

## Chapter 34

### IVY

I gag right as the limo stops. The door opens, and I rush toward it, stumbling out of the car and nearly tripping headfirst into the dirt before the King grabs my arm. Retching, I try to pull out of his grip, knowing I'm going to throw up, but it is too late, and I puke all over the ground, narrowly missing our feet. My entire body feels hot by the time I am done. Kyson's grip on my arm is growing increasingly painful, his body shaking as he holds onto me as if he believes I might run at any moment. Catching my breath and gripping my knees, I glance around, my surroundings spinning slightly.

"You won't lie to me again, will you, Ivy?" the King asks. My brows furrow as I peer up at him over my shoulder. His jaw clenches tight as he looks straight ahead.

Why does he keep asking me that and saying it that way? I hear car doors open and I stand up straight when the King passes me a handkerchief. Looking up, I see my surroundings spin. I wipe my mouth, feeling somewhat better but very unsteady on my feet.

My vision is terrible, and my head is pounding to its own beat, pulsing in my ears loudly. The only things I can make out are that I am on the side of the road, the scent of damp earth, and the King standing beside

me. Peering around, the forest is a blur of green along both sides of the road.

The King's Beta comes over to me with a bottle of water. He cracks the lid, handing it to me. Shakily, I take it.

"Get her toiletries bag, please. I would say she wants to rid the taste from her mouth," the King states. His tone of voice is cold and sends a shiver up my spine.

Damian nods once and walks off. I chug the water down before the Beta comes over with a cloth and toiletries bag.

"I don't feel too good," I mumble just as one of the guards brings another bottle of water over, and I lean heavily on the king, unable to hold myself up. His arm slips around my waist while the Beta grabs my arm to help keep me upright. I wonder briefly if this is what it feels like to walk on the moon because gravity and I are not mixing very well. My limbs feel so heavy, and everything sways with the breeze—or maybe I am swaying. I'm not sure.

My entire body feels heavy and hot.

"Hold her for a second," Kyson tells his Beta. I feel like a rag doll as Damian pulls me to him, taking most of my weight. His scent prickles my nose and I try to pull away from him, wanting the King's familiar smell. Not that Damian smells bad, but his scent is nauseating compared to the King's. The King has a masculine yet sweet scent, and

while Damian definitely smells similar, there's a sour taint to it that burns my nose. I push off his chest while the King fiddles with the toiletries bag.

"Ivy!" King Kyson scolds me when I stumble backward over my own feet.

Damian's hand snakes out, his long fingers wrapping around my arm before I fall on my butt.

"He smells wrong," I groan as Damian pulls me back to him.

"Wrong," Damian says blandly. "Well, I feel kind of insulted, yet also relieved," Damian chuckles. "Might have had a few issues if I smelled right to you, Ivy," he adds, which confuses my already muddled thoughts as I try to push him away.

"Definitely would have caused issues," Kyson growls. I feel the comforting, familiar tingles rush up my arm when Kyson pulls my pliable body back to him. I face-plant into his chest. Why anyone would like this feeling is beyond me. Wine should be banned; it doesn't feel safe. Actually, I don't feel much of anything, which is the problem. I can't feel my limbs or get them to cooperate properly.

The King wets a cloth before wiping my face, and I feel fingers graze the back of my neck as Damian lifts my hair. The King dampens the cloth again, the chill water cooling me down so I no longer feel like I'm boiling from the inside out.

“Tilt her head back for me,” Kyson grumbles, yet the motion of my head moving makes me gag, as the world tilts around me. Kyson pours some water from the bottle into my hair, and I shiver at the icy feeling. I sigh at the coolness of it against my heated skin before he washes my face again like I am some toddler. I’m too wobbly to care or be embarrassed, though. I am pretty much a rag doll as he pulls me around. “Get her something to eat.”

“I have some protein bars,” Damian tells him, wandering off.

“Are you feeling better now? Or am I sticking my fingers down your throat to make you sick again?” Kyson asks, and I shake my head. I would die from humiliation if he did that.

"I think she learned her lesson, my king," the Beta chuckles when he returns. He opens a protein bar and forces it into my hand.

