

## Chapter 105

24 years ago...

Adelaide

I stared at the back of the man limping in front of us, his cane reaching the stone pathway of Starlight Academy with each tap as we trailed behind him with my suitcases.

The man who had introduced himself as Principal Sterling stopped and turned to face us, a wide smile plastered across his face. His eyes landed on me.

"You five have been chosen for the Starlight Program," he began. "You are here to represent your kind. We have a long history, both good and bad—but now it's up to you to show us that this can work, that we can live amongst each other."

He continued his speech, however, I wasn't paying attention anymore. Everywhere I looked, I could feel their eyes—Lycan eyes, werewolf eyes...the ones who actually belonged here.

They walked past, scrunching their noses as if we were intruders and maybe we were.

I didn't want to be here any more than they wanted us here, but unfortunately I didn't have a choice.

The tiny school in the village had burned down, and although it was in the plans for the future, there was not yet an academy for witches nearby, so the witches were scattered all over the academies, given the opportunity to learn healing and join the second semester at Starlight.

I knew she did it...

Mom, the High Priestess of the dark witches and I knew why she had done it.

It was all so I could get close to the Alpha King's son, Alaric. I wasn't sure why, but mom insisted I had to keep an eye on him. For four years, I would have to watch over him, making sure he was strong for what she called the grand finale.

I was a child of blood, a descendant of a long line of soothsayers from Dad's side. Due to the special bloodline, children of blood were more powerful than regular witches—but none of them were like me. None of them were gifted with the eyes.

Most needed spells and potions to do what I could do with just one look.

Mom always said I was special. She had me train my eyes since I was little, teaching me how to control their dangerous power. She kept it hidden, saying the world would hurt me if they knew, even other witches.

According to her those eyes weren't just mine. They were ours, and everything she told me to do was for the good of the witches.

I didn't question her, I never did. I didn't know the full plan. All I knew was that my eyes had a purpose, and I would have to use them for her.

That was my only purpose in this world.

My destiny.

"You're free to explore the campus now," Principal Sterling wrapped up his speech. "I trust each one of you will find your way."

He shot us a quick smile, and I gave him one in return. Then he walked off.

"Addy, are you coming? We're going to find our rooms," one of the girls asked.

I shook my head. "You guys go ahead."

The four girls exchanged glances, then walked off without saying another word. I couldn't help but roll my eyes.

Those girls probably didn't like me any more than the werewolves or Lycans would. They hated me for the same reason everyone did—because of mom. Being the High Priestess' daughter wasn't something for the weak.

It didn't matter. I wasn't here to make friends anyway.

I was only here for Alaric.

I looked around, taking in the campus again. The buildings appeared to be old, and in the middle of a renovation—but it still had a spark. It was all so different from the dark village I came from. I wasn't even quite sure if I would fit in, but I would have to try.

"No, please!" I suddenly heard a scream, making me snap my head to the sound.

Two boys were holding a girl down, trying to shove her head into the fountain water. The girl was crying, struggling to pull back her head as her blonde pigtails swung side to side.

And everyone else? They just walked by.

I frowned, confused and disgusted. Something like this definitely wouldn't pass back home.

Dragging my suitcases behind me, I marched toward them.

"Hey!" I shouted.

They stopped, turning their heads to look at me, even the blonde girl as tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Get off her," I released my suitcases, stepping closer.

One of the boys smirked. "Isn't this one of those bitches from the exchange program?"

The other laughed. "I suggest you keep walking before you're next, witch—"

Before he could finish, I grabbed his arm and twisted it behind his back, forcing him to his knees. The other boy lunged at me, but I kicked him hard in the stomach. Then, I let go of the first one, sending him stumbling to the ground beside his friend.

"Now," I knelt, staring at them. "Don't make me use any witchcraft on you."

Their eyes widened as they struggled to get up from the floor before running off without another word.

Witchcraft always worked, especially with those animals.

Satisfied, I straightened up, brushing off my hands. As I turned around, the blonde girl blinked her eyes at me. Her body was trembling, she was small, cute even—with glasses slipping down her nose.

"What's your name?"

"C-Claire," she stammered.

"Well, Claire," I said, my eyes softening. "let me tell you something. You don't let anyone push you around like that again. Especially not a man. Because I might have to kill one for you someday, and their blood will be on your hands. Got it?"

Her eyes widened, and for a moment, I thought she might cry—but then a warm smile appeared on her lips. "I-I understand!"

"Good," I said, nodding toward my suitcases. "Let's go. You're going to help me find my room."

