

## Chapter 126

I brought my arms up and crossed over my face as Mom's foot hit me. My feet slid back but my heel caught on a seam in the floor and I tipped back. The problem was that I blinked and she was next to me. Her elbow came down and slammed into my stomach. It was like I was in slow motion while she was in full speed. I tried to bring my arms down to protect me but I couldn't, not fast enough. Suddenly, I wasn't hitting the floor. I was bouncing back up off the floor, my breath leaving me. My eyes shut and I curled up into a ball as her foot slammed into my side and I flew into the wall on the other side of the room. The entire room shook as my back slammed into the wall. 1

"Vale Maximillion Everfell! Don't just give up after one hit!" Mom shouted at me.

There was no way I could reply. I was crumbled into a ball after sliding down the wall onto the floor. She was brutal. Every day was like a new form of masterful torture. There had to be something against the Geneva code with how she was training me. Nothing had time to heal. I was stuck trying to play catch up every single day.

"Mom...I can't..."

"You can! You got hit and I saw you just give up trying to block my hit."

I didn't need to look at her to know the face she had. Her frustrated look was so easy to pick out; eyebrows bunched together, frown on her face. Usually coupled with hands on her hips and a slight shaking of her head.

Turning onto my hands and knees, I just stared at the floor. "I wouldn't have been able to reach it in time to block you. Why bother...."

"Because your arms would have been down there to block the second. Just because you couldn't block the first didn't mean you couldn't have blocked my kick! You just let me kick you across the room."

I chuckled but it hurt. "Yeah, you really yeeted me that time."

She let out a breath laugh until I heard her sigh. "You can't just give up, Vale. That's not something I ever taught you in all my years of training you. You may take hits but the point is not to take every hit. Don't just submit to your target. What kind of warrior would you be if after a couple of hits you just rolled over?"

"A couple? You got more than a couple, Mom. I'm over here fighting for my life! You're going to kill me one of these days."

Taking a deep breath, I pushed off of my hands and sat up on my knees. My head fell back as I just tried to focus on not crying. I was a grown ass werewolf and I was not going to cry because my mother beat me the hell up. Everything hurt so badly though. How did Hector even train with her? How had he survived fighting her when she wasn't this limited? Naresh was even allowed to join but he had slinked off after getting a mouthful of Mom's foot.

"Vale?"

I shook my head. "I'm done for the day. I can't."

"You've been through worse, Vale. Get up."

"No! I won't! I'm not just going to walk over to get my ass handed to me!"

Her footsteps came over and she stood over me, her hands still on her hips. "So you're just giving up? That's it?"

"Yes! That's it! I'm done! Fuck this. Every single day, it's the same. I'm not getting better."

Her hand came up and I saw it coming down to hit me across the face. Reaching up, I grabbed her wrist to stop her. Growling, I let some of my Alpha King power out.

"I said I was done, Auri. Stop."

She stared down at me for a few seconds before she cracked a smirk. "You wouldn't have been able to catch that a week ago, Vale. That was full speed."

My eyes widened as I looked at her wrist I was still holding. "What?"

"Yes, you are getting your ass handed to you every day. The reason for that is because I see when you have mastered something and so I bring up the difficulty every time. Once you master something, I will always push you to be better than that. You are getting better but you still have a ways to go."

She took her hand out of my grasp and took arm, hoisting me up. I was unsteady but I managed to stay upright after a few seconds. Suddenly, Mom's knuckles slammed into my stomach and I fell forward, blacking out.

Groaning, I opened my eyes and trying to orient myself. After blinking a couple times, Hector's face came into my



view and he was holding a cold wet cloth to my head. He looked at me worriedly.

"Hey, welcome back to the land of the living."

"What happened?"

He chuckled awkwardly. "You went down with a punch to the stomach. It was a cheap shot."

A huff off in the room made me lean my head to look around him. Mom was standing at the oven, stirring two pots of something. She had a frown on her face and she was definitely refusing to look my way. We were in the kitchen and I was sitting in one of the chairs next to the counter and doorway.

