

## Chapter 53

Brandon POV (now called Emilio by Ana)

"How soon will this plan be put into effect?" I asked Ana as she watched me feed from the sixth victim today alone.

"Soon, my love," she tells me as I finish my meal. I was always hungry. "I just have to make sure that bloody witch doesn't find us before we want to be found." She told me. Last time we were found by that witch, she had caught me feeding. I didn't see her, though, but I could feel her presence. Her presence brought out something of a memory. Something in me stirred as a beautiful ebony woman with wild black hair and light green eyes. Harim. Or Hemin. I couldn't remember much. A part of me feels like I should know her, but the bigger part of me says to ignore it. Besides, if this woman was important to me, why hadn't she found me yet? As far as I was concerned, Ana saved my life. I owed Ana everything. It is best not to ponder on the past.

Adam Pov

As I tried to kill Atlas with my blade, a portal opened, and a very beautiful girl stepped through. She had brown hair with purple eyes. Those same purple eyes that my Sorena had. The exact same shade. Were they related? How did she know Atlas? Also, fuck, I may have just killed her, but then look at how panicked Atlas looks. Maybe this is a good thing indeed. All of these thoughts came into my head as I watched Atlas fly her to the hospital, followed by Aunt Katrina and Uncle Ellis.

Ava Pov (before coming through the portal)

I feel a tug at my heart. It's a deep emotion of rage, and it's not mine. What is this?

"Mate," my wolf says.

I'm feeling him. How? I asked her.

I don't know, but you have been connected to a mate for some time now. I have felt it ever since the dream walk, she tells me. If Atlas was in trouble, I could at least help, whether he wanted it or not. He was still my mate. Whatever force has been watching me lately must have been listening, because a portal to that same land opened up. I remembered my dad's words, but my friend was in trouble. He will just have to accept it. I saw people I had never seen before. The place was a complete mess. The portal closed.

I felt him. I felt Atlas. He was behind me. I turned around to greet him when I felt something piecemeal. In a rush of adrenaline, I looked down and saw a sword in my chest. My eyes widened as I realized what had just happened. This blade was different. It was like it sapped all of my energy at once, and before I knew it, all I heard was Atlas's beautiful and horrified face calling my name before darkness overtook me. Atlas Pov

"Ava". What the fuck is she doing here? How did she even know where I was? Fuck! I rushed her to the hospital. The doctors took her to the back immediately. Another doctor looked her over as they rushed her to the back.

"Who is this young lady?" I was asked, but I didn't answer the question.

"Fix her. NOW!" Kai yelled through me, saying what I had been thinking. They stopped me at the door, not letting me pass through, telling me to wait as they needed all hands-on deck since it was the king's sword that hit her. That sword has the power not only to kill but also to drain any and all energy from the person it hits, weakening them. Not even her wolf would be able to heal her, as her wolf would be weak as well. It weakens everything.

"Fuck," I growled, punching a wall. Uncle Ellis and Aunt Katrina were sitting down and watching me. I slid down against the wall. It was becoming a very long day, but as troublesome as all of it was, none of it compared to losing Ava. Why did she come here?

She may have felt the bloodlust and wanted to come to help. We are all connected, Kai replies.

"But how? We never mated." I told him.

"You both established a connection the day you pursue your dreams. I used my power to bind you together, so one would feel what the other was feeling," he replied, causing me to get even angrier. But not for that reason.

"You pushed her," I said, annoyed with him.

"She is very powerful herself. All of the things she is mixed with. Connecting to everything that she is was difficult, and the impact knocked her to the ground. It was not personal. I'd never harm her intentionally. I want her. You're the one that does not, he said before closing his link to me.

"She is your mate, isn't she?" Aunt Katrina said, putting her arm around me and pulling me close. It was a sort of comfort. I nodded to her before putting my head in my hands in frustration.

"Have faith, my boy. Things will work out the way our God means them too," she said in a supporting tone. I just stayed silent. A few hours had come by, and we watched people come and go.

"If she dies, how do I tell her family that I'm the reason for it?" I told her. I had been doing my very best to stay free of Ava so that I could continue my mission of reclaiming my kingdom, but guilt overclouded me like a cloud of smoke, and Ava filled my thoughts. I'm not really sure what was happening, but a portal opened up, and I saw Jessica and Rynyxon walking in a forest, holding hands. They looked so happy. I called out to them both, and they turned around in shock before heading our way. The portal was closing fast.

"Ava is here, and she is hurt," I yelled, and they both took off and reached the portal in time, coming through it before it was sealed. Someone was opening portals, but when I looked around, I saw no one. I'll have it checked later.

