

Chapter 15

GANNON

Liam agreed to come with me. I have to make sure whoever I take has a strong stomach to handle what I have planned for the bastard who touched my Abbie.

Liam is part of the King's Royal Guard, and the man has an iron gut since he is the king's executioner. Liam is like a ghost; half the time you don't realize he is there. The man is as silent as the night when he wants to be. He is also just as fucked up in the head as me; probably why we get along so well.

He is also the only person who knew of my mate. Liam is like a brother to me, he is older, not by much, but we grew up together, and he was raised by Clarice, just like most of us guards in the castle.

But just like Liam, I never speak about my past. It haunts me, but out of everyone, Liam and I have no secrets between us; he even helped me cover up what I did.

Kyson is aware that something had happened, but I don't think he truly knows what or who she was to me. Or if he did, he never mentioned nor acknowledged it. One thing I do like about the King's Royal Guard, we all grew up together. It's why the king trusts us—we all know most of each other's secrets, definitely the king's. We all know Liam's; it's why no matter how unhinged he becomes, the king can never turn his back on him.

Kyson, Damian, Liam and I are best friends, but I know even Kyson and Damian have their limits. They would look at me poorly if they knew what I did, especially after what I did to her; so I never told them. How I survived, I'll never understand. Most Lycans die without their mate or are driven insane, yet still, I'm alive—if you call my existence living. For so long, I have purely existed, my life holding no meaning until Abbie came along.

However, I'm pretty sure Damian and the king suspected something was up because I never showed interest in looking for my mate, but that was because I had already found her.

I met Sia a year before Claire died, and she was a normal she-wolf. I thought it was a mistake, Lycans aren't usually mated to common werewolves. She rejected me the same day I met her. The only issue was that Lycans can't be rejected. The bond doesn't just go away for us. The bond doesn't end until one is dead. Werewolves can reject each other. While it's painful for them, the bond eventually severs.

Even so, it took years after her death for the bond to die out completely, something I never thought would happen. I assumed I was stuck with

longing for a bond that didn't want me and was dead and buried for her betrayal. A betrayal I couldn't look past. I held out hope she would come to her senses. That was when I learned werewolves could reject their mates. That was one difference between our species that became so obvious to me the day she did it.

Ironically, she could reject me and feel nothing toward me while I would be left pining for her and feeling her betrayal. And in our case, it could have killed me. After two years of it, I killed her. Liam helped me destroy the evidence and I know Kyson and Damian would have forgiven me for it or convinced me to hold off longer, but I didn't want their pity. I didn't want their concern when it wasn't needed; I had it handled. And the king was grieving his sister.

At least I thought I did. It made me cold and unfeeling, and I detached from everyone. The only time I felt anything was when Kyson would send me to do the jobs nobody else wanted, and usually, Liam came with me for those jobs. I relished it, relished their screams, and eventually grew an appetite for it.

Then Abbie came along. I didn't want her screams; I wanted her. I wanted her love, and I had never wanted another woman since Sia and was content forever to be alone. But Abbie stirred up feelings I thought I was no longer capable of. From the moment she came into my quarters accidentally, an obsession was born, one in which I wasn't sure was healthy but still better than the void I have felt before she came into my life.

“So, we are going back for that headmistress?” Liam finally asks; something he doesn’t do frequently. I glance over at the man, surprised he asked anything at all. He has a massive scar down one side of his face that goes from his hairline to his chin, though it is barely visible. Liam is almost blind in that eye, which is funny considering he is our best gunman. Not that we have much use for guns, but they made things easier than risking the king when he travels.

Like the rest of us Lycan men, he appears to be in his mid-thirties.

“Her and another,” I answer him as he unrolls his knife pouch—no doubt to make sure he has all his trusty knives. The man has a knife fetish.

“Who else?” he asks as he runs his thumb down the blade, letting it slice him, testing its sharpness.

“The butcher when we find out who he is.”

“A butcher?” he snorts. “Well, that is interesting. I wonder how he will feel when he realizes it will be his meat you’re cutting into.” He glances at me with a smirk.

“So the Alpha and his mutt son know we are coming?” Liam asks.

“Nope, but I have the paperwork if they kick up a fuss.”

“To bring him in?” he asks, I snort and smile. He knows if I’m hunting, and he is with me, this isn’t a catch and release mission.

“Well, I suppose they wouldn’t have sent you if it was as simple as taking them in,” he says, rolling the pouch back up.

“So, what did he do to the king?” Liam asks.

“Not the king, to Abbie,” I explain, and he exhales, pushing his fringe from his eyes and turning in his chair to look at me.

“Ah, now I know why he sent us.”

Knowing all this just adds to the list of reasons why I need to get her back. And I will get her back even if I have to go behind Kyson’s back; I’m not losing her. For now, though, I will wait like he asks to see what he comes up with.

I know he will have to, for Ivy. I heard the call go out earlier in the night about her title change, but I am used to calling her Ivy. The king likes to pretend he is in control, but I know he would allow her anything she requested if she batted her eyelashes at him. She will learn he is putty in her hands. She just needs to recognize that, which is precisely why I let it slip about Abbie. Kyson can deny me, but he won’t deny her for long.

Going at Kyson headstrong won't get her anywhere, but she has other ways to get what she wants. She just needs to come out of her shell and play on that, which I know Kyson is dreading when she figures that out.

He knows he is screwed when she does, especially with her bloodline. Landeenas were known to have certain gifts, so it will be interesting to see if she inherited any of those traits. She has her mother's eyes, so hopefully, she will receive her mother's abilities or will inherit her father's. Or both? Only time will tell. But if she inherits either, she'll be a force to reckon with. The Azures and Landeenas were the two original kingdoms, and they were not just king's and queen's, they were so much more. Queen is not a title fit for Ivy, and when she realizes that, Kyson is in trouble.

"So, what did this butcher do?" Liam asks. I growl and he nods, as I cast him a warning look.

"Enough said," he says. We spend the rest of the drive in silence. The long, windy roads are boring, and I pull over and swap with Liam when I feel myself nodding off. By the time we arrive, it is the early morning hours, the sun is just creeping above the trees of the sleepy town. A town I am about to wake with a monster's screams.