Yet I am trying to wrap my mind around what the King just said, staring at him in disbelief.

"I had to improvise. I don't think she'd appreciate going over my knee," the King says, confusing me more.

“Maybe not yet,” Damian chuckles darkly.

"I don't understand," I slur.

"You lied to me," the King repeats simply, lifting my hand and stuffing the protein bar in my mouth.

I shake my head at his words.

"I have another bottle. Would you like to drink that too?" the King asks me. I stop mid chew and nearly choke on my protein bar when I virtually inhale it.

Huh, is that why he kept making me drink? As some sort of sick punishment? But for what? I haven't lied. At least, I don't think I have. I quickly shake my head.

My legs wobble under my weight, and Beta Damian's grip tightens on my arm. I try to look around again and find all the men out of their cars, looking at the forest and road. Oh my gosh, all these people just watched me puke.

"Do you want to rinse your mouth?" the King asks me.

I nod, though the task seems like it will be too much; but I need to get this taste out of my mouth along with this protein bar that is so chewy it is hurting my jaw.

"I spewed," I slur, my words not coming out right. I know what I want to say, but they don't come out correctly.

"Yes, you did," the King says, pulling me back to the car and placing me on the seat.

I don't want to get back into the stuffy car – the cool outside air feels good on my skin. The Beta hands me the toiletries bag, placing it on my lap.

"Eat!" Kyson orders, and I groan when he lifts my hand to my mouth. I try to bite the stupid bar but instead bite him.

He hisses, jerking his hand back. "You bit me," he states.

"Don't stick your finger in my mouth," I slur.

"If you don't hurry up, I will stick something else in your mouth, and it won't be my finger," he tells me.

"You're daring considering she just bit you," Damian laughs.

It takes my sluggish brain a few seconds to catch up to what he said, and I scrunch my face. "I bite," I blab.

Kyson grips my chin between two fingers. "So do I, now eat," Kyson purrs.

“You eat it,” I tell him, not meaning for so much sass to come out of my mouth, yet my brain-to-mouth filter feels out of tune. Oddly enough, I don’t even care. I’m more focused on how odd my tongue feels in my mouth.

“And an attitude! Anyone would think she forgot you’re a King,” Damian laughs.

“One could fucking hope. Maybe she’ll stop being my damn slave if she does,” Kyson states.

“Rogues...” my words trail off, forgetting what I was going to say and what they were talking about.

“Eat!” he orders when I don’t move to put the protein bar in my mouth.

His command rolls over me, jolting me. However, the power of it works, and I finish it in two more huge bites. I lean against the door frame while my fingers fumble as I try to open it.

The King takes it from me and pulls out some mouthwash. He unscrews the cap before handing it to me.

"You can brush your teeth when we get to the hotel. For now, just rinse your mouth," he tells me.

“You’re very bossy,” I snap at him when he pours some mouthwash into the cap. I hear his Beta chuckle.

“Rinse your mouth.”

I can’t fight his command and snatch the cap – spilling some as I do – and Kyson sighs, muttering under his breath when I obey. I glare at him before spitting the mouthwash into the tiny cup he hands me.

"She is feisty when drunk," Beta Damian states.

"It appears so," the King chuckles, taking the cup from my hands. One of the guards takes it from him, and the King motions for me to hop in. I shake my head.

"No?" he asks.

"It's too hot," I tell him, although I don't think the words came out like that, but he doesn't seem to have trouble understanding what I mean.

"I know; I had the driver put the heater on," he laughs.

I blink at him, wondering why he would do that when it’s stifling hot already.

"In the car, Ivy," the King says. I shake my head again.



“Ivy!”

“Kyson!” I slur before covering my mouth, having blurted that out in front of his Beta and his guards that I know are close enough to have overheard. My heart beats in my chest faster and my eyes burn.

“And she is one of those drunks: first whiny, then feisty, now the waterworks,” Damian chuckles.

“I’m not drunk!” I growl at him, startling myself with the noise that leaves me.

Kyson smirks, and my eyes widen at what I did. “I...I’m sor—”

He peels my hands away. “You can growl at him, Ivy. I growl at him sometimes, too.”

