

Chapter 42

KYSON

Ivy's scent perfumes the room and calms my nerves, which is the only thing keeping me sane right now. Tomorrow is my sister's murder anniversary, so I am on edge. Ivy is unaware that I am watching her.

No matter how much I try to pry my eyes from her sleeping form tangled in the sheets, my eyes always drift back to her or I find myself standing over her, fighting the urge to touch her, caress her.

My senses are all over the place with her. The desire to mark her grows stronger with the bond as it forges. I can tell Ivy is just as affected by the way her arousal will fill my nose, her instincts pulling her closer while they wage war with her mind telling her to stay away.

I must admit, that is one thing I love about she-wolves. Their ability to become lost to their baser instincts makes them compliant. Although I don't want that from Ivy—I want her to challenge me, maybe because she is the only one that could get away with it.

However, looking at her, I doubt she ever will. Lycans are worse tempered, and sometimes I forget she's an ordinary werewolf. I should be gentler. Ivy isn't as durable as a Lycan. Despite how much she sometimes reminds me of a Lycan, instincts so similar, yet so far apart

at the same time. I need to remember she isn't because I worry I will push her too far, or scare her beyond repair.

I wonder briefly what her wolf will be like, what color fur she will have. She has the most abnormal eyes for a werewolf. Every time I look at her, I get this bizarre feeling something is off about her.

Her deep, cerulean-blue eyes remind me of someone. I can't figure out why or who. Even a few guards and Damian have commented on how odd her eye coloring is.

Blue is an odd color for werewolves—Lycans not so much. It isn't unheard of, but it is rare for werewolves to have those deep blue eyes. Sometimes genetic mutations or super strong bloodlines cause it in werewolves.

We'll find out soon enough. Maybe her father was human. That would explain why I can't sense her wolf side as much. Perhaps she doesn't have one.

No, that can't be it, because she can growl and purr. My thoughts run rampant as I watch her until I am pulled from them when I feel the mind link open up.

"Are you awake, my King?" Gannon asks. I stare at the glass of whiskey in my hand before downing it.

"You know I am, or you wouldn't be asking," I reply as I get out of bed and wander over to the bar. I pour another glass, and the door to my room opens.

Damian and Gannon step in, averting their gazes from Ivy and looking at me. Damian walks over to the armchair and takes a seat in one of the armchairs while Gannon wanders toward her on the bed. I raise an eyebrow at him, but he only tosses the throw blanket over her back to cover her before taking a seat across from Damian. I hand them both a glass before retrieving my own.

"What is it?" I ask them, wanting to know why they suddenly decided on a midnight visit.

"I thought you were going to heal her?" Gannon asks, looking over at her sleeping.

"She fell asleep while eating," I answer. Anger courses through me at the thought of why she needs healing, though they're no longer gaping wounds across her back. Still, I hate seeing the angry red lines that litter her skin.

"Why did that stop you?" he asks.

"I would rather do it while she's awake. She needs to know not to fear me in that form."

Gannon nods in understanding, turning his attention back to me.

"So why the middle of the night invasion of my room?" I ask.

"Couldn't sleep," Damian answers.

"Me, neither," I tell him, and he chuckles.

"How many of those have you had?" he asks, pointing to my glass.

"A few too many," I shrug and his brows furrow with worry – a look I have seen plenty of times on his face.

"Are you sure that is wise with her around?" Damian questions.

"She isn't going anywhere, and I won't hurt her," I growl.

"I'm not worried about you hurting her, my King. I'm worried about you spooking her," Damian answers.

"I am fine," I answer while moving across the room to sit on the edge of the bed facing them.

"I assume you came to see me for a reason other than insomnia?"

"Yes, my King. We know we agreed to 6 am, but the men are antsy. This place is unfamiliar and too hard to keep watch over the entire perimeter," Gannon answers.

"You want to leave earlier?"

They both nod their heads, looking at Ivy on the bed behind me.

"You doubt my ability to keep her safe?" I ask them.

"Never, my King. We just worry about our King and future Queen's safety in this hotel... too many people and too many hiding spots; and with the anniversary tomorrow, we want to keep moving," Damian answers.

"The driver?" I ask.

"Also ready to go," he replies and I nod.

"Give me an hour," I answer, glancing at the clock. It's a little after 2 am. My head turns back to them; they're both getting to their feet.

"I want to heal her first; at least then she may sleep in the car."

"Do you want me to stay?" Damian asks. I glance at Ivy before looking back at him.

"Won't be necessary," I tell him. He nods and both of them take their leave. Placing the glass down, I strip off my shorts before shifting. I twist and crack my neck as my bones readjust and snap swiftly with my shift. My vision and sense of smell adjust, my senses intensifying as I walk toward the bed and climb onto it.

Ivy's back is rising and falling as she breathes in and out, and I gently tug the blankets off her. My claws slice through the thin sheets as I peel them away.

Ivy moves in her sleep, and goosebumps rise on her delicate skin, now exposed to the night air. I sniff the back of her neck while my clawed hand trails up her side, and she stirs. I don't want her to wake startled, so I move slowly as I bury my face in her neck, inhaling her scent.

She continues to stir, and I can feel the orgasmic tingling sensation that contact with her skin causes to rush over my hands. Something stirs within me as I watch her—some desire to claim what belongs to me—and before I can stop myself, I nip her.

She jumps in her sleep, then tenses, freezing. Her senses warn her a predator is near, something more dangerous than her. I hear her heart thumping in her chest like a hummingbird's wings. So I run my tongue over my bite, licking up the blood that trails down her shoulder blade.

"Kyson?" Her voice is barely a whisper, and I press my nose against her cheek. She trembles beneath me as I push my chest to her back and

start purring. Her tremors stop, and she sighs as I press my weight against her.

"You're safe with me, always," I purr, releasing her from my calling. She remains still, and I can tell she is scared, but it shows she trusts me enough not to hurt her when she doesn't try to escape me.

I sniff her neck, and when she turns her face slightly, I press my nose against hers. Her giggle makes me chuckle, then lick her lips.

"That was gross, like a dog's tongue," she chuckles.

"Well then, I guess I am your pet," I snicker. I lift my weight slightly off her and she rolls beneath me, looking up at me curiously, warily.

Her hands move shakily to my face before her thumb runs over one of my teeth. She jerks her hand away when it slices the pad of her thumb and she sucks on it.

"What did you expect? For them not to be sharp?" I chuckle.

She pulls her thumb from her mouth and examines the slice. I quickly lick it, letting her watch it heal. She seems in awe as she studies the now non-existent cut.

"How?" she mutters. I don't answer, not wanting to tell her it's because I am her mate. I want that to be a surprise for her to find out on her own.

"Roll over," I whisper to her, and her eyes dart to mine. She sucks in a breath, and I nudge her.