

Chapter 12

Ivy

LATER THAT NIGHT

I'm awoken by Gannon's voice outside. Sitting up, I shiver while rubbing my arms trying to warm them. "Kyson, I won't let you—" Gannon's words cut off abruptly, and I hear a grunt and a splash. My heart rate quickens at the sound, before it nearly leaps out of my chest when I hear the creak of the door.

Hastily moving, I sneak into the closest stall, trying to hide, his footsteps echo loudly, and the horses become unsettled. His aura ripples out violently, and I bite my lip to refrain from screaming out to Gannon.

Hiding amongst the hay, I wonder if Gannon is alright when I hear the crunch of footsteps coming nearer. I hold my breath, burrowing deeper into the hay. Peering out, I can't help the whimper that escapes me when I notice Kyson, only it isn't his

normal form but that of his Lycan side. The moment the noise leaves my lips, I clamp a hand over my mouth at my mistake.

He turns swiftly in my direction, and I hold my breath. A few tense seconds pass by, and I hear him sniff the air while my heart beats rapidly, drawing his attention further. His growl is thunderous, as he starts ripping through the hay, claws slashing violently as he searches for me. Within seconds, he finds me hiding, and I peer up at him, seeing his chest rising and falling heavily while his eyes blaze with fury. I clench my eyes shut when I see his hand coming toward me, only to hear him grunt. The thud of him hitting something makes my eyes jolt open to see Gannon has tackled him. He is dripping wet, which confirms he is the one who was tossed into the lake.

“Ivy, go, but don’t run!” Gannon urges, but it is too late by the time I hear the last because I wasted no time getting to my feet and running for the doors when I hear more fighting. Then, a loud crash. Peering over my shoulder, I see Gannon’s body crumpled on the ground against the stall opposite to the one I was hiding in.

Distracted by Gannon momentarily, I turn to keep running, only for my body to careen forward when somebody collides with me. My scream is deafening, and the horses go wild in their stalls.

I brace myself for impact, wishing I hadn't when I hit the dirt in a stiff heap. The air rushes from my lungs and I groan as I get to my hands and knees, to find blood dripping on the floor. I wipe my chin. Having fallen face first, I'd split it open. My busted fingers throb even more as they take my weight when I tense, hearing Gannon's voice behind me.

"Ivy, don't move."

My heart leaps frantically in my chest when I feel the heat of him press against my back as he shoves me back to the ground. His nose presses to the side of my neck, and he lets out a menacing growl while I freeze beneath him.

"Kyson, you don't want to hurt her," Gannon speaks softly but it earns him a feral snarl before I am suddenly grabbed and ripped away. I shriek as I roll onto my back, his huge form towering over me possessively as he glares at Gannon before returning his attention to me.

His claws rake my skin, tearing my clothes, and I can smell the copious amounts of liquor he has been drinking. "Kyson," Gannon speaks, though I hear the underlying fear lacing it, which only scares me more.

Suddenly, the stable doors open and his head whips in the direction of the noise. So does mine to see Damian enter and freeze. Kyson growls, baring his teeth, which are only inches from my face. Damian raises his hands, kneeling, his eyes trained on his king and me trapped beneath him.

“Ivy, are you okay?” Damian asks when Kyson’s paw presses into my shoulder, his claws slicing my flesh.

“No!” I whimper. “He’s going to kill me,” I sob.

“He is not in control, but I don’t think that is his intention,” Damian speaks calmly, while I feel anything but calm. Kyson, though unfazed by Damian’s presence, returns his attention to back me trembling beneath him. He lifts his hand, and I feel my blood pooling in the crook of my neck and chest. He sniffs my blood, instinctively I grip his fur, petrified he’ll bite me or eat me. He growls, shaking his head, yet my hands don’t let go.

“Kyson please, you’re scaring me,” I whimper.

“He’s scenting you, Ivy. Kyson may not have control, but he’ll recognize his mate,” Damian tries to reassure me. Kyson sniffs me, then licks the scratches he gave me, healing them. I cringe,

as he continues licking me, while also tearing apart my clothes with his claws. He becomes almost frantic each time, he slices me quickly healing me with his tongue.

“Kyson!” Damian calls. His head twists in Damian’s direction, but he drags me closer, pulling me further under him.

“I’m not taking her but stop. You’re scaring her.”

Kyson huffs but peers down at me, nearly coming nose to nose with me. I freeze with him so close to my face when I feel his tongue roll across my chin, healing the gash before frantically licking and nipping my neck. I grab his face, my hand tugging on his ear, and he growls at me.

“Stop it,” I cry out only for him to snarl, which sends a shiver down my spine when he suddenly grabs me with one arm like I weigh nothing. Gannon jumps to his feet.

