

CHAPTER 146

Winter POV

My rage knows no bounds as my mother takes the opportunity to dart towards a man who is hanging out the back, looking like he's the leader, as he stares at Kai and myself, his black hair tied tight in a pony tail, his blue eyes gleaming in the sunlight. He smiles widely upon seeing my mother, who flings herself into his arms, his men, standing at the ready, their guns upright and pointing straight at us. I flinch. It's hard not to feel disgusted at a woman, your own mother, you might add, betraying you like this. It doesn't even seem to faze her as she hugs the man hard, crying out "Lexus."

What a surprise. Turns out her so-called mate, and Johnathon's cowardly father weren't dead. How nice. I seethe at the both of them, as mother moves away from him, a smirk on her face. Bitch. She would get what was coming to her, I promised myself, and I wouldn't be merciful.

"Surrender yourselves, and we won't harm you" the man called Lexus calls out, his arms folded over his chest "we can do this the easy way or the hard way" he adds pompously.

Asshole. Does he think we're going to just walk up with open arms and say 'take me?', if that's the case, the man is clearly delusional.

I start counting. There are a dozen men, not counting Lexus and my mother, all holding what appear to be tranquilizer guns. Their aim isn't to kill then, merely to take us out and transport us somewhere else for experimentation or for sale. Hunters don't always kill their prey, they like to study them first, use our blood and other bits to experiment with.

"We're too open" I mind-link Kai "we're like sitting ducks."

He responds instantly as the men wait, their gazes never wavering from us, "We need to separate, draw them out into the forest and take them down that way, it's our only chance. There's too many to approach them all at once, one hit with the gun and we're dead meat."

He's right child. You need to go in opposite directions and lure them after you. Most of them are human, besides Lexus and your mother. That gives us an advantage, but we have to be cautious of the tranquilizer darts. Who knows what's in them but I suspect wolfsbane would be its main component.

I agree. I'm going to kill my fucking bitch of a mother afterwards Sabriel. I'd do it now, but she's protected by the men.

I know, but revenge will be sweet Winter, no-go Sabriel shouts in my mind, Kai also giving an indiscernible nod, both of us racing to the side as shots sound out.

Kai goes to the right, while I race across the left, my vampire side easily outracing them, weaving in and out of the trees, the men behind me cursing as they wasted several shots, darts embedding in trees and landing on the ground. My hair flies through the wind, my body not tiring. I glance around and notice that they are a bit behind, using my claws and sharp nails to help me climb quickly up a nearby tree, my eyes scanning the woods. Good, they've spread out, I observe, not sure which way I've gone. There are six of them, so they had split themselves up evenly, the other six having gone after Kai, who I hoped was alright. He was relatively new to being a hybrid but by God, he'd be a strong one. Right now, I need to focus on my own safety and survival. There's no sign of mother or Lexus and I assume they are waiting by the truck, rather than doing the dirty

work themselves. My eyes begin to glow red. I hear heartbeats nearby, getting louder as they get closer.

Two men come my way and I wait, tensing my body and preparing myself. I can hear their voices, both sounding annoyed and disgruntled.

"Could have sworn the vampire bitch went this way" one commented. The other one grunts at him.

"Keep your eyes open" he says annoyed "the disgusting hybrid must be nearby."

I'm a little offended by their choice of words. My nails dig into my skin for a moment as I wait for the perfect opportunity. They stop right under my tree and I move, throwing myself onto one of them, who falls, stunned to the ground, his comrade swinging around and shooting as I move, slamming my fist into his face as the dart misses, landing with a thwack into the tree I had just jumped from.

His comrade doesn't move, and I realize that he's been knocked unconscious, his head hitting a rock as he fell. Good, I move away from the other man who is howling and clutching his face, his jaw broken at least, from the sound it had made when I made contact with it.

"Bitch" he splutters and I cock my head and grin, relishing at the amount of anger in his voice. I was going to enjoy this.

He moves towards me, grabbing a knife from a holster on his pants, brandishing it at me. I raise an eyebrow. Does he think I care about the size of it?

He lurches forward and I shift sideways, grabbing his arm and bending it backwards, a loud cracking sounding, his scream loud, giving away our location. I swear and kick his knee, sending him to his knees and then use the knife, still in his hand, bending his arm and cutting his throat, the blood

trickling down as his body flops to the forest floor. I hesitate, the blood smells delicious, sweet and my mouth drools at the thought of tasting it. But I remind myself there are still four men to go, and drop the knife, dashing away again as I hear more footsteps. This time it's one guy, and I don't run away too far, but swerve and dart in a different direction, to prevent the others finding me straight away.

