lap. "You don't have anything to fear." He wrapped his strong arms around me. "I won't leave you. Ever."

This was the only promise that I wanted, but I knew that this was not our reality. Something drastic had to happen for Alpha Kevin Lombard to accept me and I didn't know what that would be.

I didn't see Sinclair for the next two days, nor did I see Monica and Nash. I heard that Nash was in the hospital, still nursing his pain

that he received after I rejected him. I shouldn't have been happy, but I wasn't feeling sad. He should suffer and he should suffer a lot. He rejected me without even giving me a chance to explore our relationship. He broke the bond that Moon Goddess bestowed upon us. My grandfather liked him and everything was in his favor, but he rejected me with no remorse. And here Damon was—accepting me as his mate even though every particle of nature screamed against us.

“I want that tuna sandwich,” I said to Anna who was still reading the book on herbology while eating the sandwich. Damon and Killian had classes and Eliza was just napping behind us. The sun had come out after a long spell of cloudy days and almost every person in the academy who didn't have the class was sprawled around in the massive garden that wrapped around the whole building. Anna gave it to me and took out another one from the lunch box. She had made them in the morning.

While I was eating it, I smelled the familiar oakmoss scent. I peeled open my eyes. Nash was coming this way, his eyes having a wondrous look.

“Poppy—” he said and knelt in front of me. “You've got a wolf!”