

CHAPTER 147

Kai POV

I dashed off to the side, with one last sidelong glance at Winter, reassured that she would be alright. I was certain she could take care of herself, her figure like a blur in the trees. I myself, was weaving through the trees, my feet crunching on dead leaves, my body feeling like it was a tornado. It was exhilarating. I sucked in deep breaths of cold air, feeling my heart pumping loudly in my chest. There was something so thrilling about the vampire side of me, the ease of which I was able to draw on it, astonishing. I leapt up high, landing on a branch, taking time to pause and take stock of the heartbeats I could hear, following behind me.

Six, all men, I could tell. They had their tranquilizer guns held to their shoulder, eyes scanning the forest for a sign of myself. I smirk, seeing they are walking in teams of two. They were making this far too easy. Sure, they are organized, both with their backs to each other, but I had thought they would have had some more tricks up their sleeves. Or were they that arrogant, they felt it wasn't necessary?

I jump from tree to tree, my nails digging into the bark. It's like a scene from those twilight movies, making my way steadily in a zig zag direction. The first team, when I do finally stop, take a while to find me, and as they pass by, I fling myself on top of them, sending both flying to the floor. I smash my fist into the first one's face, rolling backwards and getting to my feet. The other hunter gets up and I do a roundhouse kick, sending him flying into the tree trunk. His comrade shoots and I fall to the ground, the

dart flying by. He swears as I turn and grab him by the neck, swinging him widely around and releasing him. His body hits a tree in the distance and makes a sickening crack. He's either dead or broken something serious, because he's not getting back up. I turn back to the first one.

He swings his hand at me, and I dodge to the side, grabbing hold and yanking it backwards, dislocating it from his shoulder as he screams. I drop it and then punch him several times in the midsection as he doubles over, before grabbing his hair, twining my fingers in it and biting into his neck ferociously, his hands scrabbling uselessly as I drain him dry, throwing his body to the side. I lick my lips. His blood was tangy but sweet with a hint of bitterness. I feel like I could run a thousand marathons and still not be out of breath. Plus, my thirst, for blood, was now gone. I grab the tranquilizer gun and find the darts in the man's pockets. I give him a vicious kick, before I start to run again, two more heartbeats closing in on me.

They are persistent, but I'm surprised at the fact there's not many. They must be very arrogant and cocky.

I know Storm. Two hybrids and this is all they brought? It's a joke.

We still have Elena and Lexus to contend with.

I know, that bitch betrayed her own daughter. She's all Winter's, Lexus will be ours I comment viciously.

Storm growls his approval. He too, is feeling bloodthirsty right now, but content to let me hunt down the hunters in my human or rather vampire form. He would get his fight later. I had a feeling Lexus wasn't exactly going to be a piece of cake to beat.

We stop, crouching down behind some shrubbery. I load up the tranquilizer gun. I can only shoot one, but this gives me an advantage over the second one at least, if his comrade is down. I gingerly poke the gun

between the shrubbery and wait patiently for them to come pass. The idiots are muttering under their breath, but my vampire hearing, more sensitive than shifter hearing, picks up what they are saying.

"Can't believe we got stuck with this assignment. Fucking Lexus being so impatient. I told him we needed more men."

"He said he could handle it if we failed" the other man scoffs "says he's stronger than a hybrid. Fucking idiot is delusional. I blame that fucking bitch that's with him. She has him wrapped around her little finger."

"Well at least we get paid well" the first man grumbles "but sometimes it's not enough for what we do."

"Where do you reckon the others are?" the man whispers and they pause, still just out of view, suddenly becoming more cautious. Had they missed their fallen comrades as they came this way?

Their footsteps become a little more cautious, softer now, their voices having gone silent as they became aware that my presence must be close by. I watch, waiting, as they slowly come into eyesight, still a fair distance away, but not so far, I can't shoot. I line it up, tracking their movements, keeping the gun in line with them and then, whoosh, I pull the trigger and the dart goes flying, hit the man in the shoulder as he gives a shout.

"Fuck" he howls as his mate turns to him wide eyed, falling to his knees and yanking out the tranquilizer with one hand, wincing at the pain "he fucking shot me."

He falls face down on the ground, the other hunter nervously looking around, the gun still at his shoulder height, his eyes sweeping from left to right. He leaves the other hunter unconscious, on the ground.

I run towards him and he shoots, wildly, startled, the dart missing me by a mile. I smirk, as he pulls out a knife and waves it at me. To me it looks

like one of those plastic ones from the toy store, but I know it's real. He thrusts it at me and I dart to the side, giving him a grin. He begins to wave it back and forth, weaving forward as I continue to dodge, side to side, my fist darting out and punching him in the eye. He howls and pauses, stumbling backwards and I knee him in the guts, before punching the side of his head, sending him to his knees. Before he can move, half blind as he is, I move behind him and grab him around the neck, depriving him of oxygen as he tries desperately to claw at me, his nails digging into my skin. I wince but continue, his face slowly turning blue, until his hands hang limply by his sides, his whole-body slumping. I drop him and take the knife that's fallen to the ground. I touch the edges and flinch. It is sharp. I glance down at my arms and notice, absently, that the scratches and gouges he made, are already healing.

