

## Chapter 190

Zeke needed a run—something to calm himself.

Did his mate really feel sorry for Jared? Did she think his fate would somehow change just because she didn't approve of it? She hadn't been there!

She hadn't been the one to come back from a hunt and see so much chaos and destruction. She hadn't been the one to find her mother murdered in the woods and her father tied up when the breaking of the bond had weakened him.

And then to hear Jared whimpering that he was sorry. Sorry wasn't going to undo anything that his family had done.

It didn't matter whose sin it was; Jared would still pay for it, too.

“Do you need a minute, Mr. Michelin?”

When he heard the professor's nervousness, he looked up and realized his claws were digging into the desk. Shadow had taken control.

“I’m fine.”

He had bigger issues to worry about. His anger was likely pointless because they were all going to die. He should have been thinking of the beautiful connection he’d had with Ava’s wolf. That moment when her wolf had looked back at him, heard everything he’d had to say and allowed him to demonstrate it physically.

It had been an experience that he doubted anyone he knew had ever had.

But now that was tainted with this anger. This fury.

She was taking Jared’s side? Seriously?

“Mr. Michelson...”

He looked up again and realized he was looking through Shadow’s furious eyes. Everything had a red haze.

“Maybe if you take five minutes? Get some fresh air?”

He didn’t wait to be told again. He shoved his chair back as he stood and didn’t have it in him to feel bad when the whole class flinched. After what Ava had done in training, the entire school was wary of him, too. He had never lost control like that at the academy; they only heard stories about him. But Ava had shown them what he could be like, and they didn’t even realize they were capable of so much more.

When he pushed the doors open, the guards on either side turned to him with their hands on their weapons.

“Lesson time. Go back inside,” one of them said.

He ignored them and walked out. Maybe fresh air was what he needed.

But he caught Jared’s scent, and his anger increased. That bastard was supposed to have died the night he tried to escape with Ava. If she hadn’t come into her heat

“I said get back inside.”

He turned his head slowly to the guards. It was clear that it meant nothing to them that he had been offered a position on the Council. Maybe that hadn’t been publicized because they hadn’t yet taken the offer. But these guards were not scared of him. They weren’t scared of Shadow. And the dominant beast was not happy about that at all.

But it was Jared’s scent they were both interested in now.

He needed to die.

His claws dug into his palms as he clenched his fists. The coppery scent of his blood filled his nose, but it didn’t hide Jared’s. The muscles in his face stretched as all his senses focused on one thing. He was on the verge of losing control.

Because of Jared Fucking Anderson.

He’d tamed his urge to rip him apart for years, but now just because his mate pitied that damn coward... Again! He had put it aside last time because she hadn’t known what he had done, but now?

He could tell precisely where Jared was. He could hear the pounding of his heart, the sound of his breathing. Did he know he was in danger of his last breath?

But the last thing he needed right now was to do anything that would risk the plan. Protecting Ava should be the only thing on his mind.

He closed his eyes and focused on his mate instead. Her heartbeat. Her breathing.

“I need to go for a run,” he warned the guards.

They had to know what he was by now. They had to know it was safer for them if they didn’t try to stop him.

“Not during lesson or training time. Read the rules,” the guard snapped.

He wasn’t a wolf. Zeke opened his eyes and cocked his head as he studied him. There was some magic in the air. Maybe the guard was a witch of sorts. But regardless, he should have sensed the danger he was in. Why the hell was he challenging Shadow now?

His claws lengthened more. All the muscles in his body tensed as he turned fully to the guard. The other guard was a wolf, and he kept his position. but didn’t say or do anything that would be considered a threat. He should have taught his friend how to do that.

“I need to go for a run,” he repeated.

His voice was deeper.

Before the Council had infiltrated the school, he could have walked out of any lesson and gone for a run anytime he needed to. He hadn't felt suffocated before, not when he was constantly worried about Ava, but he felt it now. He had no control here. Not anymore.

"Get back to your class, or we will throw you into Isolation," the guard said.

He sensed more of them approaching as if these two had already called for backup, even though he hadn't done anything to warrant that.

If he attacked them and ended up in isolation, that would put a cog in their plans. He had to think of Ava. Only Ava.

Shadow backed down from the challenge even though it pissed him off. But they both had to think things through before they gave in to their nature.

'Let's go,' Shadow growled.

Shadow would take them deep into the woods, he'd calm the fuck down, and no one would get hurt. Not even Jared.

He turned away and started jogging towards the woods.

"I said stop!" the guard yelled.

He discarded his blazer and kept running. There were vampires in the guard ranks. If they were serious about stopping him, they would have outrun him by now.

The tie came off next, and then he ripped his shirt off. When he was butt-naked, he shifted and let Shadow take over. That had been too close. He could still feel the anger surging in his veins, but the distance from Jared was already doing some good. They would be okay if he was left alone for little while.

The crisis would be averted, at least for today.

Several guards appeared to block him before he could run through the tree line into the woods. They came out of nowhere, he had to wonder if they had let him get this far on purpose. If they had planned this.

Shadow slid to a halt and growled at the guards to make them get out of the way, but all they did was pull their weapons out.

It was like they threw a match at a can of gas.

Shadow's rage was instant. The bloodlust took over so completely that they were in a pile of limbs before he realized what he was doing.

And then something sharp hit him from the back. Shadow whined and turned, but they were already toppling over before they could see what had happened

Everything went black.