

## Chapter 87

I turned in the arms of my mate to face him. I studied his handsome and peaceful face in the dim light as the shadows were still lingering in the room we were in. The shadows made him appear more mysterious, especially with the nice beard that was starting to come in. His arms tightened around me and I smiled. I knew he was awake and just faking that he was asleep. I snuggled up as close as I could get to him, almost nose to nose. I could feel the warmth of his breath caressing my skin. I opened my eyes as wide as they could go, so I was staring at him in a creepy, yet hilarious way.

When his eyes opened and adjusted to my face, a deep belly laugh rolled out of him. He hugged me tightly to his body and rolled with me tightly in his arms, so I was now lying on top of him. I propped my head with my arms and looked down at him.

"Well, good morning there you creep." He told me, with a smile.

"Good morning to you too. Can't help it, you're just so dashing." I smiled.

He moved my arms and held my face between his hands and gave me a soft kiss. I smiled into the kiss as my lips happily pressed back into his. As much as I would have loved lying in bed with him, I knew we had a lot to do today and a lot to uncover. Like for my main question of why Melissa was trapped there and why did the council turn on her and the others? I placed another quick kiss on Everest's mouth before rolling off of him, onto the bed, keeping my momentum and standing up on the floor. I surprised myself when I didn't faceplant on the floor, laughing at my own achievement.

"As much as I would enjoy the day lying around in bed with you, we have work to do." I told him as I rummaged through some clothes.

"I wish we could. Maybe one day we will be able to do nothing but love one another all day?" Everest lay in bed as he began to day dream as I got myself ready.

I stepped into the bathroom, looking around for a moment. I opened up the cabinets and, to my own surprise, there were woman products in the drawers and I decided to help myself. I worked some dry shampoo I found in the cabinet through my hair and used my fingers as a poor excuse as a comb. There was a brush in there, but I didn't know whose it was and I was not about to use it. Gross. I pulled my hair into a cute but messy bun that sat right on top of my head. I looked in the mirror and once I approved, I walked out to an already dressed Everest. Seriously, he gets ready too fast.

He opened the door and I walked into the hallway first. I could hear the soft talking coming from the first floor level and looked back up at Everest. He nodded and motioned me to walk and I did so. I could feel the energy was almost electrifying with excitement as we walked into the room.

"Well, good morning you two. Coffee, bagel, or a sausage biscuit?" Melissa offered.

"Oh, yes, coffee and a bagel, please." I smiled and took the food she was offering.

"Three sausage biscuits and I'll get water, thank you." Everest said, moving to open the fridge, opening it up and pulling a bottle of water out. Melissa pushed over a paper plate that had three large sausage biscuits on it and we ate our breakfast. Once we were finished, we threw away our trash and sat down at a table where Melissa and Miranda were chatting.

"So, let's get to it shall we?" Melissa turned to Everest and myself and began telling her story of how she became trapped in the 'steel cell of hell', as she called it.

Melissa POV

"Well, where should I start?" I pondered thoughtfully, thinking of where a good place to start would be. Should I start with Avalynn's parents seeking help or skip that? I had heard Avalynn was gifted but was unsure what her gifts were. I knew her mother had possessed powers herself and was a very powerful witch. Her mother was to be one of the head members until her mate came along, marked her, and that was that. Well, or so everyone thought.

"You can just start when things began to change in the council and you didn't agree with the actions that were being taken." Avalynn smiled at me and her big brooding mate, who was angled behind her with his arms crossed, sat behind her. Those judgy eyes made me feel a bit nervous.

"Okay, I can do that." I managed to get out and closed my eyes for a brief second, recalling the right moment to start from. When I pinpointed where I wanted to start, I opened my eyes and took a deep breath. "It may be lengthy, and if for any reason, and I mean any reason, you have any questions, please let me know. I will be more than happy to answer them to the best of my knowledge."

"Okay, we will." Avalynn's voice was soft sounding and she gave me a reassuring nod.

