

## CHAPTER 131

### Winter POV

It feels like I'm floating, suspended in midair, surrounded by darkness and yet, I can distantly hear a voice in the distance, one that is familiar to me.

Winter, you need to wake up. Winter, Winter, Winter wake-up. Earth to Winter. Hello Dumbass

The voice is annoying. Extremely so. Persistent. But there's something else that is inside of me, something that makes my hands draw to my stomach unconsciously. Images flicker in my mind:

Sitting at a dining table, opposite King Axel and his wife Queen Vanessa. But every time they kiss, a green light appears and fades. What is this light? What does it do? Why am I the only one who can seem to see it? Is it because I'm a hybrid?

Kai making love to me, his hands exploring me all over. Then he utters the word Vanessa and I'm heartbroken. I send him out of the room, angry, confused, scared. Why would he think I was Vanessa?

Wandering around the castle at night, no real destination in mind. I come across Kai and Vanessa conversing. She wanted him to have sex with me. Why? What is her motive in getting me to conceive?

Kai coming back to the room, talking to me. A sharp, painful prick. The bastard dosed me with something, then forced sleep and now this state of nothingness.

I struggle to open my eyes but am not successful. All I can do is float and think, with images popping up in my mind. How could Kai have done this to me? It hurts so bad, but then I realize that Kai didn't do any of this to me. Not really. Not to his awareness. Vanessa has put who knows how many spells on him to make him do this. I think the green light is also a spell she's placed on the King. It would explain his confusion and lapses of memory. But how does a witch manage to seduce more than one man? Unless she's part siren? Is that possible?

Anything is possible idiot. Just because hybrids are dangerous and becoming one can kill you, doesn't mean there aren't other ones around. By the way Kai's a dick. I'm going to insert a needle right up his fucking rectum when I get hold of him.

Is that you Sabriel?

It's me. Alive and kicking. Your mate is such a douchebag. I blame Kai only. Storm would never have done this in a million years, no way.

It's not his fault, he's under a spell.

So, I heard. If she's part siren then anyone who comes into contact with her is going to be seduced, you know that right? So, Damien and Langdon are going to be just as useless. I hate to say this Winter but. . .

But what?

You really need some girlfriends. They wouldn't be able to be seduced by a siren. Sometimes the male species just seems so pathetic and weak. Like right now.

I would settle for waking up right now instead.

I don't have any suggestions for that. Unless you want me to scream in your head or something? See if that jolts you awake?

I consider it and then wave the idea away. Instead, I begin to see if I can move parts of my body, wiggling my toes, my fingers, getting circulation back to my body. Yes, I can feel it working, slowly parts of me are becoming easier to shift. My eyelids flutter open. I'm in the bedroom, tucked under the covers like Kai had done previously. My head shifts to the side, the door is open. Footsteps sound outside the door. I can hear that bitch Vanessa's voice. "Remember just check on her. If she's still sleeping soundly then don't dose her. It's bad for the baby" she tells someone, who I assume must be Kai.

"Don't worry I won't. I will do exactly as you say Vanessa" Kai's voice.

I want to roll my eyes at how lovey dovey he sounds towards her. Instead, I move my limbs back into place and force my eyes to close. If he comes inside now, he'll dose me when he sees me awake. I force my breathing to be slow and even, aware that Vanessa is still outside the door.

I smell him come into the room, his footsteps heavy. His hand touches my forehead and my cheek, his eyes no doubt sweeping over my body.

"How is she?" Vanessa calls out, her voice rich and smoky.

"Sleeping" Kai answers, still touching me "she's still sleeping."

"As I thought" she said sounding satisfied "she'll be under until tomorrow at least with the dosage you gave her. Tomorrow night is the ritual. Once that has been completed, she will no longer be needed."

"What about me?" asks Kai.

She chuckles. "I will definitely need you, Kai. You're going to keep me company with your friend Axel. A woman can never have too many friends willing to do as she asks."

Slut, I think furiously to myself.

"Now come along" she orders him "King Axel wants to spend some time with you, his friend and that means I can have some alone time" she adds with a sigh. "It really is hard to keep spells going all the time with barely any rest" she complains. I hear their footsteps as they move away from the bedroom and go down the corridor, but I don't dare try to do anything for several long minutes.

I think it's safe now. I can't smell them either Winter.

Why is it so hard to move? I feel like I'm tied up or something.

It's the sedative you were given. I don't know what was in it. I do know she wants you for some reason and your baby. You need to get up.

I'm trying.

Try harder.

