

Chapter 74

Daisy

Hours later. I'm lying in my bed beside a passed-out Xavier. His breaths are slow, and his skin is still marred and black from the curse. Sera told me it will take some time before it completely leaves him. She also explained that we didn't have to use up as much of our magic as she expected since Xavier's werewolf side decided to help out.

Even though I don't have his permission, I place my hand over his chest. His pectoral muscles are large and defined, and he has a dusting of dark hair. I stroke my fingers over his skin, feeling the rhythm of his heart beneath my touch. It's steady and strong-a testament to his survival.

'I can't believe he's alive,' Sera murmurs, sounding awestruck,

I smile, tracing his jaw with my fingers. 'Neither can I.'

Suddenly, Xavier stirs next to me, his eyes flitting open to meet mine. Panic races across his face as he tries to sit up, only to wince as pain jolts through him.

“Easy.” I soothe him, pressing lightly on his arm to keep him from moving too much. “You’re safe now.”

His eyes search mine, worry etching lines onto his forehead. “Daisy?” he rasps out, his voice strained.

“It’s okay.” I reply, gently caressing his cheek with my fingers. “I’m right here with you.”

He gives me a look that speaks volumes of the storm that must be brewing inside of him. I see fear and hesitation in his gaze, as if he isn’t sure if he can trust me.

Eventually, he relaxes. “The last time I trusted a woman, she put a stake through my heart.”

I don’t stop stroking his chest. “Who was that?”

“Your past life, Serena. I had a crush on her.”

“Oh?” I furrow my eyebrows. “But I thought she never took a mate? That she was single and died a virgin?”

Xavier snorts. “All lies. Serena and I met for the first time when she was a young werewolf. Her entire pack had been slaughtered, and her eyes were swollen from crying. She looks so miserable that I decided to find her a new pack.”

I blink. “You...you saved her despite being a vampire?”

“Technically, I was a hybrid-half-demon and half-vampire.”

A breath of a laugh leaves my lips. “You know what I mean.”

“I do,” he turns his head with a wistful smile. “I found her a pack, and they took her in. The leader was the wind Alpha, and he warned me not to come back, but I did. Every year, I would show up with a gift for the werewolf child I saved.” His eyes grow distant. “And every year, she would be older and more beautiful.”

“And you fell in love?”

“No...I was attracted to her, but Serena was the one who kissed me underneath the cherry trees. She was the one who convinced me we could be together despite our differences, but she was...she wasn't a good person.”

“Huh?” I stare at him in disbelief. “Didn't she try to save the magical realm?”

“Yes, but there would never have been a war if Serena had not decided to murder every single demon and vampire in the first place. Once she awakened to her powers, she decided only werewolves and humans were worthy creatures. And then, she started to exterminate every other magical being, starting with my kind. Demons and vampires alike fell under her tyrannical reign.”

“But... she was a hero,” I say, struggling with the disturbing information. I can’t reconcile the Serena I knew – powerful, wise, merciful with the monster Xavier is painting now.

Xavier lets out a harsh laugh. “A hero? She was a destroyer, a conqueror. But she was good at spinning tales, making herself into the savior when, in reality, she was the villain.” His voice lowers, becoming almost a whisper. “I loved her anyway. For her fire, her passion...even for her ruthlessness.”

“And she betrayed you.” I finish for him.

“Yes,” he admits. His eyes meet mine, filled with centuries of regret and loss. “She put a stake through my heart and left me for dead. But my mother found me and spoke to me. She made my demon side awaken, and then I summoned the eternal darkness. I thought I had given the other vampires a chance at survival, but nothing could exist without the sun. I, however, didn’t care. Not in that state. I was broken and angry, a demon that didn’t believe anything good exists in this world.”

“But you changed.” I whisper, my hand drifting down to rest back on his chest, my thumb idly tracing circles around the dark patches on his skin. “Or else you wouldn’t be telling me this, right?”

Xavier gazes at me, and there’s a softness in his eyes that wasn’t there before. “I’m telling you this because you’re pregnant with

my child, and I've realized that the only way to save you is to awaken the demon within me. The demon that I've tried so hard to suppress."

The weight of his words hangs heavy between us, and a chill runs down my spine. "Xavier, what does that mean exactly? Aren't you just a hybrid?"

"No," a sad smile spreads over his lips. "I might only have been born as a mere hybrid, but my demon side is still present, waiting for me to accept exactly what I am: a tribrid. Not a hybrid, but a tribrid."

When I say nothing, he continues, "I'm going to merge with the other Xavier, and I'm not sure what will happen once I do. What memories will be left, and so on. Chances are, I might not be here. I'm just a ghost from the past that was sealed into the anklet. The other Xavier is the one that lives now, the one who you love."

I swallow thickly. "But I like you too."

Watching me with wary eyes, he says nothing. Instead, he silently reaches out his hand to cup my cheek. I let him. I hold perfectly still as he studies my eyes, and when he leans into kiss my lips, I don't pull away.

The kiss is soft, a mere brush of lips against lips, but it sends fire coursing through my veins. When he pulls back, I can see in his eyes that he's saying goodbye.

"I'm sorry," he murmurs, tracing the curve of my cheekbone with the pad of his thumb. His voice is thick with emotion, and I can read the sorrow etched onto his expression. "I wish things could've been different."

"I wish you didn't have to go." I whisper back, fitting my hand over his where it rests on my face. As much as it hurts to admit, I do care about him.

"Promise me," he whispers, his voice hoarse. "Promise me you'll look after our child. That you won't let her become like Serena-someone who doesn't accept other species."

"I promise," I say immediately. His request is understandable, given what he's been through. I will do whatever it takes to protect our child from such a fate.

"Thank you," he murmurs, pressing his forehead against mine. His breath fans across my face, and I close my eyes, savoring the moment.

"I'll miss you," I whisper, my voice barely audible, the words caught in the depths of my throat.

"I don't deserve that," he replies, his tone laced with sorrow.
"But thank you."

I can feel his heartbeat under my palm, strong and steady again my touch. It's a stark contrast to the turmoil of emotions swirling inside me. I cling to it, hoping that it will ground me amidst the chaos.

"I'm scared, Xavier... I don't know what will happen. What if I end up losing you both? What if you won't remember a single thing about me?"

He strokes my hair gently, his thumb rubbing soothing circles on my scalp. "That's okay, love. Fear is a part of life," he says gently. "But if you want to ensure I won't hurt you after I've merged with the other Xavier, then..." He hesitates, and I glare at him.

"Tell me what you were going to say."

He winces before mumbling, "I was going to suggest we mark each other so the mate bond exists on both sides. But you don't have to do it! Having sex with me is probably-"

"I will do it." I say breathlessly. "Let's mark each other."