

## Chapter 199

Rûe

The minute I woke up I knew something was oddly off. My entire body was burning with a certain fire that I could not seem to quench. I turn over on my back gasping for air. In doing so I had seemed to have woken up Ares, whose limbs were tangled with my own.

I blinked looking at the sky that was slowly emerging into color. From the slight chill I knew it was still early, probably in the wee hours of the morning. I breathed out, noting how my breath came out foggy yet my insides felt like molten lava coursing through my veins.

Ares sits up and leans over me, his deep eyes showing his worry. "What is wrong love?"

Even though his words made my heart leap I was not sure if I could answer his question. Not when I do not know myself. Last night when he marked me I had thought of my wolf breaking free, she did but I had not felt any different then. But now, I could not help but think that it was her doing. My body was changing. I could certainly feel it.

"I do not know. I just feel a burning fire coursing through my veins." I murmur, shifting my eyes to his.

The skin between his brows crease as his eyebrows draw together in worry. "Do you feel cold? Do you have a headache? Do your bones feel sore?" He asked in a swift breath while brushing the back of his hand down my forehead to my neck.

I could feel the tingles as he did so but barely. Something was definitely wrong. Had I caught pneumonia?

I shook my head. "I do not feel cold but I do have a slight headache." I answered truthfully. His last question I pondered on. I had not registered it but now I could definitely feel my bones sore, almost like a slight throb.

I nodded slightly letting my eyes drift to the branches high above us. For a second I wondered if they could hear or see what we were doing. This place was odd so I would not doubt it. "Aye my bones feel sore."

Deep in worry he brushes a finger over the raw skin where he had marked me last night. I shivered, somehow the feeling of getting touched there was rather satisfying. "Listen love. What you are feeling is normal for a first time shifting wolf."

As soon as the words came out panic started to kick in. Since I was not really expecting to actually shift so soon I had not prepared myself. "What!" I shout.

"What is with all this racket? The sun has not opened its eyes yet. Why are you two up so early?" The voice belonged to Gorjon whose voice was thick with sleep.

I ignored him, trying to sit up only to be gently pushed back down by a worried Ares. He scans his blue eyes over my body. "Do not move much. From the scent I am getting in a few hours or by even an hour, you will shift into your wolf."

He brushed my hair off my forehead and pressed the back of his hand over the now heating up flesh. I could feel tiny beads of perspiration dotting my forehead already. "I will not lie to you Rue, the process of shifting is not easy but I will be there every step of the way." He promised.

I squint my eyes and lips curl back into a snarl. "How comforting." I am surprised at how harsh I sounded and how angry I felt. Why? I had no idea.

I looked at Ares ready to apologize but he shakes his head, smiling softly. "It is normal that first time shifting wolves feel rage Rue. Your body is changing trying to adapt. Marking you last night must have triggered the dormant wolf in you."

I wanted to utter no shit sherlock but bit my tongue. It did not feel right to pass my rage unto him when he was only trying to help. "You said process, what do you mean by that?" I asked, feeling my insides burn.

He looks reluctant but decides to answer. "Like I had said, when a wolf first shifts it is not easy. Your bones will break and reform, your entire body will be in pain and when you are a hundred percent shifted then it will be hard to control your wolf, especially since you are hybrid."

My heart pounds and my brain goes haywire. Ares shushed me brushing the back of his hand down my cheek. "Calm down love. I am here." He whispers. My bones breaking? How dreadful.

I nodded even though I was not entirely calm. Then a thought races through my mind and my stomach tightens in discomfort. I was not sure if he could read it. I searched his face trying to find any signs of hostility but there was none. "What is it?" He asked concerned and confused and no doubt picked up my anxiety.

"Do you not hate me now knowing I am a hybrid? I have killed my kind." I asked sadly, tearing my eyes away from him. The irony of him now trying to ease my pain while I had done nothing but kill his pack, his people, the people held close to his heart.

His gaze stays glued to me then a peek of a smile grows on his lips until he chuckles. "Is that what you are worried about love?" Not getting an answer from my suddenly dry mouth he speaks.

"I think last night proved that I do not care about your past or you being a hybrid. I had known the moment I took the smell in the room. There was no fooling me Rue, not when I am your mate and can sense something was off. Besides it turns me on knowing I'm always going to be balls deep in the most devious witch, scratch that, the most deviously beautiful hybrid." He smirks.

His words had me clearly blushing like those blasted red berries. I hated and loved how this dog could make me turn mushy even when I am in pain. The me back then would think he was using sorcery against me. But the me now knew I had just fallen in love with the stupid dog that made me feel things I never knew was possible.

Chuckling he rises to his feet and looks over where Gorjon and Stefan were listening to our conversation. Both were now wide awake and alert. When they notice Ares catching them staring they tear their eyes away quickly, red blotches dotting their pale cheeks. How cute.

"We shall continue our way right now. I do not want Rue shifting in the open, I do not trust this place." He spoke, flickering his eyes between the two elves who nodded quickly.

"Yes sir." They said simultaneously.

Ares's eyes drop to mine and his lips grow into a soft smile. "Well we shall be on our way my little witch. It is time we get out of here so I could show you off as my queen. Also so that I would not have to worry about breeding you with pups in this ugly place." He teases and reaches out a hand for me to take.