

## Eternally Damned: Chapter 12

Alexander

Two weeks have gone by and still I'm the myth ringing true. I live at night.

I've experienced misery before. When I got bit and had to lie in a tomb, that was miserable.

But so is this.

Darkness can't come soon enough. I'm tired of being inside. I don't like that I can't be with my beloved during the day, to protect her, to be near her. It's too early in our mating for us to be apart like this.

My bones ache.

We've barely had anytime to give into the mating heat and I can feel the effects. I haven't had enough of her for my body to be used to this new life.

My fangs throb.

I need her blood.

My cock pulsates for her.

I need to claim her, to feel her body tighten and to hear her moans as she releases.

But Pa is always with us, and he doesn't know about the mating heat. It's difficult to fuck the way I want to fuck my beloved while we are here. I hate it. I hate I feel less than what she deserves.

I feel weak.

She's been trying to prepare the estate for me so we can work on it together. She could hole up every window like she did here with her magic, but then how could we work when plants are in the way?

And it isn't like we can get much work done now anyway.

That fucking guy dropping off his wood hasn't called her back.

I snort. "Yeah, I just bet he'd be dropping off *his* wood." The thought has my cupid's lengthening over my lips. I'm going to drain him fucking dry.

"Woah, who has got your fangs in a twist?" Pa laughs at his own joke.

I smile. "I apologize." I try not to drop fang in his home but I find it difficult. He doesn't care, but I want to be respectful. "I was just thinking of something and got upset." I inhale to calm down and the rotten smell of death ruins my attempt to relax.

Instead, I worry about Pa. We've gotten to know one another over the last few weeks, pouring over the books we've brought from the estate to try and figure out her magic and why I can no longer be in the sun.

We haven't found anything, but there are hundreds of books to go through.

"Are you ever going to tell her?" I ask, pouring myself a cup of coffee and add a splash of milk. It calms me. Coffee doesn't give us energy like it does with humans. It has the opposite effect. My nerves stop firing so fast and my breathing slows.

I've gone through a few containers of coffee in this house, but I make sure to pay my dues. Luckily, I'm very well off considering I'm the only living heir of the Monceaux's.

I'm a billionaire.

And I'm only buying coffee.

Pathetic.

I need to buy my beloved something. A new car, diamonds, dresses, anything she wants she shall have.

A quiet purr of content builds in my chest at the thought of taking care of her.

“Tell her?” He sips on his own drink, bourbon, while giving Whiskey some too.

Never seen a dog like liquor but times have changed.

His heart rate skips a beat being caught in his lie, and the putrid smell becomes stronger the more nervous he becomes.

“You’re dying,” I say simply, throwing it out there so we both know what is going on. I tap my nose. “Vampire senses. I can smell the death in your blood, Mr. Wildes.”

He sighs, then leans his hands against the counter while hanging his head. “You can’t tell her.”

“I cannot lie to my beloved. If she asks, I won’t keep it from her.”

He doesn’t do or say anything for a minute before nodding. “I can respect that. Too much is going on. I can’t tell her. Not yet. It will destroy her.”

“So will the lies you weave to keep her safe,” I state. “She deserves to know. What is it? Cancer?”

He shakes his head, letting out a sarcastic chuckle. “No. Witches and Warlocks don’t get human illnesses. I would have lived much longer if I would have had a coven, but since I didn’t, I lived a normal human life.” He turns to me, picking up his white mug that’s chipped along the rim and brings it to his lips. He sips carefully so he doesn’t burn himself. “My magic is killing me.”

I almost drop my coffee. “What? How does that make sense? Magic is your protection. It’s a part of you.”

“Right, it is a *part* of me. I haven’t been able to use it the way it was meant to be used. Like other things that don’t get used, say milk, it spoils over time. My magic is turning my blood sour.”

“Can’t you use it now? I’m here. You’re a part of our coven. I know there is only me and Maven, but there is room for you. Always.”

His eyes brighten and the way his mouth grins, closed and not showing teeth, tells me my offer isn’t possible. “I am not your coven witch and I do not have a beloved. I’m afraid my magic is unable to be used. I can still do small useless things, like flip pages in a book or stir the sugar in my coffee. Remember what I said, we need vampires to help us take some of our magic, to control it, I haven’t had that. All my life, this force inside me has had nowhere to go, so now—” He shrugs a shoulder.