"Love, you shouldn't have gone that hard. You knocked him out...with a hit to a stomach."

She huffed again. "Yeah, well, he called me Auri. I'm not about to let that go."

Hector lifted my head and looked in my eyes before giving me a soft smile. "You'll be alright. Just try to be careful tonight. Don't strain yourself too much."

"Yeah. Thanks, Hector."

He nodded and stepped back. Walking over to Mom, it looked like he was going to slap her upside the head but instead she stopped him with a wooden spoon to the forehead. He groaned and rubbed his forehead.

"I think we need to have those runes checked."

There was a sighed and she nodded. "I need to let out some of the pent up power. Otherwise, it's just going to start making this worst."

"What do you want to do? Pour it into the house?"

She shook her head. "I think I just need to head to the Fey Realm for a couple days. I can pour it into their barrier without altering the entire ecosystem like I could accidentally do here."

I felt like I had been forgotten but the fact that my mom was having issues with the runes made by the fey king was an intense conversation. They made it sound so normal together but I had to wrap my head around the idea. Hector turned back to me after kissing my mom on the head.

"Vale, you staying for dinner?"

Shaking my head, I smiled. "Zeke is making dinner tonight. So you know it's going to be good. Plus, we are starting to see more skirmishes between the vampires lately. Even between other vampires. We have to see what would be a good time to bring Grandpa into this."

"I heard there was a big rally in the states. Some of the vampires were rallying against others. If it does break out into in a battle, it might be a good opportunity. I could sneak over there, see if I can..."

Hector slammed his hand down on her head. "You will do no such thing, love. You're staying out of this as much as possible, remember. You're going to head over, feel like you need to help, and then everyone will die at your hands. We can wait to hear news of it." He turned to me. "She's right, though. That would be the perfect time. A big enough battle like that would allow Morgan to step up. We should have him head over. If he can stop the fighting or help those who are wanting to uphold the treaty, he could

announce his candidacy there. The supernatural news should already be there. It would be the perfect moment."

I nodded. "I'll talk to him tonight then. He's not going to be happy."

Mom laughed. "No, but I think all along he knew he might end up taking the job. He is perfect for it. Has been since I was little. I wanted him to take the job when I killed the Vampire King back when I was sixteen. They've wanted him on the council too but that he would hard decline."

"Then, let's move forward if it gets to that level. After that, I can put out a statement and then Uriel can do what he wants from his side."

She nodded. "I can speak to him. Tell him we are in motion. I'll be gone probably for a few days, so I might miss it but I'll be back from the fey realm after that. Then whatever you need me to do, I'll do it."

It was always surprising when she let me lead. Not because I was king, she always acknowledged me as such. More that I'd just gotten my ass kicked and she was my mom. Here she was deferring to me and waiting for me to give her instructions on how to move. I stood up and Hector started to come over but I held my hand up.

"At least let me walk out of here with some dignity."

He chuckled and nodded, giving me a salute. My mom was looking at the pot in front of her, but it was the frown on her face that made me pause.

"Mom? Everything okay?"

She tapped the wooden spoon against the side of the pot. "Everything is progressing a lot faster than I originally



thought. Oran has completely turned against Julius wishes and just let everyone run free a lot faster than I thought." Her eyes caught mine and her next words were through mind link. 'I don't know if we will be ready.'

'You mean me. You don't think I will be ready to stand up to Oran.'

She shook her head, her eyes showing a bit of a gold ring around the outside of her pupils. 'No, Vale. Not you. Everyone else. Our pack warriors. Getting the fey together. Papa. I don't know if everyone will be ready when we need them to be.'

I hummed and sighed. "We will be okay, Mom. We will mange. No matter what, we will survive. We will move forward and we will get rid of the bastard. Don't lose faith."

Mom nodded and smiled but it wasn't reaching her eyes. Hector looked from me to her and he wrapped his arms around her shoulders pressing a kiss to her cheek. I took my leave from them but what she said rattled me. If we weren't ready, what would happen? There couldn't be an outcome where we lost. But at what cost? And was the cost worth the win? 1