

CHAPTER 148

Winter POV

I take my time, savoring the feeling of power coursing through my veins. Kai's mind-linked me and I'm disgusted that my mother would take part in such a thing, not to mention the brief feeling of euphoria at finding out I had a half-brother. Too bad, that Simon, grew up raised by Elena and Lexus, his childhood was the worst of all and he was still a child, barely a teenager. I longed to throw my arms around him, but that would have to wait. I had to deal with my mother and her mate first.

I get close and can hear them speaking, cocking my head. My mother is grimacing "we should have brought more hunters, Lexus, I warned you that Winter was strong. So is that bastard mate of hers."

"There's more on the way" Lexus snaps "and neither of them will be stronger than me, I've defeated Alpha's before, I can defeat a hybrid. There's nothing too it" he boasts.

I raise an eyebrow. Someone sure is cocky and arrogant.

"But I don't hear anything" mother frets, pacing back and forth, a scowl on her face "what if they've all been taken down?"

Lexus gives a snort. "A dozen hunters brought down by two hybrids? Not likely Elena, stop being such a worrywart" he murmurs "they're probably busy chasing them. The cowards are probably hiding that's all. My men are professionals, they'll be fine."

My mother huddles into his arms. What a cozy scene, I think to myself sarcastically. I give a glance around, but Kai's still on the way back. I decide not to wait. I walk out, with a wide smile on my face, smirking at the startled looks of my mother and Lexus.

"What the hell" Lexus growls, sniffing the air. His eyes widen. "Where are my men" he demands, stepping sideways and regarding me warily. Now he doesn't look so arrogant.

"Oh" I say casually "either dead or unconscious. It was really nice of you to send me a blood supply, I kind of needed it" I hiss and he gulps while mother turns pale.

"That's not possible, no one's ever gotten the best of my hunters" Lexus counters, his eyes turning pitch black. Man, does he look pissed and I relish it. I can smell mother's fear from where I stand, and it smells wonderful.

I shrug "wasn't hard, in fact, it was almost too easy" I growl "they weren't exactly hard to overpower. Weaklings, the whole lot of them" I snarl, folding my arms.

My mother gives a gasp. "What's wrong mother?" I query, turning towards her and cocking my head "didn't think I would manage it? Or maybe you're afraid of what I'm going to do to you, for your betrayal? I must say that Damien in particular, will be more than glad to have you gone completely from our lives."

She shivers but glares, her face completely cold and livid. "As if. You might be powerful, but together, Lexus and I are unstoppable" she declares, "we've beaten every single creature we've come across and that's all you are" she sniffs "a horrible, disgusting, creature that needs to be put down."

Ouch. Words hurt. But I maintain my angry expression. I harden my heart. I can't allow myself to become weak from the words she flings at me.

"Except that Winter is not alone" cuts in a furious voice, and Kai steps out, looking determined, every inch of him drenched in sweat and blood. Even so, I swoon a little. What girl doesn't, when her mate looks that damn good?

"I see you managed to best the hunters that were after you as well" snarls Lexus, curling his lips "I guess that means that you get to face off with me."

Kai gives me a small nod. Mother, looking a bit frightened now, and frantic, turns and shifts in one fell swoop, a grey wolf with black stripes across her, running away from our small group, as though her life depends on it. Well, I guess it kind of does, I muse. I barely even give Lexus a glance, shifting into my own wolf, my paws thudding against the dirt and foliage as I follow her mad dash into the woods. The chase was on.

She's fast, for a wolf. A lot faster than I would have anticipated commented Sabriel in my mind.

I see that too. But, Sabriel, what if she experimented on herself? To make herself faster? That would explain this speed of hers, wouldn't it?

It would, but I don't understand how she could turn against her own kind like that.

Money, Sabriel, it all comes down to money. That's all that's ever mattered to her, it must have infuriated her that her real mate, father, couldn't make any and gambled or drank it away.

It's disgraceful. Money is no reason to become such a horrid person. Thank goodness you are nothing like her Winter, or Damien or even Drake for that matter.

We're all thankful for that Sabriel, don't you worry. Now remember, we can't kill her.

No, but we can damn well cause her some serious damage! For everything she's done. Show no mercy Sabriel growls and I agree, letting her take full control. Sabriel wanted to fight, her rage easy to feel and I wasn't about to get in her way. Not when she was this determined and bloodthirsty.

We come to a large clearing and mother swerves to the side, but Sabriel jumps and prevents her from continuing, her jaw wide open in a snarl. Mother's wolf glares, hackles rising, snarling at an unconcerned Sabriel who advances slowly as mother backs away. Mother leaps into the air and Sabriel jumps to meet her, both wolves crashing into each other, frantically biting and clawing. Sabriel manages to dislocate the other wolves' shoulder, making her howl loudly as she crashed to the floor. Unfortunately, mother's wolf seems unphased and gets up on shaky feet, racing into the nearby tree and popping the limb back into place with a loud popping sound. She turns and faces us. Sabriel gives a low growl. Our own wounds merely consist of some grazes and scrapes. Flesh wounds, nothing major.

Mother darts towards us and we dodge to the side, turning around and clawing at her back as she yelps. She turns, eyes narrowed, panting heavily. While she's a fairly tall wolf, we're much bigger, and have the advantage. She tries to back away and Sabriel jumps, cutting off her escape and swinging her paw up, scratching mother's wolf across one eye and effectively partially blinding her. She snarls, Sabriel advancing, jumping on top of her, biting deep into her neck, but not enough to break it, shaking her head wildly and sending mother into a nearby tree, making it fall to the ground, along with her.

