

Chapter 2 - Their Burning Touch on my Skin

Chapter 2

EMMA - One Week Before

Her deafening scream rips through the air, the earth trembling as she gets blue flames to break out of the ground rupture that she is creating.

I keep myself from panicking but can't prevent my body from taking a step back automatically as the ground opens towards me, risking to bury me alive.

The air is crackling, and my skin sizzles, threatened by the furious flames as the heat seems to take over the room, transforming it into an apocalyptic scenario.

I know that it isn't more than just a hallucination.

A mix between her mother's powers and the ability to create illusions she got from her father.

The hypnotic ability, strengthened and enhanced by a powerful vampire that she as a hybrid morphed into an insane ability.

Even if she hasn't realized it yet.

"Serena, you will calm down right now," Aunt Artemisia says in a serious tone. "You have no right to disrupt Emma's lessons."

I knead the hands in my lap as I see the little girl stomp into the ground as the illusion disappears just as fast as it was created. "This is unfair! You promised you would bake cookies with me."

Aunt Artemisia shifts in her seat, scrunching up her nose as she holds her arm. "Baby, not now. I told you that when I would be back we could do that and watch a movie together, but Emma has a lesson with me now, hasn't she?"

"Yeah," Serena sulks.

"So, will you wait for us or do you want me to ask Alberta to bake with you?"

The question makes Serena look between us with big eyes and she starts entangling her fingers in her dress as she seems to think about it.

Just as she stomps her foot slightly, and wants to protest once again to get her will, the door opens, and Logan enters the music room with a frown. "What's all that screaming about?"

I chuckle, surprised that as Gamma and one of Aunt Artemisia's mates, he hadn't shown up here earlier.

"Nothing. We are just having a little talk about the importance of priorities, aren't we?" Aunt Artemisia tilts her head, and Serena looks up at Logan.

"I will wait," she finally says, running out of the room.

We laugh, and Logan shakes his head. "Are you sure that you don't want to rest, my love? Everyone would understand that. Right, Emma?"

"Of course," I confirm quickly, looking back at Aunt Artemisia.

But she flashes him a tired smile, declining any help as she always does. "I'm alright. You always worry too much about me."

"What else would I be doing with my life," Logan says chuckling as he crosses the room to reach her. "It's my job after all."

She closes her eyes as he kisses the top of her head and turns around to walk back out. "Emma will tell me if you are overdoing it, and I'll come to make you rest, right, Emma?"

He grins at me and I nod happily. "I'd tell you right away, Gamma."

"Thank you," he mouths while Aunt Artemisia groans.

As soon as he is gone, she turns to the piano fully again. "I'm surrounded by traitors," she says jokingly, making me giggle.

"No, just with too many people who care for you," I answer happily, making her roll her eyes, even if I can see the joy spreading in her expression.

I see her flinch as she pushes a key on the piano, and I have to resist the urge to address it once again.

Crossing my hands in front of me, I sing the note, following the other notes she plays.

"Very good." She smiles as she hits another scale, making me sing another set of notes.

I have always loved my singing lessons with her as a teacher. And even if it was just for me to get me to stop stuttering and regain the full power of my voice, I started enjoying it as a hobby.

And seeing her in pain is definitely not what I want.

It's the worst.

Especially since I know that she puts herself under a higher amount of 'testing' than she would have to because she wants to keep them from testing me.

'We seem to have the same type of wolf anyway.'

I remember the words she said to me that day loud and clearly.

And I still suffer at the thought that I had been too scared to go against them and left her alone in this.

Closing my eyes, I sing a higher scale, squeezing my hands together.

I can literally feel the pain rolling off her and I finally take a step forward. "Are you sure that you are okay? Your wolf doesn't seem to be healing you."

"Ugh, they gave her something to make her keep still and not act up when they cut pieces out of my flesh. I guess that she is still processing that poison." I flinch as she laughs out loud, shaking her head. "But it was all for nothing because Fynn was the one accompanying me."

I lift my brow, and she puts her hand in front of her lips.

"Sorry."

Chuckling, I watch her eyes sparkle as she tries to apologize for something she actually doesn't feel sorry for. "What did the Beta do?"

"Not much. He just enabled Drake to take over as they took their samples. And with the statement 'if you get a piece of my mate, I'll get a piece of you' bit off the doctor's arm."

We press our lips together simultaneously, to keep us from laughing and we nearly would have failed, if it wasn't for Serena bursting into the room again.

"Serena, I told you that-" Aunt Artemisia starts but Serena interrupts her right away.

"Mom, what's the Royal Court?" she asks, her hand still clasping the doorknob.

Aunt Artemisia's eyes widen, our faces falling as we look at the girl fidgeting at the door. "Where did you get that term from?"

"Dad is yelling at some people at the door. They said they are the royal court," Serena explains, making Aunt Artemisia jump up.

Her nails bury into my arm as she hisses. "Watch her. Stay back."

She scurries past me, out of the room and down the stairs, and we follow her to the other wing to reach the main entrance.

As soon as we have crossed the wing doors, we already hear Alpha Cayden's voice streaming towards us.

Aunt Artemisia increases her pace while we slow down, setting on the top of the stairs to watch from afar.

"I don't care what you are! You could be descendants of the Moon Goddess herself. You can't come on my territory without previous permission," he growls at two men, who look a bit scared.

But who could ever blame them?

Their red uniforms with the golden crest show that they are indeed coming from the royal territory.

"Alpha Cayden, if I m-" one of the men starts, but gets interrupted right away.

"No! You just spent hours torturing my wife! Haven't you done enough already?" He continues to rant just as Aunt Artemisia reaches him, laying her hand on his arm.

I hug Serena closer as she looks at the scene as lost as I do, and I love how the Luna gets to calm the angry Alpha right away.

"Darling, what is going on here?" she asks, and I can't even sense the slightest trembling in her voice, even if I know how much she was afraid of this.

"They are here to pick up Serena," Cayden snarls, his voice lowered immensely as he talks to his wife. "I already mind-linked Hendrick. He is on the way."