

Chapter 4

One Year Later

It's been a year since I fled from my pain. I had thought my wound would heal, but I had been wrong. I hadn't healed. Neither had I found closure. Instead something darker had taken root inside me.

As the Uber driver drives past the familiar streets. I'm reminded of why I had left this forsaken country in the first place. I'm reminded of the pain and humiliation I endured one year ago. I'm reminded of Darren's betrayal.

"I hate this city," Blue murmurs in disgust. Echoing my thoughts.

Within minutes we're at the hospital. I pay him then get out. I stand for a minute. Watching the towering building. Calming myself.

The hospital is for werewolves only. It was located in a secluded area. We had werewolf government officials who helped us keep it under radar.

If I were being honest, I hadn't planned on ever coming back. But my godson had been diagnosed with a tumor. Claire had called me crying, afraid and hysterical.

I would do anything for them. So when they both asked me to come, I did. I left everything to come be with them.

Entering the hospital I locate the elevators and get in. Claire had given me the floor and room number.

Given this was the same hospital Krystal was born in, I knew where to go.

Minutes later, I'm walking into Mason's room.

He's on the bed watching cartoons. Though he was scheduled to have an operation soon. He was calm. Laughing even.

Claire on the other hand looked tired and worn out. Managing our branch here while taking care of a sick son was draining her. This was the other reason I was here. To take care of the company. While she took care of Mason.

"Auntie Renny, you came!" The excited shout brings me from my thoughts.

Claire's eyes snap open. I can see the happiness and relief in her eyes.

"Hi baby boy," I greet him. Kissing his forehead before stepping back.

Turning towards Claire, I open my arms. She basically falls in them. Sagging in relief.

"Hi Claire bear."

She sobs. "Oh gosh Renny, you have no idea how much I've missed you. Talking to you on the phone isn't the same as having you here with me."

“I’m here now and I will be for as long as you both need me” I whisper softly. Rubbing her back in comfort.

She lets go of me then wipes her tears. She stares at me. As if inspecting me. Studying me.

“There’s something different about you, I can’t wrap my finger around it though.”

I just give her a small tight smile. She has no idea just how different I had become.

I turn my attention back to Mason as we both take our seats.

“How’s my favorite godson doing?” I ask.

“Aunty,” he says dragging the word. “I’m your only godson.”

I grin at that. He was right after all.

“I’ve missed you lots. I’m glad you’re here.” The smile on his face, makes my heart constrict.

I always try my hardest not to think of Krystal. The pain that accompanies those thoughts is something I try to avoid.

“Well, I’m here and I brought you lots of presents.”

“Really? That’s so cool. I’ve been a good boy. The doctor says I’m a very brave pup and that once I’m completely healed, I’ll get an ice cream treat. My choice.”

The calmness and joy in his voice is contagious. For a moment I forget that my heart is frozen. I relax into the moment chatting with him.

Mason is ten but his outlook on life is different. He fills me in on everything I have missed. Especially his new best friend called Jax who comes to visit every day.

At that, I look at Claire in question. She nods her head confirming it’s Miranda’s son. From there on we chat lightly.

I had spent about three hours with them, when I cut my visit short. I had to go to the office to catch up on work.

I was leaving the room when I came face to face with Darren. He was the last fucking person I wanted to see.

“Lauren?” he asks unsure. As if seeing a ghost or something.

I don’t answer him. Just give him a death stare. We had nothing to talk about anyway.

I was about to bypass him when a body collides with mine. Tiny arms wrap around my waist. I look down to see the top of Krystal’s head.

Shit! I so wasn't ready for this. She's my daughter, I love her but I wasn't ready for this. I was still in a dark place. And my mind couldn't reconcile the pain and the love buried deep inside my heart.

I wanted to hug her so much. Fuck did I want to, but I couldn't bring myself to do it. I was still afraid of her rejection. Afraid that she was going to push me away. Afraid she still hated me.

Her hateful words still rung in my ear. I couldn't shut out her voice. Her voice as she called me an evil witch and other nasty names. Or when she said she was going to pray to the goddess to punish me and send me to hell.

I untangle myself from her and leave without a word. It makes me a monster. Walking away from my daughter like that but I can't get past the painful memories. I can't get past the darkness in me.

In my hurry to get away from them I collide with someone.

"I'm so..." I go to apologize but I freeze.

Miranda stands before me. Looking beautiful as ever. As if she hadn't destroyed my life a year ago.

"Lauren? Oh my god, it's you...long time no see, how are you?"

I stare at her like she's lost her mind. Was this bitch being real right now?

"Is something wrong with you?" I ask completely puzzled.

She answers confused. “No, why?”

“It seems you’re under the impression we’re friends. Let me remind you we’re not and we will never be. You took everything from me and I’m back to repay the favor. Karma is a nasty bitch. I’m going to be your personal hell. I will destroy you Miranda, until there’s nothing of you left. By the time I’m done, you will wish you were dead.” I threaten, my voice going cold and dangerous.

With that I bump her shoulders, leaving her shocked and shaking.

I get a cab and go straight to our company. Thirty minutes later I arrive. Ruby’s was able to bounce back once I left. We had even been able to open another branch in the island I had escaped to.

I was just about to head into the building when I was stopped by two guards.

“What the hell are you doing?” I asked gritting my teeth.

I was in a bad mood after seeing Darren and Miranda.

“What does it look like we’re doing?” one of them retorted.

What sort of people did Claire hire while I was away?

“Do you know who the fuck I am?”

“The president? Wait, maybe you’re the first lady” the other mocked.

I was starting to get pissed and so was Blue. They were humans so we couldn't harm them.

"I'm the CEO of this company." I snarl. My nails digging into my palms in anger.

I wanted to swipe at them. Teach them a fucking lesson.

"Not looking like that." the black haired one scoffed.

I admit I wasn't looking my best. I had worn out jeans, a crumpled blouse and shades. I had taken a direct flight with no stops so I wasn't looking all that put together.

"I bet you're a hoe, you probably fucked one of the higher ups and now they don't want anything to do with you, so you're here to cause drama." the other one snorted in disgust.

I stared at them in disbelief.

We had started attracting attention. Not wanting to deal with the idiots, I try moving past them.

The tall one grabs me in a painful grip and starts dragging me. That's when I lose it.

"Get you filthy fucking hands off me." I shout then using my other hand I slap him hard.

The hit echoes through the room. His eyes turn dangerous and he's about to lounge at me when a voice stops him.

"What the hell is going on here?" Micah our general manager shouts.

"This bitch here is causing problems." one of them answers.

Micah turns to look at me and gasps.

"Are these the type of fools you hire nowadays Micah? Idiots who are disrespectful to women and even manhandle them?" My voice is cold and restrained.

"Oh god, I'm really sorry Lauren, so sorry...I apologize on their behalf, it won't happen again." he stutters nervously.

I see the color drain from the faces of the guards once my name clicks in their mind.

"Oh, it definitely won't happen again because they're fired. Get them out of my fucking company."

I walk past them. They beg me to give them another chance. I ignore them.

"What are you all waiting around for? Get back to work or suffer the same fate." I shout, making everyone scramble to get back to their stations.

I was done being nice. Done being good. In fact I was going to be very bad. I was going to be the villain they accused me of being.

Hell has no fury like a woman scorned. Darren and Miranda were going to pay. I was going to rain hellfire on all those who hurt me. I was going to watch them as they burned.