

Damon POV

“B— but mom—” I stuttered. This was so sudden!

“Hush!” She placed a finger on my lips. “As soon as she is healthy, you have to marry her. Our pack wants to see their Alpha married because they want to see whether their future is secure or not. And marrying your mate means you are going to produce very powerful pups. So you better keep a very close watch on your mate and keep her well-guarded.”

Goosebumps ran down my body. My mother was so receptive of my mate that I chide myself internally for doubting my parents initially. I was so wound up with Monica and the enemy bullshit that my mind was clouded.

“You will marry her by the next full moon. Is that clear?” she said sternly.

“But mother, that is only fifteen days away!” I was taken aback by her sudden decision.

“So what?” she slapped my upper arm. “That is the most auspicious time. This is my final decision. You will marry Poppy by that time.”

“She has partial amnesia, mom. She needs to get healthy. She would never agree to marry me so soon!” I argued, because I was

sure.

She narrowed her eyes on me. "Then make her fall in love with you. And you have fifteen days!"

I stumbled back and sat on the bed with a thud as I stared at her incredulously. Everything was going at the speed of a comet traveling across the sky. "Mother..." I said, licking my lips. "Are you afraid that Poppy will leave me or run away?"

She pursed her lips in a thin line and said, "You have to understand the dynamics of a pack. The pack members know that you have a mate. They want to see you married to your mate as soon as possible! Why can't you just understand?" She raised her hands over her head and eyed me annoyingly.

"Mom, Poppy is not well. I can't drop the marriage bomb on her. Please give me a few days before I can say for sure that she will marry me, okay?"

She shifted on her feet impatiently. "Okay, you have one week and that's it!" She stormed out of the room announcing that she was going to meet Poppy. I rushed after my mother who seemed like a tornado on a mission.

The nurse informed us that Poppy was still taking a bath. I let out a sigh of relief. "Can we schedule this meeting an hour later?" I pleaded with my mom.

Her shoulders sagged. I knew she was very tired and she needed

her sleep. She was with my father for the entire time and wasn't leaving his side at all.

"Why don't you go to sleep, mother? I will go and interrogate our prisoner?" I suggested.

She stiffened. "Yes, that is a good idea. I want some answers from Monica. Once you are done with her, call me."

"I will," I said, assuring her. My mother was extremely pissed off by George Dawson and if I let her be on her own, I was sure she would kill Monica first. But I had many questions. I strode to the dungeons to prison number 15. That was where they had a lot of torture instruments.

Monica was stretched on a torture table with her wrists and ankles shackled. She was bleeding profusely through a thin gray rag that one of my men had made her wear. Her mangled hair covered one half of her face. She peeled open her eyes when she sensed me.

"Damon..." she grated. "What a way to meet my fiancé?"

Lifting a hammer from the long table where various torture instruments were kept, I approached her. "Who was behind Poppy's kidnapping?" I asked as I positioned the hammer over her toes and played with them.

She gulped. "What will you get by torturing me, Damon?" she squeaked.

I could smell her fear and it was potent. Good. Because I was going to make her life hell. I lifted the hammer and brought it down on her toes. She let out a blood curdling scream. "Damon!" She shook her head against the table and pulled against her shackles. "Noooo!" Her toes were a pulp. Her mind went blank because of pain.

"That wasn't the answer to my question," I growled as I looked at her screaming in pain. "Do you want me to repeat this?"

"No. No!" she cried. She wailed for some time and when I lifted my hammer again, she said, "It was my uncle, George Dawson!"

"Why?" I started playing with her ankle.

She lifted her head to see what I was doing and she started trembling. This time she didn't waste time in replying. "He was upset with you when I reported to him that you have left me for Poppy. He— he just wanted to teach you a lesson."

I roared. The walls and doors shook with my roar. Monica winced. She closed her eyes tight.

"Teach me a lesson!" I growled. "George Dawson wanted to teach me a lesson? By attacking my father? By kidnapping my mate?" I towered above her. "You people simultaneously orchestrated the two events. Your uncle attacked my father while you, along with some help, abducted Poppy! Yes or no!"

She was shaking so much out of fear that she pissed. Her gray rag

became wet. "Damon, I—"

"That is Alpha Damon for you, you piece of scum!" I slapped her tight.

She shrieked as blood spurted from her mouth. She started crying again. "A-Alpha Damon..." she sobbed. "This wasn't my plan. I did what I was asked to do. I don't know any further about it. Uncle Dawson—" she let out a painful moan. "He called me and ordered me to abduct Poppy. That's all."

"And you took Sinclair's help to do that?" I asked, my rage burning like a volcano inside my chest.

She nodded weakly. "Yes, Sinclair agreed," she said, wailing loudly.

"So Sinclair was in cahoots with you," I stated. "Why did he agree? Why did he betray his own future Alpha?"

Monica's eyes opened wide when she realized her mistake. She had named Sinclair as her accomplice.