

## Chapter 81

Zeke made everyone sleep in the basement. He'd never thought he'd have to use it to hide from the Council, but he was glad that his paranoia about Shadow had made him reinforce that room. He didn't know if it was strong enough to keep them out if they were determined to get Ava, but they hadn't tried.

While his mate and his pack slept, he stayed up, trying to come up with a plan. Ava needed to become stronger to take care of herself if things went wrong for him. That meant he had to mark her as soon as possible and train with her as well.

Mating with a human would weaken him, but it would give Ava the strength to survive.

Only if the mark didn't kill her.

Which meant he had to go back to the library today and hope he hadn't pissed the librarian off too much,

He left the house while the others were still sleeping and let Shadow take over. Usually, he could track anyone, but even with Shadow in control, he felt like he was running around in circles.

He couldn't sense where the Council members were but knew they were still on campus. Their magic was everywhere. They were never so blatant with it, so they must have found out the truth yesterday and were just fucking with him. Were they coming for Ava or not?

He'd really wanted to ask Ava about what she had told them and what they had asked, but not in front of the others. He didn't want to risk telling them anything that would make it harder for them to accept her as his mate.

He finally sensed the Council members. It was as if they had finally decided that he could find them. With his mental walls intact, he rushed to the administration building and saw them standing by the fountain, looking at the water. Iulia stood in the middle with her arms linked with the men's.

“Good morning, Mr, Michelson,” Julia said as he approached, without even turning back to see him. “I trust you slept well?”

Sleep! Very funny. Andrei chuckled beside her, but the demon wolf remained quiet.

“Good morning, ma'am,” he answered.

Yulia reached into the base of the fountain and ran a hand through the water. The silver in the oval ornament in the middle glowed briefly before he sensed a change in the air. He had always known the fountain was significant, with its silver markings in an ancient language, but he still didn't know the purpose of it. But now it seemed it had something

to do with the Council's magic. He would say as far away from it as possible.

"May we help you?" Alpha Diego asked, finally turning around to face him.

He leaned against the fountain and put his hands in his pockets.

"I came to ask the results of your investigation."

"Oh? Why?" the Alpha asked

"Because you alluded that I was a suspect. I want to know what's coming."

"We did no such thing," Andrei said as he turned around, too. "We simply questioned everyone who had seen Miss Hubert the seventy-two hours prior to her disappearance."

"And now we're going home," Iulia said with a shrug as a car came up the driveway and went around the fountain.

Going home?

"What about your investigation?" he asked carefully. He didn't dare let them into his head now,

"What about it?" Andrei asked as he offered Iulia his arm.

"There are students missing."

“Oh, yes. Them. We found them.” Andrei said.

And then he helped Julia into the car without further explanation. Found them where? Were they all back in school! Would they tell him what the hell had happened? Councilor Andrei followed after the witch and slammed the door shut,

Alpha Diego was still leaning against the fountain when he turned back to him, and it didn't look like he would offer any explanations either.

“How have you tamed your wolf?” the Alpha asked as he straightened and started walking to the car.

“Like everyone else, sir,” he answered.

“Only your wolf isn't like everyone else's, is it? It's more like mine,” the councilor said as he opened the other car door. “I look forward to seeing you at the evaluation, Mr. Michelson Perhaps teach your Omega some manners until then.”

And then he got into the car, too. He watched them drive off for a while and didn't move until he started to feel Councilor Yulia's magic dissipate. He had no idea if she could still get him from such a distance, but he didn't dare let his walls down as he started making his way back to his house.

The others had just woken up when he let himself in and took a deep breath. The tension left his body as he stood in the entranceway.

Was this shit really over? Claire wasn't dead, and he did not need to worry about Ava's fate?

"Where have you been?" Ava asked as she approached him quickly. "I don't think it's a good idea to separate yourself from your pack right now. We don't know what the Council is going to do."

Her concern felt genuine. If any good had come out of the Council's visit, it was the fact that she wasn't terrified of him right now. She seemed to have forgotten that she had hidden away from him all weekend after he had dealt with Jared's pack, though why she had been so scared was beyond him.

"Maybe because she knows you want to mount her."

Shadow had a way with words. He said nothing about that as he looked into the big blue eyes of the human whose soul had been intertwined with his.

"They're gone," he told her,

Derek and Myles walked out of the lounge when he said that, looking at him for confirmation of his statement.

"We won't see them again until evaluations," he added.

"But why? What happened?"

He looked down at his little human again. Maybe tonight he would ask why she'd had Claire's blood all over her.

“It doesn’t matter. But they’re not through with us yet,” he said. “Go and have something to eat and get ready. You’ll be training with me every morning from now on.”

“Why?” Ava asked, taking a step back from him.

“Because I need you to be able to protect yourself. Mock evaluations start on Friday. You’ve been struggling in training, but the evaluations are... More dangerous. You need to prepare yourself.”

He didn’t want to tell her about Claire just yet, not if it brought her fear back. But he would stick to her side like glue no matter how uncomfortable it made her.

“I can fight-“ Ava started.

“It’s not a negotiation, Ava. Move.”

He could tell by how she shut her mouth and color appeared on her cheeks that he had pissed her off. Fire filled her eyes as it had before all this shit had started happening. As he waited for the inevitable refusal, he saw why Shadow wanted this human’s submission so much. For such a strong-willed human, her submission would mean he had earned her trust. It would mean she would give herself to him completely.

“I will train by myself,” she growled before turning away from him and storming towards the stairs.

He couldn't stop the groan that came out of his lips as his need for her intensified. Yes, he was going to mount her. Soon.