

Chapter 205

Ava's frustration boiled over, and she told Samantha to get Julie and stay close to Myles and Derek. Then she shifted and lowered her head. All she wanted was to get to her father, but the guards were in her way.

Nyx growled. She hadn't known Nyx long enough to know if it was a standard growl, but it felt different. It felt right. She could feel it in her whole body as Nyx took over again. And when Shadow came to stand beside her, and the growl came from deep within him, she felt the strength of their bond.

One by one, the people in front of them stopped and lowered their gazes, soldiers and students alike. It was not something she usually liked, but she understood her wolf now, and this was the only way they would get to her father. They had to show their dominance.

She felt something else. It was more than the darkness she felt in Nyx's soul; it was all around them. She felt it the same way she felt the evil in the forest both times that she had gone in. It was the same darkness she felt when Mr. Hansson was close. The same darkness she had felt in Claire and her friends. But it didn't scare her as it had back then.

Because it was hers.

It was Zeke's.

The sense of fear increased in the air. Not fear, terror. Icy, gut-twisting terror that filled her with dread. There was some commotion behind her and an increased tempo of heartbeats. Little whimpers and the sound of people sucking in their breaths. She turned around the same time Zeke did and saw them.

The forest creatures.

The purple-eyed monsters.

Monstrous beasts that were neither wolf nor man. In the broad daylight, she could see that her imagination had never done them any justice. They were terrifying. Patchy grey fur, scars all over their bodies, huge fangs dripping blood. They were different sizes but were all bigger than the wolves around them. The biggest were almost the same size as her. And at their feet, slowly slithering forward, were the giant snakes she had assumed were tree roots, discolored and their black tongues flicking out.

Everyone moved out of their way as they slowly walked out of the forest, their heads lowered and growling as they assessed the situation.

Was this Hansson's doing? These were his creatures; had he called them to finish her off? She could feel her anxiousness rise, but Nyx pushed it down and remained calm. They came out of the woods all up the road, pushing everyone back towards the residences almost as if they were

herding them. She couldn't fight against these things and the guards at the same time. Hansson was winning.

The road ahead started to clear.

‘What do we do?’

She heard Derek's question and looked to see her group of friends holding steady while everyone else around them was retreating. Even Jared stood next to Alpha Diego, waiting for the next move.

‘I don't think they're going to hurt us,’ Zeke answered.

Ava looked back at the creatures and saw some of them start to sit on the edges of the road, lining up as the guards had done. The larger ones kept coming towards them, fearsome like an army from the depths of hell. How could Zeke think they wouldn't hurt them? She'd had nightmares about them. They had tried to hurt her in the forest while she'd writhed in pain on the ground from the mental attacks. She still saw their gnarly limbs reaching for her when she closed her eyes.

But as they got closer, they lowered their gazes, and their body language changed. Almost as if they were submissive! They stopped right in front of them and didn't make a move—just stopped.

‘What the hell is going on?’ she asked Zeke,

‘I think they cleared the obstacles in our way,’ he answered.

She looked back and saw that, yes, the road was completely clear now. She could get to her father. Without waiting to be told, she started running up the road, forgetting all about the mangy beasts as her anxiousness for her father returned. Shadow came to one side and Diego to the other. Surely they could win now with Julia down and the beasts on their side?

Nyx opened up her senses and pinpointed precisely where that vile man was. It didn't take long to reach the Administration building, where he was sitting on the edge of the fountain, and her father was suspended high over the spherical sculpture in the middle.

He was sitting so casually as if the sight of three demon wolves hurtling towards him didn't faze him at all. Diego was the first to stop, she had to force herself to stop, too. She didn't know why Hansson was still so confident when he had lost all his people.

Hansson's brow rose when he looked at Diego.

"Et tu, Diego?" he asked with a sigh as he stood up and put his hands in his pockets.

Diego shifted.

"You didn't have to do that to Andrei," he growled.

"You know the rules, Diego. If you want him back, along with everyone else, just do your job," Hansson said. "I'm willing to overlook this lapse of judgment if you take your place beside me."

Ava shifted her focus to her father. She didn't care what issues Diego had with Hansson; she just wanted to kill the bastard.

Alpha Roland was conscious, but she didn't know for how long. He looked like he was struggling to breathe. The last time Hansson had tightly bound her, she'd broken a couple of ribs. If Julia was still down with grief, how was Hansson still doing that?

Nyx moved quickly and went for Hansson's neck, but he swatted the air and sent her flying across the driveway. Hansson seemed to have gotten stronger somewhere between snatching her dad off the stage and hanging him over the giant spherical sculpture on the fountain. That was impossible.

Shadow attacked him next and was sent to the opposite side while Hansson continued to speak to Diego. She didn't understand. Their bond supposedly made them a significant threat to Hansson, but he wasn't even breaking a sweat.

"I'm going to kill these two because they're of no use to me now. When I've done that, it will be up to you to decide your fate," Hansson said to Diego.

He turned from Diego to grin at her and then looked up at her father.

"I can make the impact the same as if he's falling from a great height," Hansson said. "I would have kept him alive, you know, but now I feel like I need to eradicate anyone you've ever loved. When I'm done here, I'm going to kill your brothers. Then I'll kill your whole pack."

She looked up at her father and met his gaze.

“I love you,” Alpha Roland whispered.

“Aww,” Hansson said as he sat back on the fountain edge and casually played with the water.

And then she remembered.

She’d sensed the dark magic in that fountain. She’d seen the darkness swirling in its depths the day Dexter’s father had hit his head on it.

That was it. That was what was strengthening him. That was what fed the forest and made it stronger.

‘The fountain,’ she screamed in her head. ‘We need to destroy the fountain!’

Seconds later, she heard the thundering sounds. She felt the vibrations beneath her paws and then saw the army of creatures with glowing purple eyes approaching them.

“What the hell have you done?” Hansson shouted as he stood from the fountain.

He started to chant and wave his hands, sending the creatures flying to the sides, but he only had two hands, and there were so many of the beasts. When Hansson saw he couldn’t stop them, he teleported away from the fountain to keep himself safe.

But he wasn't the target.

She watched as the beasts launched themselves at the fountain one by one. The silver on the markings burnt them, but they didn't stop until the sculpture toppled.

"No!" Hansson screamed.

And that was when she felt his fear.