

The Alpha King Call Boy

Chapter 207 A Direct Threat

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Third person

“You’re a disgrace,” Scarlet muttered under her breath. “You just throw your clothing on the bathroom floor and leave it there...”

“That’s what servants are for, Mother. I’ve never had to do servants’ work a day in my life. You want me to start now?”

“It’s just remarkable, really, what a tremendous mess you leave behind everywhere you go. One would think you could show your mother a modicum of courtesy while we are stuck here together...”

“Oh, would you give me a fucking break?” Lucas groaned. He was lying flat on his back in his messy bed, staring up at the ceiling.

“All I have done your entire life is give you breaks.” Scarlet sounded bored. “It’s my own fault, really. I was too tired to fight your nasty attitude, too lazy to keep bothering to try, and I let you turn into the helpless, insolent man-child you are today.”

“Yeah, just keep blaming me for everything,” Lucas grumbled, rubbing his eyes.

Despite feeling dead exhausted, Lucas had hardly slept in days. Being manhandled by a furious

vampire had frightened him more than he'd ever be willing to admit to another living soul. Every time he closed his eyes, his body remembered how helpless Donovan's supernatural strength had made him feel. And his brain reminded him how totally vulnerable he and his mother were inside this godforsaken hotel.

And with Scarlet watching him like a hawk, he couldn't sneak out to hit the bars or find someone to hook him up with weed or pills, either. He did not like the way sobriety felt at all. It was something he hadn't experienced in years. His body ached and his mind churned with now inescapable thoughts, fears and regrets, and all kinds of ideas—good, bad, and really bad...

The unending quarrel continued between mother and son, each infinitely repeating their critiques of the other's failures, until a familiar knock on the door caused them both to startle into silence.

Scarlet opened the door for Donovan. Her old friend was looking much more relaxed than the last time the three had interacted.

"Am I interrupting?" the vampire asked in his thick, drawling voice. His eyes drifted from Scarlet to Lucas, who was now seated upright in his bed attempting to watch the happenings at the door out of the periphery of averted eyes.

“Not at all.” Scarlet stepped aside and Donovan strolled forward, ducking slightly under the doorframe.

He cast a critical glance around the room. “Looks like you could use some maid service,” he remarked casually. “I’ll have the staff come by while we are out.”

“Out?”

“Yes, I thought you two might be in need of some fresh air, a change of scenery perhaps.” His thin lips curled into a taunting smile.

Scarlet noted with some discomfort that the vampire’s usually pale face looked a bit rosy. He had recently been feeding.

“Don’t worry,” he continued. “We have made some recent changes in the hotel that have made it much safer for our kind, and our allies, to enjoy the resort’s amenities. Come, join me for a little stroll and I will show you...”

So this was how they’d done it, Lucas mused, trying to act calm.

He was walking half a pace behind his mother, who followed their vampire guide’s lead but kept in stride beside him. They’d traveled downstairs to the main floor of the hotel, finding it not completely empty but eerily quiet in the lobby, which had been densely packed with rowdy

tourists and bustling staff the last time Lucas had seen it.

Uniformed hotel employees still milled about the space, but there was something wrong with them. They were walking around like zombies. Silent, with dull, expressionless eyes, working their tasks robotically.

They had been brainwashed. Or hypnotized, or whatever kind of mind control it was that vampires were able to perform. Lucas had heard of such things, of course, but he'd never witnessed the phenomenon for himself. And he never imagined something like this could be possible—hundreds of werewolves operating in a state of long-term hypnosis, walking around like mindless drones in the service of vampire masters.

Lucas felt Donovan's eyes on him and resisted the urge to meet them with his own. He did not want to be hypnotized, not if he could help it. He could see, peeking out the edges of his vision, that their vampire chaperone was smiling at him. Perhaps Donovan was listening, amused, to the sound of the young werewolf's anxious heart thundering against his ribcage.

"Here we are," Donovan said when they reached an open set of double doors from which drifted

the sounds of chatter, laughter, moving water and loud music with a slow, heavy bass beat.

The last time Lucas passed through this doorway, he'd found a crowd of tourists lounging and partying poolside and crowding two small outdoor bar areas outside.

The scene Donovan led them forward into was rather different.

