

Chapter 68

Zeke waited for the phone to ring, but his attention was on the human pacing her room upstairs.

‘You almost marked her.’

He looked at Derek sitting as far away from him as possible in the lounge. Understandable. This was the second time he’d almost snapped his Beta’s neck.

It was true. He had been ready to mark her, Sink his teeth into her and then drop her towel and sink into her. It was taking all his willpower to stop himself from doing that right now.

‘Sorry. Shadow is territorial.’

That had been more than territorial. And it was a lie; he couldn’t put this on Shadow. He had been the one who’d lost his temper because of Derek’s timing. He’d been the one who wanted to see his mark on Ava’s smooth skin. He’d been the one who’d wanted to pin her down underneath him.

And Ava had been willing.

So willing.

He looked up again to concentrate on her movements. He could sense what she was feeling a lot more than before, and she was kicking herself for what happened. His little human still hadn't got her head around the fact that it was all inevitable now. There was no turning back.

She was human, but she had pulled him out of the darkness, something no one else could have done.

'Is he always going to be like that?' Derek asked.

Was Shadow always going to be a maniac when it came to Ava? Probably, So would he. A raging maniac.

'I don't know,' he lied. 'I need to learn more about this, I guess.'

Maybe the librarian could help him again. He couldn't mark Ava until he knew what it would do to her. They didn't turn humans for a reason; most died during the process. He couldn't risk Ava's life like that.

"Something's changed," Myles said from where he was sprawled on another chair, throwing and catching a ball.

"What do you mean?"

"I thought you would be more. I don't know, you seem to be in perfect control of your wolf. Not saying you weren't before," Myles added, "but you seem a lot calmer."

“Are you sure the Council didn’t...”

Didn’t break him. That was what his friends were scared of. But the Council couldn’t break something that was already broken.

“I’m fine. Just need to get my strength back up,” he lied.

His whole life had been about taming his beast, controlling his beast, keeping himself separate from the beast. But it hadn’t been possible to do that in Isolation. There were no walls between them anymore.

The phone rang on the table in front of him. He sighed and answered, making sure to put it on speaker.

“Hello, Father.”

“What the bloody hell have you done? Isolation? What sort of Alpha gets himself put into isolation like you can’t fix any situation that comes your way!” Alpha Erra started,

“It was unavoidable. I fix the problem; don’t worry about that.”

Jared wouldn’t live past graduation. It was only a matter of time.

“Yes, while you were there taking a break in isolation, the vampires were still walking all over us,” his father growled.

A break. He clenched and unclenched his fists.

“The vampires don’t need to be handled. I killed enough of theirs when we first tried to get our wolf back. We’re even.”

He didn’t know where he got the balls to say that, but the silence on the other end of the phone screamed his father’s displeasure.

“Listen to me very carefully, boy, because I will tell you this only once. If you don’t bring that bitch back home, then you will never be Alpha,” his father growled. “I will not be made a fool of by a bunch of blood-sucking, undead ass wipes. Am I clear!”

‘Tell him we will be Alpha with or without his consent,’ Shadow growled.

He wanted to say it Shadow was right. But this man was still his father, and up until his mother had died, he had been a good one.

“Did I make myself clear?” Alpha Ezra shouted

“Yes, Alpha,” he answered.

‘Pussy,’ Shadow said before he curled up and turned his attention back to Ava again.

“Good. I expect it to be resolved by the time I come to visit. Now for the matter of the rogues...”

His attention strayed as he listened to Ava leaving her room. His father was still speaking but he had already stood from his chair to wait in the

doorway. Where was she going? Claire could reappear any moment, and Jared was still out there.

She was really quiet for a human. He had noticed that before. She stepped so lightly that if Shadow's senses weren't stronger than most, she could have managed to sneak past him.

As she came down the stairs, she noticed him and froze. Her heart started pounding again, but he knew she wasn't scared—at least not of him. She was afraid of what she knew he was going to do to her.

“...increased the patrols, but the attacks are almost daily now...”

That got his attention. He looked back at the phone as his father finished speaking a frown on his face. He would need to go and sort that out himself. It seemed his father had allowed it to go too far if they were fending off rogues every day. Organized rogues, by the sound of it.

“I will speak to Beta Lawrence and see if I need to come home,” he said to his father.

His eyes went back on Ava She was still standing in the middle of the stairway as if she was unsure what she should do next. He inclined his head for her to come down, which she did, still stepping lightly.

“...see you at Parents' Weekend with the future Luna...”

He looked at the phone on the table quickly and willed his father to shut his mouth. With everything that had happened after his father's phone

call he had completely forgotten about this. The wolf that his father had chosen for him would visit soon.

“In the meantime, do what I fucking told you to,” his father continued.

And then the line went dead. He breathed a sigh of relief as Ava came to stand in front of him. He had never cared if a girl thought he was with someone else, but with Ava

He would have to fix this as soon as possible. Somehow.

“I’m going to call my family,” Ava said quietly. “I didn’t speak to them last week; they will be worried.”

“Use our phone,” he offered as he walked to pick it up from the coffee table.

“I... I just wanted some air. I think—

“Take the phone and go sit outside.”

He knew that wasn’t what she meant. She wanted space from him, but that wasn’t happening. She wasn’t safe out there, and she knew it.

She saw a little fire in her eyes, and then it died quickly as she looked away from his gaze.

“Fine,” she said.

He placed the phone in her hand and then watched her walk towards the back. He had work to do. His father was bringing academy, he needed to mark Ava before then.

Shadow practically wagged his tail. Being one mind with such a beast was a little bit terrifying. But no one was taking Ava from them.

Not even Ava herself.