

Chapter 69

Daisy

There is a pause, his question hanging like an arrow in the air. I swallow hard and gather my strength, forcing myself to stand tall. “No.” I say, but my voice lacks conviction.

Xavier’s lips curl further to form a smile; this time, it’s more sinister. He steps closer, so close that the scent of him, pine. mixed with something addicting, wafts over me. “You should be,” he murmurs.

My heart thuds against my ribcage as Xavier’s gaze roams over. There is a hunger in his eyes that sends shivers down my spine. Not because I fear him but because a part of me is having trouble seeing him as my enemy. The mate bond is still there. I still crave him, want him, but he doesn’t remember who I am.

“Tell me, little flower,” he steps closer still, backing me into a wall and pinning me to it with his gaze. “Do you know what happens to a wolf who tempts a vampire?”

The wall is cold against my back, but I feel the heat of his stare, searing and potent. I ignore the fluttering in my stomach.

Pushing it aside to focus on my sense of survival. I draw on every ounce of my dignity as I meet his eyes, dark and dangerous and dripping with anticipation.

“I imagine they bite,” I retort, squaring my shoulders. My heart is pounding like a drum in my chest, fighting to escape its confinement. Xavier chuckles. It’s a low, sexy sound that rumbles through the room, setting my teeth on edge. His arm snakes out to brace against the wall beside my head, effectively caging me in.

“Not quite,” he murmurs, his breath hot against my cheek. The proximity is destroying my resolve. I close my eyes, trying to distance myself from him. But it’s useless; his scent envelops me, and I find myself holding my breath. Slowly, I feel him lean in closer until his lips are almost touching my ear. “They become addicted,” he whispers, causing goosebumps to erupt across my skin. His words hit me like a bolt of lightning. What does he mean by that? Shivers prick over my skin as I look into his red eyes. He is gorgeous-dangerous but beautiful.

Mixed emotions bubble in my chest as I look at him, each fighting for dominance -fear, anger, hurt, confusion. “Addicted to what?” I finally ask, trying to keep my voice steady. Despite my composure, I can hear the slight tremor in my tone.

He chuckles again, his breath washing over me in warm waves. “The thrill,” he responds. “The danger.”

His words shock me into silence. I look at him, studying his features. He's the picture of calmness, a stark contrast to the storm raging inside me. I swallow hard. "And what happens to vampires that tempt wolves?" I counter, challenging him with my gaze.

The flicker in his eyes is my only indication that he didn't expect this question. His face is close, too close. My body is tuned into every breath he takes, every twitch of his lips, every blink of those haunting red eyes.

The silence stretches between us like a tightrope, and I can barely breathe. "Well," Xavier drawls slowly, his voice dripping with amusement "they get to enjoy the chase." His teeth flash in a predatory grin, all sharp canines and promises of danger.

His confidence unnerves me, but not enough to keep my mouth shut. "And is that what this is? A game of chase?"

Instead of giving me a clear answer, he breathes a laugh and answers my question with another. "Why can't I stop thinking about you, the woman destined to destroy me?"

I wet my lips. "Accept your werewolf side, Xavier. Let your vampire and werewolf be one. It will answer your questions and... bring you back to me."

His eyes narrow. "My mother warned me of doing that."

Since I can't help myself, I laugh." Do you always do what your mama tells you to do?"

He frowns. "No, but Xavier suppressed me for years; it's only fair I do the same."

"Suppressed you?"

"I'm not just his vampiric side, Daisy. I'm his past life. A ghost from forever ago."

I squint at him. "H-how is that even possible?"

"My mother placed a spell on the baby she had with Christian Reeves and made it a host for my soul. Either way, I have no plans on accepting my werewolf side."

Panic sweeps through me at the thought of Xavier being lost forever. I have to stop this madness somehow. "But by not doing that, you will never figure out who I am and why you can't stop thinking about me," I say, hoping it will be enough to make him change his mind. Instead, he smirks.

"I'm not stupid, Daisy," his red eyes burn into mine as he speaks; there is amusement written in them but also passion and longing. "You were the Xavier's lover, weren't you?"

"I was." I swallow thickly. "And if you know that, then you must understand that I miss him. That I want him to come back to me."

He stills for a moment before asking, "Isn't my life important too? Do you only care for the other Xavier?"

I gasp at his words. "You're my enemy, the one who summoned the eternal darkness, and here you are, expecting me to care about you?"

He doesn't back down. "Yes."

I shake my head at him. "I don't even know you."

"Then get to know me," he says, his tone equally as challenging. "Learn to know me as I am now. Don't cling to a past that no longer exists."

I stare at him, breathing heavily. He is the enemy, a specter from the past with Xavier's face, but the man I loved is long gone. This entity before me is a stranger.

"And how do you propose I do that?" I ask, my voice barely above a whisper.