The sprawling pool was alight with the signature pink and fuchsia glow that Blackout Resort used to light up many of their attractions, and it was filled with a spattering of noisy revelers. But these pale, hard-bodied figures were not werewolf tourists. They were vampires. Men and women of all apparent ages, some clad in swimsuits or lingerie and others fully nude, were reclining on cabana couches under the moonlight, engaging in intimate acts in dark corners, and floating lazily in the heated, pink-hued pool.

More zombified resort employees milled about out here, too. Tidying up, providing swimmers with fresh towels, and carrying pitchers of viscous crimson liquid that they intermittently paused to pour into low or empty crystal goblets rimmed with purplish-red drips and lip marks.

At a short distance from the trio, on the other side of the pool, a huge golden throne had been

installed upon a low stage that Lucas recalled having been used previously as a DJ booth. And upon the red-cushioned throne sat the vampires' hulking, horned leader, seated comfortably with his legs lazily spread, his head back and his deep, dark eyes half closed. Caius was dressed in black suit pants and a snowy white dress shirt spattered and smeared with red around the unbuttoned neck and high, crisp collar. A hint of something like a smile played on the beast's glossy red lips as he surveyed the carousel before him, and remained unchanged when he turned and caught sight of the newcomers.

"We are celebrating," Donovan announced, leading Scarlet and Lucas around the edge of the pool.

"Celebrating what?" Lucas asked, surprising himself. He probably shouldn't be asking questions, but he was loopy from sleep deprivation and his fear of this place was shooting his adrenaline up to an all-time high.

His mother shot him a stern look that he understood to mean "shut up," but Donovan only glanced back at Lucas and smiled.

"A small victory," he answered. "We have, as of tonight, officially taken ownership of the resort." Scarlet's eyes went round with surprise.

"We bought out the majority shareholder," Donovan continued, sounding proud. "This place

belongs to us now. And we have finally, as you may have noticed, also managed to get the staff completely under control.”

“Thank you for joining us,” Caius said when the three finally made their way to the stage and paused before his throne. He focused his gaze on Lucas. “I’ve been looking forward to making your acquaintance, young man.”

“Why’s that?”

Caius’s bony eyebrow ridge shot upward into his wide forehead. He stood and took a single step forward. “Call it... morbid curiosity,” he answered mysteriously.

“Congrats on buying the resort,” Lucas quipped sarcastically, having nothing else to say and, for whatever reason, unable to stop himself from talking.

“Thank you,” Caius said coolly, eyeing the young wolf with sharp curiosity. “We are finally starting to feel comfortable in our new home.”

“Kind of a funny choice, for vampires to make their home in a place like this,” Lucas muttered.

“You think? Why’s that?”

Scarlet made a strangled sound deep in her throat, trying to get her son to look at her. He either did not hear her or did not care.

“Nowhere to bury yourselves out here. Only rocks, no soil. And it’s not like you can sleep in the

hotel. Where around here can you even be safe from daylight?”

In an instant, the party went dead silent. Donovan was suddenly behind Lucas with one arm restraining the young man's torso and the other hand gripped tight around his throat. Caius was in front of Lucas, inches away and glaring down at him with pure venom in his black eyes. Both vampires had their mouths ajar and their fangs extended. They had taken the wolf's wildly inappropriate inquiry as a direct threat.

“Please!” Scarlet screamed. “My son is very stupid. And he is not in his right mind. He meant nothing by this idle comment. Tell them, Lucas. Tell them you meant no harm!”

Scarlet was not convinced, herself, that what she was claiming was in fact true, after Lucas's recent comment about wanting to go crawling back to Alexander. Her doubt was apparent in the weak, thin tenor of her voice.

Caius cast a disgusted glance at Scarlet, shook his head at her reprovably, and then took a step backward and gave Donovan a terse nod.

And then Donovan clamped his teeth down into Lucas's neck and latched onto it.

Lucas screamed, writhing in pain, while the eager vampire tightened his grip around the young

man's body and sucked his blood with hungry fervor and a garish symphony of slurping, sucking, and squelching sounds.

Scarlet's slack-jawed countenance was a portrait of horror as she watched, shocked mute and frozen in place.