

Latent by Queasy

Chapter 4

My mind instantly got thrown into a mindless turmoil, and my senses clogged with scents, sounds and sights of things that weren't there.

The putrid smell of urine and aconite. The sweat trickling down my clammy skin. The feel of my bones melting. . . The sound of slow, approaching footsteps.

A whimper filled my ears and I realized I was now sat rocking on the floor, back in Eunice's car. I tried to hang onto the present, but the memories were relentless.

Like a large sea monster, it threw me back into the ocean of my spiraling thoughts, holding me down until I couldn't breathe, until I was drowning, drowning in my sea of memories. My chest constricted and a wet substance slid down my cheeks. I realized I was crying, inside the ocean?

The pungent smell of urine filled my nose, and when I opened my eyes, it was to see father advancing towards me with a large syringe. The point of the needle glinted menacingly before it came descending into my skin.

A faraway scream hit my ears, increasing in volume with each trace of consciousness that slipped into me, until I heaved a large breath and my eyes flew open. In a split second I realized the screams were coming from me.

With a loud creak, the boot opened above me and cool moonlight kissed my skin.

"Shit. Shit. Shit," Eunice frantically muttered above me, pulling me out.

When my feet landed on the concrete, I fell on her.

Eunice's voice cracked as she hurriedly spoke to me, "Oh, Hil. Who did this to you. I'm so sorry. You know you can talk to me. Tell me w..." Her incoherent muttering slowly faded into the back of my mind. I buried my face deeper into the material of her dress, shivering, finding I was really tired. I always got drained after experiencing an episode, as if I had all the life sucked out of me with a giant tube.

We stood there on the empty curb for God knows how long. Cars wheezed past us, windows sliding down to reveal puzzled and suspicious gazes.

When I was sure I wouldn't trip on my feet if I decided to walk, I disentangled myself from Eunice. "Come on, let's get going."

Her teary gaze watched me wearily. "Are you sure?"

I automatically bristled. "Hey, stop that. Stop treating me like that. I'm not fragile, neither am I a child." I turned and made my way over to the car.

I paused when I opened the passengers door. Turning to look at her, I asked, "Well, are you coming or not?"

For a while she stared at me, before seeming to snap herself out of something.

When she got into the car, she started the ignition and I laid my forehead against the window, watching the buildings we passed by.

Termination dust had started to coat the vast mountains, and the people on the road were all bundled up to their teeth. It was nearing winter in Alaska, and unless you had a death wish, you'd do well to go out with ammunition. Ammunition being sweaters, beanies, puffer jackets and whatnot.

"So, here's what we're gonna do tonight," Eunice began resolutely, drawing my attention. "When we get to the club, we're gonna drink our asses out until we get wasted."

Opting to not remind her werewolves couldn't get drunk, or wasted, I nodded.

"And we're going to dance until our feet hurt."

"Got it."

"And not think of anything else apart from the music and alcohol. Not our pack-mates, not your dad, not Lizzy, not... Not your episodes."

With my middle finger, I tucked my hair behind my ear. "Roger that."

"Good."

After a while of navigating our way through twisting roads and forking routes, we drove into a well-lit lawn. Other cars were parked on it, the vehicles extended throughout the wide pasture.

When we got out, my nose was immediately overwhelmed with different scents; humans, drinks, sweat, cigarette smoke and stale perfume. The loud bass from the music pumping within seeped outside, sounding muted and faraway.

"Come on," Eunice said. We wove our way through the maze of parked cars and drew level with the huge front doors. After stating our business to the bouncers we were let in.

The earsplitting screams and bellows hit my notice first, before the dancefloor did, it was packed, full with mortals.

As I and Eunice headed for the bar, people stopped and stared, their gazes like the ones that'd watched us as we stood hugging on the curb; puzzled and suspicious. It could be because of the thin-layered clothes we wore, nothing that could protect us from the freezing cold. We were shifters, we could summon body heat at will.

Or, their suspicious looks could be as a result of their subconsciouses being on red alert, informing them there was something really off about us, that we were predators. The big bad wolves— literally.

Sat on the high stools now, we ordered the strongest of what they had. Strobe lights flashed around, their long rays highlighting the wild scene on the spacious dancefloor.

People danced like this was the last night of their lives, their heads bobbing wildly, their bodies carelessly twisting in tune to the heavy music. On their faces were looks of pure joy and euphoria, and for a moment I wished I could loose myself like that.

“Here you go, misses.”

My attention on the drinks, I took a glass and downed its dark-red contents. I spat it right back out. “The hell’s this?” I shouted above the noise.

The bartender’s tone was amused. “The strongest of what we have.”

I swiped the back of my palm across my mouth. “Didn’t tell me you served poison.”

