

Chapter 131

I stood looking out over my old stomping grounds. We decided to bring back Jax's body to Harvest Moon pack, to our home pack. He was laid to rest next to his parents, since he never was able to find another mate. I stared out at the forest from my mom's old house. The earth had recovered from when they torched her garden and now it was pretty much being reclaimed by the forest itself. It had been a week, but there wasn't any news. We had no information. Nothing on Reagan or Rowan. Not a peep difference from Oran. None of our contracts had seen them. It's like they vanished completely.

Mom had come with us but I honestly couldn't say that she was there. I only saw her during the ceremony and that was from the back. If I even thought I saw her, I would blink and she was gone. Hector was easier to find but there was a pain and anger that scared me. His words from the hospital kept me from speaking to him. Lucy wasn't able to come with us. She barely managed to survive the surgery but she wouldn't be able walk again. It was worse when they told her she lost her baby. I still could hear her wails in the hospital wing. Felix was broken but I think he was just thankful that he didn't lose her as well. They could get through this together but it wasn't going to be easy.

I don't even know what happened to Wendy or where they laid her to rest. The kids were all quiet, the loss of their sitting hitting them hard. Sammy was the most torn up. Her and AJ had the deepest sense of survivors guilt. He had come but he was so closed off that I every time I

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tried to talk to him he was so far away that I knew he wasn't hearing me. Eventually, he would just walk off, not even paying attention. I think I saw him speaking with Mom but each time, it was just a wisp of her.

"Vale?"

I looked over at Zeke and pulled him to me. He had lost so much weight over this week. I had to basically force feed him and I found him more times than not sobbing quietly in a dark place. The weight of the fact that I let this happen, that I was supposed to protect everyone, was crushing me. Naresh tried to help but really I just did my best to not let it weigh on Zeke as well. He didn't need to take on my guilt.

"Yeah?"

"You've been staring at the forest like a monster is going to walk out of it."

I chuckled. "Maybe I am. Maybe I'm waiting for something to do other than feeling like I'm utterly useless."

"I..." Zeke stopped as he looked out into the much smaller clearing.

The air shimmered and shifted. My mom stepped through a portal, but she threw a tied up body ahead of her. She looked wild. My grip on Zeke tightened and I moved aside as Hector came out of the house, quickly stepping down the stairs.

"Auri?" It was said in more of a warning tone, then questioning her.

"I found the bastard. It took me days...days, Hector. But I found him." Her gold eyes were bright as what could only

be described as a sadistic smile crept onto her face.

Next to me, Zeke shivered and I looked down, his eyes were focused on Mom and he was shaking. I was glad it wasn't just me who was picking up on how wild and murderous she had become. Reagan and Rowan missing tore me apart but I had to trust that we could find some way of getting them back. Trust that we would find the information before I could become useful. That waiting was both painful but allowed me not to go down the murderous rampage that my mom had apparently succumb to.

"Please...please...don't hurt me. Please...I didn't...I don't..." The man was crying into the dirt and grass that Mom had thrown him into.

"Tell them, you sniveling piece of shit. Before I splatter your insides all over this fucking place!"

I extracted Zeke from me as AJ, Bryan, my Dad and Týr cleared out of the house to see what the commotion was. Stepping down the steps as well, I had Naresh stay up front with me in case we needed to use our power.

"Please...it wasn't...I was only following orders..." He cried out as Mom slammed her boot into his side and lifted him off the ground, throwing him closer to the house.

"That's not what I was talking about, you piece of filth."

He cried out as his face hit the ground again. Blood was dried to his clothing and matting his hair. "Please...mercy...mercy..."

"Mom? What's going on?"

Her eyes turned to me and I stepped back, her power

nearly overwhelming me. My knees started to go weak and I felt my hands shake. Hector was further ahead of me and he stepped in between us as he took the brunt of my mom's power.

"Auri, talk to us. What's going on?"

"He was one of the ones who took the kids. I tracked him down. His scent was on the door. I tracked him and he decided to sing like a sweet little bird. Isn't that fucking right, Oscar? Oscar who has kids and a family and who doesn't want to die and doesn't like to be tortured. Oscar who has been crying and bleeding all over the place, snot coming down. Oscar, who doesn't care that he just handed children over a madman. Who doesn't give a shit because they weren't his kids, were they?"

My mom was nearly frothing at the mouth as she turned her anger and madness back to the man whose name was apparently Oscar.

