

Chapter 35

KYSON

I didn't want to punish her, but she lied to me once again, and I had no choice. I knew something was up with her and Ester, and Ester would pay for whatever she has done. However, I should be able to count on my mate to tell me the truth. Damian said he would tell me later when we got back to the castle, so whatever it was, he found out from Dustin, one of my guards. He was afraid of speaking about it in front of Ivy in case I lost control again.

Her breathing evens out as I hold her. My skin tingles where hers touches mine and drives me crazy with desire, my cock hardening beneath her. I unclip her bra, letting it open, and she sighs as I pull it off and out from under her. Her pink, hardened nipples graze my chest.

I must admit, I like her drunk. She has loosened up significantly, forgetting my title and her own. Yet I can't keep her constantly intoxicated, even though seeing her like this has its appeal.

I trace my fingers down her back, and a growl escapes me as I trace the scars that litter it. The lash marks that cover her back are deep and jagged, with a purplish-red hue. They criss cross each other in patterns. Her skin is rough under my fingertips. Some are still healing, while others have faded. She whimpers and stirs, but I turn the calling back

on her again. I love how she melts against me, pressing closer and turning her face into my neck.

The car begins to slow as we pull over for gas. When we do, Damian climbs in the back with me and slides onto the seat across from me. Gannon climbs in behind him a few seconds later and closes the door.

Both of them notice her state of undress and avert their gazes to the windows while Damian rummages through the storage under his seat and pulls out a thin throw blanket. He hands it to me, and I quickly drape it over her to cover her bare back.

"You can turn," I tell them, and they both face me.

"We may need to take an alternate route. I don't like the Black Forest; there are too many hiding places for an ambush," Damian tells me.

"It will be an extra half a day's drive," I tell him.

"I'm sorry, Kyson, but it is not a risk I am willing to take," he says.

I peek down at Ivy in my arms, and I notice out of the corner of my eye that he does too.

"You're right, whatever is safer," I tell him, and Damian nods, releasing a breath of relief. I won't risk her life over half a day. I know that is why

both of them came in to tell me such news –they worried I would argue with them over this, but when it involves Ivy’s safety, I won’t take unnecessary risks.

"Did you find out more about her history, her last name, anything about her?" I ask, turning my attention to Gannon.

"No, but I reached out to the old Alpha. He said he would dig her files out, and I could come to collect them next week."

"I will come with you," I tell him, and he nods.

"He was curious as to why we wanted to know about her, though," Gannon says.

"What did you say?"

"Nothing, of course. I told him I wanted Abbie's files too – told him that we wanted to know if they could be trusted amongst the other servants."

I nod at his words. He's always a quick thinker when put on the spot, which is why he's my third in command.

My fingertips trace down her back under the blanket, feeling the ridges of her spine and her scars. She's underweight, which bothers me just as

much as the scars lining her back, and I suddenly feel guilty for making her sick. I would have to make it up to her.

"He said she was young when she came, and her parents put up a fight. Apparently, her father killed the orphanage headmistress's mate," Gannon tells me.

"Would explain why she was punished so brutally. Why would he let her remain with the headmistress, knowing that?" I growl.

Gannon growls while shaking his head.

"Did he say why there were only two rogue children in the orphanage?" I ask.

"No, but he became very nervous when I asked. I think he was covering up for his son."

"Makes sense. I got the same vibe when I spoke to him," Damian tells me, and I tilt my head to look at him. He looks away guiltily.

"You weren't assigned to look into it. Gannon was, so why did you speak to him?"

"Same reason: I was curious about her. I needed to know she wasn't a threat to you. It is my job as your Beta."

I nod, looking down at Ivy.

"Well, is she?" I ask him with a chuckle, knowing full well she is no threat to me. No one was, but unfortunately, not everyone fights fair, and Lycans have always been hunted, even by the werewolves.

"She is," Damian says with a smirk, and I raise an eyebrow at him.

"Don't tell me it wouldn't break you if she suddenly left," Damian challenges, and I growl at his words. She is never leaving me; I won't allow it. I will chain her to me if needed.

"My point is proven. Physically, being a werewolf, she is no match, but that doesn't mean she can't break you in other ways," Damian laughs.

"She won't. I won't allow it," I snap.

"But she could," he says, and I nod once, tugging her closer and burying my face in her neck. Damian chuckles, and Gannon snorts, trying to hold his laugh in.

"Shut up, the both of you," I snap at them. I know they find my obsession with the girl amusing, yet they will understand when they find their mates one day.

"Don't get your panties in a knot now that you realize she holds all the power," Damian laughs.

"I am still a King," I tell him.

"And she is your Queen." Gannon nods at her, and I smile.

Yes, she will one day be my Queen if she will have me, I think before stopping myself, realizing my line of thought—if she will have me.

If!

I look at Damian, who has a knowing look on his face. He can read me too well sometimes.

"I'm still the King," I tell them, and Damian smirks.

"So you keep saying," he laughs.

"My word is law."

"For now," Gannon teases.

"I could always keep her as my servant," I tell them, and Damian folds his arms across his chest with an incredulous look on his face.

"I didn't say I would," I tell him.

"I know you won't," Damian says.

"Unless, obviously, she did something bad," Gannon adds, and Damian and I both glare at him.

"Now, why would you say that? What bad bone does the girl have in her body?" Damian asks.

"I'm just saying," Gannon says with a shrug.

"It would have to be something horrendous. Even then, I am not sure," I admit. I think nothing would stop me from loving Ivy or wanting her. She could try to kill me, and I would probably ask her to forgive me for angering her. I chuckle at the thought.

"Something funny, my King?" Gannon asks.

"No, Gannon. I just can't wait until her birthday, and she realizes I am her mate," I tell them while leaning my head back and closing my eyes.

It is well into the night when we arrive at the grand hotel. The place is enormous, modern, and all sleek design, exactly what is expected in this modern era. I arranged for us to leave no later than 6 am.. I can't

wait for Ivy to see the castle, but I also can't wait to be alone with her either.

I cover her with the blanket and carry her inside the huge hotel. My men surround me, obscuring her from the view of any other people as I make my way to our suite.

Damian steps ahead of me and searches the room before allowing me to enter. When I hear the door click shut as he leaves, I place her on the bed before climbing on it myself. She stirs now that I have dropped the calling, allowing her to wake. Her beautiful eyes flutter open dazedly, and my lips devour hers before she has a chance to speak.

Her skin heats beneath my palm as I grip her breast, rubbing my thumb over her nipple. My lips travel down her neck, and I desperately feel the urge to mark her.

“My King,” she blurts, and the growl that leaves me makes her tremble beneath me. Anger courses through me, and I stifle it, reminding myself she just woke up and isn't clear-headed enough to remember. Her hands shake against my chest, and I can feel her breath on my neck.

“I didn’t mean to startle you. Are you hungry?” I ask her.

She shakes her head, but her stomach betrays her.

“I will give you one chance to correct that answer, Ivy,” I tell her, pulling back to look down at her. She averts her gaze to my chest, and I sigh, brushing her cheek gently with my hand.

“You don’t need to fear me. I haven’t hurt you, and I won’t hurt you.”

She licks her lips, and my attention diverts briefly to them. They look dry and cracked.

“Are you hungry?”

She nods, and I peck her lips, then roll off her, grabbing the phone to order room service. I feel Ivy move on the bed behind me. While I wait for them to answer, I move toward the small fridge and retrieve a bottle of water before making my way back to her. She squirms on the spot where she sits but takes the water, placing it beside her.