“Now it’s killing you,” I finish for him. “How much time do you have?”

“Oh, plenty. A year before the side effects really show. Right now, it’s a cough I get every now and then. A fever too. Like a cold.”

“Will this happen to Maven?” The thought of her dying burns my heart the way the sun burned my skin.

It is so painful.

“No, not only is she your coven witch but she is your beloved. She will live as long as you do. And I’m so happy for that. Truly. I’ve wanted more for her than this life, the one her mother left and wanted nothing to do with.”

“Is her mother alive?”

“I don’t know.”

I can see the sadness in his eyes of not knowing, the memories that he has with his daughter playing in his mind.

“Anyway, it’s better as it is. She hated that she was pregnant, and she didn’t want to be a mom. She didn’t want to be here with me, so she handed over Maven and that was the end of it.”

My fangs drop at the thought of seeing her again.

Pa chuckles.

“I’m sorry. Anything that hurts Maven makes me upset and it’s hard to control my impulse.”

“Don’t be sorry for your nature and don’t be sorry for loving my Maven. I won’t hear of it,” he huffs and waves his hand through the air. “That’s the past. Maven is all who matters now.”

I hear a car pull up the driveway and the brakes squeak while it comes to a stop.

It isn’t Maven’s truck. I know that sound like I know her own heartbeat.

I glance at the clock, making sure the sun has set, but I still have ten more minutes. I slam my fist on the counter and snap the edge off. It falls, slamming onto the floor.

“I’ll fix that,” I grumble, hating I have to live my life by the hands of time.

“I’ll see who it is. It is probably Dottie. She won’t stay away. She isn’t the type and Maven has fooled her long enough. She’s too smart for that nonsense.”

I grab his hand to stop him before he begins to walk. “Be careful.”

He cocks a brow at me. “It’s Dottie. The only thing that hurts is her temper.”

“Something is different about her. I felt it when I was a ghost. She isn’t fully human.”

“I know,” he says, patting my hand. “But I don’t think she knows, so it’s best if we keep that information to ourselves.”

“How do you know?” I ask, a bit impressed he was able to find out.

“Witches can see energy. Auras, if you will. Paranormal have the same one, they vary from red to orange. Hers is slight, but it is there. The color gets brighter the older she gets. I don’t know what she is though, and she might not be enough of it to ever know. She’s kind, strong, and loyal to Maven. She’s good people. Trust me.”

I'll still wonder, but having his word calms me. I give a curt nod and release his arm, watching as he walks to the front door.

I hear the squeaking frame of Maven's truck flying down the driveway.

And I know something is wrong.

I run to follow Pa, but I have another seven minutes before I can step outside.

Running my fingers through my shaggy hair, I tug the strands, debating if I want to pull them out from frustration.

I'd burn for her if her life were at stake. I'd send my soul to ash and dust if it meant keeping her safe.

That isn't the case right now.

She's fine.

And if I stepped outside this instant, she'd wrap me up in vines and pin me to the wall.

My arousal that's been weighed down by the stress of recent events slams against me and I lose my breath. The mating heat is still strong in my blood and until it is sated, it will get worse.

Tonight, she's mine.

Tonight, I'll claim.

We only have the stars now and I'm going to own her under them.

"Maven, you little witch!" Dottie's voice yanks me out of my filthy thoughts.

I grin, knowing Dottie means that in every insulting way as possible while also, literally, stating truths.

Maven *is* an actual witch.

“Dottie—” the truck door closes “—I haven’t been ignoring you.”

I glance at the clock.

Three more minutes.

“My god, I swear a century passed quicker than waiting for the sun to set,” I grumble to myself.

“You haven’t just been ignoring me. You’ve been lying to me. You know I don’t like that. Just be honest with me, Maven. You know I don’t care you’re a witch. I mean, I am the one that told you it wasn’t a bad thing, so why won’t you talk to me?”

I place my hand against the wall, using it to perch while I listen. There’s emotion choking her words, tears maybe.

She’s hurt and it’s real.

