

Chapter 66

Xavier

I look down from my seat on the windowsill, rolling my eyes at the candles on the floor. My mother is performing some kind of ritual with the other vampires.

“Summoning Lucian is a terrible idea,” I tell her, and I’m not even lying. She immediately glares up at me with a dagger in her hand—it’s covered in virgin blood from the willing participant, a young woman whose body now lies limp on the floor. It’s sickening, so I look away, but my mother won’t let me have the last word.

“Xavier,” she hisses, the name sliding off her tongue like poison. “It is not your place to question me, especially since you’re the sole reason I’m doing this.”

I raise a single eyebrow in disbelief. “I’m the one to blame?”

“Yes.”

My lips curl into an irritated smile. “How?”

“I can’t trust you. I told you to kill the light wolf, yet you’re keeping her alive-you’re slipping and acting weird. If I didn’t know any better, I would say you’re second-guessing our whole operation.”

Instead of answering, I glance out through the window at the eternal darkness outside. I might have been the one who summoned it, but I can’t take it back... Shit, what am I thinking? Why would I even want the eternal night to stop? Maybe my mother is right. Perhaps I am slipping because every time I close my eyes, I see the face of that goddamn light wolf. Daisy. My insides sizzle with discomfort. Daisy isn’t one bit like her past life, Serena. No. That bitch was cold and wanted all of the vampires dead even before the war came. But Daisy? Her Beta is a vampire, so she couldn’t possibly share the same sentiments as Serena. But damn it, Daisy is a werewolf, and I...I am what I am. ...bet she thinks I’m a monster. It would make sense. I am Daisy’s enemy, the vampire prince, the one who brought the eternal darkness. But I’m also confused and suffering from bad migraines because I’m constantly fighting back my werewolf side. I have to do it, though, since I would probably disappear if I let my two sides mix.

“You’re not even listening to me!” my mother shrills, bringing me back from my reverie. A heavy sigh leaves my lips.

“I’m heading out.”

“Wh-what? No, you need to listen-”

I open a portal underneath my feet and leave the vampire castle without listening to her lecture. I'm over a thousand years old, for God's sake; I can't be expected to let my mother boss me around like I'm still a child. I push through the darkness and materialize on the street, jumping when I hear a loud "BEEP!" coming from one of those big metal boxes with lights-at the front. Humans use them for transportation, but they don't look safe. Why do they use them? Suddenly, two women walk through a pair of doors that are entirely made of glass.

"And then he, like, broke up with me, but I was like...I wasn't going to take that, so I broke up with him."

"Girl, that's so hardcore!"

"Word!"

My nose twitches when they walk past. They smell funny, but oh wow, what is that in their hands? It's a see-through container of some sort, and it smells like coffee but different-sweeter. I can feel my mouth watering even though coffee isn't blood. Is it because I'm a hybrid? Either way, I enter through the glass. doors, following the intoxicating smell. Inside, bright light and clatter fill my senses. There might be an eternal night outside, but here, people are sitting at small tables or on plush couches, fingers tapping against little boxes with glowing screens. It's like the world isn't going under, and I immediately take my place in the line.

“I just wish Xavier remembered me.”

I freeze when I hear Daisy’s voice. She is standing in line with her friend, and I have to think fast. Do I leave? No, I want my coffee with my name spelled on the cup, damn it! This is a dream of mine!

“He will, eventually,” her friend says and looks around so fast I have no other choice than to alter my appearance in the blink of an eye. In a split second, my usually dark hair turns blonde, and my piercing red eyes become an unremarkable brown. I even add a few scars, shorten my height, and give myself a tan. I’m now a young, naive surfer.

“Who is that?” Daisy’s friend murmurs, looking directly at me.

Even though I seldom smile, I try my hardest to look friendly. It pains me, but what don’t you do for the sake of coffee? I wait for Daisy to look at me, holding my breath even though I don’t need to. She won’t be able to recognize me, right?

Daisy finally follows her friend’s gaze and stares at me. Her pink eyes widen, and for a moment, recognition flickers. Just as quickly, it disappears and is replaced by confusion.

“Hi,” I say, trying to sound friendly. “You don’t happen to have any money? I’m broke.”

Daisy and her friend fall silent before Daisy whispers, "You won't believe this, but I think that guy is my second-chance mate. I feel weird looking into his eyes. There are bubbles in my chest."

Does she think I can't hear her? I guess I don't smell like a vampire since I've masked it, but seriously? I'm not deaf! Who do they think I am?!

"He is kind of hot," her friend says. "Would you like to buy him a coffee or frappe? Talk to him a little?" Daisy blushes and looks me up and down before whispering back. "Do you think he minds that I'm pregnant? If he is my second-chance mate, maybe I should at least hear him out? I would hate to be rejected since I know how it feels."

Frustration courses through me. Do all girls talk loudly like this in front of the person they're discussing? Somehow, I ignore my irritation and plaster a friendly grin on my face.

"No, not at all," I say, my voice taking on the laid-back tone of a surfer. "I'd love coffee, actually. And for the record" I point to my ears and shrug nonchalantly, "I can hear everything you're saying. But it's all good, really."

Daisy reddens even further, her blush spreading from her cheeks to the tips of her ears. Her friend giggles, apparently delighted by the turn of events. "You didn't have to say that out loud," Daisy mumbles, her hands nervously fumbling with the hem of her blouse. "Now I feel foolish."

“No need to,” I say, my smile never leaving my face. “Happens all the time.”

Her friend, the dark-haired girl with the devilish smile, nudges Daisy playfully before looking at me. “Do you want to join us? The coffee is on me.”

Should I? These two are my enemies, but...

I glance at Daisy, who squirms in her place. I’m confused about her calling me her mate. I don’t feel anything, but this is the perfect opportunity to spy on her. And no, I’m not interested in her or anything. This is just part of the cat-and-mouse game that we are playing.

“Sure,” I fake a smile. “My name is Matt Lumm. like seashells and...stuff. Nailed it.

Daisy’s friend stifles a giggle. “Well, Matt, who likes seashells and stuff. I’m Lola. And my lovely single friend who is looking for a man is Daisy.” She points to her friend, who has now managed to blush an even darker shade of red.

“Nice to meet you, Lola. Daisy,” I add quickly, letting my gaze linger on Daisy’s pink eyes. She is extremely nervous around me and I smile evilly to myself. This will be fun...