

## Chapter 28

Ivy

Forcing my legs to move, I start running. My heart thumps erratically, and I take off before hearing one howl so loud and angry it can only be the king. Panic seizes me, and I glance ahead, knowing that being by the water, I am far too exposed. With that knowledge, I take off for the tree line, deciding to stay as near to the edge of the forest as possible, so I don't get lost. I also won't be spotted out in the open of the clear space running alongside the river.

Adrenaline courses through me as I take off, praying I make it to the bridge. Tears burn my eyes as the wind whips my face, making it sting. The sounds of running through the forest send fear coursing through me. What took me half an hour to run through, they cover in a matter of minutes. I can hear them in the woods gaining on me. I glance behind me only to look ahead and I skid across the ground, coming to a halt. My feet skid across the loose rocks and leaves making me fall on my side when a huge black Lycan with impenetrable eyes flashes between the trees in front of me.

“No,” I gasp, knowing he’s found me. Knowing I can’t escape his Lycan.

He prowls through the trees toward me. His growl sounds menacing, furious, as I scramble backward, trying to get to my feet. However, the leaves and damp earth make the ground slippery as I hear the crunch of twigs beneath him.

“You were warned,” he growls angrily, and I shake my head.

Kyron’s fur is so dark, it has a blue hue to it under the moonlight filtering through the trees. He stalks closer to me, growling, his teeth sharp and gleaming, chilling my bones as he stalks closer. His chest rises and falls heavily with his burning anger, and his aura is suffocating. His claws slash down a nearby tree when he stops, tilting his head.

“Don’t,” he warns, anticipating what I am about to do. But my mind doesn’t listen.

My scream hurts my own ears when he suddenly runs at me, as my feet finally get leverage on the ground. I sprint off, only to get about five steps when his weight hits my back, shoving me forward into the dirt. The air in my lungs completely leaves me

in a huff as I hit the ground. His weight never lands on top of me, yet I feel the rumble of his growl against my back, his clawed hands on either side of my face.

Fear momentarily paralyzes me, and I can feel the fur on his legs brush against mine as he traps me beneath him, caging me in.

The crunch of twigs makes me look up to see Damian step out of the trees in just a pair of shorts. Worry etches into his facial features as he stares at me pinned beneath the king. I want to yell out to him for help, but my voice is suddenly mute with the fear wrapping around me.

“Leave us,” the king commands him.

“No, please,” I beg my voice a whisper in the breeze that goes unheard. My eyes meet Damian’s fleetingly before he disappears within the trees, leaving me with Kyson. His chest rumbles with his growl against my back, and he buries his nose in my neck, making me whimper.

Tears stream down my cheeks as I try to claw my way out from under him, only for him to press his chest firmly against my

back, forcing me to the ground. His teeth nip my shoulder, making me cry out when I try to move.

“You would dare attempt to leave me, to leave your king,” he snarls next to my ear, his gravelly voice sending a shiver up my spine. My entire body shakes beneath him, his aura slamming down on me, dominating me and forcing another whimper to leave my lips.

“You’re mine, mine Ivy, and you will remain with me. I will chain you to my damn bed if needed,” he growls. “You won’t be escaping me again, you were warned never to run from me, and now you’ll learn the consequences of your actions.”

My fingertips burn and throb, anger mingling with my fear and claws slip from my fingertips, enraged by his words, although petrified at the same time. They dig into the earth, and he snarls again, nipping my shoulder and making me flinch as he breaks my skin and blood trails down my shoulder blades.

I was so close, so close to freedom.

“Submit,” he growls in warning, and I feel my eyes flicker before my own growl slips out of me uncontrollably. My vision changes, illuminating the darkness and making my

surroundings brighter. His hand falls on my shoulder, claws sinking in as his weight lifts. Before I know it, he flips me on my back with a swift yank before dropping his weight against my abdomen and legs. Trapping me once again. His aura smashes against me, and he roars in my face.

“I said submit,” he growls, but instead of a whimper, rage emerges out in the form of my thunderous growl.

“No!” I scream back at him, thrashing beneath him trying to escape.

His fists come down on either side of my face on the dirt. “I am your fucking king. You will submit to me,” he snarls, then pressing his chest against mine.

“The same king who doesn’t want me for a mate,” I snarl back, my vision making his features clearer as my eyes adapt to the darkness, turning a luminescent blue, which makes his glare harden as his eyes examine my face. He uses his nose, turning my face, his fur brushing against me before he snarls.

“You’re mine,” he seethes, shaking with rage above me and the bond flares, making me angry.

“I’m not anymore,” I growl at him, and he roars in my face before punching the ground beside my face. I squeeze my eyes shut and inhale deeply but refuse to submit like his aura tries to make me. The feeling of it caressing over me makes nausea build. Yet I shove it back, shocking myself at my own ability to not give in when I feel his tongue swipe across his bite marks on my shoulder and arm.

“You will submit, one way or another,” he purrs, and I hear his bones snap and rearrange before his warm skin presses against me. I feel the calling, making my skin tingle as he forces the bond to the surface, and I gasp that he would use it on me to get me to submit to him.

I scream as he awakens the stupid calling. Willing to do anything to get away, I thrash beneath him, wanting him to stop, not wanting to submit to him when I feel the weight of it start to relax me. With a last-ditch effort to stop him, I start hitting him and thrashing for him to get off me.

The king snarls, shoving the calling on me again as I scramble, kicking my feet and pushing away and out from under him. He snarls, flashing his canines at me, and my hand moves with speed I never thought possible and connects with his face. Only after they do that, I realize my fingers... no... my claws are out, razor-sharp as they slash down his face.

Blood spills and sprays across my face, and I gasp at what I've done while his head whips to the side. The deep threatening growl that leaves him makes my blood run cold as he slowly turns his face back to look at me. Deep claw marks streak down his cheek, across his lips, and over one of his eyelids. How did I do that? My bravado wears off immediately as he snarls before pouncing on me and crushing me beneath him. His blood drips on me, covering me like a leaky faucet.

My claws retract instantly, and I whimper, waiting for him to tear into me when he purrs, the calling washing over me, and I sob as I feel my body go lax beneath him, giving in to his demands. He buries his face in my neck and my hands feebly try to push his face away.

"Shh, my queen," he whispers, nipping my fingertips and burying his face in my neck.

"You're mine now," he purrs before I feel his teeth pierce my skin. He sinks them deeply into my neck, through the layers of skin and tissue and I gasp as sparks rush from head to toe, every inch of me tingling. My body feels foreign to me. Even my toes curl as immense pleasure washes through every part of my body. I feel him take something from me, like he stole a piece of my soul as it embeds and transfers to him. My eyelids flutter,

heavy as the fight drains out of me and I feel his teeth slide out of my neck, his tongue rolling over my mark.

His calling grows louder, taking everything, forcing me to relax while exhaustion, like never before, slivers through me.

“Sleep my queen, your king has got you,” he purrs. My head falls back as he scoops me up in his arms, his chest vibrating against me as he continues to purr, clutching me close while I become entirely limp in his arms. He starts walking, nuzzling my neck as I try to fight the exhaustion. Unable, I blink once more and everything goes black.