

## Chapter 159

“Focus, Ava.”

Ava dragged her eyes from Claire as she sparred at the other end of the training room.

“What’s going on?” Max asked as he faced her from across the mat,

“Nothing,” she mumbled, dropping into a fighting stance again.

Focus on Max. Focus on Max

But her eyes found their way to Claire again, and the wolf was staring right at her this time. Fury, white-hot fury, shot through her when she saw the smug look on the wolf’s face. It occurred to her that maybe this was another of the Council’s tests. Perhaps they wanted to see what she would do to the wolf she had already ripped apart and thrown into their forest. Maybe their spies were in this room, reporting her every move back to them. But she was beyond thinking clearly now.

After another sleepless night, she knew she was about to snap.

The coach's whistle blew, and he walked to the front of the room

"We're going to switch partners now," Coach Henderson said.

He was stockier than Coach Baxter, and so far, he hadn't said or done anything that had made her not like him. But she was sure if she attacked one of his other students, all of that would end. And he was a vampire, so he could have her off Claire before she was satisfied,

She had been thinking of that all day. Imagining how she would get Claire, when she would get her. The fantasies weren't satisfying, and all they did was feed this hunger inside her. It was clawing at her insides, begging her to get the satisfaction she needed.

"Tomorrow, I'll be separating you into different ability levels so that next week, we can move on with our training schedule," the coach continued "Pick a partner."

She was moving before she realized she was, and Claire was heading right for her. The wolf's dark cloud followed her, but the need to punch Claire's face in was greater than any fear she had of that darkness. Again, another worrying thing. Nothing was worse than the evil Claire possessed inside her, she'd known from the first day. So why was she not scared of it?

But still, there she was, facing the wolf across the mat. Claire had that snarl on her face, a promise that the match would hurt. She obviously had no fear inside her even after what had happened in the village, so she had to be pretty confident in her abilities.

The fact that Claire was more than she had been before didn't make her back down. The fact that this was probably a suicide mission didn't make her back off, either.

"No shifting. Keep it clean," the coach instructed as he came to stand beside their mat

The moment the whistle went, Claire moved towards her at a speed she hadn't expected and threw a punch that sent her flying across the room. She saw stars when her head hit the wall. Holy shit. Whatever had happened to Claire had made her stronger. How easy would it be for the wolf to rip her apart?

Still, she didn't stay down long, she got to her feet and attacked despite the fuzzy head. Maybe Claire hadn't been expecting that because she managed to get a hit. Claire only staggered back a little, which pissed her off because she'll put her back into that punch. She clenched her teeth and launched herself forward, tackling Claire with a spear with her shoulders in her stomach that brought the wolf down onto her back. Her next punch knocked Claire's head hard into the floor, as did the next and the one after.

Claire would have Zeke over her dead body! The nerve of her to say that when she'd clearly seen Zeke's mark!

Claire didn't stay down for long. The wolf showed her off with so much strength she flew across the floor again and landed on her shoulder. When she got back to her feet, Claire was already standing, and there wasn't even a bruise or a cut on her face.

She didn't know how long they went for after that, but when the coach finally pulled them apart, she was the one bleeding even though she had Claire in a sleeper hold and was yanking so hard on her hair that she pulled handfuls of it out.

"I said keep it clean!" the coach yelled as he threw her off Claire. "Get out of my training room, Morgan!"

But Claire was still breathing.

There was no blood, and the wolf was smiling at her as if nothing she had done had hurt her. A red haze tilted her vision, and she could hear her heart pounding, her breathing coming in short, harsh breath. Something rose inside her as her fists clenched at her sides. She felt it unfurling, ready to finish Claire, to send her back to the darkness of the forest where she belonged. She went to throw herself at Claire again, but the coach rammed into her with his shoulder, knocking her onto her bottom.

The red haze cleared from her vision when she focused on the vampire standing over her, but the anger remained.

"Get out! You're done for the day," he repeated. "Unless you want me to mark you down for detention."

She gave Claire one last look before she stormed out of the room. She didn't bother grabbing her bag from the locker room, she just stormed straight out of the Training Centre and past the guards outside. Her anger was still raging inside her, but it was different. It wasn't the same anger

that had won her the matches in the mock evaluations or allowed her to fight Zeke's dad. This time, she actually wanted to kill someone.

And maybe before Zeke took her out of there tonight, she would.

It was the only thought running through her head as she jogged to her still-empty dorm room. She was breathing hard, but it wasn't from the exertion. It was as if her emotions had been on the extreme side since yesterday, and she just couldn't calm them down. No decent person was ever okay with killing anyone, but it was what she craved, what she needed.

And she knew without a doubt that it was her murderous wolf's intentions.

The only time she'd had a break from that desire to see Claire in a pile of limbs at her feet was when she had been with Zeke.

Zeke. Focus on Zeke.

She stripped off her training kit and went straight to the shower, where she stood for a long time, trying to do just that. But her breathing remained the same, and her heart was still pounding in her chest. Had Zeke sensed all of her anger through their bond? Could Zeke feel that she needed him right now? Would he come despite the ban on their interaction?

Because she needed him here. Something wasn't right in her head. In her body.

When she finished her shower, she didn't bother drying herself. She just threw herself onto the bed and looked up at the ceiling. Then, she focused on her breathing. Whatever happened felt a lot like one of her panic attacks, but she knew it wasn't. She wasn't fighting fear or anxiety

Zeke would have been able to calm her with just a touch of his hand. Or a kiss...

Thinking about his touch sparked something in her that spread like a fire. Something that was burning slowly, but it replaced her need to kill Claire with her need for her mate. It was the same as yesterday, but it felt more intense. More urgent. Her toes curled, and her thighs pressed together as the fire turned into an inferno.

Like a switch.

Something was definitely wrong.