

Chapter 55

Zeke closed his eyes as he fought off another mental attack from his wolf. It had been more than twenty-four hours, but Shadow was determined. He kept clawing to get out, and all he could see in his head were the images of blood and severed limbs as Shadow showed him his intentions.

‘I will bathe in that wolf’s blood!’

‘And then you will condemn us both to death,’ he argued for the millionth time.

‘You have no idea what we are capable of. You’re weak. You are stronger than all of them, but you still hold us to their standards?’

‘The rules are there for a reason. We can’t break them just because you think this human is yours!’

That made Shadow go on another psychonic tirade that had him griping the chains tightly even though he could smell his flesh burning.

Pain shot through every inch of his body, and the stench of dry and fresh blood assaulted his post. Every part of him was raw from the heavy

chains wrapped and locked around him and the silver bars he was chained to. He could feel the silver poisoning him, and his limbs were already numb. If Shadow didn't give in and give him back his control, he wouldn't last much longer.

Using silver was a stupid way of controlling his wolf. Any other wolf would have been dead by now. If his father knew about this, he would likely never hand down the reins, but he would go through all of this a million times over to finally get what he wanted.

The basement was for emergencies. In the three years he had been at the academy, he'd never had to use this room. It wasn't just the heavy silver chains holding him in place, there was also a spell around the room and it was soundproof. He had screamed his head off in pain for hours, Shadow also barked commands and screamed constantly, but Derek and Myles couldn't hear him. They had also cut off their links to him just to be extra cautious, but only after he commanded them to protect Ava with their lives.

If Shadow had already been their alpha, they would not have been able to cut him off. They would never have had the chance to chain him, and Shadow would have hunted down Claire by now

Not that he blamed Shadow. The poor beast was as much a victim of this bond as he was. He was still struggling to rein in his anger about the state Ava had been in, and he knew that was probably the reason Shadow still had a hold of him. The only thing holding him together was that he could still sense that Ava was asleep. She was okay. And her scent was everywhere in the house and the basement. It wrapped around him, controlling him, stopping him from completely giving in to Shadow.

That fact that another person could control him like this was the reason Ava had to go.

She had already weakened him. The moment he got Shadow under control, he would say those words and reject her. He would take control back from her. The vampires had it wrong – it was a load of bullshit, as his father had said. Or at least he didn't think he had got to the point where he couldn't break this bond without hurting himself or Ava. He hadn't done anything that he thought would cement the bond. They would both be okay.

Wouldn't they?

Part of him recognized that he could sense her so easily now as if she was in the same room. It made him worry that it was too late. But he pushed that thought aside because there was no other option.

'You can mark her, and they will never dare touch her again.'

Would they leave her alone just because she had been claimed by a demon?

Or would they take that as an opportunity to end him? He had too many enemies already. Jared had already somehow sensed this weakness and tried to use it against him; what more a more formidable enemy?

He sensed the moment she woke up, and something washed over him. A sense of calm. Even Shadow calmed down as they paid attention to her movements through the wretched bond. Ava was where Shadow

believed she belonged. Friday night had probably been the best sleep he had ever had, and Shadow had been content just to hold her instead of going after Claire. It felt like she had grounded the beast—something he needed silver and witch spells to do himself.

After a while, he couldn't sense Ava anymore. Was the silver weakening the bond? Or had the stubborn human left the house?

Shadow became agitated again, and he cursed the fact that he was worried, too. He looked at the chains holding him captive. Shadow had already tried to rip the silver bars out several times when he still had a bit of his strength, but now that his energy was almost non-existent, he wouldn't get them without help. They wouldn't be able to help Ava if she was in trouble. Derek and Myles should have kept her in the house.

“Derek!” he growled, but he knew it was useless.

He didn't know how long he had called out until he felt her presence near again. He was breathless, his limbs trembling, and he could feel his body starting to shut-down.

He must have passed out because the next thing he was aware of, he couldn't sense Ava again. The clock on the wall said it was already sundown and there was at least another hour until Derek and Myles came to release him. By then, Shadow would be too weak to do any damage, and he would have enough time to fix his problem with Ava and get some sleep before starting what would hopefully be a more sealed week of lessons.

‘By then, she could be dead,’ Shadow growled weakly.

He tried in vain to link back to his pack mates. Why was Ava not in the house when she was supposed to be sleeping? Were they keeping an eye on her as he had asked?

If she was in trouble, how would he help her like this? Even an Omega could take him down in this state.

He was desperately trying to link his friends when he finally heard Myle’s voice in his head.

‘I’ve followed her. I thought she was just going for a walk because that dick Jared upset her. She’d gone into the forest, Zeke.’

He sucked in a breath, and his heart stopped at the same time the door to the basement opened.

“Shit, Zeke,” Derek said when he came down the stairs and saw him.

“Unchain me,” he growled.

As Derek moved to do what he had ordered, he let Shadow take over. For the first time in a long time, their thoughts aligned.

Ava. They had to get to Ava.

He fell from the bars and pushed Derek away when he came to help. Something was happening. Something changed as he went up the stairs

and rushed out of the house. His heart pounded out of his chest with fear even as a raging fury filled him. But it wasn't aimed at Claire, the coach, or any of the other students who had hurt Ava.

It was aimed at the darkness that wanted to claim Ava.

Something in his mind snapped as his bones broke and his body shifted. The pain caused by the poison in his body mixed with the pain he sensed from Ava.

And then nothing else mattered as he followed her scent.