

Chapter 183

Ava didn't know what to think.

Her anxiety had hit the roof as she had waited for them to do whatever they had brought her there to do, but the Council members had just been drinking and talking about people and things she had no idea about.

Like normal people. It was as if in this house, they weren't the psychotic people who'd clapped when she'd stood in the puddles of blood.

This was a mind game; she was sure of it.

To make her drop her guard before they swooped in? Make her trust them and spill her secrets? It would never happen. She could still feel Mr. Patrick's magic protecting her from their probing, but she didn't think they had even tried.

"Hey, you haven't touched your drink," Andrei said, pulling himself away from Iulia. They had been disgustingly affectionate with each other the whole time.

"I... I don't really drink, and it's still too early in the day."

Plus, she wasn't going to put anything from them into her mouth.

"There's no one here to see you break any rules, Ava. This is our space. Live a little." Andrei continued.

And that was when she felt his allure. Andrei studied her as if to watch her reactions closely, but there was no way she would do what he wanted. For all he knew, there was something in that drink that would make her do something stupid.

"Leave her alone," Alpha Diego said as he came back with some more drinks.

The men had discarded their suit jackets, and Alpha Diego had rolled up his sleeves. His muscles bulged under his shirt as he sat back beside her. Like Zeke's. If his wolf was indeed like her and Zeke's, then his huge frame supported that. Not like hers. Nobody would expect something like that to come from her.

"So why couldn't you and Ezekiel wait until after graduation to mate?" Alpha Diego asked. "College is the last place you want to get hitched: you kids should have been having fun first."

"I guess when you know, you know," she answered with a shrug, looking away from his gaze.

"Tell me, Ava."

She felt the power in that command. It rolled over her skin and made her open her mouth to confess. But she snapped her mouth closed and kept her gaze away from the Alpha. That had been too close. Was the protective magic wearing off?

“I think I should go. It’s almost lunchtime,” she said as she stood and picked up her blazer.

Andrei laughed and looked at Alpha Diego.

“You see? Now you’re going to drive yourself insane thinking about her.”

She popped her blazer back on and picked her bag up. Her ribs felt completely fine now.

“I’ll take you back.” Alpha Diego said, standing, too.

“No, it’s fine. I’ll just —”

“I insist,” the Alpha said as he walked to the door.

“Bye, Ava See you soon,” Julia said.

Like they were friends.

The car was still outside, so Alpha Diego opened the door for her again. She sat as far away from him as she could and held her bag against her like a shield as they drove back towards the Administration building.

This was surreal; she still couldn't figure out what they hoped to achieve.

"Do what he asks, Ava," Alpha Diego said quietly. "It's better that way. You'll get to stay with Zeke, and your father will go home to your brothers"

She didn't respond. The moment the car stopped, she opened her door and got out. And her Zeke radar shifted her gaze to the front steps where Zeke was sitting as if he had been waiting for her the whole time.

Zeke stood as she approached him, but he was looking behind her. His eyes were red, and his fists clenched. Looking back, she saw Alpha Diego had come out of the car.

There were several students around this time, and they had witnessed her come out of the same car. This would isolate her even more than she already was.

"Thank you for your company. Miss Morgan," he said with a nod.

Then he got back into the car, and it drove off.

Zeke didn't speak. He just took her hand and led her to his car. He didn't speak on the drive, though she could sense he was still struggling to control his anger. And when they walked into the house, he took her straight to the basement and closed the door.

"What the hell Ava? What the fuck did he want?" Zeke shouted.

“He said he wanted to hang out.”

“And you just went?”

She felt his anger increase, and his eyes were still red, but she knew none of it was directed at her.

“What was I supposed to do?!” she shouted back.

“Not go with him! I don’t trust that asshole for shit. He’s been asking too many questions about us for days, and I swear if they are trying to break our bond...”

Zeke backed away, and she realized she was dealing with mated wolf possessiveness. Kind of how she had been when Claire said she was going to take Zeke from her anyway.

“No one is going to break our bond,” she said gently, taking his hand and pulling him towards her.

Zeke came easily and wrapped his arms around her. And when he buried his face in the crook of her neck and took a deep breath, she felt his anger ease.

There was someone else she would burn the world down for. Zeke. So, she would have to do whatever was asked of her to keep them together. To keep herself alive so Zeke would stay alive.

“If you two are quite done, maybe you can come down and tell the rest of us what the hell is going on.”

She let go of Zeke to see her father at the bottom of the stairs. They hadn't found out much that would be useful in stopping the Head of the Council, but they did know that her father was no longer safe.

They walked down the stairs and saw Myles, Derek and Mr. Patrick sitting on the benches.

"I sent Penelope to tell me what happened in the meeting, but she told me he took you off the school grounds instead," Mr. Patrick said. "What happened?"

Zeke told them everything. Her father sat heavily on one of the benches. Was he regretting his decision to stay?

"He could be an air Fae because of the teleportation and the magic he used to bind you." Mr. Patrick said. "And he could be an earth Fae because of the forest."

"And he also said Iulia was the best thing to happen to him until us," she added.

"Iulia's magic is exceptional. She might be the one enhancing him. Maybe he has charms on him," Mr. Patrick said.

"It doesn't really matter. I think it's safer if we do what he wants. He knows dad is here, and I don't want to risk anything going wrong."

"Is this something you discussed when you were hanging out?" Zeke snorted. "You can't make that decision by yourself. We're mated, Ava."

“I can’t see another way out of this. I can’t lose my family, and I can’t lose you.”

“So you would rather pick five students to die instead?” her father asked.

Yes. She didn’t say that out loud, but her answer was evident in her silence.

“I’m going to eat something before training. I don’t think we should meet like this again, it’s too dangerous,” she said as she stood.

She felt numb when she walked into the kitchen. It was better than feeling like the selfish, traitorous disappointment of a daughter and mate that they all probably thought she was.