"Well, I believe it all started when your mother met your father. We were not really in a war back then, but a major confrontation with the group of Royal Lycans who bordered our lands. You see, some witches came up missing, and my council was determined that it was the Royal Lycans and their," I paused and held up air quotes with my fingers "their goon squad.' Your mother was leading the mission back then and when the King laid eyes on her, everything as we knew it shifted. Our worlds, which were once magically divided, basically became one." I paused as I let it sink in for a moment.

"So, was it my father and his people causing your witches to disappear?" Avalynn asked and I shook my head. My eyes darted around the quiet room as everyone was listening and watching me.

"No, it wasn't. I found out the nomadic vampires, who were not supposed to be trespassing here, were lurking in the shadows of the forest taking the witches and killing them." Gasps were heard and whispers began and I motioned for silence.

"Vampires?" Everest asked and I nodded my head.

"Yes, vampires. They thought because Avalynns' father's Kingdom was so small he could not only take over it, but cut them out of the picture and allow the witches to do that for him. Well, when your mother was on her mission she crossed paths with your father. He fell to his knees in front of her and begged her to hear him out. I remember her telling me that there was some kind of weird pull. Like magnets pulling her to him. She believed him when he told her it wasn't him or his men, to his knowledge, doing such things. He confessed that she was his mate and she knew he was telling the truth. Especially considering she was a thought reader. She could slip into his mind and read his most inner thoughts. They nearly overwhelmed her with how he was thinking of her inside. He wanted her, he wanted to take her right there, and he wanted to mark her. It almost made her run, except for the part that he would not give into what his beast was wanting. He would not force himself on your mother and would win her love in another way. He would step back and tell her the truth about how she was his mate, how he wanted to prove to her that he would be by her side and love her forever."

"Awe, that sounds a lot like us." I heard Miranda whisper to Brent. I watched him lean down and placed a soft kiss on her forehead.

"So my mother was a witch and my father was a Royal Lycan?" Avalynn captured my attention again.

"Yes. The stories you may have heard were untrue. The stories about how he marked her immediately and never let her return are all inaccurate. In fact, he courted your mother for a few weeks and they had a small and intimate ceremony. Your mother told him about a week after they met how she was a thought reader and knew he was telling the truth the entire time. Your father didn't care and loved her all the same. They fell in love, he marked her, she became a Lycan after a painful and grueling process of transformation. She was able to keep her ability as a thought reader, though it didn't work on everyone." I let out a small sigh and took a sip of water.

"So, how did Dexter become involved in all of this then?" Everest sat up in his seat, leaning forward, his elbows now resting on the table as he looked at me.

"That would be from the works of Sophia." I told him.

"Sophia?" Miranda asked confused.

"Yes, Sophia. She can put on one hell of a front, but don't let it fool you. She can and will double cross you when she wants. When she wants to, it's usually for her own gain." My lips tightened in a straight line and my brows came together in a frown. "She has a power called Truth Manipulation, it is a very rare form to possess and she never told anyone she could do such a thing."

"How did you figure it out?" Miranda leaned up in her seat some.

"Well, I have a friend who makes a special blend that you can put in lotions, teas, rings, bracelets, or necklaces. Her family has a grimoire that has a potion for it in there. She made me one and when Sophia tried to manipulate me, I figured it out. Luckily, my friend had warned me of her suspicions so I just kind of went a long with it. But, with that said, I feel like she manipulated the truth for Dexter and had him under her spell."

"No one ever thought to tell him or give him anything?" Brent snarled and I could understand his frustration and anger.

"We did try." I told him and he stood and walked out of the room, not wanting to listen to anything further. I really should not have skipped ahead. He will understand better when I get to that part of the story. I let out a soft sigh as I watched Miranda stand and go after him. I could tell that they were going to be good together.

"Well, this is probably a good time as any to take a break, really. Let's take a few minutes and whenever everyone is ready we can sit and I will tell you all the events that led us all here today. Use the time to get fresh air, stretch, drink something, or get a snack." I smiled and stood as I watched everyone leave the table, walking outside. I could hear Brent going off about the information he learned and how he regrets his brother's murder. I sighed to myself before taking a sip of water.