She hesitated for a moment, but eventually pulled my suitcases and walked beside me. Honestly, it was nothing more than an experiment to see if she would really do it—and she did.

She almost let those guys push her head into the fountain, and she agreed to pull my suitcases for me.

She was weak...too weak.

Yet somehow, I had always had this strange obsession with caring for the weak.

"Who were those guys, anyway?" I wondered.

She opened her mouth to answer, but I shook my head. "Never mind. It doesn't matter. You're weak, Claire—but that's going to change because from now on, I'm taking you under my wing."

Claire nodded nervously.

"Healing major?" I asked further.

She nodded again, meeting my eyes for just a second before lowering them again.

"If you don't want to fall on that pretty face of yours, you need to look in front of you, Claire," I chuckled.

She immediately looked up. Her lips parted slightly, surprised, but she didn't say anything.

"Are you a Lycan or werewolf?"

"Werewolf," she answered softly, barely above a whisper. "M-My Daddy is the Alpha of the Bloodrose Pack."

An Alpha's daughter with no backbone?

I raised a brow, observing her as we continued walking. She was so quiet, yet so sweet—I just wanted to wrap my arms around her and protect her so no one could ever hurt her again—and I would.

I knew I told myself I wasn't here to make friends, but in that moment, I decided she would be my person.

Claire blinked, glancing at me again. "What room are you in?"

"Lunar Hall. Room 102," I replied.

Her eyes widened in shock. "No way! Me too?"

"Well then," I said with a small grin, "it must be fate that brought us together."

I meant it—because something told me sharing a room with her wouldn't be as bad.

~

"I didn't have a roommate the first semester," Claire mentioned, sitting on my bed. "I mean, I did—but the girl requested her own room. Some of them do that."

Smiling, I unpacked the rest of my clothes, listening to the rant of the girl who couldn't even count to ten some time ago.

"I guess the room wasn't up to her standards," she shrugged.

I wasn't complaining because it looked better than what we had in the village. We slept in tents and cabins, expected to be 'one' with nature and live modestly.

The dorm seemed perfectly fine in my eyes, and even if it didn't—I wasn't here to play house. I was here to control Alaric.

Listening to Claire had been fun, but it was time to discuss more important stuff. I paused, dropping my shirt as I glanced over my shoulder to look at her.

"Since your dad is the Alpha of your pack?"

"Yes?"

"Are you familiar with Prince Alaric? The son of the Alpha King? I heard he goes here."

"He goes here, yes," Claire laughed. "But no one's really allowed to talk to him. He's always surrounded by people, you know? Guards, other royals. No one gets close."

I let out a deep sigh. How was I supposed to get close to him if he was constantly being watched? What was my mom thinking, sending me here without a better plan?

"Who does he hang out with, then?" I asked. "Doesn't he have friends?"

Claire tilted her head, thinking. "Well...he's like two peas in a pod with Crown Prince Elyx of Lyperia."

My brows furrowed. "And what is Elyx like?"

"Uh, like the guys at the fountain...but ten times worse," she scoffed, softly. "He doesn't like mingling with common folks and, just like Alaric, he's heavily protected. Honestly, they're both kind of untouchable."

The word untouchable triggered something inside me. It would be hard, sure, but no one was untouchable.

That's was Mom taught me.

Claire continued. "Except for James Rochwall. He's the star student here. Elyx actually respects him, and the two of them are—"

"What about James?" I cut her off. "What is he like, and where can I find him?"

Getting closer to James meant getting closer to Elyx which would eventually lead me to him... Alaric.

Claire eyed me strangely. I shrugged casually, trying to appear normal. "I-I mean, if he's the star student, I want to meet him," I told her. "I plan to be a star student this semester, so it makes sense for me to get to know him, doesn't it?"

Claire hummed, satisfied with the answer. "Well, if you're interested in James, I know he'll be at the bonfire tonight."

My eyes narrowed. "Bonfire for what?"

"Just a small event to celebrate the start of the semester," Claire explained. "James loves attention, drinking, partying...girls," she lifted her brows at the last part. "So I know he'll be there."

"Good. We're going."

Claire squinted her eyes in surprise. I could tell she wasn't feeling it, but I would be going with or without her—I was only giving her a chance to join me.

I reached out and gently removed her glasses, throwing them on the bed. Then I began unbraiding her pigtails, letting her blonde hair fall loose around her shoulders.

Her face turned pink. "We...we're going?" She finally reacted.

"Yes," I stated. "And you're coming with me. Trust me, Claire—you're going to thank me for this."