

Chapter 171

There was silence in her head.

She'd sat for hours after taking that potion. It had indeed brought her clarity on what she had to do, but there was no whisper from her wolf. And that was frustrating because she knew she had changed because of her wolf.

She hadn't imagined hearing Emily's heartbeat. The night she had discovered her father in the basement, she'd caught his scent outside. And there was no denying that she was running faster now. Her body even felt different, so where was this wolf? Even just a hello would do.

But the silence in her head was so loud it was making her angry,

At least anger was better than numbness.

Derek parked the car, and then he and Myles looked back at her. It had been a long night for all of them in that basement because they had all realized the same thing. The Council could get any one of them anytime,

"Stay safe, Derek said to her.

“Yeah. And don’t worry about us. Do whatever you need to do,” Myles added.

Derek tried calling his father last night to tell him what was happening, but there had been no dial tone. They were completely cut off from the world, so they had to figure things out by themselves.

They got out of the car, leaving her and Zeke in the back seat. He was looking out of his window, and his eyes flashed constantly as he looked at the guards watching the car. She put her hand over his larger one and gently squeezed him.

The flashing stopped, and he looked back at her. His eyes were full of everything he couldn’t say now that they were out of the basement, but she understood. He was as angry as she was. The only difference was that he had a huge wolf he had to keep control of.

“I’ll see you later.” she whispered

She was about to open the door when he pulled her back and planted his lips on hers. His kiss was deep and desperate, full of all the rage he was feeling, yet it calmed a part of her.

“I don’t know what they will do today, but I’ll be right next to you,” he whispered when he released her.

She nodded and fixed her hair before she got out of the car and walked towards her block.

The moment she walked in, she felt the heaviness in the air. The grief. She may not have liked Emily, but that wolf had been there longer and had made some connections. People parted as she approached, and she saw the looks on their faces. She knew they were blaming her for Emily's death because she was blaming herself. She couldn't look any of them in their eyes as she walked towards her first class.

“Ava.”

Her eyes widened as she saw Jared standing in the doorway of an empty classroom. She pushed him into the room and closed the door.

“You can't be around me. I don't know what the Council is doing, but I don't want to give them any more targets,” she whispered.

“I just wanted to check that you're okay after what happened yesterday, Jared said.

“I'm okay. But please, stay away until they're gone,” she whispered and then quickly left the classrooms.

She had only gone a few steps when she saw the vampire who had killed Emily leaning against the wall, his eyes on the door to the classroom. He would have heard what she had said to Jared.

“Miss Morgan,” he said with a nod.

“Sir,” she answered, lowering her gaze.

She felt ill to the pit of her stomach. Seeing his face brought the images of what he had done back to the forefront, and now she had to worry that he would mess with Jared, too.

“Call me Andrei. I feel that what we shared yesterday brought us a little closer. We have a bond now, like survivors of a terrible accident,” the vampire said as he pushed himself off the wall to stand in front of her.

The hallways were completely clear now. The students would know to stay out of his way.

“I can’t call you by your name, sir,” she whispered.

“Oh, don’t tell me that was all it took to get you back in line,” the vampire chuckled. “I had such high hopes for you.”

She remained silent because she didn’t know what they wanted from her.

“Tell me something. Ava. You seemed very eager to return to Isolation yesterday. How did you come out of there without a scratch the first time?”

She felt his allure as if he could turn it on and off whenever he wanted. It was so strong she had to step back as she tried to resist him.

“Come now, Ava. Tell me the truth. You can trust me.”

And she felt like she could, even though, in her head, she was screaming at herself to snap out of it. She looked up at the monster’s beautiful face. At his perfect skin and striking hazel eyes.

“That’s it,” Andrei whispered. “Tell me how you did it, and I will make sure nothing happens to any more of your friends.”

The councilor stepped closer, but she didn’t step back. She had to crane her neck to keep looking at him.

“You don’t even smell human anymore. Do you know how curious you’ve made me?” the vampire asked.

He took a deep breath and then smiled at her, showing his fangs. It was the sight of those fangs and remembering how Emily’s blood had dripped from them that brought her to her senses.

The vampire brought his hand to her face like his girlfriend had done yesterday and trailed a finger down her cheek. She had expected him to be cold, but he was warm, and his touch tried to pull her back under his spell. She felt the pull as she kept eye contact.

“Let me in. Ava,” the vampire whispered.

He was so close now. So inappropriately close. She felt the heat from his whole body, and something in her recoiled. She did not want this man’s touch because she already belonged to another.

She heard a loud, hair-raising growl that made the vampire step back. It took her a moment to realize that the growl came from her throat.

“Wow. I have to admit, I can see why he’s attracted to you now,” the vampire said. “You have the whole cold-blooded abomination vibe all over you.”

And she could see he was now more curious than ever.

“Well, that was disappointing, but I will see you again, Ava Morgan. Soon,” he said, and then he smiled and walked away.

The door opened, and Jared stepped out, his eyes on the councilor as he left the building.

“What do they want?”

She looked back at Jared

“Stay out of things, Jared. Keep yourself safe,” she told him before walking to her first class.

She had to admit, though it was worrying her that the councilor said he would see her again soon, she had a better idea of why they hadn’t made a move. They didn’t know everything. They didn’t know how she had survived Isolation, and they didn’t know who had been giving her information about them. It made her feel they had a slight chance to achieve what Mr. Patrick wanted.

But by the time training came back around, she realized that it didn’t matter. The Council liked that they could play these games with their lives.

When they came into training this time, they stood at the front with Coach Henderson. Councilor Andrei didn't take his eyes off hers for moment as the coach announced their task that day,

"Today we're having a showcase," the coach said. "We will watch Claire and her friends fight."

But who?

The vampire smiled widely as if he had heard that thought And she knew today was nine to be as messed un as the day before.