The guy is huge, broad shouldered, with slick greasy hair and muscled body. Almost like a heavy weight champion. It's a little unsettling. The smile he gives me as he raises his gun is creepy and unnerving.

"Time to sleep" he tells me confidently and I move, running right towards him, darting left and right, the dart missing me by an inch at the most, as I slam my fist into his stomach. He gives a groan, but remains standing, to my utter disbelief. I sniff, he's human, just one that seems to be on something to make him even stronger. An experiment, no doubt.

I jump back as he swings wildly, connecting with nothing but air. "I'll get you" he snarls, no longer smiling "and who knows maybe Lexus will let me have some fun with you."

I shudder at the thought of this repulsive man getting anywhere near me, let alone touching me. He fires again and I grab the dart in midair, my eyes narrowing in on it, my reflexes faster than ever. He gulps. I don't stop, I move, my body slamming into his, jamming him against the tree as I sink the dart into his thigh. I knee him in the nuts, making him let out a strangled gurgle, while I headbutt him as well, causing his nose to break and to bleed.

I give a smile of satisfaction. He doesn't look so cheerful now. Instead, as I step back and regard him, my fangs now out as I smile, he glowers at me, clutching his genitals with one hand, bent double, the other holding his nose as he falls to his knees.

"What" he stammers and only then seems to see the dart still in his leg "bitch" he murmurs and then flops to the floor, his head hitting the ground with a thud, completely knocked unconscious. I pick up his tranquilizer dart and rummage through his pants, finding several darts to load it with. I grin and start to jog, hearing the sound of the last three hunters coming towards me. It was time to do some of my own hunting.

The other hunters had joined forces and were approaching, their backs to each other, their rifles loaded at the ready as I stayed, behind the tree, my own gun ready to go. Their eyes were intently scanning the forest, their footsteps as quiet as they could make it, given the debris and leaves scattered all over the dirt floor. They pass me and I move, coming around the side of the tree and shooting, the dart landing in the side of one of the hunter's necks. This one, maybe because he was more lean and definitely less built, touched his neck and his eyes widened, before he promptly fell to the ground, completely out of it. His mates gave a shout, seeing me and I dropped the gun, not wanting to take time to reload, one man racing towards me while the other raised his gun. I Jump, the dart moving past me, almost in slow motion as I'm that fast, colliding with the first man and rolling over him. The other man runs and I shoot out my leg, tripping him up, before getting to my knees and piercing his neck, moving behind him and drinking greedily while he flails wildly in my grip, unable to stop me, his comrade staring in horror as I drain his friend completely dry.

I lick my lips and let the man drop like a sack of potatoes, my eyes on the last man standing, who is not as brave as his friends or maybe he's just smarter, who knows, the man backing away, as I stand there watching, wiping the blood from my lips with the back of my hand. I feel reenergized, the blood giving me more strength and satiating the thirst I had.

"You" I snarl as the man halts, his whole body shaking, a look of abject terror on his rather plump face.

"Yes" he stammers, before putting his hands together and begging me "please don't kill me. I won't be a hunter anymore if you let me live."

I cock my head. "How many?" I ask softly, feeling anger rising inside of me, letting it build instead of trying to stem it. I welcomed it, let it take over me. I was no longer afraid of anything that was my vampire aspect coming through.

He swallows hard, his eyes darting away. I raise my voice slightly, listening out for the sound of any heartbeats, beside our own, nearby. "How many" I repeat.

"I don't understand" he stammers "how many what?"

"How many of us have you hunted? I don't care whether they were vampire, hybrids, phoenix's, dragons, shifters. How many have you hunted?"

He looks nervous, sweat dripping off his brow. When he speaks, it's in a hushed voice that's croaky and scared "I don't know, over 50 I guess" he says.

Just like that, any mercy I may have shown towards the man was gone in an instant. He clearly realized as well, getting up on his feet and trying to run away, his back towards me. The foolish man. He should have known that he couldn't get away, but he tried regardless. I get behind him, my hands coming around his throat as he gasps in shock, pressing them tightly and then with full force, I break his neck and fling his body into a nearby tree. It stays there, pinned by a sharp branch, for the rest of the hunters to see if there are any more to come, in order to help their fallen men. A warning for them, that I would kill them as well without hesitation. I feel bloodlust pumping through my veins as I take a moment and wonder just

how Kai is faring. A quick mind-link assures me all is well, that I can still get through if necessary and I turn back towards the direction I had initially come from. My mouth curves into a wicked grin. It was time to face my mother, and her not so dead mate Lexus who were still by the truck. They were in for a real treat. They would get to see another side to Winter, and my mother would get to see what happened when you screwed people over, especially your own family. I begin to hatch a plan, as I make my way slowly towards the unsuspecting pair of lovebirds.