“Easy, Gannon,” Damian warns him, and I turn my head to find Damian also standing.

Kyson, not worried by them, drags me off to one of the stalls. I am about to start thrashing to get out of his grip, when he suddenly lays down, pulling me on top of him. I hear Damian

exhale loudly. While I am frozen in my fear. I carefully try to climb off him, only for him to snap his teeth at me and pull me back.

Damian enters the stall and at first. I think he is going to help me escape, but instead he keeps his distance and sits on the floor across from us when Kyson growls in warning not to come closer. Kyson rolls, his huge furry body pressing me into the stall wall, obscuring my view. “I’m not going anywhere, Ivy, sleep. His beast is just restless, and he obliterated himself drinking.”

I try to move, only every time I do, I am dragged back, and he presses closer. I fist the fur on his chest, my body stiff. “He’ll sleep, just leave him be, he won’t hurt you.”

“What happens when he wakes up,” Damian chuckles softly.

“Oh, he’ll be furious, but I won’t let him hurt you, we’d die stopping him if we needed to,” Damian says, making me remember Gannon mentioning the pact.

“I promise, I’m not going anywhere, sleep. He tries anything. I’ll stop him,” Damian says, then I hear him yawn. I remain still, his furry face pressed into the hollow of my neck,

eventually fighting sleep becomes impossible, and I drift off to sleep cocooned in his scent and warmth.

The next morning, I wake to the feeling of Kyson moving. I'm unsure when he shifted back, but now his knee is pressed between my legs, his arm wrapped around my torso, his face next to my shoulder. I try to sit up, and carefully move his arm off me, only for him to lurch upright. His eyes are wide as he scans his surroundings while I shuffle backward to get away from him. My movement, however, doesn't go unnoticed by him, and he pins me with a glare.

He takes in his surroundings, and peers down at the filth he had us lying in, earning a growl from him. The noise instantly wakes up Damian, who snaps to attention. Kyson glares at me as he gets up, his rejection of me loud and clear. My bond screams out for him, and I flinch when he takes a step toward me, only for Damian to speak behind him.

"Touch her, Kyson, we'll have problems," Damian warns him. Kyson peers at him over his shoulder and I watch him, petrified about what he'll do next. His jaw clenches and his hands fist at his side when he abruptly turns and stalks out of the stall toward the stable door. I let out the breath I was holding, and Damian scrubs a hand down his face.

“Are you okay?” Damian asks, and I hastily nod, only to notice Gannon, Dustin, and Liam all out in the main area of the stables. My lips part in shock when I feel fabric touch me and I jump, peering up at Damian, but his gaze is averted, and he is shirtless.

“My Queen, you have no top,” he tells me, and I notice all the guards looking toward the stable door. I take it, covering myself while my face flames with heat.

“As I said, we won’t let him hurt you.”

“You didn’t stop him last night,” I mumble, feeling angry and scared all over again.

“But did he hurt you?” Damian asks as I pull his shirt on. I swallow staring down, but besides my busted fingers, I am unscathed. “He scented you, nothing abnormal for Lycans. We are rougher, but his intention wasn’t to hurt you. Unfortunately, Gannon panicked, which escalated things. But I don’t believe his intention was to hurt you.”

“Then what was his intention?” I ask, baffled, remembering him healing the deep gashes he left in my skin.

“His bond craves yours; Lycan aren’t meant to be apart once they’ve found their mate. I know you don’t understand since you aren’t one, but the bond pulls a lot harder for us. He wanted you close, the moment he got close, and everyone calmed down, he went to sleep,” Damian tells me.

I peer out at Dustin, Damian and Gannon. “Then why are they here?” I ask him.

“Just in case, we weren’t sure what he would wake up like. In his Lycan form, he is more beast than man, running on instinct. But as a man, he runs on emotion, which can be far more lethal than his animalistic traits when it comes to you,” he warns me.

“So what am I supposed to do when his animalistic side comes for me again?” I blurt, worried that his beast would be creeping around every night.

“Usually, Kyson has control except when drunk, but if he does come,” Damian crouches in front of me, “don’t run, My Queen. You never run from a Lycan, you do, and he will chase. And that is one race he will always win,” Damian warns.

I swallow, glancing at Gannon, but I nod. Damian smiles sadly.

“Hopefully, the king will come to his senses soon, for now, I need to shower, and you need your breakfast,” he tells me. Oh, how I wish to shower myself but after my last attempt, I’ve given up on the idea. Though, maybe I could try to bathe in the lake. But what if I drown? I’m no good at swimming. Yet, Kyson’s scent covers every inch of me, one part of me hates it because it makes me long for him, another part of me wants to savor it, not knowing when I will see him next.