

Chapter 46

She Is A Monster

Xavier stared up at Ava, were just moments before, she'd been slaking the firestorm raging in his blood. Their bond had deepened, giving Ava glimpses of himself that weren't meant for anyone's eyes but his own.

He'd balked at the pity in her eyes - at the fact that after all that she'd gone through, she still had it in her spirit to find sympathy for the likes of those who caused her pain.

That was something Xavier couldn't reconcile. The idea of mercy had become so foreign to him, that he still struggled with the idea of forgiving Ava amidst the well of doubt. Vengeance and retribution had become his bread and wine, and the knowledge that Ava could just...move past her own, floored him. Agitated him.

So, he pushed her. Because that was what he did. His need to punish Ava had subsided considerably, in its place had come a needling craving to push her boundaries. The dominant in him wanted to see how much she could take and reveled every time she rolled her eyes and talked back.

It was so close to the easy rapport they'd developed in their youth. Except, now, the banter was undercut with a yearning desire.

After he'd cut her off from the bond and erected his maze of barriers, she'd navigated them so beautifully, met his simmering need for chaos with her own. He'd been aching to take her then and there. Willing to meet her in the only way he knew how.

But, then she'd been the one to pull away.

"You need to go," Xavier said, finally. He moved to rise to his feet and Ava slid easily off of her seat on his lap. He strode over to the door and held it open, silently waiting for her to leave.

She did, without a fuss. As she passed him in the doorway, she paused, "Are you going to- "

"I got what I wanted, Ava." He nodded for her to keep going, and after a loaded glance, she did. She nodded at the guards who acknowledged her back and exited the suite without once looking back.

Xavier's test tightened, but he refused to waste any more time pulling those threads today. Twice today, Ava had rejected him, and there was nothing left to do but move on from the hollow feeling in his bones. He'd do well with a break from the constant space she took up at the forefront of his mind.

"Bring her in."

A sullen Madison sidled through the door, making sure to give Xavier a wide berth as she made her way across the room to take a seat in one of the chairs sitting across from his desk. He followed her on silent feet, making sure not to make any sudden moves that could potentially cause her to clam up.

At this point, Xavier wanted this mess over and done with almost as much as Ava did.

He took a seat and took a moment to study the human girl as he gathered his thoughts. She was already on the defensive, with her arms crossed tightly over her chest and one leg jogging impatiently. She was ready for a fight, but unfortunately for her, Xavier had had enough verbal sparring for one day.

"You sent Ava to Room 701. Why?" He posed his words largely as a statement, not leaving any room for argument. Of course, that didn't mean that the obstinate girl wouldn't try anyway.

"I said that I didn't."

"I know what you've said, Madison. I also know what you did. Now, I want to know why."

Her hands balled into fists as she bared her teeth, "What, did she come in here and tell you that I set her up? I bet she did, didn't she? Ava Davis is the most self-absorbed person I've ever met in my life and that demon skank has it out for me and everyone else here."

Xavier tilted his head to one side, as if taking her criticism of Ava's behavior into consideration, "Do you feel this way for any reason in particular, Madison?"

"She's greedy. And selfish. And lazy." She sneered, "Ever since she got here, she's been hoarding all of easy clients from the other workers, taking all of their money and doing a fraction of the work they do every day. Even then, giving sad, flabby geezers pep talks was still too much work, so she moved into my territory. Ava's a whore, so she should be whoring. There shouldn't be a reason for her to be taking waitstaff assignments. No one else does!" Xavier gritted his teeth against his building urge to lash

out at the vapid welp. Instead, he nodded for her to continue, and she did so gladly.

"People work their asses off for years for the chance of making it onto the eighth floor and never get the opportunity. I've been in this cesspit for two years and have only gotten invited up once. Ava's been here all of five minutes and she's sent up there daily. How is that fair? She doesn't offer anything special and yet you and Sutton allow her to monopolize all of our best clients."

This caught Xavier's attention. He leaned forward, "Best clients, like who?"

Madison gave a non-committal shrug, "I've seen her messing around with all kinds of people. People like you. I mean, she's up on the eighth floor every night, I doubt she leaves alone." "Focus Madison."

She huffed out an aggravated breath, "I catch her falling over Dylan Miller all the time. He used to be so nice and attentive to the rest of us, but Ava's had him climatized for months. He used to be one of our favorite clients, but he hasn't spent a dime on another girl since Ava showed up."

Xavier felt himself begin to frown. In spite of himself, he was beginning to be drawn into this spiteful human's diatribe, "Falling over Miller, how?"

"I've caught them in the stairwell more than once with their hands all over each other," she said through gritted teeth. "And she's taken him back to her room a couple of times."

Xavier thought about how close Dylan had, himself, admitted that he and Ava had grown over the last few weeks. All the while she could hardly stand to be in his presence.

The voracity of Dylan's affection was on display even as recently as last night. After all, the male had been looking for Ava even before they'd realized she was missing. And when they'd finally found her, he hadn't hesitated to exact retribution on the ones who had hurt her.

Xavier had warned the other male off right then and there, and he'd known the male long enough that he knew Miller would likely respect his request. It still irked him to no end that while he'd been off trying for the life of himself to avoid further antagonizing his mate, Miller had been here actually courting her.

All at once, Xavier became far too tired for this bullshit. His thoughts were...all-consuming, as if a horde of riled up wasps had taken up residence where his brain should be. To be clear, he'd been operating at this level to varying capacities ever since Ava had fallen back into his life.

Needless to say, it made higher cognitive processing...hard. Exhausting. And tonight was the night that it suddenly became too much.

Xavier stood abruptly, cutting off Madison's ongoing stream of rancid consciousness.

He couldn't be bothered to continue listening to her deluded - if mildly compelling - attack against Ava. As ridiculous as the girl was, her blatant vindictiveness did serve a purpose in giving him much to consider. Just not tonight. "Alright, Madison. I think we're done here." Xavier made his way over to his office door and pulled it open, beckoning for his guards to come retrieve their charge. "Take her to Ms. Sutton. Tell her to deal with her employee as she sees fit." Madison rose with a cautious eye on the guards, looking ready to bolt at a moment's notice, "So, this is it? Whatever happened to Grace and Lola is going to happen to me because I had the nerve to speak out."

Xavier paused as Madison's eyes blazed with indignant fury. He blinked slowly before addressing her, "I assure you that you're not worth the effort."

She stiffened at the callousness in his words, but he only increased the derision in his tone, letting Madison know exactly what he thought of her, "You're a poor excuse for a living being, Madison. And I can only hope that the rest of the individuals under my employ have an iota more common sense than you seem to."

With that, Xavier nodded at the guards prompting them forward to finish gathering Madison. The human girl was simmering with venom, but she

didn't fight against the guards this time. When she passed, he gave her one final condemning look, "To me, you're nothing but a lost cause. But she plead on your behalf anyway. Wherever you end up, I hope you remember that."

As he could have anticipated, she wasn't mollified by his assurance in the least, shaking her head in disgust. "You're a liar, or a fool for believing her. She might look innocent and sweet on the outside, but she's a monster on the inside." She leaned in and spat, "I've seen it. Take a look at her Wolf, where she can't hide it. Ava Davis is a fucking monster."