

## Chapter 33

### Brave Girl

Ava's pace slowed as she reached her hallway only to find someone waiting for her outside of her bedroom door. And not just anyone, either. Madison.

For a split second, Ava debated whether or not she should just turn back around and avoid whatever this situation was altogether. Maybe Bella would let her sleep on the couch in her office?

Goddess knew that the woman was busy, and Ava hadn't wanted to bring yet another problem to her doorstep - especially not something so juvenile as a petty... rivalry? That didn't seem right. Ava had no issue with the girl other than the fact that Madison seemed to have a raging hard-on for Ava's job.

She was just about to beat a hasty retreat when Madison spotted her, perking up from where she'd stood leaning against the wall beside her door.

Sighing, Ava resigned herself to dealing with the girl quickly so that she could just be done with this long ass day. Straightening her shoulders, Ava consciously injected confidence into her stride. Instead of walking to meet Madison, Ava aimed right past her, heading for her door.

"What are you doing here, Madison?" Ava asked while digging out her key card.

Madison had the grace to duck her head, looking properly contrite. "I...I'm sorry for what happened. You know...the other night."

Ava frowned. Madison's tone didn't match her words or demeanor. She sounded hesitant and sullen, as if she didn't want to say the apology, but felt that giving one was in order just to get it out of the way. The girl had come her for a reason other than to apologize for her disgraceful behavior, Ava knew that for certain.

She only shook her head in unspoken distaste and swiped her key card over her door handle. Her first instinct had been the correct one - the best course of action was for Ava to simply ignore the waitress. Soon enough, she'd find another target for her catty grievances. Girls like her always did.

When Ava's door beeped, Madison's head shot up. Suddenly, her hand was gripping Ava's wrist, halting her from opening the door. "Wait!" she cried. "W-who were you meeting up on eight yesterday? Who was..."

Ava whipped her head around to glare into the other girl's emphatic blue eyes. When Madison had attacked her the other night, she'd practically towered over Ava who'd been barefoot at the time. This time, Ava had the height advantage in her platformed stilettos.

Like the coward she was, Madison flinched back, her intrusive questions trailing off as she realized that Ava was bigger than her tonight. She released her hold on Ava's wrist and lowered her eyes, biting her lip. Hmm, the waitress might not have much experience with Wolves, but the girl was starting to get the hang of things.

Ava curled her lip, "I didn't meet with Dylan Miller, if that's what you're so worried about."

Madison's shoulder immediately lost some of the tension holding them rigid, only for her to tense right up again. Madison's cheeks went beet red as she began to stammer, "I'm...I'm not talking about Dylan Miller." The girl straightened and shook back her curly blond hair. She was clearly trying to regain the upper hand as she lifted her chin and crossed her toned arms across her chest. "I just came here to apologize. That's all."

Ava held Madison's haughty gaze for one moment...two. There was no genuine regret in the girl's eyes. In fact, she was practically glaring at her. Normally, Ava wouldn't care, and honestly didn't care, now. But the hypocrisy of it all was the fact that Madison, for all of her self-righteousness, clearly coveted Ava. For what, she didn't know.

"Is that it?" Ava asked.

Ideally, she hoped that the girl would just come out and say what she'd come here to say. Then they'd finally be able to get it out of the way, and there'd be absolutely no reason for Madison to darken her doorstep again. Instead, Madison bulked, "Excuse me?"

In a snap, Madison's entire demeanor changed from one of forced politeness, to someone ready for a verbal skirmish.

"Right. Well, we're done here." Ava swiped her card again.

"Hey!" Madison snapped, "I said sorry." She took a step forward only to freeze in place when Ava levelled her with a lethal glare.

"And I don't accept. I don't need an apology from you, Madison. The kindest thing you can give me is your absence."

Without looking back, Ava stepped into her room and shut the door in the human girl's fuming face.

Madison stood staring at the solid wood door that had just been unceremoniously slammed in her face.

The door to the hallway opened and a couple more of the club's streetwalkers passed her on their way up the corridor. Their eyes lingered on her, noting how she was standing dejected and alone. And she had no doubt they knew exactly who's door she was standing in front of.

She turned away and quickly headed down the hall in the opposite direction of the escorts. Madison could swear she heard them giggling as she hurried off. They were laughing at her.

Cursing to herself, she hit the stairs running, storming down flight after flight.

Who did Ava think she was?! Madison didn't care who she was connected to, Ava was a trashy little nobody who was ruining everyone else's opportunities. And everyone knew it, even if they were too chicken shit to say it. But Madison wasn't. She'd just been humiliated by that dusty little tramp for the last time.

Madison reached a staff bathroom and splashed some water on her face, trying to cool down her jagged nerves. When she came up for air, she

caught sight of her own reflection and, just like magic, Madison found herself recentered.

She was beautiful, there'd never been a question about that. Ever since Madison could remember, people had told her she was gonna be a stunner, a future heartbreaker. And future hadn't taken long, either. With her golden ringlets and beach blue eyes, Madison had been loving and leaving them since she'd learned to bat her lashes.

She was everything Ava wasn't. Madison had a body to die for - toned and curvaceous in perfect measure. Unlike Ava who was short and Olsen twin slim.

And worst of all, no one else knew what she knew. No one else had seen the heinous beast lurking inside of the ditzy little twit. If it killed her, she'd show everyone what a monster Ava was.

Madison shuddered, remembering Ava's gnarly half-changed Wolf form snarling just feet away from her. Madison had a few Wolf friends - the Northeast was so fucking liberal; you were labeled a bigot if you didn't have at least one. She'd seen them transform a time or two, and never had she seen one that looked like Ava's.

She was saved from her dark revery when her cell phone rang, "Yeah?"

"You've been requested in 701."

Madison straightened, "Requested? By whom?"

The girl on the other end gave the verbal equivalent of a shrug, "Jared didn't mention."

Madison hung up the phone, confusion and excitement making her heart pound. The seventh floor had nothing on the eighth, but the clients there were nothing to sneeze at, either. One lucky night up there could set her up for life, just like she'd always intended. And she wouldn't even have to lay on her back to do it.

Madison took the time to fix her makeup, slathering on the bright pink gloss that always made her look like girl-next-door sexy. She made her way up to the private suite and took a deep breath before knocking. She was charming and smoking hot. If her loaded future husband was in there, it was only a matter of smiling at the right times, a pretty giggle here and there, and she'd be set. No one would ever be able to make her feel less-than again.

When she opened the door, the butterflies in her stomach turned to lead. Instead of the Adonis-types that were a staple of the eighth floor, this suite was filled with greasy, overweight geezers.

One with hair that was way too dark for his age and no neck to speak of, slid his eyes up and down her body. Madison's skin crawled under his lecherous inspection.

"You must be the...spirited young cocktail waitress we've heard so much about." He laughed.

Determined not to let the slimy pigs see her sweat, Madison lifted her chin, "Madison Harris. Sir."

The men shared another conspiratorial laugh. "Brave girl, indeed!"

With noticeable effort, he rose to his disproportionately small feet, "Since you're so brave, would you care to indulge us in a game we like to play?"

‘Click’. Madison spun around to find that one of the men had gone behind her and engaged the door's deadbolt.

She was trapped.