"WHERE IS MY DAUGHTER?" His voice boomed, slamming me against the wall, and rightfully so. I deserved it. I had not only abandoned her, but I was also the reason she was here. Uncle Ellis pushed him off of me as the two stood head-to-head, about to exchange blows, when Jessica and Katrina pulled them both apart. I could tell Rynyxon was linking to someone. Jessica waved her hand, and a portal opened, bringing through both Ava's sister Jasmine and her mate Samael.

"Who the hell are you?" Uncle Ellis said to them. Of course, he didn't know them. I hadn't had the time to explain my situation to him yet. The tension in the room was thick as Samael stood in front of Jasmine, who looked a little different since the last time I saw her, but I couldn't put my finger on it. I held my hand to him.

"They are all fine, Uncle Ellis. They are with me," I told him, causing him to back down, and everyone lightened up a bit. I could feel Jasmine's gaze on me, and I'm sure it made her uncomfortable. My face is the devil of her past, but she still smiled slightly and gave a slight nod before turning back to the situation. Weirdly, I could see everyone was calming down, and I looked at Samael, who was looking at everyone. It dawned on me that he was using his powers to control the situation.

Interesting. On the other hand, I was still jumpy about wanting to know more about Ava. I almost burst through those doors. Why was I feeling this way?

"Now everyone calms down. That beautiful girl is back there, getting treated. We don't know how long it will be since we haven't received any updates yet, but we have been here waiting for her the whole time," Aunt Katrina said, but Rynyxon just looked at her, bewildered.

"What happened to her?" Samael asked me.

"It was my fault. My brother and I were fighting. My dragon linked Ava and me when she walked into my dreams and must have felt what I was feeling. She came here wanting to help, but got caught in the crossfire, "I explained, with my face falling. I had spent five years locked in a cage, but even now, I have never felt so helpless. Jessica came over to me, putting her arms around me. She was the only one here who knew my story, as half of it was also hers. She knew I came to reclaim my kingdom and the vow of death I made against my brother. I noticed Katrina was looking strangely at Rynyxon, getting a good look at him in this hospital light, before she gasped. He was doing the same with her.

"Katrina?" he said, and Aunt Katrina looked at him questionably before realization dawned on her face.

"Oh my god, Nyx," she said before reaching out and hugging him, in which I heard Jessica's wolf growl slowly as she pulled away from me.

"That's your baby girl back there?" She asked, and he nodded. Everyone else looked at them in confusion.

"Can someone tell us what the hell is going on?" Jessica said, looking between Rynyxon and Katrina, but before they could respond, a doctor came out of the room with blood all over him. I ran up to him, knowing the news was about Ava somehow. Everyone crowded around him, ready for him to deliver his news. All I know is that my heart dropped from what he said next.

"She is..."

(To be continued in the next chapter.)

Ava Pov

Funny how life seems to flash between your eyes on the brink of death. Did I imagine I would die this way? Absolutely not. I knew, though, that if I did die, it would always have been in the service of someone else. These are thoughts that travel through my mind as I feel myself sink further and further into darkness before I drop to the ground. What the hell? I was back outside, near the big lake. The same lake from my dreams last time. Was I dreaming? No. I would know if this was a dream, as a dreamwalker would always know. This felt more like a vision, but what?

I sat up and looked towards the huge castle. Its black bricks seemed to glow somehow under the light of the red sky.

Same as last time, I looked towards the lake again and saw the lady with the black hair and silver eyes. She was planting the flowers by the lake. She got up and looked in my direction. I turned around and saw my mother, but this time, she was not looking at me. She was looking at the woman, who greeted her with a warm smile.

"Amber," the silver-eyed lady said, greeting my mother by her name. "Rose," my mother said to her before they both hugged.

"These flowers are looking brighter and brighter each day, Rose," my mother said, looking over them.

"As they should. I wouldn't be able to see without them," Amber said, overlooking them as well. They both held a silence before Rose spoke.

"How are things in the witch kingdom?" Rose asked my mom. Which kingdom?

"As bright and prosperous as they have ever been, though sometimes I worry about some of my witches, They aren't to stay on this border anymore. They wanted to explore the rest of the kingdom. I feel they may overlook my rules one day and go solo," my mom said. Wait. My mom ruled witches here.

"You know that the border is for your people's protection as well as mine, Amber. The bad history between our two species runs deep," Rose said.

"It is for that reason that I keep order," mom said.

"I know, and my husband has left you and the witches alone to do as you please on the other side of the border, so that you may prosper. You all know that this border between our lands is temporary. Our children will be the ones to unite our lands, as the great prophecy foretells," Rose says. My mother frowned.

