

Chapter 18

Daisy

A day after my talk with Yato, I wake up in the middle of the night to the sound of Alpha Xavier howling I've never heard him do it before, but I can immediately tell it's him.

'A distress call, Sera points out. 'Someone has been killed on pack grounds.'

Yato told me we were at war with basically everyone.

I sit up in my bed, unable to fight the shivers coursing my spine since yesterday, and I haven't been able to relax since then. It feels like I'm in constant danger.

I should take up on Yato's offer to train me. I'm going to need it, people are dying now.

Sera growls in disdain. 'I don't trust that Alpha.'

"What other option do I have?

'true,' Sera sighs. 'At least you're not taking your medication anymore.'

"Are you getting stronger?

'Yes'

I let out a satisfied sigh and quickly throw on some clothes, Alpha Xavier is still calling for his pack, and since my own Alpha isn't around, he is the authority. I better hear what this is about, especially since someone has died.

As I slip into my boots, my hands are trembling, not from the cold but from fear. Still, I force myself outside into the icy night. The sun still hasn't risen, and my breath forms small clouds of vapor as I exhale.

"Everyone's probably already there," Sera mutters. "You better hurry!"

Since I can't shape-shift. I sprint as a human towards the woods, Wolves are heading in the same direction. They smirk at me knowingly, aware of my inability to shift.

"Don't mind them. Sera growls inside my head. They will eventually learn their place.

"Oh yeah?" I ask, amused by how bloodthirsty my inner wolf is.

"Yes, Sera falls silent when another wolf sticks out their tongue at me on the path ahead. Once she realizes they are making fun of me, she growls louder. 'Peasants, all of them.'

I chuckle at her words and enter a clearing. The sky is cloudy, but the morning sun is behind it, making everything feel less creepy.

"Is that Alpha Xavier?" Sera asks in an impressed tone.

I look up, my eyes landing on the largest wolf that I've ever seen. It has gleaming green eyes and a muscular body that makes it seem like a hard foe to take down. Its fur is the color of a moonless night, thick and lustrous, and I hold my breath when it meets my gaze.

The mate bond sizzles. 'Yes, that's him,' I confirm, trying to keep myself from shaking. Its one thing seeing Alpha Xavier in his human form, but his wolf form is just.. intimidating.

He is speaking to the other wolves through the mind-link. We can't listen since we aren't part of the pack, but what he is saying must have something to do with that girl's body over there. It looks drained of blood,

My heart speeds up. "Vampires"

Most likely.

Fear grips my heart, and I silently wonder if it was a mistake coming out here. I'm not strong like the others, and the longer I stare down at the dead girl, the more my paranoia intensifies. I'm not equipped for this, yet I can't stop staring at the girl's wide-open eyes and mummified skin.

It's a declaration of war, Sera murmurs, horrified. 'They drained her dry just to send a message.'

My chest tightens, and I swallow down the bile that rises in my throat. The wolves around me are growling, their sorrow and rage over the lost pack member lost in translation for someone like me who can't hear them. Yet the heavy atmosphere of grief and fury is almost palpable.

Alpha Xavier's green eyes burn with an intensity that makes me shiver in my boots. He lets out another howl, more mournful this time. It reverberates through the forest, echoing off the trees and sending a shudder down my spine.

'He is calling for a meeting.' Sera whispers inside my head. Her voice is somber, as if affected by the obvious pain radiating from Alpha Xavier. 'You should go,' she says.

I don't need to be told twice. I turn around the way I came from only to halt when Alpha Xavier blocks my path. He is the size of a horse, and his eyes bore into mine. I can see the pain seething beneath the surface of his green orbs, and for a moment. I'm paralyzed by it.

'Oh, damn...' Sera whispers in my mind, and I can feel her retreating into the shadows of my consciousness, an uncharacteristic show of fear from my usually audacious wolf.

"Don't leave me!" I call after her, but she is already gone. I'm alone with Alpha Xavier, who approaches me with his head held down low.

“Wh-what do you want?” I ask, frightened by his size. But he doesn’t stop advancing. Instead, it’s me who freezes and shuts my eyes, paralyzed until I hear him shifting.

‘Umm...I think he wants you to climb up on his back.’ Sera says in a confused voice.

I open my eyes, stunned to find Alpha Xavier lying on his stomach with his back presented to me. He casts a glance over his shoulder and huffs.

Understanding slowly dawning, I hesitantly approach him, my heart pounding and my breath catching in my throat. His glittering green eyes never leave mine as I clamber onto his back to straddle him like a horse. Unlike the harsh winter weather, his black fur is warm and soft.

“Are you prepared, Daisy?’ Sera’s voice whispers again in my mind.

‘Not in the slightest.’

“This will be fun,” Sera sounds excited. “Since you’ve never been able to shape-shift, this will be your first werewolf experience; you could even pretend it’s you running.”

That’s a thought, I retort, trying to hide my nervousness.

Alpha Xavier rises on his four paws, and I’m struck by the raw strength coursing beneath me. Without wasting another second, he lunges forward into the forest, the speed breathtaking and dizzying.

Trees blur past us as Alpha Xavier races through the forest with unmatched agility. The wind is howling in my ears, leaving me with only the thud of my heart as we speed through the dark woods.

Enjoying it?’ Sera’s voice echoes in my head, tinged with humor. I smile to myself. This is terrifying but also fun.

‘Hold on tight, Daisy.’ Sera advises telepathically, her voice echoing in my head. I grasp a fistful of Alpha Xavier’s fur and do as she says, clinging onto him for dear life.

His strides are powerful and fluid, belying the size of his bulky frame. The world around me becomes a blur of green and brown as we traverse through the underbrush, leaping over fallen logs and darting through narrow clearings.

We don’t stop until we are right outside the hotel. Alpha Xavier walks up to the doors and glances at me over his shoulder. Is he telling me to climb down?

I hesitate, unsure of his intention, but after a moment’s consideration, I slowly slide off his back. Once on the ground, I look up at him; his green eyes hold something unreadable.

Sera grows quiet inside my head, and though she doesn’t voice her thoughts, I can feel her curiosity.

Before I can gather my courage to ask any questions, Alpha Xavier leaves me standing in front of the hotel. His muscular form gracefully weaves through the trees until only the ghost

of his presence remains. The air feels colder without him, and I wrap my arms around myself, trying to hold on to the warmth his fur offered me.

“Why would he...” I start but trail off as Sera interrupts me.

‘Perhaps he wanted to make sure you’re safe,’ Sera concludes, her tone thoughtful.

‘Maybe.’ I murmur, unable to shake off the feeling of longing that clings to me in Alpha Xavier’s absence.

With a shivery sigh, I turn toward the hotel. My mother and Lina are sitting in the lobby, and I hear my sister sigh in disdain as soon as I enter.

“I have no idea why Alpha Xavier treats Daisy so kindly. She doesn’t have a wolf.”

“It makes no sense to me either,” my mother replies. “Maybe he can sense what she truly is?”

“Shh, she could hear you....”

I want to ask what they are talking about, but Sera’s voice inside my head stops me. ‘Confronting them isn’t wise. They won’t answer you, and you can’t put up a fight against them. Better pretend as if you haven’t awakened yet.’

Nodding to myself, I tread lightly across the polished wooden floor and up the grand staircase. My heart beats heavily in my chest as I make my way to my pet room. I open the door and I swear nothing can have prepared me for what I see.

Yato is lying on my bed and reading one of my books, a telltale smirk spreading over his lips. "You're back," he says, his voice filled with amusement. "Did you enjoy your little love ride with my brother?"