

Chapter 201

Ava's scream split Zeke's heart in two

Her pain, her guilt, overwhelmed him. Zeke dropped his bag and tried to go to his mate, only to find himself bound by that bastard's magic. He was held in his place while Ava was lifted into the air. Just to torment her, in show her that he could do this and there was nothing Ava could do about it

Then, the body was thrown into the woods. He sensed those vile creatures moving around like they were in a frenzy as they closed in on the kid's body. Ava whimpered. He knew she could feel them, too, but her guilt was shutting her down. She had already given up.

"Now, who's next?" Mr. Hansson said.

As if he was serving crumpets at a tea party. What the hell was wrong with this guy?

Shadow fought to take control, to shift and rip the man to shreds, but the magic bound him, too. Ava was released and fell to her knees on the stage, but her gaze remained on the spot where the kid's body had been

flown. There was nothing but grief radiating from her. Being unable to reach her to comfort her was worse than anything else that was going on.

Worse than the screaming students and teachers who had started to run back up the road. Worse than the feeling of betrayal in his heart. All of this was happening because he had trusted someone other than himself. He should have known better.

“You look like you will be a lot harder to break.”

He looked from Ava to Mr. Hansson and saw the smile on his face. Andrei had been right about that part. He would take everything he cared about until he bent to his will.

The vampire stood impassively beside Alpha Roland as if the chaos wasn't bothering him.

“Let me get to my mate,” he growled.

“Ah, yes. Your stupid mate bond,” Mr. Hansson said. “We're going to have to get rid of that if we're going to move forward with this.”

Mr. Hansson turned to Ava and flicked his wrist, and Ava's hand flew to her neck as a different type of pain hit her.

And it hit him at the same time.

It felt like something was stabbing him in the neck right where his mark was, and Shadow howled in his head before he started thrashing in pain. He gritted his teeth as his pain mixed with Ava's.

He can't take her from us. Shadow. She's our true mate!

But it felt like he could, Maybe he could. Mr. Hansson wasn't like anything he had come across before. His magic was different from witch magic. It made fire flow through his veins and head as the magic worked through his body. It felt like dark magic, something the Head of the Council was not supposed to practice but did so openly. Everyone knew he did; they just had to look at the monstrous forests he had created around all the academies.

But he prayed to the Goddess that what he told Shadow was true. That their bond was fated and unbreakable. It was the reason Hansson had tested them, so that had to be true.

"Don't use your energy, Shadow. We can take this."

His beast started to calm down even with all the pain they endured. He had done a lot worse to his wolf over the years to try to control him. His basement, full of silver, was proof of that. If they could withstand this, so could Ava.

Ava wasn't making a sound as she was being attacked the same way, and by her rigid posture, he could see she was being held in place by the magic again,

'Breathe through it, Ava. Without Mr. Patrick, our bond is all we have to rely on. We'll have to attack the second we get an opening.'

'I can't. I can't. I want to stop this. I don't want anyone else to die.'

‘They’ll die anyway. Focus on something else and get ready to save your father.’

There was no point sugarcoating it. They were at war, and his mate needed to get her head back in the game.

“It’s for the best. Your attachment to each other is holding you back. You’ll work better separately,” Mr. Hansson continued. “I think I should make that a rule for everybody. Mates are so pointless when the whole purpose of the Council is to make decisions that are not influenced by unnecessary emotions. You’ll thank me for this.”

He didn’t miss how the three councilors looked at each other behind Mr. Hansson’s back. Had they actually mated! Was that the ‘special bond’ that Mr. Patrick had referred to? They could mind-link when they were not the same species, and Andres could eat solid food. That shit didn’t just happen.

It felt like forever when the pain finally stopped and allowed him to breathe. Mr. Hansson turned to Iulia, who mouthed something under her breath. A spell. He felt the magic in the air before Mr. Hanson took a deep, satisfied breath before he turned his attention back to him.

So that was how they were doing this shit. Mr. Patrick had been right that Iulia kept the bastard’s strength up.

‘She’ll be the first to die,’ Shadow promised.

“Now, where were we?” Mr. Hansson said.

The Head of the Council's eyes glowed, and seconds later, he found his body turned to face the panicking students. The guards had blocked them in and were herding them back, so it looked like no one had managed to escape.

The whole academy was trapped.

He sensed Ava appear next to him, also forced to face the students for whatever Mr. Hansson had in store for them next.

"I really want to get this done today and get out of this shithole," Mr. Hansson said as he came to stand in between them, "so please do as you're told. You won't let me into your heads because you think that somehow that will protect you from what's coming. But it won't. Submit to me and make this transition a little bit easier on yourselves. Be on the right side of history."

'Stay strong. Ava,' he reminded her.

"Shall we get on with this?" Mr. Hanson said.

There was a grunt, and another student was plucked into the air.

Ava gasped, and he found himself torn as he looked into the eyes of the coward he was supposed to kill himself.

"You like this one, don't you, Ava?" Mr. Hansson laughed. "Let's see if he will make you see the light."

Jared didn't make a sound as he was pulled over their heads by the invisible force to the spot where the last guy had lost his life.