"This way" I hear a shout, two more heartbeats coming directly towards me. I dash forward and hide behind a tree. I grip the knife tightly in one hand.

Two more hunters come into my line of sight, back-to-back. One bends down and checks the corpse's pulse. "Poor bastard is gone" he reports, his voice gruff, his finger tightening on the trigger of his own gun.

The other hunter is fairly young, trembling, his grip slack on the trigger. His eyes are wide as he stares down at the body in front of him, looking as though he's about to be sick. He must be a newbie. I feel a pang of sympathy for him. His whole body is starting to shake and it's a miracle he hasn't accidentally pulled the trigger.

The older hunter shakes his head at him "get it together for heaven's sake" he snaps "Christ, god knows why Lexus insisted you had to come along" he murmured. "It's almost like he wants to get his son killed."

"I can't help it" the younger one cries, his blonde hair curled and moving in the breeze "I told father I didn't want to."

Did that hunter just say this young one was Lexus's son? If that was the case, then why would he risk him being killed? Would this mean he was Johnathon's half-brother? Was he Winter's half-brother as well? It was mind boggling. My mind was awirl with questions. My head was spinning. So many questions. The older hunter makes the mistake of walking past me, his back facing me, and I move, faster than ever, my arm thrusting the knife directly into his neck, before I yank it out. He gives a strange gurgling sound, blood spurting out of his neck and onto the forest floor, the younger hunter turning green as he gives a loud scream.

The older hunter's body falls to the floor convulsing. I stare at the younger man, who has already dropped his gun in fright, his body shaking so hard his teeth are chattering.

"Are you really Lexus's son?" I ask coldly, moving towards him. He looks like he's paralyzed, none of his limbs so much as moving as I stop inches in front of him.

"Y, ye, yes" he stammers "please don't kill me" he continues, begging with me, "I didn't want to come, but he said it was time I learnt to be useful."

I eye him carefully. He does look like he's merely a teenager and definitely isn't a young man, now that I look closely. I feel disgusted that Lexus would put his own flesh and blood in danger. He and Elena are cut from the same cloth, that's for sure.

"What's your name?" I ask abruptly and he flushes, looking down at the ground.

"Simon" he says quietly "my name is Simon."

"Is your mother Elena?" I ask and he nods, looking even worse for wear.

"She hates me" he mumbles "they both do. Because I'm a terrible fighter, even with shifter blood. I would rather read a book, then go train. I'm pretty sure my father was hoping you would kill me."

My lips curl back in contempt. I was fairly certain of the same thing. "Do you know the girl that was with me?" I say delicately as his body slowly begins to relax "Winter?"

He shakes his head "I saw her for a moment" he admits "but that's all."

"She's Elena's daughter" I tell him quietly "your half-sister, if you're telling the truth."

He looks upset. "My father wanted you or my own sister to kill me?"

The irony. "How old are you?" I ask.

He bites his lip. "13" he finally says. My stomach churns. He's still a youngling. I could have murdered a child. He was barely a teenager. He was tall for one though, which made him appear older.

"Thirteen" I say in disbelief "you have no business being here at all."

He hangs his head. "I think my father wants rid of me. I was going to try and run away tomorrow and he must have found out, because next thing I know he makes me come here and forces me to hunt."

"Why are you running away?"

"Because I wanted to tell someone, another Alpha about the warehouse and the experiments, the hunters are doing on different supernatural races." He says, steadily looking at me. I believe him, he looks so earnest and his voice is sincere. Lexus must have been pissed when he found out his own son was going to betray him.

"You were going to do the right thing" I say, uncomfortable when I see tears shimmering in his eyes. I glance around at the forest. Winter mind-

links me quickly and assures me that she's alright and headed towards her mother and Lexus. I put a hand on Simon's shoulder. "We need to go" I say "you're coming with me. Can you follow orders?" I add and he nods, his eyes flashing with hope.

"Good" I grin "because in a few minutes, you're about to see your sister in action. I just need to know one thing? Will you get in the way of us killing your father?"

He hesitates, then shakes his head, curls bouncing, "I want him dead. He's a horrible man" he says thickly, a catch in his throat "he deserves to die."

"Can you lead us to the warehouse?" I ask, imagining the dreadful building in my mind.

He grimaces. "They kept me blindfolded the whole time we were travelling" he says hoarsely as we walk "I wouldn't have the first clue how to get back. But Elena, my mother, knows where it is."

"Does she now" I say casually "I guess we better not kill her then." I mind-link Winter and begin to include her in on the plan.