“Most of the time,” Damian states.

“You are not helping.”

Damian shrugs.

“I didn’t mean it.”

“Growl all you want, my Q.... Ivy. I promise I don’t scare easy,” Damian says.

“Now, in the car. I will get the driver to put the air conditioning on,” Kyson tells me.

I briefly wonder if the King is coming down with something for him to be cold. Do Lycans get the flu like werewolves? I shake the thought away and lift my legs in, turning on the seat before shuffling heavily over to my side of the car.

I lean against the other door when Kyson climbs in, turning on the air conditioning and a little fan. After his Beta climbs in the car beside me, Kyson taps on the glass and speaks to the driver.

His Beta hands me another water bottle, and I drink it thirstily, gulping it down just like the rest.

"Fuck, it is hot in here," the Beta says, and I gasp at his language in front of the King. My shock must have been evident because the King also laughs, tugging his shirt off over his head.

"Nope, I can't sit in here with this heat," Beta Damian whines.

"I turned the air conditioner on," the King tells him. His Beta shakes his head and hops back out, not even waiting for the King to dismiss him.

"He just got out, and he swore, but you didn't punish him?" I slur angrily.

The King laughs, reaching for me. My eyes open wide as his hands grab me, making me realize I spoke out of turn once again.

Instead of punishing me for snapping at him, he pulls me on his chest directly under the air conditioning. I feel the limo start moving and I groan, not liking the movement, pressing my face into his neck to steal his addictive scent.

"Damian is my best friend; he can do what he likes. Same you, Ivy."

I shake my head.

"You lied," I tell him.

"I am the liar, am I?"

I nod, turning my face where I am draped over him, enjoying the icy cold air conditioning blasting me. The King tugs my shirt off, but I am too limp to stop him and feel too terrible to care.

"When did I lie?" the King asks.

"You said I could do what I want. I didn't want to drink. You made me," I tell him, and before I can stop it, a growl slips past my lips. I startle myself again, jumping slightly, yet the King just laughs.

"First Damian and now you just growled at me," he chuckles softly, and I feel my pulse slow when he doesn't become angry.

"I'm sorry," I murmur.

"Don't be. You are coming of age to shift soon; you will make noises when showing emotion."

I nod, wondering how much shifting will hurt. I heard it is terribly painful for werewolves during their first shift, and witnessing Abbie's, I am positive it is. Her first shift was horrifying, though she tried to remain quiet.

"And, technically, I didn't lie; that was a punishment. I would have preferred using other means, which would not be appropriate until after you shift, or spanking you..." he chuckles, "but somehow I think that would have traumatized you more."

I must have heard that wrong. I shake my head at his outrageous words.

"But I didn't lie." I needed to stop talking. I must be sounding whiny. Plus, I am already pushing my luck after nearly puking on him.

"You did. I asked you earlier if you liked Ester, and you never told me she had been giving you trouble," he says.

I shake my head, but this time he growls, wrapping his arms around me, holding me in place when I try to get up.

"So you like Ester, then?" he questions, and I pause to think. I didn't hate her, and I wasn't one to hold grudges.

"I don't think she likes me," I answer.

"That wasn't what I asked; I asked if you liked her," the King says.

"Well, I don't dislike her; I don't know her," I tell him.

He nods, pressing his nose to my cheek as he pulls me higher against him. I nuzzle my face into his neck, enjoying his scent when he starts to purr. I love the sounds he makes, except when he growls.

I love his smell, too. But it also makes me wonder how much it will hurt when he tosses me aside, as everyone else has. Can I go without smelling his scent everywhere? Feeling his touch?

"I like it when he does that," I think to myself, and he chuckles.

"Is there someone else I should know about? Some competition I am unknowingly competing against?" the King asks.

"Did I say that out loud?" I ask, mortified.

"Yes, so it better be me you are speaking of. If I find anyone else purring at you, I will remove their vocal cords and lungs," the King laughs, kissing the side of my mouth.

"Why are you..." I mumble, my words becoming harder to form the more he purrs.

"Sleep, Ivy. I will wake you when we get to the hotel," he says, and I feel myself sucked under as sleep and his command takes me.