

Chapter 142

I wiped the blood out of my eyes, trying to focus on the where Oran was in the room. Vale was standing near the center of the room. He didn't look nearly as bad as I did but that wasn't saying much. Oran was playing with us but we still couldn't compare to his strength. Holding up his broken sword, Vale parried Oran's knife but was thrown back with the power behind the hit. Staggering up, I ran, only shifting my claws since I couldn't shift my whole body anymore. I caught Oran's arm as he was making a stab for Vale. My claws dragged across his skin and he dropped the knife.

"Well, aren't you the useful little mate."

I put up my arms to cover my face, sensing an attack either by his fists or foot. Vale though, grabbed the knife and me, pulling us back away and out of reach of the strike. We both were breathing heavily and on our knees.

"Vale...we need..."

He nodded. "I know. I know, Z. Just hold out a little longer."

Vale lifted up off the floor before brandishing the knife as his own weapon. Oran chuckled and shook his head.

"You are but children. What can a child really do?"

"We can..." Vale took a deep breath. "...surprise you. Children are resilient. They don't know when to quit. They don't know when to stop fighting. And they don't know how to lose."

Oran smiled, his nails elongating to a grotesque length. "Then let me be the first to teach you how to properly lose!"

The way his nails darkened and shined, I knew this wasn't just some regular extra strong nails. In order to hit Vale, Oran needed to go over me. I took the chance and as he made a move to swipe at Vale, I clawed his wrists from below. It pushed his attack off but both Vale and I watched in surprise as the knives edge was shorn right off. There was something far more devastating about his nails. Taking another swipe, I managed to break off a few of them but not all.

Oran roared, his foot slamming into the side of my head and I went flying across the room. My back hit the wall and I felt the stone crack as I dropped onto the floor. Coughing, blood was now pouring out of my mouth. I could barely feel my body anymore. He must have broken too many bones for me to get up right now.

"Zeke!" Vale yelled and then roared at Oran.

"No...Vale..." I tried to reach him but I couldn't move my arms. My voice was grabbed but I was able at least to keep my eyes open.

'I'm coming! Just...hold out a little longer! I'm coming!' Auri's voice was like a relief I thought I would never hear. 'Uriel found the pups. Reagan, Rowan, Bast and Osiris are safe. They are with the other kids. Just hold on! I'll be there soon!'

Vale and Oran were still locked in battle but Vale was being beaten back too quickly. Oran was overpowering him at every step and if Auri didn't come soon, Vale wouldn't make it. My eyes widened as a kick to the chest

threw Vale across the room and slammed him into the stairs just below the throne.

"You know. These suits of armor are always so unrealistic." Oran grabbed the handle of the sword the suit of armor was holding and he kicked it away, swinging the sword. "Never would you have such a finely made or sharpened blade. It was always blunt and you would be lucky if it was straight."

He used two hands and held it up. "Even in the Roman Empire, the sword that was given to me for all the heroic deeds I did was absolute shit."

Fear coursed through me like nothing I had ever felt before. Watching Oran as he turned away from the crumpled suit of armor. He was a hunter before his prey. Vale was getting up, wiping his mouth on the back of his hands. Blood was coming out of the sides of his mouth and his ears as he held the chipped knife in one hand.

"Oh Vale, you don't seem to get that you are outmatched. You will die here today. The BloodHunter coven will always rise again, with me at the helm. I will never be forgotten. I will continue to live, to gain more power. I will unravel this world's very core. That is the purpose of my life. To find all the answers."

"Not if you're dead, you won't." Vale ground out, holding his knife out in front, watching as Oran slowly made his way back into the center of the room.

He cackled, the sound echoing in the empty space. "You? Kill me? The delusions of a king perhaps."

I watched as Oran disappeared, only to reappear in front of Vale a second too late. Vale managed to get a scratch

on Oran's cheek but Oran kicked him back onto the the platform. As his back hit the bottom of the throne, Vale cried out and I tried to move. My arms were shaking but my lower body was refusing to listen to my commands. Dragging myself by my arms, I could only go inch by inch as I tried to reach out into the stone to pull me closer to him. He was going to die. We both were.

"Come now, Vale. I tire of this. At least your mother would put up a fight. She is always such a feisty thing."

Tears threatened to blur my vision but I blinked them away. I couldn't take my eyes off of Oran. He would kill in an instant if I did.

'Vale. Go. Run. Please. Auri will be here. Let her take over. Don't fight him anymore. Please. You have to live. You have to survive.' I tried to reach him through the mind link.

I started to sob as I felt Vale drop his walls and the entire room was filled with his power. It was staggering how much it had grown since his training with Auri. I took a couple deep breaths but already I was down so it didn't affect me as much as it probably should have.

Oran staggered a bit, his body hunched under the weight of Vale's power. "Well, not quite as powerful as your mother but it sure does still pack a punch, I'll give you that."

Vale jumped forward, taking the moment to attack. He was aiming the dagger for Oran's heart but Vale's power wasn't enough to incapacitate Oran. Suddenly, Vale's body was flung across the room and I screamed my mates name as he slammed into the throne. His body crumpled in it and I cried out over and over. My hands worked faster, my arms dragging me across the floor but

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it was still so far away.

'Zeke?' His mindlink voice was weak.

'Vale! Vale!'

'It's okay, Zeke. I can kill him. I can do it. His own arrogance is his downfall.'

I shook my head, my hand reaching out but the strength wasn't enough to pull me forward anymore. 'No, Vale. Please. You can't leave me. You can't leave us. I promised ...I promised I would protect you. That we would go home together. You, me, the pups. We would all go home together.'

'I know, my sweet little Alpha. And I love you. I love you so fucking much.'

Oran was walking up the stairs towards Vale.

'I love you, Vale. You are my world, my everything. You have shown me what it means to live. What it means to love. I couldn't have gotten this far without you. You can't leave me.'

'I'm sorry my mate. I have to do this. I have to kill him. It has to end, now. Otherwise, he'll find a way to slip away. I won't let you feel my death. I won't let anyone. I...goodbye ...my mate.'

I screamed 'no' both in my head and out loud. Blood sprayed from my lips as I felt him break our bond. Our mate bond fell to pieces and the pack was handed over to me in that moment. The shock and confusion from the pack and the sudden intrusion into my mind made me cry out.

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Oran had been speaking this entire time but he stopped in front of the throne; in front of Vale's crumpled body. Vale was gripping the knife in his hand but otherwise, he didn't move.

"...do you have anything to say, Alpha King Vale? Any last words?"

"You...will never...win..." His voice was raspy and his eyes looked up at Oran defiantly.

I watched in horror as Oran took the sword and jammed into through Vale's heart. The sword stuck into the stone as it pinned Vale to the throne. His hands came up at the exact time and the silver knife cut into Oran. Oran stumbled back, his hands hovering over the knife before he fell to his knees, hunched over. My wail filled the room as Vale's eyes became unseeing and I couldn't hear his heart beat. My mate, my king, my love...was gone.



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