

Chapter 181 Out For Blood

We shifted into our wolf forms, hunkered down and braced for the assault.

A half dozen or so vampires were on the three of us immediately, their fangs out and jaws stretched wide open, running and flying in at impossible speeds.

Vampires are fast, but so are my reflexes; I leapt high into the air at an angle and managed to catch one of the assailants by the neck before he could touch down. I sank my own fangs into his flesh before he could turn his head and attempt to do the same to me.

Kayden, Cal and I had intentionally drawn our enemy's attention to us when we arrived on the scene. To provide some space and time for the rest of the pack, who had followed behind us stealthily, to get into strategic positions, surrounding the courthouse on all sides.

As soon as they sighted the vampires, my pack came surging out of the shadows and began a full-fledged counter-assault.

Some of my soldiers were in their wolf shape. Teeth bared, claws out, the wolves ran and leapt for the nearest vampires they could find, dragging them to the ground.

Our best throwers were in human form, wielding wooden spears and javelins that they let loose fast, expertly aiming just ahead of the undead creatures' flight paths and striking several of them in midair. The staked vampires exploded. The greasy, tar-like sludge of their insides rained down upon those of us below.

Noise and chaos became the only reality. The growls and snarls of wolves. The roars and screams of vampires and the short, strangled wails they bleated out just as they met their violent ends.

It did no good to wound a vampire and leave it bleeding. These creatures healed from all injuries, except for staking and complete decapitation; it was one of the things that made them so hard to fight. Others were still coming for me, but for the moment I had to keep my focus on the beast in my clenched jaw.

This vampire was strong and flexible. He thrashed and tore at my body with his cold hands and feet, trying to strangle me with his preternatural strength. But he was not as strong as I am. Or as motivated.

I unclamped my jaw for only a tiny fraction of a second—just so I could open even wider and encircle the vampire's entire neck. As I released, he twisted his body position. I don't know what he'd hoped to accomplish, but he succeeded in providing a perfect angle for sinking my sharpest teeth into the softest parts of his throat.

I bit down hard, reared my neck back and took the vampire's throat up and away from his body with me. My would-be attacker's severed head rolled down the courthouse steps, leaving a messy trail of black slime in its wake.

Sensing movement behind me, I wheeled around just in time to catch another incoming vampire with my open mouth. I did my best to tear as much of his throat apart as I could before he squirmed, shrieking, from my grasp and fled. He didn't get far. He was wounded and weak, his speed impaired, and another of my wolves got a hold of him and finished him off some twenty yards away.

Kayden had somehow wound up pinned to the ground at the top of the stairs. He was immobilized on his side, with one vampire latched to his bloody throat and trying to drain him, while a second one straddled his body. I caught sight of them just as the second attacker was bending his head and arching in to take another bite out of my friend.

I went after the one on his neck first. I got the vampire by the shoulder and whipped my head hard to throw him to the side. The sound of glass shattering told me he went flying through one of the courthouse windows.

No longer outnumbered, Kayden outmatched the vampire that had been on top of him. They traded places in the blink of an eye.

My Beta was bleeding profusely, the gray-black fur of his neck and throat soaked and dripping red. But he lost no momentum, and once he was on top of the vampire, he tore away at its throat with savage fury, leaving his mouth dripping black and the assailant at his feet in two lifeless pieces.

It cannot have been very long before the enemy started to retreat. Perhaps only minutes. They'd been sustaining massive casualties from the beginning. Not only were they completely surrounded from the jump, but now that we'd quickly slain half their assault battalion, but they were also now wildly outnumbered.

A sharp, eerie whistle sounded from a distance.

And that was when the remaining vampires – those that hadn't been wounded or frightened enough already to scamper away of their own accord – immediately released any hold they had on my men and disappeared into whirlwinds streaking out and up in all directions.

WHOOOOOSH. Their collaborative exit from the battle scene had the night sky pulling up on us like a vacuum. It took several seconds for the wind to settle.

That was long enough for me to look high into the sky and spy him.

Caius. Hovering in the air above me, unmistakable with that devilish ram's head silhouette.

Like a fucking coward, he had sent a whole brigade in to fight me but hung back at a safe distance himself.

I watched as he turned his head twice to scan the area, seemingly to confirm that the only vampires still on the courthouse grounds were irrevocably deceased. Perhaps he was afraid that I may take prisoners.

And then he was gone.

But I had noticed something very curious before he disappeared.

Caius had been some distance away when I was watching him, so I could only really make out the shape of him outlined against the sky. But that was enough for me to notice an interesting detail.

His right horn... it was still damaged. It was blunt-ended and shorter than the other. The way he'd pivoted his head allowed me to observe it from multiple angles, so I was quite sure it wasn't just a trick of the eye.

I'd done that to him. Years ago, the day he and I first met. The day I caught and took him captive.

I guess I always figured he would have healed. That the tip of his horn I'd taken off would grow back. Vampires always heal from injury.

Or so I thought.

My old foe was probably very sore about this indeed.

Oh, yes. That small glimpse of him was enough to let me know.

I had taken a tiny piece of his beloved horn—forever. I'm sure this wounded his ego in a big way.

No wonder he took such a big risk tonight. He knew this wasn't a well thought-out attack, and that was why he didn't lead the charge. He knew it may be a suicide mission.

He was acting irrationally... because he was impatient. He'd been stewing for years with hatred that he couldn't hold back any longer.

Vampires are always a difficult enemy to fight. But an extra bloodthirsty one out for personal vengeance... Who could say what that individual may be capable of?

Caius didn't care about his troops. He might not care about the war at all. He was just here for revenge.

He was out for blood. Mine.