

The Beast And The Blessed

Chapter 184

Eight: Charlie

Charlie P.O.V.

I watched Damien out of the corner of my eye as he moved to the line of clothes Paxton had left up overnight to dry.

Paxton was probably the closest to Damien's height, but Damien's thighs and hips were a lot larger and way more muscular than Paxton's.

My jaw dropped as Damien pulled them on, getting the zipper up a few inches but leaving the button undone. The trail of dark hair leading down beneath the fabric made me very happy indeed, and I had to swallow hard to keep from drooling.

His hand slid into the pants, adjusting himself and making my body burn hotter. Could he smell how aroused I was?

My cheeks felt like they were on fire, and I turned away from him, running my hand over my chest to wipe away any perspiration. The less evidence there was of my wild hormones, the better. I had never understood how out-of-control mates would act in public, but I finally understood because I wanted to throw caution to the wind and climb Damien like a tree.

Everything I had ever been taught about composing myself and masking my emotions went right out the window with him around. I felt Damien walk up next to me as I bent down, grabbed the knife, and easily sliced through the meat.

He was too damn close. I knew if I lifted my hand, I could touch him.

I cleared my throat before speaking to save myself from the additional embarrassment of my voice cracking. "Did you bring my dagger this time?"

He sat on the ground next to me, leaning back against the log behind him where I usually sat. I had moved the log back before bringing the deer in to make room for me to work.

It was proper not to sit in a chair higher than the princess, and I felt myself tense. Did he know who I was, or had he just wanted to sit next to me?

He didn't look at me, his eyes glued to the small fire I would have to build up before hanging the pot over it. "Do your men leave you here alone often? ■

My head pulled back at the anger in his tone. "We take turns. We can't all leave the camp at once. Whoever stays behind is responsible for cooking for the day and ensuring no animals or people ransack our things."

He didn't like the answer. His hands clasped together with his forearms resting on his knees.

"I can handle myself," I whispered, suddenly feeling inadequate. Damien didn't need to say it for me to know what was happening in his head. It was the same thing Killian said when he saw me walking around without bodyguards, that I was an easy target, weak compared to most men.

It was ridiculous. I could cut down a full-blooded Lycan with my sword before they could lay a finger on me.

"I don't doubt that."

I let out a deep breath, relieved that he wasn't treating me like my brother did. Even my men had taken a while to come around to the idea of me being left on my own. I had to knock them to the dirt several times before they accepted that I was one of them and could hold my own.

I earned my spot here and wouldn't ever be ashamed of it.

Things were quiet but comfortable between us as I cut up the meat and placed it in the pot with the vegetables and potatoes Diego had, hopefully, purchased in town. His slippery little fingers were good for saving money, but we never needed to worry about that.

I didn't carry it around with me, but I had more money in the bank than we could ever require and took care of my men.

When I was done and had washed my hands from the pot of clean, boiled water we kept on the edge of the camp, I sat back down next to Damien. He had been so patient with me, but I felt his stare the entire time I cooked.

I even felt him press his thigh against mine a few times, but he would pull away after a few seconds.

"Why do you call me Charlotte instead of Charlie?" I whispered, wanting to break the silence but keep the comfort between us. The last thing I wanted was for him to leave again. I wanted to spend as much time with him as I could.

"Because that was how you introduced yourself first. I figured there was a reason you gave me that name before your nickname." His head tipped to the side as he stared at me for a long moment. "Do you want me to call you Charlie or Charlotte?"

Both variations of my name rolled off his tongue so beautifully that I wanted to ask him to repeat them.

"Either one works,' I choked out, pushing at one of the rocks surrounding the fire pit with the toe of my shoes.

Damien let out a low chuckle, and I bit my lip to stop from smiling at the sound.

"You confuse me," I admitted, turning to stare at him. His beard had grown longer over the past two weeks since I first saw him.

It wasn't extreme. Damien kept it trimmed, and it looked incredible on him. It was slightly lighter than his jet-black hair and made him look dangerous." You refuse to accept that we are mates or even the possibility of it. But you're here, and you don't have to be. You chose to be here. What do you want from me, Damien?"

The pull to him was undeniable, and it didn't make sense how he could so easily dismiss it. "I feel drawn to you, Charlotte. More than I have to any woman before."

My head pulled back, and a sick feeling swirled in my gut. I wanted to be happy that he felt a bond with me, but hearing him admit that he had been with other women was hard to swallow. It wasn't even singular; it was plural Multiple women.

