

Chapter 49

Adam POV (Five years earlier continued)

The witch kingdom of shadows. From far away, it would look like a black abandoned house, with holes in the roof and a few abandoned huts surrounding it, but for dragons, we could see it for what it truly was. Their black castle almost rivaled ours since they renovated it recently, thanks to their new queen. The grass was green and kept, most likely with their spells and such. Before the new queen's reign, we hadn't had many issues with them. The old queen kept the witches in check, and we even had an alliance with the witches, but then she passed away 13 years ago due to circumstances out of her control. Ever since, the witches have been out of control, becoming darker with their magic and bolder with their attacks, especially with their new queen. Atlas was always under the impression that it was the witches who took our mother, but Sorena says there was no activity or plans that she heard of regarding mom, so I dismissed it.

I landed on the ground after flying here while Sorena was still sleeping. Luckily, I knew Atlas would be up right now but busy with his duties, so he wouldn't have any time to get to Sorena. Once I landed, their queen greeted me immediately. She would have been alerted once I crossed the barrier. She had no backup or protection with her, though, which was the first thing I noticed. The second thing I noticed was her beauty. Her long red hair almost touched her waist and flowed perfectly. Her eyes were a deep shade of gold and almost cat-like. I could feel the power radiate from her that screamed queen and something else altogether. I also felt a strange sense from her, like she was blocking me from reading her.

"Adam," she greeted, holding her manicured hand out for me to kiss it, and I did, being polite.

"Queen Ana, a pleasure," I replied, stepping back. I was cautious. To her, I was still the enemy, and one can never be too prepared.

"Come," she directed, turning around and walking back into her castle, and I followed her. Many eyes of both witches and humans alike followed us, but I kept them straight ahead. I knew some witches possessed the power of manipulation just by looking into their eyes. I followed her until we came to a large purple and black room decorated heavily with Victorian-style drapes, much like the ones back in my home. A woman of taste. She sat down on a black velvet-made chair and crossed her legs. Her black, strapless dress had a slit in it that showed her legs perfectly.

"So, you seek to overthrow your brother," she said, lifting her hand, conjuring a chair for me to sit down in. I did. She then raised her hand again, creating a martini from thin air. How did she know what I wanted?

"Oh, please. I'm the most powerful person in this castle. It comes with a few perks. There is a lot I can do that others can't, and that includes reading you. I can see into your deepest desires," she said.

"Then you know the reason why I want this and why I am risking everything for your help," I told her.

"Of course. Your heart was revealed to me the second your dragon landed in my territory," she said. "Such a horrible fate to fall on poor Sorena," she said, laughing, which annoyed me after I recalled what Sorena told me happened to her while she was here.

"Don't you talk about my mate, witch?" I spat at her, but she only laughed and brushed me off. Luckily, I'm sure she felt my dragon's anger, as she changed topics immediately.

"I can help you, dragon, but tell me, what do I get out of this?" she asked.

"Our kingdoms will be united. No more fighting or war. A peace treaty." She laughed once again.

"Peace treaties never last long, but an alliance does sound good. That's not enough, though. Not if you want my help overthrowing the most powerful amongst yourselves.

"What do you want?" I asked her. She seemed to ponder the question a bit. If she wanted money, that was no issue. We had an ass load of it.

"I don't want your money. Tell you what. I'll have a service that I will require from you one day. It could be today, tomorrow, or even five years from now, but you will need to reach out to me to complete it. I thought about what she said. Would I risk this? Would I really risk everything to remove Atlas from the throne? The image of Sorena came into my head, and rage took over.

"I don't want him killed," I told her. She smirked at me.

"That isn't an issue. I can have him removed and sealed in some place where he won't be able to bother anyone ever again. All you need to do is play your part. She predicted her plan into my head, and I admit, it was a good one. evil, but good. One that would secure my victory as well as remove Atlas while keeping him safe. "You have yourself a deal," I told her.

5 hours later.

Atlas Pov

I was in my office with Ellis when a soldier brought me a report about my mother. He said she was spotted outside, near the border. I jumped out of my chair and

jumped from my balcony, mid-shifting into Kai, and took off. I raced all across the border, looking for her. I soared over the lake until I came to the end of it, where I spotted a woman with black hair and gray eyes, wearing a white robe, picking flowers. She was near her dad's house. It was my mom. My mind sped at the thought of having my mother back. I could finally get my father out of his depression. As I got closer, my senses started telling me something about her. As I got closer to her, I didn't get that feeling of familiarity. She felt... wrong.... I landed on the ground and prepared for battle. This was not my mother.

"Very good," the woman said, transforming into a red-haired woman with green cat eyes. Witch!

"So, at last, I finally get to meet the infamous Atlas," she mocked, sizing me up and down. I had only been king for less than a year, but I had already done so much within that time frame to earn myself the name of Atlas Drakos. I stepped back and circled her, pulling out my sword, which burst into flames upon my dragon's breath. The king's signature weapon.

"Who are you, witches?" I asked her. I felt her power, and it was unlike anything I had ever felt before. This was a different kind of witch.

"That hardly matters now," she said, and I attacked her. Enough chit-chat. However, she dodged my attack, and I ended up going through a portal into unknown lands where a big castle sat. The sky was blue with white clouds, and there were many trees. I turned back around, about to jump back through the portal, but a black mist of some kind wrapped around me, holding me in place. As the portal closed, the witch used her power to grab my sword, and she handed it to someone. My heart dropped when I realized who she handed it to. Adam.

My own brother. The portal was closing, and I was doing my best to escape from the clutches of this mist. I couldn't even transform into Kai. I saw my father, for the first time in weeks, come out of his house and see the scene. In a fit of rage at noticing the situation, he rushed straight to the witch after pushing Adam out of the way, and in his clouded judgment, he attacked the threat, but he was not quick enough. The

last thing I saw before the portal closed and darkness engulfed me was my father's heart in the witch's hand and Adam breaking the witch's neck, killing her in revenge. My father was dead, and my brother, my brother, had betrayed me.

I struggled to get out of the midst, but a figure appeared who took on my features, and soon I was looking into silver eyes that mirrored mine. There was only one creature I had read about who was capable of this, and it was the demon species.

His demon midst kept my dragon weak, as I could have breathed fire to kill him on the spot, which meant he was of a higher rank of demon. As his appearance finished taking my form, I was thrown into a cage with bars that burned me when I touched them, unable to escape, no matter how many times I tried. I was alone. That is, until some men brought in a female woman with brown hair. She had bright hazel eyes, and I later learned her name was Jessica.