*One minute left.*

“It’s hard to explain,” Maven states weakly. “Come inside and I’ll show you why. I didn’t know how you’d react. And so much is happening, but I swear, I’ll tell you. I’m so sorry, Dottie. I didn’t mean to keep you in the dark. I should give you more credit than to think you’ll run screaming.”

“Damn right, you should have.”

Time is up.

Racing to the front door, I grip the knob and turn, swinging it open so fast it slams against the wall. Next, I push the screen door open, the hinges creaking. It crashes shut behind me and my boots pound on the porch which causes heads to turn.

“Beloved,” I say on a breathless whisper as I head down the steps. I go to her faster than anyone can form a word and bring her into my arms. “I missed you.” I can’t hold onto her long without my body reacting, so I pull away.

Dottie looks me up and down, arms crossed as she clicks her tongue. “So, this is why you’ve been ignoring me? You find a piece of tall, dark, and handsome and didn’t even tell me! What the fuck, Maven? I thought we were closer than that. You know I would have been happy for you. I don’t know how he ran to your side so fast, but I’m sure he’s just a great runner or I’m tired.”

Maven coughs. “Something like that.”

“I’m Alexander Monreaux.” I hold out my hand, staring at the hue surrounding her. It’s faint orange. Pa is right. I didn’t notice before because I wasn’t focused on it.

“Like the Monreaux Estate?” her mouth falls open. “Damn Maven. You really landed a good one. I’m Dottie. The one and only best friend.” She smiles and grabs my hand, the strength firm in her grip. “Wait a minute...” she lets go of my hand. “Alexander Monreaux, that’s one of the names on the will that was found when we were at the auction. Great grandpa?” she asks.

“No. I’m Alexander Monreaux. The one from the will,” I decide to be upfront and honest.

She blinks at me for a few seconds before tossing her head back and laughing. “Oh, Maven. He is funny too. That’s not possible.”

“I was in a coma for 121 years because I got bit by a werewolf and vampires can’t heal from werewolf bites. The only way to wake up from that is for my beloved to find me, the one I’m meant to spend eternity with. When Maven came to the estate, she woke up my ghost, but not my body, not until she found me. When the house shook, and you heard a roar of sorts when you left that day from ripping the porch out? That was me. You couldn’t see me, but I was next to Maven. She’s related to Sarah Wildes, our old coven witch. Maven’s powers became present when she met me because she’s my coven witch. I’m a vampire and now I can’t go out into the sun for some reason which is what she’s been trying to find out, on top of getting the estate sun-proofed for me. We’ll be over there tonight. Does that cover it?” I ask Maven, knowing our story sounds like fiction.

People love the idea of finding love in fiction.



Until they are confronted with it.

“Nope, that about covers it.” Maven twists her fingers together and rocks on her feet.

I wait for the typical response from Dottie.

The, “I’m crazy and need help” or some bullshit like that.

Dottie looks me up and down, uncrosses her arms and drops her hands to her hips.

“Prove it,” she says.

“Prove it?” I echo.

“Yep. Prove you’re a vampire and all can be forgiven.”

“You don’t have to,” Maven whispers, her hand landing on my arm.

“No need to hide from your best friend since she’s going to be around a lot.”

“Damn straight,” Dottie agrees. “So, let’s see it. Come on. Show me your fangs.” I can tell she doesn’t believe me.

I could mystify her, but I find that very rude to do. It’s a breach of privacy and should only be used in emergencies.

I turn to Dottie and lift one hand, causing my talons to lengthen at the same time my fangs show. My eyes turn a flaming red, nearly the same color as Maven’s hair.

Dottie’s mouth falls open before she steps closer and cocks her head, lifting a finger to touch my fangs.

I’m about to wrap my hand around her wrist to stop her. My fangs are only for Maven to touch, but Maven beats me to it.

“Ow,” Dottie says on half a laugh.

“Sorry, but please don’t touch him or his fangs. They are mine and I’m territorial right now because we haven’t been able to complete our... mating,” she whispers so Pa can’t hear.

I love that she got territorial. I want to whisk her away to the estate and lock her up, tie her to the bed, and have my way with her.

Fuck, if we even have a bed.

We will by the end of the night.

I pull her closer and drop my lips to her ear, growling how she likes, and her breath catches in her sweet throat, the one I can’t wait to fuck later so I can see her lips stretch wide while taking me.