"You didn't like hearing that," Damien said, his eyes narrowed. His tone sounded confused and curious, and I knew it was because he expected that I had been with other men. Lycans were very intimate creatures; most had been with several different partners before hitting their twenties, let alone finding their mates. Instead of addressing it, he avoided that conversation altogether. We weren't there yet. "The pull toward you is strong, Charlotte, irresistible."

His arm dropped from his bent knees in front of him, and he trailed his finger up my thigh. Goosebumps followed his touch, and sparks shot through my system as he moved it higher in delicate circles.

"Yes." I agreed with a gasp.

He released a low growl as his hand flattened against the top of my thigh, his fingers curling around to slide between my legs but staying several inches below my shorts.

Damien was challenging me. I knew it, but I still fell for his trap anyway. I was furious that he had been with other women when I had been waiting for him, but it was more than that. I felt this primal need to claim him as mine.

I wanted him to know and accept that he belonged to me, and I belonged to him. Other women needed to stay away from him, and if he wanted to seek release...

My body was moving before I could think rationally. Damien let his legs slide out in front of him as I threw my leg over his, straddling him.

"Because the only woman you should be touching is me, Damien. 'We' are just a matter of time. I can be patient. But if you want someone to take

care of you, I'm the only one you should be coming to." My hand trailed down his chest, and his body shook. I wanted to brand him, mark him... claim him.

"Charlotte." His growl when I reached the trail of hair leading down into his pants made me grow instantly wet and managed to ease all of my worries.

I hadn't known what I was doing, but he seemed to enjoy it. I could fake confidence. I had been doing it for over two decades.

"Damien. Tell me to stop if you don't want this." I leaned in, my lips brushing against his as I spoke.

The silence lasted a second too long for my comfort, and I was about to pull away when he grabbed the back of my head and crashed his lips against mine. It was rough and primal. He sucked on my bottom lip, nibbling on it.

My lips parted with a sigh of pleasure, and his tongue met mine.

I moaned as his hands grabbed my ass and pulled me against his hips, rubbing my core against him. As much as I wanted him there, I wanted to touch and taste him more. I wanted to show him that I could take care of him and that he wouldn't need anyone else.

My hand slipped into his pants, the zipper working its way down the last few centimeters as I wrapped my fingers around his thick and hard cock. It was awkward to stroke him beneath the pants, and I pulled at the fabric with my other hand, trying to free him.

He lifted his hips from the ground, and I grabbed his shoulders to steady myself as he worked the pants down a little, breaking our kiss. "Fuck, Charlotte."

His groan did something to me that made me feel wild and seductive. As I grabbed him again, I watched my hand go up and down his length. He was massive, and it took everything in me not to tear off my shorts and sink down on him.

I was mesmerized by how the skin moved with my hand as I pumped his length, and a small bead of white formed at his tip. It was the most attractive thing I had ever seen, and the thumb of my other hand ran over it before pulling my finger up to my mouth.

"Mh," I hummed at the delicious taste just before he grabbed my head and pulled me back to him. His fingers fumbled with the button to my shorts, and I was about to tell him to rip them off when he pulled back, panting.

Laughter in the distance startled me back to reality, but he held me tightly to him, not ready to let go.

I wasn't either, but I knew he wouldn't be comfortable with my men finding us in this position. I jumped off his lap, running my tongue over my raw lips and fixing my top that had ridden up to be just under my breasts as Damien got to his feet.

Even after he pulled his pants back up, the tip of his cock was still visible above the waistband, and I couldn't help the rush of desire that made its way between my legs. Touching it was one thing, but now that I had a taste... I wanted another.

The tip of it glistened with a small amount of wetness from where my thumb had wiped away his pre-cum. I swallowed hard, still able to taste Damien on my tongue.

I wanted more. More than what he had given me, more than what he could give me, and more than my heart could take if he didn't want me forever.

Damien's fingers grabbed a section of my hair, pulling on it so slightly that I barely felt it before he fingered the front of my top and pulled me to him again. My chest pressed against his, and he bent down, stealing one last scorching kiss that made my toes curl before walking us toward the river with his hand in mine.

"Why did you come here today?" My question made his black eyes shoot over to meet mine when we reached the fallen tree we had been using as a bridge, and I felt my heart thump unevenly in my chest when his lips pulled up.

"To give you back your dagger," He said, his voice thick with amusement. We had already established that he didn't bring it. A wide smile stretched across my lips as he repeated the same words from the river, promising me more time with him. "I'll return it to you later."