

Chapter 97

Artemis wasn't bluffing when she said the magic was stronger when we shifted. I hadn't shifted in a while so I hadn't noticed but the minute I changed from human to wolf, I felt like an entirely different person.

Artemis was stronger. The little training we'd received was certain to make a difference in confronting Skylar but the magic we now had was everything we needed and so much more.

When she moved, she moved with better grace, than ever before.

Skylar's wolf and Artemis met midair, rolling off to the ground but not before Skylar smacked the edge of Valens' desk. I was atop her when we went down, my claws digging into her brown wolf.

She tried to wiggle out of my grip, tried to get my claws dislodged from her neck but Artemis had a far superior grip than she expected; it was evident in the surprise in the wolf's eyes.

I wasn't the timid girl she used to know. I was not where I wanted to be, having barely hit half of my full potential, but I was far, far away from the person she used to know.

Images of the past flashed through my mind as if to remind me I was not angry enough. But I remembered the days she had bullied me, humiliated me, beat me, and made me feel worthless and sorry for myself. I was angry for things she had stolen from me, the life she had ruined, and for Lucien. She'd ruined him and a part of me, a small part, grieved the friend I had lost.

The wolf underneath me clawed at my face frantically, getting the upper hand as I ducked to avoid having my eyes gouged out. My weight away, she managed to push me off her. She backed away from me, snarling as she did, her eyes filled with rage, bl**d darkening her fur.

She circled, or tried to; a desk stood between the two of us. The man on the floor groaned but she didn't care. She had her eyes on her prey and nothing else mattered to her at that point.

The brown wolf snarled and charged at me with every inch of her covered with murder intent.

She slammed me to the ground as she pounced on me, her teeth going straight for my neck. I pushed her off me with enough force that she landed many feet away, her claws scratching the ground.

This time, I went at her. She was bleeding still, losing her strength. If I engaged her for longer, she would have no choice but to surrender. Or she could pass out like her mate over at the corner. I swiped at her face, leaving deep claw marks. To my surprise, a dark gooey substance started to leak from the wound.

The wolf stumbled backwards, the fur on her skin starting to recede. Unfortunately, she was stuck between shifts. She kept flickering from wolf to man, never fully there, while I stood, confused.

What is this?' I asked my wolf who was as perplexed as I was.

It's poison, Artemis replied in a quiet voice, looking down at her paws.

I felt my ch3st tighten, becoming unbearably hot.

The only time I ever felt like this was when I unknowingly ate a too-spicy meal.

With the feeling of discomfort, bordering on pain, in my ch3st spreading to my stomach, I took a step back on wobbly feet. Skylar seemed to be

getting a grasp of herself although she looked terrified, like she would flee any moment from now.

‘No, A voice whispered in my head. It was an unfamiliar voice. You go nowhere,’ the voice came again as Artemis advanced. It did sound a bit like my wolf but not quite. I felt I could recognize it but I could not.

Before I knew it, Artemis was rising to her hind legs, her front paws raised at Skylar.

‘Rest well,’ I heard the strange voice in my head before an invisible force slammed into Skylar right as she decided it was best to run. It slammed her to the ground, picked her up, and whipped her back down. Then repeated the motion several times until a shelf collapsed atop the wolf.

Artemis went back on all fours, snarling at the rubble Skylar was buried underneath. She was pawing at the rubble when the door opened to let in Jabari and two warriors, Gavin included.

“What the – You are bleeding.” He picked me up and carried me from the room while I was stuck in my wolf form. We got to the car and he ordered the men downstairs to join those upstairs in retrieving Skylar and her mate. They were going straight to the dungeons.

“She’s injured,” Jabari sounded frantic as he explained to the nurse who directed us to a ward.

“And it seems she is unable to shift.”

“She is in shock. It is a normal occurrence for wolves in shock to have trouble with shifting,”

Jabari put me on the bed, letting the nurse attend to me. “I will clean her injuries before the doctor arrives,” the nurse smiled at him. I could feel the anxiousness wafting off him and it made me anxious too.

“Do you know who this is?” He pointed at me, glaring at the nurse while he paced a bit. This is your Luna,” he almost snarled. “F*ck, Valens’ going to have my neck when he wakes up.”

When he what?’ My wolf snarled.

“Beta, please help me get a doctor,” the nurse said when she noticed my anxiousness. Jabari left with a grumble. He was just out the door when I shifted.

“Where is my mate?” I looked around frantically as if expecting him to be seated somewhere in the ward. I pushed out of the bed.

“Ay- Luna, at least put on some clothes!” The nurse flung a hospital gown at me before I rushed out of the room.

She – I ran into Jabari and the doctor he went to get” She has shifted. Aysel, what are you doing?

Your face is injured!” I touched my face and it was indeed bleeding. Skylar had scratched me and it wasn’t healing up fast enough and my shifting back must have worsened the injury.

“Where is Valens?” I interrupted him.

The Alpha got shot but is –

“You were not supposed to tell her that!” Jabari exclaimed at the doctor.

“What!?” I yelled at the same time as Jabari. “He got what? Where is he?”

“We took out the bullet. He is-“

“Where is he!” I yelled at the poor doctor. I would apologize later but then, my adrenaline was running high.

“If – if you would follow me, he is this way. I treated him myself and I followed the doctor and he led me to another end of the hospital. I

rushed into the room to see my mate laid out on a bed, still as the dead and without any color.

He looked terrible, hooked up with so many tubes.

“What happened?” I asked the doctor who Jabari was glaring at.

“He was shot by some punk. We have him in custody,” Jabari answered.

“He – he doesn’t look good.” I took his hands and they were cold. He didn’t move. His chest was hardly moving, making me wonder if he was truly alive.

“He had a bit of silver poisoning but we were quick to suck it out after taking out the bullet.

The Alpha is a strong man. His wolf has done much of the work, making him recover faster than anyone else I have ever treated with a silver bullet in their chest.”

“His chest?” The more the doctor spoke, the more I lost my mind. Things just kept getting worse the more he talked. “He – how long has he been like this?”

“He got here a few hours ago. We were –

“Rather than gossip, you should be treating her injury!” Jabari snapped at the doctor who he did not like.

“It seems to be healing quite nicely,” the doctor said. Whatever thing he saw in Jabari’s eyes made him change his mind. “But of course, we don’t want the injury to get infected. I shall get a nurse.” The doctor left without further ado.

“I am sorry. I have failed you once again,” Jabari bowed his head. “I got a call that Valens was shot right as you left and I forget my priorities yet again. I deeply apologize.”

“I am fine. Is he really okay?” I directed the attention back to my mate.

“He is. Can you do me a favor though?” I looked up at him. “Can we not tell him what happened.

“I am going to fu*k**g kill you.” We heard a quiet rasp interrupt us.

Valens!” I turned to my mate, eyes wide. “You are alive!” He was and he looked about ready to end his Beta.

“Still invincible,” he muttered, trying to seat up.

“But you are not – I pushed him back down as he winced, trying to seat despite his injury.

It felt as if a weight had been lifted off my shoulders upon seeing him awake but yet – yet something lingered, a kind of guilt that I had carried with me all along, a truth I had hidden that made me feel like a fraud in this relationship.

I knew who he was but he – he had no idea who I was. Was I ready to take that secret with me to the grave? Would I ever forgive myself if I lost him without him ever knowing about me?

“I have something to tell you,” I said to my mate, looking down at my hands. I would chicken out again if I did not say it that instant. “Can you excuse us, Jabari?” I turned to the Beta, using the opportunity to wipe my eyes.