“Oh,” Dottie doesn’t get it at first but then the light clicks. “Oh! You need... time... sexy time. Meow.” She pretends to extend claws. “Well, say no best friend.” She leans in and gives Maven a hug before turning to me and holding out her hand, respecting Maven’s wishes.

I like that.

Maybe Dottie isn’t so dangerous after all.

“Okay, then. It’s nice to meet you. Your secret is safe with me. I’m assuming it’s a secret? Anyway, love ya.” She blows us a kiss before getting into her car and speeding away.

She honks, waving with a big smile on her face before she’s out of sight.

“Odd woman,” I say.

“But the best. All she cares about is the truth.”

“The truth is all that’s necessary for people to accept what is around them. I’m glad you have a friend like her. And I’m glad she’s so accepting. Not everyone is. I was afraid I’d have to mystify her.”

Maven shakes her head. "Dottie is off limits with that. Please. Never."

I can't make that promise. If it means protecting Maven and my brother, I'll do what I have to do, but since Dottie won't need to be mystified, I agree. "Okay, beloved."

"You two should get out of here," Pa shouts from the porch. "While it's still dark out."

I don't bother with the truck. I'm quicker.

I lift her into my arms and hold her to my chest. "You don't have to tell me twice, Mr. Wildes." The wind rushes against us and her head tucks into my chest to protect her face from the chilled air. Trees become one. The road becomes a tunnel from my vision narrowing.

The iron gate to the estate is closed, but I jump over it without issue, landing on my feet seamlessly. I slow to a normal pace and brush her hair from her cheek. "We're home." I stroll down the driveway, fingers of the moss dragging along the ground, the fog beginning to come in and swirl around the trunk of the trees. A violent memory surfaces, but I push it down so I can replace it with this one.

Solar lights line the driveway and stop when we get to the house. There are concrete blocks for steps that lead up to the door since the porch isn't there, but there is a new door.

It's painted red.

Just like I remember.

"You painted the door red." I stare down into her twinkling green eyes as she looks up at me.

God, how lucky of a man am I to have her staring up at me as if I'm everything she's ever wanted?

"I want this house to be everything it used to be before it got taken from you," she answers, and I fall in love with her even more. "The steps are iffy..." she winces as I begin to walk up them and one shakes under me.

Opening the door, everything looks the same, except the piles of ash are gone. She must have seen my expression because she hurries to explain.

“I put the ashes in small vases. They are in another room. I hope you don’t mind. I didn’t want them to get lost or blown away when we started the heavy renovating.” She nestles her face against my throat, her plush lips heated.

That’s when the last two weeks of built-up mating heat rears its head. Her lips brushing against me has me kicking the door shut.

“Go to your old bedroom,” she tells me, placing open mouth kisses along my jaw.

I moan, barely able to move my feet, but warmth boils my entire body, the worries of everything diminishing and the stress becoming nonexistent. Now instincts take over, nature takes its course, the protective boundary is gone, and lust encompasses the air.

I bypass the stairs and jump to the balcony, not wanting to risk falling through the weak steps. I throw her over my shoulder, and she yelps, giggling while smacking my ass.

When I get to my old bedroom, I notice that this door is replaced too. It’s heavy, black, steel maybe.

Expensive.

Curious, I push it open and the curtains hanging from the window are parted, showing the stars dancing around the crescent moon. The ceiling is lined with her roses and a few hangs down, the edges of the petals glowing.

Candles are placed around the room, varying in size and shape. The flames flicker, the shadows swaying along the wall.

There’s a bed in the middle of the expansive space. Just a mattress and a box spring with big fluffy pillows and a comforter we could get lost in.

“You did this without me? Is that why you’ve kept me away?”

“I wanted to surprise you. We’ve been holding back what we have needed to do for too long, and I wanted the moment to be perfect.”

I toss her on the bed, her body bouncing as I begin to unbutton my shirt. “It’s going to be far from perfect, beloved. It’s been too long and while I’ve been a gentleman for your sake at Pa’s, here, in this house, I’m a monster, a beast, and I’ve been caged.” I whip off my belt and stalk forward, pinning her hands above her head and loop the belt around her wrists. I tighten it almost too tight. Her hands turn a light shade of pink from the constriction, the blood roaring just under the skin.