"He's human..." Zeke stepped forward but I put my arm out, stopping him from getting ahead of me.

"Of course he's human. Who else would do the dirty work of that bastard against us? You try to tell a vampire or a werewolf to kidnap the kids of the two most powerful beings in the world and see what they say. No, these assholes were fucking human. Using Nová 2.0, weren't you, you fucking bastards."

I'd thought she was completely out of control but she wasn't. When she kicked him, she could have obliterated a human. I knew she didn't have all the runes off her back to stop her from having the power to kill me, let alone a human. She was completely in control. Well, not completely, but enough that she knew when to hold back

to extract information.

"I did it! I did it! I was hired but when we found out we were nabbing kids, we said no. Then...they threatened us. So we did the job and nabbed them. We were told that at a designated time, there would be two cars that were almost destroyed and we were supposed to take the kids. So we showed up, grabbed the ones that we needed, and left."

He was crying, his body was shaking and he obviously had some broken bones despite her holding back. At first, I felt bad for the guy taking my mom's wrath. Now though, my body was shaking in rage. This was one of the guys who took Reagan and Rowan. Took Osiris and Bast. Anger filled me and I felt Zeke grab my arm, most likely trying to hold himself up against the onslaught of my emotions.

"Oh, you're not done. Not even close."

Auri walked up to him and grabbed his hair, lifting him up so that only his legs was touching the ground. He was clawing at her arms, trying to get her to let go.

"Auri...stop...this is too much..." Dad walked past me, his mouth in a thin line and I could see his hands shake but before he could reach Mom, Hector stopped him.

"Don't, Logan. Not right now. She'll kill you."

She kicked Oscar in the back of his thigh with a sickening crack; you could see she had broken his bone completely. Oscar howled and cried, his hands dropping from grabbing her to holding his leg.

"I said tell them the rest of what you did."

Oscar shook as he hung by his hair. "They...we...took them

back to the drop point. It was...some...old castle...looking... but we didn't go in. There was a trap door...or tunnel...or something...they met us there."

"Who met you there?" I growled out, my body shaking as Naresh pushed forward ready to bite this man's head.

"I don't know! There were these guys, with guns. Some old guys. I don't know. I don't ask names. We got paid, ensured our families wouldn't be touched, and they took the kids. That was it. I swear. I don't know anything else. I swear. I don't know anything else. I didn't do anything else."

My mom laughed, maniacally into the sky. "Nothing else? You kidnapped children. You kidnapped children and turned them over to people who threatened your own families. I'm going to find every single one of you, and you will die. You think you were being threatened? I don't make threats, Oscar. I don't give warnings, Oscar. I destroy. You have taken my children and I will take everything from you, starting with your insignificant life."

I blinked. A single moment and suddenly, Oscar's head was the only thing Mom was holding. The rest of his body thumped to the ground. She was heaving, her anger and power lashing out around her.

"Auri, you did good. You found the information. He's dead. Drop the head. Let it go. Let the power go, love." Hector took tentative steps towards her, as though he was trying to tame a wild animal.

"Hector...he has them. Oran has them." Her eyes slipped back to their normal amber color now as she focused on Hector. "He could be doing goddess knows what to them. Hector...they..."

He reached her and I watched as he cupped her cheek. "I know, love. I know. We will get them back. We won't let him hurt anymore of our children."

It was almost too intimate, watching the exchange between them. Hector's hand slide down her shoulder and arm before he was able to get her hand to let go of Oscar's head. It dropped with a thud as he interlocked their fingers. His other hand brushed the tear tracks on her face, but they had long since dried.

"You did good, love. You did it. Now, we make our move. Now, we kill them. We know where he has them and we will get them."

Mom nodded slowly before she allowed Hector to pull her against him. His size just engulfed her and he held her tight, his cheek resting against the top of her head. Dad looked back at the rest of us, shaking his head.

"It's a trap. You all have to know that. He wants you there. He has his whole army there. He wants to b**e you. You need to plan...make sure you're not just stepping into..."

"Not this time, Dad." I finally managed to pull Naresh back, now that the man was dead. "It doesn't matter if it's a trap. Nothing matters. We will destroy every single one of them. For taking our children. For taking all the children. For his experiments. The pain he has caused us. Caused our kind. We will destroy him. We will do it without mercy. Oran dies and everyone who is in the forest dies as well. This ends. Now."