

Chapter 123

Ava stopped her tears and wriggled her feet for her father to put her down. The Alpha's huge hands immediately went on either side of her face as he looked at her.

“Who hurt you?”

She saw the anger in his eyes as he wiped her tears and knew there would be hell to pay if she told him everything.

“Nobody. I'm just so happy to see you,” she lied.

Alpha Roland looked behind her and growled. Only then did she notice that Derek and Myles came to stand behind her, and their heads bowed after the Alpha's warning.

“They're my friends” she assured him quickly.

“Names,” her father growled.

The two wolves both flinched before they answered. She had never met an Alpha who exuded as much authority as her father. At least, not until she had come to Phoenix Academy and met Zeke.

Thinking about him brought the tightness to her chest again.

“Derek Lawrence, future Beta of the Blood Moon pack.”

“Myles Jeffries. Future Gamma of the Blood Moon pack.”

Her father didn't give a shit what pack they were from.

“Who hurt my daughter?”

Ava sighed and took her father's hand to lead him down the steps. Alpha Roland didn't resist, but her feet felt like lead as she tried to put one in front of the other. She didn't know how she looked, pulling the massive man behind her, but most people around them lowered their gazes. Her father led a small park deep in the New Mexico forests because it was his preference. He had no desire to be the biggest. He took no shit from anyone, and that was how he had raised all his children.

He wouldn't think twice about putting anyone in their place, no matter where they came from. His wolf wasn't like Zeke's, but it was pretty damn close.

Again, the thought of Zeke messed her up. The heaviness settled again. Her feet stopped moving.

“Ava? What happened, sweetheart? I sense...”

She didn't know what was happening, so she doubted her father could put a name to it. But she tried to pull herself out of it again and took another step forward.

She hadn't even made it to the car waiting for her father before she felt him. And she knew it was him. She had felt Zeke's aura often enough now to know when he was near her. Her feet stopped again as she looked around.

And there, right next to her father's car, was the man himself. Her breath caught.

His eyes were bloodshot, but Zeke was dressed smartly in his uniform, and not a single strand of hair was out of place. His eyes drilled into her as if she was a meal and he was a starving man. The weight lifted from her shoulders. The darkness in her bones began to melt away,

She had fought this feeling for so long but realized it was impossible. Whatever had happened in this awful place had linked them together. Maybe for a time, maybe forever.

But she was his. She wanted to be his. For a time. Forever, It didn't matter. She couldn't function with this distance between them.

As the tension left her body, she felt a small smile form. The wolf in front of her took a deep breath as if he had been holding it.

“Who is this, Ava?”

She felt stupid for forgetting that her father was behind her. She quickly lowered her gaze from Zeke's. Who was he? The man who would take her virginity away. But her father would never know that, not if she wanted Zeke to live.

She hadn't answered when Zeke came forward and stood in front of her and her father.

"Ezekiel Michelson," he said as he extended his hand. "Future Alpha of the Blood Mount pack. Your daughter is my... She lives in my house."

She felt the temperature drop when Zeke said those words, and she had to bite her lip to stop herself from laughing. Her father was predictable.

"You three boys live with my daughter?" Alpha Roland said calmly.

"Um..."

Zeke was the scariest wolf she had ever met, but at that moment, he was just a guy meeting his girl's dad for the first time.

His girl. Warmth spread through her chest. It sounded right. Maybe the story wouldn't end as badly as she imagined. Perhaps they could do this and face the Council together.

"Ava is... there are other Omegas in my house." Zeke started.

"Ava is not an Omega," Alpha Roland growled.

Zeke swallowed and then looked at her as if he was asking for help. She couldn't stop the chuckle this time, but when Zeke's eyes zoomed in on her lips, the laughter stopped.

How was it that she could feel better just because he was there, standing in front of her? How could she feel whole again? It felt like the past few days hadn't happened as the warmth turned to heat in her veins. His eyes flashed red briefly.

She stepped forward, answering a pull she knew she couldn't fight anymore. How would it feel to willingly give herself to this man?

“What is the meaning of this?”

The loud, booming voice brought her to her senses and startled her. She stepped back and bumped into her father while Zeke turned to the owner of that voice

“Father,” Zeke said with a nod.

The man had come out of the car that stopped behind her father's with several other people. Though they had similar facial features, that seemed to be where it ended. Zeke's father was tall and muscular, but Zeke still towered over him. His hair was jet black compared to Zeke's rich chocolate with lighter highlights. And his eyes were icy blue. They were staring at her now with the contempt she had grown accustomed to from wolves

“Is this the human you have put under my pack's protection?” Zeke's father growled.

The growl didn't scare her. Something about this man rubbed her the wrong way and brought out the stubborn devil inside her. She refused to lower her gaze.

But the growl that came from behind her made her think twice about what she was doing. Before she lowered her gaze, she saw the panic in Zeke's father's eyes.

"Have you got a problem with my daughter, Alpha Michelson?" her father growled.

"Your daughter? Of course not," Zeke's father said. "Hello, Alpha Morgan. It's been a long time."

A coward Zeke's father was a coward. He opened his mouth but could not stand by his convictions. She didn't need to look up again to know that her father had intimidated him.

"Ezekiel, come over here. We have matters to discuss," Alpha Michelson said. "Your mate is waiting for you."

She sucked in a breath as she lifted her gaze to look into Zeke's eyes. His mouth had dropped open, and his eyes... They were full of guilt.

She looked to where his father had walked and saw a tall, beautiful brunette standing with him. A strong-looking woman who looked like Luna material. Her green gaze was drilling into her as if she knew what she and Zeke had almost done,

His mate.

Her heart squeezed in her chest. It cracked wide open.

“Ava...”

Her gaze came back to Zeke. It hurt to look at him. He had said over and over again that she was his, but this woman....

Without saying anything else, she entered the car that had brought her father there. Was this what it felt like to be heartbroken? She hadn't even done anything with Zeke yet, but the pain in her chest threatened to consume her. To kill her.

“What have you gotten yourself into, little one?” Alpha Roland whispered as the car started moving.