

CHAPTER 132

Langdon POV

I've never seen Damien this morose and miserable before. Repeated trips to the attic, have revealed no new information in regards to his twin Drake. The basement, a cold, desolate, dark and horrible room, has nothing of importance that I can tell, although Damien, refuses to so much as step foot inside of it. The cage, or cell, is something that he fears looking at and I can't blame him, even standing near it is enough to make me uncomfortable.

Elena has been avoiding the both of us, keeping herself holed up inside her room. However, tonight, she's ventured back into the living area of the pack room and Damien wastes no time in asking her, once again, where Drake was taken.

"Damien, I really don't know" she protests thickly, her eyes puffy and red from crying "I don't know what else to tell you." She cries, leaning back in the chair, her eyes wide as she looks at the both of us.

"I just don't understand how you couldn't have asked where he was taking him. He was your son, mother, your flesh and blood. Did that mean nothing to you?" Damien growled, a look of utter contempt on his face.

"I didn't want to know" she said, her voice trembling "It would have hurt too much to know where he was, that he was with another family who loved him. It was far easier to pretend he didn't exist at all. I focused all

my attention on you and Winter instead and never thought about the other baby I gave birth to either." God even she knew how cold she sounded surely, I thought to myself.

Silence. Elena looks haggard, emotional and overwrought. Damien looks seethingly angry, frustrated at the lack of information and discovering no new clues. He plonks himself down on his chair, frowning. Elena snuffles, running a hand through her disheveled hair. Part of me feels sorry for her. To have spent the last few years of her life on the run, with a mate who left his own partner behind. Both of them lying to each other and then losing her partner for being a rogue. She's not had an easy life, even if it was one of her own makings. But it wasn't my place to persuade Damien of that either.

"Damien, we can contact the other packs, see if we can find him through his adoptive parents" I whisper, kneeling down and taking his hands "but you need to stop getting so angry at Elena. Sure, her actions were wrong, but what good is it going to do, to hold a grudge against her? All it's going to do is keep fueling your hatred towards her."

Damien's eyes rest on me, our hands touching and soften. He glances over at his mother who is now sniffing, wiping her eyes with the sleeve of her shirt, while avoiding our gaze.

"I'll keep trying to think Damien, maybe he said something to me that I didn't fully understand at the time" she offered "maybe he let slip and I didn't realize. Hell, I'll even go and look around the house" she says firmly, turning to look at her son who for once, doesn't snort derisively at her or scoff. It's something at least.

"I think that's a good idea, your mother would know the house and where your father might have hidden something more than anyone" I tell him

and his eyes light up with the tiniest spark of hope. "Let her try Damien, it can't hurt, can it?" I press, trying not to be too hard on him.

Elena gives him a watery smile. Damien sighs. He looks defeated. "Fine" he mumbles "but I don't want you getting rid of anything in that house just yet. I still have to clear all the alcohol bottles and beer cans out" Damien grumbled. I stifle my smile at his complaining.

Elena's eyes dimmed somewhat at that comment. "It's mainly your ex-mate's room that contains the alcoholic rubbish" I tell her hastily and she gives me a grim nod.

"I'll start tomorrow" she says quietly "with your permission of course Damien. I just want you to love me again, like you used to do when you were small."

Please don't say anything cutting, I think to myself, giving Damien a swift glance. Sometimes it's hard to read him, especially when there's no expression on his face. I do know that he's a young man, hurting right now, pushing away the love of a parent because he blames them for the loss of another. If Winter was here, I thought to myself sadly, she would know what to do. I know her and Damien have been conversing with their cellphones. She was a stable influence on him, always had been. Damien might not realize it, but I sure did.

"Alright mother" Damien sighs, not noticing the way his mother's eyes light up when he uses that one simple word towards her. "Maybe you can find what we can't" he admits not sounding too positive about that.

"Have you heard from Winter yet?" she asks tentatively, fidgeting with her hands. She's nervous. But desperate for information on her daughter as well, who is currently at the castle, where we are intending to head next.

"Yeah, she seems to be going okay. But she's not a fan of Queen Vanessa" Damien says with a shrug, not sounding worried about it.

"Well, the queen isn't the nicest of people. Not to mention even when she's been married, she's been involved in all sorts of different affairs. It's said she's so beautiful that no man can resist her, once he's come into her presence. I don't know how the King puts up with that" Elena said slightly outraged.

Thankfully Damien refrains from commenting about the hypocrisy of that statement. Although judging at the way his mouth thinned, I could tell he wanted to.

"Yeah, Winter was a little less specific than I would have liked her to be, when I was talking to her. I think it's nerves and the ritual" Damien said without thinking. I shoot him a glare, but it's too late. Elena's head pops up and she glares at both of us.