I use all my might to move my legs and arms. My eyes open easily but the sedative isn't wearing off, at least not quickly enough for my liking. I take a deep breath and then launch my body onto the ground, hitting it with a large thud, my legs and arms spreading out. I guess I must have shocked my system because I could move, albeit slowly. I use my arms to get up and sway on my feet, glancing back over at the bed. My eyes widen in disbelief. Is that my cellphone? Had Kai left my cellphone for me or had he missed it in the bedding? I don't care. I limp over to it and grab it, my vision slightly blurry.

The battery's about to die. I need to be quick. I bring up Damien on my contact list and press the message button. I know he's coming anyway but he needs to be prepared. Otherwise, he'll be under her spell the second he walks through the castle doors.

Queen, witch, siren.

Kai under spell.

I'm in danger

Be careful getting here.

I hit the send button and then hide the cellphone in my dresser. I glance out of the corridors and see that it's empty. Now I hesitate. There's so many servants running around, that anywhere I go, my whereabouts will be reported. I'm screwed.

Not if you're dressed as a servant

I can't just knock some poor innocent girl out and take her clothes

Winter, you don't have a choice. We're in survival mode hun.

I feel bad about this.

A servant girl comes wandering past. I make a motion towards her. "Excuse me" I say politely, backing away into the room "could you please give me a hand?"

She comes inside and with a grimace of distaste, I whack her on the back of her neck, sending her crumpling to the floor. I hastily change my clothes and hers and then with a spurt of genius, place her on the bed, under the bedcovers. With any luck, they'll assume it's me without coming fully into the room.

I head back into the corridor, keeping my head down. I look just like the rest of the servants now, and make my way with ease towards the back of the castle. If I can get to outside, then I might be able to shift and escape. Then I can get Damien and Langdon to help me get Kai back. It's worth a shot. I can't exactly just lie in the bed waiting to be sedated over and over again. I creep down the stairs, hands clutching at the bannisters. I'm still unsteady on my feet.

A voice sounds behind me, dripping with malice. "Oh dear, you're out of your bed. You're meant to be resting Winter, dear. Otherwise, you won't be ready for the ritual tomorrow night."

I slowly turn and face her. She's to the side of the stairs, Kai beside her, his jaw tight, his hands clenched into fists. She smiles at me maliciously.

"You think that I'm still going to go ahead with that ritual" I hiss, my whole-body trembling in indignation "I refuse. I would rather keep my hybridness. I don't trust you one bit" I snarl, looking over to Kai with pleading eyes.

"Kai let's just go. I don't need this ritual. Just you and me, let's go home, away from here."

His eyes widen for just a moment and I feel the tiniest hint of hope, but just as quickly he looks away. "No" he mutters "we need to stay here Winter."

Vanessa smiles triumphantly. "I really am doing this for your own good" she promises, her voice thick with meaning "you'll thank me later for this. Now how about we all walk upstairs and get you back into your bed?" she asks.

The hell I will. Instead, I growl at her. She sighs. "You're going to be pigheaded about this, I can tell" she wails dramatically, wringing her hands together. She suddenly clicks her fingers and Kai goes as still as a statue, his eyes unblinking, his posture stiff and still.

"What have you done?" I whisper.

She doesn't answer, retrieving a large kitchen knife from behind her back. She places it against Kai's throat. "Cooperate or I will kill him" she says bluntly.

I see a drop of blood from the kitchen knife being pressed so hard against his throat. "You need him" I say numbly, my head beginning to scream in panic. "You need him."

"Not really" she muses "I need you more. So, I'm prepared to sacrifice him in exchange for you. So how about it Winter, do you want me to kill your mate right here and now?" she pushes.

She means it. She makes a sudden move and I scream out in rage "no don't, I'll do what you want, just don't kill him" I beg.

She throws something down at my feet. I slowly bend down and pick it up, looking it over curiously.

"It's a sedative, but one that won't harm your baby" Vanessa says calmly "drink it."

I eye the sedative, but Vanessa's right there, with the knife, prepared to kill Kai if I don't do it.

"You'll let him go."

"I won't kill him" she huffs, glaring at me "now hurry up. I don't have all day you know."

I flip her the finger. She just laughs at me.

I undo the vial and press it to my lips. There is no smell, it's odorless. Vanessa waits, tapping her foot on the ground, as I reluctantly take one last look at Kai and then drink it down, gasping at the foulness of the taste, the vial dropping from my hand and smashing to pieces on the ground. Vanessa drops her arm with the knife, letting out a short laugh. Kai's body jolts back to life as my own begins to sway and then crashes to the ground.

"Kai honey, your mate needs some help getting back to bed" Vanessa coos, giving him a wink and a kiss on the cheek "get her back there would you and then stay guard. We can't risk her getting free again. Not when this ritual is so damn close. Everything I've ever wanted is almost at my fingertips. I'm not about to let it slip through my fingers now."