

## Chapter 195 We Need To Get Out

Third person

The heavy, furious pounding that suddenly sounded on her hotel room door could not mean anything good. Scarlet hurried over and flung it open.

Donovan stood there in the doorway, wide-eyed; he was angrier than she had ever seen him. He was holding her son Lucas in one hand, clutching him by his loose shirt collar and holding him just high enough off the ground that his feet could not touch it.

“Lemme go—” Lucas was in the middle of muttering. His voice croaked, sounding half-strangled.

“What on earth—”

Scarlet’s query was interrupted when Donovan abruptly threw Lucas over the threshold, launching him across the bedroom. The young man landed in a heap with a heavy thud and a pained outcry.

A restrained growl vibrated from the vampire’s throat.

Scarlet was stunned frozen.

Donovan leaned his neck to one side. It made a popping sound as he cracked his spine into alignment. Then he balled his big hands into fists and cracked his knuckles, too. He strode into the room – Scarlet anxiously closed the door behind him – and began to straighten out his shirt and jacket.

“Your son has been exceedingly reckless.” Donovan was almost shouting. Scarlet noted that his fangs were partially extended. He was speaking to her, but had his unblinking eyes fixed on her son. Lucas had righted himself into a sort of crouched position on the floor. “He has been out partying this week. Visiting the hotel attractions. Inviting guests back to his room. And putting the two of you in great danger, I’m afraid.”

Scarlet clenched her jaw. In her son’s lifetime, she had been furious with Lucas more times than she could count. But this might’ve been the angriest she’d ever been with him.

“Now, Caius suggested we simply dispose of this liability,” Donovan said coolly, lowering his volume. “But seeing how as you and I have such a special history...”

The vampire brought his eyes up to meet Scarlet’s for the first time since she opened the door. His mouth widened into a bright, toothy smile.

“...I managed to persuade him to give the boy another chance. He agreed that your son may be permitted to live, and even continue to stay here under our protection.”

“Thank you,” Scarlet breathed.

“On one condition.” Donovan took a step in her direction. “You are to keep your eyes on him at all times. All times, Scarlet. You are your son’s keeper now, is that understood?”

She nodded slowly.

“Should he be seen again breaking the rules of our agreement, it will no longer be only Lucas who faces a severe consequence. You will be held directly responsible for his transgressions from this point on. Is that clear?”

Scarlet sighed. “As crystal,” she said quietly.

“Very good.” Donovan glanced back at Lucas, who remained seated on the floor wishing he were invisible. “I will be back in one hour to show the two of you to your new accommodations.”

The vampire moved casually to the door, opened it, walked out and left it open.

Scarlet closed and locked it before wheeling back around to face her son.

“I have always known you to be foolish,” she hissed. “But I did not realize that you also have a death wish!”

“Oh, I’m the one with the death wish? You’re the one who got in bed with vampires!” Lucas finally got up off the floor and started trying to push his disheveled clothes back into place.

“The vampires will protect us, Lucas. This will be over soon, and when it is, we will finally be in power. But none of that can happen if you keep running around like a careless child—”

“You are insane!” Lucas groaned, clutching at his untidy hair. “They’re not protecting us, Mother. They’re holding us captive. You can’t trust them. Look at what they did to you!”

His eyes went wide as he focused in on the two round, scabby bruises on Scarlet’s neck.

“I am doing the best I can,” she retorted through gritted teeth.

“You have no exit strategy with all this,” Lucas went on, lowering his volume. His hands were shaking as he dragged them down the sides of his face. He was still staring at his mother’s bite wound. “Oh, we are so fucked.”

“Stop it.”

“They already tried to ambush Alexander and look what happened. I told you they can’t kill him. No one can.”

“Just shut up with that already! Leave that part to me. All you need to do is fucking behave yourself, Lucas! Your job is easy!”

“You want me to sit in a room all day doing nothing, just waiting on the vampires to see when they decide they’re finally done using you and ready to eat us both? It’s been weeks of this already. I’m going crazy, Mom! I can’t just do nothing all day, forever!”

“And what would you propose we do instead, Lucas? Hm?”

The young man groaned again, wringing his face in his hands. He began to pace the room slowly.

“Mother,” he said, in an uncharacteristically quiet and calm tone of voice. “At this point, we’re fucked no matter what. This situation is so beyond fucked up. But you have to see, these monsters you think are your allies have no regard for our lives. Alexander... if we confessed and we gave up the information that we now have about the vampires, maybe he would show us mercy.”

Scarlet’s mouth fell open. She stormed across the room and slapped her son across the face.

“Agh!” He took a step away from her, holding an arm out to defend against a possible second assault.

“Don’t you say another word about that again,” Scarlet hissed, pacing after him. Suddenly she became aware that it was highly possible this room could be bugged. “Alexander would kill us both in an instant,” she whispered. “Or else, put us in prison for life!”

“And what’s the alternative?” Lucas snapped, still retreating from his mother who followed him in slow pursuit. “Live on the run forever, hiding and afraid? Be a vampire’s midnight snack every night until the day he finally kills you? You saw what they did to all those werewolves. They don’t give a shit about you. And they already actively want to kill me. At least Alexander is our kind. And we are family after all. He may show mercy if we help him now.”

Scarlet lunged forward and grabbed her son by the collar of his shirt.

“You shut your mouth right now, Lucas. Shut it. Do not ever speak of this idea again, do you hear me? If the vampires heard you talking like this...”

She shuddered. A scenario flashed through her mind like a vision. Lucas attempting to contact Alexander. Caius discovering this act of treachery. Caius killing her son before her eyes while she stood helpless, forced to watch. He’d do it in the most cruel way he could think of. And then he’d kill her, too.

“We need to get out of this place,” Lucas whispered through clenched teeth.

“Lucas. You listen to your mother for once in your goddamn life.” She shook him. “Do as I say. I am trying to keep us both alive.”