"What ritual are you talking about?" she says tightly "I know that the queen is a witch, what is she doing to Winter" she finishes with a growl, standing up and crossing her arms.

Damien cringes. He looks up apologetically, his mother almost shooting flames from her eyes. "Well Winter is a hybrid" he says slowly "so she wants the Queen to take out the vampire side of her and make her a shifter only again."

"What" she screeches "how did Winter become a hybrid. When did she become a hybrid" she demands, flailing her arms around.

"Calm down, we'll tell you" Damien says annoyed, the screeching no doubt hurting his ears. I sigh. I thought Elena already knew.

"It all started with this guy Thomas" starts Damien wearily, telling the sad, sordid tale to Elena, who listens, mouth flattened, her breathing heavy. The only thing missing is steam coming out of her ears.

"I can't believe it" Elena says distraught "your poor sister" she exclaimed "no wonder they were in such a hurry to get to the castle. I suspected something was going on, but this" she says weakly.

Damien just frowns and then we hear his cellphone going off with a message. He pulls it out of his pocket, and checks the contact. I can see it's from Winter from here. He holds the phone out, so that all of us can read the message which is glowing brightly in the dimness of the room.

Queen, witch, siren.

Kai under spell.

I'm in danger

Be careful getting here.

"Queen, Witch, Siren" says Elena bemusedly "who does she mean? Is she saying that the Queen is a witch and a siren?" She gasps in shock.

"It would explain why men seem to fall in love with her so easily" I say under my breath "the siren part of her would lure them in like it was nothing."

"It also says that Kai is under a spell" Damien points out, his brows arching in concern "do you think it's under her spell? "

"Well, if that's the case, then he's most likely lost to us for now" I murmur "Kai will be doing anything the queen asks of him. We can't trust him when we get there."

Fuck. So much for Kai keeping Winter safe. But then, neither of us had really known much about the new Queen, other than she was a well-respected witch. No where, had we heard about her being a siren, or that she would have ulterior motives. The King was an old friend of mine and Kai's for heaven's sake; we'd been delighted to learn that he'd found his mate and gotten married. Now I was pissed. What if she wasn't really King Axel's mate? Had my friend been bewitched and tricked by this woman? I was determined to find out.

"It says she's in danger" Elena says sounding slightly panicked "we need to go to her."

Both Damien and I turn to look at her in shock. "You can't come" Damien says firmly "you need to stay here, where it's safe. Besides you promised to go through the house for answers" he points out to her chagrin.

Her cheeks go bright red in anger. "I can't stay here when we know that she is in danger. You can't make me stay here. I'll just follow the both of you if you don't take me" she says triumphantly.

Damien swears. I merely raise an eyebrow. Part of me suspects that Elena could actually be a help in this situation, but I'm not going to pressure my mate, one way or the other.

"Fine" Damien growls finally "but we don't let anyone know we're coming. I don't want them warned beforehand. Don't even mind-link Winter or Kai. For all we know, she's managing to listen somehow with a spell."

"I daresay that we'll be caught once we reach the grounds" I point out and Damien nods.

"I and mother will be caught once we reach the grounds" he corrects me as I look at him confused "you're going to sneak your way through in the boot of the car."

I groan out loud. "You're going to put the big smelly blanket over me to hide my scent aren't you" I grouse. Damien laughs out loud in answer. "I want you to search for Winter once we've made it to the castle. Something tells me, she's going to be the one who needs your help the most."

"Anyway, let's go" Damien mutters, grabbing his wallet and keys "we can't afford to lose any more time. I don't like the sounds of this ritual either. I want Winter safely gone before the full moon. We can find another way to turn her back into a full-fledged shifter. This is not the way."

I agree. I grab my own keys and wallet, Elena grabbing a small handbag. She gives an awkward smile. I reach out a hand and take hers, leading her alongside us, to the garage. Damien eyes his motorbike with longing and I hide a smile, going over to the SUV as he sighs and walks over.

I help Elena into the passenger seat. She smiles tiredly, adjusting herself in the seat as I walk to the back. Damien grins and helps me into the boot of the car, a large smelly, old, blanket placed on top of me. It covers me completely. I also stink and I cough and splutter, hearing Damien's laughter as he shuts the door. "Try not to cough when we get there" he yells and I flip him the finger. I hear the car start and the murmur of voices,

the driver door shutting with a loud bang. The car pulling out, the tires squealing softly. Music playing from the radio, the whisper of Elena and Damien's voices. I relax where I am, lying there, things piled on top of me and close my eyes. There's very little traffic at this time of night and before long I find myself becoming sleepy. But before I fall asleep, I suddenly realize that, Elena, managed to get herself out of searching the house for more clues by coming with us. Was it intentional? I very much suspected it was.