He chuckled, and I took a moment to oogle him. He was handsome. Chocolate brown hair that looked deliciously soft, high cheekbones, hazel eyes and an athletic build. So why wasn’t my heart tripping? I frowned, maybe Gerad had ruined me for other men. Incredulous, my frown deepened and I wondered how I could even think that.

He noticed my frown. “Anything wrong?”

“Ah—no. Just, the aftereffects of the drink, can still feel the sting in my throat.” My hand awkwardly went to my neck.

He smiled, shouting above the music, “I’ll go get you something softer.”

After my nod he went away.

Eunice spun to face me. A huge, ridiculous grin spread across her face. “He’s hot!”

“And you have a boyfriend.”

She giggled into her tumbler, taking a long sip.

My face scrunched up. “How on earth can you stomach that?”

“How on earth can you not? Unless”—her eyes grew to the size of hot air balloons—
“unless we’re not on earth! We’re outside aren’t we?! In spaaacee.”

I drew back. “Wait, are you drunk?”

She cut the crap, gingerly sipping her drink. “Nope, just pretending to be.”

I giggled. “You know w—”

A dark shadow fell upon the both of us. Sensing werewolves, my instincts went on high alert. Turning, I saw who it was.

Lizzy Carver. The lead packtracker’s daughter, little miss perfect, and Gerad Justin’s girlfriend till date. Behind her, her two other minions sashayed forward to take their permanent place four inches behind her and be a pain in my neck in five... Four... Three... Two... O—

“If it isn’t Latilda,” said Sarah Jones.

A bored, icy mask took over my face and I drummed my fingers on the counter. “Like your current relationship, the name’s gotten stale. Time to change it... The name, I mean.”

Sarah’s eyes warningly flashed yellow. She made to say something scathing, but Lizzy held up a well manicured hand, stopping her. She casted her smoky-eyed gaze around the club. “This place’s filled with mortals, weak, annoying, pathetic little creatures, and it’s no place fit for a true werewolf. Figured you’d be here.”

My brows lifted. “You’re here, too. And last time I checked you weren’t a witch.” I looked her over. “Although you could’ve fooled me.”

Eunice’s giggle reached my ears, and one escaped my lips as well.

She subjected us both to a poisonous look. In a pissed tone, she addressed me, “Watch it, Latilda, or I’ll not be responsible for any unfortunate circumstances that might befall you.”

“Is that a threat?” Eunice asked.

Lizzy’s gaze shifted to her. “Oh, little omega, it is. What are you going to do about it, Cinderella? Hit me with a broom?” Her mocking laughter mingled with the ones behind her. It made my blood boil.

Heather Clark, the last of her friends, finally spoke up, “No, she’s going to go and try to kill herself again.”

Silence enveloped us. Eunice’s throat worked. Like me, Eunice had gotten her own fair share of bullying, even I didn’t know to what extent she’d endured them, but unlike me, she hadn’t been able to keep on putting up with them. I sharply rose to my feet, getting into Heather’s face “Shut the f*ck up, Heather!” I noted my voice rang out.

It took me a moment to realize half of the club had stopped to watch us. The other half joined in when Heather forcefully pushed me backwards. My back connected with the hard ridge of the counter.

“Or what?” she said, her eyes glittering with cruel amusement. “Cry off to daddy dearest?” She tsked. “Too bad he doesn’t care for you.”

My breaths had started to quicken in anger, my palms fisting.

Eunice rose to stand beside me. Urgently she whispered, “Come on, let’s get out of here.”

Heather Clark added, “I’m sure mummy didn’t either.”

I saw red. A shrill scream tore out of me as I charged forward, colliding with her. We both tumbled onto the floor, roughly rolling. “Leave my mother out of your filthy mouth!”

“Cat fight!” The crowd hollered, cheering.

“Get off me, you bitch!” Heather shrieked. Her claws instantly lengthened and she used them to swipe at my face.

“Hil!” Eunice screamed.

Dodging her deadly swipe, I seized hold of her dark hair and slammed her head to the floor. An audible crack sounded.

“Ouchh!” The crowd intoned.

I could hear the heavy footsteps of the bodyguards starting to run towards us.

“Hey!” They were here.

A furious bouncer barreled towards me, anger taut on his face and rippling muscles. Something told me he had no qualms about hitting females.

A red haze fell over me. Never releasing my hold on Heather's writhing form, I focused my heated gaze on him, and something happened. As though propelled by an invisible force, he suddenly flew into the air, grandly crashing into a large, fancy table.

A stretch of silence. Then stampede. "Freak!" the humans screamed as they tumbled over themselves rushing out the doors. "Freak!"

The blares of sirens hit my ears and finally, the red haze of anger cleared from my vision. I spotted Eunice running towards me, and I stood, letting her grab my hand; then together we ran off.

Author's note:

Hello, sweethearts!