

CHAPTER 84

Winter POV

Kai and I continue to argue with each other as we walk downstairs.

"I just don't understand how you can forgive him for everything so easily. Besides what if this isn't your brother?" he asks looking angry.

I eye him pointedly. "I forgave you everything" I pointed out and he looks taken back. I have a point though and he knows it.

"I never beat you." he protests. He falls silent at the look on my face. He sighs.

"Look" I say with a sigh, turning to him at the base of the stairs "I know it doesn't make sense to you, but Damien was afraid of our father. He did everything he was told to do, because otherwise our old man would have turned on him. It might not make it right, but try and put yourself in his shoes. If you were afraid of your father, wouldn't you do anything to keep him from being angry at you?"

Kai looks thoughtful, but no less angry. I shrug. He would eventually see reason, maybe after he's met Damien, he'll loosen up somehow. Besides, Damien is my brother and the only family I have.

We approach the study, my footsteps getting louder as I begin to rush in my excitement. I know Langdon is there, guarding my brother and who I'm assuming is Johnathon that's with him. I almost slam the door open and bounce in. Straight away I see it's him, my older brother, standing

there with his eyes twinkling at me. I throw myself into his arms, enjoying the way his arms feel around me and his scent. How I've missed him. I don't want to let go of him. But in the end an "ahem" and a loudly cleared throat, forces me to step backwards and look at my mate, who is glaring profusely at poor Johnathon who looks distinctly uncomfortable. I understand my brother coming after me, but why on earth is Johnathon with him?

"Damien," I say quietly "This is my mate, Alpha Kai. Kai this is my brother Damien and his friend Johnathon."

"Nice to meet you." Kai says between gritted teeth and I shake my head at him, my eyes warning him to be kind.

Kai shakes their hands and I notice both Damien and Johnathon wince. Is he squeezing their hands hard, eliciting a warning of his own towards them?

Kai lets go and strides to his seat behind the desk while I perch on the corner, absolutely beaming at the both of them.

"I can't believe you're both here." I gush and Damien sits down tentatively while Johnathon's more relaxed, plonking himself down.

"I can't believe you can talk." Damien says in awe, staring at me wide eyed. "It's like listening to music." he adds and I grin at him. He was always a charmer when he wanted to be. Even though I swear my voice is nothing like music.

I wonder about Langdon though. He looks like he's swallowed a bunch of sour grapes. His arms are folded across his chest and he hasn't made a single move, let alone cracked a smile. Hmmm there's a story to that. Especially since Damien's eyes keep shooting to look at him over his shoulder. That's very interesting. I have an inkling of what might be the problem, but that's something to bring up later.

"Let's cut to the chase, shall we." Kai growls as I stiffen. "You better have a good reason for coming here because if I so much as think your trying to bullshit me, I'll throw your sorry asses in the dungeon."

I scowl at him.

However that made the two boys blink and sit upright.

"I came because I was looking for my sister," Damien says huffily "do you have any idea how worried I've been? You've been gone for months and I hadn't heard from you." he exhales. Man he sounds pissed. His concern is touching. I hadn't realized I'd worried him so much. Or maybe I hadn't realized how much he actually cared.

"I was worried about her too." Johnathon says sourly from his own chair. I almost laugh in amusement. He sounds like a petulant child.

"I'm sorry Damien" I apologize softly "I was going to write you when I was fully settled in, I just have been busy." I add hastily.

Yes, busy. Busy not being killed and dealing with a stubborn jack ass of a mate who refused to reject me. I somehow don't think it's appropriate to bring that up to Damien. The last thing I need is a fight between my mate and my brother.

Damien's eyes darken. Is he that angry at me? Why the hell was Johnathon here anyway. The last I'd heard we were officially no longer mates. Maybe him and Damien had become good friends in my absence. It's the only explanation I can think of at any rate.

"We can get to that later." Damien says slowly "Johnathon and I came her for another reason as well. You're in danger Winter." he says and I look at him confused. In danger from what?

I'm safe, aren't I? Candice is finally dead. I can finally breathe and relax. I begin to hyperventilate. No, no, whatever this was, it couldn't be too

serious. Kai would keep me safe. Damien as well. All I need to do is clarify what he means by danger, but Kai gets to it first.

"Explain yourself." Kai hisses and Johnathon glowers at the man. Geez, what is his problem.

Langdon at least, has dropped his arms and sidled closer, his hands going to the back of the chair that my brother Damien is sitting in. Damien fidgets slightly and I swear there's a flush on his face. I hold back a smile.

"Winter, I don't want you to freak out." Damien says nervously.

It's a little too late for that, I want to scream out. Tell me already. Tell me, damn you.

"Well Thomas isn't dead, Winter."

Thomas isn't dead. Thomas isn't dead. Thomas isn't dead. The words keep repeating themselves in my mind and I'm at a complete loss. Of course Thomas is dead, I killed him myself. I hadn't meant to, it was self-defense but he was very clearly dead. Damien had to be mistaken.

I give a short laugh as Kai surveys me. "Good one Damien" I say forcing my voice to sound light "but not a funny joke, don't you think."

He looks apologetically at me. "Winter, Thomas is alive. I saw him with my own eyes."