Sabriel stays still, sniffing the air. The smell of blood is strong, from both of us and we can smell hers. Mother's blood smells slightly off somehow, definitely not just like a shifter. It's too metallic, for one. Like something

has been added to it. Something unnatural. It's not vampire blood either. Mother's wolf gets to her feet, swaying slightly and looking very unbalanced. The wolf is covered in blood that's trickling down from several wounds. Sabriel doesn't wait for her to move, lowering her head and crashing into the other wolf, head on, swiping her paws across the wolves' midsection. Sabriel rips open her fur and blood begins to drip down, trickling onto the forest floor and staining it a bright red. The wolf is barely standing now, and then with a groan and a low hiss, it falls down, scrabbling weakly at the floor. She's too injured, to continue fighting.

There's the loud sound of bones breaking and shifting, before mother lies before Sabriel and I, naked, doubled over and crying, hand clutching at her stomach.

"Winter" she sobs, holding out a trembling hand towards me and my wolf, "please, I'm your mother" she whispers.

I shift, Sabriel reluctantly giving me back control, staring at the woman with nothing but utter contempt in my eyes.

"You are not my mother" I tell her evenly, staying back and eyeing her angrily "you never have been. Where is the location of the warehouse where you perform your experiments? Where you give up the shifters and anything else you catch?"

She shakes her head. "I can't tell you," She coughs "I won't tell you."

Big mistake. But there's something else that's on my mind and bothering me. If I have to torture her to find the location, I will, but right now, I needed to hear something else from her.

"What about Simon" I shout, incensed at her as she blinks up at me, one eye almost completely shut and scratched over "did you even care about him at all? He's your son and you sent him out to hunt us" I growl, shaking my head. "Why?"

She laughs, derisively. "Because he's cut from the same cloth as you and your brother Damien" she spits out blood, "Lexus and I knew what he was about to do. Why do you think he's here? He was supposed to die by yours or Kai's hand. Let me guess" she continues to chuckle, weakly, "Kai was too softhearted to do it. Figures" she exhales, sounding disappointed more than anything "all my children are such a disappointment" she mutters.

I shoot out my leg and kick her, enjoying hearing her gasp and then moan in pain. Her hair is covered in dirt; leaves stuck in it. It looks like a dark brown, rather than its original color and her whole body is covered in bruises and scratches. I squat next to her. "You are a despicable and horrible human being" I tell her quietly, my body trembling in indignation "Simon deserves a better parent than you. I'm giving you one last chance to tell me the location" I warn her, picking up some of her hair and yanking it hard "before I have to do something I don't want to."

Her one good eye looks at me. It's gleaming, her lips curving in a small sickening smile. "Do what you have to" she coughs "because I'll never talk. I would never betray Lexus in that way."

It would be sweet, if it wasn't so sad. The only things that mattered to her, money and Lexus. I move slowly, quietly, behind her, my hands moving to squeeze her throat as she gasps and tries to scratch at me. But she's weak, from being so heavily wounded, her flailing and scratching barely even breaking the skin as I tighten my grip. But I'm also careful. I remember Kai's warning, that we needed her. We couldn't afford for mother to die, not just yet anyway. Her lips turn blue and slowly her body stops shaking. I let go, checking to see that she has a pulse. It's weak, but steady. Good. She's not dead then, merely unconscious. I sigh. The next step was going to be the worst thing I've ever done, but some part of me, didn't care. We need answers, mother has them. I would do what was necessary. There could be shifters and other supernatural creatures in need

of rescuing. I would make sure to remember that, and continue to harden my heart.

I mind-link Kai, who is busy fighting Lexus and bend down, picking up the limp body of mother, cradling her to my chest. She's light as a feather, thanks to my strength. I glance down at my nude body with a grimace. Man, it's freezing and now I would have to freeze my ass off until I got home. I stare down at mother resentfully. My feet crunch on the ground. I hear a wheezing sound and turn, startled, to see a young teenage boy with blonde curls looking at me, his hands held up in surrender.

"I'm Simon" he says quietly, "Kai sent me to help you. I can carry her, if you want to go to Kai" he offers.

I stare at him in fascination. He looks so much like myself and mother. A mixture of us both, with the tiniest hint of that Lexus guy. This is my half-brother. Not to mention Johnathon's half-brother., and Damien's and Drakes. He looks shy, but has kind eyes. I melt towards him, trying not to smile when I notice he's blushing and looking away, evidently realizing I'm naked. He hurriedly takes off his camouflage jacket and hands it to me. I give over mother, seeing with approval that, despite his age, he's able to carry her. He's quite tall too.

"Thanks" I mutter, putting the jacket on. It goes to my knees, due to his being taller than me. "I appreciate it."

We begin to walk. "Are you really my sister?" he blurts out.

We hear a scream in the distance, one that sounds like it's coming from Lexus.

"I guess so" I say, turning to him "and I would like to get to know you better, I promise I'm nothing like our mother."

He looks relieved "me neither" he admits as the truck comes into view. "Now what?" he adds and I smirk, gesturing for him to put mother on the floor of the back of the truck.

"Now we wait for Kai" I say, leaning against the truck and folding my arms "something tells me he'll be here soon."