

Chapter 170

Was she dreaming? Was this another nightmare?

She felt numb as she looked: the lifeless body in front of her and then the vampire who relished the kill.

There wasn't a sound in the training room except the loud beating of her own heart in her ears.

“Now look at what you've made me do. I really liked this suit,” the vampire said.

His eyes were back to normal as he rubbed at the bloodstain on his jacket. As if all was still right in the world.

“All you had to do was follow the rules. Ava, not find a way around them. Fight, show no mercy,” he continued. “Is it really that difficult for you? Do you like to challenge everything?”

She looked back at Emily: Was this her fault?

And then the vampire smiled again.

“Now, who’s next?” he asked.

The chaos started. Omegas started to whimper and cry. Some rushed to their feet and started running out of the training room. Others backed away as if that would draw less attention to them. The two coaches remained where they were standing, their eyes on the body on the floor.

And then Zeke was in front of her, blocking her from the gruesome view and facing down a vampire stronger than any she had seen before, even Penelope. Is all felt like it was happening in slow motion.

“Mr. Michelson, I’m hurt, I thought we were friends,” the vampire said, and then he laughed

Psychopaths. The Council was run by psychopaths who were going to kill them all.

“Not all of you. Just some.” the witch said as she came came up behind her.

Zeke turned her the other way, but the Alpha wolf stood there. They were surrounded.

Something held her in place; she couldn’t move her feet. It felt like a ton of something had been placed on her shoulders, and it even stopped her body from trembling. And then she felt those familiar slithers of something as they blatantly played in her head.

But her mind was numb Stuck on the horror that she had just witnessed. They wouldn't find any other thought even if she wanted them to.

The witch sashayed the rest of the distance to her. She flinched when her perfectly manicured hand came up to her face and wiped some more blood off her other cheek with her finger. And then put her finger in her mouth and sucked it. The councilor's eyes closed as if she were tasting something delicious, and she moaned.

“Don't tease me, Iulia. I'm working here,” the vampire said.

She had been warned about them all her life. She had heard stories. But now she had seen it with her own eyes and knew that this wasn't the full extent of their insanity.

“You've scared them all off. I don't think you're getting anything else done today,” the Alpha said as he came to stand next to Iulia.

Then the wolf kissed the witch as if he, was savoring the taste of the blood. Because Iulia's invisible force still held her, she was forced to watch them tongue-fight in front of her.

So this was their bond? They were lovers?

“Hmm,” the Alpha said as he released the witch and looked at her. “Has someone been talking about us?”

Kittens. Kittens. Think of kittens.

But instead, she saw the smile on Emily's face. She saw the blood. This was her fault.

"It will be fun to break this one," the witch laughed.

Suddenly, the vampire appeared beside them, kissing Iulia, too.

"Very fun. But you're right, we won't get anything else done here today. Let's get out of here."

They all turned to walk out, not caring at all about the devastation they were leaving behind. The moment they were out of sight, the weight fell off her shoulders, and her trembling returned. She dropped to her knees, her eyes still wide as her mind tried to process what had just happened.

Zeke's hand on her back brought her back to her senses. Some Omegas were rocking themselves and crying. Others looked shell-shocked.

"Let's go home," Zeke said, helping her to her feet.

She avoided looking at Emily again, but she saw the coaches standing over her as if they were also struggling with what to do. And she saw Claire and her friends, still standing in formation as if they had been ordered to.

Was all of this just to make her like Claire? She didn't understand why the Council was playing all these games. Why did they have to kill Emily?

Zeke led her out of the training room to the locker room, where she just grabbed her bag without bothering to wash the blood off her face and hands. And then he led her outside. Derek and Myles were already waiting in the car, still in their training kits. She could tell by their demeanor that Zeke had already told them what had happened. The Council had just killed someone in front of several witnesses and left her body for someone else to deal with.

Because they could get away with murder.

Thinking that made her realize how easily it could have been her on that floor.

The car stopped, and she saw they were already at Zeke's house. He helped her out of the car, and they all looked at the guards still stationed across the road in front of the driveway. Still looking at them as if they were to report everything they said and did. The Council wasn't even trying to be subtle.

Zeke led her straight to the kitchen, where he pulled a bottle of something out of the cupboard and four glasses. "For the shock," he said. She drank the bitter liquid as if on autopilot and then grabbed her bag to walk to the basement.

She hadn't even reached the bottom of the stairs when she put a fist to her mouth to stop herself from screaming. Then she remembered the blood on her fingers and removed it.

She had probably imagined killing Emily several times since the day she had sent her into an ambush. But watching her die...

She threw her bag down and screamed. Her screams turned to sobs as she sank to her knees.

Her fault. It was all her fault.

They said all she had to do was follow the rules. This was a warning to her. Follow the rules, or people would die.

When she looked up. Zeke was sitting on a bench in front of her.

Would he be the next to die?

No. No, she would fight next time. She would rather die first than watch anyone else die. She reached for her bag and emptied the contents on the floor to find what she was looking for. The little case fell out with a clatter, and she picked it up with her bloody, shaky hand.

Then she opened it and pulled out the vial. She poured the contents down her throat before Zeke could ask her what it was and then sat cross- legged on the floor.

Her wolf had to come. Only something as bloodthirsty and ruthless could stand up to the council. It was her only hope. Her dad's only hope.