“What are you doing?” She licks her lips and tugs against the leather, the flesh pulling.

“Keep them there.” I would tie her to the bed frame, but we don’t have one yet and I have to accommodate. “Be a good girl.” I run my hands down her chest and groan when her nipples press against her shirt. Gripping the material, I rip it from her body, showcasing another lace brassiere, this one a mint green.

I want her too much.

I’ll buy her a new one.

With one talon, I slice the straps, then the middle, the dainty lace parting. Her nipples tighten when they touch the cool air and I tilt my head back as my fangs make their appearance. I can hear her heart racing and the sound causes my mouth to water.

Skimming my talons down her stomach, I watch her muscles quiver from my touch. The outline of her ribs shows under her skin every time she takes a deep breath in. I smirk before righting my face into a serious expression.

I love how she reacts to me.

An eternity won’t be long enough to experience it.

I take my nails across her ribs, enticing a soft moan from her pink impatient lips. She reaches for me and with speed she can’t match, I pin them above her head again, flashing my fangs in warning.

“I said keep them there.”

She licks her lips, wetting them as her eyes drop to my mouth.

Maven’s becoming feverish, I can scent it. Her entire body is flushed and there is a sheen of sweat canvassing her body.

“Oh god, please, touch me,” she whimpers, lifting her head to reach my lips. “It hurts.”

There’s no time to play.

Next time.

*Even if that’s what I said last time.*

I didn’t expect us not to be able to give into the mating heat. And now it’s all bubbling to the surface. She’s right. We can’t wait anymore.

It does fucking hurt.

I kick off my pants and line her body up to my cock, her center warm and wet. With a satisfied groan, I sink into her and both of us cry out in ecstasy. My eyes turn redder, my nails become longer, and my fangs become bigger.

God, to know there is no barrier, no give, that I’m plunging inside her because I am the one that took her virginity almost has me spilling inside her too soon.

Because she’s mine.

Her heart, her soul, her body, it’s all fucking mine.

I slam into her harder, loving that it’s only me she’ll ever feel like this with.

She stares at me with large round eyes, the moonlight dancing upon her skin, her beauty outshining the lunar glow.

I lift her legs and place them on my shoulders, pressing my cheek against her left calf as I slide out just to plunge back in.

Her arms lift and she reaches out to me, her bound hands flattening against my stomach. With no warning, I drop her legs, and hover over her face. I don't move. I keep a rough grip on her wrists and pin them above her head again.

"I think my beloved has issues listening," I hiss through tight teeth. Her tits bounce with every hard thrust I give, her cunt clamping around me, rubbing against the sensitive length as she sucks me in.

I speed up, faster than a regular man, but not as fast as I can give, and her mouth drops open.

"Lex, I can't. Oh god," she keens, trying to break free from the hold I have on her.

"You will." My voice rough and deep. "You'll take every fucking inch I give you. You'll take it all, won't you, beloved? You'll take anything I give you." I grip one of her hips, then release her wrists to pin her to the bed by her throat. "Say it." I'm a fingerbreadth away as my lips become millimeters away from her lips. "Say you'll take it all. Say you're mine." I tighten my grip, her jugular pulsating wildly from constriction.

She remains quiet, rebellion shining through those emerald gems.

"I said tell me!" I roar, my voice taking on the power I hold within, shaking the flames flickering the candlewicks.

I thought it would scare her, but instead, her muscles give and flex around me. She screams as an orgasm rip through her, gripping my cock to the point I lose control.

With no ease, no gentle caress, I roughly take her lips in a mad, barbaric kiss as I come, burying myself to the hilt with every jet that leaves me.

It does nothing to relieve the burning in my body. If anything, the heat gets stronger.

"I'll take it all," she slurs, delirious. Her eyes are glazed over and there are beads of sweat gathering in the middle of her sternum. "I'll take anything you give me. Everything."

“Oh, beloved. You have no idea what you’re agreeing to,” I say, sinking my fangs into her neck. I don’t drink. I pull free and make my way down her body, piercing the skin above her breast.

She whimpers from the sting, but I can smell the lust permeating the air. She likes this. She likes to be bit.

*Good.*

Because I’m a biter.