Instead of answering my question directly, he dips his head so that our lips are only inches apart. "This is how." Without warning, he kisses my lips. His touch is like ice, but his lips are

soft, and the flutters in my chest are far too intense for me to handle. He tastes like sin. I gasp in surprise, but he takes that opportunity to deepen the kiss, pulling me closer to his hard body. I can't stop it. Xavier is kissing me with such control that I'm melting, dying, and being reborn. If this is what kissing is supposed to feel like, then what have I been doing for my entire life?

Each kiss is addicting, stirring a whirlwind of emotions inside me. I shouldn't be kissing him. It feels like I'm cheating on the other Xavier. My first instinct is to push him away, but something stops me. His hands are on my waist, fingers digging into my sides. I want to resist him, but there's an intensity in his kiss that's too intoxicating. Too addicting Xavier pulls back and drags his thumb over my swollen bottom lip before smirking.

"Why settle for the hero when you can have the villain instead?"

This is it-the moment when I should scream for help or tell him to go to hell. Xavier's smile is cruel and wicked, yet I'm coming alive around him. The realization makes tears prickle behind my eyelids, and I push against his chest, desperately trying to put distance between us.

"I will never be yours," I snap, anger surging through me. My heart is pounding so loud I can hear it in my ears. "And don't you dare dishonor Xavier's memory by thinking I would ever choose you over him." I raise hand to slap him, but he grabs it

and looks down at me in amusement before shamelessly kissing my palm. It makes heat spread over my skin, and when he licks me, I can feel my arousal like a burning ache.

“That’s where you’re wrong, Daisy,” he murmurs against my skin, his warm breath teasing the sensitive flesh at my wrist. A shiver runs down my spine as if my whole body is rebelling against me. “You may not choose me over him, but you will choose yourself over him. And in choosing yourself, you will eventually choose me.”

“I’ve had enough of your riddles!” I jerk my hand away from his lips, backing up more to put some distance between us. But Xavier’s eyes burn so brightly in the dim room that it feels as if he’s everywhere at once. He fills up every inch of my vision.

“You can run, Daisy,” he continues, his voice a purr in the dense silence of the room. There’s a certain amusement in his eyes that irks me to no end. “But you can’t hide from your feelings.”

“And what makes you think I have feelings for you? I don’t even know you!” I yell, refusing to let him see how much his words have already affected me.

“But you will,” he grins. “I will be going now, but if you need me. I’m just a thought away.”

A growl leaves my lips. “I would never ask for help from the likes of you!”

“We shall see about that,” he teases. “My mother is about to summon my father, a pureblooded demon from hell, and while you’re a strong werewolf, Daisy, you and I both know we would be stronger together.”

“And you think I’ll just join forces with you because there’s a threat?” I scoff, my lips curving into a cynical smile. “Is that your grand plan?”

“There’s another option,” he shrugs, his eyes alight with a devilish spark.

“Oh? What might that be?” I challenge.

“You can keep running from your feelings and watch as my father rips your world apart.” Xavier’s tone has lost its playful edge, and it’s now replaced by an icy severity.

I hiss at him, blood singing in my veins. “You’re not the only one with power, Xavier.”

“I know that,” he counters calmly. “But I’m the most powerful one in the room right now, and you need me. You just don’t want to admit it.”

“I’d rather die than get your help,” I spit, my chest heaving with anger and frustration.

“That can be arranged.” Xavier’s voice is as cold as ice, his eyes glittering dangerously.

“Threatening me?” I questioned, my tone laced with bitter mockery. “That’s a new low, even for you.”

Xavier merely shrugs, his gaze never leaving mine. “Just stating facts. My father won’t spare anyone who stands in his path. especially not the light wolf.”

“I will become stronger, and I will recruit every single elemental werewolf to help me!”

“And I’m saying that won’t be enough,” he cautions, his voice deadly quiet. “You don’t understand the sheer power he holds, Daisy. You’re talking about going head-on with an ancient demon. This isn’t a werewolf you can claw down.”

“You underestimate me!” I snap.

“No,” he responds softly, “you underestimate him.”

A dreadful silence ensues. It’s suddenly very clear that Xavier isn’t taunting me or playing some twisted game. He’s genuinely terrified of his father.

“And you think siding with the devil’s son is my salvation?” I sneer. “You’re just as dangerous as him.” Those words seem to wound him. He makes a face before looking away.

“Yes, but maybe I can still be saved,” he mutters before disappearing through the floor. The room suddenly feels hollow, the echo of his words whispering through the silence. He is gone, but his presence lingers like a ghost. I can still feel his touch on my wrists, feel the warmth from his lips on my skin. I grit my teeth, shaking off the thought. The new Xavier is a man who has poisoned my mind, and I don’t need him.