I can feel myself shaking now. "Not possible Damien, he's dead. There was no coming back from what I did. It's impossible, now stop, the joke isn't funny."

Kai pulls me onto his lap, stroking my hair as I turn into him, gripping his arms tightly. I can't even bring myself to look at my brother anymore.

Johnathon speaks up "It's true. He's no longer just a shifter either, he's a hybrid."

No, no, no that was impossible. How on earth did he become a hybrid. There's only one race that would have saved Thomas and that would have been a vampire. It's a miracle he survived the transformation.

Kai continues to soothe me. "It's alright Winter, we'll be alright. I'll protect you."

But I can't help it, beginning to sob on his shoulder.

I can't deal. I just can't. Candice is finally gone and now someone else is after me. Why can't I just be left alone?

"What's he a hybrid of?" asks Kai calmly.

"Vampire and shifter." Damien says bitterly "Apparently money does buy everything."

"That's a potent combination, especially when you're not born one. It's amazing he lived through the transition" Kai says with a murmur.

"We didn't mean to distress you like this" Johnathon says as I slowly turn and look at him "but we wanted to warn you before it was too late."

"I don't get it" I shout, now feeling myself growing angry "What does he want? What is it that he has to have so badly that he can't leave well enough alone? Is it revenge he wants, for killing him?" I trail off and see my brother and Johnathon go pale. I'm trembling all over now and still they stare at me. Somebody speak, I beg in my mind, speak.

"He wants you Winter, but not for revenge." Damien says finally.

"He's still obsessed with you." Johnathon says above a whisper and I stare at them both, tears trailing down my cheeks.

I knew full well how obsessed Thomas had been with me, but now it seemed much worse. I'm terrified and it shows.

"Winter look at me." Kai says sternly, and I turn my head around, my eyes meeting his which is pitch black. "You are safe here, he will not get his hands on you, not ever. I will protect you. Stop panicking sweetheart" he said, kissing me on the cheek. It works. I begin to relax. I'm in a strong pack with strong warriors. Thomas won't stand a chance if he attempts to get at me. Not to mention this time I have my wolf.

Exactly right girl. We kick ass. You're bigger now, stronger. Did I tell you that Johnathon looks hot right now?

Sabriel, Thomas is on his way to find us and you're still checking out other men?

I'm not blind Winter, I appreciated beauty when it's right in front of me. Like smelling the roses, sort of.

Um, it's nothing like that. Johnathon rejected me remember?

Oh yeah, my bad. How about after this we pee on him?

Um, no thanks Sabriel.

Bite him in the ass?

Tempting but still no.

Kick him in the man bits?

Also no.

Change his shampoo to hair dye so it goes a purple colour?

No idea how you came up with that one, but still a no. Let's just leave him alone.

Fine, you never let me have any fun.

You'll survive Sabriel.

"We should increase the patrol." Kai was instructing Langdon who was standing there nodding, mind-linking as they spoke. "No one gets near the boundary line without being thrown in the dungeon." he growls "and" he adds looking at Damien "anyone that matches this Thomas's description is to be killed on sight. Is that clear?"

"Yes Alpha Kai." Langdon says obediently.

"As for the both of you," he says darkly, shooting Damien and Johnathon a black look "if it were up to me, you'd both have your hides in the dungeon right now. It's only because Winter has requested that I don't, that's saved you from it."

They both went quiet and silent.

"Kai," I say sweetly "I would really like for my brother and I to catch up some. Do you think you could give Johnathon a tour of the grounds? Show him the pack house."

Johnathon looks annoyed but I could care less. Kai looks just as pissed.

"I can do that." Kai says between gritted teeth "but if he so much as does anything that upsets you..." he growls pointing at Damien.

"He won't." I promise.

Kai gets up, pecks me on the forehead and looks at Johnathon with a scowl on his face. "You're coming with me." he snaps and irritably stomps out of the room.

Johnathon hesitates but something in my face must have told him to leave, because he gives a long suffering sigh and follows Kai out the door. Good, one less thing I need to worry about.

Langdon is still there and looks hesitant. I don't even worry about it, blurting out what I know must be the truth. "You two are mates aren't you?" I ask.

Langdon blushes. "Yes." he mutters, looking away.

I couldn't be more thrilled but I also know that Langdon is going through stuff right now, especially as that bitch Candice was his first mate. Damien just looks concerned.

"I couldn't be happier." I declare "but I also think you need to work out what you both want. Damien" I tell him with a wicked grin "you and I can get to catch up with each other another time. But right now, I think you and Langdon need to have a proper discussion. Langdon," I say turning to the man who looks startled "don't let your past mate, ruin what could be a good thing. Let her stay in the past where she belongs." He gives a small nod.

"Damien" I say lightly "you so much as upset Langdon a little bit and I will throw your ass in the dungeon. Langdon deserves to be treated respectfully and I suggest you remember that." I say, a deadly look on my face as my brother stares at me and gulps.

"I'll remember" Damien whispers and I give a smile of satisfaction.

"Fantastic" I beam "then I'll see you both at dinner. We're all going to eat as a family."

Langdon is about to protest then thinks better of it. I head to the doorway and give them a casual wave. "See you later." I sing out and leave the both of them staring at each other, completely speechless.