"The future's not set in stone anymore, Rose. The most horrific thing has happened," my mother said, walking past me, sitting near a tree.

"Pray tell me," Rose said.

"I'm sick, Rose." A sickness that I can't cure rose, no matter what treatments I take. My grandmother died from it, and I had hoped it would skip me, but it hasn't. It's the curse, Rose. Rose gasped as she sat next to my mother.

"Oh, dear god," Rose said, touching my mom's forehead. "Yes. I have tried every good spell that I know to try to prevent it, but none of them work. It's still inside of me, growing slowly." mom said. I remember my dad explaining the generational curse of cancer to me. It was a curse on our family line from an ancient witch for using dark magic. According to my dad, the witch who performed the dark magic did it to save her lover's life. Dark magic has always been forbidden, since our line was from a light magic generation. My dad brought me up in the ways of light magic. Mom died not too long after I was born, and somehow, I was free of the curse. My

dad said it was because of how much my mother loved me, though I had always felt like there was more to it.

"Is that why you have come to me, my friend? To see if I can find a remedy." Rose asked, and my mom put her head on her shoulder.

"I need you to read me, Rose. I need to know if there is anything that can be done to save all of us. Not just that, but you know I will always come and see you, no matter what. I don't need a reason to see my best friend," my mom replied, playfully hitting her. Best friend? Dad never told me about Rose before. Did Atlas know too?

"Hand me your palm," Rose told my mother, and she did, closing her eyes. When she opened them, they were fully red, with no trace of her eye color. My head started to hurt. It was the same pain I experienced when my wolf tried to break through a connection. What kind of power was this? I had seen seers giving visions, and this was nothing like what I was used to. As I held my head, Rose was looking at my mother, but I would swear she looked my way as well, since I was sitting next to my mother on the opposite side.

I'm not sure what they saw in the vision. All I know is that my mom broke away from Rose's grip so fast, with tears falling through her eyes as she stood up, followed by Rose.

"I would never... do that to her. My own daughter," my mom said, backing away. "You and I both know these things are never set in stone, Amber, but there are some things that even I can't predict will change. It seems this fate is set in stone. This is a fate that will come to pass." Rose said, with a sad look in her eyes.

"That is a magic darker than anything I have ever seen. I... the cost... the cost... I can't do it," mom said, with tears in her eyes. Rose walked to her to hug her, and I heard her whisper.

"If you don't let this come to pass, then I'm afraid you will doom us all," Rose said. My head stopped hurting after I gave into the pain it was causing, which caused me

to hunch over. My body was feeling warm. Too warm. When it died down, I looked back up, and they were both gone. Instead, the vision changed, and I was standing in a forest of pale trees. The trees looked as if they were smoking, as there was a misty fog all around. I looked around, but no one was here. However, the chill on my neck let me know I was not alone. I tried reaching my wolf, but I couldn't feel her. Through the mist, I could see a black hut with a red door, but a hand on my shoulder stopped me. What the fuck?

"Don't, a voice said, and I recognized it. I turned around, only to see Rose standing behind me, with her long black hair and silver eyes that looked as if they had seen too much. "Rose," I greeted her, and she smiled.

"It is nice to finally meet you, Ava," Rose said. I smiled and then looked around me once more.

"What is this place?" I asked her. She looked around, too.

"This is the Misty Realm. It is the realm where all supernatural souls with unfinished business go until it is their time to go back into the world, but only as spirits," she said.

I looked around again as my heart leaped at the thought I just had.

"Is my mom here?" I asked, but her face dropped when I asked, implying that she was not. Well, that's just fucking great.

"What is that house?" I asked her, pointing to the black hut, and her eyes went to it.

"It is the house of revealing mysteries," she said.

"Whose secrets does it reveal?" I asked her.

"Your own, from your past and/or future, as well as those it sees fit to show you," she said.

"I don't think I have any secrets," I told her, looking at the house. Something in me was pulling me towards the house. She looked at me knowingly.

"The pull of your feelings. It is from the house. Those who go in do not come out the same. Some souls go in and come out, never speaking a word again." She said, That would explain her telling me not to, but I can't help but want to go. Something is there for me. I can feel it in

"You said souls are here, but you're here. Are you dead?" I asked her, and she nodded.

"My family does not know, and I need your promise not to tell them. When you get back to your world, I will be there, but only in spirit form. Fate has connected us both for a reason. You must not tell my family that you can see me. Especially my son." She said, That was stupid. Her family doesn't know she is dead, and she doesn't want me to tell them. They must be worried sick.

"I have my own reasons for this, but for my sake, please. Do not breathe a word of anything regarding me to anyone." She tells me, and I nod to her. It was not my business to know why. It was hers, and hers alone.