

## Chapter 8

Ivy

My night in the stables was horrendous, and the following morning I wake in the makeshift den I had built. It became obvious I wouldn't be shifting. Gannon tried to tell me it was because I was fretting for my mate. It made no sense to me. I had just seen him the day before, even if only briefly, but it was enough for him to rip my heart out.

I would have preferred that, because last night was one of the worst nights I have endured. More so than when he was gone because I knew he was here, he was just out of my reach.

The king didn't even come down when I should have shifted last night, not that I did, but he had promised. For some reason, I thought he would keep it, though it wasn't the first and probably wouldn't be the last promise he'd break.

The fact that I can't shift is just something else for him to hate me for. He has a dud for a mate. It's bad enough I am a traitor

in his eyes, yet the Moon Goddess had to do one better and make me a failure.

“Ivy, Abbie will be here soon with breakfast. Do you want to shower?” Gannon asks me and I peer up at him from where I sit in the hay.

“Am I allowed?” I ask him and he purses his lips. I smell terrible, having slept in a stable with the horses.

“I’ll sneak you into the maid’s quarters,” Gannon tells me. “You can shower in my room.” He holds his hand out to me, and hesitantly, I take it. He pulls me to my feet, and I dust off my clothes which are filthy.

Gannon leads me up to the castle, but instead of going through the main doors, he leads me around the side to where the doors lead into the huge ballroom. Grabbing my hand, he pulls me along, leading me through the halls, then stops at a door. He pushes it open and looks around inside.

Once he is sure no one is in there, he motions for me to enter. Only before I can, I hear the King’s voice and freeze. My heart races when I hear his growl up the long corridor. Instinctively,

I turn to find him storming toward me, and I am about to run when his aura rolls over me and pins me where I stand.

“You are not welcome in here,” he snarls, and my eyes drop to the floor. My breath comes in small rasps, while my chest constricts, and sweat beads on my neck. His footsteps grow nearer when suddenly Gannon steps out of the bathroom directly into his path.

“What is the issue, My King?” Gannon asks, his body stands like a wall between us, and Kyson drops the command his aura had over me. I stumble forward into Gannon’s back, his hand gripping my hip to steady me, only for Kyson’s snarl to echo off the glass windows and throughout the corridor.

Gannon pushes me behind him, and I clutch the back of his shirt to remain upright while I regather myself. “Did you expect me to let her fall, My King? If you don’t want me touching what’s yours, maybe you shouldn’t have discarded her so easily,” Gannon snaps at him, making my brows furrow.

Peering around Gannon, I see that King Kyson has a hold of Gannon forearm, the same arm Gannon used when he pushed me behind him. “Why is she in here, she is forbidden from stepping inside the castle walls,” Kyson sneers and his eyes move to me peeking out from behind Gannon. Then his gaze

darts to my hand clutching Gannon's shirt and I notice his claws slip from his fingertips, making me gasp.

I let his shirt go quickly, not wanting to anger him more, yet why would he be upset with me touching one of his guards when he doesn't want me?

"She wants to shower," Gannon snaps at him.

"I don't care what she wants, now get her out of my castle!" Kyson yells, making me flinch.

"Well, didn't you wake up on the wrong side of the bed," comes Liam's voice. Peering under Gannon's arm, I notice Liam and Damian have come up behind Kyson.

Kyson glances back at them and growls. "Get her out, she is not welcome here."

"Exactly where is she supposed to wash then, My King, because last I checked there are no bathrooms outside."

"In a trough for all I care," he snarls. Tears spring in my eyes at his words and silence falls, yet that silence is almost deafening

as they stare at him. “Fine, you won’t remove her, I will,” Kyson threatens.

“One step, My King, and you’ll find my blade in your back,” Liam threatens, emerging from out of the darkness. I gulp, noticing Liam now has a knife which he twists between his fingers. Kyson grits his teeth and turns toward him, within seconds Liam is against the wall, the King’s hand wrapped around his throat, but Liam smiles sadistically. There is seriously something wrong with that man to challenge the king so openly and enjoy it in the process.

“You dare threaten me?”

“It wasn’t a threat, My King, I warned you,” Liam tells him, and I see Kyson’s brows furrow. Yet when Kyson straightens, I notice the knife in his shoulder blade. My eyes widen in horror at what Liam has done.

Kyson, noticing it, pulls it out. “Seems I’m faster,” Liam tells him. Kyson presses the blade to his throat.

“I should kill you for that,” Kyson tells him, a shade of red slowly creeping all over his face.

“But you won’t. You don’t want to hurt her, Kyson, you know that, just as you don’t want to hurt me,” Liam tells him.

“Have you forgotten who she has taken from us all!”

“Ivy has taken nothing. And the sooner you see that, the sooner you can move on from this. You can’t keep punishing her for something that wasn’t her fault,” Damian’s voice cuts in, and Kyson spins to face him.

Kyson’s eyes flick to Damian and then to me, and I feel a sickening fear in the pit of my stomach as he takes a step toward me. Gannon steps forward again, shielding me from Kyson’s wrath. “You need to leave, My King. Now is not the time,” Gannon tells him firmly.

Kyson’s eyes narrow and for a moment, I think he is going to attack us all when I speak up. “It’s fine, I will go,” I tell Gannon.